

**OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT
OF EMPLOYEES (OTM-R) POLICY FOR RESEARCH AS WELL AS
RESEARCH-AND-TEACHING POSITIONS AT THE HUGO KOŁŁATAJ
UAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN KRAKÓW**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the OTM-R policy of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków is to ensure the recruitment of researchers with the highest competences, while guaranteeing equal opportunities and access for all candidates.

OTM-R, which stands for Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers, is one of the pillars of the European Charter for Researchers, in particular the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers launched in 2005 as the Recommendation of the European Commission addressed to researchers, employers and entities financing research¹.

The OTM-R policy is intended to encourage candidates to apply for employment at the UAK, in particular by:

1. providing clear and transparent information on the entire recruitment process, including selection criteria and an indicative timetable;
2. posting clear and concise job advertisements with links to detailed information on required competences and duties, working conditions, entitlements, learning opportunities, career development, gender equality policy, etc.;

¹ Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 on the European Charter for Researchers and on the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OJ L 75 of 22.3.2005).

3. ensuring that the required qualifications and competences are in line with the needs of the position and do not constitute a barrier to entering the market, e.g. too restrictive and/or requiring unnecessary qualifications;
4. minimizing the candidate's administrative burden (proof of qualifications, translations, number of copies required, etc.).

II. BASIC PRINCIPLES

Working towards the implementation of the EU's human resources strategy, recruitment procedures are governed by a set of core principles that guarantee all interested parties have equal access to employment in accordance with the constitutional principles of equality, respect for Polish law and international regulations in this field, in particular the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers².

At the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture, the values of equal treatment are included in the Mission³, Strategy⁴, and other internal legal acts. The UAK University of Agriculture fulfils the basic tasks of developing knowledge, raising the scientific level of employees and educating academic staff and students with respect for academic values, in the spirit of responsibility for the ideas of humanism, freedom, tolerance, respecting ethical standards and creating attitudes of openness to persons, knowledge and the world.

Anti-discrimination rules and those supporting equal treatment have been included among others, in the UAK Work Regulations⁵. According to them, employees should be treated equally in terms of establishing and terminating an employment relationship, employment conditions, promotion and access to training in order to improve professional qualifications, in particular regardless of gender, age, disability, race, religion, nationality,

² European Commission, EUR 21620 - European Charter for Researchers. Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. ISBN 92-894-9327-5

³ Mission of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków - https://urk.edu.pl/misja_uczelni.html

⁴ Strategy of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków for the years 2021-2025
https://urk.edu.pl/zasoby/23/Strategia_Uniwersytetu_Rolniczego_im_H_Kollataja_w_Krakowie_na_lata_2021_2025.pdf

⁵ Rector's Ordinance No. 175/2019 of 16 October 2019 on the implementation of the Work Regulations of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków. https://urk.edu.pl/zasoby/23/zr_175_2019.pdf

political beliefs, trade union membership, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, and regardless of employment for a definite or indefinite period, full-time or part-time. The above-mentioned Ordinance also sets out detailed rules of conduct in the field of counteracting mobbing. They refer to the adopted internal anti-mobbing policy⁶. Gender equality issues are defined in the Gender Equality Plan of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków.⁷

This policy defines four employee profiles in the group of research as well as research-and-teaching staff members:

1. R1: First Stage Researcher - holding the professional title of Master of Science, Master of Engineering or equivalent, until taking a doctor's degree;
2. R2: Recognized Researcher - holding at least a doctoral degree and having relevant scientific achievements and active participation in scientific life, manifested in particular in speeches at conferences, symposiums or significant achievements in professional work;
3. R3: Established Researcher - holding at least a doctoral degree and significant achievements: scientific - in the case of research workers or scientific and didactic - in the case of research-and-teaching workers and having achievements in the field of educating scientific staff, as well as:
 - 1) experience in managing research teams or projects, or in conducting projects independently, or
 - 2) achievements in obtaining funds for scientific research from external sources – in the case of research as well as research-and-teaching employees;
4. R4: Leading Researcher - holding the academic title of professor and significant achievements in the field of:

⁶ Rector's Ordinance No. 15/2011 of 17 June 2011 on introducing Internal Anti-Mobbing Policy at the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków. https://akty.urk.edu.pl/zasoby/23/zr_15_2011.pdf

⁷ Rector's Ordinance No. 9/2022 of 9 February 2022 on the introduction of the Gender Equality Plan at the University of Agriculture Hugo Kołłątaj in Kraków https://akty.urk.edu.pl/zasoby/23/zr_9_z1_2022.pdf

- 1) training of scientific staff, or
- 2) experience in managing research teams or projects or conducting projects independently, or
- 3) obtaining funds for scientific research from external sources.

