

# **Regulation University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) Erasmus University Rotterdam**

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## **Qualification to ensure quality of education**

In 2008, 14 Dutch universities signed an agreement regarding the mutual recognition of the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). This was done in view of: the quality of the academic studies and associate professorship; teacher professionalisation; more standardised accountability for quality of the university staff; establishing teachers' competence levels and increasing inter-university mobility. The agreement stipulates that all universities must grant their academic teachers a UTQ if they meet a certain set of requirements, with this UTQ certification being recognised by all universities. The agreement and the UTQ endorse the importance of high-quality education.

## **Peer review UTQ**

In 2017, and as follow-up in May of 2022, all universities participated in a clustered peer review of the UTQ. This was commissioned by UNL through the EHON network and has a rich output. Universities learned a lot from looking into each other's work and are implementing these lessons in their own institution.

The UTQ appears to be well embedded in all institutions and it is appreciated: both by teachers who are qualifying and by programmes that are improving and/or innovating. The universities therefore answer the question of whether mutual recognition of the UTQ can be maintained with a wholehearted yes. Furthermore, there is recognition from all universities for the UTQ sub certificates 'implementation' and 'supervision'.

## **Continuous teacher development and qualifications**

Continuous care for the development of teacher professionalisation and qualifications is important for maintaining and improving teaching quality within the EUR. In this regard, the qualifications serve as a test moment in which the minimum level of teaching is demonstrated. With this regulation we lay down the ground rules of the UTQ qualification.

However, it is imperative to pay attention to the quality of education and development and performance of teachers both prior to and after the qualification (and not only with the UTQ).

## **Distinction between UTQ and SUTQ**

There is a distinction between the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) and the Senior University Teaching Qualification (SUTQ). The University Teaching Qualification course is meant for all newly appointed teachers at the Erasmus University Rotterdam who fall within the intended target group for participation. The goal of the UTQ is to let teachers explore the foundations of a well-structured course and how they can improve their own course. Upon completion of the course, teachers are able to critically review and substantiate the way they design, carry out and assess their teaching.

The SUTQ course is a follow-up on the UTQ. In the SUTQ, the emphasis is put on carrying out an educational project, such as working on revision of a course or a (part of a) curriculum. Participants of the SUTQ also work on different roles that they take on as senior teachers, such as designer, visionary,

mentor, reflector, connector, and evaluator. The SUTQ is thus meant for experienced teachers who would like to develop further by designing new types of education (innovation) or significantly improving existing education.

This guideline further elaborates exclusively on the UTQ.

## University Teaching Qualification

In principle, the goal of the UTQ is for all teaching staff to acquire competences that will enable them to perform their current, as well as their future teaching tasks properly. In 2008, fixed characteristics of the UTQ regulation were agreed upon nationwide.<sup>1</sup> Within the EUR the UTQ serves as the first foundational component of teaching professionalisation and qualification. The candidate must meet the following criteria to receive the UTQ:

3.1 Having completed the University Teaching Qualification course that demonstrates mastery of the following teaching and didactic skills:

- 3.1.1 Educational design;
- 3.1.2 Teaching;
- 3.1.3 Supervision of students;
- 3.1.4 Testing and assessing students;
- 3.1.5 Evaluate one's own teaching.

Universities are free to translate the nationally established criteria and attainment targets into their own UTQ course for the institution. The EUR translated attainment targets to the following competences and critical behaviours:

Attainment targets/ exit competences	Critical behaviors	Skills central to the critical behaviors
Vision on education	Write your personal vision on education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your personal vision on education, aimed at developing a scientific-critical approach to the substance and the problem-solving capacity of the student.</li> <li>• Compare your own educational practice with the educational vision of the EUR.</li> </ul>
Design	Design and/or improve a course according to the principles of constructive alignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and/or improve a course according to the principles of constructive alignment</li> <li>• Design course learning objectives</li> <li>• Align the type of assessments with course objectives</li> <li>• Align the type of teaching activities with assessments</li> <li>• Align the type of teaching activities with course objectives.</li> <li>• Draft a student manual.</li> <li>• Design a course that matches the students' needs, consider:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ future professional careers / today's society</li> <li>○ next courses in the program (e.g. Bsc, Msc)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.universiteitenvannederland.nl/kenmerken-bko-regeling.html>

