



VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM

HRM,
Arbo & Milieu

VU Amsterdam Professorship Policy

Adopted 18 June 2024

*Updated version re amendment promotion
requirements adopted on: 25 November 2025*

Introduction

1 Types of professors

- 1.1 Professor
- 1.2 Endowed professor
- 1.3 Visiting professor
- 1.4 Roles cannot be combined
- 1.5 Joint professor appointments between multiple faculties
- 1.6 Joint professor appointments with another university

2 Types of chairs

- 2.1 Regular chair
- 2.2 Sponsored chair
- 2.3 Endowed chair

3 Personnel policy

- 3.1 Recruitment
- 3.2 Strategic personnel policy
- 3.3 Diversity and inclusion
- 3.4 Promotion from Professor 2 to Professor 1
- 3.5 Emeriti policy

4 Quality assurance and academic integrity

- 4.1 Academic integrity
- 4.2 Ancillary activities
- 4.3 Knowledge security
- 4.4 Safeguarding the impartiality of endowed and sponsored chairs

Introduction

High-quality professorship at VU Amsterdam is key to achieving the university's ambitions in teaching, research, impact and leadership. When our professors achieve excellence, this sets the tone for our activities and contributes to our good reputation. High-quality leadership helps create a positive, stimulating and safe working environment and offers young academics an excellent training path. The professorship policy has been put in place to safeguard and expand this quality.

Structure of this document

The primary aim of the professorship policy is to maintain the quality of our professors according to the principles outlined below. The policy is also designed to safeguard the quality and transparency of our appointment processes. This text sets out the principles and definitions that underpin the policy, together with the various procedures for appointing professors.

The VU Amsterdam Professorship Policy is structured as follows. Chapter 1 describes the types of professors at VU Amsterdam. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the different types of chairs to which professors can be appointed. Chapter 3 contains various personnel policies that play a role in the professorship policy. Chapter 4 discusses academic integrity, ancillary activities and knowledge security.

The following documents are available to download separately from VU.nl: the template for the appointment advisory committee's (BAC) report, the assessment portfolio template, the description of the procedure, checklists and letter templates.

Key principles

Research

Our research is driven by academic curiosity and social engagement.

Our research aims to find answers to questions drawn from both science and society. We want to play a pioneering role.

Teaching

Our teaching emphasises the social value and relevance of academic pursuits. The education we provide gives our students the opportunity to achieve broad development – academically, personally and socially – to help them become successful members of society and make meaningful contributions.

Impact

Our impact is inextricably interwoven with our teaching and research. We use a range of knowledge transfer strategies to add value to society, such as postgraduate continuing education, public debate and dialogue, co-creation between science and society, contract research, public-private partnerships, practical innovations for businesses and entrepreneurship.

Open Science

We amplify the reach and impact of our research by sharing our research findings and processes with the wider world. We work closely with other knowledge institutions and partners in society: government, citizens, civil society organisations and the business community.

Academic integrity

Safeguarding and strengthening our academic integrity is essential for the future of our university. We fulfil our scientific and social responsibility in our research by striving for the greatest possible level of transparency about our methods, our findings and any collaborations and interests. This enables a critical evaluation of our work, promotes knowledge sharing for the benefit of both science and society and creates the conditions in which diverse, inclusive and equal research can flourish.

We prioritise privacy and are accountable to our ethical principles.

Recognition & Rewards

VU Amsterdam values all the work our academic staff contribute. Alongside teaching and research, this also means rewarding educational innovations, patient care and impact.

It benefits our strategy when academic staff choose a career path that emphasises teaching, research or knowledge transfer. To safeguard academic integrity and social safety, we place a greater emphasis on rewarding leadership, collaboration and the contribution our staff make to their teams and to the organisation. The assessment of our academics aims to achieve a greater balance between qualitative and quantitative assessment. This broader form of recognition and rewards is a better fit for both the core tasks of modern institutions for knowledge and education and the demands society makes of those institutions.

With this in mind, VU Amsterdam has developed an evaluation system for recruitment and promotion policies that aligns with our mission, identity and ambitions. This system emphasises our duty of care towards our staff, students, alumni, stakeholders, the environment and humanity. We recognise and reward diverse roles, leadership and contributions to teams and to the organisation. Teaching, research, impact, patient care, open science, teamwork and leadership are all valued equally. However, not every employee needs to specialise or excel in all these aspects at the same time. From our dual foundation in teaching and research, academic staff have access to a range of career paths within their teams, allowing them to foster their specific talents and help us achieve our shared goals.

A Broader Mind

VU Amsterdam encourages students, academics and professionals to have *A Broader Mind*: explore the academic world, grow as a person and develop a social orientation. This is how we bring opposing sides together, find sustainable solutions and work to create a better world.

1 Types of professors

VU Amsterdam employs professors and endowed professors. The unambiguous use of these titles promotes transparency and comparability, both between faculties and to the outside world. This chapter discusses the differences between these types of professors, as well as the requirements for the role and the minimum scope and duration of appointment.

