

# Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R Policy)

## For the Recruitment and Selection of Researchers – Permanent Academic Staff and Researchers on Fixed Term Contract at Cyprus University of Technology (CUT)

### I. Introduction

The Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) is committed to the principles of the European Charter & Code for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (The Charter & Code). In April 2023, CUT was granted the 'HR in Excellence Award by the European Committee, in recognition of its ongoing commitment to align its human resources policies and practices with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) is one of the main pillars of the Charter & Code and one of the main priorities of CUT.

Our Recruitment and Selection Policy for Researchers at CUT is based on the OTM-R Strategy for Researchers which is a crucial component of the University's Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) Action Plan.

The main objective of the HRS4R Policy is to attract and retain researchers by fostering an attractive working environment and to adopt an Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment for researchers which focuses on recruiting the best person for the job, while ensuring equal treatment for all candidates.

The OTM-R policy aims to build on the principles of the Code of Recruitment for Researchers, providing detailed guidance on the various phases of the Recruitment and Selection for researchers at all levels of CUT, while complying with the relevant Legislation, Regulations and Rules binding the University.

The OTM-R principles incorporated in the OTM-R policy for Researchers must additionally act as a guide for all recruitment procedures for all positions at the Cyprus University of Technology.

**It is important to note that the OTM-R policy is implemented in conjunction with the relevant Legislation, Regulations and Rules at CUT.**

Researchers at CUT include two basic categories:

1. Permanent Teaching and Research Staff (PTR) and
2. Researchers on fixed-term contract / on a project basis (RFT)

## II. Phases of Recruitment and Selection at CUT

### II.I ADVERTISING AND APPLICATION PHASE

#### II.I.I Permanent Teaching and Research Staff

Vacant Positions of Permanent Teaching and Research Staff (PTS) must be approved in the University Budget Law and assigned to Academic Departments by responsible University Bodies.

Upon approval by the Senate and the Council for the advertisement of a vacant PTS position, the HR Department prepares the announcement **using the approved templates**.

Vacant positions are advertised, as dictated by legislation, in both the national language (Greek) and in English at the Cyprus Government gazette, four (4) national newspapers as well as other national and international platforms ([www.jobs.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.ac.uk)). They are also advertised in [CUT Website](#) and social media. All vacant positions are open to both internal and external candidates.

**The advertisement is in inclusive language and includes the following information:**

- ✓ Faculty, Unit/Department, number of vacant positions and Specialisation
- ✓ Ranks for the advertised position, which according to legislation can be either for (a) Lecturer or Assistant Professor, or for (b) Associate Professor or Professor.
- ✓ Salary per rank determined by University Budget Law
- ✓ A link at CUT Webpage with the minimum qualifications per rank, as specified by CUT Law. These can refer to either [Article 26](#), or [Article 26A L. 105\(I\)/2008](#) and [Article 26B L. 111\(I\)/2012](#). The criteria dictated by CUT Law include a range of evaluation criteria, both quantitative such as academic qualifications and qualitative such as teaching and research work, publications and contribution to science, funding, professional achievements etc.
- ✓ Next Steps of the Selection Procedure until final decision and estimated timeframe
- ✓ Policy of the university for commencement dates of employment per academic semester and estimated start date
- ✓ Application procedure with application material and contact details
- ✓ Deadline for the submission of applications, which by law is three (3) months from the date of the announcement at the Cyprus Government gazette.
- ✓ Links for Equality Policies, Research and Mobility opportunities, Career Development, Professional Development opportunities and OTM-R policy at CUT.

### II.I.II Researchers on Fixed Term Contact (RFT)

The University has approved **Rules which categorise Researchers on Fixed-Term contracts (RFT)**, based on their qualifications and experience (A. [Postgraduate Associates](#), B. [Postdoctoral Researchers](#) and C. [Special Scientists for Research](#)) and has specified a [minimum and maximum hourly rate](#) for each category/subcategory for equal treatment which are obligatory to use when recruiting Researchers on a Fixed term Contract, unless otherwise specified by the project.

