Approved by the Governing Council: October 29th, 2026

OTM-R POLICY
(Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment)
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEÓN

This is an unofficial English translation, provided for information purposes only. In the event of any discrepancy between this translation and the Spanish version of this policy, the Spanish version shall prevail.

The University of León (ULE), in its firm commitment to academic excellence, institutional transparency and equal opportunities, has adopted the OTM-R (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment) policy, with fair and open selection processes for academic and research staff based on the abilities and merits of the candidates, thereby promoting an inclusive and competitive environment.

Through its OTM-R policy, the ULE promotes a framework of good practice that sets out clear principles and procedures for the recruitment of staff in research and higher education institutions. Its main objective is to ensure that selection processes are transparent, open to all qualified candidates and based on objective, merit-related criteria. The implementation of this policy helps to prevent bias, favouritism and discrimination, promoting equal opportunities for all applicants, regardless of their gender, origin, age or any other personal circumstance.

This policy complies with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005) and with their reformulation in the Council Recommendation of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe (C/2023/1640).

The OTM-R protocol has been drawn up as part of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) followed by the ULE to adapt its human resources regulations to the above-mentioned European Union context. The Regulations on Research Staff of the University of León, approved by the Governing Council on 11 December 2024 (amendment approved by the Governing Council on 29 September 2025, BOCYL no. 192 of 6 October 2025), are a key element of that strategy as the University's internal regulations on the recruitment of research human resources.

This policy is implemented through four standardised instruments, which apply to calls for research and technical staff funded by agreements, Article 60 LOSU contracts and research projects: the institutional model call, in a bilingual Spanish/English version; the institutional selection assessment scales (form 17.2), one for Research Staff (Group I) and a unified one for Research Support Technical Staff (Groups I and III); the Protocol for the publication of research job offers on EURAXESS and the management of international applications; and the standardised declaration of absence of conflict of interests (DACI) for members of selection committees, in a bilingual Spanish/English version.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The OTM-R policy of the University of León rests on three essential pillars:

1. Openness: All recruitment processes at the ULE are open to qualified candidates, without discriminatory restrictions. Vacancies are published on accessible platforms, such as the institutional website and the electronic notice board, and progressively on the EURAXESS portal, in accordance with the institutional publication protocol, to ensure their international dissemination. Calls contain clear and detailed information on the requirements and application procedures and are also published in English to facilitate access for international candidates.
2. Transparency: The ULE guarantees documented and understandable selection processes, with assessment criteria that are accessible and published in advance in institutional assessment scales, stating the maximum score for each stage and section, which strengthens institutional trust and ensures objective decision-making.
3. Merit: The assessment of applications is based exclusively on merits, skills, experience and potential, applying previously established and fair criteria. When held, the interview and/or the practical test are structured, with questions common to all applicants and previously established assessment criteria.

IMPLEMENTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEÓN

The University of León has designed specific mechanisms to ensure the proper implementation of this policy, including:

- Publication of job offers on official platforms, including the EURAXESS Jobs portal, with a record of evidence in the administrative file.
- An institutional model call, bilingual, with homogeneous minimum content for all positions.
- Public institutional assessment scales according to the category of the position, with explicit weighting of each stage and section.
- An online application channel accessible without a digital certificate or national electronic identification systems.
- Precise definition of the profiles of the positions offered.
- Training of the staff involved in selection processes.
- Establishment of diverse and balanced assessment committees, with a balanced representation of women and men.
- A declaration of absence of conflict of interests (DACI), in a standardised bilingual form, signed by all members of the selection committee.
- Internal audits and periodic reviews.
- Promotion of participation and feedback from candidates, who are informed of the score obtained in each section of the assessment scale.

BENEFITS FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

The advantages for recruited staff include:

- Mobility incentives through calls managed by the Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer.
- Financial support for doctoral candidates through specific calls of the ULE's own research programme.

In turn, the adoption of the OTM-R policy enables the University to attract talent of excellence, strengthen its international profile and consolidate an organisational culture based on equity, diversity and trust.

CALLS AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

The University of León seeks to promote fair, transparent and merit-based recruitment processes, ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates.

PUBLICITY

The ULE guarantees the dissemination of all calls through its website and electronic notice board.

For research staff contracts:

Calls/Staff (CALLS), where the lists of admitted and excluded applicants, the proposed award and the decisions of the Selection Committee are also published.

For administrative and service staff (PTGAS) or teaching and research staff (PDI):

Convocatorias-PTGAS-PDI

In addition to publishing calls on the ULE website, research staff job offers will be published on the EURAXESS Jobs portal, in accordance with the Protocol for the publication of research job offers on EURAXESS and the management of international applications, which is mandatory for all units that manage the selection or recruitment of such staff. This ensures that vacancies are accessible to an international audience, promoting openness and transparency in selection processes, thereby complying with international standards and facilitating the participation of qualified candidates from different countries, and so strengthening the quality and diversity of our recruitment processes.

