



TUS

**Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre, An tIarthar Láir**

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy
Research Staff

Human Resources Department





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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
1.0 Introduction.....	4
2.0 Scope.....	5
3.0 Open, Transparent and Merit Based Recruitment.....	5
4.0 Recruitment.....	5
4.1 Planning for Recruitment.....	5
4.2 Advertising.....	6
4.3 Shortlisting.....	6
4.4 Selection Methods.....	7
4.5 Selection Boards.....	7
4.6 Interview Feedback.....	8
5.0 Appointment Process.....	9
5.2 Verification of Qualifications.....	9
5.3 References.....	9
5.4 Pre-Employment Medical.....	10
5.5 Garda Vetting.....	10
5.6 Contract of Employment.....	10
6.0 Employment of Non-EEA Nationals.....	10
7.0 Data Protection.....	11
8.0 Ethics, Conflicts of Interests and Behaviour.....	11
Queries.....	11
Appendix 1 - Recruitment and Selection Appeals Procedure.....	12

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 TUS promotes equal opportunities, diversity, and inclusion, and actively welcomes applications from underrepresented groups for employment opportunities. We ensure that applicants with disabilities are accommodated, and our recruitment, selection, and appointment processes adhere to current employment laws. TUS is dedicated to adopting best practices in our recruitment procedures, which are fair and transparent. A review of this policy will occur one year after approval, followed by subsequent reviews every three years. Recommendations from expert groups regarding best practices and equality standards will be considered in these reviews.

Recruitment Principles for Appointment of Researchers:

- 1.2 Efficient recruitment and selection procedures play a crucial role in attracting and retaining high-quality research staff. The implementation of open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment of researchers (OTM-R) enhances the effectiveness of national research systems, ensures equality, particularly for under-represented groups. This, in turn, facilitates the optimal dissemination of scientific knowledge. At TUS, our recruitment practices adhere to OTM-R principles, incorporating a set of competencies to provide a systematic and objective approach to assessing and selecting individuals. Those involved in the recruitment process have a responsibility to apply the relevant competencies, emphasising the University's commitment to merit-based selection.

The commitment to the principle of appointment based on merit aligns with the University's [Equal Opportunities Policy](#). Research positions, funded by external grants and agencies, typically operate on a specified purpose contract basis. Recognising the necessity for research centres to swiftly recruit staff, while adhering to best practices and legal compliance, HR will provide support and guidance to enable the recruitment process to be carried out as efficiently as possible.

- 1.3 It is the policy of the TU to advertise all research vacancies with the exception of:
- Researchers specifically listed in grant applications
 - Once off new posts with duration of less than six months without prospect of renewal (if renewed/extended the position will be advertised)
 - Where existing staff are available and have the required qualifications and competencies to carry out the role

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of research staff.
- 2.2 Other posts such as administration, technical or management within the Research area will be recruited under the TUS Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy, available [here](#).
- 2.3 Advice and assistance on all aspects of recruitment is available from the Human Resources Department.

3.0 Open, Transparent and Merit Based Recruitment

- 3.1 Implementing Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment policies and practices for our Research staff aims at making research careers more attractive, while facilitating mobility and equal opportunities for all candidates.
- 3.2 Our approach to Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment is in line with the HR Strategy for Researchers as outlined in the Charter and Code. Further details can be found [here](#).

4.0 Recruitment

4.1 Planning for Recruitment

- 4.1.1 Each recruitment campaign is underpinned by a resource planning process. The objective of good planning is to ensure that the TU can give as much information as possible to potential applicants.
- 4.1.2 The Recruitment Information Booklet is the main source of information and is the focus for applicants in providing information about the TU. The job description and person specification will provide information on the role itself, the experience, knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies required, the terms and conditions associated with the post and contact details for further information.

4.2 Advertising

- 4.2.1 The TU advertises vacancies to the broadest pool of applicants possible and uses various media to achieve this. Our commitment to open recruitment ensures open positions will be published, in particular on international web-based resources such as Euraxes.
- 4.2.2 Applicants can apply for a position by submitting an online application through the TU's e-recruit application system.
- 4.2.3 The location of Research Staff vacancies which are non-campus specific, will be decided on appointment in consultation with the successful candidate.
- 4.2.4 Any extension to closing dates will be updated on the TU's recruitment system welcome page, and all employees will be notified via an internal all-staff email.

