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Tenure track at Tampere University

1. Tenure track model

Tampere University offers an attractive and inspiring tenure track model that provides appointees with a clear and predictable career path to a full professorship. The tenure track career model supports and promotes the quality and impact of research and education at the University. The goal of recruiting is to employ the best possible people in the posts to achieve the University's strategic goals. This tenure track policy applies to filling the vacancies of all professors.



The entry-level posts are filled for a term of five years. When a person is promoted from the first to the second level, the appointment is made on a permanent basis. When a person is recruited directly to the second level, the term of office is five years. Appointments to the third level are made on a permanent basis.

Tampere University is committed to employees holding tenure track posts and gives them the opportunity to advance to the permanent position of a professor. The supervisor and Dean make a written agreement with the persons in tenure track posts, detailing clear goals for each level, whose achievement the supervisor and Dean actively support and monitor throughout the track. If the mutually agreed goals are not met, the person may have to exit the tenure track. As a rule, employees are recruited to tenure track posts through open international calls. The

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candidate who has demonstrated the best potential to attain full professorship on a high international level or who is already an internationally recognised researcher in their field, is appointed to the tenure track. For well justified reasons professor posts may be filled using the invitation procedure. An exceptionally merited researcher (e.g. a researcher who has been granted ERC funding) may also be invited to the other levels of the tenure track if that supports the faculty's strategy.

2. Strategic HR planning and allocation of positions

Tampere University's strategic HR planning reflects the University's core values and mission, and is far-reaching, responsible, and sustainable. Planning is based on the University's overall strategy, its research and education strategies, and the faculties' HR plans. HR plans are annually updated in the internal negotiation process with the faculties. The positions are primarily filled in accordance with the HR plan which is part of the annual operations plan and budget.

The faculties' HR plans describe the personnel structure that would best promote the achievement of their goals. The faculties are committed to their HR plan by setting aside sufficient resources for new appointments and for supporting researchers' careers and career development.

The University's management discusses the allocation of tenure track positions based on the proposals submitted by the faculties as part of annual planning. Starting the process of recruiting staff to tenure track positions must be authorised by President.

3. Recruiting employees to the posts

Tampere University is committed to the principles of responsible assessment of researchers. The University has signed the international Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, which guides the responsible assessment of research. The University is also committed to the recommendation for the responsible evaluation of a researcher in Finland and the principles included in the European Charter and Code for Researchers.

A recruitment process is initiated by a faculty, and it is sanctioned by President. A tenure track vacancy can be opened for application at multiple levels simultaneously. The open levels are announced for each post. When submitting their application, the applicants mention the tenure track level for which they are applying. An applicant can only apply for a post at one level. If the appointment committee preparing the recruitment finds that an applicant should apply to another tenure track level, it can ask the applicant to agree that their application is assessed in another category. Applicants are also asked to name two referees in their application.

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The chair of the appointment committee is generally the Dean or, as nominated by the Dean, the vice-dean or the head of the unit. The reason why the Dean does not act as the chair of the appointment committee must be recorded in the decision to nominate the appointment committee. The Dean nominates the appointment committee to prepare the filling of a post, conducting the invitation procedure, or a promotion review. In addition to the chair, the appointment committee generally includes (3-5) professor-level members and the faculty HR representative as the secretary. The Dean has the right to attend and speak at the meetings of the appointment committee, interviews, and suitability assessment events, even when they do not act as the chair of the appointment committee. The University recommends that at least one external member is selected to the appointment committee who represents another faculty or a different organisation altogether. In accordance with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, people from different genders are selected to the appointment committees where possible.

The duties of the appointment committee include drafting the call for applications, deciding on the profile of the post and the selection criteria, choosing the recruitment channels, canvassing for potential candidates, and actively promoting and advertising the vacancy via its own networks. A recruitment process is prepared in accordance with the principles governing the responsible assessment of researchers. Tenure track positions are openly and mainly internationally advertised. The faculty of the open tenure track position actively disseminates information about the call also via its own networks.

When recruiting employees to tenure track positions, external reviewers are always consulted to assess the best candidates' scientific or artistic expertise. At least two internationally distinguished professors or persons with a corresponding track record are asked to review the top candidates' scientific or artistic competence. The Dean appoints the experts based on the appointment committee's suggestion. Non-discrimination is considered when external reviewers are appointed, and gender equality must be noted where possible.

The conflict-of-interest provisions set out in sections 27–28 of the Administrative Procedure Act apply to both appointment committee members and external reviewers. Tampere University has a separate policy on the assessment of conflict-of-interest in recruitment. The identity of appointment committee members, interviewers, and external reviewers are told to the shortlisted applicants. They are reserved the right to comment on potential conflicts of interest related to appointment committee members and external reviewers.

The appointment committee interviews the most potential candidates. The interview may also include a presentation of the applicants' research work. Video interviews may also be used in the recruitment process. The teaching skills of the strongest candidates are assessed,

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For a justified reason, the appointment committee can narrow down the list of applicants so that at least three applicants undergo an external review. Within six weeks, external reviewers are requested to provide a written statement on the candidates' scientific or artistic merits relevant to the post. The reviewers may be advised to list the candidates in the order of preference for appointment on specific tenure track levels. If it wishes, the appointment committee may arrange a meeting with the expert reviewers.

The appointment committee presents a justified proposal on the person to be appointed. The Dean hears the Faculty Council about the proposal and makes a proposal to the President, even when not acting as the chair. The proposal must document the Dean's role in the recruitment process. The President may ask the appointment committee to clarify the proposal or return the matter for further consideration. If the President approves the proposal, an employment contract is drawn up and the President signs it. If the selected candidate declines the job offer, the appointment committee may prepare a new justified appointment proposal for the President or propose to leave the position unfilled.