<b>Deliver</b>	Provide engaged/motivational teaching that matches students' learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a variety of learning activities in your course that match the learning objectives of the subject /course.</li> <li>• Apply blended learning in your course.</li> <li>• Adapt your teaching (method) based on students' learning needs.</li> <li>• Structure your lesson with a lesson plan.</li> <li>• Reflect on your own teaching skills.</li> </ul>
	<b>Supervise student activities in a way that contributes to student learning.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask effective questions to stimulate students' ability to reflect.</li> <li>• Identify students' needs by (active) listening on deeper level.</li> <li>• Empower your students by applying the GROW model.</li> <li>• Integrate formative assessment in your course.</li> <li>• Integrate good quality expert feedback or peer feedback in your course by selecting the right activity at the right time.</li> </ul>
<b>Assess</b>	<b>Design and construct assessment(s) based on the quality factors: validity, reliability, and transparency.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select assessments methods that are in line with the formulated learning objectives and activities (constructive alignment).</li> <li>• Construct assessments and grading models based on the quality factors (validity, reliability and transparency).</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluate &amp; reflect</b>	<b>Reflect on the UTQ course by demonstrating your progress on the critical behaviors.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing an improvement plan for your own course based on the principles of constructive alignment.</li> <li>• Writing an improvement plan for your course based on feedback from different sources (e.g. student evaluations, feedback from peers and your own reflection).</li> </ul>
	<b>Write an improvement plan for your course and describe how it relates to your personal vision on education.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to teach &amp; develop courses based on reflection.</li> </ul>

To determine whether the intended competences and critical behaviours are sufficiently mastered, participants will create a digital portfolio.

The UTQ establishes an initial basic norm for teaching quality but does not guarantee continued quality. Even after obtaining the UTQ, quality of teaching and teacher development will have to be a subject of continuous monitoring and discussion. This is done in any case through the Development Cycle and via the offering of various MicroLabs, in which teachers work on specific teaching issues in short how-to modules, which are subsequently applied to their own teaching materials and integrated into their teaching practices.

## Regulation University Teaching Qualification

No rights can be derived from references to articles in this chapter.

### Article 1: Definitions

1. UTQ: University Teaching Qualification
2. The regulation: the current regulation University Teaching Qualification
3. RISBO: independent training and research institute affiliated to the EUR which usually provides the UTQ-training.<sup>2</sup>
4. Employee: all academic employees with an employment contract with the EUR, excluding student assistants.
5. Manager: the person under whose daily management the employee functions.
6. SUTQ: Senior University Teaching Qualification
7. LOL: Educational Leadership course (*Leergang Onderwijskundig Leiderschap*)
8. HR Services: personnel administration department within the EUR HR department.
9. SAP-system: system in which registrations (enrolment, progress) are stored.
10. University Delivery Qualification (UDQ). Sub certificate for modules “implementation” of the UTQ. Specifically focused on the implementation of teaching.
11. Individual customised UTQ: course for lecturers who can demonstrate PACs (previously acquired competence) and/or have a UTQ sub certificate.
12. EMC educational course: separate educational course for EMC employees to whom - due to the nature of their work and their profile - not all UTQ competences apply.
13. Exemption: an exemption entails that the employee does not have to follow the UTQ course at the EUR. An exemption granted by the EUR is only valid within the institution and is not equal to the UTQ.
14. UTQ institutional committee: a committee that processes the (exemption) requests of the category of teachers, named in article 2 paragraph 3 and 4. In any case, the institutional committee is comprised of faculty members that are in possession of an SUTQ/LOL and a delegation from Academic Affairs.

### Article 2: Target group UTQ

1. The regulation applies to all academic teachers<sup>3</sup> except for the categories mentioned in article 2 paragraph 5.
2. At the level of the school, in addition to paragraph 1,a decision can be made to make a UTQ mandatory or optional for employees who do not fall under the target group mentioned in paragraph 1, but who provide a significant part of the education. Think

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<sup>2</sup> Not all faculties use Risbo's UTQ offer, with EMC, for example, using its own UTQ course.