Under that protocol, the European Projects Office (OPEI) coordinates the University's institutional profile on EURAXESS and registers the authorised users of each managing unit. The offer is published once the call has been approved and published on the University website, with its essential elements translated into English and the official call attached in PDF format. As a minimum, each offer includes a descriptive title in English free of gender bias, the researcher profile according to the European classification (R1, R2 or R3; this classification does not apply to technical staff positions), the application deadline, the assessment criteria and their weighting, the working conditions (type of contract, working hours and indicative salary), the link to the bilingual application form and the institutional statement on equal opportunities. A PDF record of the published offer, stating its date and identifier, is added to the administrative file as evidence of international dissemination.

OPEN AND TRANSPARENT RECRUITMENT

To ensure clear processes, standardised model calls are used, which are publicly available in a bilingual Spanish/English version (in the event of any discrepancy, the Spanish version prevails). They include relevant information such as:

- Type of contract: open-ended contract for scientific and technical activities (Article 23 bis of Act 14/2011 on Science, Technology and Innovation), stating the ground for termination provided for in Article 52(e) of the Workers' Statute.
- Working hours: full-time (35 hours per week) or part-time, stating the number of hours per week.
- Salary: gross monthly salary for each position, in 12 payments with prorated extra payments.
- Working schedule: as indicated for each position in Annex I.
- Functional profile: Annex I of the call, which identifies the category of the position (Researcher R1, R2 or R3; Technician Group I or Group III).
- General requirements: In compliance with the principle of equality, the ULE will admit any person holding Spanish nationality or the nationality of a European Union member state, or who, being a national of another state, holds the relevant administrative authorisation. In addition, applicants must be at least sixteen years of age and not exceed the mandatory retirement age, hold the qualification and meet the specific conditions indicated in the profile of the position, and have the functional capacity to perform its duties.
- Selection procedure: a merit-based competition, applying the institutional assessment scale corresponding to the category of the position, and a personal interview or practical test if the Selection Committee considers it necessary. The institutional assessment scales (form 17.2) are public and bilingual: the scale for Research Staff (Group I) allocates 70 points to merits and 30 to the scientific presentation and interview; the scale for Technical Staff (Groups I and III) allocates 80 points to merits and 20 to the interview or technical test. If this second stage is not held, the merit score is rescaled proportionally to 100 points.
- Application period: 10 working days from the day following the publication of the call. Even where the procedure is processed as urgent, this period is not reduced, in order to encourage applications, including international ones.
- Information on personal data protection.
- Institutional statement on equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

APPLICATION

Application procedures are carried out using electronic tools, with no initial requirement for original documents, thereby reducing the administrative burden.

Applications are submitted through an online form specific to each call, hosted in the University's institutional Google Workspace environment, which does not require a digital certificate or the use of national electronic identification systems (Cl@ve), so that it is fully accessible to international candidates; for offers advertised on EURAXESS, this form is the application link (How to Apply). Documents are attached as

scanned files, in Spanish or English, and are presumed valid under the responsibility of the applicant; the curriculum vitae is organised according to the order of the applicable assessment scale. The date and time of submission are those recorded by the form, and applications received within the deadline through this channel are fully valid. Applications are forwarded to the Selection Committee and assessed on strictly equal terms, regardless of the applicant's nationality.

As a transparency measure, this OTM-R policy will include a descriptive guide to the selection procedures at the ULE, so that applicants have clear instructions on how to apply and how the procedure is processed.

Calls will state the time limits for each stage of the selection process, which will be long enough to make it easier for interested candidates to apply, thereby ensuring the transparency of the process.

Annex I of the call contains the following sections:

Name of the position offered, category of the position, required profile, specific qualification where applicable, specific conditions to be met, details of the principal investigator of the project, Article 60 contract, agreement or project and its budget code, gross monthly salary, working hours, working schedule and place of work.

The assessment criteria and their weighting are set out in the institutional assessment scale corresponding to the category of the position, which is made public with the call. To promote equal opportunities for international candidates, the assessment scales value mobility at centres other than the one where the doctorate was obtained, including companies, and allow knowledge of Spanish to be assessed for applicants whose mother tongue is not Spanish, on the same scale as other languages.

LIST OF ADMITTED APPLICANTS

Once the application period has closed and compliance with the minimum requirements for participating in the call has been verified, a provisional list of admitted and excluded applicants is published on the ULE website, stating the grounds for exclusion, and applicants have 5 working days to remedy the defect or submit objections, through the form provided for this purpose or through the University's Electronic Register. Once the objections have been resolved, the final list is published and the Selection Committee proceeds to assess the applications.

