



AALBORG UNIVERSITET

Human Resources

Date: 10.2.2021

Contact: Susanne B. Hansen

Last revised: 10.2.2021

Last revised by: Susanne B. Hansen

Next revision date:

Date of approval: 10.2.2021

Approved by: Executive Management

Case No.: 2021-201-00030

Tenure-track employment at AAU

Purpose and Scope

Tenure-track employment at AAU describes the rules and procedures for using tenure-track employment at AAU.

Table of contents

1. Legal basis	1
2. Purpose	1
3. Tenure-track employment	1
4. Recruitment and appointment	2
5. Offers and requirements for assistant professors with tenure-track employment	3
6. Process	4
6.1 Aligning expectations (career plan and follow-up interview)	4
6.2 Evaluation process (annual and mid-term evaluation)	4
7. Tenure-track assessment / associate professor assessment	6

Tenure-track employment at AAU

1. Legal basis

Tenure-Track Employment at AAU was prepared in accordance with the *Ministerial Order on Job Structure for Academic Staff at Universities* (the job structure). Accordingly, the university has the option of offering tenure-track employment to assistant professors and researchers.

2. Purpose

Tenure-track employment at AAU outlines the rules and procedures that apply for tenure-track employment at AAU.

Tenure-track employment at Aalborg University is a career offer for the most talented and promising researchers and teachers from all over the world.

By offering an internationally recognisable career path with greater job security, tenure-track employment helps to

- increase the ability to attract and retain highly qualified, talented research and teaching staff from around the world
- focus on continuous professional development for assistant professors/researchers early in their careers
- create transparency in the scientific career path

3. Tenure-track employment

Tenure-track employment is employment following public advertisement for assistant professors/researchers who, subject to positive assessment, will automatically transfer to employment as an associate professor/senior researcher.

Tenure-track assistant professors/researchers are offered employment for a six-year period during which they must acquire qualifications at the associate professor level. At the end of the period, the assistant professor/researcher¹ transfers to employment as an associate professor/senior researcher, subject to positive assessment. Promotion to associate professor/senior researcher is thus based solely on the staff member's own results and not on competition with other candidates.

Profile

In tenure-track employment, AAU attaches particular importance to:

- The candidate has a PhD degree or equivalent qualifications
- The candidate can demonstrate a high degree of autonomy in their previous education and employment path
- The candidate shows considerable potential and is among the best in their field
- The candidate has academic experience from several universities and/or research institutions and preferably international experience
- The candidate is a skilled communicator
- The candidate writes and speaks English at the academic level

¹ Subsequent sections primarily mention assistant professors, but the content includes both assistant professors and researchers.

- The candidate is expected to meet the criteria for permanent employment at AAU at the end of the tenure-track process

Particular faculty and/or department-specific requirements for the profile are also clearly described in the job advertisement and subsequently in the individual tenure-track career plan.

In order to ensure the best candidates, every effort is made to ensure diversity in the selection of candidates, including representing more than one gender if this is compatible with the required qualifications.

4. Recruitment and appointment

Recruitment and appointment follow the general procedure for recruiting and appointing assistant professors at AAU, with the addition of the following:

- All tenure-track positions are advertised
 - The job advertisement must indicate that the position is tenure-track
 - The job advertisement must clearly stipulate and ensure transparency about the criteria emphasised in the assessment when transferring from the level of assistant professor/researcher to the level of associate professor/senior researcher
 - The criteria may be divided into general expectations for research, research-based teaching, research-based public sector consultancy, knowledge dissemination, etc.

The assessment committee is set up according to the university's general rules for assessment, including the composition of the assessment committee. It would be appropriate to direct the assessors' attention to the fact that this is a tenure-track position.

The head of department is chair of the tenure-track appointment committee. The dean makes the final decision on appointment based on the recommendation from the head of department.

