



University of Limerick

Procedure for the Open, Transparent & Merit Based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R)



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Approved: :20th April 2022

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to set out how the University of Limerick implements the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in its recruitment processes from advertising to appointment to ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment process for researchers. This procedure provides further details of the University of Limerick's commitment to OTM-R in line with the University of Limerick's HR Strategy for Researchers and the University of Limerick's Policy for the Recruitment of Staff.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 *To whom does the procedure apply?*

This procedure applies to the recruitment of researchers at the University of Limerick.

1.2.2 *In what situations does the procedure apply?*

This procedure applies to recruitment and appointment of all research roles of 12 months or more in duration at the University of Limerick.

1.2.3 *Who is responsible for ensuring that the procedure is implemented and monitored?*

Implementation of this procedure is the responsibility of the Director of Human Resources, with the relevant Principal Investigator/Recruiting Manager playing a key procedural role.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 *Researchers*

These procedures apply to the selection and recruitment of researchers employed on the researcher career framework including research assistants, postdoctoral researchers, research fellows and senior research fellows.

1.3.2 **OTM-R**

OTM-R refers to the EU recommendations on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment practices for researchers (OTM-R)

2 Context

2.1 Legal and Regulatory Context

2.1.1 *The European Commission Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers*

Launched by the European Commission, the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) supports the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code for the Recruitment of Researchers in organisations. In 2011, the University of Limerick formally endorsed the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In 2013, the European Commission awarded the HR Excellence in research logo to the University of Limerick.

This procedure sets out the University of Limerick's compliance with the European Commissions Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Research, which consists of a set of general principles, and requirements to follow when appointing or recruiting researchers. These principles and requirements ensure observance of values such as transparency of the recruitment process and equal treatment of all applicants, in particular with regard to the development of an attractive, open and sustainable European labour market for researchers, and are complementary to those outlined in the European Charter for Researchers. Through the implementation of this procedure, the University of Limerick is adhering to the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and openly demonstrating the University of Limerick's commitment to act in a responsible and respectable way and to provide fair framework conditions to researchers, with a clear intention to contribute to the advancement of the European Research Area.

3 Policy Statements

3.1 Principles for the Open, Transparent & Merit Based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R).

The University of Limerick is committed to fully implementing the EU recommendations on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment practices for researchers (OTM-R), in adherence with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, as committed to in the University of Limerick's HR Strategy for Researchers.

The University of Limerick has developed a set of research staff role profiles, which outline the qualifications and skills required for each of the research grades to help provide a systematic and objective method of assessing and selecting candidates. It is the duty of those involved in the recruitment and selection of candidates to ensure that the appropriate qualifications and skills are applied and that the University's commitment to selection on merit is clear and unambiguous.

By ensuring that the best person for the job is recruited, open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers improves the effectiveness of national research systems, guarantees equality, especially for under-represented groups, and boosts transnational and international co-operation. This, in turn, promotes optimal circulation of scientific knowledge. Individual researchers, employers, funding bodies, and ultimately the whole European Research Area (ERA), benefit from OTM-R.

Through the University of Limerick's HR Strategy for Researchers and OTM-R procedures the University of Limerick seeks to provide good working conditions for researchers, enhance our researchers' careers and mobility and attract top class researchers from around the world to UL to pursue research excellence.

4 Related Procedures for Open Transparent and Merit Based Recruitment

4.1 Open Recruitment

To initiate the recruitment process the principal investigator completes the research recruitment pack (pre-populated with the generic research role profiles) or must complete the requisition online (where recruitment is available).

All research posts of 12 months or greater are advertised. The University of Limerick advertises all Research posts both internally and externally utilising a number of national and international websites including the European Commission website Euraxess. Each job advertisement for research includes information on the required competencies, skills and qualifications for candidates; information on the research recruitment process including recruitment timelines; the benefits available to researchers upon joining the University of Limerick and details of the career development supports available to the researcher as provided for in the University of Limerick Researcher Career Development Programme.

