NTNU's guidelines for recruitment positions (version 18 June 2026)

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NTNU's guidelines for recruitment positions

These guidelines were adopted by the Rector on 2 January 2025 and from the same date they regulate qualification requirements and terms of employment for recruitment positions at NTNU. This is a translation of the original Norwegian version. Note that national legislation and NTNU guidelines may be available online only in Norwegian. [Last administratively following Rector decision 18 June 2026 pertaining to section 2.7 Integrated PhD education.]

1. General

The guidelines apply to appointments to recruitment positions under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (uhl.) and associated regulations.

The terms of employment are regulated by the Act relating to the Civil Service (sal.) to the extent that no special regulation has been issued pursuant to the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (uhl.) and associated regulations.

As a rule, all teaching and research positions and researcher positions must be publicly advertised. This applies to both permanent and temporary employment and is independent of the source of funding; cf. NTNU staff regulations.

Everyone involved in the process of appointment, transfer and promotion is obliged to follow the Public Administration Act's rules on impartiality (fvl. §§ 6, 7 and 8). They must not have close ties to any of the applicants or close cooperation, for example through supervision or co-publication, or any particular advantage or disadvantage from assessing them. The individual is responsible for assessing his or her impartiality and reporting circumstances that may lead to disqualification. See NTNU's guidelines on impartiality in the recruitment process.

Everyone involved in the processes for appointment, leave of absence and extension is subject to a duty of confidentiality regarding what they become aware of in connection with the case (fvl. § 13).

Applicants are considered a party to appointment cases and have the right of access pursuant to the regulations to the Public Administration Act (fvl. regulations, chapter 5). This means that applicants, for example, have the right to access:

- an extended list of applicants and the ranking of nominations. They can be given access to academic assessments of their own qualifications, but not recommendations.

Reference is made to the supplementary administrative guidelines and templates for the recruitment process:
Recruitment of temporary academic staff – PhD candidate and postdoctoral fellow (sharepoint.com)

1.1 Definitions and abbreviations

- *Recruitment positions* include research assistant (“*vitenskapelig assistent")*, doctoral research fellow (“*stipendiat”*), resident (“*spesialistkandidat”)* and postdoctoral fellow.
- *Educational competence* is pedagogical or didactic competence to promote learning, including knowledge and skills in the development and implementation of teaching and supervision at university and college level (Regulations to the University Act, section 3-8).
- *Career-enhancing work* is work beyond one's own research project and doctoral education that provides relevant knowledge and experience for further career paths in higher education or other sectors.

- *The career plan* includes career goals and measures, including career-enhancing work. It supplements the plan for doctoral work/research project. The career plan is agreed upon and followed up in the annual employee interview ("medarbeidersamtale").
- *Academic assessment* carried out by two internal academic staff with associate professor qualifications assesses the applicant's academic qualifications (internal assessment).
- *The recruitment group* conducts interviews and reference checks of applicants.
- *The authority to make recommendations* lies with the Head of Department.
- *The appointing authority* is vested in the Dean for Appointments to Recruitment Positions.

Abbreviations:
aml. – Act relating to the working environment, working hours and employment protection, etc. (Working Environment Act) ("arbeidsmiljøloven")
fvl. – Act relating to procedure in cases concerning the public administration (Public Administration Act) ("forvaltningsloven")
ldl. – Act relating to equality and prohibition against discrimination (Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act) ("likestillings- og diskrimineringsloven")
sal. – Act relating to the Civil Service (Civil Service Act) ("statsansatteloven")
sal. regulations – Regulations to the Act relating to Civil Service
uhl. – Act relating to Universities and University Colleges (Universities and University Colleges Act) ("universitets- og høyskoleloven")
uh. regulations – Regulations under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, Chapter 3: Teaching and Research Positions, Recruitment Positions and Tenure-Track Positions.

