Dual Career Policy

Preamble

As a particularly family friendly-friendly institution, the University of Konstanz is also committed to supporting dual career couples. Since 2007, the university has strived to offer dual career couples a shared family and work home, to tap into the potential provided by the accompanying partner for enriching the region’s scientific and economic capacity and to strengthen the couples’ integration in the Konstanz region for the long term.

Dual career couples are both highly qualified and have a keen interest in advancing both of their careers. The first person to be hired by the University of Konstanz is considered its “first hire”, while the accompanying partner still looking for employment is considered a “second hire”.

The Dual Career Policy reflects the University of Konstanz’s long history of advancing the careers of dual career couples. The policy contributes to increased diversity at the university and the realisation of its equal opportunity targets. These include promoting greater compatibility of family and career responsibilities, increasing the percentage of women in research as well as implementing gender-equality and family-friendliness at the university (Code of Practice on Gender Equality).

The Office for Equal Opportunity, Family Affairs and Diversity manages the Dual Career Programme, which works to uphold the second partner’s career trajectory and minimise gaps in his/her career. It focuses primarily on women’s careers, especially in academic settings, in order to support career and partnership models that promote equality.

1. Aims and target groups of the programme

In order to recruit and retain top researchers, the Dual Career Programme focuses its efforts mainly on the accompanying partners of professors (including junior professors).

In addition, the Dual Career Programme supports the partners of new
- female postdoctoral researchers (to advance women’s careers)
- junior researchers with children (to promote greater compatibility between research and family life)
- staff in key positions of the academic support services (to support human resources development)

In line with the university’s diversity policy, the programme is open to all couples, expressly including same-sex and queer couples.
As long as the “first hires” have worked at the University of Konstanz for less than a year and have a contract lasting at least two more years, their accompanying partners can take advantage of dual career support. In certain cases, these regulations can be applied more flexibly (e.g. when re-joining the workforce after a period of parental, care leave or long-term illness). Partners of prospective and current professors, however, may take part in the programme at any time.

2. Individual support provided by the Dual Career Programme

The University of Konstanz’s Dual Career Programme provides consultation services for accompanying partners of new university staff. They receive information, advice and support services to facilitate their integration into the job market. This service is a support measure meant to expedite the partner’s job search. The professional support process also involves defining the specific support provided and clarifying the expectations of everyone involved. Participation in the programme is voluntary and process-based.

The following services are available depending on the target group and the applicant’s individual needs:

- Assessment of the applicant’s current state for the purpose of charting new career trajectories (e.g. paths for those re-joining the workforce or who would like to work outside academia)
- Information and advice on career options, continuing a current career or finding employment in the region (e.g. recommendations for finding jobs, identifying potential employers, finding language classes or having qualifications from abroad recognised in Germany)
- Contacts to those in charge of hiring staff in relevant areas of the University of Konstanz as well as in other businesses (as possible)
- Support for the application process (e.g. improving self-marketing skills, preparing for job interviews)
- Individualised offers for partners at the professorial level (e.g. positions as visiting professors, researchers in residence, fellows)
- Guidance with relevant support services offered elsewhere at the university (e.g. Welcome Centre, Office for Equal Opportunity, Family Affairs and Diversity, Academic Staff Development, Research Support, Tax and Social Security Services).
3. Appointment and selection processes applicable to dual career partners

The Konstanz area has an employment market with extremely limited career development opportunities for academics. In response, the University of Konstanz would like to provide the best possible support to dual career partners with their integration in the job market, recognising them as important sources of valuable knowledge and untapped potential. For this reason, the university expressly welcomes job applications from dual career partners. Dual career services are integrated into recruiting processes in the following manner:

a. Job announcements
All job announcements for positions in research and in higher levels of academic support services mention dual career support.

b. Appointment processes: trial lecture followed by a discussion with the appointments committee
As part of the discussion following a trial lecture, all candidates will be informed by the chair of the appointments committee about the Dual Career Programme and asked to contact the dual career team for further assistance.

c. Appointment processes: proactive contacting of prospective professorial appointments
As soon as the Senate and Rectorate have approved the list ranking the candidates for a professorial position, the Vice-rector for International Affairs and Equal Opportunities will contact the first placed candidate. The Vice-rector will inform him/her of the University of Konstanz’s intent to appoint him/her as a professor (upon approval by the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts Baden-Württemberg (MWK)). The Vice-rector will also recommend that he/she contact the dual career team early on if the topic is relevant for his/her acceptance of the appointment. If the first placed candidate rejects the appointment, the Vice-rector for International Affairs and Equal Opportunities then contacts the next placed candidate.

d. Appointment processes: offer of a professorship
The official offer of a professorship includes a statement about dual career support that is adapted to the individual case by the Rectorate.

e. Applications by accompanying partners for job openings at the University of Konstanz
Dual career partners who apply for job openings at the University of Konstanz will be invited to a job interview as long as they fulfil the formal criteria and have the required qualifications for the position. The university department/division with the job opening will receive written notice of the applicant’s dual career status along with the request to justify cases in which such applicants were not invited to job interviews. To promote greater compatibility between work and family life, this also applies to applicants whose partners are new hires in the university’s academic support services. In this case as well, the “first hire” must have moved to the area for the posi-
tion, have started their job less than a year ago and have a contract lasting at least another two years.

f. Applications by accompanying partners for professorships at the University of Konstanz

Having dual career partners apply for professorships can help the university recruit or retain professors and other management personnel. If the “first hire” partner is a professor or member of management then he/she can contact the dual career team for further information about appointment processes where dual career couples are involved. If the Dual Career Policy applies, then the dual career team informs the Rectorate and the chair of the appointments committee about the application of the “second hire” for a professorship. The Rectorate then consults with the committee chair and the university department with the job opening about how to progress. Generally speaking, and in keeping with the university’s policy of promoting dual careers, such candidates will be invited to give a trial lecture as long as they fulfil the formal criteria and are not significantly less qualified than the other candidates.

4. Procedures for allocating funds from the Dual Career Pool

(second funding line of the Excellence Strategy)

In special cases and in agreement with the dual career team, the Rectorate may award funding for bridge scholarships or continuing education programmes for accompanying dual career partners. For further details, please contact our human resources development and dual career coordinator, Kerstin Melzer (dcc@uni.kn).

5. Employment of dual career partners in the same team

In order to prevent conflicts of interest and dependent relationships, dual career partners will generally not be hired to the same team. In such situations, the Rectorate will decide on a case-by-case basis. Under no terms should a dual career partner be subject to the other partner’s managerial authority.

In 2011, the University of Konstanz’s Dual Career Policy was published after being adopted by the Senate and Rectorate. In 2018, its wording was revised and its content made more precise. The Rectorate approved the changes on 16 May 2018.