

## POLICY PLAN GENDER HASSELT UNIVERSITY

### A. BACKGROUND

- **Situation**

**Gender:** the social differences or roles assigned to women and men, roles into which people are educated and which change over time, and are contingent upon culture, ethnic background, religion, breeding, class and geographic, economic and political environment in which people live. The behavioral models determine the normative matrix and affect who we are alongside our sex. Therefore, gender describes the set of characteristics and attitudes expected of men and women by society, which determine their social identity. This identity varies from culture to culture and depends on the historical context (Equal Guide on gender mainstreaming, European Commission, 2004).

In 2012, a few decrees were issued, which impose gender quotas for the composition of academic advisory boards and management at universities.

These decrees took effect on 1 October 2013 on the understanding that a balanced representation of both sexes should be realized at the next reshuffle of the relevant boards.

From the onset, the rectors have voiced concern over the feasibility and purpose of these gender quotas. As a result, a 'High level Task Force Gender' has been founded within the VLIR framework with a view to developing concrete proposals which should be more effective in the long-term than mere quotas, and which elicit more sympathy among the Tenured Academic Personnel, which is why they developed 'VLIR Actieplan Gender, Vrouwen in de academische loopbaan en het universitair beleid', which was submitted to the tutor secretaries Ingrid Lieten and Pascal Smet in 2013. Both secretaries were enthusiastic and requested the rectors to draw up an inter-university charter. In addition, each institute was requested to develop an individual gender action plan.

The Hasselt University Policy Plan Gender is an action plan proposal that was prepared within the framework of the working group Gender, which is underwritten by the faculties through their representation within the Council of Deans as well as the Sounding Board Gender.

The measures proposed by Hasselt University within the framework of its policy plan are patterned on the recommendations formulated by the VLIR High Level Task Force Gender, which can be divided into three groups:

- measures with regard to business culture (target group: complete personnel);
- measures with regard to inflow and throughput (target group: academic personnel);
- measures with regard to work-life balance (target group: complete personnel).

The majority of proposed measures, in particular the last group of support measures, aim to facilitate the work-life combination for the complete personnel. As such, they cater to the needs of men and women belonging to a 'dual-career' couple, one-parent-family or recomposed family.

Hasselt University is very well aware of the fact that – apart from the aforementioned 'work-life balance' issue – there are specific gender issues, often to the disadvantage of women, with regard to business culture and academic inflow and throughput. A few measures within the first two groups aim to neutralize this gender aspect.

- **Approach**

An effective gender approach takes into account the interests, needs and experience of both women and men. Taking this further, Hasselt University, considering the experience that both men and women struggle to balance private and social life, wishes to use the concept of "dual-career couples" as the right approach towards the proposed Policy Plan Gender<sup>1</sup>. 'Dual-career couples' differ from 'dual-earner couples' in some aspects. They are defined as couples in which both partners aspire a career. Both hold a job which is important for them, which offers chances to develop their potential, and which demands a high level of commitment. In this respect, the careers of both partners have equal standing. At the same time both partners have a family life, possibly with children, definitely involving chores and tasks intrinsic to managing a household (De Jonghe & Von Krumbkow, 1990).

As an increasing number of academics belong to this group, universities need to consider the needs of these couples. It is undeniably true that dividing family duties and socio-economic obligations is a decisive factor of the extent to which both partners are able to realize their professional goals. Moreover, Hasselt University takes into account the fact that traditional family structures have been subject to change over the last 15 years. The number of particular households increased strongly between the early 1970s and late 1990s while the average family size has decreased steadily. The underlying trend is a strong increase in the number of single adults, both single adults living alone and single-parent-families (Cantillon, Verbist, & De Maesschalck, 2004).

Furthermore, there is a strong increase in the number of recomposed families, which often face a concatenation of difficulties in various domains of everyday life. The UHasselt wants to take these specific needs into account.

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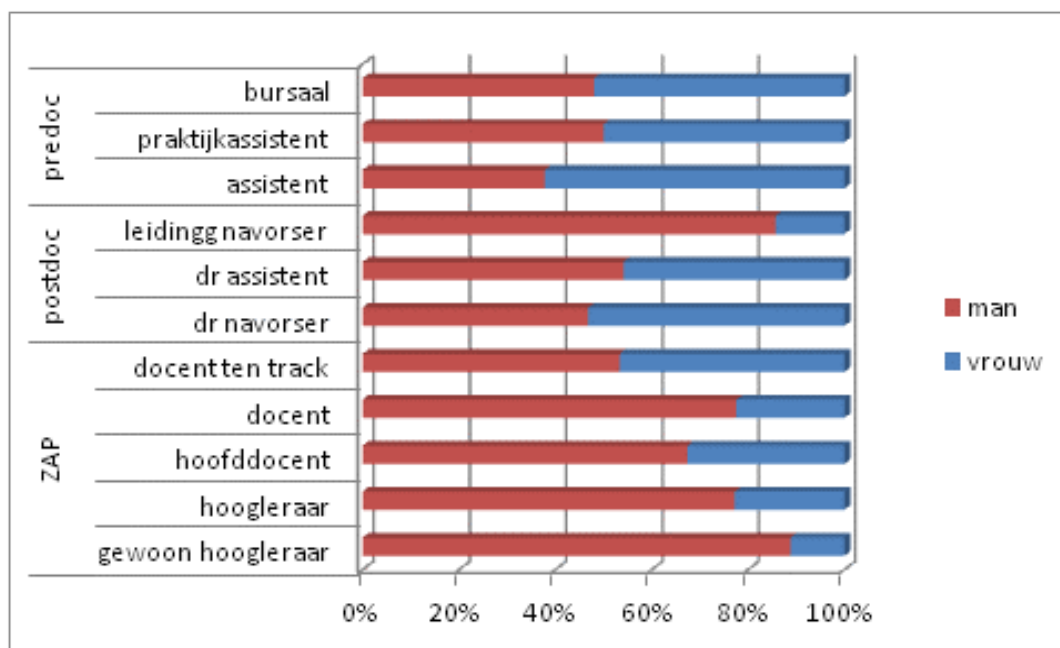
<sup>11</sup> The term 'dual-career couples' is used within the "Federal Equal Opportunity at Universities Programme", which was launched in 2000, striving for proportional representation of men and women in institutes for higher education.

