



‘Sharing experience to better implement
the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers’

Consensus Report
(to be filled by the lead assessor)



RENEWAL PHASE¹ – assessment with a SITE VISIT

Name of the Organisation under assessment:UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR.....

This assessment is composed **in CONSENSUS** by the assessors on:2019, JANUARY THE 26TH

DETAILED ASSESSMENT

1. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the **quality of progress** intended and obtained by the organisation.

1A. DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

	YES	NO
Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?	X	
Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation’s priorities in HR-management for researchers?	X	
Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions’ current status, additions and/or alterations?	X	
Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation’s management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation?	X	
Is the OTM-R policy ² in place and publicly available ?	X	

Look ahead at the questions to be addressed during the site visit, listed in part 1B:

¹ Last update 2.2.2018

² *During the transition period special conditions apply:*

Institutions having started the HRS4R implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be penalised but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

Does the internal assessment of the institution give **rise to any issues you wish to explore** in more detail during the site visit?

Which elements of the HR Strategy and Action Plan would **you like to focus on** during the site visits?

- How UM defines actions and policies coherent through all faculties. Having in mind the fact that survey results from each faculty have been different and therefore needed actions have to be different as well.
- Follow up the completion of actions launched at the Revised HR Strategy Action Plan for researchers for purposes of implementing the principles of the European Charter of Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and recommendations on Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment practices (OTM-R) for the period 2017-2020, as shown in Template 3-Internal Review.
- Additionally get proofs of the training programmes planned to be run along 2018-19, for key stakeholders within the University on the topic of unified and consistent implementation of documents relating to the principles of the Charter and Code and the OTM-R Policy, as stated in Template 3-Internal Review.
- Internationalization: Applications, Obstacles, Language, Summer Schools
- Gender balance /equal opportunity: See gender proportions R1-R4, measures and diversity beyond gender.
- Mentoring/Supervision/Career advice: standards, quality controls, feedback from stakeholders, incentives.
- OTM-R Compliance, measure and tracking.

1B. SITE-VISIT BASED Assessment (to be completed jointly by the assessors after the site visit)

Please provide a brief answer to the following questions:

1. Does the site visit confirm the impression made by the written self-evaluation report?
<p>Yes, entirely.</p> <p>We have confirmed evidence of how the HRS4R process has been embedded into the institutional policy and confirmed the impression gained from the findings of the desk- based assessment. The site visit proved that not only institutional policies in line with the HRS4R are written, but real actions take place.</p> <p>Additionally, strong involvement of top persons from the university hierarchy in the implementation process was observed. It also clarified that some progress, mainly the internationalisation, is hampered by national legislation rather than by lacking university efforts. Further considerable efforts have been undertaken since their report was filed; most outstandingly the new Rector has created a new position for a vice-rector for quality, human resources and legal affairs.</p>
2. What have been the benefits of implementing an HR Strategy in the organisation under review? How do you judge its overall impact and achievements?
<p>First of all, raised awareness of the HRS4R among academic staff. Secondly, newly appointed Rector (June 2018) recognizes the importance of the quality of HR management, thus in July 2018 a new position - Vice Rector for Quality, Human Resources and Legal Affairs - was created. Thirdly, a range of trainings both science related and soft skills, not only for academic staff, but also administration is proposed.</p> <p>Designed training system is impressive, both for the research staff and admin staff, including technical as well as transversal skills in an officially scheduled training calendar.</p> <p>It has given rise to setting clear and transparent criteria for promotion, especially habilitation, and a very systematic and extensive effort to extensive training opportunities at every level.</p>

