

1. **Why this document?**
2. **Principles of the career policy for teaching staff**
  - Academic education & qualification of lecturers
  - Recognising and rewarding teaching in line with academic career paths
  - Employment contracts linked to career prospects
  - Opportunities for development and professionalisation
  - Junior lecturer and researcher
3. **Overview of career policy for D4 to D1 teaching staff**

## Appendix 1 Relevant Collective Labour Agreement provisions

Preamble: More permanent employment contracts

Article 2.2 The employment contract

Article 2.2a Temporary employment contract

Article 2.3 Term of the temporary employment contract

Article 6.12 More career prospects and job security for junior lecturers

Article 6.5 Career development

Appendix E Studies and other agreements

E.7 More permanent employment contracts

Appendix M More career prospects and job security for junior lecturers and post-doctoral researchers

## 1. Why this document?

Teaching is one of the three core domains at universities, alongside the core domains of research and impact. At Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam), teaching staff in job profiles D4 to D1 have long been assigned the core task of teaching on the basis of their specific knowledge and expertise.

In this policy document, VU Amsterdam has developed a career policy framework for these lecturers in line with the teaching profile for academic career paths. Our aim in doing so is to ensure appropriate recognition and rewards for teaching staff and to reflect VU Amsterdam's core values, Educational Vision and Education Framework.

The career policy for teaching staff outlines career and development opportunities for lecturers in both temporary and permanent employment, and provides a framework for faculties when implementing the policy in greater detail.

## 2. Principles of the career policy for teaching staff

### *Academic education & qualification of lecturers*

Teaching at VU Amsterdam is inextricably linked to research. The difference between D4 to D1 lecturers and the profiles of assistant, associate and full professors (UD-UHD-HL) is that D4 to D1 lecturers are not directly involved in carrying out academic research, nor are they part of a research team. They are, however, indirectly involved in academic research; they base their teaching on this research, the underlying principle being that teaching staff are up-to-date with to the latest academic research and connected to the research-intensive environment, as shaped by the faculty.

VU Amsterdam operates on the principle that D4 and D3 lecturers do not need to have a doctoral degree, while D2 and D1 lecturers are expected to have a doctoral degree. Faculties can deviate from this principle as long as they can provide sufficient reason for doing so. The nature of any such deviation, the lecturers/programmes/departments to which this applies, the composition of teaching teams and the educational qualities that these teams represent all form part of the Strategic Personnel Plan.

### *Recognising and rewarding teaching in line with academic career paths*

On the basis of the Recognition & Rewards initiative, developing and delivery in the field of teaching is a core domain, equal in status to the core domains of research and impact. D4 to D1 teaching staff fulfil a vital role in the university's core domain of teaching. They focus on and specialise in teaching: specific knowledge and skills in this field are key components in providing an excellent education.

At VU Amsterdam, this position creates substantive interaction between career paths for teaching staff and academic career paths with a teaching profile. In practice, this means that the assessment categories and principles for the academic career paths of D2 and D1 teaching staff equate to those of assistant and associate professors as regards teaching.

### *Employment contracts linked to career prospects*

D4 lecturers are starting out on their teaching career. They teach pre-prepared programme components, review assessments and supervise working groups and undergraduate theses. This is by far the largest category of teaching staff at VU Amsterdam. D3 lecturers generally have several years of teaching experience; they teach, supervise working groups, undergraduate and graduate theses, and fulfil more of a coordinating role (e.g. in relation to internships).

To provide lecturers with development opportunities and to safeguard and further improve the quality of teaching, we generally offer D4 lecturers a single contract for a number of years. The reasoning behind the temporary nature of the multi-year contract for D4 lecturers is that a permanent D4 appointment does not reflect the structure of the university environment, as it offers insufficient opportunities for growth and development. After all, D2 and D1 lecturers are expected to have obtained a doctoral degree.

In specific situations, consideration may be given to offering D4 lecturers a shorter-term employment contract or a permanent contract. For example, a permanent contract for a limited number of hours could be offered to lecturers who deliberately choose such an option in combination with a main job elsewhere. A shorter-term employment contract can be considered when there is a clear temporary spike in the workload due to illness or maternity leave, for example.

