

## University of Antwerp recruitment and selection policy (OTM-R policy)

The University of Antwerp aims to be a stimulating, attractive working environment for every researcher—from PhD student to full professor—and, by extension, for all of our employees. It seeks to be an innovative workplace where scientists can develop to their fullest and build high-quality careers. This is the common thread of the **plan of action: [HR Strategy for Researchers](#)**. Inspired by the European ‘Charter & Code’, the University of Antwerp is working with its researchers to develop a wide range of continuous improvement actions in the following areas: recruitment and selection; employment conditions and social security; training and development; and the ethical and professional aspects of research. These efforts have repeatedly been recognised with the ‘**HR Excellence in Research Award**’.

The University of Antwerp thus strives for excellence in its HR processes, and this obviously includes the complete process of recruitment and selection. We adopt an **applicant-centred, inclusive, fair and high-quality approach**, and every recruitment and selection procedure is aimed at the goal of **selecting the best person for each job**.

### Recruitment phase

For every open job vacancy, the relevant unit is expected to conduct a **thorough job and profile analysis**. The responsibilities, range of tasks and desired profile (selection criteria) are discussed thoroughly and defined in a realistic, unambiguous manner. This combination of qualitative and quantitative criteria is also clearly addressed in the **job vacancy announcement**. This ensures that every applicant will have a clear image of the job content and the competences that are either necessary or desirable. In addition, the use of **job templates** for each job level ensures that salary scales and fringe benefits are always stated and up to date. Wherever possible, the various steps in the selection procedure and the corresponding timing are defined and stated as well, so that every applicant will be aware of them and be able to anticipate or follow up on them.

Our job site contains a large volume of information on various careers, the organisational structure and the University of Antwerp **HR Policy** and **Diversity Action Plan**, thus enabling every applicant to form the best possible image of the University of Antwerp as an employer and be encouraged to apply.

Because we welcome talent from all over the world, the University of Antwerp works with a **job vacancy matrix**, a guideline that allows the use of a variety of relevant national and international publication channels based on the specific profile. We strive to ensure that our job vacancies are distributed widely through general channels, professional channels, social media and other national or international networks. We aim **to attract as many suitable candidates as possible**, and we are committed to reaching under-represented groups, thereby ensuring that the composition of **our pool of candidates is as diverse as possible**. This is the only way that we can recruit the most suitable person for the job. For each job vacancy, we thoroughly assess whether knowledge of Dutch is a strict (and immediate) requirement. If not, the job vacancy will also be distributed in English.

### Selection phase

The University of Antwerp always works with **selection committees** which have a **balanced and diverse composition** (with regard to gender, background, domain of expertise, position level and other aspects), customised to the specific job vacancy. We invest in training the members of our selection committees **with regard to good recruitment and selection practices, as well as in how to counteract bias (both implicit and explicit) in the process**. The multiple-eyes principle ensures that

various independent perspectives are included throughout the entire recruitment and selection process and that the suitability of each candidate is assessed by several people.

The use of the online application form ensures that every applicant will go through the same application procedure. In this way, we attempt **to limit the administrative burden on applicants**, in addition to providing a format for the **objective assessment of applications** by submitting all relevant information in a structured manner to the selection committees. In addition, our application appendices offer applicants the opportunity to share information about **mobility, academic and non-academic experiences and achievements, and atypical career paths, as well as an opportunity to provide descriptive and qualitative details**. Moreover, the application appendix serves as a qualitative source of information for the selection committee to assess the potential of each applicant.

An initial pre-selection is performed by various members of the selection committee based on the application files that have been submitted. The **pre-defined, measurable, transparent and realistic selection criteria** are reviewed for each applicant and used to determine which applicants will be invited for the further steps of the selection procedure.

The further steps in the selection procedure are determined **in a manner tailored to the specific job vacancy and the associated selection criteria**, according to **valid, reliable selection instruments**. Every applicant will go through **the same selection procedure** but we are flexible in making **reasonable adjustments** for applicants that are necessary to provide them with equal opportunities. A balance is always sought between giving applicants the greatest possible chance to progress through the selection procedure and working in phases, with several rounds, in case of a large influx of applicants.

The selection committees aim to conduct a **structured interview**, which includes only interview questions that are related to the job content and the applicant's career, motivation and required competencies (selection criteria). They are encouraged to address the same interview questions to all applicants so that these will all have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the job. We consider it important to create **a safe application context that allows space for two-way communication**, so that applicants can also make a well-informed and well-founded choice for the University of Antwerp as an employer. Although we opt for a competency-based approach, we also pay **attention to the potential** of applicants.

#### Decision

The members of the selection committee are expected to base their decisions on their own **independent and objective observations**, after which they discuss each applicant, specifically with regard to competencies and potential, and thus ultimately their suitability for the proposed position. Should bias (implicit or explicit) nevertheless emerge, the members of the selection committee are trained to address it, in order to ensure objectivity in decision-making.

The University of Antwerp is **committed to timely and correct communication** to applicants throughout the recruitment and selection process. Once a decision has been taken with regard to an applicant, whether at the end of the entire selection procedure or at an earlier stage, it is communicated as soon as possible, and the selection committee provides the applicant with an opportunity to obtain **constructive, development-oriented feedback** on their application.

Finally, throughout the entire recruitment and selection process, the University of Antwerp respects the **privacy** of its applicants and seeks to grant them appropriate **discretion** with regard to their applications.