

RSAC Handbook

This Handbook is designed to be read by candidates for appointment change and/or review, their supervisors (faculty members), and RSAC members.

Details of membership, responsibilities, and operation of RSAC are described in the RSAC Terms of Reference.

The Research Staff Appointment Committee (RSAC) has a responsibility to review and decide upon:

1. Conversion of research staff appointments to continuing appointments
2. Performance review for research staff with continuing appointments
3. Appointment changes from Postdoctoral Scholar to Staff Scientist
4. Appointment changes from Staff Scientist to Senior Staff Scientist
5. Research staff related tasks other than those above upon DFA's request (See "Responsibilities" in RSAC Terms of Reference)

1. Conversion to continuing appointment

The RSAC considers proposals to award research staff continuing appointments. In principle, continuing appointments will be renewed with the same terms and conditions until the age of 65 unless either party raises the issue of termination at least two months before the end of the contract term period.

Procedures are as follows:

1. Proposals to grant a member of the research staff a continuing appointment should come from the head of a research unit or, exceptionally, from the President or Dean of Faculty Affairs (the "Proponent"). The request should be sent to the Academic HR Section at the Faculty Affairs Office (FAO).
2. The candidate's dossier is completed and delivered to the Academic HR Section at the FAO and to the RSAC committee members.
3. At an RSAC meeting, the RSAC reviews the dossier, interviews the supervisor, and discusses the change of appointment.
4. The final decision is made during the RSAC meeting, and the appointment outcome is announced to the candidate and supervisor.

1.1 Staff Scientist, Senior Staff Scientist, and STA (Science and Technology Associates)

Submission of dossier

1. An up-to-date CV of the candidate, including a complete list of publications, patents, invited talks and conference presentations, seminars, peer review activities, conference and workshop organization, assistance with supervision, and service to the University, and demonstrating scientific or technical skills that meet the factors in dossier evaluation below;
2. A letter from the candidate requesting the continuing appointment in the current research unit and accepting the conditions that accompany that status, in particular, to be reassigned by the DFA to work in another research unit, should circumstances so mitigate;
3. A letter from the Proponent setting out clearly the grounds for making the proposal, addressing the factors in the dossier evaluation below;

Factor in dossier evaluation

1. The candidate possesses or has developed special expertise, skill, or set of skills that are essential to the proponent's research program or, more broadly, to the research program at OIST, and that it would not be optimal to replace this skill or expertise through recruitment, or to train someone to acquire the skill or expertise without impacting severely upon the research program;
2. This skill will be required by the research program for at least the next five years and is likely to be required in the future;
3. The candidate's performance is excellent in terms of scientific or technical productivity as it relates to her/his special expertise/skills. The candidate must demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional development.

1.2 Technicians

Submission of dossier

1. A letter from the Proponent setting out clearly the grounds for making the proposal, addressing the factors in the dossier evaluation below;
2. An up-to-date CV of the candidate, including service to the University and demonstrating technical skills that meet the factors in the dossier evaluation below;
3. A letter from the candidate indicating their willingness to accept the continuing appointment in the current research unit and to accept the conditions that accompany that status, in particular, to be reassigned by the DFA to work in another research unit, should circumstances so indicate;

Factors in dossier evaluation

1. The candidate possesses or has developed special expertise, skill, or set of skills that are essential to the proponent's research program or, more broadly, to the research program at OIST, and that it would not be optimal to replace this skill or expertise through recruitment, or to train someone to acquire the skill or expertise without impacting severely upon the research program;
2. This skill will be required by the research program for at least the next five years and is likely to be required in the future;
3. The candidate's performance is excellent in terms of technical ability as it relates to her/his special expertise/skills. The candidate must demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional development.
4. Given the above, it is unlikely that staff in the junior (level I) grades will qualify for continuing appointments.

2. Performance review of research staff with continuing appointments

The RSAC will also review the regular performance of research staff with a continuing appointment. The performance review will typically be done every five years, usually along with the Unit external review.