The categories/subcategories of Researchers on Fixed-Term Contract correspond to the Researcher Profiles R1-R4 defined by the [European Framework for Research Careers \(R1-R4 Profiles\)](#)

The Project Coordinator (PC) contacts the HR Department to initiate the procedure for the announcement of the RFT position for a research project or for the conduct of research from a different funding source.

He/she uses **the approved template** to prepare the first draft of the announcement, which is submitted to the HR Department, together with the employment terms according to the relevant Rules and Project requirements, for relevant revisions if required.

The announcement uses inclusive language and it is concise. It includes:

- ✓ Researcher Category/subcategory with corresponding R1-R4 profiles
- ✓ Number of available positions, Unit/Department and specialisation
- ✓ type of contract (full time/part-time) and duration of employment
- ✓ salary based on Category/subcategory according to the relevant Rules and other benefits
- ✓ required and desirable qualifications and competencies based on Researcher Category/subcategory and Profile as well as specific project requirements, which must include both quantitative (such as academic degrees) and qualitative criteria (competencies, funding, preparing, submitting and managing research projects etc.). Mobility experience / international and professional mobility will be considered as an advantage for all positions/Profiles.
- ✓ Application procedure and contact details
- ✓ Deadline for the submission of applications, which must be at least two (2) weeks from the announcement of the position
- ✓ Next steps and estimated timeframe for the selection procedure
- ✓ Links for Equality Policies/working environment, Research and mobility opportunities, professional development and OTM-R Policy.

Once the announcement and terms of conditions are agreed with the PC, the HR Department requests the approval of Administrative Services (Research Department and/or Finance Department depending of source of funding) and proceeds with the advertising of the position.

The announcements are always uploaded on [CUT Web page](#) and **are open to both internal and external candidates**. They may be additionally advertised in national and international platforms, social media and national newspapers as indicated by the Project Coordinator.

**A strong recommendation** is made for the announcements to be either in the English language or both the Native language (Greek) and the English language and to also to be advertised in the EURAXESS platform for more international exposure.

## **II.II SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS**

### **II.II.I Permanent Teaching and Research Staff**

The administrative burden for candidates for PTS positions is minimum. Candidates only submit the required documents for the assessment of their application against the predetermined criteria per rank.

CUT has developed an **E-recruiting tool** for the submission of applications. For transparency purposes, all applicants receive an automated email with a link to the complete application submitted.

The tool is also used to automatically notify assigned referees once an application is submitted. The referees receive a link in order to upload their reference letter directly to the candidate's application. Candidates receive an automatic notification every time a reference letter is uploaded in support of their application.

The Selection committee has access to the E-recruiting tool for the review and assessment of applications. Invitation for interview as well as rejection letters are sent via the E-recruiting tool.

### **II.II.II Researchers on Fixed Term Contract**

Similarly, the administrative burden for candidates for RFT positions is minimum. Candidates only submit the required documents for the assessment of their application against the predetermined criteria specified in the announcement.

Candidates submit their application via a designated electronic form and receive verification.

The Selection committee has access to the applications to proceed with their assessment.

## II.III EVALUATION AND SELECTION PHASE/COMPOSITION OF SELECTION COMMITTEES

### II.III.I. Permanent Teaching and Research Staff

The appointment and composition of Selection Committees is clearly defined by:

- a) [Election, Evaluation and Upgrading of Academic Staff Regulations Eng](#) of the University of Cyprus, which in the absence of relevant regulations of the Cyprus University of Technology are in full force by Law, and
- b) [Code of Conduct for the Composition of Special Committees for the election of Academic Staff](#)

The Selection Committee comprises of five (5) members, both internal members and external experts in their field from at least two (2) different countries (Cyprus excluded).

The proposition for the composition of the Selection Committee, based on the Regulations and the Code of Conduct, is submitted to the Senate for approval. Legislation prevents the composition of the Selection Committees for PTR positions to be made public.