Recruitment and appointment process	
Recruitment	
Department heads and deans	The recruitment process follows the AAU rules on announcing positions, shortlisting and search committees - however, a special job advertisement is prepared (cf. points 3 and 4 above). The assessment committee is set up according to the AAU rules on assessment .
Head of department - with the involvement of relevant persons to ensure anchoring in the department	Job advertisement is discussed Ensure that assessment criteria are included in the job ad (cf. point 4 above).
Application	
Applicant submits application	
Content required:	Application CV Degree certificates Publication list Research activities and research plan

	Teaching portfolio Any participation in public sector consultancy Participation on committees and in admin. forums References
Assessment	
	Assessment follows the AAU rules and procedures for assessment
Assessment committee	Manages assessment of applicants' academic competences (Ensure knowledge of AAU tenure track)
Appointment	
The head of department	Chair of the appointment committee
Appointment committee (faculty may have formulated requirements for appointment committees)	Selects candidates for interview based on assessment of assessment committee
	Holds interviews
	Obtains opinions from references
The head of department	Submits recommendation for appointment attaching the recommendation of the appointment committee and assessment committee's assessment of the candidates
Dean	Approves the recommendation for appointment

5. Offers and requirements for assistant professors with tenure-track appointment

Offers for staff

The faculty and/or department offer a special framework for the candidate who is employed in a tenure-track position. The framework may consist of:

- access to state-of-the-art research infrastructure
- a mentor or supervisor
- support for developing scientific networks and results
- opportunity to develop project management competences
- opportunity to develop research management competences
- support for applying for external funding
- annual follow-up and mid-term evaluation with head of department/immediate superior
- financial flexibility for travel costs, conferences and other networking activities
- special on-boarding support for international staff members and accompanying family

The content and scope of the framework are individually negotiated for each appointment

Requirements for staff

As part of the AAU tenure-track process, the tenure-track staff member is expected to:

- participate in drawing up their individual tenure-track career plan
- conduct independent scientific work at high (international) level
- be a supervisor for Master's students and possibly co-supervisor for PhD students
- provide high-quality, independent teaching with satisfactory teaching evaluations and/or provide high quality advising

- complete the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors as well as further competence development in teaching (PBL)
- Bring in external funding – however, this is assessed in terms of the individual subject area
- participate in collaborative projects with other research groups and, depending on the area, also with advisory institutions; participate in innovation activities and work with external partners such as industry and other business partners

In addition:

- In the long term, the candidate masters the Danish language
(The desire for a specific time horizon is specified in the individual tenure track career plan and, where appropriate, in the job advertisement (cf. points 4 and 6.1))

6. Process

6.1. Aligning expectations

At the beginning of the employment process, the head of department/immediate superior holds an interview with the new staff member so that they are aware of the requirements, guidelines and expectations associated with the tenure-track process. At this meeting to align expectations, the tenure-track career plan is made, indicating the objectives for the tenure-track staff member's development process.

After six months, a follow-up interview is held.

The tenure-track career plan must be filled out and stored in WorkZone in the staff member's employment record within the first three months of the tenure-track staff member's period of employment.

6.2 Evaluation process

Substantial emphasis is placed on the management task involved with the tenure-track staff member. Tenure-track employment at AAU is done according to the job structure meaning that at the end of the process the tenure-track staff member automatically transfers to a position as an associate professor or senior researcher upon a positive assessment. It is thus important that the most talented candidates are employed in tenure-track positions as these individuals will shape the AAU of the future. A number of evaluations have therefore been included in the tenure-track process in order to focus on the individual staff member's development and document performance. First and foremost, there is an annual evaluation where the tenure-track staff member and head of department/immediate superior follow up on the tenure-track career plan that was agreed on at the beginning of the period of employment. In addition, there is a mid-term evaluation that includes inviting relevant external persons to evaluate the tenure-track staff member and indicate how far the staff member is from an associate professor assessment.

Annual evaluation

The annual evaluation is held between the tenure-track staff member and the head of department or immediate superior. The evaluation must be done based on the staff member's tenure-track career plan.

The annual evaluation has two objectives:

- to focus on the individual staff member's development and
- to document the individual's performance

thus ensuring that the tenure-track staff member is performing satisfactorily and according to their tenure-track career plan.

The evaluation must provide the tenure-track staff member with clear and qualified feedback on whether they are making satisfactory progress in the tenure-track process. This is to ensure that the tenure-track staff member is on track to achieve a positive assessment and thus transfer to an associate professor/senior researcher position after the tenure-track process (when assessing whether the process has been satisfactory, documented illness and leave including maternity leave periods must be taken into account).

