

# AUDIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

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## 3.2 Supporting the competence development and well-being of the staff

- Korkeakoulun itsearviointi

### The university supports staff well-being at work

Physical, mental, and social capacity for work and activity is supported in a variety of ways. The university has a multi-site working model, which means that people can work flexibly on campus and remotely. A common policy on multi-site working aims to ensure successful and recovery-friendly multi-site working. A range of online materials and training courses on well-being at work are offered to support job retention. Staff well-being is monitored every two years through well-being surveys and, if necessary, pulse surveys. In spring 2022, an interaction and collaboration survey was carried out among the university services staff to find out their experiences of interaction and collaboration in the university community.

The progress and well-being of doctoral researchers is monitored through a biennial survey. The results of the surveys are used to plan and develop activities.

Staff well-being is supported by comprehensive occupational health care and an early support model. The skills of supervisors in dealing with different work capacity management situations are developed through regular training. Workplace surveys are carried out every five years to take a broad picture of the state of each unit and to support its operations and development work. The University Sport services Sykettä offers a wide range of physical activity services for both students and employees.

## Diversity, inclusion, and equality at the University of Eastern Finland

Making visible and strengthening the diversity of its staff and students is a strategic goal of the University of Eastern Finland. In a diverse, inclusive and equal workplace community, everyone can work, study, and participate as themselves, openly express new ideas, and contribute to the success of the university.

The current state of staff and student diversity has been mapped through various surveys and statistical data. In 2022, diversity will be a central theme in training and events for university staff. The topic is also addressed in training sessions for management and supervisors. By the end of 2022, the university's renewed Equality and Equal Opportunities Plan will include more specific objectives and measures to promote the above objectives. Diversity is linked to the university's sustainability and responsibility agenda and to the accessibility of higher education.

As of June 2021, researchers with grants have had the opportunity to enter into a part-time employment relationship (10%) with the university, improving their status and guaranteeing them access to the benefits normally covered by the employment relationship, as well as allowing them to become more closely involved in the university community. There is also a common title for doctoral researchers.

### Ensuring transparency and justification in recruitments

Strategic human resources planning provides a vision for expertise and recruitment needs over the next three years. Human resources planning is also used to implement strategy and renew operations.

The transparency of the recruitment process and the justification for the candidate selection are verified at different stages of the process. The recruitment process is carried out in cooperation with Human Resources Services and the recruitment decision is always made in accordance with the competence of the university as an employer.

A vacancy notice will be published for open applications (internal or external). Furthermore, in the case of direct recruitment, the job to be filled must be documented with the job title, job description, and other key information about the employment relationship. Vacant positions are published in the electronic recruitment system (SaimaRekry), on the university's website and LinkedIn pages, and on other electronic application channels relevant to the position.

The stages of the recruitment assessment and selection process are documented. A written merit or reference report is prepared for applicants, which includes an assessment of the applicants and the recruitment process described in an appropriate manner. Employment contracts are prepared in writing. The publicity of recruitment documents is determined by legislation and the documents are archived in accordance with the university's information management plan.

The career development of teachers and researchers is based on the guidelines and nomenclature of the national four-tier career model. In addition, the university's tenure track offers the best researchers an accelerated and personalised route to scientific career progression. Tenure track positions are always recruited in line with the strategic human resources planning of the faculties and departments. The university's current career model is being worked on to develop new models for the career development and skills development of teaching, research, and other staff. The aim is to enable staff to focus on tasks that match their expertise at different stages of their career. UEF's career modelling work will be linked to the preparation of reforms related to the EU's research assessment and the development of research careers. The university has been recognised by the European Commission for HR Excellence in Research for its long-term HRS4R development work. During 2022, the university will develop its activities to ensure the continued use of the logo. UEF is also committed to the DORA Declaration.

## Expertise development

Expertise development needs are identified through, for example, development and appraisal interviews, well-being at work surveys, and workplace surveys. A report on the expertise needs identified in the annual development discussions is drawn up and used to plan staff training. The planning process is supported by a working group on skills development, with a wide range of scientific and administrative disciplines represented. Staff expertise is strengthened by offering a wide range of free training in Finnish and English. The findability of staff training provision has been improved by centralising all training provision in the university's common [training calendar](#). The university will also offer more flexible ways of training (self-paced and instructor-led online and distance learning) and increase the number of courses offered in English, including management training.

The university has started to define competencies that describe the development of the expertise profiles of all staff. The focus is on strengthening expertise. The employee must have the basic knowledge and skills to work effectively and efficiently in a university environment with others, using time- and task-appropriate working methods and acquiring information. Cooperation in education and training takes place at the local, national, and European levels. UEF is part of the European consortium of YUFE universities, which develops common guidelines for the development of staff expertise. Staff have had the opportunity to participate in staff training provided by the YUFE universities.

UEF service design training has been piloted as training for managers of University Services and independent and service institutions.

### **Strengths**

10% employment contract for grant researchers

### **Enhancement areas**

Career models

Strategic Human Resources Plan

Diverse services for work ability and well-being at work

Workplace surveys to support the operation and development of the units

Expertise development opportunities and management training

Knowledge management

Transparency of work plans and objectives for teaching and research staff

Career and well-being services for doctoral researchers

Reform of recruitment practices and the recruitment system

Diversity work

Developing human resources and management indicators and monitoring progress