1.1 Professor

A **professor** is employed by VU Amsterdam and performs core tasks in the field of teaching, research and impact (and patient care) in a discipline that receives significant focus over an extended period, that is embedded and that determines the teaching and research strategy of the faculty and of VU Amsterdam. While VU Amsterdam expects all academic staff to have a *dual foundation* in teaching and in research, in their individual careers they may choose to focus on one of the areas of teaching, research or impact. VU Amsterdam's requirements for professors are set out in the "[Qualitative assessment framework for academics](#)".¹

The university job ranking system (UFO) is the foundation for all the diverse expressions of career paths. Performance may vary between domains (teaching, research or impact) according to the principle of communicating vessels: when someone excels in one or more of the domains, that person may perform activities in the other domains less skilfully. Recognising this reality helps us avoid setting unreasonable expectations of individual versatility and creates an environment at VU Amsterdam where everyone's talents can flourish.

Leadership, collaboration and management qualities are crucial in an academic culture where we share responsibility for healthy group relationships, talent development, social safety and inclusion. We expect professors to have an excellent command of these qualities and to take on a leadership role that goes beyond their own discipline.

All professors must satisfy the leadership requirements for their specific level: training and development in leadership and management are prerequisites for vertical career progression.

Number of supervised PhD projects

As part of the leadership role, the responsible and successful supervision of PhD candidates is of great importance. Therefore, the appointment of a full professor generally requires that the candidate has successfully supervised at least two PhD projects.

In exceptional cases, this requirement may be waived, provided that a substantiated justification is given based on the specific characteristics of the academic domain².

Following consultation with the dean, the exception is granted by the rector, after which the file is submitted to the Executive Board.

Assessment portfolio for professors

During the selection procedure, the prospective professors complete their own assessment portfolio to give the university a clear picture of their relevant qualities. This portfolio represents the practical implementation of VU Amsterdam's Academic Career Paths policy framework and includes the following elements:

1. Self-reflection: personal leadership, contribution to teams, academic leadership and management including a reflection on peer review (360-degree feedback³) of colleagues, supervisors in research and teaching and students on the applicant's contribution to science and positive collaboration according to the Art of Engagement;
2. Basic academic activities in the domains of research, teaching and impact;

¹ VU Amsterdam, *Academic Career Paths*, 2023.

² If a professor is appointed who has not yet successfully supervised two PhD projects, an additional professor at VU will always be appointed as (co-)supervisor alongside the appointed professor, until the requirement of two successfully completed PhD supervisions has been met. Furthermore, the newly appointed professor is expected to enrol in the course 'Supervising PhD Candidates' within the first year.

³ For more information, please visit <https://vu.nl/en/employee/annual-consultation/360-degree-feedback-for-employees>

3. Career-specific activities in teaching, research and impact.

Scope of employment

The minimum scope of employment for a professor at VU Amsterdam is 0.4 FTE (full-time equivalent).

Duration of the appointment

The duration and the scope of the professorship derive from the terms of the employment contract entered into for the purpose of the professorship and not from the appointment itself. As this also applies to changes such as modifications to FTE, extensions of the employment contract or taking up a new temporary appointment after gaining emeritus status, no new decision on appointment is needed in such cases. In exceptional cases in which the professorship ends but the professor remains in employment, the appointment must be explicitly terminated by the Executive Board.

According to the Collective Labour Agreement for Universities in the Netherlands (CAO-NU),⁴ the university may enter into a fixed-term contract with a person employed in the position of professor for more than 0.2 FTE for a maximum of 12 months, or 18 months if this is the first employment contract. If the employment proves suitable, this arrangement will be converted into a permanent contract. Associate professors already employed by VU Amsterdam who are later appointed as professors, for example through a career track, usually already have permanent employment contracts.

1.2 Endowed professor

An **endowed professor** is not employed by VU Amsterdam and instead performs a primary role elsewhere. An endowed professor is appointed by an external organisation (legal entity), with the approval of VU Amsterdam's Executive Board, to perform duties in the domain of teaching, research and impact in a discipline that has permanent or temporary social and academic relevance and that adds value to the faculty and to VU Amsterdam. The appointment is limited in scope and is granted for a maximum of five years (with the possibility of reappointment).

There is no separate UFO profile for the position of endowed professor. The criteria set out in the UFO profile for a regular professor provide the main framework. However, due to the differences in career progression and career performance between professors and endowed professors, in practice these criteria cannot simply be applied unchanged to an endowed professor. VU Amsterdam therefore uses the following minimum appointment criteria for an endowed professor:

- Doctorate in a subject relevant to the chair;
- Ability to conduct scientific research, as evidenced by an academic PhD and relevant academic output;
- Ability to transfer academic knowledge in the domain of the endowed chair;
- National and/or international reputation in the professional field;
- Ability to promote connection and interaction between the current teaching and research at VU Amsterdam and external partners (in government, business and other sectors of society);
- UTQ or registration for a UTQ/teacher training course in the first year, tailored to the endowed professor's teaching duties.