- **Current situation Hasselt University**

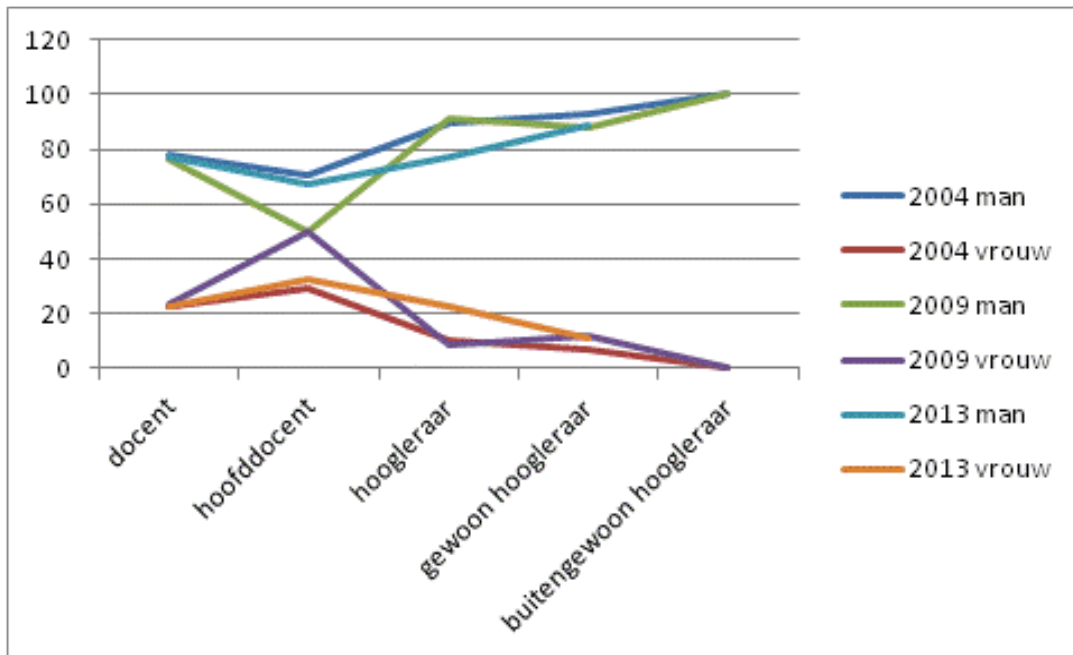
The throughput of women among the Administrative and Technical Personnel is satisfactory. Looking at the Academic Personnel figures, however, a discrepancy between male and female representation is apparent at different levels. The table below represents the situation on 1 February 2013. At predoc and postdoc level the male-female division is still quite balanced. However, the higher in terms of academic rank, the fewer are the women.

### Academic Titles

<b>Flemish Community</b>	<b>Translation (Standard English)</b>
Gewoon Hoogleraar	Full Professor
Hoogleraar	Professor
Hoofddocent	Associate Professor
Docent	Assistant Professor
Doctor-assistent	Post-doc research assistant
Assistent	Research assistant
Lector	Lecturer
Gastprofessor	Visiting Professor
ZAP	Tenured Academic Personnel
AAP	Assistant Academic Personnel
ATP	Administrative and Technical Personnel



The diagram below shows the presence of men and women at Hasselt University for 2004, 2009 and 2013.



## **B. ACTION PLAN**

### **1. GENDER CONSCIOUS and FAMILY FRIENDLY BUSINESS CULTURE**

The established management and business culture within a university plays a pivotal role in realizing a balanced representation of men and women across all university levels ('gender-conscious' business culture) and in recognizing and considering the needs of dual-career couples ('family-friendly business culture').

Starting from the gender perspective, Veerle Draulans and Mieke Smet use three strands of argument to analyze the low throughput of women (Draulans & Smet, 2005). Besides the macroperspective, which regards the issue as a matter of time, and the microperspective, which claims that women deny themselves the opportunity to climb to higher organizational levels through mechanisms of self-selection and self-exclusion, the authors discuss a third level, i.e. the meso level, which traces the causes of the glass ceiling mostly to the organizational structure and culture. In contrast to structural elements such as procedures and recruitment, which can be mapped quite easily (but which have to be assessed in terms of gender neutrality as well), the organizational culture can hardly be charted, prompting the question which values are held in high regard and whether these values implicitly or explicitly tie in with masculinity or femininity.

In a company, diverse values take root within an organization (in which there may be a potential gender bias), which are reflected in a few domains (Arjuna Coaching & Assessments):

- The organizational set-up, size and management features such as the decision-making process;
- HRM-policy, such as competence management (trade-off between hard and soft competences);
- The organizational culture including leadership styles.

In practice, an inconsistency between 'hard' and 'soft' values is often noticeable. An organization may provide facilities to work part-time, but the culture may be so masculine that using these facilities could disadvantage one's career opportunities. Another example is an organization which claims to be woman-friendly but emphasizes hard rather than soft competences. In other words, if the personnel of an organization is not aware of the underlying values determining their actions, the application of specific 'gender-friendly' measures will not yield the desired results (Arjuna Coaching & Assessments).

The aim of a gender-conscious business culture should consist of recognizing a very broad and diverse array of (practiced and applied) values, norms and competences within the company culture, and the appreciation of this diversity as an added value for the organization as a whole.

Consequently, Hasselt University strives for an organizational culture that is inclusive, and in which the individual, regardless of his or her gender can develop and use his or

her talents to contribute to the organizational objectives. This should be achieved by communicating commitment from the top (actions 1.1 and 1.2), through internal awareness-raising (actions 1.3 and 1.4), and through the ambassador role of collaborators (action 1.5) as well as the creation of clear guidelines (action 1.6).