When a temporary employment contract comes to an end, a lecturer has the opportunity to apply for any available vacancies (e.g. a D3 teaching position or doctoral position) or to leave the university to take up a position elsewhere, in teaching or another field. Promotion to a D3 position during temporary employment is also possible.

The number of D2 and D1 teaching staff who work at VU Amsterdam is small. Opportunities for advancement to these positions are limited: only experienced or highly experienced teaching staff with a doctoral degree are considered. Since internal candidates take priority over external candidates in cases of equal suitability in the recruitment of assistant professors, an academic career with a teaching profile is the more obvious choice.

The number of temporary and permanent teaching positions available depends on the teaching capacity of the faculty and the programme, as substantiated in the Strategic Personnel Plan. Human Resources oversees the implementation of the Strategic Personnel Plan.

### *Opportunities for development and professionalisation*

Through the VU Centre for Teaching & Learning, D4 to D1 teaching staff are able to obtain teaching qualifications and access training, peer supervision and coaching geared towards personal and professional growth. All faculties facilitate D4 to D1 teaching staff so that they can participate in these activities. In their own personnel policy, faculties specify the desired minimum number of working hours for each job level and how much time for development this allows. Development time is determined by the faculty based on a reasonable assessment of what is appropriate to the length and scope of the employment contract. At a minimum, development time includes the time required to attend the necessary training, for example to obtain a University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). At the start of the development process, the lecturer will reach agreements with their manager on how much time they need to invest.

In addition to training courses for purposes such as obtaining a UTQ (see Table 1 for the full range of training courses), the time available for professionalisation and development can be used for activities such as passive participation in research or writing a PhD proposal.

### *Junior lecturer and researcher*

In line with the Collective Labour Agreement, VU Amsterdam offers the opportunity to combine a position as junior lecturer with that of PhD candidate within a temporary employment contract. During this PhD programme, the lecturer is also expected to obtain the UTQ. As a rule, such a temporary employment contract has a duration of six years. It is up to the faculty to determine whether this option is desirable within the Strategic Personnel Plan and to issue the necessary vacancies.

## **3. Overview of career policy for D4 to D1 teaching staff**

This framework describes the advancement and development opportunities at VU Amsterdam and also details the relationship with the classification criteria for the university job ranking system (UFO), the Education Framework and the Academic Career Paths.

The faculties use this framework to set out their own personnel policy and Strategic Personnel Plan, and to ensure the implementation of career paths for both prospective and existing D4 to D1 teaching staff.

The monitoring of career path implementation is incorporated in the planning and control cycle by means of the annual plan and annual report and discussed at the administrative consultative meetings.

D4 teaching staff	
<b>Advancement and development opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Training and Supervision Plan sets out the agreements made as regards the lecturer's professionalisation and development.</li> <li>• The following training courses provided by the VU Centre for Teaching &amp; Learning (CTL VU) are offered as standard to D4 lecturers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Professional teaching for junior teaching staff (including UTQ)</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Pioneers of Education</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• D4 teaching staff with a main position elsewhere are offered a flexible learning path in order to obtain the UTQ (<a href="#">UTQ-flex</a>).</li> <li>• A reasonable amount of time is reserved for participation in professionalisation and development activities.</li> <li>• Advancement: apply for any available D3 position, PhD position or position elsewhere.</li> </ul>
<b>University Job Classification System criterion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching pre-prepared standard programme components.</li> </ul>
<b>Education Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 1: from new lecturer to mid-level lecturer.</li> </ul>

D3 teaching staff	
<b>Advancement and development opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTL VU offers all D3 to D1 teaching staff a <a href="#">continuous development path</a>.</li> <li>• A reasonable amount of time is reserved for participation in professionalisation and development activities.</li> <li>• Advancement: career prospects at D2 level, depending on opportunities and/or D2 positions available at the faculty. Other options: apply for any available PhD position or a position elsewhere.</li> </ul>
<b>University Job Classification System criterion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching pre-prepared standard programme components.</li> <li>• Carrying out periodic updates of assigned programme components.</li> <li>• Identifying opportunities for improvement to assigned programme components.</li> </ul>
<b>Education Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 2: from mid-level lecturer to reflective teaching professional.</li> </ul>

