

Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment Check-list: OTM-R

A specific self-assessment checklist is provided for Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R). Please report on the status of achievement, also detail on the indicators and the form of measurement used.

- The "Open", "Transparent" and "Merit-based" checkboxes are indicative of the type of policies and practices the questions refer to, as detailed in the C&C. They are pre-set in the HRS4R E-tool and cannot be changed. No action is needed from institutions in their respect.
- The difference between "+/- Yes substantially" and "-/+ Yes partially" ratings is that in the first case the volume of the remaining work to be done until completion is little as compared to the effort that has been put so far in that direction, whereas for "-/+ Yes partially", the remaining work is either the same in volume or more than what has been achieved.
- For the "Suggested indicators" column, whenever the user hovers the mouse in the row dedicated to each question, a small text box will pop up, indicating options of potential indicators to use. However, each institution should identify own measurements of the effectiveness of its OTM-R policy which should be further reviewed and adapted.

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	++ Yes completely	Personnel Policy Guidelines for USN, adopted by the board 15 of June 2018 https://www.usn.no/getfile.php/13582732-1568014287/usn.no/en/About%20USN/Rules%20and%20regulations/USN%20-%20Personnel%20Policy%20Guidelines.pdf

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer: Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Online information about applying for a position at USN:

<https://www.usn.no/english/vacancies/applying-for-a-position-at-the-university-of-south-eastern-norway-article221286-26882.html>

Personnel Regulations for USN, adapted after negotiations between USN and the labor unions, last updated 1 of July 2019:

<https://www.usn.no/getfile.php/13582735-1568014329/usn.no/en/About%20USN/Rules%20and%20regulations/USN%20-%20Personnel%20Regulations.pdf>

Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?

x

x

x

++ Yes completely

Complementary internal procedures, guidelines and templates are available on the USN Intranet pages for managers, while a shorter, more user-friendly description are available on the English web pages for job applicants (Pls. see link above).

<https://min.usn.no/rekruttering-ansettelser/rekruttering-rutinebeskrivelse-og-lederverktoy-article220648-33442.html>

Recruitment – description of routines and management tools:

<https://my.usn.no/recruitment-and-hiring/recruitment-description-of-routines-and-management-tools-article220832-33466.html>

Specific internal procedure for recruitment of Research Fellowships and Post-Doctoral Positions:

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					https://my.usn.no/recruitment-and-hiring/appointment-of-research-fellows-and-post-doctoral-fellows-article220837-33466.html
					<p>Department for Personnel and Organisation provide USN managers with professional HR services and leadership support in all stages of the recruitment process.</p>
Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>All approximately 50 USN managers (on 4 year terms) have participated in two day training in recruitment, selection and hiring. Union representatives, which participates in all interviews and selection processes, also receive duly training i legislation and procedures.</p> <p>New compulsory e-learning training program, combined with seminars, is under development and planned for implementation 2021 when existing managers are replaces (end of 4 year term). The program will ensure that all new Deans and Heads of Department are familiar with the OTM-R principles.</p>
Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		++ Yes completely	<p>USN uses an online recruitment system, 'JobbNorge', which covers all stages of the recruitment process and ensures openness, predictability and information to applicants.</p> <p>In addition, USN announce academic positions at the EURAXESS jobs portal. Increasing the portion of positions announced here is an area of improvement in the Action Plan 220 - 2021.</p>

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Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	++ Yes completely	<p>HR staff from Department for Personnel and Organisation ensures that all cases are handled in accordance with the USN Personnel regulations.</p> <p>All announcements and appointments are handled, in accordance with national legislation and internal guidelines, by two levels off approval within the Personnel and Organisation Department, and finally approved by the Appointment Board for academic positions.</p> <p>OTM-R is embedded in Norwegian legislation and the process has a high degree of transparency. Applicants receive information about the process and how their application is evaluated. Applicants also have access to complaint mechanisms (Both at the USN and a second level at The Parliamentary Ombudsman).</p>
Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	++ Yes completely	In accordance with national legislation and USN Personnel Regulations, all vacancies are published externally. For the period 1.1.18 - 1.7.19, 90,8% of applicants for open positions at USN were external (Source: JobbNorge)
Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>As a newly established university, the USN work systematically to make itself known internationally. USN is focusing on increasing the level of international applicants through marketing, EURAXESS and our researchers' professional network.</p> <p>For the period 1.1.18 - 1.7.19 USN received in total overall 5359 applications for 355 positions. International applicants amount to 45 %.</p>

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

For 160 academic positions which was announced during this period USN received 1112 international applications (60% of total).