<p>3. How do you judge the organisation's level of ambition with regard to its HR strategy for researchers, taking into account the initial state of play?</p>
<p>The university's level of ambition is very high, being the process led by the top level of the University and fully supported by the Rector and his team, who are fully involved in the Strategy. They have proven that they are able to fulfil this high level of ambition. The current Rector is supporting and progressing all HR efforts to the highest possible level and has established a very dedicated supported team consisting of academics and administration</p>
<p>4. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the Ethical and Professional Aspects of Researchers?</p>
<p>The university has developed new codes of ethics and integrity. There are guidelines for supervision and mentoring, ensuring that the superiors are making new employees aware of these principles. The researcher at career levels R2-R4 have complete research freedom. To ensure the implementation of the C&C principles in relation to Ethical and Professional Aspects of Researchers, the UM has introduced the following documents: The Code of Professional Ethics of UM and the Code of Ethics and Integrity for Researchers of UM.</p>
<p>5. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the Recruitment of Researchers? Is an OTM-R policy in place?</p>
<p>UM has started to implement an OMT-R policy. Researchers of all levels were found to be aware of these changes in recruitment. However, internationalisation is hindered by legally imposed language abilities for students and teaching staff as well as comparatively low income. Internationalisation is very low, and UM is fully aware of this problem.</p> <p>The UM will have to improve international visibility for job postings, ensuring publication on Euraxess. However, some evidences of the institution's effort to put an OTM-R policy in place are confirmed, but yet processes and training for that have to be developed. Some further considerations will have to be made to improve gender balance on higher hierarchical levels more proactively.</p>
<p>6. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the Researchers' Working conditions and Social Security?</p>
<p>The salaries are not competitive compared to international standards or the private sector but they are legally restricted. The UM provides good working facilities and social security at all levels. UM provides researchers with children good flexibility in working time and location, adequate parental leaves and full support during and after these at all career levels. Social security at each level covered in 100%.</p> <p>To support researchers and limit their administrative burden related to grant application and implementation, dedicated Grant Office(s) should employ enough number of specialists to answer university needs. Therefore, fostering a Grant Office giving service to the whole University by means of specialized professionals would improve the support received and grant applications and reporting.</p>
<p>7. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding Researchers' Development and Training?</p>
<p>There is an impressive amount to training and skill enhancement options provided by the university at all career levels. These efforts are centrally organised by a specialised unit at the UM. Clear advancement criteria give a high level of predictability and transparency to career development.</p> <p>R2 and R3 researchers get promotion based on performance assessment. Most of them are 100% teachers and additionally conduct research. High teaching workload [6 or 10 hrs/ week] influences researchers' mobility. It can be decreased but salaries are based on teaching. Additionally, performance assessment is based on research output (publications, projects).</p>

Please list one or more **elements of good practice** that you would recommend to other organisations – either in terms of action or in terms of coordination/process.

A vice rector for quality, human resources and legal affairs was established, who interacts strongly with other vice-rectors, e.g. the vice rector for education, embeds the HR efforts nicely into the universities overall strategy and gives the efforts sufficient leverage. Additionally, there is one dedicated person at the UM who was involved in the HRS4R process from the beginning on. This is a big advantage, because it ensures a high level of knowledge, understanding and continuity.

UM is investing considerable resources for training possibilities at all career levels as well as for administration staff.

The university has created an attractive, stimulating and rewarding environment for researchers and is continuing to raise the bar. Their level of ambition is high; their level of achievement as well.

The assessors congratulate them on this and hope they will continue to carry institutional HR policies to a higher level.

2. Strengths, Weaknesses and Recommendations

On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the organisation's national research context, how would you as an assessor judge the HR Strategy's strengths and weaknesses?

If relevant, please provide suggestions for alterations or revisions to the (updated) HR strategy:

STRENGTHS

Support to continue and enhance HRS4R from top level of the University.

Very well-structured and coherent HR strategy in line with the overall strategy of the University.

Tasks on the action plan are linked to the HR principles.

WEAKNESSES

Internationalisation: the language is the biggest obstacle. Due to national legislation, teaching has to be in Slovenian. Therefore, Internationalization level (students, visibility, Summer Schools, collaborations, etc.) is limited and poor.

The UM will have to improve international visibility for job postings, ensuring publication on Euraxess.

Some further considerations will have to be made to improve gender balance on higher hierarchical levels more proactively.

To support researchers and limit their administrative burden related to grant application and implementation, dedicated Grant Office(s) should employ enough number of specialists to answer university needs. Therefore, fostering a Grant Office giving service to the whole University by means of specialized professionals would improve the support received and grant applications and reporting.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Which describes the organisation's progress most accurately?	Additional comments	TICK the right option
<p>1. The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.</p> <p><i>The <u>next assessment</u> will take place in 36 months.</i></p>	<p>Charter & Code principles are implemented and communicated throughout all levels of staff in the institution</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>2. The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.</p> <p><i>The institution is requested to submit within 1-2 months a revised file taking into account the recommendations of the assessors.</i></p>		
<p>3. The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.</p> <p><i>The institution is requested to submit within 12 months a revised file taking into account the recommendations of the assessors.</i></p> <p><i><u>Until then, the HR award will be put as 'pending'.</u></i></p>		