

DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND ORGANIZATION

# CAREER POLICY FOR PROFESSORIAL STAFF:

NEW EVALUATION AND PROMOTION MODEL

Regulations approved by the Board of Governors, 7 December 2018

# STARTING POINTS

- New career policy for professorial staff ('ZAP'):
  - vision statement approved by Board of Governors, 1 June 2018
  - regulations approved by Board of Governors, 7 December 2018
- Main idea: *“Those who perform well will be promoted”*
  - = in response to the increasing work pressure
  - trust instead of control
  - academic freedom combined with responsibility: no more imposed objectives but a focus on intrinsic motivation and talent as drive

# “UGENT VERLICHT”

*What are we getting rid of?*

- Personalized (a priori) objectives
- Quantitative indicators
- University/faculty reference frameworks
- Faculty evaluation committees
- A myriad of forms and obligations:
  - the objectives file (*doelstellingendocument*)
  - the annual job description (*jaarlijkse taakomschrijving*)
  - the activity report (*activiteitenverslag*)
  - the evaluation form (*evaluatieformulier*)
  - the performance review file (*toetsingsdossier*)

⇒ administrative simplification



# GENERAL PRINCIPLES NEW VISION (1/3)

Quantitative indicators and an output-driven evaluation process (focusing on ‘measuring’) make way for an **evidence-based career model**, focusing on **talent development** and **collaboration**:

- **High-quality & evidence-based:**
  - a posteriori reflection (at the end of the cycle) instead of a priori objectives (also for assistant professors in tenure track)
  - most significant achievements instead of an exhaustive enumeration of all output activities
- Focus on **growth, talent development and career guidance:**
  - interim feedback in a dialogue
  - importance of leadership and interpersonal skills in feedback & evaluation
  - an HR-committee for each professor

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES NEW VISION (2/3)

- Collaboration, teamwork and collegiality:
  - embedding in the larger entity of research group / department / study programme / faculty / university
  - complementarity within the larger entity allows for differentiation in the core tasks – according to individual talents – of education / research / institutional and societal engagement
  - integration text drafted by the professor at the beginning of the cycle
- Promotion based on a simplified evaluation cycle:
  - 1 cycle = 5 years instead of 2/4 years (reduced to the minimum provided for by law)

