

Principles for the Recruitment of Scientific Staff at Health

Background - the seven norms, evaluation of recruitment procedures and audit

Aarhus University strides to become an even stronger international and research-intensive university characterized by a high level of quality permeating all core activities. The scientific staff at Aarhus University are performing at a high level thereby giving the university a strong starting point, but as we are aiming to create an even stronger university, it is important to ensure a higher level of competition for more of the scientific vacancies.

Therefore, Aarhus University has established seven norms for the recruitment of permanent scientific staff. The seven norms were established by the University's senior management team based on discussions in the academic councils and several hearings in the professional communities. The University's senior management team has decided to strengthen the organization's recruitment practices, which will bring changes to the previous recruitment practices in several parts of the University and position recruitment as an important management task that is naturally rooted with the Head of Departments and the academic environments at departments and centers.

Henceforth, the norms will contribute to strengthened recruitment practices at Aarhus University, among others by contributing to heightening the quality and diversity among applicants' at all four faculties. The norms stipulate a joint direction forward, including use of search committees, re-advertising, assessment committees, stays abroad and appointment committees, which will be implemented at departments and centers where local managements will be heading the adaptation of the norms to current local guidelines.

The standards must form the basis for the implementation of the faculties' recruitment guidelines.

7 norms for the recruitment of scientific staff

1. All advertisements for permanent academic positions must be formulated in broad terms and published both nationally and internationally.
2. Search committees are a requirement, in order to ensure a sufficiently large, diverse pool of high-quality applicants (external applicants, international applicants and applicants of both sexes).
3. A position must be re-advertised if an insufficient number of qualified applications have been received by the application deadline.
4. The majority of the members of the assessment committee must be external.
5. Appointment committees are a requirement; in case of professorships, with the participation of the dean's office/executive team.
6. In connection with the assessment of applicant qualifications, great emphasis must be placed on long-term stays at one or more internationally recognised research institutions outside of Denmark.
7. Appointing internal candidates to permanent positions without prior advertisement is not possible.

The above norms and the evaluation report and audit report (evaluation and audit completed in the spring of 2017) form the basis of Health's future recruitment guidelines. The audit and Health's internal evaluation process identified a need to re-assess the assessment criteria employed at Health - including a need to clarify the criteria and their objectives. This indicated that there was a

need to also revise the structure and contents of the assessment templates to improve their ability to underpin (and provide IT support for) the assessment committee's work.

Furthermore, the evaluation revealed a demand for more rapid recruitment processes in the case of scientific vacancies, which we have tried to accommodate in the below principles, particularly for post docs and clinical associate professors and by creating a short-listing option.

Principles for VIP recruitment

The principles outlined below stipulate Health's local guidelines when filling a scientific vacancy.

Criteria for appointment of scientific positions – including revised assessment templates

Based on an assessment of Health's recruitment guidelines, it was decided to revise the criteria for appointment of scientific staff.

The revision is based on the following:

- In future, applicants must provide factual information by pre-filling an applicant template via the recruitment system.
- Prefilled factual information allows the assessment committee to focus its efforts on a purely professional assessment.
- Henceforth, the term "expert statement" is not used. A single assessment committee and one type of assessment will be employed for each type of position.

The below appendices were prepared in connection with the revision. The templates were prepared with reference to professorships. More templates will be prepared, in which the criteria will be adapted to match the remaining types of positions. In the below appendices, please focus exclusively on contents rather than layout and visual form, as the layout has yet to be determined.

- Appendix 1. "Criteria for appointment of Professors"
- Appendix 2. "Template – Professorship Application"
- Appendix 3. "Template – Assessment of applicants to professorship"

Shortlisting option – is introduced for all types of scientific vacancies

The shortlisting option was requested during the evaluation process. The purpose of shortlisting is to achieve a more rapid recruitment process while reducing the workload on the members of the assessment committee, who can then focus on the most relevant and competent applicants.

