

TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN – Halmstad University, Sweden

Case number: 2019SE372597

Name Organisation under review: Högskolan I Halmstad, Halmstad University (HH)

Organisation's contact details: Halmstad University, Box 823, SE-301 18 Halmstad, Sweden

Phone + 46 35 16 71 00, registrator@hh.se

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1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
<i>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research</i>	210
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	50
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	140
<i>Of whom are women</i>	90
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	170
<i>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</i>	15
<i>Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</i>	30
<i>Total number of students (if relevant)</i>	5200
<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	600
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	Ca 55,2 M EUR
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)</i>	6,3 M EUR
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	2,9 M EUR
<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	Ca 4,2 M EUR

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

Halmstad University (HH) in SW Sweden is a university with ca 600 employees, 55 professors, 80 doctoral students (incl joint PhDs), 11 200 students, 50 higher educational programmes and more than 130 courses. The research is internationally renowned and pursued in interdisciplinary innovation and research environments. HH takes active part in the development of society through extensive and recognised collaboration with both the private and public sector, and conducts education and research within two profile areas, Health Innovation and Smart Cities and Communities, with a basis in three prominent doctoral education areas: Information Technology, Innovation Sciences, and Health and Lifestyle.

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE:

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Thematic heading of the Charter and Code	STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES
<p>Ethical and professional aspects</p> <p><i>1. Research freedom, 2. Ethical principles, 3. Professional responsibility, 4. Professional attitude, 5. Contractual and legal obligations, 6. Accountability, 7. Good practice in research, 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results, 9. Public engagement, 10. Non discrimination, 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems.</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses: New and/or relatively complicated legislation (such as GDPR, IPR questions) and changes towards open science (e.g. open publications and open data) poses challenges in developing and implementing good and well-functioning internal routines for their handling, especially for a small university like Halmstad University (HH). For such questions it is important, besides from developing good internal handling, to be part of (national) networks and cooperation with other higher education institutions, and in addition to allocate resources for important processes, for instance in legal expertise.</p> <p>Strengths: Development of internal processes to handle above-mentioned new and/or relatively complicated legislation, are ongoing at HH. Implementation of procedures is ongoing in a planned and structured fashion HH. The national (Swedish) legislation is an important fundament that contributes to regulation of, and guarantee for, much of the Ethical and professional aspects stated in the EU Charter. This by the national legislation itself or via local and more detailed formal documents, guidelines and processes developed.</p>
<p>Recruitment and selection</p> <p><i>12. Recruitment, 13. Recruitment (Code), 14. Selection (Code), 15. Transparency (Code), 16. Judging merit (Code), 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code), 18. Recognition of mobility</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses: HH have needs to recruit researchers to perform research that has got external grants for, and recruitment needs that are not always covered in practice. Turnover of staff contributes, in addition, to problems of pursuing research projects according to time schedules. This, partly due to being a small university with limited economic margins, tendencies to reducing risk and chance taking, and competition from larger universities in the geographical vicinity for</p>