4.3 Shortlisting

- 4.3.1 The TU will apply a shortlisting process for all competitions.
- 4.3.2 The applications are forwarded to the relevant line manager/supervisor as soon as possible after the closing date for receipt of applications. A shortlisting form will be used to record the process and will form part of the recruitment and selection documentation which will be retained by HR in accordance with the HR records retention schedule.
- 4.3.3 The hiring manager and Research Institute Director / Head of Research where appropriate, will shortlist the applicants, by reviewing each application and eliminating, in the first instance, those candidates who fail to meet the essential criteria. Depending on the numbers applying, and where all applicants meet the essential criteria, additional shortlisting criteria may be applied from the 'desirable' criteria as outlined in job description. Each applicant is scored against the 'desirable' criteria. Once all scores have been assigned, totals per applicant are ranked and a cut-off point for progressing to the interview stage will be determined and stated on the form.
- 4.3.4 The hiring manager and Research Institute Director / Head of Research will also:
 - Agree on and record a final shortlist if unanimous based on the essential and desirable criteria as set out in the job description.
 - Consider re-advertising the position if no applicants meet all the essential criteria.
 - Agree on the suitable range of questions, presentation title if required, suitable date and location for the interviews.

4.3.5 Shortlisting criteria will be available to applicants on request.

4.4 Selection Methods

4.4.1 In order to find the best match for the requirements of the post, assessment mechanisms, selection tools and techniques may be used to facilitate the identification of the successful candidate. These include:

Interviewing - is the primary method of selection in the TU and is carried out by a Selection Board. A second round of interviews may be required. A wide range of evaluation criteria should be used and balanced, according to the position being advertised and in accordance with the approved list of competencies for each level of research role as outlined in the RCF.

IT Skills testing, presentation skills, practical assessment or competency-based assessment may be used to test the competencies expressed in the job description/person specification. Candidates will be notified in advance if this is required.

4.4.2 The TU may conduct interviews in person or virtually. Shortlisted candidates will be advised in advance of the interview of the relevant interview mode.

4.5 Selection Boards

4.5.1 The composition of selection boards shall be dependent upon the type of post concerned and will be determined at the recruitment stage. Selection Boards will bring together diverse expertise/competencies. 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 selection board;
- inclusion of external expert(s) in selection boards for Level 3 and 4 (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 selection board as a whole should have all the relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidate.
- The most senior internal staff member on the panel acts as Chair of Selection Board.

4.5.2 The overall role of the Chair is to preside over and direct the board's deliberations. Key responsibilities of the Chair and all panel members are outlined in the Interview Guidelines provided to the panel.

4.5.3 Conflict of Interest: A member of a Selection Board who stands in a relationship to a person who is a candidate, or another member of the Selection Board, shall disclose to the TU the fact of the relationship and the nature thereof. In this context, the Selection Board members are required to make a disclosure not only in the case of a family relationship but in respect of any personal, business or other relationship which could be regarded as prejudicial to ensuring absolute impartiality in the selection process. Unless HR is fully satisfied that the participation of the Selection Board member during the selection process would not be prejudicial, the HR Manager shall direct that the Selection Board member withdraws and another person shall be nominated to replace that person.

4.5.4 The TU will introduce appropriate training for internal selection board members. This will include interview skills and relevant equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) training and must be renewed at a minimum every 3 years.

4.6 Interview Feedback

4.6.1 The Selection Board will make a recommendation as to who is deemed appointable to the position. The outcome of the interview will be notified via email to all candidates. Selection Board members are not at liberty to disclose the results of the interview to any person, as it is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department to correspond with all candidates.

4.6.2 Interview feedback is considered an important part of the recruitment process. Feedback will be factual, accurate and relate to the candidate's overall application and performance at the interview. All information pertaining to the interview process must remain strictly confidential. Human Resources will retain all appropriate recruitment and selection documentation in accordance with the Human Resources Department data retention schedule.