We recommend that a candidate for an endowed professorship should have successfully completed two PhD programmes as co-supervisor.⁵ All newly appointed endowed professors are expected to be prepared to take the Supervising PhD Students course once they start supervising PhD students.⁶

Scope of the appointment

The availability of an endowed professor is at least 0.2 FTE.

⁴ Article 2.3

⁵ If the endowed professor has not yet completed two PhD programmes as co-supervisor, a professor at VU Amsterdam must be appointed as supervisor together with the endowed professor.

⁶ As the Supervising PhD Candidates course uses case studies from trainees' own practice, this training is offered to new supervisors one year after they start work.

Duration of the appointment

By definition, endowed professors are appointed on a temporary basis for five years, with the possibility of reappointment for a further five-year term. There is no maximum number of reappointments. An endowed professor is appointed not by the Executive Board, but by the legal entity that establishes the chair, after the Executive Board has given its consent.

The Executive Board's consent must also be obtained for reappointment.

1.3 Visiting professor

The temporary presence of a renowned academic as a visiting professor offers an attractive opportunity to strengthen existing strategic partnerships with other universities or to create new ones, to raise the profile of globalised science among staff and students within the professor's faculty and, above all, to temporarily enrich research groups and their research. In view of these advantages, visiting professors make a significant contribution to VU Amsterdam's reputation and profile.

A visiting professor is attached to VU Amsterdam on a temporary basis: the Executive Board formally admits visiting professors for an initial period of at least three months and at most five years. This protects the title of visiting professor within VU Amsterdam and makes it more attractive for academics to enrich the university as visiting professors. VU Amsterdam is keen to award visiting professorships to distinguished academics who are professors in a university-based or external research group that has a prominent international profile in the relevant field. As visiting professors are not formally appointed as professors at VU Amsterdam, the procedure differs from the formal appointment procedure for professors.

A visiting professor does not receive the *ius promovendi* (the right to confer doctorates) from VU Amsterdam. However, visiting professors may act as supervisor or co-supervisor by virtue of their professorship at another institution. Although visiting professors are not employed by VU Amsterdam, they do receive courtesy privileges. The faculty is empowered to agree on an expense allowance and any other facilities that comply with fiscal regulatory frameworks.

Visiting professors will spend a substantial part of their agreed working hours acting as a visiting professor at VU Amsterdam.

1.4 Roles cannot be combined

VU Amsterdam (including the Faculty of Medicine) views the combination of an assistant or associate professorship and a regular or endowed professorship as undesirable. As a result, no combination of these roles is permitted. Professors are expected to perform all aspects of their role thoroughly and with integrity at a professorial level. It is also true that, in practice, the different relationships of authority between the categories of professor and assistant/associate professor are hard to distinguish from each other when both roles are performed by the same person. However, it is possible to hold a regular or endowed professorship at VU Amsterdam and an assistant or associate professorship elsewhere, or vice versa. Employees can also combine the roles of professor and (exclusively) healthcare provider (Amsterdam UMC) within VU Amsterdam.

1.5 Joint professor appointments between multiple faculties

A professor may be appointed to two faculties with the same teaching assignment. In such cases, the total scope of the appointment is divided between the two faculties. The request to establish the chair and the appointment nomination are submitted by the 'coordinating' dean, supported by a letter from the dean of the other faculty. Both faculties are of course represented on the BAC.

1.6 Joint professor appointments with another university

A professor may be appointed at two universities with the same teaching assignment. The professor enters into an employment contract with one of the universities and is seconded to the other for part of that employment contract, with a corresponding secondment agreement. The professor is nominated by means of a single file that the two faculties prepare together. Both faculties are represented on the BAC.

2 Types of chairs

There are different types of chairs at VU Amsterdam: regular, endowed and sponsored. These three groups are explained below. VU Amsterdam also hosts temporary chairs linked to university outreach programmes, such as the Fenna Diemer Lindeboom chair. These temporary chairs are described in greater detail in a separate document. Candidates for these chairs are appointed as regular professors.

2.1 Regular chairs

Regular chairs form the core of teaching and research at the university. Professors (see 1.1) appointed to these chairs are employed by the university. A request to establish a regular chair can be submitted to the Executive Board at the time of the candidate's nomination.

2.2 Sponsored chairs

It is possible for a regular chair to be sponsored; it is then referred to as a sponsored chair. The sponsor is identifiable to third parties at all times by a clear statement such as: 'This chair is funded by'. Each chair may have multiple sponsors. To ensure continuity, sponsorship agreements should ideally be entered into for a term of at least five years.⁷ The professor appointed to a sponsored chair is employed by the university, and the duration of the appointment is derived from the employment contract entered into for the professorship. Sponsorship of a chair is generally a temporary arrangement, lasting for one or two terms. The faculty is responsible for costs that are not covered by the sponsorship, as well as costs incurred after the sponsored period ends.