HTA – Basic Agreement for State Employees ("Hovedtariffavtalen")
MSCA - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Postdoctoral Fellowships
PD policy – NTNU policy for the appointment and career development for postdocs, 12 January 2022
RD – NTNU framework funding ("ramme drift")
RSO - NTNU strategy and restructuring funds ("ramme strategi og omstilling")
Staff regulations – NTNU staff regulations for teaching and research positions ("personalreglement")

2. Qualification requirements and job content

2.1 Postdoctoral Fellow ("postdoktor")

The purpose of a postdoctoral position is for the employee to develop a research profile and competence that qualifies him or her to apply for a position as an associate professor. The position may also provide other expertise of relevance to the postdoctoral fellow's further career (uh. regulations § 3-18).

For appointment as a postdoctoral fellow, a doctoral degree is required (uh. regulations § 3-18).

2.1.1 Length of the fixed-term period

The fixed-term period for employment shall be from three to four years. No one may be employed for more than one fixed-term period as a postdoctoral fellow at the same institution (uhl. § 7-6). The fixed-term period can be extended up to the maximum time frame, i.e. up to four full-time

equivalent years, if the scope of other career-enhancing work has been significantly increased after the postdoctoral fellow started in the position (uh. regulations § 3-17).[1]

Postdoctoral fellows should normally have been at an institution other than NTNU for at least a year prior to employment or be able to demonstrate extensive experience from academic environments outside NTNU. If this requirement is not met, it must be compensated for in the career plan, either through stays abroad or other suitable measures that give the candidate experience from academic environments outside NTNU (NTNU PD policy item 4).

All postdoctoral fellows shall, if possible, be offered employment for a fourth year. This will provide more room for internationalization, stays at other institutions, development of applications for research projects, teaching and supervision experience (NTNU PD policy item 8).

2.1.2 Career plan and career-enhancing work

A career plan must be prepared for the postdoctoral fellow, which specifies the competence he or she will acquire during the fixed-term period beyond the research project itself. The institution is responsible for ensuring that the career plan is followed up and that the postdoctoral fellow has access to career guidance throughout the postdoctoral period (uh. regulations § 3-18). See Chapter 3.

If the postdoctoral fellow does not already have educational competence that meets the requirements for a position as associate professor, the institution must arrange for the postdoctoral fellow to acquire such competence during the period of employment (uh. regulations § 3-18).[2] In such cases, the Department must assign relevant teaching tasks and create a basis for the employee to complete the university's basic pedagogical competence requirements as part of the career-enhancing work (ref. the career plan).

If the employee cannot document proficiency in Norwegian, Swedish or Danish at level A2 at the time of employment, the institution must offer free Norwegian language training with the aim to achieve Norwegian skills at minimum this level (uh. regulations § 3-18).[3] In such cases, the Department must plan for the employee to take Norwegian courses (ref. the career plan), but language training does not entitle the employee to an extension of the work contract.

To enable the main goal of qualifying for employment in a permanent academic position, postdoctoral fellows must conduct research at an international level. The postdoctoral fellows should also gain experience with application writing and training in research management (NTNU PD policy, section 7).

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[1] If the employer in a specific case and subject to application, wants to employ a PD in a 50 % part-time position or more in the whole or part of the fix-term period, the employment is correspondingly prolonged. The distribution between research and career-enhancing work is agreed with the employer. It should be ensured that the research work at least constitute two man-years (ref. chapter 6.3 terms of employment for doctoral research fellows). For externally funded postdocs, obligatory career-enhancing work (that is basic educational competence) must normally be internally funded (RD/RSO).

[2] NTNU's training programme for basic educational competence (gatherings, colleague supervision and projects) is credited in the employee's time account with 200 working hours (5-6 weeks of work). The programme normally runs over two semesters, and it is assumed that the employee has teaching assignments in both semesters.

[3] NTNU must offer language courses. The Departments must pay for textbooks and fees for courses and examinations. Employees who wish to take additional courses, should be given the opportunity to do so. The academic communities should encourage employees to practise Norwegian.

2.2 MSCA Postdoctoral Fellows

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellows can, if the Department and candidate so wish, be employed in a three- to four-year postdoctoral position, of which two full-time equivalent years are dedicated to the MSCA project.[4] In that case, the terms and conditions of employment in the Universities and University Colleges Regulations apply to postdoctoral fellows, including basic educational competence and Norwegian language training as career-enhancing work.