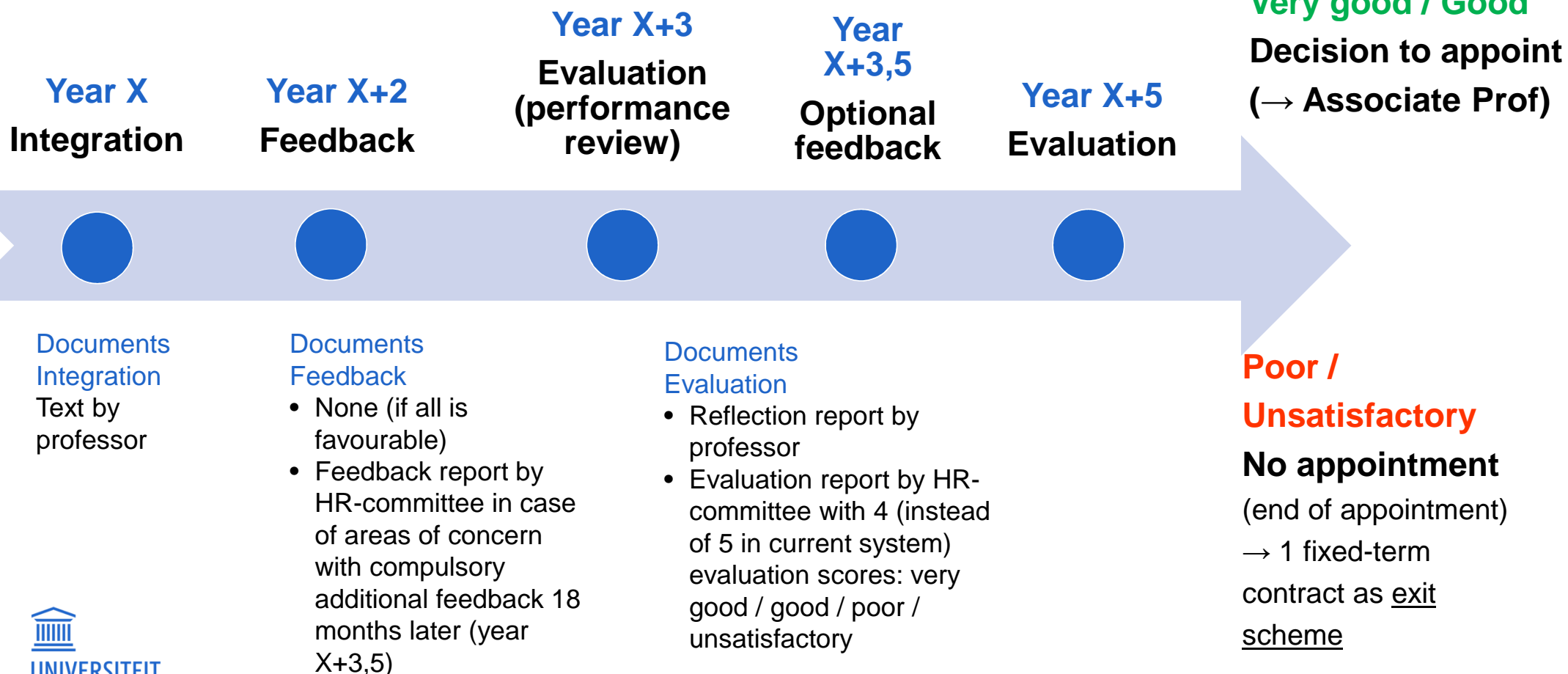
⇒ an “evaluation break”

Assistant Prof (TT) → Associate Prof	5 years
Associate Prof → Full Prof	2 x 5 years
Full Prof → Senior Full Prof	8 years (3 + 5 years)

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES NEW VISION (3/3)

- Promotion based on a **simplified evaluation cycle**:
  - 3 templates: very limited, but with a clear focus
    - Integration text: my ambitions (and with relation to the larger entity)
    - Reflection report: my main contributions/achievements
    - Evaluation report: contributions/achievements and a global assessment (according to the HR-committee)
  - according to the job level (*see next slides*)
    - 4 *cumulative* profiles: assistant prof, associate prof, (senior) full prof
    - job descriptions = indicative, non-exhaustive guidelines
  - rationalisation: evaluation at the end of one cycle and discussion on the integration text for the next cycle at the same moment if possible
  - differentiation: no compulsory feedback for (senior) full professors, though possible upon request

# EVALUATION CYCLE ASSISTANT PROF TENURE TRACK



# EVALUATION CYCLE ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

**Year X  
Integration**

**Year X+2  
Feedback**

**Year X+3,5  
Optional  
feedback**

**Year X+5  
Evaluation**

**Very good / Good  
Decision to promote  
(→ Associate Prof)**

**Year X+7**

Documents  
Integration  
Text by professor

Documents  
Feedback

- None (if all is favourable)
- Feedback report by HR-committee in case of areas of concern with compulsory additional feedback 18 months later (year X+3,5)

Documents  
Evaluation

- Reflection report by professor
- Evaluation report by HR-committee with 4 (instead of 5 in current system) evaluation scores: very good / good / poor / unsatisfactory