2.1 Staff Scientist and Senior Staff Scientist

Submission of dossier

The Proponent (Unit head) should prepare a dossier that should include:

1. As provided by the candidate, their up-to-date CV, including a complete list of publications, patents, invited talks and conference presentations, seminars, peer review activities, conference and workshop organization, assistance with supervision, and service to the University (or, if a new hire, to their previous place of work), and demonstrating scientific or technical skills that meet the factors in dossier evaluation below;

2. A letter from the candidate containing a self-appraisal of the achievements since the appointment or the previous review. As appropriate, a research plan for the following five years;
3. A letter from the Proponent (Unit head) detailing the contribution of the member of the research staff to the work of the Unit;

Factors in dossier evaluation

1. The quality of the work in the period under review (including publications, collaborations, awards, lectures and conference presentations, and work for the community both in OIST [or at the previous employee(s), if a new hire] and internationally) which will be classed as excellent, good, satisfactory or poor;
2. If a research plan(s) is appropriate, the quality of the research plan(s) will be classed as excellent, good, satisfactory, or poor.

2.2 Technicians**Submission of dossier**

The Proponent should prepare a dossier that should include:

1. As provided by the candidate, their up-to-date CV, including service to the University (or, if a new hire, to their previous place of work), and demonstrating technical skills that meet the factors in the dossier evaluation below;
2. A letter from the candidate containing a self-appraisal of the achievements since the appointment or the previous review.
3. A letter from the Proponent detailing the contribution of the member of the technical staff to the work of the Unit;

Factor in dossier evaluation

The quality of the work in the period under review in OIST [or at the previous employee(s), if a new hire] which will be classed as excellent, good, satisfactory, or poor;

2.3 STA (Science and Technology Associate)

Details of STA's performance review are described in the Review Handbook for STA (PRP 4.6).

3. Appointment change from Postdoctoral Scholar to Staff Scientist**3.1 General conditions**

Exceptional Postdoctoral Scholars may be appointed to a Staff Scientist position as described in the PRP 4.2 section on Research Appointments.

In addition,

- (1) a qualified candidate should possess or should have developed special expertise, skill, or set of skills that are essential to the proponent's research program at OIST,
- (2) a qualified candidate should have the ambition and ability to become an independent researcher with his/her own research program, and
- 3) it would not be optimal to replace this skill or expertise through recruitment or to train someone to acquire the skill or expertise without impacting severely upon the research program. This ability will be required by the research program for at least the next 3 years.

3.2 Procedure

The procedure is as follows:

1. Proposals to grant a Staff Scientist appointment should come from the Unit Head. The request should be sent to the Academic HR Section at the Faculty Affair Office (FAO).
2. The candidate's dossier is completed and delivered to the Academic HR Section at the FAO and to the RSAC committee members.
3. At an RSAC meeting, the RSAC reviews the dossier, interviews the supervisor, and discusses the change of appointment.

The final decision is made during the RSAC meeting, and the appointment outcome is announced to the candidate and supervisor from the FAO.

3.3. Eligibility criteria for an appointment change

1. The candidate's performance is excellent in terms of scientific or technical productivity as it relates to her/his special expertise/skills;
2. The candidate should clearly demonstrate a commitment to pursuing an independent academic career and demonstrate high potential to obtain a faculty position within 3 years after the appointment as a Staff Scientist; and,
3. The supervisor should verify the commitment of the candidate as specified in point 2 above.

These criteria should be considered independent of the source of funding for the postdoctoral scholar.

Details of the required performance and professional development commitment are outlined in Section 1.4 below.

3.4. Submission of the dossier

After the contract discussion with the supervisor, which should be at least 6 months prior to the end of the current appointment, the supervisor should submit a dossier at least 5 months prior to the termination date. The dossier should contain:

1. An up-to-date CV provided by the candidate, including a complete list of publications, patents, independent external funding, invited talks and international conference presentations, seminars, peer review activities, conference and workshop organization, assistance with supervision, and service to OIST (or, if a new hire, to their previous place of work), and demonstrating scientific or technical skills that meet the factors in dossier evaluation below.
2. A letter from the candidate containing a self-appraisal of the achievements since the appointment or the previous review.
3. A 3-year research plan.
4. A letter from the supervisor detailing the contribution of the candidate to the work of the Unit.

