



UNIVERSITY *of* LIMERICK

O L L S C O I L L U I M N I G H

**PROCEDURES FOR THE RECRUITMENT /
APPOINTMENT OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Approved by Governing Authority 6 October 2016

Preamble

The aim of this policy is to set out clear procedures for the recruitment and appointment to academic posts at the University of Limerick in limited exceptional circumstances; e.g. candidates in receipt of a portable European Research Council or similar award; or those with critical skills for strategic needs. The objective of the procedures is to attract and select, in limited exceptional circumstances, the above-defined candidates in a fair, transparent and effective manner. The procedures do not replace the procedures for recruiting and appointing academic staff but rather to supplement them in limited exceptional situations that are of strategic importance to the University.

In accordance with public sector recruitment and appointment procedures and norms, all appointments of candidates in exceptional circumstances to academic posts of 12 months or longer will be subject to the procedures set out in this document. The Governing Authority will consider and approve, if appropriate, all appointments subject to these procedures.

1. Process Initiation

- 1.1. Members of the University of Limerick (UL) management team may identify a candidate(s) who would be a key strategic appointment in pursuit of UL's strategic objectives. The identification of candidate(s) should normally be done through a search committee (see appendix A)¹. The relevant Faculty Dean(s), Head(s) of Department and Director(s) of Research Institute (where applicable) will submit for approval to the President a proposal that sets out the strategic relevance of the identified candidate(s).
- 1.2. The proposal will include the following information:
 - Proposed discipline area.
 - Relevance to UL's strategic goals.
 - Sustainability plan for the proposal.
 - Recruitment Committee approval for the academic post.
 - Detail on the mechanism by which the candidate has been identified by UL's management team.
 - An outline of the area of research of the proposed candidate and how this fits with the University, faculty, department and (where relevant) research institute's strategic plans.
 - An outline of how the faculty and department will encompass the new appointment within the relevant strategic plans.
 - An assessment of the achievements of the candidate in research, teaching, leadership and other areas relevant to the grade of the academic post, including a brief curriculum vitae in an appendix.
- 1.3. An individual (or members of his/her family) who is involved in the preparation of a proposal may not be put forward as a candidate. Conflict of professional or personal interest must be declared to the Vice President Academic & Registrar (VPA&R) or Director, Human Resources (HR) prior to the preparation of the proposal.
- 1.4. Once the proposal has been approved by the President, the Faculty Dean(s) (in conjunction with HR) will invite the candidates to visit UL. The purpose of the visit is to facilitate the candidates to engage with academic staff and students and for the University to become familiar with the candidates. The following activities will occur during and after the visit:
 - 1.4.1. At the commencement of the visit, the candidates will be invited to give a public presentation on his/her research.
 - 1.4.2. A meeting schedule will be drawn up by the Faculty Dean(s) to ensure that the candidates meet the following groups and personnel, where relevant to the post: academic staff and students, Head(s) of Department, Director(s) of Research Institute(s). These meetings may take the form of one-to-one or small-group meetings.
 - 1.4.3. The Faculty Dean(s) will arrange for the candidate to meet the President, the Vice President Academic & Registrar and the Vice President Research

¹ The search committee process will not apply to external candidates in receipt of a portable European Research Council award or similar award as such candidates will have been assessed by an international panel of experts convened by the relevant funding body

individually for at least 30 minutes per meeting.