### **1.1. Signing the Gender Charter**

In its mission statement, the VLIR High Level Task Force Gender puts forward the action lines behind which universities can position themselves, and which can be adopted in a Charter as a collectively supported commitment. This Charter is to be ratified by the VLIR Council. The action lines are:

- The explicit commitment from the top of the university;
- The translation of this commitment to all levels within the university;
- The training of both male and female managers;
- A gender policy for inflow and throughput to Tenured Academic Personnel;
- A gender policy in management bodies and other councils and committees.

Hasselt University commits itself to signing this charter.

### **1.2. The foundation of a task force 'Gender'**

In preparation of this policy plan a task force 'Gender' has been founded. In order to emphasize the commitment by the top of the university, both the Rector and the General Administrator of the university take part in the meetings. The task force will also be charged with the further follow-up of measures/initiatives described and included in the proposed policy plan.

The task force composition is as follows:

- Luc De Schepper – Rector Hasselt University
- Marie-Paule Jacobs – General Administrator Hasselt University
- Nicole Dekelver – Director of Education
- Ann Peters – Director of Research
- Yves Soen – Personnel Director
- An De Backer – Rectorial Office Director
- Mark Smeyers – Senior Legal Advisor
- Sara De Clerck – Rectorial Office Policy Collaborator

The proposals of this 'technical' working group are discussed, complemented and supported by the Vice-Chancellors for education and research, and by the Council of Deans. Moreover, the policy plan has been submitted to a sounding board group in which various faculties of Hasselt University are represented and the male-female balance respected. The Board of Governors should underwrite this policy plan and follow up its further implementation.

The Sounding board group composition is as follows:

- Bert Brone (Faculty of Medicine and Life Sciences)
- Frank Neven (Faculty of Sciences)
- Petra Foubert (Faculty of Law)
- Griet Verbeeck (Faculty of Architecture and Arts)

- Sandra Streukens (Faculty of Business Economics)
- Michael Daenen (Faculty of Industrial Sciences)
- Patricia Zanoni (Research group Diversity)

Throughout this process Professor Erna Nauwelaerts (who is also a member of the VLIR High Level Task Force Gender) acted as an advisor across the activities of the various groups.

### ***1.3. Reviewing business culture at Hasselt University***

It is important to have the right tools to assess sufficient room and regard for the wide range of norms, values, competences that should exist within a pluralistic organization as well as the awareness-raising process among staff with respect to the conscious values they believe to have and the unconscious values that actually determine their behavior.

Hasselt University wants to organize an audit that enables it to identify the Hasselt University business culture at different levels: visible aspects through the screening of procedures on the one hand and the unfathomable aspects of business culture such as the practised and applied values on the other hand. Inconsistencies, inaccuracies and imbalances will be tracked and remedied. The audit results will be used to translate gender-awareness to the various levels of the university.

### ***1.4. Creating gender awareness***

A gender-conscious and family-friendly business culture considers the combination of professional, personal and socio-social life of its employees and the equal opportunities for men and women within the organization. This implies an awareness with respect to the gender-specific characteristics, and its valorization also includes the acceptability of holiday arrangements and part-time work within the practised culture, both for men and women. People in management positions are undoubtedly indispensable actors in nurturing and maintaining this culture. Through its training programme "Learning@UHasselt", Hasselt University ensures the implementation and safeguarding of the results and conclusions of the aforementioned audit into the existing trainings for management.

Moreover, within the framework of the action plan 'HR-strategy for researchers' a workshop will be organized for the members of the selection committees. When conducting selection processes for researchers, the focus has traditionally been on the applicant's motivation, research experience and education skills.

Social communication skills, teamwork, persuasion and other aspects of leadership are too often given secondary importance. However, it is clear that these skills are critical to make researchers carry out their activities in a successful way. It is also worthwhile to investigate whether a similar awareness-raising process should be implemented in the Statutory Commission of Advice for the assessment and promotion of the academic personnel (action plan 'HR-strategy for researchers').

It should also be determined whether the values put forward during the trainings/workshops are actually positively assessed during the selections and evaluation processes. Tools to evaluate these skills in the most objective way will be developed to this end.

### ***1.5. Family-friendly and efficient culture of meetings***

Planning meetings at family-friendly times is a condition to combine work-related obligations with private matters. Besides, it is important for meetings to be run in an effective way, which includes the careful draw-up of the invitation list and the timely communication of preparatory contents. For this purpose, the Hasselt University will develop guidelines in terms of "family-friendly and efficient meetings" that will be sent across different layers of the university. To meet this end, presidents of the meetings will be called on to comply with these guidelines, and individual meeting teams will be invited to draw up the most beneficial schedule in mutual consultation.

A policy on effective meetings can only be successful if information after the meetings is soundly transferred to all stakeholders involved. For this purpose the department of communication and marketing will investigate suitable methods for knowledge transfer.

### ***1.6. Making role models visible***

Hasselt University wants to make an effort to promote both internal and external female and male role models. A good role model is both realistic and appealing. It includes the performances related to the university's core activities as well as witness statements with respect to an efficient work-life balance. Both men and women can benefit from these witness statements as they provide useful tips to be applied to the personal situation, and contribute to the wider acceptance of using holiday arrangements/part-time working arrangements by both genders.

In this respect, young researchers form a particular target group. In fact, for young researchers the supervisor acts as a first role model, which makes it worthwhile to support the supervisors in this role.

In consultation with the Communication and Marketing Department of Hasselt University, new ways are investigated to increase the visibility of role models within the University as well as the broader academic community, possibly in combination with a monitoring system which safeguards the balanced communication in terms of female/male staff ratios, and which offers various views and ways to take action.



## 2. INFLOW - THROUGHPUT

Hasselt University has a long tradition of HR policy towards researchers. In 2007 it was one of the first Flemish universities to sign the Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers of the European Commission. Furthermore, Hasselt University was the first Flemish university that was awarded the "HR Excellence in Research" from the European Commission. This acknowledgement happened on the basis of a strategic HR document from Hasselt University which describes both the current HR policy and the initiatives revolving around this policy (see appendix 1). In this way, the career plan for Non-Statutory Academic Personnel has existed since 2004, various facilities have been offered to strive for a better work-life balance, and Hasselt University takes part in a pilot group of 40 European research institutes to contribute to the implementation of the European Manual for Researchers.