Researchers conducting their own research area.

A detailed description of the competency profile can be found in Table 1 constituting Appendix No. 1 to the OTM-R Policy.

The principles of establishing an employment relationship with academic teachers in research as well as research-and-teaching positions as well as conducting competition procedures are regulated by:

1. Act of 20 July 2018 - Law on Higher Education and Science (i.e. Journal of Laws of 2022, item 574, as amended);
2. Act of 26 June 1974 - Labour Code (i.e. Journal of Laws of 2022, item 510, as amended);
3. Statute of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków of 28 June 2021, introduced by the Resolution of the Senate of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków No. 88/2021, as amended),
4. Rector's Ordinance No. 163/2019 of 1 October 2019 on the rules of employment of academic teachers.

These rules stipulate that establishing the first employment relationship with an academic teacher at the University for a definite or indefinite period longer than 3 months, for more than half of the full-time job, takes place after open competition.

In the case of recruitment of employees who are beneficiaries of a project, program or competition announced by NAWA, NCBiR, NCN or an international competition for the implementation of a research project, or for the duration of a research or teaching project financed:

1. from the funds from the budget of the European Union;
2. by other grant awarding entities.

The recruitment process is carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the financing institution.

In the event that the financing institution requires a competition and there are no guidelines in this regard, the competition committee is appointed by the Rector at the request of the project manager or coordinator of tasks carried out by UAK, in the case of projects in which UAK acts as a partner in the consortium. The committee consists of the project manager as the chairman and at least two persons appointed by him/her with appropriate scientific or professional qualifications.

The competition procedure does not apply in the case of employment for a definite period of time of an academic teacher assigned to work at the University on the basis of an agreement concluded with a foreign scientific institution.

III. PROCEDURE AND STAGES OF RECRUITMENT OF ACADEMIC TEACHERS IN THE GROUP OF RESEARCH OR RESEARCH-AND-TEACHING EMPLOYEES

Competition procedures at the UAK must be conducted in a transparent manner based on clearly defined criteria for persons applying for a research or research-and-teaching position.

The applied procedures should ensure equal access to the competition for all groups of persons, including those in a difficult situation (due to age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or belief, etc.) or researchers returning to a research career, including teachers (from any level of the education system) returning to a professional career.

Applicants from outside the EU or with a diploma issued abroad must meet the conditions set out in the law in force in the Republic of Poland. Information on the rules applicable to foreigners applying for a job in Poland is available on the website of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange: <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/recognition/recognition-for-professional-purposes>

Competition announcement

1. The competition for the position of an academic teacher in a group of research or research-and-teaching staff at the faculty is announced by the Dean with the consent of the Rector, at the request of the head of the department or other faculty unit, with the opinion of the relevant discipline coordinator.
2. Competition for the position of an academic teacher in university-wide units are announced by the head of the unit with the consent of the Rector, after consulting the relevant Vice-Rector and the discipline coordinator.
3. The competition requirements for a candidate for the position of an academic teacher specified in the announcement shall be determined - taking into account the principles resulting from the Act and the Statute - by the head of the unit in which the candidate is to be employed, taking into account the needs of the unit related to the scope of its tasks. Determining the requirements for a candidate for the position of an academic teacher in a group of research-and-teaching and research employees is assessed by the discipline coordinator.
4. Information about the competition is published on the University's website in the Public Information Bulletin (BIP) <https://bip.malopolska.pl/urkraków>, on the website of the minister responsible for higher education and science and on the website of the European Commission on the European portal for mobile researchers EURAXESS at least 30 days before the end of the recruitment process. In the case of calls announced as part of projects funded by the National Science Centre, information about the call is also published on the NCN website.
5. The competition announcement should include in particular:
 - 1) name of the University, faculty and organizational unit where the candidate is to be employed,
 - 2) specification of the position to be filled up by the way of competition (including the number of positions, description of the position, description of tasks and place of work);
 - 3) conditions (requirements) to be met by the candidate
 - 4) required documents to be submitted by the candidate;
 - 5) date and place of submission of documents;
 - 6) planned date of concluding the competition;

- 7) any other information of importance to the candidate (including the type of employment contract, working time);
 - 8) required clauses provided for by the relevant provisions of law;
 - 9) contact details of the person providing information on the competition.
6. The competition procedure consists of:
- 1) formal verification of submitted offers;
 - 2) merit-based evaluation of the submitted offers;
 - 3) making a decision concluding the competition;
 - 4) drawing up the minutes of committee meetings.