**Poor /  
Unsatisfactory**

- Remedial trajectory by HR-committee
- New evaluation after 2 years

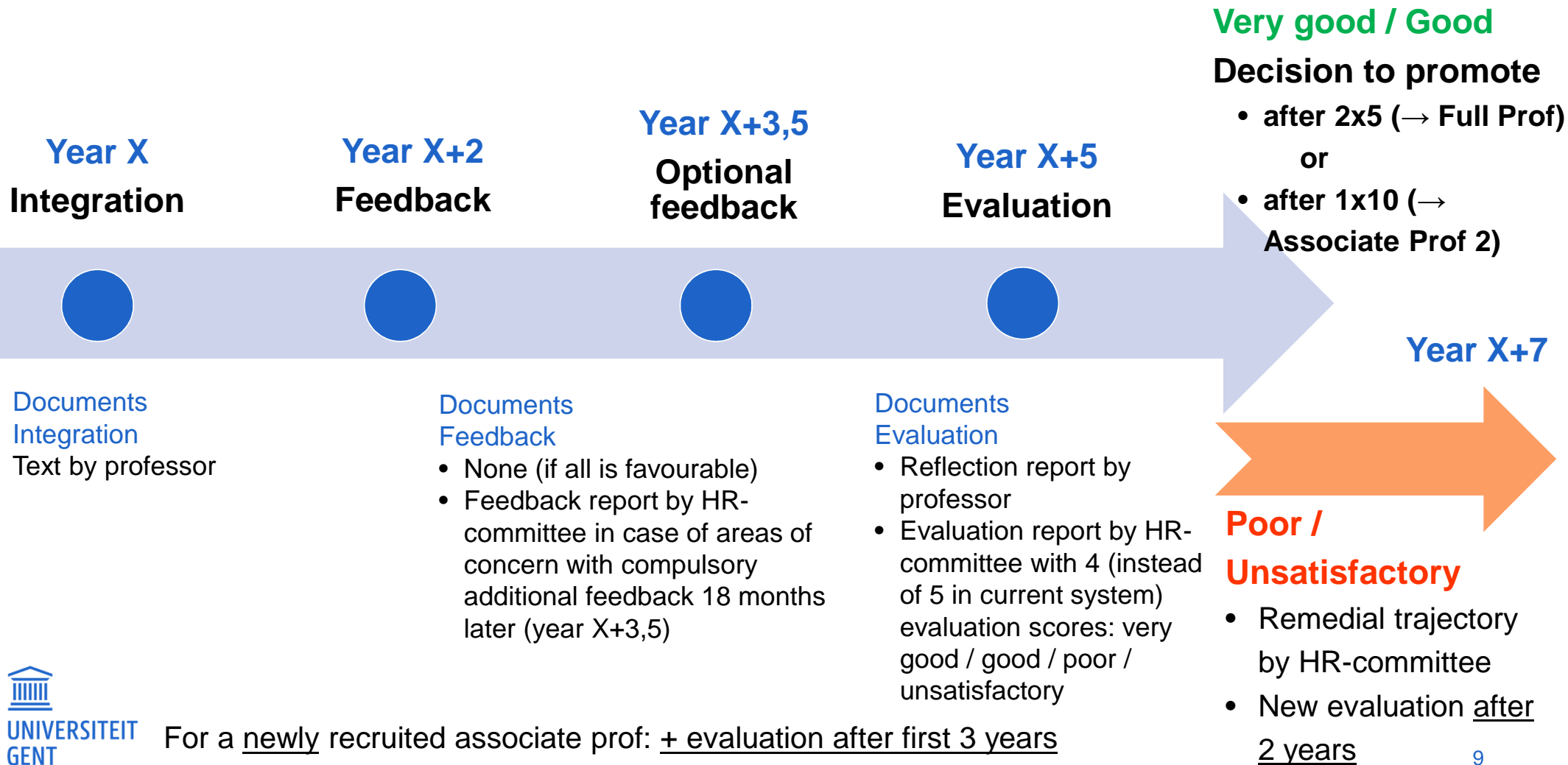


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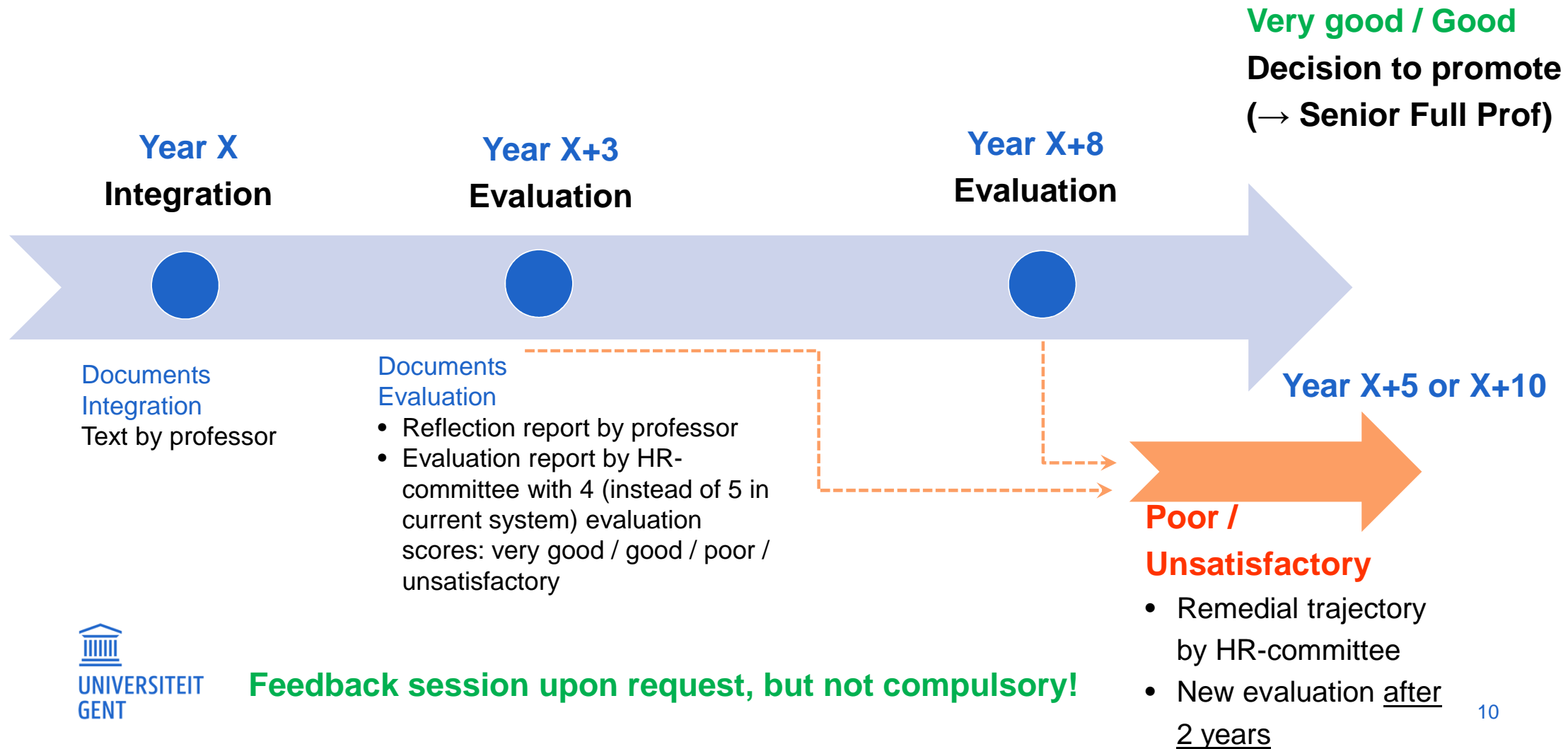
For a newly recruited assistant prof: + evaluation review after first 3 years



# EVALUATION CYCLE ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



# EVALUATION CYCLE FULL PROFESSOR



# EVALUATION CYCLE SENIOR FULL PROFESSOR

**Year X**  
**Integration**



Documents  
Integration  
Text by professor

**Feedback session upon request,  
but not compulsory!**

**Year X+5**  
**Evaluation**



Documents  
Evaluation

- Reflection report by professor
- Evaluation report by HR-committee with 4 (instead of 5 in current system) evaluation scores: very good / good / poor / unsatisfactory