4.6.3 Where interview notes have been recorded, these will be made available to the candidate on request. Candidates who would like to receive interview feedback should email the Human Resources Department no later than two weeks after the date of notification of the outcome of the interview.

- 4.6.4 Where there is more than one candidate deemed appointable, a panel may be formed. These candidates will be advised of their position on a panel and the lifetime of that panel once interviews are concluded. The lifetime of any panel will generally be for one year from the date it is formed, but may be extended for a further period of up to one year at the discretion of the TU.

5.0 Appointment Process

- 5.1.1 An offer of employment may be made to the successful candidate(s) which will be subject to submission and verification of required evidence of qualifications, professional experience, references, pre-employment medical, birth certificate and garda vetting, (where required). Acceptance of an offer must be submitted within the designated timeframe as detailed in the letter of offer.

5.2 Verification of Qualifications

- 5.2.1 No appointment will be made unless the Human Resources Department verifies a candidate's qualifications required for the role. In this regard, where a qualification is an essential criterion, candidates will be required to provide original academic transcripts/parchments. The cost incurred by a candidate for requesting an academic transcript will not be covered by the TU. The TU reserves the right to verify documentation with the relevant bodies.

5.3 References

- 5.3.1 Three Employer References will be required; one of these references must include the most recent/current employer. Where employer references are not available other reference types may be accepted. The TU reserves the right to contact referees directly. Permission will be sought in advance of contacting referees.

5.4 Pre-Employment Medical

- 5.4.1 The appointed employee will be required to have undertaken a pre-employment medical with an occupational health physician. Pre-employment medicals are required for positions with a duration of one year or more. The primary purpose of the pre-employment medical is to assess an individual's fitness for a particular position or occupation with regard to the requirements for that post. The TU will have regard to its obligations, to make reasonable accommodation for a candidate. Where the contract of employment is for less than a one-year duration, candidates will be required to complete a Declaration of Health form.

5.5 Garda Vetting

- 5.5.1 Garda Vetting will be carried out in accordance with TU's Garda Vetting Policy. The Garda Vetting process must be successfully completed before a candidate can commence employment.

5.6 Contract of Employment

- 5.6.1 A written statement of the terms of employment will issue within the first 5 days of commencing in post. The complete contract of employment will issue within two months. HR will accommodate Research staff who require contracts in advance of these timelines e.g. for visa applications.

6.0 Employment of Non-EEA Nationals

- 6.1 The TU will comply with legislation regarding the employment of both prospective and existing employees who require a work permit.
- 6.2 TUS operates a policy of strict compliance with current employment legislation; specifically, the Employments Permit Act 2003. The EURAXESS Ireland help-desk provides free advice and tailored assistance to international (mobile) researchers and their families, on topics including administrative, working and cultural matters, immigration, residency and work permits. Annual pay increments will generally be in line with funding budget.

7.0 Data Protection

- 7.1 The collection and processing of candidates' personal data will comply with all national and EU ethical and legal requirements. Information on the processing of personal data is detailed in the Employee Privacy Notice.

8.0 Ethics, Conflicts of Interests and Behaviour

- 8.1 Canvassing will disqualify candidates and will result in their exclusion from the appointments process. Candidates in the recruitment process must not:
- Knowingly or recklessly provide false information.
 - Canvass any person, with or without inducements.
 - Interfere with or compromise the process in any way.

Queries

For enquiries on this policy please contact the Research HR contact: hrresearch@tus.ie.

Important Note: All communication from the TU regarding all aspects of the process will be through email. Therefore, it is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they check their emails regularly particularly the spam folder to ensure they receive all notifications.