Requests to establish a sponsored chair and/or to convert a regular chair into a sponsored chair must be approved by the Executive Board, and such requests must be submitted to the Executive Board prior to and separately from the candidate's nomination. The Executive Board's approval is not required to extend the sponsorship agreement after the first term.

The request to establish a sponsored chair must include the reason why this sponsor was chosen and whether there are any potential risks associated with collaborating with this sponsor (impartiality, reputational damage, knowledge security). The request to establish a sponsored chair must include a draft sponsorship agreement. The request will be assessed against various criteria, including the considerations surrounding the decision to collaborate with this partner, whether the collaboration aligns with the values of VU Amsterdam and whether any risks are involved. The sponsorship agreement may be signed once the Executive Board issues a positive decision.

Where a further sponsor is added at a later date, the Executive Board's approval must again be sought by means of a letter setting out the above reasoning and an amended sponsorship agreement.

VU Amsterdam publishes an overview of all endowed and sponsored chairs on its website, including the relevant legal entities and sponsors. This list is updated twice a year.

Sponsors have no formal role in deciding what research and teaching is conducted. However, the sponsor may engage with the chair, preferably by receiving an annual report from the holder of the chair. The chair holder meets annually with the head of department and/or dean to discuss the progress and impartiality of the chair. The assessment of the chair holder takes place during the regular annual interview.

VU Amsterdam will only consent to establish a sponsored chair if:

- the collaboration with the sponsor cannot damage the reputation of VU Amsterdam by affecting impartiality, integrity, ethics or academic freedom;

⁷ Sponsorship agreements are governed by the prevailing rules regarding authority to sign.

- the collaboration aligns with VU Amsterdam's policies and values;
- there is no risk to knowledge security.

2.3 Endowed chairs

Endowed chairs create a bridge between the university and wider society. They offer a platform where new knowledge and fields can be profiled or represented in teaching and research, and they both attract and generate specific expertise in research and/or teaching. Endowed chairs can take many different forms. An endowed professor is employed elsewhere, with the endowed chair being an ancillary position. As endowed professors are usually employed by an external legal entity, they represent an important link between that entity and the university. However, some endowed professors are appointed through an open recruitment process and were not already associated with the legal entity. Civil society bodies – companies, institutions, foundations and government agencies – can ask the university to establish an endowed chair to promote the development of a particular field of study or academic interest.

VU Amsterdam will only consent to establish an endowed chair if:

- the endowed chair has something to add to the research and/or teaching profile of the faculty and university and/or contributes to impact;
- the endowed chair aligns with the faculty's profile and strategy;
- the collaboration with the external legal entity and/or the ultimate financial backer cannot damage the reputation of VU Amsterdam by affecting impartiality, integrity, ethics or academic freedom;
- the collaboration aligns with VU Amsterdam's policies and values;
- there is no risk to knowledge security.

The request for authorisation to establish an endowed chair must be made prior to the request for approval for the appointment of a candidate as an endowed professor.

Financial conditions

VU Amsterdam will only consent to establish an endowed chair if the legal entity or the employer can confirm the remuneration procedure for the endowed professor. Options include: a) The endowed professor is employed by the legal entity, and the legal entity seconds the endowed professor to VU Amsterdam for the endowed professorship for at least 0.2 FTE (in kind); b) The endowed professor is not employed by the legal entity, but the legal entity compensates the endowed professor's employer for at least 0.2 FTE, or the employer seconds the endowed professor without receiving compensation.

Faculties provide endowed professors with an expense allowance for duties related to the endowed chair, and agreements are made and recorded between the faculty and the endowed professor upon nomination or reappointment. These are additional expenses (for office and travel expenses, literature, et cetera⁸) which the endowed professor can claim internally within the faculty. These arrangements are in line with regulations (regarding the declaration of these expenses to the Dutch Tax Administration) and transparency regarding the financing of endowed chairs. These arrangements must be clearly formulated and recorded at the time of nomination or reappointment.

Endowed chairs appointed through the Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam

In very exceptional cases, the Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam may establish an endowed chair. Only when no other construction is possible (sponsored chair or endowed chair with an external legal entity) can an explicit and reasoned request to this effect be submitted by the dean to the Board of the Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam.

The Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam then assesses the application. If the Foundation agrees, the complete file can be submitted to the Executive Board.

Where an external legal establishes an endowed chair at the university through the Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam, the connection with the strategic partner must be made clear at all times. VU

⁸ Where the actual, verifiable costs are demonstrably higher than the allowance provided, the endowed professor and the faculty may agree on an additional expense allowance.