MSCA's contractual terms and conditions regarding academic supervision, career plans, research projects and activities that promote the research career are followed up in accordance with NTNU's guidelines for postdoctoral fellows as far as they are appropriate (Chapters 2.1 and 6.2).

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellows can alternatively be employed temporarily in a Senior Researcher 1109 position for two years.[5] Researchers are not entitled to leave of absence and extension under the special rules in Chapter 7.[6]

2.3 Postdoctoral fellow on tenure-track terms ("innstegsstilling")

For employment as a postdoctoral fellow on tenure-track terms, the terms of employment in Regulations to the Universities and University Colleges Act §§ 3-23 to 3-28 apply with NTNU's supplementary provisions (Norwegian webpage).

2.4 Doctoral research fellow ("stipendiat")

A doctoral research fellowship position is intended to lead to the attainment of a doctoral degree and contribute to the employee's qualification for relevant careers at higher education and research institutions and other sectors of working life where research competence is required (uh. regulations, § 3-19).

Appointment as a doctoral research fellow requires admission to a doctoral programme or a binding agreement on admission (uh. regulations § 3-19).

2.4.1 Length of the fixed-term period

At least three full-time equivalent years in the total fixed-term period must be dedicated to doctoral work. The position may also include other career-enhancing work (uh. regulations, section 3-19).

The fixed-term period for employment as a doctoral research fellow is three to four years. No one may be employed for more than one fixed-term period as a doctoral research fellow at the same institution (uhl. § 7-6). The fixed-term period can be extended up to the maximum time frame, that is, up to four full-time equivalent years, if the scope of other career-enhancing work has been significantly increased after the start of in the position (uh. regulations § 3-17).

2.4.2 Career plan and career-enhancing work

A career plan must be prepared specifying the competence that the doctoral research fellow will acquire beyond the doctoral work. The institution is responsible for ensuring that the career plan is

[4] Upon appointment or during the employment period, it can be agreed that the MSCA project is carried out full-time or part-time combined with other postdoctoral work at NTNU. If the MSCA Fellow only wishes to carry out the MSCA project, the employee can terminate the employment as a postdoctoral fellow after two years.
[5] That is, temporary employment as a researcher pursuant to Section 9 (1) of the Civil Service Act pertaining to temporary employment and Section 3 (3) of the Regulations under the Civil Service Act on employment without advertisement for externally funded assignments.
[6] For MSCA-PF, it is possible to apply to the EU for a suspension of the project due to maternity leave or long-term sick-leave and resume the project after the leave provided that the EU project is still active.

followed up and that the doctoral research fellow has access to career guidance throughout the doctoral education (uh. regulations § 3-19). See Chapter 3.

If the employee cannot document proficiency in Norwegian, Swedish or Danish at level A2 at the time of employment, the institution must offer free Norwegian language training with the aim to achieve Norwegian skills at minimum this level (uh. regulations § 3-18). In such cases, the Department must plan for the employee to take Norwegian courses (ref. the career plan), but language training does not entitle the employee to an extension of the work contract.[7]

2.5 Resident ("spesialistkandidat")

The aim of a resident position is to lead to recognition as a specialist in the relevant field. The position category must be used for specialist training in subject areas where there is a need to qualify persons for positions that require competence as both specialists and researchers (uh. regulations § 3-20).

For appointment as a resident, a higher degree examination in the subject area and practical training in the subject are required (uh. regulations § 3-20).

The fixed-term period for employment as a resident is two to four years. No one may be employed for more than one fixed-term period as a resident at the same institution (uhl. § 7-6).

In the event of employment for more than two years, the institution may include other career-enhancing work in the position (uh. regulations § 3-20).

2.6 Research assistant ("vitenskapelig assistant")

The aim of a position as a research assistant is to form the basis for a further academic career through work tasks that provide insight into and experience with scientific or artistic work and methods (uh. regulations § 3-21). The main tasks shall consist of scientific/artistic assistance and assistance with academic development work.[8] The work may include the development of a doctoral project to apply for a doctoral research fellowship position.

For appointment as a research assistant, at least one year of completed undergraduate studies or equivalent is required. Persons who have been employed as doctoral research fellows or have obtained a doctoral degree may not be employed as research assistants (uh. regulations § 3-21).