3.5 Factors in dossier evaluation

1. The quality of the work in the period under review (including publications, collaborations, awards, lectures and conference presentations, and work for the community both in OIST [or at the previous employer(s)] and internationally) will be evaluated. Interactions with other scientists, other achievements, and evidence of being up-to-date scientifically and/or technically will be considered;
2. The strength and feasibility of a research plan (for example, as outlined in an IDP) will also be considered

3. Strong evidence of high academic potential to obtain a faculty position after contract fulfillment will be a factor. The evidence might additionally include successful external funding, collaboration, teaching and mentoring experience, institutional service, and public outreach.

4. Appointment change from Staff Scientist to Senior Staff Scientist

4.1 General conditions

In exceptional cases, Staff Scientists with fixed-term or continuing appointments may be recommended for a Senior Staff Scientist appointment. Senior Staff Scientist appointments are based on an employment contract that can be renewed without changes in terms and conditions for the same term period repeatedly until the retirement age unless either party raises the issue of termination of the employment contract at least one month before the end of the contract term period. The RSAC reviews Senior Staff Scientists with continuing appointments at least every five years, comments upon the achievements and future plans, and makes determinations regarding salary and promotion.

4.2 Procedure

The procedure is as follows:

1. Proposals to grant a Senior Staff Scientist appointment should come from the head of a research unit (the "Proponent"). The request should be sent to the Academic HR Section at the FAO.
2. The candidate's dossier is completed and delivered to the Academic HR Section at the FAO and to the RSAC members.
3. At the RSAC meeting, the RSAC reviews the dossier, interviews the candidate and the Proponent, and discusses the change of appointment.
4. The final decision is made during the RSAC meeting, and the appointment outcome is announced to the candidate and supervisor from the FAO.

4.3 Eligibility criteria for an appointment change

1. The candidate possesses or has developed special expertise, skill, or set of skills that are essential to the proponent's research program and, more broadly, to the research program at OIST, and it would not be optimal to replace this skill or expertise through recruitment or to train someone to acquire the skill or expertise without impacting severely upon the research program. This ability will be required by the research program for at least the next five years and is likely to be required in the future.
2. The candidate's performance is excellent in terms of scientific or technical productivity as it relates to her/his special expertise/skills.

4.4 Submission of the dossier

After the contract discussion with the supervisor, which should be 6 months prior to the end of the current appointment, the supervisor should submit a dossier at least 5 months prior to the termination date. The dossier should contain:

1. An up-to-date CV provided by the candidate, including a complete list of publications, patents, external grants received, invited talks and conference presentations, seminars, peer review activities, conference and workshop organization, assistance with supervision, and service to OIST, and demonstrating scientific or technical skills that meet the factors in dossier evaluation in below.
2. A letter from the Proponent setting out clearly the grounds for making the proposal. The letter should also detail the contribution of the candidate to the work of the unit.
3. A letter from the candidate containing a self-appraisal of the achievements since appointment or the previous 5-year-review. The letter should also state their willingness to accept the appointment in their Unit and to accept the conditions that accompany that status, to be reassigned

- to work in another research unit, should their present unit close.
4. A 5-year research plan.

4.5 Factors in dossier evaluation

1. The quality of the work in the period under review (including publications, collaborations, awards, lectures and conference presentations, and work for the community both in OIST [or at the previous employee(s)] and internationally) will be considered. Interactions with other scientists, other achievements, and evidence of being up-to-date scientifically and/or technically will be evaluated.
2. The strength and feasibility of a research plan will be evaluated.
3. Strong evidence of high academic stature and an assessment of the candidate's interview will be evaluated.
4. Evaluation of special expertise, skill, or set of skills. Only expertise that is broadly applicable and essential to the research program at OIST will be considered.

A panel of technical experts and/or faculty might be formed to evaluate these factors in dossier evaluation as necessary.