All research advertisements carry the statement of the University's commitment to equal opportunities. Regardless of advertisement medium used, all applicants must complete their applications online through the E-Recruitment Portal.

Research recruitment positions are normally advertised for a minimum duration of a two-week period to allow candidates the opportunity to apply for the position.

4.2 Selection

Selection Board Composition for Research Recruitment competitions must be in adherence with the Selection Board Composition Requirements for the Research grade as outlined in the University of Limerick Policy for the Recruitment of Staff.

There must be gender representation on every Selection Board of at least 30%, with a minimum of 40% gender representation on any Selection Boards of greater than 3 members.

The HR Division provides training on the best practices that should be employed during the interview process and encourages all Selection Board members to familiarise themselves with these principles in advance of the interview. The Competition Owner should ensure that all Selection Board members have completed online unconscious bias training and all Chairpersons have completed Chairperson training in advance of interview. Effective from April 2021, all internal Selection Board members must have completed interviewer training.

4.2.1 *Transparent Recruitment Process*

In advance of the interview, the Selection Board will agree a format, criteria and scoring for the interview in line with the criteria outlined in the advertisement provided to candidates. Interviews may be conducted via video conferencing and web camera facilities as appropriate.

If at any stage during the recruitment process, a party becomes aware of a conflict of interest (as specified in Code of Conduct for Employees), they must report this to the Director, Human Resources or their nominee. Each contributor to the recruitment process must be asked to

confirm at the outset of their respective involvement to outline any potential conflict of interest they may have.

For research posts, the recommendation of the Selection Board will go forward to the Dean or their nominee for approval. Recommended appointments will go forward to Governing Authority for noting. (Please refer to 3.1.11 of the Policy for the Recruitment of Staff).

All candidates receive written notification of the results of the selection process and may request feedback on their interview from the HR Representative. Where the HR receives a request for feedback, the candidate will be provided with a copy of their scoring against each of the evaluation criteria from the interview process.

A review of the Selection Board recommendation for appointment is available to candidates as outlined in the University of Limerick Policy for the recruitment of staff (Please refer to Section 3.1.16 of the Policy for the Recruitment of Staff).

4.3 Merit Based Evaluation of Candidates

After the date for the submission of applications has passed, the Competition Owner or their nominee, assisted by the HR Rep, will be responsible for screening all applications to ensure that only candidates who meet the minimum stated qualifications/criteria are considered for shortlisting by the Selection Board. The Competition Owner or their nominee may make a recommendation regarding the number of candidates to be shortlisted at this stage or may determine that all candidates who meet the minimum stated qualifications will be interviewed.

Subject to the above, the members of the Selection Board will recommend a shortlist for interview from the list of candidates against the criteria as stated in the advertisement and information for applicants. The final list of candidates to be called for interview will be determined according to the recommendations received from the Selection Board.

Screening and shortlisting may take place at the same meeting provided all Selection Board members (as outlined in 3.1.7 of the Policy for the Recruitment of Staff) and HR are present at the meeting to allow for shortlisting to take place.

The University of Limerick ensures the administrative burden for the applicant is kept to minimum and only requests documents when required to make a fair, transparent and merit-based selection of the applicants. Documented evidence of qualifications are only requested for successful applicants following recruitment competition.

The Human Resources Division will have responsibility for administering the recruitment process, ensuring full compliance with this procedure and will provide advice on the process as required.

5 Related Documents

University of Limerick Policy for the Recruitment of Staff

Research Staff Role Profiles

University of Limerick Researcher Career Development Programme

Code of Conduct of Employees

Recruitment of University of Limerick Staff Procedures

[Irish Universities Association Researcher Career Framework](#)

[European Charter for Researchers](#)

6 Document Control

Document Version	HRX011.1
Document Owner	Human Resources
Approved by	Executive Committee
Date	20 th April 2022
Effective Date:	20 th April 2022
Scheduled Review Date:	3 years from approval date unless otherwise required