Many of the measures adopted in this policy plan build upon the action lines embedded in Hasselt University's HR strategy.

### **2.1. Measures for inflow improvement**

#### **2.1.1. Gender-neutral job advertisements/job descriptions**

Hasselt University vacancies explicitly mention its non-discriminatory nature: *"Hasselt University contributes to the knowledge economy in the (EU) region. Its features are active and student-centered education, top research in well-defined fields and international orientation. Because of its small scale, and together with its collaborators, it develops an organization where people work in an agreeable way. People's qualities are the only yardstick. Gender, ethnicity, handicap, nationality and age are not taken into account."*

In addition to the existing "manual for recruiting Academic personnel", Hasselt University wants to draw up a checklist safeguarding the gender neutrality of job advertisements in general and job descriptions in particular, which acts as an extra security mechanism alongside the already existing legal obligations. This checklist also pays attention to the avoidance of sex-related terminology, the critical formulation of certain qualifications (so as not to discourage too many suitable candidates beforehand), the explicit mentioning of available secondary work conditions, and the safeguarding of the balance between 'hard' and 'soft' skills.

## **2.2. Measures for throughput improvement**

### **2.2.1. Differentiated career path policy**

Tenured Academic Personnel and postdocs are expected to develop a balanced career with attention for research, education and services to the university and the community, which make up the three 'traditional' pillars of a university. In addition, they also assume other tasks (e.g. management activities) in terms of throughput and expertise. However, throughout their careers, academics cannot be expected to excel at all these aspects at once. This view on careers perfectly fits a business culture which encourages the adoption of specific holiday arrangements and part-time work, and ensures that this adoption does not negatively impact on evaluation and selection procedures.

This is why Hasselt University, along with other universities, strives for the development of differentiated career paths, through which professors can focus more on education or research during certain career stages as well as services to the community, innovation/valorization and policy responsibilities within the university – without any negative impact on their careers. This, however, does not detract from the fact that in the early stages for Tenured Academic Personnel sufficient attention should be paid to education and research output in order to ensure the career's academic scope. An adjustment of Tenured Academic Personnel profiles is currently being prepared, in which a more differentiated approach towards expectations based on seniority and throughput across different degrees will be possible.

This is also translated into Hasselt University's assessment and promotion guidelines and should be fully supported through career path counseling (see 2.2.4). Needless to say, the emergence of a 'natural' hierarchy through the application of a differentiated career policy with academics specializing in research earning the highest positions in contrast to those concentrating more on education should be avoided. For this purpose, the criteria used within the context of assessment and promotion should be critically evaluated. These criteria should not only conform to the prevalent expectations within an inter-university and international research context, but should also be realistic within the context of a business culture that strives for a balance between work, family and social-societal commitments.

### **2.2.2. Replacement fund**

Hasselt University wishes to found a replacement fund ensuring the continuation of academic assignment, both during and after long-term absence of Tenured Academic Personnel as a result of illness, pregnancy, maternity leave or palliative care leave. These measures also contribute to a higher acceptance of holiday arrangements by men and women.

During the absence of a member of the Tenured Academic Personnel, the teaching assignments or any other assignments can be taken over by temporarily employed staff within the department, thus enabling an assignment reorganization within that department.

In addition, this replacement fund could be useful when academics wish to complement their scientific portfolio after a longer period of absence. In order to bridge this potential breaking-in period, the adjustment of the Tenured Academic Personnel statute is being prepared, by which Tenured Academic Personnel that has been absent for a longer period of time is offered the opportunity to temporarily renew and intensify exclusively specified academic assignments to update the scientific portfolio after the catch-up period. In order to avoid the situation in which colleagues from the Department involved are faced with a significant increase in workload on account of this arrangement, the replacement fund allows for the replacement funding. As such, the member of staff who acquired the temporary exemption can consolidate his/her scientific portfolio without disadvantaging his/her colleagues.

With respect to long-term absence of Assisting Academic Staff, it has already been organized by decree to facilitate matters, possibly through the introduction of a seventh year or an extra year for post-doc research assistants.

### ***2.2.3. Fostering international mobility***

A survey conducted in the summer of 2008 and 2010 by the Expertisecentrum voor O&O-monitoring (ECCOOM) among junior and senior researchers of Flemish universities has shown that Hasselt University has a higher number of postdocs and Tenured Academic Personnel having obtained their PhD at another institute than the Flemish average. The same survey pointed out that young researchers score low on mobility (12%). The willingness towards mobility, however, is as high at Hasselt University as it is at other Flemish universities, which means that there is a clear discrepancy between effective mobility and willingness towards mobility. Moreover, it has become clear that senior researchers at Hasselt University strongly feel that the institute encourages its researchers to collaborate in an intersectorial way. With respect to intersectorial cooperation, Hasselt University scores higher than the other Flemish institutes (Leyman, De Grande, Jidkova, Van der Goten, Jacobs, De Boyser, & Vandeveld, 2009; te Kaat, Leyman, Vandeveld, & Van Rossem, 2013).

Hasselt University monitors the mobility of researchers, which is apparent from its research policy plan 2011-2015. Fostering international and intersectorial mobility of junior and senior researchers is one of the operational targets of the research policy plan. Participation in Flemish, federal and international funding channels for the purpose of researcher mobility, both incoming and outgoing, is further encouraged and supported. Research in direct cooperation with companies in the form of Baekeland and innovation mandates (Rapportering Universiteit Hasselt, 2013) is also important in this respect. Worthy of mention is also the possibility of sabbatical leaves for Tenured Academic Personnel. To this end, resources will be earmarked within BOF from 2014 onwards to cover the costs of intensive research periods for TT-lecturers and Tenured Academic Personnel, both inside and outside the university (internal BOF-guidelines). The aforementioned replacement fund can also contribute to a higher number of academics (e.g. assistants with teaching assignments) getting experience abroad for a specific period of time.