The process will be as follows:

The Head of Department holds the decision-making competence to exclude applicants from in-depth professional assessment by the assessment committee. The Head of Department, assisted by the assessment committee and supplemented by the chair of the assessment committee, selects applicants for in-depth professional assessment on the basis of an overall assessment to determine which applicants (on the basis of the application material) are the best matches for the department's and the faculty's recruitment needs and who meet the qualifications, competences, experience and potential described in the job advertisement, including the faculty's criteria for employment of permanent staff.

The short-listing process means that the assessment committee will assist the Head of Department only in determining which applicants are eligible for inclusion in the remaining assessment process according to the committee. Thus, the assessment committee does not decide which applicants will be assessed by the committee and does not determine if an applicant is qualified or not.

As a minimum, 5 applicants must be selected for in-depth professional assessment, unless there are fewer applicants, or unless fewer applicants remain once, clearly non-qualified applicants have been excluded. Applicants whose applications are not submitted for assessment are informed hereof by HR immediately after the short-listing process has concluded. Final rejection letters are submitted once the recruitment has been concluded. HR will inform the applicants whose applications are forwarded for an assessment by the assessment committee. At the same time, applicants are notified of the composition of the assessment committee and they are informed that they will have the opportunity to comment on the part of the assessment that relates to the applicant him or herself.

Review of types of positions - an outline of the main changes

Teaching assistant, research assistant, clinical assistant, part-time lecturer, clinical instructor and senior clinical instructor of dentistry

No significant changes to the existing practice.

Teaching assistant professor and teaching associate professor

Teaching assistant professor and teaching associate professor will follow the same process as that which is used for teaching assistants, clinical assistants, part-time lecturers, clinical instructors and senior clinical instructors of dentistry.

Post doc

- The assessment process for post docs is changed to allow for more flexibility. Thus, now only one “expert statement” is needed, regardless of the duration of the position. From now on, an “expert statement” will be coined an “assessment”.
- The assessment committee will therefore only consist of two internal members who are at associate professor level or above, of whom one member may be from another department.

Tenure assistant professors

- A search committee is established for all tenure assistant professor vacancies. Search committees are used to ensure a sufficiently broad field of applicants in terms of quality as well as diversity (external applicants, international applicants and applicants of both sexes).
- Appointment committees are used, and the Head of Department serves as the head of the committee. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the appointment committee’s composition is discussed in the department’s management group, and that the appointment committee consists of relevant scientific staff.
- All vacancies are worded broadly and advertised nationally as well as internationally.
- Vacancies are re-advertised if it is assessed that a sufficient number of qualified applicants has not been established after the application deadline has been reached. Assisted by the assessment committee and the chair of the assessment committee, the Head of Department assesses if a sufficient number of applicants has been reached.

- Assessment committees must have a majority of external members. The committee thus consists of three members who are associate professors or above, and preferably one staff member at professor level - including two external persons, of whom at least one must be from abroad.
- When assessing the applicants' qualifications, considerable emphasis is put on longer-term stays at one or more internationally renowned research institutions abroad.

As a consequence of the above-stated principles, recruitment processes are initiated by the Head of Department who consults with the Vice-dean of Research before publishing the job advertisement. As the basis for the consultation and keeping in mind the department's recruitment strategy and the need for internal consultation with the department's assistant professors, professors or a representative group hereof, the department describes the following recruitment package:

- The wishes for the vacancy.
- A profile of the vacancy (including the professional part of the job advertisement listing any requirements for qualifications relating to research and teaching, external funding, etc.).
- Funding
- The possibility of establishing a "starter package" for tenure assistant professors (wages, access to laboratory facilities, etc.) is discussed.
- Preliminary assessment committee proposal (particularly with respect to external assessors).
- Search committee proposal.
- Preliminary appointment committee proposal.
- Preliminary process plan for the current recruitment (underpinned by HR).

Assistant professors

Assistant professors follow the same process as tenure assistant professors, barring the requirements to establish a search committee and the requirements regarding the composition of the committees. Instead, the assessment committee consists of two members who are associate professors or above. Where possible, at least one of the members should be external and from abroad.