Given the restrictions imposed by the relevant Regulations and by the criteria set in the Code of Conduct regarding the composition of Special Committees for the Election of Academic Staff, **the Code makes strong recommendation that every possible effort must be made so that internal and external members of Committees are from all genders where possible.** To this purpose, a relevant confirmation must accompany the proposal sent by the Academic Department/Faculty to the Senate for the composition of the Special Committee for a given position.

**The Selection committee must be independent and members should have no conflict of interest.** To this purpose, all members are obliged to declare potential conflict of interest (a) with the candidates and (b) amongst themselves as analysed in the Code of Conduct for the selection of academic staff. In case of conflict they must be immediately substituted.

In addition, to ensure equal treatment of candidates and non-discrimination of any kind, the Coordinator of the Selection Committee must ensure that **all members watch the [video on the prevention of unconscious bias and discrimination in recruitment and selection](#)** (a) before the evaluation of applications, and (b) before the conduct of interviews on the commencement of the meeting.

**The same Committee is involved in all stages of the process.** All applications are screened by the Committee based on the criteria set in the announcement and all candidates are treated equally. The members of the Committee submit their nominations for the candidates at the same time at a predetermined meeting. Based on legislation, candidates who receive at least two (2) nominations by the members of the Selection Committee proceed to interview. The nominations are justified in a report signed by Committee Members and approved by the University Bodies. The nomination procedure is open, transparent and merit-based since all candidates are treated equally, their application is screened based on the same criteria specified by law per rank/s applied and well known to candidates from the advertising phase.

Candidates to be invited for interview, are given a notice of three (3) to four (4) weeks. Candidates by law may request to be given permission to participate via teleconference. In case of travelling to Cyprus for the interview (physical presence), the University currently covers travelling expenses (a specific amount per country) and the candidates are informed accordingly via the interview letter.

After the conduct of interviews, the Committee prepares and signs a report with full justification for its decision on each candidate and its final decision for the candidate(s) selected. In the case that the Selection Committee does not find a suitable candidate for the position advertised, it prepares and signs a report with full justification for the decision not to proceed with recruitment and for the position to remain vacant.

The Committees' Report is examined by the Electoral Body. The composition of the Electoral Body is indicated in CUT Legislation (Article 25 of CUT Law) and it comprises of internal members. Finally, the decision of the Electoral Body is examined by the Senate and the University's Council for the ratification of the decision for the selected candidate or for the position to remain vacant.

#### II.III.II. Researchers on Fixed Term Contract

For RFT positions, based on CUT Rules, the Committee comprises of three (3) internal members of the Department indicated by the Project Coordinator.

A **recommendation** is made so that members of the Committee are from all genders and there is a gender balance in Selection Committees where possible.

All applications received within the deadline set are screened by the Committee and upon the discretion of the Committee candidates may be invited for interview. In this case, a notice must be given to candidates of at least one (1) week.

**The Committee must watch the [Video sent by the HR Department on how to avoid unconscious bias and discrimination in recruitment and selection procedures](#)** (a) before the evaluation of applications and (b) at the start of the meeting before the conduct of interviews.

The evaluation should be consistent with the requirements of the position advertised, considering the candidates' past performance and future potential, depending on the profile of the position.

A report sufficiently justifying the Committee's decision is prepared and signed by all members.

The Project Coordinator sends the Report to the HR Department together with the final terms of employment.

The HR Department receives approval by the relevant Administrative Services (Research Services/Finance Services depending on the source of funding) prior to the approval of the Rector's Council. If the funding is from a research program, it is a precondition that the grant agreement/Contract is signed.

In the case that the Project Coordinator decides to recruit the RFT as a Special Scientist for Research, additional approval is required from the Department's Council or Academic Council of Research Center and the consent of the Faculty Council or Dean for non-autonomous Faculties. To this purpose, the Project Coordinator must fully justify the specific category/subcategory of Special Scientist for Research.

In the case that the Selection Committee does not find an appropriate candidate for the position, it justifies its decision for the position to remain vacant in a Report signed by all members which is forwarded to the HR Department. If the Project Coordinator wishes to announce the vacant position, the procedure is repeated.