<sup>3</sup> Academic teachers are defined as staff members in the following job groups: teacher 4, teacher 3, teacher 2, teacher 1, assistant professor 2, assistant professor 1, associate professor 2, associate professor 1, professor 2 and professor 1.

of PhD students. The EUR places importance on teacher development and as such also encourages for these staff members participation in the regular UTQ. The school shall make a written statement on the adaption of such an addition.

3. Employees who are in the possession of a (foreign) teaching qualification prior to their appointment at the EUR but who have not yet acquired all the UTQ competencies, could be eligible for an individual customised UTQ (see article 4 and 5). For specific requirements of the regulation, see annex 1: Guidelines UTQ regulation Risbo.
4. Staff members who have a great deal of relevant and recent teaching experience and expertise and can thus demonstrate that they possess several UTQ competences, may be eligible for an individual customised UTQ (see article 4). For specific requirements, see annex 1: Guidelines UTQ regulation Risbo.

5. Article 2 paragraph 1 does not apply in the following circumstances:

Employees who are unable to demonstrate the in chapter 3 of this regulation mentioned teaching and didactic skills due to the nature of their educational tasks, are not required to obtain a full UTQ. However, they are expected to obtain a sub certificate (UDQ-course) on the part on which one does demonstrate sufficient skills as described in article 4 paragraph 3.

- a. Employees on a fixed-term contract of less than 12 months with no prospect of renewal at the EUR; and employees that will reach the date of retirement in 2 years or less. The UTQ is optional for them.
- b. Employees that are unable to meet the requirements in article 3 due to a permanent residency abroad.

6. Article 2 paragraph 1 also does not apply in the following circumstances:

Employees of EMC who are unable to demonstrate the pedagogical and didactic skills based on their research job profile as well as the nature of their teaching duties, do not need to obtain a full UTQ. However, they are expected to follow an EMC course developed for that purpose where one does demonstrate sufficient skills. The EMC educational course is an alternative that meets a specific need within the medical faculty and is not equivalent to the regular UTQ. With the successful completion of the educational course, the obligation to obtain a UTQ for the aforementioned target groups becomes redundant. If the nature of the position or work changes (change of profile, etc.) which does necessitate a regular UTQ, it must still be obtained. This applies to:

- a. Erasmus MC staff who fit the description in article 2 paragraph 6 and fall into the following categories: assistant professor (profile research), associate professor (profile research) and professor (profile research). For specific requirements per target group and course, see Addendum educational regulation EMC.

7. In the following scenarios the rector may grant a temporary exemption from the UTQ:

- a. New employees with an exceptional record where a UTQ is a hindrance to their appointment. See article 5 paragraph 1.

8. The exceptions mentioned in paragraph 5 a and b are in no way an exemption from the UTQ obligation. The moment an employee no longer falls within a group of exceptions, they will still be required to comply with the regulation.

### **Article 3: Term of certification**

Employees who fall within the target group need to be UTQ certified within two years after entry into service.

### **Article 4: Individual customised UTQ and partial certificates**

1. Employees who meet the requirements of article 2 paragraph 3 and paragraph 4 may be eligible for an individual customised UTQ as developed by Risbo (see annex 1: Guidelines UTQ regulation Risbo).
2. A request for an individual customised UTQ is submitted by the staff member in question to the UTQ institutional committee via the application form intended for this purpose. The committee - after assessing the application - can issue the advice that the teacher in question can complete an individual customised UTQ.
3. The employee then undertakes the individual customised BKO at Risbo. This process is based on the employee's learning questions and is linked to the competences that require (further) development. For specific requirements and explanation of regulation and procedure see annex 1.b: Guidelines UTQ regulation Risbo.
4. Successful completion of the individual customised UTQ entitles one to a full UTQ certificate.
5. Employees who fall under the provisions of article 2 paragraph 5 must obtain parts of the UTQ according to Risbo's programme, which are appropriate to the work performed by them. Successful completion of one or more of these components entitles one to obtain partial certificates, which can be used to follow an accelerated UTQ course at a later stage.

