

The programme recognises the multifaceted and often heavy responsibilities of ZAP. At the heart of the approach: **supporting excellence without adding extra pressure**, professionally strengthening leadership and structurally embedding well-being. ZAP is not merely a producer of research and education; ZAP guides (young) people, and that deserves targeted support.

## RESEARCH

- **Research time:** the faculty actively safeguards available research time, particularly for academic staff with heavy teaching loads
- **Project support and project orientation:** proactive encouragement and practical assistance with ambitious applications (peer review, mock interviews, newsletter), targeted advice on possibilities for research project applications
- **Theo Teams:** seed funding for interdisciplinary, bold team science — including for junior ZAP (and innovative for ABAP)
- **Refinement of ZAP-support:** ad hoc support for academic staff with smaller (urgent) tasks
- **Broad recognition of output:** new ZAP evaluation framework recognises fundamental research, public theology, policy advice, societal impact, science valorisation, press contributions and outreach, as well as artistic-theological output
- **360° feedback:** active implementation; as a tool for growth, not as a means of control
- **Celebrating achievements:** actively promoting publications, grants and awards both within and outside the faculty, and celebrating them collectively

## TEACHING

- **Rationalisation:** a fair, transparent exercise to determine which programmes to strengthen or reposition, in close consultation with academic staff and research units, from the perspective of the past, present and future (data-informed and data-driven)
- **Task allocation:** apply the guidelines for the allocation of teaching duties per status more actively, redistribute; monitor balance
- **AI-agenda:** AI-literacy as a core competence; faculty-wide support for AI-integration in teaching and assessment
- **Teaching support:** staff development days, ZAP-evening, coaching and infrastructure

## LEADERSHIP & WELL-BEING

- **Leadership programme:** continuation and deepening: authentic, vulnerable and connecting leadership as a shared goal
- **Peer supervision:** regular sessions on mentoring, conflict management and communication, including for ZAP
- **Career discussions:** appreciative and empathetic discussions focusing on individual aspirations and personal wellbeing; implementation of KU Leuven's appreciative ZAP career discussions (following four years of our own initiative in this regard)
- **Workload:** improved workload measurement; transparent task allocation; coaching as a structural provision
- **Disconnection:** enshrined as a right, including for ZAP
- **Colleague solidarity:** ZAP-breakfast, ZAP-evening, thematically focused consultations and exchange, annual excursion, celebrating shared successes, sharing research

## GOVERNANCE & PARTICIPATION

- **Polyphonic governance:** multi-voiced core teams; ZAP-voices structurally represented in all decision-making
- **Faculty Council:** developed as a genuine forum for dialogue and participation (brief updates, members' concerns, time-conscious)
- **Trust:** presumption of good faith; transparent communication regarding decisions and procedures
- **Confidential reporting channels:** accessible and clear; confidentiality guaranteed for anyone wishing to report an issue

The programme explicitly acknowledges that the position of ABAP is **structurally vulnerable**: dependence on contract renewal, publication strategy and the relationship with the supervisor means that an equal partnership cannot be taken for granted. The approach is two-pronged: **structural safeguards** that offer protection regardless of the individual goodwill of supervisors, and a culture of **mutual responsibility and recognition**.

## SUPERVISION AND LEGAL STATUS

- **Supervision teams**: systematic appointment with an active role; multiple points of contact as the absolute standard, not the exception
- **Career reviews**: held periodically with someone other than the student's own supervisor; structured, not on request
- **Anonymous annual survey**: annual ABAP survey independent of the supervisor; reporting of issues without risk
- **Ombudsperson**: outside the regular ZAP framework
- **Exit interviews**: a standard procedure for every contract termination or non-renewal: as a basic tool for organisational learning and respect
- **Non-renewal**: clear and transparent procedure; sufficient advance notice; respect as a starting point
- **Buddy/mentor system**: for new researchers; welcome and onboarding as standard