D2 teaching staff	
<b>Advancement and development opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTL VU offers all D3 to D1 lecturers a <a href="#">continuous development path</a>, including the <a href="#">Senior Teaching Qualification (STQ)</a>.</li> <li>• A reasonable amount of time is reserved for participation in professionalisation and development activities.</li> <li>• As a rule, D2 and D1 teaching staff must have obtained a doctoral degree, but faculties may make exceptions at programme level.</li> <li>• Advancement: career prospects at assistant and associate professor level (with teaching profile) for lecturers with a doctoral degree: open recruitment procedures with priority status as a VU employee in the event of equal suitability, as stipulated in the Collective Labour Agreement. Career prospects at D1 level: depending on opportunities and/or D1 positions available at the faculty.</li> </ul>
<b>University Job Classification System criterion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing assigned programme components based on pre-established design, content and didactic approach.</li> <li>• Teaching self-developed programme components to a variety of target groups.</li> <li>• Drafting improvement proposals in response to teaching evaluations for assigned programme components.</li> <li>• Active participation in work groups, committees or project teams within the relevant capacity group.</li> </ul>
<b>Education Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 3: from reflective teaching professional to teaching innovator/specialist.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic career paths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General academic foundation (assistant professor and above) - teaching component of the teaching profile.</li> </ul>

D1 teaching staff	
<b>Advancement and development opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTL VU offers all D3 to D1 lecturers a <a href="#">continuous development path</a>, including the <a href="#">Senior Teaching Qualification (STQ)</a> and the <a href="#">Educational Leadership Course (ELC)</a>.</li> <li>• A reasonable amount of time is reserved for participation in professionalisation and development activities.</li> <li>• As a rule, D2 and D1 teaching staff must have obtained a doctoral degree, but faculties may make exceptions at programme level with good reason.</li> <li>• Advancement: career prospects at assistant and associate professor level (with teaching profile) for lecturers with a doctoral degree: open recruitment procedures with priority status as a VU employee in the event of equal suitability, as stipulated in the Collective Labour Agreement.</li> </ul>
<b>University Job Classification System criterion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating and developing the structure, content and didactic approach of cohesive programme components.</li> <li>• Teaching self-developed programme components to a variety of target groups.</li> <li>• Drafting and implementing improvement proposals in response to teaching evaluations for cohesive programme components.</li> <li>• Chairing work groups, committees or project teams within the relevant capacity group.</li> </ul>
<b>Education Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 3: from reflective teaching professional to teaching innovator/specialist.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic career paths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General academic foundation for senior staff (associate professor and above) – teaching component of the teaching profile.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1 Relevant Collective Labour Agreement provisions

### Preamble

#### More permanent employment contracts

The parties to the collective labour agreement agree that it is important that university employees have good career prospects. However, they have noticed that the number of lecturers on a temporary employment contract has increased, meaning good career prospects are not always in the offing. To remedy this, the parties to the collective labour agreement undertake to reduce the number of lecturers on a temporary contract.

According to the latest available WOPI figures (2023), 10.9% of academic staff with teaching duties (professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers 1–4) in the sector are employed in a teaching position on a temporary contract. Note that we define professors, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers 1–4 on a permanent contract as teaching staff having permanent employment contracts, based on their FTE employment status. The parties undertake that the sector will reduce this figure to 13.5%, within a period not exceeding three years. Options to achieve this include permanent lecturer positions, but also assistant professor positions. Individual universities have an obligation of due effort to help achieve this sector-wide target. Progress will be discussed annually in the local consultative bodies when the new WOPI figures are made public.