Amsterdam publishes an overview of all endowed and sponsored chairs on its website twice a year, identifying the legal entities and financial backers (including the entities who are actually responsible for paying an endowed professor). The names of partners who establish a chair at VU Amsterdam through the Foundation for Endowed Chairs at VU Amsterdam are also published.

Number of endowed chairs

To achieve the right balance between regular and endowed professors, and to limit the burden on the internal organisation, VU Amsterdam follows the principle that the percentage of endowed professors in the faculty should not exceed 30% of the total number of professors.

Supervision of endowed chairs; role and composition of the curatorial panel

The supervision of endowed professors differs from that of regular professors. Whereas professors fall under the authority of the dean, endowed professors are not directly accountable to a dean, but rather to a specific curatorial panel set up for each endowed chair. The curatorial panel has the following duties:

- supervising the endowed chair;
- ensuring that the academic quality, integrity and impartiality of the work to be performed by the endowed professor are sufficient;
- acting as a sparring partner;
- reporting to the legal entity and to the faculty board.

The curatorial panel consists of no more than three members, including two professors from the faculty. The dean does not sit on the curatorial panel and may only attend sessions as an observer. Members of the curatorial panel are appointed by the legal entity, but their appointment is subject to the consent of the faculty board.

To strengthen engagement between the faculty, the curatorial panel and the endowed professor, the head of department — where this person is not a member of the curatorial panel — should have some involvement in the panel's evaluation. The dean of the faculty monitors the supervisory role of the panel members with regard to the endowed chairs within the faculty; if necessary, the dean can also remind members of their monitoring and reporting obligations.

3. Personnel policy

3.1 Recruitment

Professors join VU Amsterdam through open recruitment. Open recruitment may take place when a chair becomes vacant, for example due to retirement, and a candidate is recruited externally. Where internal candidates are nominated for a professorship, their open recruitment must have taken place when they obtained permanent employment at VU Amsterdam. In practice, most professors are appointed through internal transfer from Associate Professor 1 positions. In such cases, the nomination for appointment is the result of a thorough implementation of the personnel policy in which the appointment was prepared in annual meetings, staff reviews and the strategic personnel plan (SPP) and/or was the result of a successful career track.

Career tracks

VU Amsterdam offers the option of career tracks to enable staff to follow personalised, diversified career paths.

Nominations for a chair can be made after a candidate has completed a career track. To be eligible for this nomination pathway, the candidate must have joined the university through open recruitment. The open recruitment process may have taken place at an earlier stage of the candidate's career, for example when starting work as an assistant professor. In all other cases, nominations should be made following a recruitment procedure based on open recruitment.

VU Amsterdam has several principles and instruments in place for recruiting professors, as explained below.

A career track is an agreement between a department and/or faculty and a staff member, involving time-bound performance and guidance targets to advance to a higher position. A career track with advancement to professor involves the following aspects:

- a description of the intended advancement to Professor 2, including the candidate's choice of focus domain;
- the steps the candidate is expected to take to achieve the target level, with a timeline;
- the support (including training) to be offered during the career track.

A career track is neither a necessary condition for promotion nor a guarantee of advancement; it is more like a tool.

Faculties record their career tracks in their SPP, and the structure of career tracks is set out in faculty guidelines.

Each year, before the summer, the faculty sends the Executive Board an overview of its expected nominations for appointments of professors and associate professors in the coming academic year. This overview also records its current career-track and tenure-track professorship appointments and indicates which professors are expected to leave in the coming academic year. The overview forms part of an annual interview between the dean and the rector.

When nominating candidates who have completed a career track, it is not necessary to request a dispensation from open recruitment in advance if the career track was recorded in the annual overview. In the case of closed recruitment for internal candidates who have not followed a career track, and for external candidates, this dispensation must be requested in advance.

Open international recruitment

If a vacant chair is not filled through a career track, the next source of candidates is open international recruitment – or rather, open *search*. After all, talent recruitment is about maximising academic quality and optimising diversity and inclusion to enrich the quality of the team. In some cases, a combination of scouting and open recruitment may produce better results. Top talent is scarce, so we need to take an active approach and draw on an international network. In this professional approach, the university is always explicitly looking for international, diverse talent. The VU Amsterdam recruitment services team can support faculties to do this.

Recruitment for endowed chairs

Open recruitment is preferred for endowed chairs. However, the endowing legal entity often already has a candidate in mind, and in such cases it is possible to request a dispensation from open recruitment. The dean must give adequate reasoning for these requests.

Dispensation from open recruitment

Sometimes VU Amsterdam becomes aware of an opportunity to attract an excellent candidate to join the university as a professor. As some disciplines have a very competitive labour market, in highly exceptional cases a closed procedure may be possible.

When open recruitment is not required and no candidate who has completed a career track is nominated, the faculty submits a well-reasoned request for dispensation to the rector prior to starting the appointment procedure.

