

# University policy for open, transparent and merit-based recruitment

To guarantee the excellence of its research, the Université Côte d'Azur has embarked on a strategic initiative to improve its human resources policy by applying for the HR Excellence in Research label.

A multi-annual master plan for the site's human resources was adopted by the Board of Directors on 28 November 2023 and provides for the deployment of Axis 1: attract and recruit. Based on the guiding principles of the European Charter for Researchers, this European label aims to make careers in research more attractive, encourage mobility and ensure that everyone has equal opportunities.

**In addition, HRS4R accreditation requires an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment policy for researchers, lecturers and professors, also known as the OMTR policy (*Open Transparent Merit-based Recruitment*).**

The OTMR is important because :

- It ensures that the most deserving candidate for the post is recruited
- It guarantees equal opportunities and access to all candidates without distinction or discrimination
- It facilitates the development of an international reputation (cooperation, attractiveness, mobility)
- It promotes careers in research and makes them more attractive

In order to ensure that the recruitment of teaching and research staff is more formalised and more accessible, the Université Côte d'Azur has drawn up a formal recruitment guide for selection committees.

In addition, the Université Côte d'Azur is committed to constantly improving its ability to comply with the OTM-R principles through the implementation of an *Applicant Tracking System* (ATS) recruitment tool, scheduled for deployment in 2025.

The various stages in the recruitment process for teaching and research staff, from the recruitment phase through to the appointment phase, are governed by a body of national texts and a set of texts and commitments from the institution.

The range of teaching and research posts at the Université Côte d'Azur is varied. Positions are defined as tenured or non-tenured (postdoctoral students, temporary teaching and research assistants (ATER), contract research engineers).

As a result, the Université Côte d'Azur's OTM-R policy is being rolled out in two stages:

**The first stage** consists of formalising the recruitment phases for teaching and research staff, as detailed below. The French regulatory framework guarantees the implementation of OTMR principles for these staff.

**The second step** is to formalise the recruitment procedures for research staff in line with the practices observed in the research units. The recruitment procedures for research staff based on OTM-R criteria have been introduced by changes in the regulations. As a result, this stage will be rolled out in 2025- 2026 in coordination with the HR master plan. Tenured teaching and research staff are recruited by competitive examination, transfer or secondment during the synchronised national recruitment campaign.

All information on positions, applications and results can be consulted on the Ministry's website: <https://www.galaxie.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/ensup/candidats.html>.

### Regulatory texts / reference texts

- [Decree no. 84-431 of 6 June 1984](#) laying down the common statutory provisions applicable to teacher- researchers and laying down the special status of the body of university professors and the body of lecturers.
- [Order of 13 February 2015](#) on the general terms and conditions for transfers, secondments and recruitment by competition of senior lecturers
- [Order of 13 February 2015, as amended](#), on the general terms and conditions for transfers, secondments and competitive recruitment of university lecturers.

The recruitment process comprises five stages:

1. **Preparing for recruitment**
2. **Search for candidates**
3. **Selection of candidates**
4. **Welcome and integration**
5. **Evaluation of the recruitment process**

The processes differ depending on whether the recruitment is permanent (permanent staff) or temporary (contract staff). The recruitment process described here concerns permanent staff.

## 1. Preparing for recruitment

This phase can be considered OPEN, TRANSPARENT, BASED ON MERIT when the profiles are defined by a group of stakeholders and experts in the field.

**This stage includes :**

- **Expressing demand**
- **Definition of the job (permanent or contract) and profile**
- **Analysis of demand, particularly with regard to the school's recruitment strategy.**

After collecting all recruitment applications from special-status components, subject departments and research units, and after consulting the EUR COPIL, the EUR directors and their departments place all the **prioritised** job descriptions on the dedicated server.

In this work, the institution asks the EURs to rely fully on the disciplinary departments, the components with specific status and the research units in order to put together a pedagogical and scientific argument, which must be described in an argument sheet.

All these requests are then subject to arbitration by the University's various bodies. A webinar is then organised to inform applicants of the institution's decisions.

A support guide is sent to the chairs of selection committees and an information meeting is organised each year to raise merit-based selection criteria and present existing resources. The selection committees for teaching and research staff have a framework guaranteeing transparency and merit-based judgement.

## 2. Search for candidates

The phase can be considered OPEN, TRANSPARENT, BASED ON MERIT when an effort is made to dematerialise recruitment procedures and reduce the administrative burden.

**This phase includes :**

- **Developing an attractive employer brand (in line with the UniCA brand)**
- **Implementing an appropriate HR communications strategy**
- **National and international prospecting.**

A complete dossier is required in a transparent and objective manner for teacher-researchers. At present, only the regulatory documents are requested from candidates in order to lighten their administrative burden.

The job offer template is systematically filled in: all job offers published on Galaxie for teacher-researchers are automatically published on EURAXESS, the UniCA website and social networks.