Associate professors except for clinical associate professors

- A search committee is established for all associate professor vacancies, regardless of the duration of the position. Fully externally financed (earmarked) associate professor positions are, however, not subjected to the requirement of a job advertisement and therefore also not to the requirement of establishing a search committee. Search committees are used to ensure a sufficiently broad field of applicants in terms of quality as well as diversity (external applicants, international applicants and applicants of both sexes).
- Appointment committees are used¹ in which the Head of Department serves as the head of the committee. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the appointment committee's composition is discussed in the department's management group, and that the appointment committee consists of relevant scientific staff.

¹ The positions for which no job advertisement is prepared are also exempted from the requirement to establish an appointment committee.

- All vacancies are worded broadly and advertised nationally as well as internationally.
- Permanent assistant professor vacancies are re-advertised if it is assessed that a sufficient number of qualified applicants has not been obtained after the application deadline has been reached. Assisted by the assessment committee and the chair of the assessment committee, the Head of Department assesses if a sufficient number of applicants has been reached.
- Assessment committees must have a majority of external members. Thus, the committee consists of three to five members, mainly at the professor level, among whom no more than one member is internal, whereas the remaining members of the committee are external, preferably from abroad.
- When assessing the applicants' qualifications, considerable emphasis is put on longer-term stays at one or more internationally renowned research institutions abroad.

Because of the above-stated principles, recruitment processes are initiated by the Head of Department who consults with the Vice-dean of Research before publishing the job advertisement. As the basis for the consultation and keeping in mind the department's recruitment strategy and after internal consultation with the department's assistant professors, professors or a representative group hereof, the department describes the following recruitment package:

- The wishes for the vacancy.
- A profile of the vacancy (including the professional part of the job advertisement listing any requirements for qualifications relating to research and teaching, external funding, etc.).
- Funding
- The possibility of establishing a "starter package" for associate professors (wages, access to laboratory facilities, etc.) is discussed.
- Preliminary assessment committee proposal (particularly with respect to external assessors).
- Search committee proposal.
- Preliminary appointment committee proposal.
- Preliminary process plan for the current recruitment (underpinned by HR).

Clinical associate professors

In January 2018, the Department of Clinical Medicine introduced a more flexible process for the assessment of applicants for clinical associate professor positions. This is done as part of a pilot project. We propose that the pilot project be made permanent.

The backdrop for this change has been a wish to introduce an appointment and assessment process that is easier, faster and more flexible for both the Department of Clinical Medicine and for the Administration. It is an important premise of the change that the professional assessment is in line with the previous professional requirements during the assessment at the associate professor level.

The process involves:

- An assessment committee is established, but the members proposed for the committee do not need the approval of the Academic Council.
- The assessment committee must consist of the clinical professor and chair (alternatively a clinical professor) and one other scientific staff from the associate professor level or above, who

must be from another department and from another specialty than that of the associate professor vacancy being filled.

- The two members of the committee can participate if they are not judged to be disqualified for the process at hand, and therefore still need to submit a completed declaration of interest statement.
- As previously, the assessment will evaluate the previously used professional criteria - including the applicant's research and educational qualifications and a short summary assessment – but will be drafted in accordance with a new template that is easier to complete.
- As previously, the Head of Department must approve the final assessment.

Professors and Professors with special responsibilities (MSO)