The assessment is carried out in accordance with the corresponding institutional assessment scale. This stage may include interviews or practical tests if considered necessary. In that case, applicants who reach a minimum score in the merit stage will take part, and these will be conducted in a structured manner, with questions common to all of them.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

Selection committees will be composed of five members, in accordance with the Regulations on Research Staff: a Chair, who will be the Vice-Rector responsible for research or the person to whom this role is delegated; three members —the principal investigator of the contract, agreement or project to which the position is assigned, who may delegate to the co-PI or, failing that, to a member of the research team; the head of the Department, Research Institute or Service to which the PI belongs; and the head of another

Department with staff assigned to the same Faculty or School as the PI, or the person to whom this role is delegated— and a Secretary, a civil servant from the Human Resources Service, who has the right to speak but not to vote. The committee will observe gender parity through a balanced representation of women and men, wherever possible. The inclusion of external assessors is being implemented through the creation of a pool of assessors drawn from teaching and/or research staff of the four universities of Castilla y León. Where the selection committee considers it appropriate, given the characteristics of the position or the profile of the candidates, experts from non-academic organisations, such as companies, or even from the international sphere, may be asked to take part. The creation and operation of the pool of assessors will be governed by regulations currently being drafted.

The selection process must comply with the constitutional principles of merit, ability, transparency, openness, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

In view of these safeguards, interruptions and variations in research careers will not be penalised, whether due to personal reasons such as maternity or paternity leave, or to research reasons such as sabbaticals or career breaks.

The selection process is based on the candidates' merits required in the applicable institutional assessment scale, and an interview or practical test may be held if the selection committee considers it necessary.

Committee members must have the experience and qualifications needed to assess candidates effectively, seeking to promote diversity and balance, which is why the ULE is introducing the participation of staff from outside the University of León in these assessment committees.

To guarantee the independence of the selection committee from the candidates, in all calls each committee member signs a declaration of absence of conflict of interests (DACI) once the final list of admitted applicants has been published and before the assessment begins. In it, they declare whether any of the grounds for abstention laid down in Article 23 of Act 40/2015 of 1 October on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector applies, as well as any other academic or professional relationships with the candidates that should be disclosed. Any member to whom a ground for abstention applies abstains and is replaced by their substitute or by the person appointed by the Chair. The declarations are added to the file of the selection process and, in calls funded by European funds, they also comply with the specific requirements of each programme. The declaration is made using the standardised form of the Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer, available in Spanish and English, which also includes the undertaking to report any conflict of interests arising during the process, the duty of confidentiality regarding the information and data of the applications, and notice of the right of interested parties to challenge a member's participation under Article 24 of Act 40/2015.

DECISION AND PUBLICATION

Once the assessment has been completed, the Selection Committee publishes the proposed award, stating the score obtained by each admitted applicant in each section of the assessment scale, and applicants have 5 working days to submit objections. Once these have been resolved, the Vice-Rector for Research and Knowledge Transfer issues the final award decision, which is published at the same web address. The outcome of the process will be communicated to all applicants, together with the time limits available for

submitting objections. Once the process has been completed, the file is forwarded to the competent services for the signing of the contract.

The number of applicants declared successful may not exceed the number of positions announced. Applicants who do not obtain a position are placed on a reserve list in order of score, up to a maximum of five per position, which makes it possible to cover withdrawals or absences without a new call. The Committee may propose, on reasoned grounds, that a position be declared vacant where no application matches the profile. The process is resolved within a maximum of three months from the publication of the call, and its decision may be challenged by means of an optional appeal for reconsideration or a contentious-administrative appeal, on the terms indicated in the call.

RECRUITMENT

The ULE will facilitate the recruitment process in all cases, and especially in the case of foreign nationals, thereby contributing to the attraction of international researchers. Original documents, sworn translations, certified copies, the official recognition of foreign qualifications or submission through the Electronic Office are only required from the selected person, prior to the signing of the contract. In particular, qualifications obtained abroad are assessed on the basis of the documentation submitted with the application, in Spanish or English and without the need for a sworn translation; the grade point average may be evidenced by the declaration of equivalence of average marks issued by the ministry responsible for universities, and official recognition or a declaration of equivalence of the qualification is only required from the selected person, where the qualification is a requirement of the position.

DATA PROTECTION

Calls and application forms include the University's data protection information clause, stating the purpose, legal basis, recipients and retention period of the processing, as well as how to exercise data protection rights. Access to the data collected is limited to the authorised staff of the managing unit and to the Selection Committee.

CONCLUSION

For the University of León, the OTM-R policy represents a firm commitment to excellence, equality and transparency in the management of academic and research talent. Its proper application not only ensures compliance with international standards but also drives the continuous improvement of institutional processes, strengthening the ULE's position in higher education and research.