Appointment advisory committee (BAC)

The appointment advisory committee (BAC) is charged with recruiting and selecting candidates for the position of professor. As the BAC advises the faculty board about the candidate, members of the faculty board do not serve on the BAC. Ultimately, the faculty board submits a nomination to the Executive Board, which then decides whether to appoint the candidate.

The guidelines for the composition of the BAC are as follows:

- Chair: professor/head of department;
- 1-2 professors (from outside the department in question);
- 1-2 members of academic staff from the department in question or from a similar field of study;
- a programme director;
- 1-2 external academic advisers (from outside VU Amsterdam), preferably professors, with expertise in the field in question;
- a Director of an Interdisciplinary Research Institute if the appointment relates to a relevant field of study;
- a member of another faculty at VU Amsterdam if the appointment relates to a field of study that affects that faculty's discipline;
- HR advisor;
- a student as an advisory external member (optional).

Additional comments:

- The BAC should include at least two female academics;
- The BAC should ideally have one member with an international, non-Dutch background.

Self-image interview

An important and unique aspect of both open and closed recruitment at VU Amsterdam is that the university organises a self-image interview with prospective professors. The dean and the candidate hold this discussion before the nomination is submitted to the Executive Board, with the aim of reflecting on the underlying values of VU Amsterdam and the Art of Engagement and on the candidate's own values. A report of this interview is included in the candidate's file.

3.2 Strategic personnel policy

Each department has its own SPP that sets out the strategic developments in teaching, research and impact that are relevant to the ambitions of the department and its staff and to the staffing of the department and its sections/teams. The establishment of a chair or a professorial appointment is usually announced in the SPP between three and five years in advance.

The SPP includes a regular (annual) staff review. This review involves a discussion between managers about the performance, development and mobility needs of employees within the unit, as these relate to the future scenario that has been outlined for the unit.

The review offers an insight into the quality of the unit as a whole.

3.3 Diversity and inclusion

Diversity is a core aspect of the identity of VU Amsterdam. VU Amsterdam believes that diversity helps improve the quality of teaching and research and has a positive effect on collaborations. People may differ in terms of their ethnic, cultural or religious background, social and political views, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, prior education and academic discipline. Everyone in our university community should be able to build connections across these differences. We strive to broaden our horizons and remain open to the uniqueness of others.

We want to create a recruitment process that offers all underrepresented groups a level playing field, and we strive to build an inclusive working environment and focus on recognising talent in an inclusive way.

In line with these principles, the diversity policy for professors focuses on increasing the number of female professors. Although there is a rich pool of female academic talent available, we still cannot simply assume that these women will advance to professorial positions. With this in mind, in 2020 we set ourselves a goal: at least 35% of all professors should be women by 2025.

The professorship policy uses the following instruments for this purpose:

- include at least two female academics on the BAC;
- if a male candidate is ultimately nominated, state in the BAC report what efforts were made to seek out and approach women;
- distribute the scouting guidelines for recruiting and selecting female professors to BAC members.

When it comes to faculties, the faculty plans must explicitly address the faculty recruitment strategy and objectives for the recruitment and selection of female academic staff.

3.4 Promotion from Professor 2 to Professor 1

In the interest of achieving a balanced personnel policy, proposals for promotion to Professor 1 should be drafted with care. The bar for this promotion is high, and only a small number of professors will qualify. Most of the achievements that may support promotion to Professor 1 involve significant contributions to the university, faculty and/or society that go above and beyond the candidate's own domain of teaching and/or research in the Netherlands. Simply having an excellent research or teaching profile is never sufficient to achieve promotion to Professor 1 on its own, and nor is taking on a role in governance. Candidates for promotion to Professor 1 must excel in leadership, in management and in at least one of the focus areas of teaching, research or impact.

As promotion to Professor 1 is an exceptional situation involving only a select group of candidates, the College of Deans advises the Executive Board in its decision-making and there are central qualitative criteria in place to guide the process.⁹

Criteria

1. Candidates have delivered excellent performance in the position of professor for at least five years.
2. Professors are the public face of the faculty and the university and represent the faculty and the university in their research and/or teaching area, both in the academic world and in wider society.
3. They are also expected to play an important role in the future in terms of raising the profile of the faculty and the university, both in the Netherlands and internationally.

Teaching

Professors 1 with a focus on education are internationally recognised experts and role models in teaching (quality, development and innovation). Even more than Professors 2, Professors 1 can inspire and motivate others and create large-scale innovation in teaching, thereby leading to social progress. Professors 1 must have demonstrated the ability to train, mentor and inspire the next generation of academic teams. Professors 1 set the standard in the field of teaching, both within and outside the faculty and university. Professors 1 foster

⁹ The University Framework for Academic Career Paths sets out the qualitative criteria for Professors 2. The corresponding quantitative indicators are devised at the faculty level.

teamwork between teachers and promote community building around teaching, both within their own faculty and beyond.