For PhD positions, 707 (85%) out of 833 applicants for 59 positions were researchers from abroad. As mentioned in the GAP analysis and the Action Plan, USN has areas of improvement concerning career development policies and how career prospects are described in the recruitment process. Following up on these measures in the Action Plan is likely to have a positive effect on international recruitment.

Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?

x

x

x

++ Yes completely

Inclusion of underrepresented groups are safeguarded by national legislation. Applicants to USN vacancies can tick off in electronic application form if they have reduced functional ability or have minority background. USN job announcement templates includes clauses to encourage underrepresented groups to apply. National regulations stipulates that if there are qualified applicants with immigrant background or with a disability, at least one of these applicants shall be invited for an interview. To enable moderate gender quotation, the nomination shall make it clear if the qualifications of applicants are approximately equivalent.

For the period 1.1.18 - 1.7.19 USN received in total overall 5359 applications for 355 positions. Female applicants amount to 50,3 % of 160 academic positions, and approximately 30% of applicants for PhD positions were female. This is to a certain extent due to the fact that most PhD positions at USN is within the fields of technological and natural science.

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Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>Working conditions are well safeguarded through national legislation. USN Personnel Policy Guidelines and the USN Wage Policy underlines that the university shall provide good working conditions – both in terms of academically and socially – in order to attract and retain well qualified candidates and promote research. As described in the GAP analysis and in the Action Plan, USN has an area of improvement concerning how career prospects are communicated in the recruitment processes, and also regarding the balance between time allocation for research and for teaching.</p> <p>Following up on these measures in the Action Plan is likely to further increase USN's attractiveness for researchers. For the period 1.1.18 - 1.7.19, 90,8% of applicants for open positions at USN were external.</p>
Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				-/+ Yes partially	The Heads of Department and the leaders of the research groups will normally, through their knowledge of the field of research and their professional network, have a good impression whether they obtained the most suitable applicants for vacant positions.
Advertising and application phase					
Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for	x	x		+/- Yes substantially	<p>Templates and guidelines are available for all positions in Norwegian and English on USN Intranet.</p> <p>The 'Routine description for recruitment and appointment at USN' will be revised as part of implementation of Action Plan 2020 -2021. As part of this revision announcement of vacant positions at the EURAXESS portal in addition</p>

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advertising positions?					to 'JobbNorge' will be set as the norm for academic positions and the European Framework for Research Careers will also be better integrated in the routine description.
Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		+/- Yes substantially	<p>Information on career and professional development opportunities and relevant policies are not sufficiently described in job announcements today. This is an area of improvement for USN and is addressed in the Action Plan for 2020 - 2021. Information about complaint procedures is neither included in job announcements, although available.</p> <p>Inspired by the OTM-R toolkit the revision of templates and guidelines for job announcements will be improved concerning researcher career job profiles and the 'weight' of the various selection criteria.</p>
Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		+/- Yes partially	<p>Advertisement on EURAXESS is currently optional in the 'Routine description for recruitment and appointment at USN'. As part of the planned revision, the norm will be that all academic positions, except when specifically not relevant, will be announced at the EURAXESS Jobs portal.</p> <p>As mentioned above, 60% of applicants for research positions and 85% of PhD applicants are from abroad. During the period 1.1.18 - 1.7.19 only approx. 8 % of academic positions was announced at the EURAXESS jobs portal.</p> <p>The USN strives to substantially increase this amount through measures in the Action Plan.</p>