At the same time, Hasselt University recognizes that – regarding the problem basis of dual-career-couples – a stay abroad often proves difficult in combination with duties of

care. This is why an open dialogue with academics on the desirability and feasibility of international mobility at different stages of their lives should be conducted (see also Differentiated Career Path Policy) as well as more attention for intersectorial experience in recruitment and promotion.

With regard to seniority, a new paper on scaling of Tenured Academic Personnel is being prepared, allowing for more leeway to appreciate research and professional experience in the broad sense, which includes the community outside the university as well to encourage intersectorial mobility. For Non-statutory Academic Personnel a new scaling method already exists (action plan 'HR strategy for researchers').

Hasselt University pays more attention to international cooperation than stays abroad, which is why it advises to value experience abroad in terms of work visits, collaboration with international researchers and the organization/coordination of foreign/international activities and research projects rather than merely long-term stays abroad within the context of promotion. The current communication technologies allow for this approach; in addition, room should be provided to address the issue of family-related costs in mobility situations, enabling Hasselt University to offer a financial compensation.

#### ***2.2.4. Career path counseling***

##### Young researchers

Hasselt University has decided to use a subsidy for the "supervision of young researchers" to implement strategic goals with respect to young researchers and research careers in the university's research policy plan 2011-2016, the further development of its doctoral schools (Doctoral Schools for Medical & Life Sciences; Science & Technology; Behavioral Sciences & Humanities), and the implementation of the Human Resources strategy plan.

##### *Research policy plan 2011-2016*

In the research policy plan 2011-2016 Hasselt University has included the formation of research talent, with attention for the development of both academic skills and 'transferable' skills, as one of its strategic goals. The supervision of PhD students occurs at different levels: through monitoring by the specific research group, through the supervisor and doctoral commission, and through doctoral school support.

##### *Hasselt University Doctoral Schools*

Within Hasselt University doctoral schools are responsible for training PhD students, paying attention to both the acquisition of scientific competences and transferable skills, which enhance the general formation of PhD students and broaden their career perspectives. For this purpose, various initiatives are taken.

##### *HR Excellence in Research*

Specific examples of initiatives within the context of the 'HR Excellence in Research' plan are, amongst others, the gender project 'Bouwstenen voor een innovatief HR-beleid aan de UHasselt: koesteren van talent' ('Developing an innovative HR policy at Hasselt University: cherishing talent'), the mentoring program for the supervision of young Tenured Academic Personnel (see 2.2.5) and the pilot project 'Career Path Planning' in

collaboration with VDAB and Innovatiecentrum Limburg, which aims specifically at PhD students and postdocs. In the first part of this pilot project young researchers benefit from the possibility of personal coaching where they learn to define competences and formulate goals. The second part aims to bridge university and life in the private sector or service industry.

### Senior researchers

Senior researchers also need clarity with respect to established expectations. Within the framework of career path counseling, each assessment and request for promotion needs to be combined with a discussion on the way a further career could evolve. The feedback provided during this discussion should tie in with the aforementioned diversity in terms of values, norms, competences, and should challenge members of staff to set sufficiently high goals on the basis of acknowledging this diversity.

Moreover, there is a widespread demand from senior researchers to be supported in their orientation towards the non-academic sector. The survey for senior researchers shows that they find it difficult to gauge their opportunities in the labor market. In this regard, Hasselt University assumes its social role in supporting its researchers and will therefore develop a career development center for senior researchers in which both training opportunities for non-academic/technical skills and support in terms of career path counseling are provided (action plan 'HR strategy for researchers').

### ***2.2.5. Mentoring and coaching***

In the scientific literature, diverse effects have been attributed to mentoring, from the viewpoint of the organization, the mentee and the mentor (Gielen & De Clerck, 2009). Within the context of a gender-conscious policy, it is noteworthy that research indicates that mentoring also has a positive influence on the work-private life balance (including socio-societal engagements) of mentees. Through the input of mentors, mentees are prepared for possible conflicts between work-private life, and are taught to cope with these challenges.

Moreover, extensive evidence suggests that mentorship fosters the throughput of collaborators due to career-relevant feedback as well as the opportunities they receive from their mentors. Besides the advantages for the mentee, the mentor too benefits from the mentoring relationship. For the mentor, coaching others can be an important source of learning, and can raise awareness with regard to the obstacles that young academics are confronted with when developing their academic careers.

### Mentoring@UHasselt

For years, mentoring projects have been intermittently organized at Hasselt University. The aim of this mentoring project is to support the career path of young scientists. The project concerns a continuation of the mentor trajectory developed within the Equal project of the VLIR werkgroep Gelijke Kansen (VLIR working group Equal Opportunities). In 2008, a steering group of this project was founded and agreements were made in

terms of selection criteria regarding mentors/mentees, recruitment, matching and timetabling.

This mentoring program hinges upon a sharply focused, ground-breaking concept:

- Individual mentoring
- Development-focused mentoring
- Mentoring within the organization/university
- Female and male academics help to cope with institutional and attitude-related obstacles on the career path.

The ethical code of the mentoring program comprises five pillars: competence, learning and development context, limitations<sup>2</sup>, integrity and professionalism.

The general regard for the project is a positive one. It is an approach with a positive cost/benefit balance. On the basis of a thorough evaluation and temporary follow-up by a steering group, possible points of improvement within the program can be implemented quickly and efficiently.

#### Tenure-tracks/ZAP-tracks

The tenure track (TT) system provides a lecturer trajectory leading to a tenure as an Associate Professor provided that the trajectory has been successfully accomplished. This trajectory is characterized by a careful and strict selection policy aimed at recruiting and employing very talented scientists. During the trajectory, which is spread over a period of five years, a tenure track commission carefully monitors the progress made by the tenure track member according to predefined criteria, and ascertains if the tenure track member qualifies for a tenure as an Associate Professor. During the trajectory a lot of attention is paid to coaching the tenure track member.

The Tenured Academic Personnel (ZT) system provides a trajectory which leads to a scaling into the Tenured Academic Personnel framework provided that the trajectory has been successfully accomplished by members of the teaching staff group 3 (OP) of the Hasselt University integration framework.