Appendix 1 - Recruitment and Selection Appeals Procedure

(Nationally agreed)

Version	01
Purpose:	The purpose of this Recruitment and Selection Appeals Procedure is to allow an applicant for a post in [IOT/ TU Name here] an opportunity to appeal a recruitment decision if they feel that an error was made during the hiring process which adversely affected their opportunity to be appointed. This should be read in conjunction with the [IOT/TU name] Recruitment and Selection Policy and the THEA Code of Practice on Recruitment and Selection, once adopted.
Commencement Date:	June 2022
Date of Next Review:	3 years or in line with legislative changes/ national agreements/ circulars
Policy Author:	THEA/HR Department
Who needs to know about this policy?	Applicants and employees of the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
Policy Owner:	HR Department

Consultation History

This document has been prepared in consultation with the following bodies:

Name	Date	Details of consultation
Staff Unions		
Executive & Management Coordinating Forum		

Approvals

This document requires following approvals

Name	Date of Approval
Executive Board (EB)	
Governing Body (GB)	

Introduction

The recruitment process in Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (TU) shall be carried out in a consistently open, transparent and merit-based manner. The objective is to appoint the candidate who is the best fit for any given post through a competitive recruitment process. The criteria for judging the suitability of applicants is directly related to the experience, qualifications, attributes and skills required to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the post. On request, feedback will be made available to those who have been assessed for a position. This feedback can support the decision made by the shortlisting/interview panel and can assist the applicant in understanding the decision.

The purpose of this Recruitment and Selection Appeals Procedure is to allow an applicant, who applies for a post in the TU, an opportunity to appeal a shortlisting or selection decision if they feel that an error was made during the hiring process which adversely affected their opportunity to be appointed.

An appeal is to assess the process under the Recruitment and Selection Procedure to ensure that procedural fairness occurred in its application.

An applicant may appeal two key decisions within the recruitment and selection process:

Shortlisting decision (note only those applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria and who are not shortlisted will be eligible to appeal the shortlisting decision, e.g. an applicant who does not hold an essential criterion cannot use the appeal process)

Selection Board decision on the grounds of an evident irregularity in the process or outcome

Appeals Process

a) Shortlisting Decision Appeal Process

A request for a review of the shortlisting decision must be made to the Human Resource (HR) Manager in TU Midlands/Midwest in writing within three (3) working days of notification of the decision.

When making a request for review, the applicant must outline their concerns about the process including the facts that they believe led to the decision reached being incorrect. A request for review may be refused if the applicant cannot support their request with evidence. The role of the HR Manager / shortlisting panel is to assess whether on their merits the applicant should have been shortlisted for interview.

On review of the application and request for appeal document, the HR Manager together with the shortlisting panel, may recommend a reversal of the original decision and determine that the applicant should be included in the shortlist or the shortlisting decision may be upheld. If a reversal of the decision is recommended, this must be done within 3 working days of the date upon which the Appeal is received by the HR Manager from the applicant. The HR Department will notify the applicant and invite the applicant to interview and the recruitment process will continue.

b) Selection appeal process following interview

The applicant must address their concerns in relation to the selection process in writing to the Human Resource Manager who will coordinate the appeal process. The applicant must support their request by outlining the facts that they believe show that the action taken or decision reached was incorrect. A request for review may be refused if the applicant cannot support their request outlining the facts that they believe show the decision reached was incorrect.

A request for a formal review must be made within 3 working days of the applicant receiving notification of the selection board's decision or receipt of the feedback documentation, whichever is latest. Any extension of this time limit will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Human Resource Manager.

The appeal will be carried out by a panel of two members of senior management both unconnected with the selection process and senior to the grade leading the recruitment and/or an external reviewer, if appropriate¹. The Human Resource Manager will convene the panel and ensure that it is gender balanced.

The outcome of the review must be notified in writing by HR to the applicant within 10 working days of the Human Resource Manager receiving the request. This decision is final. An appeal will be upheld only if there is an evident irregularity in the interview/selection process. A recommendation from the appeal panel will be made to the President.

If the investigation does not produce a decision within this timeframe, the reviewers must keep the applicant informed of the status of the review and the reasons for the delay. In such a situation, depending on the circumstances, the TU may decide to pause the interview/selection process.

3. Procedural Issues

Nothing in this policy prohibits an applicant from pursuing their complaint to an external third-party body (including the Workplace Relations Commission). There is no obligation on the TU to suspend an appointment process once it has exhausted the in-house.

¹ Consideration will be given to the creation of an agreed sectoral panel of reviewers depending on demand and subject to procurement rules