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Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		++ Yes completely	USN uses various channels depending on the type of position. In addition to JobbNorge, and EURAXESS, USN uses the national job sites NAV, Forskning.no, and FINN. Occasionally position are announced at sites as LinkedIn, ReseachGate and NatureJobs and selected journals and newspapers.
Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?	x			++ Yes completely	Applications is handled as flexible as possible in accordance with national legislation and internal regulations. Documentation is limited to what is necessary for the assessment, and can be uploaded on the e-application system Certificates in original language are accepted, but candidates are kindly requested to send a Diploma Supplement or a similar document describing the study and grade system with the initial application. The applicants is requested to bring certified copies of testimonials to the interview.
Selection and evaluation phase					
Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?		x	x	++ Yes completely	Personnel Regulations for USN regulates the appointment of both expert and selection committees. The Dean is the appointing authority for the former and heads of departments leads and appoints the latter. Appointment for employment of the selected candidate is done by the Appointment Committee for Professional Positions, headed by the Director for Personnel and Organisation, at institutional level.
Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of		x	x	++ Yes completely	Composition of of expert committees for academic positions is covered by national legislation 'Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts':

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selection committees?

<https://lovdata.no/dokument/SFE/forskrift/2006-02-09-129>

Section 10 in the Personnel Regulations for USN regulates the composition of the selection committee / and interviewing panel.

<https://www.usn.no/getfile.php/13582735-1568014329/usn.no/en/About%20USN/Rules%20and%20regulations/USN%20-%20Personnel%20Regulations.pdf>

Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?

x

x

+/- Yes substantially

'Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts' regulates the composition of expert committees, stating that "Both sexes shall if possible be represented on the expert committee". The Personnel Regulations for USN regulates the composition for appointing bodies and stipulates that "Both genders should have approximately equal representation in the committees".

For interview panels the practice is that gender-balance is desired, however this is not currently stipulated in the 'Routine description for recruitment and appointment at USN'. This is therefore an area of improvement and will be addressed in the planned revision of templates and guidelines as described in the Action Plan 2020 -2021.

Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads

x

++ Yes completely

Complementing national legislation ('Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts'), the USN's 'Routine description for recruitment and appointment at USN' clearly stipulates the procedure for evaluating candidates based on merit and a wide range of selection criteria ensuring that the best candidate is selected. Staff Regulations for USN stipulates that in the total assessment, the expert assessments shall be

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to the best candidate being selected?					emphasized, but the assessment of teaching skills, interviews and reference checks may provide basis for changing the ranking or for not nominating an applicant.
Appointment phase					
Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?		x		++ Yes completely	All applicants receive the list of applicants and the rapport from the expert committee which evaluates and ranks the applications based on professional merits. Those candidates that have been on interviews (unusually 3-5 candidates) receive information about their ranking in the final recommendation. All applicants are informed when a candidate has been appointed for the the position.
Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		+/- Yes substantially	All applicants receive information about the ranking and considerations made by the expert committee. Feedback from evaluation after interviews are available on request.
Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		++ Yes completely	In accordance with the national Public Administration Act., applicants do not have the right to appeal against the actual employment of the preferred candidate nor permit insight into the reasons behind the hiring decision. However, if an applicant believes that a case processing error has been made, the applicants may file complaints to USN and to The Parliamentary Sivilombudsman (both of which rarely happens). More commonly, applicants has comments to the expert committee's report, which is duly taken into account prior to concluding the ranking of candidates for the position.

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Applicants are given a two week period for comments on the expert committees report.

Overall assessment

Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?

++ Yes completely

Openness, transparency and merit based recruitment is firmly embedded in the Norwegian labor market and regulated by national legislation ('Act relating to universities and university colleges' and 'Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts') and in USN's own Personnel Regulations which together equates to a OTM-R system.

The major achievements of such a system is predictability and transparency for the applicants, a fair processes avoiding nepotism and ensuring that the best candidate being appointed based on merit irrespective of nationality or gender.