The fixed-term period for research assistants is up to two years. No one may be employed for more than one period as a research assistant at the same institution (uhl. § 7-6). The statutory provision is practised so that the total period of employment in the position(s) of research assistant at NTNU cannot exceed two full-time equivalent years.

Students in master's programmes can be offered part-time positions as research assistants. Part-time positions with average working hours shorter than 15 hours per week in total are exempt from

[7] NTNU must offer language courses. The Departments must pay for textbooks and fees for courses and examinations. Employees who wish to take additional courses, should be given the opportunity to do so. The academic communities should encourage employees to practise Norwegian.

[8] Examples of assistance with research, artistic work and academic development work: transcription of interviews and video data, assisting with reporting on projects, web editing and preparation of news stories for projects, mapping of research studies, data collection, literature search, laboratory experiments. For research assistants in a full-time position, see more examples of qualifying work in Chapter 3.2. For research assistance that requires a master's degree, hiring a research assistant may be an alternative to hiring a researcher 1108. If the main tasks are teaching-related assistance and coordination tasks, other job codes must normally be used (student assistant, teaching assistant, university lecturer).

the rules on recommendation, assessment, offer of employment and signed employment contract (Staff Regulations, Section 2.1, 6th paragraph).

A full-time position as a research assistant may be offered to candidates with a completed master's degree for up to two years, less any previous months' work as a research assistant during the study period.

2.7 Integrated PhD education ("integrert ph.d.-utdanning")

Master's students who have been admitted to integrated PhD education (NTNU Regulations 2026, Section 23) are employed on part-time as research assistants. Once they are admitted to part 2, they are employed as doctoral research fellows in a fix-term position of at least three years.

Alternatively, master's students who have been admitted to integrated PhD education, are employed as doctoral research fellows in a fix-term position of at least three years. They are employed part-time while working on part 1 and full-time while working on part 2. Lacking admission to part 2, is a reason to terminate the PhD agreement and the work contract.

2.8 Dual-competence programme ("dobbeltkompetanseutdanning")

Persons who participate in organized dual-competence programmes can be appointed as both doctoral research fellow and resident in a combined position. The dual-competence programme is intended to lead to the attainment of a doctoral degree and to recognition as a specialist in the relevant subject area (uh. regulations § 3-22).

The provisions on doctoral research fellows (uh. regulations § 3-19) and on residents (uh. regulations § 3-20) apply correspondingly to employees in a dual-competence programme, as far as they are appropriate.

The total length of the fixed-term period and the distribution of working hours between research education, resident education and any other career-enhancing work shall be stated in the provisions of each dual-competence programme (uh. regulations § 3-22).

3. Career plan and career-enhancing work for doctoral research fellows and postdoctoral fellows

3.1 Career plan

After appointment, the institution is obliged to draw up an individual career plan in consultation with the doctoral research fellow/postdoctoral fellow. [9] This should take place in the first employee interview ("oppstartsamtalen"). The employer and the doctoral research fellow/postdoctoral fellow complete the career plan together. The career plan must contain a specification of career goals and measures to achieve the goals. Any need for language training and educational competence must be included in the career plan. The career plan must be followed up and updated regularly in the annual employee interviews ("medarbeidersamtalen"). The career plan must be evaluated at the end of the work period (PD policy section 6). A distinction is made between career-enhancing measures that the employee can carry out himself/herself, and salaried career-enhancing work.

[9] See the website with guidance on career development and templates for career plans for postdoctoral fellows and doctoral research fellows.

3.2 Career-enhancing work

Other career-enhancing work means work in addition to research projects and doctoral education that provides relevant knowledge and experience for further careers at higher education or research institutions or in other sectors (uh. regulations § 3-16). It is not intended to be used for administrative work (HK-dir. comment on new regulations).