In keeping with the tenure track, this trajectory (which is spread over a period of maximally five years) is carefully monitored by a Tenured Academic Personnel track commission, which ascertains whether the track member qualifies for scaling into the Tenured Academic Personnel framework according to predefined criteria. During the Tenured Academic Personnel track period the OP member involved can appeal to a Tenured Academic Personnel mentor from the Hasselt University assembly of professors so that the track member involved can be assisted with respect to informal feedback, advice when developing networks, doing research,... An OP member with Tenured Academic Personnel track can also enroll for Hasselt University programs supporting research, education, management capabilities, coaching skills,...

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<sup>2</sup> Limitations: 1) for the mentor: recognizing one's own limits in terms of knowledge/responsibilities and avoiding conflicts of interest; for the mentee: being aware of one's own responsibility in terms of personal development.

The trajectories above offer the benefit of providing the members involved with the prospect of developing into Tenured Academic Personnel. The imposed term of five years can be disadvantageous for young researchers who wish to assume duties of care. This is why it is important to check these trajectories against their gender- and family-friendliness.

### **2.3. Research on throughput**

Despite the available facilities with respect to work-life balance (see below), Hasselt University figures testify to the gender problem and indicate that women remain underrepresented in higher ranks and functions. The causes are many. Hasselt University wishes to take clear initiatives to tackle the gender problem and to allow both women and men to get access to higher echelons. In order not to lapse into (exclusively) traditional remedies which have proven to be only partially successful, it invests a mandate within the research group Diversity, which specializes in fundamental and applied research on diversity, (in)equality and identity. This mandate-holder will map out the issue in terms of throughput and work-life balance on the basis of surveys, in-depth interviews, benchmarks and recommended approach (action plan 'HR strategy for researchers').

### **2.4. The composition of councils/commissions**

On 13 July 2012 the Flemish Parliament enacted a decree<sup>3</sup> according to which Hasselt University (and the UAntwerpen) are bound to obligations aimed at ensuring a balanced representation of men and women in management bodies, councils and commissions. This decree, which added a few provisions to the Hasselt University management decree<sup>4</sup>, was put into effect on 1 October 2013.

The principal article (art. 5/1) is as follows:

*"The Board of Governors lays down the fundamental rules concerning the organization of appointments and elections in its organizational and managerial regulations. These fundamental rules provide safeguards to ensure a balanced representation of both sexes in the Board of Governors, the various university's management bodies taking decisions to be implemented, various advisory committees provided by the organizational regulations, and selection commissions. It is stipulated that only a maximum of two thirds of the members of the aforementioned bodies, councils and commissions shall consist of people belonging to the same sex."*

Hasselt University fully supports the principle of gender balance. In its execution, Hasselt University has already adapted its Reglement Academische Structuur (RAS) (Academic Structure Regulations) for the decree implementation with a view to achieving a more balanced man-to-woman ratio. The composition rules for the Research Board, the

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<sup>3</sup> The decree on the adaptation of the administrative structures of the University of Antwerp and the University of Hasselt (13.07.2012, B.S. 08.08.2012)

<sup>4</sup> The decree on the University of Hasselt and the High Council for Higher Education in Limburg (20.06.2008, B.S. 12.08.2008)

Education Board, and the Statutory Commission of Advice were adjusted to that end (see annex 2).

Adapting the composition of faculties, their respective faculty boards and related bodies (departments, examination boards, education management teams, advisory commissions for appointments) to the imposed gender norms may in some cases prove difficult. These entities are composed on the basis of certificates, scientific expertise and/or teaching assignment of the academics involved. In some scientific fields, men tend to be overrepresented or women are hardly represented at all, which is particularly the case within the field of exact sciences. In such cases, a temporary deviation from the gender norm is allowed, but the university's management bodies demand that a specific motivation for this deviation and the entities involved be given and supported only within a reasonable time span. At the same time, it should be ensured that wherever women are underrepresented, these women should not be overinvited.

Neither could the composition of the Board of Governors be adapted on the basis of this new decree since its composition is defined by other rules within the same Hasselt University decree. Consequently, the Education Secretary has been asked to adapt the composition rules for the Board of Governors by means of an extra statute adaptation in order to respect the imposed norm and to allow exceptions to the gender norm, provided that the current composition of faculties or departments prevents its application (e.g. when the research group or faculty does not include any women).



### **3. SUPPORTING MEASURES**

When universities are sympathetic to couples striving for an equal division of responsibilities in terms of household chores, children and/or social roles, and consider the specific needs of single-parent families, the compatibility of an academic career and family/social commitment should be ensured. This requires cultural as well as structural change to ensure that a university career does not necessarily clash with a lifestyle that excludes other activities and responsibilities. This is why Hasselt University wants to position itself as a family-friendly institute. The measures/initiatives below aim to contribute to this process.

#### ***3.1. Measures concerning pregnancy***

Hasselt University assumes a proactive policy with respect to female academics who relish the prospect of pregnancy. During the recruitment process and temporary follow-ups, the company doctor informs female members of staff about pregnancy policy and facilities provided by Hasselt University. If so desired, female academics can consult the company doctor in the event of a real pregnancy. In this way, general health advice can be formulated before and/or during the foreseen pregnancy, and a risk analysis with possible lab products involved can be performed. This may include the company doctor analyzing the work environment on location. On the basis of binding advice formulated by the company doctor in terms of substances that might be harmful to the unborn child, the staff member involved and the supervisor may adapt/delegate certain research activities for a specific period of time. This may involve the (complete or partial) assignment of other activities during the pregnancy which benefit the academic portfolio.

Towards the end of the pregnancy, women are given the opportunity to take breaks (either in the doctor's office or in specially purchased sofas) or to work at home. After consultation with the Hasselt University health center doctor, women can apply for a parking space as close to the workplace as possible. These facilities are currently insufficiently known within various faculties and need to be more widely communicated.

Finally, when resuming work after pregnancy, a follow-up is provided by the health center doctor, analyzing and assessing the needs/problems of maternity as well as the possibility of breastfeeding. Each employee has the right to take breastfeeding breaks during office hours up to seven months after the child's birth. To this end, Hasselt University provides available rooms with refrigerators in which expressed milk can be conserved and the single jar can be cleaned with streaming water.

