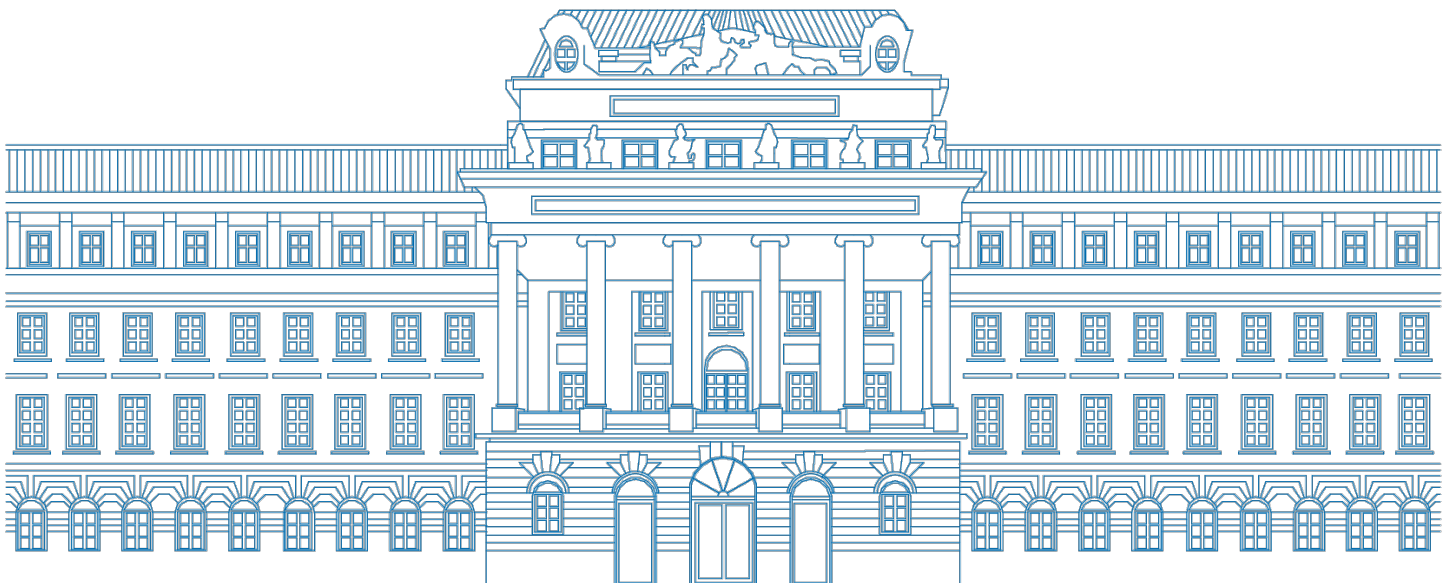




TECHNISCHE  
UNIVERSITÄT  
WIEN

# Explanations and FAQ

regarding tenure-track positions and qualification  
agreements



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# Introduction

We have summarised the most important topics relating to the guidelines on tenure-track positions and qualification agreements in the following explanations and FAQs.

## 1 Basis and objective

### 1.1 What is the basis for the guidelines?

The guidelines are based on the provisions of the University Act 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "UG") and the Collective Agreement for University Employees (hereinafter referred to as "KV") as well as the European Charter for Researchers.

## 2 Definitions

### 2.1 What is a tenure-track position?

A tenure-track position is a position for which a qualification agreement may be considered.

### 2.2 What is a qualification agreement?

The qualification agreement is an agreement on qualification and performance targets that must be met within a specified period (qualification period) in order to pursue a university career within the framework of permanent employment. It regulates the allocation of resources and support measures, and links the fulfilment of the criteria to an objective performance assessment.

### 3 Responsibilities and tasks

Here you will find a tabular overview of responsibilities and tasks in connection with the awarding of tenure-track positions and the conclusion of qualification agreements:

Responsibility	Tasks						
	Dedication tenure-track position	Advisory	Advisory	Selection	Qualification Agreement	Evaluation commission	Evaluation
<b>Rectorate</b>	Determination of the number and purpose of tenure-track positions	Approval of the job advertisement text		Appointment of two reviewers, if necessary			Appointment of two reviewers
<b>Rector</b>			Appointment of members	Decision on appointment	Conclusion of qualification agreement		Initiation of final evaluation procedure
				Appointment of assessors			Appointment of assessors
<b>Dean</b>		Drafting of the call for applications	Nomination of members	Proposal of five assessors	Voting on draft qualification agreement together with supervisor	Nomination of members	Proposal of five reviewers
			Chair				
<b>Advisors</b>				Conducts selection process	Statement on draft qualification agreement		
				Preparation of appointment Proposal			
				Decision on expert opinion for three-person proposal			
<b>Evaluation commission</b>							Implementation of evaluation procedure
							Preparation of final report
<b>Supervisor</b>					Drafts qualification agreement together with employees		Status meetings
							Preparation of annual status reports
							Statement on self-assessment
							Statement on final report
<b>Mentor</b>					Support and assistance employee during the qualification period		Right to be present at status meetings with the employer and status reports
							Any contact persons

## 3.1 The advisory board

### 3.1.1 Composition

#### 3.1.1.1 Does the Faculty Council have to appoint a member from its own ranks?

No, the Faculty Council may also appoint a non-member. Furthermore, it does not matter which *curia* the member belongs to.