Examples of relevant career-enhancing work:

- Contribute to teaching, laboratory and exercise teaching, supervision and examination work within the employee's areas of competence
- Provide training in the use and operation of research infrastructure
- Norwegian language training, educational competence, HSE courses and the like necessary for the performance of teaching and research work
- Participate in dissemination, exhibition and collection work
- Contribute to the preparation of research project applications or the organization of academic conferences
- Clinical activities
- Contribute to ongoing research projects, academic development work, consultancy and analysis work in the academic environment
- Research-based innovation or dissemination project
- Internship or collaboration with public or private actors
- Elected offices/positions of trust and committee work

3.3 Plan for career-enhancing work

The employer shall, as far as possible, within existing academic activities, economic and human resources, plan for doctoral research fellows and postdoctoral fellows to be given salaried career-enhancing work that contributes to the realization of the employee's career plan.

Career-enhancing work is financed within the framework of allocated recruitment positions (RSO) and available operating funds (RD).[10] Any internal and external grant schemes should be used to finance career-enhancing work, for example in connection with innovation and dissemination projects.

The content and distribution of career-enhancing work during the employment period is determined by the employer in consultation with the doctoral research fellow and supervisor. The plan is updated annually with the status of completed and planned work. The career plan is archived in the personnel file.

Normally, the career-enhancing work for doctoral research fellows should be distributed so that the last year can be used for purely doctoral education. The career-enhancing work can also be carried out after the submission of the thesis and used for dissemination and innovation projects based on the research work or to gain teaching experience for a further academic career.

The scope of work is calculated according to the Faculty's norms or actual working hours. For original lectures, doctoral research fellows are given an extra 50 % credit compared to the nominal time for academic staff. After individual assessment, extra credit may also be given for other particularly time-consuming tasks.

[10] NTNU allocates RSO funds to 4-year doctoral research fellowship positions and 3-year postdoctoral positions. The faculties can set aside the 4th year for a joint pot for funding of career-enhancing work for internally and externally funded research fellows.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that the career-enhancing work does not delay the progression of the doctoral education and the doctoral research fellow's right to at least three full-time equivalent years dedicated to the doctoral work.

3.4 Career guidance

The employer shall ensure that the employee has access to career guidance throughout the doctoral education and postdoctoral period.[11]

4. Announcement of positions

Recruitment positions must normally be advertised publicly and announced internally.[12] For work as a research assistant combined with studies, an internal announcement is sufficient.

The application deadline must be at least two weeks from the date of the announcement, but a longer deadline must be considered for positions with requirements for project descriptions.

The Head of Department is responsible for preparing the text of the advertisement. It must specify all the requirements associated with the position. Current guidelines/templates at NTNU are followed regarding structure and content.

In case of deviation from the normal salary levels at NTNU, the employee representatives at the Faculty/Museum (IDF LOSAM) must be informed of the advertisement text. The union representatives may request a discussion of the salary placement (Staff Regulations, section 3.4 and HTA, section 2.5.5, no. 1).

For positions that are not linked to a specific project, the unit in question must be informed and given the opportunity to participate in the advertisement text (Personnel Regulations, section 3.4). For positions associated with interdisciplinary activities, centres or programmes, the academically involved faculties/museum must be given the opportunity to comment on the advertisement text before it is adopted (Staff Regulations, section 3.5).

The advertisement text is adopted by the Appointments Committee or the chair of the Appointment Committee (Dean).

If no qualified applicants have responded, or if it is relevant to depart from the qualification requirements in the call in significant respects, the position must be advertised again. The same applies if a disproportionately long time has passed since the position was advertised or if circumstances related to the position have changed significantly. Applicants must be notified if the position is advertised again.

5. Assessment of academic qualifications and personal suitability

For the appointment of students in part-time positions as research assistants, there is no

[11] See the website for postdoctoral fellows and doctoral research fellows on career development including online resources and tools.

[12] There must be a high threshold for not advertising recruitment positions. The most important exception is MSCA postdoctoral fellows. Exemptions from the announcement require a legal basis; cf. NTNU guidelines for academic positions, chapter 2.2.

requirement for academic assessment and recommendation (cf. Staff Regulations, section 2.1). For all other recruitment positions, academic assessment, interviews and reference checks are required.

The Head of Department or authorized person appoints an academic committee to sort and assess the applicants' academic qualifications in relation to the advertisement text and the qualification requirements for the position. It will normally be sufficient for two academic staff members at the Department with at least associate professor qualifications to provide a written statement on the applicants' qualifications (internal assessment). The project manager may participate in the assessment if he or she is not disqualified due to impartiality.