The above will require a major effort from universities. In order to adopt better and more attractive employment practices concerning temporary employees, all those in positions of leadership will be required to step up their strategic planning efforts as regards long-term staffing requirements. Additionally, some sector parties may be required to adapt their education models.

#### Article 2.2 The employment contract

1. The employment shall be entered into for either a specified or an unspecified period. In principle, the employment contract shall be concluded for an unspecified period of time, unless a temporary employment contract is considered to be necessary.
2. Contrary to Section 7:652 paragraphs 4a and 5 of the Dutch Civil Code, on inception of the employment contract concluded for a period of more than six months, a probation period of no more than two months can be agreed upon, during which period both the employer and the employee are entitled to terminate the employment with immediate effect.

#### Article 2.2a Temporary employment contract

1. With due observance of the provisions in Article 2.2, first paragraph, the employer can, in deviation from the maximum total term of the employment referred to in Article 2.3, conclude a temporary employment contract with an employee.
2. The duration of the employment will be determined on inception. This can be a predetermined period or a period that is not defined exactly in advance but depends on an objectively definable circumstance.
3. The employment contract as referred to in paragraph 1 can be terminated early if this has been agreed in writing.
4. This employment contract for a specified period can be extended once by a maximum of three months, in accordance with the provisions of Section 668a(3) of Book 7 of the Dutch Civil Code.
5. This article does not apply to employees holding the position of professor for more than 0.2 FTE or the position of assistant professor or associate professor, unless an employment contract is entered into with this employee for a formally defined pathway toward permanent employment in a higher academic job profile as referred to in Article 6.6 of this collective labour agreement.
6. This article does not apply to employees holding a support or management position, with the exception of support and management staff as referred to in Article 2.3, paragraph 6(d) and (e), and paragraph 7.

#### Article 2.3 Term of the temporary employment contract

1. A temporary employment contract can be offered to the employee. As of 1 January 2022, the key principle is that employees holding the position of professor for more than 0.2 FTE or the position of assistant professor or associate professor or a support or management position can be offered a temporary employment contract for a maximum term of twelve months. Upon proven suitability and continuation in the same position, a permanent employment contract is entered into immediately following this period. If such suitability cannot be established, or cannot yet be established due to illness, pregnancy leave, maternity leave or occupational disability, the temporary employment contract can be extended for a further maximum term of twelve months, or entered into for a maximum of twelve months in the case of successive employership.

2. For academic staff positions, with the exception of the positions referred to in paragraph 4 and contrary to the term stipulated in paragraph 1, a temporary employment contract may be entered into for, or extended up to, a maximum period of 36 months. For the following positions, however, a temporary employment contract may be entered into for, or extended up to, a maximum period of 48 months:
  1. positions for which the work to be undertaken receives temporary external funding, or where there is co-funding. In these situations, longer duration temporary employment contracts are necessary in order to be able to deliver a sound scientific product/result in accordance with the agreements made with the external funding body. A temporary employment contract is necessary because, on completion of the project, the funding ceases to exist;
  2. Researcher 3 and 4 positions (the so-called postdoc positions). The nature of these positions justifies the use of temporary employment contracts;
  3. until 1 August 2023, if developments in education and/or changes to student numbers (that are intrinsic to the university's operational management) require it, and they cannot be addressed within the existing capacity of academic staff with permanent employment contracts. For employees on a temporary employment contract on the basis of this stipulation as at 1 August 2023, their contract will terminate by operation of law on the date agreed by the parties.

#### Article 6.12 More career prospects and job security for junior lecturers

For the purposes of this article, a junior lecturer is defined as an employee with the UFO (University Job Classification System) job profile Lecturer at job level 4 or 3 who is also offered a temporary employment contract of 4 years or more in accordance with Article 2.2a of this collective labour agreement.

1. In accordance with the provisions of the Collective Labour Agreement, junior lecturers will be offered a longer employment contract, for example, of four to six years, during which time is provided for development and development activities and if applicable obtaining the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). A training and guidance plan will be drawn up together with the junior lecturer.
2. The employer can offer a combined junior lecturer and researcher or doctoral candidate position within a temporary employment contract of, in principle, six years. During this period, the employee will be expected to obtain the UTQ and successfully complete the doctoral programme.
3. The qualifications referred to in paragraph 2 should be obtained as much as possible within the employment of the university. Further agreements will be made in this regard between the line manager and the employee.