#### 3.1.1.2 Must a subject area be defined in every case? /How should this be handled in the case of a faculty-wide call for applications?

Both the UG (§ 99 (5) UF establishes a right of consultation for university professors in the relevant department) and the collective agreement for university employees (definition of positions in the "structural plan") assume that there is a thematic assignment to a "subject area".

In addition to the already defined subject area in which the tenure-track position is located, this can also be a research focus of a faculty (in the case of a cross-faculty call for applications) or even the faculty itself (in the case of a cross-institute call for applications). It is essential that subject-specific expertise is represented on the advisory board (by an additional university professor from the relevant department and by consulting all university professors from the defined department). It can be assumed that the evaluation by the ministry specified in Section 99 (7) UG will take this into account.

#### 3.1.1.3 Which dean of studies is responsible if a faculty has more than one dean of studies?

The decision as to which dean of studies is responsible is made by the dean who is responsible for nominating the members of the advisory board and the members of the evaluation committee.

#### 3.1.1.4 What does "relevant external member" mean?

An essential characteristic of this person is that they must not be affiliated with TU Wien.

#### 3.1.1.5 Who is the university professor of the relevant department?

The decision as to who is a university professor in the relevant department to which the tenure-track position is assigned is made by the dean responsible for nominating the members of the advisory board.

#### 3.1.1.6 Does the retirement/emeritus status of the relevant external member of the advisory board affect their membership of the advisory board?

The relevant external member of the advisory board may be a retired/emeritus person; however, this person may not be a retired/emeritus person from TU Wien.

### 3.1.2 Appointment

#### 3.1.2.1 What does it mean that the composition of the advisory board must ensure a balanced ratio of women and men? Are there any forms?

A balanced ratio between women and men does not mean a strict quota. This should be achieved with the help of an equal opportunities policy during recruitment and at further career stages. To ensure equal treatment, there should be a balanced gender ratio in selection and evaluation committees (see European Charter for Researchers, p. 21). No forms are necessary.

### 3.1.2.2 How are the members of the AKG and works councils determined?

AKG and works councils determine their members autonomously. The same applies to the member to be appointed by the faculty council.

### 3.1.2.3 What is the procedure when an advisory board member leaves?

If an advisory board member resigns or leaves TU Wien, the dean must nominate a new member.

## 3.1.3 Tasks

### 3.1.3.1 What is meant by a statement on the draft qualification agreement?

The advisory board acts as an objective body to ensure that the qualification agreement complies with the guidelines and that the agreed objectives can be achieved within the qualification period.

However, it is not the responsibility of the Advisory Board to negotiate the qualification agreement with the Dean, as the qualification agreement is concluded as part of the employment contract between the Rector and the employee.

## 3.2 The immediate supervisor

### 3.2.1 Who is the immediate supervisor?

This is determined by the internal structure of the organisational unit to which the holder of the tenure-track position is assigned.

### 3.2.2 Can interdisciplinary tenure-track positions be created? Can the tenure-track position also be assigned directly to the head of the institute or the dean (in the case of inter-institutional tenure-track positions)?

In principle, it is possible to establish interdisciplinary tenure-track positions, but a decision on the administrative assignment must be made at the latest when the selection decision is made.

## 4 Allocation of tenure-track positions

### 4.1 Selection criteria

#### 4.1.1 What prequalifications may/should be required?

Doctorate or PhD or comparable international degree; in the arts and architecture, persons without a doctorate are also eligible.

The conclusion of a qualification agreement is an option for all academic/artistic staff who, based on their previous qualifications, are expected to meet the requirements defined by the university in the qualification criteria. This prior qualification is to be determined by the university depending on the subject area; as a rule,

a successfully completed doctoral degree from an Austrian university (especially a PhD) or a comparable international degree will be required.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Can a person who has already obtained a habilitation also obtain a tenure-track position?

It is also permissible to conclude qualification agreements with habilitated persons. However, this should be the exception rather than the rule. The collective agreement for university employees does not specify the requirements that applicants must meet, but stipulates that the scientific/artistic achievements of the candidates must indicate that they are likely to attain the required high level of qualification. This means that tenure-track positions should only be considered for assistants who have the relevant prequalifications and who, based on their previous academic/artistic output, can be considered highly talented young researchers in the early stages of their careers.

It is up to the individual universities to define the (minimum) criteria for concluding a qualification agreement depending on the respective department and the internal university objectives. In practice, tenure-track positions in academic subjects will only be considered for individuals who have already completed at least a relevant doctoral programme and can thus demonstrate their academic qualifications.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.1.3 What achievements should be included in the application documents?