The Head of Department or authorized person appoints a recruitment group to assess the personal suitability of the most relevant applicants for the position. The group conducts interviews and reference checks. The group normally consists of the position's immediate manager, employees from the academic community and HR. Members of the academic committee may be included in the recruitment group.

If any of the qualified applicants for a position state that they have a disability (sal. regulations § 4), a gap in their CV (sal. regulations § 4a) or a non-Western immigrant background (sal. regulations § 4a), at least one applicant from each of the groups must be invited for an interview before the recommendation is made.

In the assessment of applicants for postdoctoral positions, emphasis shall be placed on documented academic qualifications, the project description (where required in accordance with the advertisement text), project quality and personal suitability.

In the assessment of applicants for doctoral research fellowship positions, emphasis shall be placed on their qualifications for completing the doctoral education. The assessment is primarily based on documented qualifications and project description (where required in accordance with the advertisement text), project quality and personal suitability.

6. Recommendation and appointment

The Head of Department is the recommending authority. The recommendation is based on an overall assessment of the applicants' qualifications and personal suitability in relation to the advertisement text. The assessment is made based on the academic assessment, interview and reference check. At least two references must be obtained for each of the applicants who are considered for recommendation.

If there are several qualified applicants, three applicants should usually be recommended and ranked. A reason must be given for the ranking of the recommended applicants.

Applicants who have been interviewed shall be informed of their place in the recommendation and that, following the appointment decision, they may be given access to the academic assessment of their own qualifications.[13]

The chair of the appointments committee has the authority to make decisions on appointments to recruitment positions. The principles and rules for case processing in the appointment committee are followed (cf. NTNU guidelines on academic positions, chapter 7.2).

[13] That is, the available assessment of the candidate in question, e.g. qualitative assessment or score in an evaluation form.

6.1 Employment contract for employment in a fixed-term recruitment position

An employment contract must be entered into before the start of work.

In determining the length of the fixed-term period, the institution shall consider the specific nature of the work, any time for other career-enhancing work (uh. regulations § 3-16) and available funding. The distribution between research projects/artistic research and career-enhancing work must be stated in the employment contract at the time of appointment. Agreements on significant changes in the scope of the career-enhancing work in relation to the employment contract are archived in the personnel file.

If the fixed-term period is linked to a project, the employee (doctoral research fellow, postdoctoral fellow, resident) and the institution must prepare a description of the project and a realistic progress plan for the implementation of the project. The description of the project and the progress plan must be available no later than three months after the employee's start date in the position (uh. regulations § 3-16) and be archived in the personnel file. For doctoral research fellows, the project description and progress plan must be archived in the doctoral portfolio together with the application for admission.

The employee must have access to academic supervision throughout the fixed-term period (uh. regulations § 3-16). Supervisor agreements are archived in the personnel file. For doctoral research fellows, supervisor agreements are archived in the doctoral portfolio.

If the conditions for the appointment are not met, for example related to lack of admission to a doctoral programme, progress plan, implementation or reporting, the basis for the appointment lapses and the employer may consider terminating the employment contract and terminating the employment relationship (sal. § 20 and aml. chapter 15).

6.2 Academic supervision and mentoring for postdoctoral fellows

At the start, it must be clarified who is responsible for following up the employee with academic supervision; cf. the project description and progress plan. In addition, the postdoc must be offered a mentor from another academic environment (NTNU PD policy, section 5), participation in a mentor programme or postdoc network.

Both the academic supervisor and the employee have a duty to notify the employer of failure to implement the project and progress plan.

6.3 Terms of employment for doctoral research fellows

It is a condition of employment that the doctoral research fellow is admitted to a doctoral programme and meets the requirements for reporting and other obligations in the doctoral programme. The employment contract must state the following deadlines:

- A complete application for admission to a doctoral programme must be submitted no later than three months after commencement in the position (cf. uh. regulations § 3-19 on requirements for "binding agreement on admission").
- A signed agreement on admission to a doctoral programme must be available no later than six months after taking up the position (cf. uh. regulations § 3-19 on requirements for "admission to a doctoral programme").

