Important message to institutions:

Onsite visits are resumed starting 1 September 2022

The broad lifting of the COVID-19 related travel limitations, allow us to cautiously resume the onsite visits. All site visits scheduled to take place after 1 September, will be organized under the normal onsite configuration.

Please note that after 1 September the virtual formula for "remote" site visits, will not be in place anymore.

Implementation Phase Interim Assessment - EC Consensus Report

Case number: 2019SE372597
Name Organisation under assessment: Halmstad University
Submission date of the Interim Assessment Internal Review: 19/07/2022
Submission date: 19/10/2022

Quality assessment

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended by the organisation.
If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:

	YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
	YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?	Yes	It is very much appreciated the document with clarifying instructions regarding some sections of the Internal Review. In this sense, regarding the organisational infomation, I will recommend to start following the numbers of researchers externally funded. They mention that they have industrial researchers, who are fully externally funded, and the ones that are hired under competitive research projects can be also understood as "externally funded". It is an "easy" number to track specially for a medium-sized university. Regarding the foreing researchers, I would recomment HH to choose a criteria for monitoring also this number. It can be, for instance, the researchers that do not have Swedish nationality, despite the time they have been working in the country. These numbers are important under the HRS4R assessement.
Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers?	Yes	I would like to highlight that, althougt the documents are correctly published, the institution has not implement the recommendations given by the assessors in the Initial Assessemnt regarding visibility of the sel of excellence. There is no direct link to the HRS4R section in the home page, and there is very difficult to find this section looking into the different parts of the HH website. I Google "HH HRS4R" and it appear that the link is under "vacant positions", which is not the logical place to look for this kind of policy.

	YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions' current status, additions and/or modifications?	Yes	Regarding actions, the institution has not taken into consideration the comments made in the Initial Assessment about the indicators. It would be good to include quantitative indicators that can be measure, not only qualitative ones as there are right now. These qualitative indicators are written in a very vague way.
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?	Yes	Considering the recommendations given during the Initial Assessemnt, the institutions seems to have fully embedded the HR strategy, which is something remarkable at this stage. Nevertheless, this was highlighted as a weakness since there is no explicit mention of either the HRS4R strategy (a fact highlighted by the institution itself) or the OTMR policy. For the site visit, I would recommend including explicit references to the HRS4R strategy and the OTMR, clearly explaining how it is implemented in the HH. It is assumed that the people who consult these sections know the details of these policies, which is not usually the case. Again, we return to what was already indicated in the initial phase regarding internal and external visibility: HH is not considering positioning itself as a university awarded with the HRS4R seal, but is working exclusively internally. This is very positive because we interpret that HH is fully aligned with EU policies, but we have to make this clear, and not appeal to the interpretation of advisors or potential researchers who want to go to work at HH.

	YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
Has the organisation developed an OTM-R policy?	Partly	HH has developed a self-help tool in the intranet for OTM-R, and they have put in place several policies that are linked with OTM-R. They also indicate that we will use the OTM-R checklist in the future in their recruitment process, but there is no specific mention of OTM-R in these documents and how it is been implemented in a global way.

Strengths and weaknesses

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?** (maximum 1000 words)

Strengths

- The hiring of 2 lawyers for attending researchers needs
- Co-worker policy
- Inclusion of career paths in their website
- 2 new positions: First Lecturer and Deputy Professor
- Use of Varbi e-recruitment tool
- Support of an external consultant for double cheking the process and documents
- Use of a digital planning tool for the monitoring of the Action Plan
- Involvement of the researcher community in a more explicit and active way
- Future work with other local universities regarding career development
- To make the effort to translate into English the relevant documents and policies linked to the HRS4R
- To consider becoming Euraxess Center

Weaknesses

- OTM-R seems to be in place but htere is no explicit reference to it or to the HRS4R in their policies and documents. Difficult to find for someone who is not familiar with the concept
- Internal and External Visibility: there has been no improvement since the initial assessment in this regard
- R1 "welcome pack". Keep working in this regard.

If relevant, please provide suggestions for modifications or revisions to the (updated) HR strategy: (maximum 2000 words)

- To include the HRS4R logo and a direct link to the HRS4R webpage on the home site.

- To make an effort to monitor the number of researchers per category to be included in the section "Organisational information".

- To review the indicators in order to include quantitative ones and not only qualitative ones.

- Action 17 can be merged with action 15.

- In Action 18 (OTM-R), including the creation of a specific "summary" or "guide" of OTM-R to compile all the information and internal legislations covering each OTM-R section, together with an explanation of what is OTM-R and how it is been used at HH.

- It could be considered to include a specific communication action about the HRS4R seal of excellence. The creation of a basic "communication plan" can be helpful to HH to focus in a more extensive use of the Seal of Excellence, not only as an internal compliance with EU rules, which is "mandatory", but also as a real quality label for talet attraction to the Univiersity, which is the ultimate goal of this Seal of Excellence.

- To include explicit reference to the HRS4R in the relevant policies of HH.

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.

At this point of the INTERIM assessment, the institution does not jeopardise maintaining the HR award. Nevertheless, the institution is advised to take into account the comments and recommendations of the assessors to meet all assessment criteria at the next assessment (in 36 months).

Recommendations

Which of the below situations describes the organisation's progress most accurately? Tick the right situation and add comments/general recommendations accordingly.

HRS4R embedded	◯
HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed	⬤
HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed	◯

Additional comments *

It is clear that HH University is working very hard to polish its internal procedures regarding human resources and career paths, and they have much work done. Until the site visit, the university has plenty of time to continue working in their new Action Plan with a new focus: to highlight all these efforts both inside and outside the university, using this seal of excellence as a spearhead for attracting international talent and funding. It is time to start working also from the outside and not only internally, which they clearly have very well on track.

Explanation

- **HRS4R embedded:** The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. **There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**

- **HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed:** 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.**

- **HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed:** 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.**