**Very good / Good**

**Year X+7**

**Poor /  
Unsatisfactory**

- Remedial trajectory by HR-committee
- New evaluation after 2 years



# HR-COMMITTEE

## What?

Double role:

- **Feedback:** HR sounding board for the professor by means of guidance, support and coaching in the different stages of the career (incl. development-oriented growth path in the field of leadership, people-oriented functioning and team collaboration)
- Advisory role to the Faculty Office regarding **evaluation and promotion**

## Why?

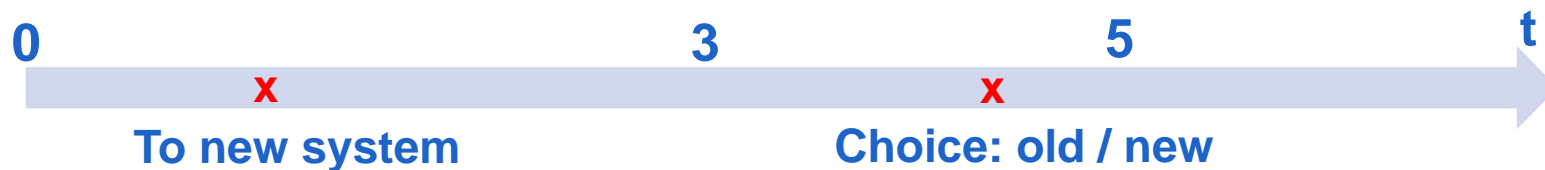
- Each professor is assigned an HR-committee: a combination of sufficiently close to the individual and helicopter view and HR-component

## Who?

- 5 members:  
(gender balanced)
- Department chair
- 1 professorial staff member of the Educational Quality Control Unit ('CKO') – familiar with the educational domain/tasks
- 1 (senior) full professor familiar with the research domain
- 1 member of the Faculty Office (not necessarily a professorial staff member) – familiar with the faculty objectives
- 1 HR-expert

# TRANSITIONAL MEASURES (1/2)

For those who have already entered into the functional career:



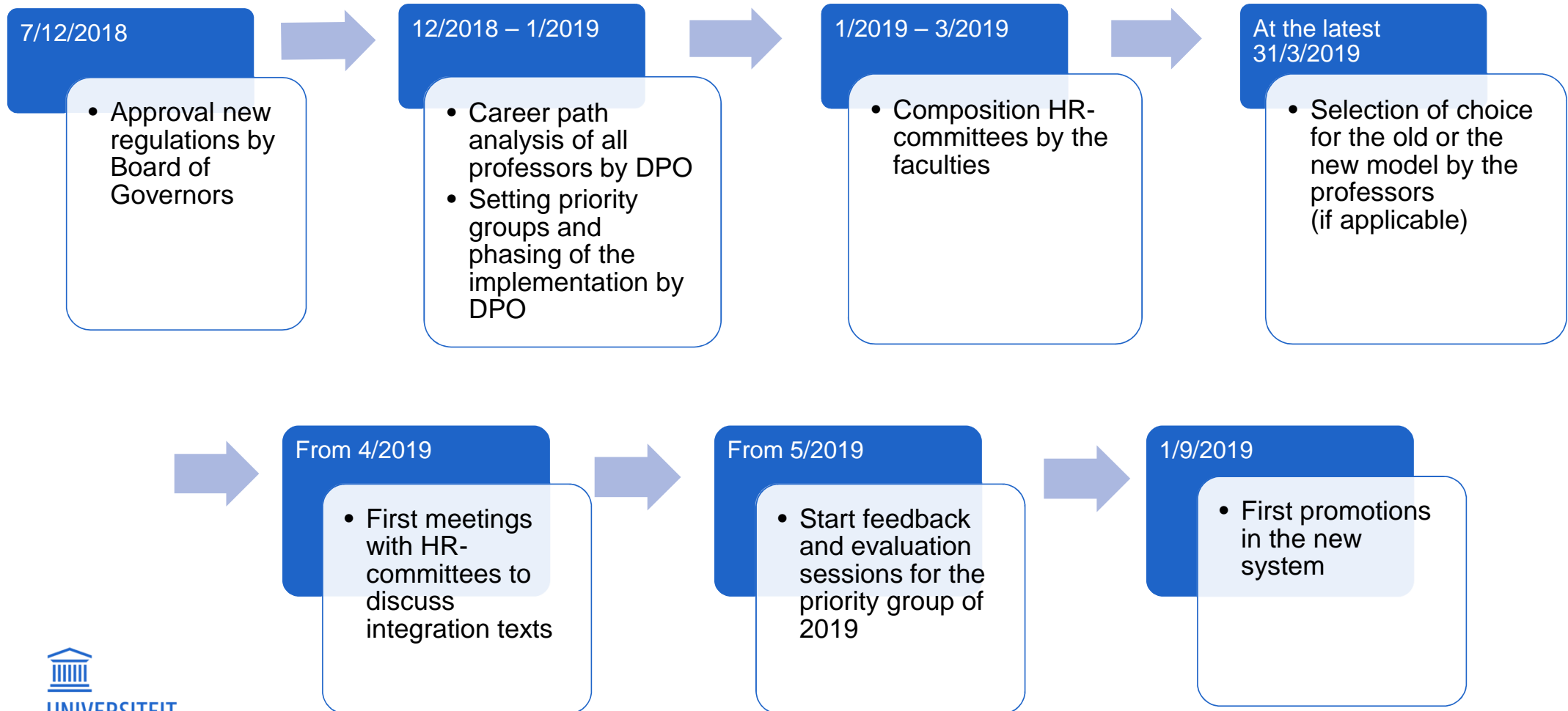
- Same end date as current cycle
- < 3 years in current cycle (on 1 October 2018): automatically enters the new system while retaining the duration of the current promotion cycle, but without personalized objectives
- ≥ 3 years in current cycle (on 1 October 2018): choice between
  - remaining in old system (continuing with personalized objectives) for this cycle
  - moving to new system (without objectives)

## TRANSITIONAL MEASURES (2/2)

For those who have NOT already entered into the functional career:

Last performance review	Next performance review	and afterwards...
2018	2023	
2017	2021	2023
2016	2021	2023
2015	2020	2023
2014	2019	2023

# TIMING



# CHECKS & BALANCES

	HR-committee	Faculty Office	Faculty Board	Rector	Executive Board	Board of Appeal
Composition HR-committee		X	X			
Integration text	X	(X)				
Promotion in the functional career	X	X				
Non-promotion in the functional career	X	X			X	(X)
Promotion in the flat career				X		(X)



# THE NORM IS TO PROMOTE, BUT WHAT IF...

... the HR-committee gives a negative evaluation score:

- Faculty Office confirms
- Executive Board decides
- (Possibly) Board of Appeal: equally composed of
  - Prorector and provice-rector
  - Employer: 3 professorial staff members (active or retired)
  - Employee: 3 professorial staff members (active or retired) appointed by the trade unions

# OTHER PROVISIONS

- For whom? all professorial staff members, on a temporary or permanent contract, part-time or full-time, with a research assignment at Ghent University or an affiliated knowledge centre
- Fast track promotion: includes teaching assignments
- Appointments:
  - From the academic year of 2020 onwards: on 1 September and 1 February
- Date entry into force promotion: 1 September and 1 February
- Reductions in cycle:
  - possible at 1<sup>st</sup> evaluation cycle upon recruitment (max. 3 years for assistant professors)
  - upon recruitment as associate professor => 1 cycle in case of 10 years of experience as a professorial staff member at another (international) university
- **To do:** regulations on the integration staff framework (for about 50 OP3 staff members) + alligning Industrial Research Fund (IOF) staff

# GHENT UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWS

## 'We are transforming our university into a place where talent once again feels valued and nurtured'



(17-12-2018) Our university should once again belong to the academics, rather than the bureaucracy, writes the rector of Ghent University, Rik Van de Walle.

