

FACTSHEET

Higher Education

Estonia

Administration and academic staff

The collegial decision-making body of a higher education institution is the Council (*Nõukogu*), whose procedures for formation and bases of operation are determined in the statutes of the higher education institution. The council approves the statutes of the higher education institution and makes amendments to them, approves the statutes of the structural units of the higher education institution, adopts the development plans for the higher education institution, approves the study programmes, approves the budget and the report on its execution.

Higher education institutions are run by the Rector who is accountable to the Council. The Rector is responsible for the development of the higher education institution and for the effective use of its financial resources. Candidates for the position of Rector must either hold or have held the academic rank of Professor. The Rector is elected for a period of five years.

The teaching staff of a university consists of professors (*professor*), associate professors (*dotsent*), lecturers (*lektor*), assistants (*assistent*) and teachers (*õpetaja*). The research staff of a university includes leading researchers (*juhtivteadur*), senior researchers (*vanemteadur*), researchers (*teadur*), and early-stage researchers (*nooremteadur*). A member of the higher education institution research staff may be engaged in teaching. Members of the academic and research staff are elected for a period of up to five years.

The higher education institution may engage scholars or other prominent creative persons or outstanding practitioners as visiting teaching staff.

At least 85% of the academic staff engaged in teaching doctoral programmes must hold a doctoral degree or a corresponding qualification or creative persons recognised in artistic fields at a high international level.

Professorship

A university professor (*professor*) is a leading member of the teaching staff in his or her field of study, participating in research and development activities at an international level, who organises and conducts studies in the broad area of studies, leads research and development activities or other creative activities, has at least five years of research, development or some other creative activity experience, and holds an Estonian degree of *Doktor* or a corresponding qualification.

A professor of professional higher education institution is a leading member of the teaching staff in his or her profession, participating in research and development or other creative activities and supervises students, members of the teaching staff and research staff involved in those activities, have at least five years of research, development or some other creative activity experience, and holds Estonian degree of *Doktor* or a corresponding qualification.

An internationally recognised creative person, who has been awarded a degree of *Magister* or a corresponding qualification, is eligible for the position of a professor in fields of arts of a university or professional higher education institution.

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Associate professors

A university associate professor (*dotsent*) is a member of the teaching staff who conducts studies in his or her broad area of studies, participates actively in research, development or other creative activities and supervises students and members of the teaching staff involved in those activities, has at least five years of research, development or some other creative activity experience, and holds an Estonian degree of *Doktor* or a corresponding qualification.

An associate professor of professional higher education institution is a member of the teaching staff who participates actively in research and development or other creative activities and may lead research and development or other creative activities in his or her profession, conducts teaching and supervises students and members of the teaching staff, has at least five years research and professional experience, and holds an Estonian research degree or corresponding qualification.

A recognised creative person, who has been awarded a degree of *Magister* or a corresponding qualification, is eligible for the position of a professor in the fields of the arts of a university or professional higher education institution.

Lecturers, assistants and teachers

A lecturer (*lektor*) is a member of the teaching staff, supervises students usually of the first and second cycle of higher education programmes and may be involved in research and development activities, and holds an Estonian degree of *Magister* or a corresponding qualification.

An assistant (*assistant*) conducts seminars, practical training classes and practice sessions in the first two cycles of higher education, may supervise students and be involved in research and development activities. A university assistant holds at least a master's level degree, an assistant of professional higher education institution holds at least a bachelor's level degree.

A university teacher (*õpetaja*) conducts seminars, practical training classes and practice sessions in the first two cycles of higher education, may supervise students and be involved in research and development activities, and holds at least a master's level degree. A teacher of professional higher education institution conducts seminars, practical training classes, practice sessions and performs other teaching tasks of a practical nature, and has a higher education qualification.