

Audit of Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT

3.6 Staff recruitment and competence development

The development of staff teaching skills is supported with extensive pedagogical development opportunities

LUT employs open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment processes, utilising international calls and a structured four-level tenure track system with clear criteria for advancement. As a rule, vacancies are announced to the public and open for applications – mainly internationally in the case of research and teaching vacancies. This allows the most qualified applicants to pose their candidacy. Scientific and educational merits are considered in the filling of all research and teaching vacancies. Further information on recruitment and separate instructions for the appointment of professors, docents, junior researchers are available on the LUT intranet, relevant information to external applicants is available on the LUT websites. LUT has the ambition to carry out recruitment processes that emphasise equality, non-discrimination, and fairness in recruitment.

The university could identify and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of culturally different approaches and critically compare them with national norms and alternative ways of thinking and doing. The recruitment support could, for example, include clear guidelines for drafting recruitment texts based on research on language that appeals to different genders and avoids deterring applicants, systematic processes for units to identify potential candidates within their networks, and encouragement for staff to actively seek and gather recommendations from colleagues on suitable candidates.

Staff competence needs are systematically identified during annual development discussions. The university provides extensive pedagogical development opportunities for staff, including teaching qualifications, pedagogical courses, digital learning supports, AI workshops, and guidance from the teaching support team. LUT offers a comprehensive 25-credit university pedagogy training programme, which is heavily encouraged and technically required for tenure track progression to full professorship. Staff consistently identified these supports as a significant institutional strength.

Staff also highlighted challenges relating to increasing workloads, lack of time for pedagogical development, increasing student numbers, and the need for more continuous and discipline-specific support. A chronic lack of time to engage in formal pedagogical training or comprehensive course development was linked to full schedules and the strong prioritisation of research responsibilities. The emergence of artificial intelligence and digitalisation was identified as a key theme in the audit, and as noted below, staff would need further guidance and support in this area.