Doctoral research fellows are employed at the Faculty at which they are to be admitted to a doctoral programme, normally at the Faculty where the candidate has his/her main supervisor and his/her daily workplace. This Faculty has employer responsibility for the doctoral research fellow. The University Museum has the right to advertise for and appoint its own doctoral research fellows; they

are normally admitted to a relevant doctoral programme at NTNU. Transfers to another doctoral programme may not be made without agreement with the employer.

If the doctoral research fellow has a place of work at another Faculty or externally, the parties to the doctoral agreement agree on how the necessary equipment and operating funds are to be financed and made available to the doctoral research fellow.

If the employer, in special cases and upon application, wishes to employ the doctoral research fellow in a 50 % part-time position or more for all or part of the period, the employment may be extended so that the doctoral education corresponds to three full-time equivalent years.

In the event of a direct transfer from a position as a doctoral research fellow to another position, time spent on the doctoral work is not included in the calculation of the period of employment. Leaves of absence or extension of the fixed-term term pursuant to the University and University Colleges Regulations § 3-17 are not included in the period of employment. Time spent on other career-enhancing work during the fixed-term period is added up to a continuous period (uh. regulations § 3-17).

7. Leave of absence and extension of the fixed-term period

The Dean decides on applications for leave of absence and extension. The provisions of the Universities and University Colleges Regulations on leave of absence and extension beyond the fixed-term apply to all employees in recruitment positions.

NTNUs guideline on prolongation for fix-term recruitment positions (in Norwegian) gives practical guidance on the stipulation of prolongations pertaining to legal and contractual leave (section 7.1) and elected office (section 7.2).

7.1 Legal and contractual right to leave and extension

Leave of absence and reduced working hours to which the employee in a recruitment position is entitled pursuant to statutes or collective agreement, as well as sickness absence, entitle the employee to an extension of the fixed-term period (uh. regulations § 3-17). Absence is counted from the first day of absence.

In special cases, the institutions may extend the fixed-term period in the event of unforeseen obstacles related to the work that cannot be blamed on the employee (uh. regulations § 3-17). For doctoral research fellows, it is assumed that the person in question will be able to complete the doctoral education before the expiry of the extension period (cf. § 2-3 (6) of the old uh. regulations).

For doctoral research fellows, in special cases, an extended period of employment may also be granted beyond statutory and contractual leave of up to three months after longer absences related to demands on personal health (e.g. pregnancy, childbirth and infant care). Any extension on special grounds must be recommended by the supervisor and the Department and approved by the Faculty.

The Faculty is responsible for ensuring that funds are allocated to finance extraordinary costs in the event of an extension related to statutory and contractual leave, regardless of the source of funding for the position.

7.2 Right to extension for elected offices and committee work

The employee has the right to leave of absence and extension of the fixed-term period for key management positions in organizations related to the positions (uh. regulations § 3-17).

Employees in recruitment positions who have been elected to the NTNU Board can, if they wish, convert the Board fee to finance an extension of the fixed-term period.

Employees in recruitment positions who are elected members of a board/council/extended management group, or appointed members of committees/working groups/programme councils where no fees are paid, are entitled to a two-week extension of their employment. For particularly time-consuming positions or combinations of offices, an extension beyond two weeks may be granted based on documentation. Extensions are agreed upon and financed by the level corresponding to the position or committee work.

It is recommended that elected members and deputy members of elected bodies at the Faculty and Department cooperate and, if possible, divide the tasks between them so that the deputy member can also be compensated. The compensation scheme must be known to the candidates in advance. For those who must travel to participate in the meetings, remuneration shall be granted in accordance with the travel regulations of the civil service.

DION board positions and board positions in the doctoral research fellowship organization in Norway (SiN) are compensated in the same way as for elected positions without fees at the Faculties, i.e. normally a two-week extension for board members and a four-week extension for the chair of the board.

The employee may at most be granted three months extension for elected offices and committee work.