Research

Professors 1 with a focus on education are internationally recognised experts, promote research in teams and serve as role models in research (quality, development and innovation). Even more than Professors 2, Professors 1 are able to inspire and motivate others and create academic impact on a large scale. Professors 1 are exemplary representatives of their field of research, both within and outside the faculty and university. Professors 1 must have demonstrated the ability to train, mentor and inspire the next generation of academics. Professors 1 represent VU Amsterdam in prestigious international research programmes and at high-profile conferences, and their scientific publications are valued and used by leading colleagues.

Impact

Professors 1 with a focus on impact are internationally recognised experts, serve as role models in terms of impact and take a leading role in initiating opportunities for knowledge transfer and achieving social innovation. Due to the significant relevance and visibility of their own teaching and/or research for their field, society, government and/or business, Professors 1 represent VU Amsterdam both within academia and in the relevant sectors of society. Professors 1 maintain an extensive network that includes key players both in academia and in the practical sphere, and they train the next generation of academics to do the same. This puts Professors 1 in a key position to promote the exchange of experience and ideas between academia and society – a position these professors frequently draw on, not least to achieve the collective benefit of VU Amsterdam.

Leadership

Professors 1 develop and pioneer a vision in their field of study that aligns with the principles of open science and academic integrity. This means that, even more than Professors 2, Professors 1 inspire, mentor and encourage teams of Dutch and international researchers, teachers and students.

Professors 1 serve as role models in exemplifying connecting leadership. They proactively contribute to positive cooperation within and between teams in the organisation and help build an open, safe and inclusive environment for working and learning. Professors 1 have self-knowledge and the ability to reflect on their motivations; they can organise their own feedback and they view mistakes as learning opportunities.

Management

Professors 1 have demonstrated leadership skills in team management and in ensuring the well-being of individual teams and team members. In this, Professors 1 set an example of connecting leadership that shows its worth in promoting healthy group relationships, talent development, social safety and inclusion. Professors 1 maintain an open, safe climate within their teams. Professors 1 have demonstrated the ability to coach and inspire employees and teams. In addition, Professors 1 are able to manage finances, processes and strategy while bringing together divergent interests.

Procedure

A department head can submit suggestions for promotion to the faculty board by presenting a completed promotion proposal file. This file consists of the offer letter and a completed assessment portfolio, including the 360-degree feedback report. Deans may consult a faculty HR advisor, existing Professors 1 in the faculty and members of the faculty's appointment or advisory committee.

They then submit each complete file to the College of Deans. Files which achieve a positive recommendation from the College of Deans are submitted to the Executive Board for final approval. The candidate is promoted once the Executive Board issues a positive decision.

3.5 Emeriti policy

Professors generally retire at the official state pension age, thus legally terminating their employment at VU Amsterdam.

VU Amsterdam is keen to make sure that talented employees within the organisation have good career prospects, to promote these employees' interests and increase their loyalty to the university. VU Amsterdam is

therefore very cautious about entering into new employment contracts with employees who have reached state pension age; it is very rare for new contracts to be offered above this age.

VU expects managers to engage with the professor in question in good time (for example, three years before retirement) to discuss who will be appointed to the chair and to ensure a proper transition of their activities (research, teaching and impact) and management tasks. VU Amsterdam expects professors to draw on their vast knowledge and experience before they reach retirement age to provide knowledge transfer, coaching and mentoring to talented young colleagues. The factors of retirement and continuity should be included in the department's SPP and annual plan before the professor achieves emeritus status.

Ius promovendi

Emeritus professors retain the *ius promovendi* for a period of five years, although VU Amsterdam policy states that they may not start supervising any new PhD programmes after achieving emeritus status.

In the same way, the *ius promovendi* also applies for five years after professors achieve emeritus status (ABP KeuzePensioen) or receive honourable discharge before retirement age.

Courtesy privileges and employment contracts

In some cases, a faculty may wish to maintain closer ties with a professor. These faculties have two options:

- Courtesy privileges
- Temporary employment (employment contract)

The decision to grant courtesy privileges or temporary employment must enjoy the support of the department. The department's management team makes a reasoned proposal to the faculty board regarding the continuity of the chair, its activities and how this decision promotes the department's interests.

Courtesy privileges for emeriti

Where a faculty wishes an emeritus professor to remain attached to the faculty, for example to complete ongoing PhD programmes (see above re: *ius promovendi*), in most cases it is sufficient to arrange for a retired professor to remain with courtesy privileges. These professors continue to perform a limited number of their original activities on a voluntary basis. In addition to continuing to supervise PhD students who had already started their studies in advance of the emeritus status, they also occasionally carry out other activities. The faculty enables this by providing facilities such as an e-mail account, and perhaps a computer or workstation. The purpose of the courtesy privileges must be clear both to the faculty concerned and to the professor emeritus, and clear arrangements must be made about when the professor should be present on campus. Courtesy privileges are always granted for a limited period of up to one year, and they may not be granted for more than five years after the professor reaches state pension age.