## **II.IV APPOINTMENT PHASE**

### **II.IV.I Permanent Teaching and Research Staff**

Upon ratification of the selection by the Council, the HR department on behalf of the Rector informs the successful candidate and sends him/her a letter of appointment and information on the documents required as well as the procedure for creation of his/her university email account.

With the acceptance of the Job offer, the HR department informs the Rector, the Department Head and Dean of Faculty as well as all Administrative Services of the new entry.

**All unsuccessful candidates, including those who did not receive any nominations as well as those who attended an interview, receive feedback** by the HR Department, on behalf of the Rector, **with regards to the outcome of their application**, via the e-recruiting platform.

More specifically, as per Legislation into effect, they receive extracts from the Committee's report with a detailed analysis of their strengths and weaknesses and the rationale for the Committee's decision with regards to their application.

In addition, they receive extracts from the Committee's report with a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate selected, where applicable, and the rationale for this decision.

Relevant feedback must be sent to the candidates within one (1) month (a) from the acceptance of the offer by the successful candidate, or (b) from the decision of the responsible university bodies to leave the position vacant.

### **II.IV.II Researchers on Fixed Term Contract**

Upon the approval of the Rector's Council, the HR Department informs the successful candidate in writing and sends him/her a letter of appointment and information on the documents required as well as the procedure for creation/renewal or reactivation of his/her university email account.

With the acceptance of the Job offer, the HR department informs the Project Coordinator and Administrative services and proceeds with all relevant arrangements for his/her remuneration.

**All unsuccessful applicants are notified by the Project Coordinator once the selection procedure is completed.** Candidates may specifically request further feedback on their application.

Feedback must be given within one (1) month from the completion of the selection procedure, either (a) from the acceptance of the offer by the successful candidate or (b) the Committee's decision to leave the position vacant.

Exemption: According to the relevant rules, the Project Coordinator may request to proceed with the direct appointment of a RFT. The request is approved by the Rector's Council with the precondition that it is fully justified. The HR department proceeds with the appointment, as analysed in Section II.IV.II.

### **III. CONFIDENTIALITY/PERSONAL DATA - GDPR**

All aspects of the recruiting process shall remain confidential.

Details of the recruitment process must not be shared with anyone but the Selection Committee and/or other administrative staff involved in the procedure.

The University guarantees full compliance with the National Legislation for the Protection of Personal Data (Law 125(I)/2018) και the Regulation (EE) 2016/79 as well as the [Internal Policy for the Protection of Personal Data](#).

### **IV. COMPLAINS PROCEDURE**

All candidates have the right to proceed with a complain to the HR Department ([HRrecruits@cut.ac.cy](mailto:HRrecruits@cut.ac.cy)) regarding the recruitment procedure and/or the outcome of their application. Complain must be dealt within a month.

- ✓ *Complains regarding Permanent Teaching and Research Staff positions* are handled by the HR Department in collaboration with the Internal Legal Department and the Rector, and the candidate receives a written response.
- ✓ *Complains regarding Researchers for Fixed term Contract positions* are handled by the HR Department in collaboration with the Project Coordinator and where necessary with the Internal Legal Department and the Rector.

In the case a candidate appeals to the Cyprus Court to object for the selection procedure, the University is represented by an external legal consultant in Court and it is obliged to agree and act upon the Court's decision.



## **VI. MONITORING OF THE OTM-R POLICY**

The OTM-R Policy together with the relevant Legislation, Regulations and Rules have been circulated to the University Community, are published on CUT Website(HRS4R Designated point) and HR Intranet and constant reminders are made for compliance in induction programs, to Selection Committees as well as to the members of the HR Department involved in the procedure.

The HR Department as well as the HRS4R Working Group will ensure the effective implementation of OTM-R at the University via the monitoring of data on predefined indicators at regular intervals and will inform the Steering Committee (Rector's Council) and Responsible University Bodies for actions and developments required for the continuous improvement and update of the OTM-R Policy.

For any questions on the OTM-R Policy you may contact the HR Department at +357 25002601.

*The OTM-R Policy for Researchers was approved by the Senate at its 250<sup>th</sup> meeting, held on 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.*