Documentation of the annual evaluation (e.g. minutes) is stored in the person's employment record in WorkZone.

Midterm evaluation

The mid-term evaluation must ensure a cross-cutting look at the tenure-track staff member. The mid-term evaluation is the first prelude to the final assessment.

The mid-term evaluation is initiated after almost three years of employment (halfway) in the tenure-track process.

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is:

- to serve as a status report for the tenure-track staff member and the management
- to ensure that the tenure-track staff member is on track to achieve a positive assessment upon completing the tenure-track process
- to guide the tenure-track staff member in planning the time remaining in the tenure-track process

Mid-term evaluation process

- The head of department sets up an evaluation committee consisting of:
 - the head of department (chair)
 - the department's teaching coordinator, possibly the vice head of department or the equivalent
 - one to two external reviewers (researchers in the field)
- The evaluation committee holds an interview with the tenure-track staff member. Minutes of the interview must be taken.
- The evaluation committee invites the tenure-track staff member to a feedback interview focusing on future perspectives, including planning the time remaining in the tenure-track process.

If the evaluation of the tenure-track staff member does not prove satisfactory, they still have the opportunity to correct the situation before the final assessment.

There may be very special cases where it is clear prior to this time that the tenure-track staff member is ready to undergo a final assessment and that therefore a mid-term evaluation prior to the final assessment is not appropriate.

Mid-Term Evaluation – description of process	
Head of department	The head of department is the chair of the evaluation committee. Sets up evaluation committees in accordance with the above. Invites the assistant professor to the mid-term evaluation.
Tenure-track staff member	May suggest <u>one to two</u> external reviewers
	Submits material for assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complete list of publications indicating the <u>five</u> most important works • A description of the research results achieved during the tenure-track process • A description of the planned research activities • Teaching portfolio and/or documentation of participation in public sector consultancy • A description of participation in various committees and administrative forums • CV Documents must be sent to all members of the evaluation committee.
Evaluation committee	Compiles and evaluates the material from the tenure-track staff member. Disseminates relevant excerpts to external reviewers.
External reviewers	Make a written assessment based on the material submitted.
Evaluation committee	Compiles external reviews. Makes an overall assessment based on criteria for permanent employment. Invites the tenure-track staff member to a feedback interview focusing on future perspectives, including planning the time remaining time in the tenure-track process.

In order to ensure that the mid-term evaluation takes place, Human Resources contacts the head of department informing them that it has now been one year and nine months since tenure-track appointment began and that the mid-term evaluation is approaching.

Documentation of the mid-term evaluation (e.g. minutes) is stored in the person's employment record in WorkZone.

7. Tenure-track assessment / associate professor assessment

At the end of the tenure-track process, the final assessment takes place in order to determine whether the tenure-track staff member is academically qualified to transfer to an associate professor position.

The assessment normally takes place in the final six months of the assistant professor/researcher's period of employment. However, the staff member may request that an assessment take place at an earlier time in the first four years. If this assessment finds that the staff member is not academically qualified, they may request another assessment within the final six months of their period of employment.

Thus, a maximum of two assessments may take place.

If the staff member fails to request that their qualifications be assessed in the last year of their period of employment or if they are assessed as not academically qualified, the university must immediately initiate dismissal proceedings in accordance with the collective agreement rules.

Upon positive assessment, the tenure-track staff member transfers to permanent employment as an associate professor or senior researcher.

Assessment is in accordance with the university's general [rules for assessment](#).

Assessment is in accordance with the university's general rules for assessment. See the [AAU rules for assessment and procedure description](#).

Final Tenure Assessment – description of process

Assessment is in accordance with the university's general rules for assessment. See the [AAU rules for assessment and procedure description](#).

In order to ensure that the final assessment takes place, Human Resources contacts the head of department informing them that it has now been five years since the tenure-track appointment began and that the final assessment is approaching.

The assessment is stored in the person's employment record in WorkZone.

With appointment as an associate professor upon a positive assessment, Human Resources sends employment papers to the person concerned.