Ghent University is deliberately choosing to step out of the rat race between individuals, departments and universities. We no longer wish to participate in the ranking of people.

It is a common complaint among academic staff that the mountain of paperwork, the cumbersome procedures and the administrative burden have grown to proportions that are barely controllable. Furthermore, the academic staff is increasingly put under pressure to count publications, citations and doctorates, on the basis of which funds are being allocated. The intense competition for funding often prevails over any possible collaboration across the boundaries of research groups, faculties and - why not - universities. With a new evaluation policy, Ghent University wants to address these concerns and at the same time breathe new life

into its career guidance policy. Thus, the university can again become a place where talent feels valued and nurtured.

We are transforming our university into a place where talent once again feels valued and nurtured.

# GHENT UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWS

 **Dr. Janna Gottwald**  
@JannaGottwald Volgen

Evaluation break: "Ghent University is deliberately choosing to step out of the rat race between individuals, departments and universities. We no longer wish to participate in the ranking of people."

[Tweet vertalen](#)

 **"We are transforming our university into a place where tale...**  
Our university should once again belong to the academics, rather than the bureaucracy, writes the rector of Ghent University, Rik Van de Walle.  
ugent.be

01:01 - 28 dec. 2018

358 retweets 735 vind-ik-leuks



**Sten Widmalm** @StenWidmalm · 1 jan.

A great article to start the new year with!

"Ghent University is deliberately choosing to step out of the rat race between individuals, departments and universities. We no longer wish to participate in the ranking of people," - Rik Van de Walle [ft.com/content/b78754...](https://ft.com/content/b78754...) via @FT


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## **Lessons from history on the dangers of blind trust in data**

Businesses and government are learning that the information they collect can mislead

# GHENT UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWS



The screenshot shows the top of a Financial Times article. The header includes the FT logo, a search icon, and the title 'FINANCIAL TIMES'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for HOME, WORLD, US, COMPANIES, TECH, MARKETS, GRAPHICS, OPINION, WORK & CAREERS, LIFE & ARTS, and HOW TO SPEND IT. A teal banner below the navigation bar says 'Get a fresh start.' and 'Choose your FT trial'. The main article content is on a light blue background. It features the author's name 'JOHN THORNHILL' and a '+ Add to myFT' button. The article title is 'Lessons from history on the dangers of blind trust in data' and the sub-headline is 'Businesses and government are learning that the information they collect can mislead'. The article is dated 'John Thornhill DECEMBER 31, 2018'. The first paragraph of the article is: 'The [Great Hanoi Rat Massacre](#) of 1902 is a classic reminder of why we need to be wary about what data we measure and reward. (...)

Alternatively, some institutions may stop playing the quantitative game, as Ghent University appears determined to do. Earlier this month, the Belgian university [announced it](#) would downplay competitive, bureaucratically determined metrics of publications and citations used to determine funding decisions. Instead, the university rector Rik Van de Walle declared, it would foster a more collaborative culture between research groups and faculties nurtured by the academics themselves.

“Ghent University is deliberately choosing to step out of the rat race between individuals, departments and universities. We no longer wish to participate in the ranking of people,” he wrote. “A university is above all a place where everything can be questioned.”

That seems like a good place to start.

[john.thornhill@ft.com](mailto:john.thornhill@ft.com)

# MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS?

[www.ugent.be/professorialcareer](http://www.ugent.be/professorialcareer)

Department of Personnel and Organization

[ZAPloopbaan@ugent.be](mailto:ZAPloopbaan@ugent.be)