### **Article 5: Exemption: new employees with an exceptional record and employees with an educational course equal to the UTQ**

1. New employees with an exceptional course record who are appointed to the EUR and where the UTQ requirement may hinder in the employee's appointment may by exception qualify for a temporary exemption.
  - a. This temporary exemption is submitted by the dean and approved by the rector magnificus.
  - b. After approval from the rector, the temporary exemption gets a written confirmation and is added to the employee file.
  - c. The temporary exemption is valid for a maximum of 2 years (24 months). The UTQ must be obtained within two years after the appointment. In the case of the employee's teaching performances being assessed as inadequate during the exemption period, the exemption can be withdrawn ahead of time. In that case the employee is obliged to obtain the UTQ earlier than the 2-year period.
2. New employees that followed a course/ training in which the UTQ final competences were fully proved, are entitled to an exemption. See annexes 1a and b for the specific guidelines.
  - a. The employee submits their exemption request to the UTQ institutional committee.

- b. The latter assesses whether the final competences have been demonstrated and will indicate in writing to the HR Business partner of the school concerned that the employee can be registered in SAP as having obtained the UTQ.
- c. Academic Affairs maintains an annual record of exemptions granted for policy monitoring purposes. This overview includes at least the numbers by school and the position category of which the employee in question falls.

#### **Article 6: UTQ in relation to other qualification trajectories**

1. The UTQ or an exemption from the UTQ is mandatory to be able to follow the Senior University Teaching Qualification (SUTQ) course.
2. The UTQ or an exemption from the UTQ is *not mandatory* for employees that meet article 2 paragraph 1 to start the Educational Leadership course (LOL). Please note that obtaining an LOL does not imply that the UTQ has been obtained or exempted.

#### **Article 7: Enrolment and registration**

1. On the initiative of the manager, the employee enrolls for the UTQ course at Risbo or at another (internal) provider.
2. The provider issues the necessary information to the participant and HR Services in order for the registration to be processed in the SAP-system.
3. The SAP-system informs the manager about the registration of the participant in the UTQ course. The SAP-system is kept up to date by HR.
4. If the employee has a UTQ certificate from another institution, it should be submitted to HR Services. The latter should verify the document and update the status in the SAP-system.
5. If the employee falls within an exception category as named under article 2 paragraph 4, this will be communicated to HR Services. The status will be updated in the SAP-system.

#### **Article 8: Progress and completion**

1. The manager (including the vice dean) could, in principle, view the status and progress in the SAP-system at any time. The registration in the SAP-system is leading.
2. The employee and manager discuss the progress of the UTQ course in the development cycle.
3. After successful completion of the UTQ course, the certificate is sent to HR Services. The status is adapted in SAP and the documents are added to the employee file.

#### **Article 9: Official title and entry into force**

This regulation shall be cited as 'Exemption Regulation University Teaching Qualification EUR' and shall come into force from the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2024.

## Annex 1: Guidelines UTQ regulation Risbo

- a. In case the teacher has a Dutch first-, second-, or third-degree teaching qualification (PE, SE), an English equivalent of the UTQ (UK teaching qualification certificate) or another type of foreign qualification (see b for additional requirements) and can use this to prove that all UTQ competences have been acquired, an exemption will be granted. The application will be assessed by the institutional committee.
- b. If the teacher holds a foreign teaching qualification or educational qualification (other than those mentioned in a l), the teacher must be able to demonstrate that the educational course, comprises at least 100 hours and that the UTQ competences are sufficiently acquired. If this is sufficiently demonstrated, the teacher may be granted exemption. The application will be assessed by the institutional committee.
- c. If, according to the institutional committee, the competences are insufficiently demonstrated, the teacher must apply for a regular UTQ course.
- d. If, according to the institutional committee, the competences are not fully but partially demonstrated, the teacher is eligible for a customised individual UTQ course.  
If the UTQ institutional committee advises positively on participation in a customised individual UTQ, the teacher is to be referred to Risbo for an intake. Risbo determines which competences still require attention and, depending on this, an individual programme will be put together with an accompanying assessment. This programme may consist of one or more lesson observations, coach interviews and documents written by the teacher, such as a teaching vision, course design or assessment plan. The programme concludes with an assessment of the competences that have been demonstrated in writing or orally. If this is completed in a positive manner, the teacher receives their UTQ certificate.