## TASKS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Tasks with growth potential**: assigned tasks must include a genuine component of professional development, made explicit and recognised
- **Teaching duties**: substitute or assistant teaching is accompanied by training and supervision
- **Recognition**: for work delivered, in words, in evaluations, in faculty communications
- **Remote working and disconnection**: clear policy for junior researchers too; disconnection as a right
- **Self-supporting PhD students**: specific policies for those pursuing a PhD without ABAP status; special care for this vulnerable group

## COMMUNITY AND NETWORK

- **Research Happening**: Graduate Conference as a platform for cross-OE exchange and community building; “share the pitches”-day
- **Doctoral Day & Career Day**: cross-OE contact via a welcome event at the start of the academic year; information day on career prospects (within and outside the academy)
- **PhD excursion**: annual community-building activity for all PhD students
- **Transferable skills**: structured provision of training outside the scope of the actual research, embedded in the doctoral course, including a choice from university-wide offerings
- **Celebrating achievements**: actively highlighting publications, grants and conference contributions by young researchers
- **Ladies' lunch / postdoc lunch / international sisters community**: targeted initiatives for specific subgroups

## VOICE AND SAFETY

- **Representation**: ABAP representatives on the Faculty Council and consultative bodies with a real say and a guarantee of safety; genuine co-governance based on the KU Leuven model
- **Social safety**: structural safeguards outside the board; external support; bystander training for all sections
- **Reporting channels**: clear, accessible (and again local/faculty-related), confidential; ABAP knows where to turn
- **Open dialogue with the Dean**: regarding future prospects and concerns — including direct communication

# ATP *Administrative and Technical Staff*

Bénédicte Lemmelijn · Candidate Dean 2026–2030 · FTRW KU Leuven

The programme regards ATP as **the foundation of the faculty**: without the expertise and dedication of the administrative and technical staff, nothing really functions. This recognition translates into concrete policy choices. ATP is not merely an executor; based on specific expertise, ATP is **a contributor, advisor and full partner** in faculty policy. This requires a tailored division of tasks, structural and proactive participation, and genuine appreciation.

## TASK ALLOCATION AND WORKLOAD

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- **Systematic evaluation**: what tasks exist, who does what, and whether the distribution aligns with the talents and preferences of the individuals concerned
- **Tailored to the individual**: redistribution not only based on efficiency, but on individuality and, where possible, the individual's preferences
- **Workload measurement**: transparent monitoring; identifying overwork as the norm, not as an exceptional complaint
- **Setting boundaries**: creating space, and expecting ATP to set boundaries without professional consequences

## CAREER AND STATUS

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- **Sustainability**: temporary and unclear situations have already been addressed; this policy will be continued and strengthened
- **Permanent contracts**: as the norm for those taking on long-term roles
- **Is everyone in the right role?**: continuing active review, and a willingness to rethink roles where necessary
- **Career prospects**: open and appreciative discussions about the future, growth and personal aspirations

## WORKING FROM HOME AND WELL-BEING

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- **Working from home policy**: clear and supportive; tailored to individual circumstances. Not a one-size-fits-all approach
- **Disconnection**: as a right for everyone, including ATP staff; no expectation of constant availability
- **Work-life balance**: explicitly recognised as a faculty value; ATP's should be able to lead a 'normal' life
- **Social safety**: clear reporting channels; external support available; bystander training for all staff

## PARTICIPATION AND RECOGNITION

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- **Direct consultation**: involvement in policy through direct dialogue in areas of concern to ATP's
- **Representation**: in consultative bodies with a real say; representatives speak freely on behalf of their group and act as co-governors based on the KU Leuven model
- **Willingness to listen**: ATP's advice, practical and administrative assessment is actively sought regarding new initiatives and the feasibility of implementation, before decisions are taken
- **Recognition of expertise**: the knowledge ATP possesses about how things actually work is irreplaceable and is recognised and utilised as such
- **Communication**: ATP remains informed about decisions that affect them; no surprises

Full programme: <https://benedictelemmelijn2026-2030-be-747b49.webnode.be/>

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