Application procedure

1. In order to reduce the administrative burden for applicants, it is recommended that documents may be submitted in person, by post or electronically.
2. Unless otherwise stated in the competition announcement, original documents and confirmations of qualifications are required at the employment stage. If the conditions of the competition or special provisions do not provide otherwise, it is recommended that the candidate has the opportunity to submit a statement, in which they undertake to provide the original documents upon completion recruitment process.

Competition committees

1. Competition committees are appointed to conduct competition procedures in the manner specified in § 114 of the Statute⁸.
2. Members of the selection committees should represent a variety of experiences and qualifications, and, if necessary and possible, represent various environments (including non-academic) and disciplines.

⁸ Statute of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków of 28 June 2021.
https://akty.UAK.edu.pl/statut_uczelni.html

3. The composition of the committee should have an appropriate gender balance,
4. It is advisable to appoint external experts, including foreign experts, with appropriate experience to evaluate candidates as members of the committee.
5. Members of the competition committees should be properly trained in the competition procedure and know the principles of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers HRS4R and OTM-R.
6. The competition committee is responsible for conducting the competition procedure, including the evaluation of candidates and recommending the finally selected candidates.
7. Members of the committee should be available to fully and consistently participate in the entire recruitment process and perform the duties assigned to them by the chairman of the committee.
8. Committee members are obliged to maintain absolute confidentiality in order to protect the privacy of candidates and maintain the integrity of the entire recruitment process. Each member of the committee is obliged to maintain the confidentiality of the information obtained in the recruitment process and not to provide any information regarding the recruitment of candidates to persons who are not members of the committee, in accordance with the provisions of general law and internal regulations in force at the University.
9. Minutes are drawn up from the meeting of the committee. The minutes are signed by all committee members present at the meeting.
10. The competition committee provides the minutes and documentation of the candidates to the Vice-Rector for General Affairs.
11. The decision on employment is made by the Rector.

The procedure for evaluating the achievements of applicants in the competition

1. It is recommended that the procedure consists of two stages:
 - 1) assessment of achievements based on submitted documents;
 - 2) skills assessment based on an interview.
2. In the first stage, the committee should check all submitted applications in terms of their compliance with the requirements contained in the competition announcement

When analysing documents, particular attention should be paid to: candidate's education; experience in the field, including published works, career history; qualifications (courses, diplomas).

3. Candidates whose applications meet the requirements of the competition are invited to the second stage. To this end, the committee should determine which applications are complete and draw up a list of persons who meet the formal conditions and whose applications have been submitted on time, and organize and conduct interviews to check their knowledge and skills. It is allowed to conduct an interview using means of remote communication, i.e. tele- or video-conferences, in accordance with the rules in force at the University.
4. The entire range of experience of candidates should be considered in the evaluation process.
5. Assessment should be made both qualitatively and quantitatively, focusing not only on the number of publications, but also on the outstanding results achieved during a diverse scientific career (Appendix No. 2 to the OTM-R Policy).
6. The importance of bibliometric indicators should be properly balanced with a wider range of assessment criteria, i.e. experience in tutoring, teamwork, knowledge transfer, research commercialization, contributions to patents, developments or inventions, research management, in the field of innovation and dissemination of scientific awareness in society and - in the case of employees in the research-and-teaching group - experience and teaching achievements.
7. Career breaks or deviations from chronological order in the curriculum vitae should not be treated as diminishing the value of the candidate's achievements, but perceived as a career evolution, and as a result, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers/artists pursuing multidimensional career path. Candidates should therefore be allowed to submit CVs supported by the evidence which reflects a representative range of achievements and qualifications relevant to the position for which the job is being applied for.

8. Any experience in the field of mobility, i.e. staying in another country/region or in another research environment (in the public or private sector), or changing discipline or sector at an early or later stage of a scientific/artistic career, or experience in virtual mobility should be seen as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.

Communication with candidates for the position

1. After receiving the documents by e-mail or post, candidates should be informed about the acceptance of the application to the e-mail address provided.
2. Candidates should be informed about the date of the interview by phone or e-mail.
3. Within 30 days from the end of the recruitment process, all persons who have met the formal criteria should receive information about the results of the competition.
4. The information is prepared on the basis of the candidate's assessment questionnaire, indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the application (Appendix No. 3 to the OTM-R).

Complaints

Candidates have the right to submit a complaint to the Rector of the Hugo Kołłątaj UAK University of Agriculture in Kraków by submitting the appropriate letter, together with an indication of procedural irregularities, within 7 days of obtaining a negative decision.

Quality control system

Administrative supervision over the recruitment process is exercised by the Personnel Affairs Office, and merit-based supervision by the Vice-Rector responsible for general affairs. The recruitment process is subject to internal audit and periodic external review by an independent observer, e.g. as part of the HRS4R peer review.