## 3. Selection of candidates

This phase can be considered OPEN, TRANSPARENT, MERIT-BASED when:

The composition of the Selection Committee (SC) respects the rules of parity and the presence of independent expert members. Selection is based on merit.

**This phase includes :**

- **The composition of selection committees according to the rules of parity, majority of specialists in the discipline, and number of members as defined in the selection**

- **committee guide.**
- **Managing the administrative admissibility of applications in accordance with the procedures set out in the decree.**
- **Selection committee meetings: examining applications, interviewing candidates and ranking the winners.**

The composition of the committees is published on the Galaxie ministerial website before the committees begin their work.

A presentation meeting for Selection Committee chairmen and women is organised each year. A specific reminder is given at this meeting about compliance with the rules of impartiality, in addition to the indications in the Selection Committee guide and the grid to help detect situations of bias made available to them.

Selection committee chairs are reminded of the OTM-R policy and must ensure that it is adhered to during recruitment.

Management guidelines and a dedicated grid help selection committees to assess merit in order to recruit the best candidates. Finally, selection committees are made aware of implicit gender bias through a presentation of key figures on equality, a cognitive test and awareness-raising videos.

Two reports are drawn up for each candidate, one by a member from outside the institution and one by an internal member.

The organisation will allow sufficient time before the interview for external candidates to make the necessary travel arrangements and prepare properly for the interview.

#### **4. Welcome and integration**

The phase can be considered **OPEN, TRANSPARENT, BASED ON MERIT** when : Candidates receive written or electronic notification of the reasons at the end of the selection process. Candidates have the opportunity to request further information on the reasons for refusal of their application.

**This phase includes :**

- **The school's decision (CacR and CaR)**
- **Validation of wishes by applicants**
- **Reception**
- **Integration.**

Candidates are systematically informed of the result obtained. Participants in the final stage of recruitment are given written notification of their decision. Appeal procedures are systematically indicated on official documents.

The rankings of successful candidates are examined by the university's governing bodies, and candidates are then notified of the results via the ministerial platform.

The application requests a response (acceptance or refusal) from only one candidate at a time, the highest-ranked, and gives him or her 8 days to respond. If he or she refuses the offer or misses the deadline notified to him or her, the application will invite the next highest-ranked candidate.

Once the Ministry has processed the applications of the successful candidates and appointed the teaching and research staff, the conditions for taking up the post are defined in conjunction with the successful candidate, the host organisation and the HR Department.

On arrival, newly recruited staff are given a staff guide and an IT passport giving them access to digital resources (institutional email address, ENT, Intranet, etc.).

In addition, every year the Chairman invites newly recruited staff to an "induction seminar for new

recruits", at which they are given an introduction to the organisation, the various support departments and their contacts.

Newly recruited staff have access to training to make it easier for them to take up their duties and acquire new skills to carry out their functions or progress.

The school offers its staff the opportunity to receive career support and monitoring from a dedicated department within the HR department, the Career Mobility Advisory Service.

The University also promotes the support and retention of disabled staff. It implements the actions set out in the master plan and facilitates the inclusion of these staff within the university community. The Université Côte d'Azur has set itself the ambitious goal of implementing a ubiquitous, innovative disability policy, based on excellence in inclusion and going well beyond its obligations, covering training, research, professional and civic integration, health, new technologies and information systems, etc.

## 5. Evaluation of the recruitment process

The phase can be considered OPEN, TRANSPARENT, MERIT-BASED when:

Data is collected for research and audit purposes. Indicators are implemented to monitor the quality and transparency of the process.

As part of its continuous improvement approach, UniCA has set up a feedback questionnaire for selection committee chairmen and local HR departments, as well as an astonishment report for newly-appointed teaching and research staff. This report is sent to them one year after their appointment, just after their tenure, in order to gather their observations on the recruitment process and their integration.

**APPENDIX**

**OTMR EURAXESS TOOLBOX**

### *A Step-by-Step Guide to better OTM-R practices*

This guide sets out, in chronological order, the various steps of the recruitment process, from the job advertising/application phase through to the appointment phase. It aims to build on the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, providing more detailed information, practical solutions and includes examples of good practice.

Three phases have been identified:

- **Advertising and application phase**
- **Evaluation and selection phase**
- **Appointment phase**

#### **Advertising and application phase:**

##### **a) Advertising the post:**

In line with the principles "Recruitment" and "Transparency" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, it is recommended to keep the job advertisement and description of requirements as concise as possible and include links to more detailed information online. Applicants should be able to find information on:

- organisation and recruiting unit
- job title, specifications and starting date
- researcher career profiles (R1-R4) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies
- selection criteria (and possibly their respective 'weight'), including knowledge and professional experience (distinguishing the 'required' and 'desirable')
- number of available positions
- working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.), type of contract

professional development  
opportunities • career development  
prospects It should also include:

- the application procedure and deadline, which should, as a general rule, be at least two months from the publication date and take account of holiday periods
- a reference to the institution's OTM-R policy
- a reference to the institution's equal opportunities policy (e.g., positive discrimination, dual careers, etc.)
- contact details

All vacancies should be published on EURAXESS. This implies that the advert should be published at least in the national language and in English.

