REGULATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL REVIEWS OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH STAFF

Adopted based on clause 14 (3) 13) of the Universities Act, clause 2 (4) 6) of the University of Tartu Act, clause 9 (3) of the Organisation of Research and Development Act and clause 12 (2) 13) of the Statutes of the University of Tartu, adopted by the senate regulation no. 11 of 21 July 2014 and approved by the council resolution no. 18 of 29 July 2014, and pursuant to clauses 39 and 55 (3) of the Universities Act.

1. The Regulations for Professional Reviews of Teaching and Research Staff (‘these regulations’) govern the terms and procedure for professional reviews of ordinary teaching and research staff (‘the employee’) of the University of Tartu (‘the university’).

2. Professional review is a periodic assessment of ordinary teaching and research staff with respect to the requirements established for their positions and of their professional performance with the aim to determine and ensure the suitability of the employee to the position, support the employee’s professional development and identity further training needs of the employee.

3. A structural unit for the purposes of these regulations is an institute, college and non-faculty institution.

4. Employee’s first professional review is on the fifth year of employment, starting from the date of signing the employment contract for an unspecified term. Henceforth, employees undergo professional review at least once every five years. Years of employment are accounted for within one position.

5. The time during which the employee was on pregnancy and maternity leave, parental leave, in compulsory military service, in alternate service, on holiday without pay for longer than six months in a row or temporarily incapacitated for work for longer than six months in total is not accounted for when calculating the employee’s years of employment.

6. In case of employees with a fixed-term employment contract, the election by public recruitment procedure or appointing to a position without a public recruitment procedure is considered equal to professional review and employees thus elected or appointed are considered to have passed the professional review until the end of the term of their employment contract.

7. Professional reviews are conducted:
   7.1. in case of professors and lead research fellows, by at least a three-member review committee consisting of experts from within the university, and if necessary, also from outside the university. The rector convenes the review committee, appoints its chair and approves the schedule of professional reviews, aiming to avoid conflicts of interest;
   7.2. in case of associate professors and senior research fellows, by at least a three-member review committee consisting of experts from within the university, and if necessary, also from outside the university. The dean or the director of a non-faculty institution convenes the review committee, appoints its chair and approves the schedule of professional reviews, aiming to avoid conflicts of interest;
7.3. in case of lecturers, assistants, teachers, research fellows and junior research fellows, by at least a three-member review committee. The head of structural unit convenes the review committee, appoints its chair and approves the schedule of professional reviews, aiming to avoid conflicts of interest.

8. If the professional review concerns a member of teaching staff, who conducts studies regularly, a student representative appointed by the student council of the faculty is also invited to the review committee. This representative has the right to speak.

9. In January and September each year, the Personnel Office forwards the list of employees scheduled for professional review within the year to the official responsible for convening the review committee specified in clause 7 or to a person appointed by him/her.

10. The chair of the review committee informs the employee, the head of the employee’s structural unit and the direct organiser of work of the time of professional review, the deadline for submitting the documents required for professional review and the date of announcing the conclusions of professional review. The chair of the review committee also informs the programme director(s) who manage(s) the curriculum where the employee’s teaching load is the biggest of the time of professional review and options to submit assessments of the employee.

11. In reviewing the professional performance of the employee and his/her conformity to the requirements of his/her position, the review committee bases its assessment on the Job Descriptions of Academic Staff, approved by the senate regulation, and the following documents:

11.1. the employee’s overview of his/her work during the last review period and his/her assessment of his/her professional performance, including the measures the employee has taken to ensure the quality of teaching, and the assessment of the direct organiser of work on the employee’s professional performance;
11.2. summary of students’ feedback survey on the employee’s teaching and courses and doctoral students’ feedback; teaching staff are recommended to present a teaching portfolio;
11.3. other materials deemed necessary by the employee or the review committee;
11.4. in case of professors and lead research fellows, the objectives of the next five years and the activity plan to achieve them (up to 1500 words in total) and the activity plan compiled for the previous professional review or applying for the position. If the employee has a right to old-age pension or such right will arise during the next review period, the activity plan must describe measures taken to assure academic sustainability in the specialisation.

[effective as of 1 January 2018]

12. The employee has the right to access the materials used in his/her professional review, including the assessments concerning the employee, and to introduce his/her professional performance at the review committee meeting before the committee makes conclusions of the review. [effective as of 1 January 2018]

13. The review committee gives a reasoned assessment of the employee’s professional performance and of his/her conformity to the requirements established for the position and draws one of the following conclusions:

13.1. the employee and his/her professional performance meet the requirements established for the position;
13.2. the employee and his/her professional performance fail to meet the requirements established for the position.

14. The review committee may, in addition to drawing the conclusions referred to in clause 13, make recommendations for the next employment period, including on how to improve professional performance and support professional development.
15. If the employee and his/her professional performance meet the requirements established for the position, the review committee’s decision, based on the employee’s professional performance, assigns a time for the next professional review, taking into consideration that the professional review take place no later than during the fifth year of work after the previous review.

16. The assessment, conclusions and recommendations of the review committee are drawn up in writing and communicated to the employee, the head of his/her structural unit, direct organiser of work and the Personnel Office within two weeks of drawing the conclusions.

17. If the employee fails to submit the documents listed in clause 11 by the deadline set by the review committee without a good reason, the employee and his/her professional performance is considered not to meet the requirements established for the position.

18. If the employee and his/her professional performance fail to meet the requirements established for the position, the direct organiser of work

18.1. agrees in writing with the employee on the activities to bring the employee’s professional performance into conformity with the requirements established for the position and sets the date for the repeat review, taking into account the reasonable time needed for improving the professional performance. The repeat review shall take place no later than during the third year from the previous review. The direct organiser of work informs the review committee, head of structural unit and Personnel Office of the agreement within 30 days after the conclusions of the review are announced;

18.2. initiates together with the head of structural unit and in cooperation with the Personnel Office the extraordinary cancellation of the employment contract of the employee under the conditions stipulated in the Employment Contracts Act and informs the employee and the review committee of that within 30 days after the conclusions of the review are announced.

19. The employee may appeal the conclusions of the review committee within two weeks from the announcement of the conclusions. The employee submits the appeal to the academic secretary, explaining the reasons not to agree with the conclusions and submitting additional documents, if necessary.

20. The academic secretary makes a decision regarding the employee’s appeal within one month after receiving the appeal.

21. If the processing of the appeal reveals that the professional review procedure had been violated, but the violation could not affect the review conclusions, the review conclusions remain in force.

22. If the processing of the appeal reveals that the professional review procedure had been violated and the violation affected the review conclusions, the academic secretary sets the date for the repeat review.

23. For professors who work at the university under a fixed-term employment contract and who complete their 11th year of employment after 1 January 2015, the prerequisite professional review for signing an employment contract for an unspecified term is his/her most recent assessment pursuant to the Regulations for Recruitment of Teaching and Research Staff as established by the senate.

24. The activity plan completed for the previous professional review or applying for the position as described in clause 11.4 must be submitted by professors and lead research fellows who take office under an employment contract for an unspecified term starting from 1 January 2015.

25. The Regulations for Professional Reviews of Teaching and Research Staff adopted by the Senate of the University of Tartu Regulation no. 15 of 19 December 2014 is repealed.

26. These regulations become effective on 1 January 2016.