The presentation of achievements includes all achievements made up to the date of application, regardless of where and for which employer they were made.

### 4.2 Selection procedure

#### 4.2.1 Does the advisory board have to conduct a hearing?

The advisory board is generally free to determine how it assesses the suitability of candidates. However, it is essential that all applicants are informed in advance of the procedure that will be used (see European Charter for Researchers, p. 26).

#### 4.2.2 In what form are the university professors of the relevant department to be consulted?

Consultation means giving the university professors in the relevant department the opportunity to comment on the outcome of the selection process. It would therefore not be sufficient to simply send the documents to the university professors in the relevant department and not wait for their response. If the university professor of the relevant department does not comment, he or she should be asked again to do so. It would be advisable to set a deadline for this.

The dean is responsible for ensuring compliance with this provision and must guarantee the "right to be heard". It is at the discretion of the dean to decide how this right to be heard is exercised; options include public hearings, reports to the *curia*, reports at faculty council meetings or similar.

<sup>1</sup> *Grimm in Pfeil* (ed.), *Personalrecht der Universitäten* (2010) § 27 margin number 20

<sup>2</sup> *Grimm in Pfeil* (ed.), *Personalrecht der Universitäten* (2010) § 27 margin number 18

#### 4.2.3 What does the provision "No assessment is required if the applicant has obtained an ERC grant or start-up prize" mean if two such applicants apply for a tenure-track position?

If two people with ERC grants apply for the same position and are suitable, two positions may be awarded.

#### 4.2.4 What happens if the number of suitable applicants is less than three?

If the advisory board considers fewer than three persons to be suitable, the appointment proposal must be justified accordingly.

### 4.3 Applications within the framework of the Excellence Programme

#### 4.3.1 Does an advisory board have to be set up for the selection process?

No, no advisory board is appointed for the selection process in these cases. The Rector makes the selection decision based on the application documents and the opinion of the Dean, after consulting the university professors in the relevant department.

#### 4.3.2 When must the advisory board be established?

The advisory board must be established after the tenure-track position has been filled, as its task is to comment on the draft qualification agreement.

## 5 Qualification agreements

### 5.1 Does TU Wien have to offer a qualification agreement?

No, according to § 27 (2) KV, the university may offer to conclude a qualification agreement, but there is no entitlement to one. For the legal consequences, see § 27 (5) KV.

## 6 Content of qualification agreements

### 6.1 Can habilitation be a goal of the qualification agreement?

In principle, this is possible. The aim of fulfilling the qualification agreement is to enable the research assistant to become a professor, i.e. to obtain a qualification that offers the research assistant a realistic chance of obtaining a professorship at a university in Austria or abroad. After successfully completing the qualification, holders of a tenure-track position should meet the following profile in particular:

- Systematic understanding of the subject area and mastery of the skills and methods associated with it
- Ability to design, shape, implement and adapt a research project (project for the exploration and development of the arts) with academic integrity

- Making an original contribution to research that expands knowledge through the development of a substantial research work or work in the context of the development and advancement of the arts
- Ability to make these contributions accessible to the scientific community in accordance with national and international publication standards
- Ability to critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise new and complex ideas
- Ability to communicate with the professional environment, the scientific/artistic community and society in general on fundamental issues of science and art
- Ability to advance technological, social or cultural progress in a knowledge society within academic and professional contexts<sup>3</sup>

## 6.2 What are particularly justified cases for extending the qualification period?

Particularly justified cases include serious, long-term illness or family responsibilities (e.g. increased care needs of a sick relative such as a child or parent).

However, a research leave does not extend the qualification period, as this is one of the objectives of a qualification agreement.

# 7 Interim analysis

## 7.1 Is the two-year period for the interim analysis variable?

The two-year period after which the interim analysis is carried out is absolute and therefore independent of the number of years for which the qualification agreement is designed. Periods to which you are entitled by law or under the collective agreement of the universities (e.g. parental leave) extend this period.

# 8 Mentors

## 8.1 Can a mentor also serve as a member of the works council/AKG in the advisory board/evaluation committee during the procedure?

If the mentor is nominated as a member of the advisory board/evaluation committee or as a member of a body involved in the procedure (e.g. works council, AKG), this person must immediately, before the advisory board/committee/body performs its tasks, declare in writing (email is sufficient) that they will not participate in the procedure as a member of the advisory board/committee/body. Otherwise, they may not take on the role of mentor.

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<sup>3</sup> *Grimm in Pfeil* (ed.), *Personalrecht der Universitäten* (2010) § 27 margin number 29

## 9 Entry into force and transitional provisions

The explanations and FAQs concerning tenure-track positions and qualification agreements, MBI. 2025, 26th edition, serial no. 253, shall enter into force on the day after their publication in the MBI.