- 1.4.4. Other meetings may be arranged by the Faculty Dean(s) as required (e.g., with HR, national funding agencies, other faculties, research institutes, etc.)
- 1.4.5. After the meetings and if appropriate, the Faculty Dean(s) may determine that the candidate give a second, shorter public presentation to illustrate the synergy s/he has identified between his/her research interests/plans and those of the department, faculty and University. S/He should also stipulate how his/her research maps onto UL's strategic research themes.
- 1.4.6. After the visit, the Faculty Dean(s), Head(s) of Department and Director(s) of Research Institute (in conjunction with HR) will document the feedback from the meetings with the candidate(s) to capture all recommendations and reservations on the candidature of the candidate(s).
- 1.5. The Faculty Dean(s) will source a minimum of four external assessor reports². The primary role of the external assessors is to provide the President with advice concerning the scholarly abilities and attainments of the candidates and his/her suitability for appointment on this basis. The independence of external assessors must be assured at all times. The Faculty Dean(s) will pay particular attention to the selection of external assessors to ensure gender balance (minimum 30%) and that the assessors are independent of UL and external to Ireland. The Faculty Dean will discuss and agree the external assessors with the President.
- 1.6. The relevant Faculty Dean(s), Head(s) of Department and Director(s) of Research Institute (where applicable) will submit a detailed recommendation to the President. The recommendation will be in the form of an updated proposal as outlined in section 1.2 above and must include the feedback from the candidate's visit to UL, including recommendations and reservations, and the external assessors reports.
- 1.7. The President will consider the recommendation of the relevant Faculty Dean(s), Head(s) of Department and Director(s) of Research Institute (where applicable). The President may consult others as s/he deems relevant and may request additional information.

2. Governing Authority Approval

- 2.1. In cases where the President endorses the recommendation, s/he will make a proposal to Governing Authority recommending the appointment. The proposal should include a reasoned argument outlining the rationale for the appointment and the merits of the candidate.

² External assessor reports may be taken up verbally. In such instances, the verbal report will be recorded and the recording and a transcript of the recording will be forwarded to the President and both the recording and transcript will be retained on file

Appendix A

International Search by a Search Committee

The President may convene a search committee to identify candidates who could potentially be key strategic appointments in pursuit of UL's strategic objectives.

The search committee will comprise:

- A nominee of the President
- Faculty Dean(s) (Chair)³
- Relevant Head(s) of Department
- Director(s), Research Institute (where relevant)
- HR Manager
- Associate Registrar
- Manager, Research Support Services
- At least one internal subject specialist at professorial level
- Search consultant (in attendance when required)

Due regard will be given to the requirement for appropriate gender balance (minimum 30%) on the search committee. To ensure appropriate gender balance on the search committee, the President may co-opt additional members (internal or external) to the committee.

UL is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to selection on merit. Consequently, the procedures for identifying candidates will be equitable and transparent and will seek to treat people in similar circumstances equally and fairly.

Individuals will not be discriminated against on the basis of disability, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief or lack of religious belief, age, race or membership of the Traveller Community.

Human Resources (HR) Division

The HR Division will be responsible for ensuring that these procedures are fully complied with and will provide advice on the process as required.

The HR Division will maintain an approved supplier list of search consultants and, after consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean(s), will engage the services of an appropriate search consultant for each process.

For each recommended potential candidate(s), HR will ensure that documentary evidence of qualifications is verified and that other necessary criteria are met and, where appropriate, will arrange for a pre-employment medicals.

Search Consultant

A professional search consultant will be engaged by HR to conduct an international search to generate a pool of candidates with appropriate profiles for consideration by the search committee.

The search consultant will first take the time to become familiar with the specifics

³ If the appointment is across faculties, the relevant Deans will agree the chair from among their number.

of the particular strategic needs of the University. With assistance from the members of the search committee, the search consultant will develop an understanding of the discipline and the preferred candidate profile. The search consultant will liaise on an ongoing basis with the search committee regarding the calibre of potential candidates. To guide the work of the search consultant, the search committee may ask external advisers for the names of potential candidates.

After conducting a thorough international search, the search consultant will determine the *bona fide* interests of potential candidates. The search consultant will then submit to the search committee his/her final list of potential candidates for consideration.

Unavailability of Search Committee Member

If a search committee member is unavailable, the President may nominate a replacement. Alternatively, the President may decide, at his/her absolute discretion, not to appoint a replacement, in which case the committee may proceed with the process.