Although possible, any exception to the above should be duly justified in the recruitment procedure.

**b) Keeping the administrative burden to a minimum:**

The request for supporting documents should be strictly limited to those which are really needed in order to make a fair, transparent and merit-based selection of the applicants. Moreover, in cases where certain documents are legally required, applicants should be allowed to make a declaration in which they engage to provide the proof after the selection process is concluded. For example, applicants should not have to provide original or translated certificates related to qualifications with their initial application. It is strongly recommended to allow the transmission of supporting documents by electronic means and possibly to develop an e-recruitment tool.

**c) Acknowledging receipt and providing additional information:**

All applicants should receive an (automated) e-mail acknowledging that their application has been received and providing them with further information on the recruitment process, indicating the next steps and including an indicative timetable (shortlisting or not, interview period, appointment date). Care should be taken to allow sufficient time before the interview for external candidates to make the necessary travel arrangements and prepare properly for the interview. If there are subsequently significant changes or delays to this process, all applicants should be duly and timely informed by (a standard) e-mail.

**Evaluation and selection phase:**

**a) Setting up selection committees:**



In line with the principle "Selection" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, selection committees should be established for all profiles (R1-R4), though the size and composition of the committees may differ according to the profile and type of contract. The process to nominate and appoint the selection committee should be transparent and made public.

The selection committees should be independent, members should not have any conflict of interest and the decisions must be objective and evidence-based rather than based on personal preference. The committee should make best use of the expertise of external members. The composition of the committee should be appropriately diverse. In order to achieve this, the following elements should be considered:

- a minimum of 3 members;
- gender balance, e.g., not less than one third of one gender in the committee; inclusion of external expert(s) in all committees (external meaning outside the institution);

- inclusion of (or contribution from) international experts, who should be proficient in the language(s) in which the process will be conducted;
- inclusion of experts from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic), where appropriate and feasible;
- -the committee as a whole should have all the relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidate.

Any derogation for certain positions, types of contract or indeed for specific disciplines should be clearly set out.

#### **b) Screening and interviewing:**

All applications should be screened. Depending largely on the number of applicants as well as the internal human resources available, the process may involve one or more steps, e.g., pre-screening to check eligibility, shortlisting of candidates for interviews, remote interviews by telephone or skype, face-to-face interviews. While remote interviews may often be appropriate, in particular at the first interview stage, they should not altogether replace face-to-face interviews in cases where these are being conducted for internal candidates. All candidates should be treated equally and in the same way.

It is recommended that the same selection committee is involved in all steps, although it is recognised that this may not always be feasible and that, for example, one committee may do the initial screening and another may conduct the interviews. Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that the process itself is transparent and made known to the applicants, including the various steps.

In case of face-to-face interviews, the institution should cover the (international) travel and accommodation expenses of the interviewees.

**c) Assessing merit and future potential:**

The criteria for selecting researchers should focus on both the candidates' past performance and their future potential. The emphasis is likely to change according to the profile of the post, e.g., when recruiting an R1 researcher, future potential is likely to outweigh past performance.

In line with the principles "Judging merit", "Variations in the order of CVs", "Recognition of mobility" and "Seniority" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the evaluation criteria should be consistent with the requirements of the position as regards research, supervision or, for example, teaching competencies.

Merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on results within a diversified career path, taking into account career breaks, lifelong professional development and the added value of non-research experience.

A wide range of evaluation criteria should be used and balanced, according to the position being advertised. Depending on the specific profile of the post, this may include (in alphabetical and not hierarchical order):

- acquisition of funding;
- generation of societal impact;
- international portfolio (including mobility);
- knowledge transfer and exchange;
- management of research and innovation;
  
- organizational skills/experience;
- outreach/public awareness activities;
- research performance;
- supervision and mentoring;
- teaching;
- teamwork

**It is strongly recommended to make use of the European Framework for Research Careers, which identifies both necessary and desirable competences for each of the four broad profiles for researchers (R1 to R4).**

## **Appointment phase:**

### **a) Feedback:**

In line with the principle "Transparency" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, all applicants should receive written or electronic notice at the end of the selection process, indicatively within one month and without any unnecessary delays. It is strongly recommended to inform all applicants who were admitted to the interview about the strengths and weaknesses of their application. Other applicants, who did not make it to the final stages, should receive a standard mail informing them of the outcome. All applicants must be entitled to further feedback upon request.

### **b) Complaints mechanism:**

The institution should establish a procedure to deal with complaints made by applicants who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly. This procedure should be transparent and made public. It should include an indication of the timeframe within which a complainant will receive a response, which should in principle be no longer than one month.