#### Article 6.5 Career development

1. When recruiting assistant professors, in the framework of good career policy, priority will be given to existing lecturers and researchers who have obtained their doctorates. After employees as referred to in Article 9.13, they will have preferential status as internal candidates in the event of equal suitability, provided they meet the requirements for the position. As of 1 September 2023, this preferential status means that, when the institution seeks to recruit an assistant professor, a lecturer or researcher who holds a PhD, is already employed by that institution and applies for the position – provided it is in their own or a related field – will be invited to a selection interview. In the event of equal suitability, this candidate will have preferential status over external applicants.
2. When the institution seeks to appoint a lecturer on a permanent employment contract, a lecturer who is already employed by that institution and applies for the position – provided it is in their own or a related field – will be invited to a selection interview. After employees as referred to in Article 9.13, this candidate will have preferential status over external applicants, provided this candidate is found upon review to meet the requirements for the permanent position.

### Appendix E Studies and other agreements

#### Section 2 Other agreements

##### E.7 More permanent employment contracts

The parties to the collective labour agreement agree that it is important that university employees have good career prospects. However, they have noticed that the number of lecturers on a temporary employment contract has increased, meaning good career prospects are not always in the offing. To remedy this, the parties to the collective labour agreement undertake to reduce the number of lecturers on a temporary contract. According to the latest available WOPI figures (2021), 15% of academic staff with teaching duties (professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers 1–4) in the sector are employed in a teaching position on a temporary contract. Note that we define professors, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers 1–4 on a permanent contract as teaching staff having permanent employment contracts, based on their FTE employment status. The parties undertake that the sector will reduce this figure to 13.5%, within a period not exceeding three years. This would involve the conversion of around 300 temporary lecturer positions. Options to achieve this include permanent lecturer positions, but also assistant professor positions. Individual universities have an obligation of due effort to help achieve this sector-wide target. Progress will be discussed annually in the local consultative bodies when the new WOPI figures are made public. The above will require a major effort from universities. In

order to adopt better and more attractive employment practices concerning temporary employees, all those in positions of leadership will be required to step up their strategic planning efforts as regards long-term staffing requirements. Additionally, some sector parties may be required to adapt their education models.

#### Appendix M More career prospects and job security for junior lecturers and post-doctoral researchers

##### Introduction

The parties to the collective agreement jointly gave the theme of ‘improved career prospects for junior lecturers and post-doctoral researchers’ a prominent place on the agenda. This aspect primarily relates to the position of junior lecturer (Lecturer 3 and 4) and the post-doctoral researcher positions (Researcher 3 and 4). In academic careers, the close relationship between education and research is logical and guaranteed at the level of the individual. An academic career will run along the trajectory of Assistant Professor (UD), Associate Professor (UHD) and Professor. For the position of junior lecturer and post-doctoral researcher, this relationship is far less present or even absent. Such positions are generally filled using temporary employment contracts. A key issue at the Collective Labour Agreement negotiation table is with which agreements employers and employees wish to enrich these temporary positions to make them a worthwhile career stepping stone, in addition to making them professionally productive, interesting and challenging.

Recent graduates are often recruited for junior lecturer positions. For them, this is often their first real (temporary) job and, as such, an opportunity to take the first step in their career. It would be a sign of good employment practices to offer a group of these junior lecturers more employment security and career prospects on the labour market, inter alia by offering them a longer temporary employment contract. Such a contract would be for a period of four (to six) years, during which the employee would follow a professionalisation pathway, which would increase the employability and employment opportunities. This also makes the position more attractive, which makes it easier to attract talented employees. In addition, this goes to benefit the quality of the education provided (a key example is the employment of a recent graduate with a talent for ICT innovations in teaching and for working group guidance).