The preceding assistance and follow-up contribute to the fact that female members of staff can continue to carry out their activities during and after pregnancy with a feeling of comfort and security. Thanks to the positive Hasselt University policy regarding pregnancy and breastfeeding at work, the university has been proclaimed the most breastfeeding-friendly employer in 2009. It should be mentioned that these facilities in terms of pregnancy and breastfeeding are also offered to students expecting or having a child.

### **3.2. Structural work-at-home**

Future-focused and gender-conscious organizations should evolve towards space- and time-independent work. Flexible work schemes such as work-at-home allow employees to adapt their schedules in term of family needs without detracting from the work quality. Employees with children in particular benefit from these advantages, especially due to the reduction in travel time through which more time can be spent on other assignments.

The Hasselt University personnel already enjoys a high degree of flexibility with regard to working time. Through the principle of 'flexible working hours' and the 'flex-system' (as adopted in the Hasselt University labor regulations) the administrative and technical personnel can adapt its working hours to the needs of private life. The academic personnel already has a high autonomy when it comes to organizing duties and assignments. Occasional telecommuting is quite prevalent at Hasselt University, especially among academic staff. It is envisaged to develop a regulatory framework to facilitate work-at-home.

### **3.3. Child care**

To remedy the shortage of home day care units, employers can mitigate things by purchasing or renting places in existing units, delegating child care through the assistance of experienced organizations or by arranging day care units themselves. In the event of illness or educational seminars, parents often find it difficult to find child care assistance last minute, especially when the employee's parents do not live nearby. The employer can support these employees by collaborating with specialized organizations. Calling a central telephone number suffices to leave the child who is ill with a reliable and experienced babysitter.

#### Needs-analysis Hasselt University

In 2012-2013, students from the Faculty of Business Economics at Hasselt University conducted a needs analysis on the foundation of a child care unit on Diepenbeek campus among a selection of the Associatie Universiteit-Hogescholen Limburg (Hasselt University: staff with children up to six years old, University Colleges: all staff). The survey results indicate that a vast majority of respondents welcome the idea of child care on campus. The reasons given were: easy access, flexible care close to work, and the possibility to spend time with the children in-between.

Nearly half of the 314 respondents admitted to being willing to put their children in the hands of such a child care unit while 34% was still in doubt. A majority of respondents were willing to use child care during the day but did not see a need for child care before 8 am and/or after 6 pm. Some forty respondents confirmed the need for child care during school holidays.

## Holidaycare@UHasselt

At present, Hasselt University is already providing child care during holidays. In the Easter break (1 week) and in the summer holiday (4 weeks) children of employees from the age of 2,5 up to 13 can be registered for holiday care on Diepenbeek campus. This care service is provided by the Hasselt University Sports Service. For children in primary school this is conceived as a sports camp with various sports facilities. For toddlers, however, lively sports activities are supplemented with more quiet recreational activities. Assistance is provided by nursing school graduates and students as well as gymnastics students. During the summer months, an external NPO is in charge of the child care. Hasselt University subsidizes this child care so that parents only have to cover 30% of the total cost. Survey results show that holiday care is highly valued by employees using this service. Parents can take their children to work during holiday periods, enabling the children to learn about their parents' work environment and to have lunch together with the parents.

With respect to regular child care, Hasselt University welcomes the possibility to collaborate in order to investigate and find suitable child care facilities close to Hasselt campus, in terms of accessibility, feasibility and real (current) needs. In collaboration with the City of Hasselt, a provision of a child care unit in the city swimming pool is currently being investigated. This location is very close to the city campus.

### **3.4. Shopping service**

The possibility for employees to order products and goods through the internet and to have them delivered to the company can save busy staff members a considerable amount of time.

Within Hasselt University, there is the initiative *Hartenboer*, which is the Limburg branch of the NPO Voedselteams. NPO Voedselteams is a network of sustainable producers through whom direct trade of sustainable local produce is organized. NPO Voedselteams thus translates global thinking into local acts. For this purpose, a network of farmers and local food teams has been founded. Hartenboer (a network of Limburg farmers) delivers the sustainable farm produce directly to the customer and also Hasselt University (Diepenbeek Campus) has benefited as a pickup point for several years. Participants in this initiative can place a weekly order online (vegetables, fruit, meat, bread, pastry, dairy products, beverages, ...) and pick up their orders in a space with refrigerator.

In addition to the Hartenboer initiative Hasselt University also wishes to investigate the possibility of a shopping delivery service in collaboration with a supermarket.

### **3.5. Ironing service**

Experience tells us that offering ironing service is feasible for most companies and meets the pressing needs of employees' households. This system can be paid for through inexpensive service vouchers and creates extra employment among disadvantaged groups. Hasselt University wishes to investigate this possibility.

### ***3.6. Takeaway meals***

Both Hasselt University's Diepenbeek Campus and Hasselt Campus have their own restaurants run by Horeservi catering. This caterer offers meals as well as takeaway meals (and bread) which can be enjoyed at home by the whole family. This offer can undoubtedly be extended to a diverse array of wholesome takeaway meals.

Staff have already requested a bread vending machine (and a cash dispenser) on both campuses.

### ***3.7. Restricting administrative overload***

Hasselt University finds it important to enable the academic staff to meet their responsibilities in a satisfying way. This is why an ever increasing administrative overload should be limited as much as possible.

In this respect, it is essential to professionalize the administrative-technical and supporting staff and to simplify the existing administrative channels.

In addition, Hasselt University keeps investing in the automatization and informatization of administrative processes (e.g. creating job advertisements, keeping academic files, financing processes, ...) which allow for a maximum of information through a minimum of input (action plan 'HR strategy for researchers').