7.3 Leave of absence and extension of up to six months

Leave of absence may be granted for absence due to short-term temporary positions in teaching and research positions and for doctoral research fellowships abroad and the like, when this can be done without reducing progress by a maximum of six months in the postdoctoral project, doctoral education or residency programme. The period of employment shall be extended correspondingly (uh. regulations § 3-17).

Leave that is not statutory or contractual is not a right and is decided by the Dean in each individual case.[14] Nor is the employee obliged to carry out work at the Department beyond the agreed research project and career-enhancing work.

Leave of absence may only be granted when the supervisor finds this academically justifiable, an adjusted plan for the completion of the doctoral education is available, and the Head of Department finds this to be acceptable in terms of staffing and finances.

If the employee and supervisor believe that the work will be competence- and career-enhancing for the doctoral research fellow/postdoctoral fellow, and there is sufficient internal or external funding for the work, it must be considered whether the work can be included as career-enhancing work in a revised career plan.

[14] In exceptional cases, the Dean may grant leave of more than six months. For example, at the MH Faculty, 1 1/2 years of leave from a doctoral research fellow position can be granted to LIS1 candidates (internship).

7.4 Extension for career-enhancing work

The institutions may extend the fixed-term period for doctoral research fellows and postdoctoral fellows up to the maximum time frame for the fixed-term position, that is up to four full-time equivalent years, if the scope of other career-enhancing work has been significantly increased after starting in the position (uh. regulations § 3-17).

Extension requires that new funding opportunities for career-enhancing work open during the employment period.

8. Entry into force, transitional arrangements and revision

The guidelines entered into force from 2 January 2025.

For announcements before 1 March 2025 and provided that a decision on appointment to recruitment positions is made before 1 August 2025, the Faculties may choose to use the terms of employment in the Regulations of 31 January 2005 no. 102 concerning terms and conditions of employment for posts as postdoctoral research fellow, doctoral research fellow, research assistant and resident.

[New rights under the University and University College Regulations (2024) pertaining to Norwegian language proficiency, educational competence, career plans and advice, do not apply to the doctoral research fellows and postdoctoral fellows who were employed under the old regulations (2006) unless stated in the contract of employment or determined by the employer. The administrative procedures pertaining to duty work ("pliktarbeid") is from January 2025 regulated by these NTNU guidelines for recruitment positions Chapter 3.2 Career enhancing work ("karrierefremmende arbeid") and Chapter 3.3 Plan for career-enhancing work.]

The guidelines for appointment to recruitment positions continue provisions pursuant to the Civil Service Act from the "Staff regulations including local procedural rules for teaching and research positions at NTNU". The general provisions of the "Staff regulations including local procedural rules for technical/administrative positions at NTNU" will also apply to recruitment positions as far as they are appropriate. The staff regulations are discussed and negotiated with the main unions in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Act and the Basic Agreement for State Employees. Particularly relevant provisions have been included in these guidelines for reasons of user-friendliness and compliance. The provisions have been somewhat reformulated and supplemented considering recent Rector decisions/policies and the new Universities and University Colleges Act with associated regulations.

In the event of changes in the staff regulations that affect recruitment positions, the guidelines must be updated without delay, and the faculties must be informed of the changes. General provisions from the staff regulations relevant to recruitment positions include:

- Exemptions from announcements (sal. § 4 and sal. regulations § 3.3)
- Exceptions from permanent employment (sal. § 9)
- Summoning applicants with disabilities or gaps in their CVs to an interview (sal. § 4)
- General procedural rules for appointment committees (fvl. § 17)
- Notification of appointment (aml. § 14)
- Probationary period (sal. § 15) and calculation of employment period (sal. § 23)
- impartiality (fvl. §§ 6, 7 and 8)

- Duty of confidentiality (fvl. § 13)
- Right of access (fvl. regulations)

The guidelines include text excerpts from key laws and regulations. These are not necessarily quoted verbatim, but reference has been added to help in questions of interpretation. The Directorate of Higher Education has developed a guide to the chapter 3 in the Higher Education Regulations.

The references are intended to make it easier to administratively update the guidelines due to minor changes in laws and agreements. The Faculties must be informed of such updates.

If changes in laws and agreements entail more than a simple update of the guidelines, proposals for revision of the guidelines shall be discussed with the faculties and the main associations.