Faculties should consult an HR adviser well in advance.

Temporary employment contracts with emeriti

Please note: the CAO-NU allows for six fixed-term employment contracts within a maximum of 48 months after reaching state pension age.

There are three situations in which a post-retirement temporary employment contract, which may be funded directly, may benefit the organisation:

1. To cover the time until a successor starts work. Where there is such a transition period, the dean decides on whether to grant an employment contract.

No nomination needs to be submitted to the Executive Board, and the term of the contract cannot last more than two years.

2. When retaining the professor is very important to the organisation. In this case, the faculty board must submit the request to the Executive Board on behalf of the department's management team,

- explaining the purpose and importance of entering into a new employment contract;
- describing what will be the professor's role and position in the relevant research group under the new contract;

- describing the professor's position in relation to the new/prospective chair holder for the field of study in question;
- demonstrating that granting a new employment contract to the professor is not likely to have a negative impact on the faculty's talent policy;
- setting out the professor's regular activities or role in the faculty's teaching and/or research programme, and the duration of those activities or that role.

3. When there is an ERC advanced grant or similar prestigious personal grant whose lead supervision/coordination is vested in VU Amsterdam, or a grant for which the faculty has given the professor an embedding guarantee. Again, a maximum of 48 months applies, and the duration and extent of temporary employment is determined by the number of hours allocated for the emeritus professor during the project. The faculty board submits the request to enter into a temporary employment contract after state pension age to the Executive Board on behalf of the department's management team.

Following a positive decision by the Executive Board, the faculty may enter into a new employment contract that aligns with the request. Should the faculty wish to extend the employment contract, this new request is submitted to the Executive Board for a decision in accordance with the procedure described above.

4. Quality assurance and academic integrity

4.1 Academic integrity

Academics occupy an important position in society, and their impartiality must be beyond question. Any appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided.

VU Amsterdam is responsible for protecting academic integrity in the academic teaching, research and social services provided by our staff.

To protect this integrity, VU Amsterdam and Amsterdam UMC have adopted as their normative framework the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, which entered into force on 1 October 2018.

4.2 Ancillary activities

Ancillary activities entail paid or unpaid work for third parties that particular employees are not assigned to do as part of their position. The CAO-NU stipulates that all university employees must report their ancillary activities to their employer. This also applies to endowed professors. Employees may only carry out ancillary activities once they have obtained the employer's permission.

Some ancillary activities may conflict with VU Amsterdam's interests, for example due to a conflict or clash of interests or the risk of damage to the university's image. Professors must actively register their ancillary activities through the self-service procedure. They can do this at any time during the year. VU Amsterdam sends all employees an annual reminder in the form of a task, asking them to check their ancillary activities and make any necessary updates. The registered ancillary activities of academic staff are automatically published on the personal page of the VU Amsterdam Research Portal.

All nominations of regular or endowed professors and reappointments of endowed professors include an overview of their ancillary activities. The dean verifies that there is no conflict of interests and confirms this verification in the nomination file.

Please note: as endowed professors always have their primary employment elsewhere, and are not employed by VU Amsterdam, from VU Amsterdam's perspective they all conduct ancillary activities.

4.3 Knowledge security

Knowledge security aims to prevent the unwanted transfer of sensitive knowledge and technology.

There is also a risk that other countries could covertly influence teaching and research, potentially jeopardising academic freedom and social safety.

Collaborations with countries which do not respect fundamental rights may give rise to ethical issues related to knowledge security. Knowledge security is not a static concept: factors such as evolving geopolitical relations can affect the lens through which past or current collaborations are viewed.

Due diligence is particularly important when a faculty plans to enter into a partnership (for example, for an endowed or sponsored chair) or when guest professors are invited to the university. You can find the VU Amsterdam Framework for Knowledge Safety on the Knowledge security page of VU.nl. There is also a Knowledge Safety Advisory Group that can answer faculties' questions about knowledge safety.

4.4 Safeguarding the impartiality of endowed and sponsored chairs

VU Amsterdam has taken specific measures relating to collaboration with third parties for endowed and sponsored chairs, with a view to safeguarding the impartiality of both VU Amsterdam and the researcher:

- It is self-evident that open recruitment is important in these situations;
- The external legal entity/sponsor does not sit on the BAC;
- Neither the chair's external legal entity nor the sponsor interferes in the research and publications. The model sponsorship agreement includes an article to this effect;
- There is full disclosure of the sponsorship, including a note on all publications and an overview on VU.nl that is updated twice a year;

- The offer letter explains the funding and remuneration structure of the endowed professor or sponsored chair and explicitly discusses whether the collaboration could pose any risks to impartiality, integrity, ethics or academic freedom;
- No more than one member of the curatorial panel for an endowed chair may represent the chair's external legal entity;
- The sponsorship agreement for a sponsored chair states that VU Amsterdam is entitled to publish the results of the research conducted for the chair in accordance with Open Science principles.