- A search committee is established for all professor vacancies, regardless of the duration of the position. Fully externally financed (earmarked) professor positions are, however, not subjected to the requirement of a job advertisement and are therefore exempted from the requirement of establishing a search committee. Search committees are used to ensure a sufficiently broad field of applicants in terms of quality as well as diversity (external applicants, international applicants and applicants of both sexes).
- An appointment committee² is established; the Vice-dean serves as its head and the Head of Department is a mandatory member. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the appointment committee's composition is discussed in the department's management group, and that the appointment committee consists of relevant scientific staff.
- All professorship vacancies are worded broadly and advertised nationally as well as internationally.
- Vacancies are re-advertised if it is assessed that a sufficient number of qualified applicants has not been established after the application deadline has been reached. Assisted by the assessment committee and the chair of the assessment committee, The Head of Department assesses if a sufficient number of applicants has been reached.
- Assessment committees must have a majority of external members. The committee consists of 3-5 members at the professor level, of whom a maximum of one member is internal, and at least one is from abroad.
- When assessing the applicants' qualifications, considerable emphasis is put on longer-term stays at one or more internationally renowned research institutions abroad.

Because of the above-stated principles, recruitment processes are initiated by the Head of Department who consults with the Vice-dean of Research before publishing the job advertisement. As the basis for the consultation and keeping in mind the department's recruitment strategy and after internal consultation with the department's assistant professors, professors or a representative group hereof, the department describes the following recruitment package:

- The wishes for the vacancy.
- A profile of the vacancy (including the professional part of the job advertisement listing any requirements for qualifications relating to research and teaching, external funding, etc.).
- Funding

² The positions for which no job advertisement is prepared are also exempted from the requirement to establish an appointment committee.

- “Starter package” for the professor (wages, access to laboratory facilities, etc.).
- Preliminary assessment committee proposal (particularly with respect to external assessors).
- Search committee proposal.
- Preliminary appointment committee proposal.
- Preliminary process plan for the current recruitment (underpinned by HR).

Clinical Professors and Clinical Professor and Chair

- A search committee is established for all clinical professor vacancies, regardless of the duration of the position. Fully externally financed (earmarked) clinical professor positions are, however, not subjected to the requirement of a job advertisement and are therefore exempted from the requirement of establishing a search committee. Search committees are used to ensure a sufficiently broad field of applicants in terms of quality as well as diversity (external applicants, international applicants and applicants of both sexes).
- An appointment committee is established³ that is responsible for filling the **clinical professorship** and the associated consultant position. The Head Consultant of the Department at AUH serves as the head of the committee. The Head of Department, clinical professor and chair and the chair of the assessment committee are mandatory members - *the appointing manager and the chair of the assessment committee cannot be the same person*. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the appointment committee’s composition is discussed in the department’s management group, and that the appointment committee consists of relevant scientific staff.
- For vacancies concerning a **clinical professor and chair**, an appointment committee is established that is responsible for filling the clinical professorship and department chair position and also the associated consultant position. The Head Consultant of the Department at the AUH and the Vice-dean serve as the chairmanship of the appointment committee. The Head of Department, a professor from the department and the chair of the assessment committee are mandatory members - *the appointing manager and the chair of the assessment committee cannot be the same person*. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the appointment committee’s composition is discussed in the department’s management group, and that the appointment committee consists of relevant scientific staff.
- All clinical professorship vacancies are worded broadly and, as a rule, they are advertised nationally as well as internationally.
- Vacancies are re-advertised if it is assessed that a sufficient number of qualified applicants has not been established after the application deadline has been reached. Assisted by the assessment committee and the chair of the assessment committee, the Head of Department assesses if a sufficient number of applicants has been reached.
- When assessing the applicants’ qualifications, considerable emphasis is put on longer-term stays at one or more internationally renowned research institutions abroad.

Because of the above-stated principles, recruitment processes are initiated by the Head of Department who consults with the Vice-dean of Research before publishing the job advertisement. As the basis for the consultation and keeping in mind the department’s recruitment strategy and

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after internal consultation with the department's assistant professors, professors or a representative group hereof, the department describes the following recruitment package:

- The wishes for the vacancy.
- A profile of the vacancy (including the professional part of the job advertisement listing any requirements for qualifications relating to research and teaching, external funding, etc.).
- Funding
- Preliminary assessment committee proposal (particularly with respect to external assessors).
- Search committee proposal.
- Preliminary appointment committee proposal.
- Preliminary process plan for the current recruitment (underpinned by HR).