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## **BIJLAGE 1: HR Strategie voor onderzoekers**

[http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/UHasselt/onderzoek/HRStrategie voor onderzoekers  
\\_UniversiteitHasselt.pdf](http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/UHasselt/onderzoek/HRStrategie_voor_onderzoekers_UniversiteitHasselt.pdf)

## **BIJLAGE 2: Samenstellingsregels van OZ-raad, OW-raad en Statutaire commissie van Advies**

Uittreksel uit Reglement Academische structuur:

### ***De Onderzoeksraad (OZR)***

#### ***Samenstelling van de OZR en van het Bureau***

1. *De OZR bestaat uit volgende leden:*
  - a. *De vicerector onderzoek, die optreedt als voorzitter;*
  - b. *acht leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad Wetenschappen;*
  - c. *vier leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad GLW, waarvan minstens één lid uit de discipline Revalidatiewetenschappen en Kinesitherapie;*
  - d. *vier leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad BEW;*
  - e. *twee leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad REC;*
  - f. *twee leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad IIW in oprichting;*
  - g. *twee leden aan te duiden op voordracht van de FacRaad ARK in oprichting, één uit de discipline Architectuur en één uit de discipline Kunst; de vertegenwoordiger van de discipline Kunst wordt aangeduid in overleg met de SofA Mad van de PXL.*
  - h. *één lid aan te duiden op voordracht van de Interfacultaire School voor Mobiliteitswetenschappen, voorgedragen door het interfacultair bestuur;*
  - i. *één lid voor de professionele opleidingen, voorgedragen door de PXL.*
2. *De RvB stelt de leden van de OZR aan, op voordracht van de rector. Daartoe formuleren de voordragende organen per mandaat een dubbele voordracht aan de rector, waarbij ze zorg dragen voor een zekere mate van genderevenwicht. Bij de formulering van zijn finale voordracht aan de RvB ziet de rector erop toe dat de voorgedragen samenstelling van de OZR beantwoordt aan de decretaal bepaalde gendernorm. Indien de decretaal bepaalde gendernorm – ondanks alle redelijke inspanningen – niet kan bereikt worden, legt de rector een gemotiveerde afwijking ter goedkeuring voor aan de RvB.*

## **De Onderwijsraad (OWR)**

### **Samenstelling van de OWR**

3. De OWR bestaat uit volgende leden:

- a. de vicerector onderwijs, als voorzitter;
- b. de voorzitters van de onderwijsmanagementteams (OMT's) of de ondervoorzitter indien de voorzitter geen personeelslid van de UHasselt is, of niet behoort tot het integratiekader;
- c. één vertegenwoordiger van het AAP, op te nemen door de vertegenwoordiger van het AAP in de RvB;
- d. één student per faculteit of interfacultaire school, afgevaardigd door de Studentenraad.

De OMT-voorzitters kunnen zich laten vervangen door hun ondervoorzitter indien zij verhinderd zijn om aanwezig te zijn.

Daarnaast kunnen volgende personen als waarnemer deelnemen aan de vergaderingen:

- de rector;
- de decanen;
- de directeur onderwijs;
- een secretaris (stafmedewerker onderwijs);
- de beheerder.

De Onderwijsraad beschikt over een Bureau, samengesteld uit leden van de Onderwijsraad, waarvan deel uitmaken:

- de vicerector onderwijs, als voorzitter;
- één vertegenwoordiger per faculteit; voor de faculteit ARK in oprichting betreft het een vertegenwoordiger uit de discipline architectuur;
- één vertegenwoordiger van de Interfacultaire School voor Mobiliteitswetenschappen;
- één student
- de directeur onderwijs, als waarnemer;
- de secretaris, als waarnemer;

4. Indien de op deze wijze samengestelde onderwijsraad niet zou beantwoorden aan de decretale gendernorm, kan het CvD na overleg met de betrokken voorzitters van de onderwijsmanagementteams, één of meerdere OMT-voorzitters vervangen door andere leden van de OMT's, en/of de studentenraad uitnodigen tot het aanpassen van hun vertegenwoordigers.

## De Statutaire Commissie van Advies (SCvA)

### Samenstelling

5. De SCvA bestaat uit volgende leden:
  - a. de rector, die optreedt als voorzitter;
  - b. de twee vicerectoren;
  - c. de decanen;
  - d. drie leden uit de Fac BEW, ieder uit een verschillende vakgroep, voor te dragen door de Fac BEW;
  - e. één lid van de Fac REC, voor te dragen door de Fac REC;
  - f. drie leden van de Fac WET, ieder uit een verschillende vakgroep, voor te dragen door de Fac WET;
  - g. twee leden van de Fac GLW, waarvan minstens één lid uit de discipline Revalidatiewetenschappen en Kinesitherapie, voor te dragen door de Fac GLW;
  - h. één lid van de Fac ARK in oprichting, uit de discipline Architectuur;
  - i. één lid van de Fac IIW in oprichting;
  - j. één lid van de Interfacultaire School voor Mobiliteitswetenschappen.

De directeur rectoraat fungeert als secretaris en woont de vergadering bij met raadgevende stem.

6. De leden kunnen slechts deel uitmaken van de SCvA indien hij/zij minstens de graad van hoogleraar hebben. Er zijn geen plaatsvervangende leden.

De graadvoorwaarde zoals opgenomen in het eerste lid geldt niet voor de voorzitters van de vakgroepen in de faculteiten IIW in oprichting en ARK in oprichting en van de vakgroep RWK. De Raad van Bestuur beslist op voorstel van de rector, vanaf welk ogenblik de graadvoorwaarde ook voor deze beide faculteiten geldt.

7. De RvB stelt de leden van de SCvA aan op voorstel van de rector. Zij hebben een mandaat van vier jaar. De aanstelling gebeurt onmiddellijk na de aanstelling van de nieuw verkozen decanen. De FacRaden doen daartoe een gemotiveerd voorstel aan de rector m.b.t. de vakgroepen voor de betrokken mandaatperiode, waarbij ze zorg dragen voor een zekere mate van genderevenwicht. Bij de formulering van zijn finale voordracht aan de RvB ziet de rector erop toe dat de voorgedragen samenstelling van de SCvA beantwoordt aan de decretaal bepaalde gendernorm. Indien de decretaal bepaalde gendernorm – ondanks alle redelijke inspanningen – niet kan bereikt worden, legt de rector een gemotiveerde afwijking ter goedkeuring voor aan de RvB.