

OTM-R at the University of South-Eastern Norway

The University of South-Eastern Norway's recruitment processes are in line with the Charter & Code principles for OTM-R.

USN do also, due to Norwegian legislation and the university's own regulations and policies, offer attractive working environment for researchers. We continuously strive to ensure qualified recruitment and aim for openness and transparency in all recruitment processes. Our way of conducting recruitment processes is described in [USN's personnel regulations](#).

Open

External advertisement of vacant positions

USN has an employment regulation that ensures that all recruitment processes follow fixed principles and templates. All recruitments are based on the strategic competence fulfilment plan for the university operations in question. A recruitment profile, including requirements and assessment criteria, is drawn up and approved as specified in the regulation. Most vacancies are, [with a few exemptions](#), published and advertised externally and, when relevant, internationally. Our aim is to attract the best qualified candidates and to promote mobility.

USN's job advertisements follow the recommendations stated in OTM-R Chapter 4.4.1a with a few exemptions. USN does not fulfil the recommendation to have a deadline of at least two months for applications. The deadline period for advertisements and the advertising channels used are adapted to the position being advertised. Consideration of extended deadlines during holiday periods is always made. The minimum deadline for USN job advertisements is two weeks; for larger recruitments and in particular for strategic recruitments, the advertisement period is usually one month or more. USN need to evaluate whether it is possible to have longer application periods; however, as a state-run institution, we are expected to follow common basic values with regards to effectiveness in our recruitment processes. USN uses a digital recruitment system with a direct link for advertising on the EURAXESS website. There are detailed instructions given for job applications. USN does not state in its advertisements anything specific about professional development opportunities. Career development has been identified as a gap at our institution and actions to solve this are outlined in the reviewed action plan.

Keeping the administrative burden to a minimum

At USN we are continuously working to simplify our administrative processes and to work effectively. The application process is facilitated using the on-line recruitment tool Jobbnorge and standardised application templates. In Norway, there are rules for how government institutions should process incoming documents (e.g. job applications). The provision of additional materials to an application is also regulated by law. In addition, the university has a duty to guide and help applicants. For instance, USN urges all applicants to check that all requested documents are attached to the application and the recruitment system permits additional material to be added up until the application deadline. Documents that cannot be attached electronically may be provided at a later date.

Regarding the language for applications, we do accept documents submitted in English, Swedish, Danish and Norwegian. For documents in other languages, the applicant is

responsible for ensuring that the university can understand the content of the submitted documents. This usually means that the applicant must ensure that the documents are translated into Norwegian or one of the languages listed above. If documents are submitted in a foreign language, the university may request a supplement to the application, in accordance with the regulations set out in [USN's personnel regulations](#).

Transparency

Communication with all candidates through the recruitment process

All applicants are kept up to date on the recruitment status through communication via the on-line recruitment tool. The minimum communication consists of the following:

1. Confirmation that the application has been received.
2. A "Thank you for your application" letter after the application deadline with information about the number of applicants and the assessment process.
3. Information about any expert review with contact details and the deadline for their assignments.
4. Call to interview for selected candidates.
5. Information about who received the employment and the appeal process.

Our recruitments

Evaluation and selection phase

Setting up the expert committee

Instructions and rules at USN take into account all points in OTM-R Chapter 4.4.2 a. In order to assess an applicant's competence and skills, we use external experts when appointing teaching and research staff at levels R2-R4. The experts are independent experts in the field, especially chosen for the task, and preparing the basis for an employment decision for the Academic Appointments Board. Their assessments provide the hiring faculty with a sound basis for further decision-making when calling candidates in for interviews. Reference is also made to the current Regulations concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts as well as the Universities and Colleges Act Section 6-3 (3) in terms of the composition of the expert committee.

Screening and interviewing

All applicants for a position are treated and assessed according to the principle of "merits and skills" according to published regulations, cf. Civil Servants Act's qualification principle. In the recruitment of permanent teaching and research staff, the faculty and a HR advisor is responsible for preparing an employment profile, advertisement, appointing members of the expert committee, conducting interviews, monitoring the trial lecture and contacting references. A trade union representative and academic staff are engaged in the interview panel. The faculty provides The Academic Appointments Board with a suggestion so that the board can determine who should be employed. Travel costs for interviewees are covered. At USN there are good opportunities to conduct interviews digitally and remotely.

Assessing merit

For the evaluation of merit, a state employer may apply the selection standards that it normally uses. The standards, however, must not in themselves be either directly or indirectly discriminatory, but should appear as explanatory and essentially rational. USN's recruitment

process and the respective employment profiles indicate the basis for the selection of applicants.

Appointment phase

Feedback

Within the government sector, the employment procedure is specifically regulated, for instance regarding how to inform about vacancies and how employment decisions should be notified. Application documents are public documents and therefore other candidates, as well as the public, have the right to access most of the documents.

At USN, the statutory requirement to locally publish all employment decisions is supplemented by informing all the candidates who applied for a position about the decision and how it can be appealed. USN provides all the candidates who have been interviewed with feedback on request as to why they were not chosen for the position.

Complaints mechanism

An applicant who has been rejected for a position has the right to appeal the appointment decision. The appeal is heard by [The Parliamentary Ombud for Scrutiny of the Public Administration](#). If the appeal is approved, the appellant must be offered the appointment, instead of the person who was first chosen for the appointment. However, admission to doctoral studies or appointment of doctoral studentships cannot be appealed.