<p><i>experience (Code), 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code), 20. Seniority (Code), 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)</i></p>	<p>competent academic staff.</p> <p>Strengths: Recruitment routines have developed significantly at HH during the past years. Currently, a process to develop a new co-worker policy (called We make each other better) is engaging large parts of the HH staff, and thus an important process to guarantee a joint understanding for the improvements needed on all parts of the recruitment process, also those that contribute to creating a good work environment and workplace culture and making researchers grow and develop and being more likely to stay at their workplace, i.e. to reduce the turnover of staff.</p>
<p>Working conditions</p> <p><i>22. Recognition of the profession, 23. Research environment, 24. Working conditions, 25. Stability and permanence of employment, 26. Funding and salaries, 27. Gender balance, 28. Career development, 29. Value of mobility, 30. Access to career advice, 31. Intellectual Property Rights, 32. Co-authorship, 33. Teaching, 34. Complaints/ appeals, 35. Participation in decision-making bodies</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses: HH has much experience in reception of mobile researchers and systems to support career development etc do exist. Such support is, however, somewhat scattered and organized in a sub-optimal manner, the support is mainly given at the Schools and is not centralized. The quality of the support may therefore vary essentially and improvements regarding career development and access to career advice have in the current gap-analysis been recognized as the main areas to focus on.</p> <p>Strengths: The annual development dialogues between all employees and their manager is the main tool to develop activities for career development, for developing professional roles and relations. Quite a few initiatives and activities are already initiated at HH. Questionnaires - the Doctoral barometer - are done every third year at HH, and nationally by UHR. Action plans are done out from these and implemented. The HRS4R-process has been an important tool to identify needs, to develop and prioritize the most important actions, and to concentrate efforts and develop a well-functioning system for career support at the University.</p>
<p>Training and development</p> <p><i>36. Relation with supervisors, 37. Supervision and managerial duties, 38. Continuing Professional Development, 39. Access to research training and continuous development, 40. Supervision.</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses: HH have identified gaps regarding support for researcher's career development; see gap analysis for more detailed information. We have, however, as part of the HRS4R process developed a series of activities in an ambitious action plan in order to mitigate current shortcomings.</p> <p>Strengths: The national (Swedish) legislation is an important fundament on doctoral training and is followed-up closely by the authorities. The guidelines for supervision of Ph.D. students at HH cover all aspects relevant for the doctoral training including e.g. relations with the supervisors and handling of individual study plans, updated annually and handled by the Committee for Doctoral Education (FUU). Questionnaires among Ph.D. students are done on a regular basis (every 3rd year, 2017 the latest), and include issues on e.g. supervision, work</p>

	<p>conditions, gender and discrimination (see Doktorandbaromentern, in Swedish). Gaps identified from the Questionnaires form the basis for action plans that are implemented subsequently. Action Plan for Equal Opportunities and Gender Mainstreaming Plan are examples of important work related to the development for quality development of the doctoral studies at HH. Gender balance in the supervision group is sought for. A number of support structures are available at the university as well as on faculty and department level to provide high quality supervision and Ph.D. education. The Pedagogical Support and Consultation (HPC), and the faculties and central HH-support provide a variety of courses for Ph.D. students; introductory courses, courses in research ethics, writing applications for research grants as well as specific thematic courses. HH provides professional training for supervisors.</p>
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3. ACTIONS

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organisation's HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html>

Please fill in a sum up list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis:

Proposed ACTIONS	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
<i>Free text -100 words max</i>	<i>Retrieved from the GAP Analysis</i>			
16. Judging merit (Code): HH intend to focus on implementing actions stated in HH Guidelines for recruitment and HH Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan (parts related to the recruitment process). HH intend to ensure such compliance for instance via training for staff involved in recruitment processes and for managers, via focused information, reminders, follow-ups, evaluations etc.	There is a risk that lack of awareness that gender perspectives, experiences other than those from the academy, etc. may affect the assessment of merits associated with appointments.	September 2021	HR	Training events for staff involved in recruitment processes and for managers. Information published.
27. Gender balance: Evaluation of the implementation of HH Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan in the recruitment process in relation to the EU Charter and Code requests. If gaps remain by that time (2021/2022), suggestions for activities will be part of a revised HRS4R Action plan for 2022-2025.	The recruitment of academic staff of underrepresented gender is still unsatisfactory. It should, however, be noticed that this to a large extent is due to broad underlying societal causes and beyond reasonable possibility for the University to influence on our own. It should also be stressed that HH has developed a good and well-covering Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan	September 2021	HR	Evaluation report, and possibly revised action plan.
28 & 30 Career development & Access to career advice (treated jointly): Following actions intend to improve the support for career development at HH: i. Packaging of existing career development courses and activities at HH and improve information about such courses and other career support at HH. ii. Monitor the needs for development of additional courses and activities related to career support at HH.	HH has systems to support career development, and long experience e.g. in reception of internationally recruited researchers. Needs and plans for career support are mainly handled mainly via the annual development dialogues between managers and employees (medarbetarsamtal). In addition, an employee and leadership strategy is under development at HH, that aims for mutual	i) September 2020 ii) April 2021 iii) September 2020 iv) April 2021 v) September 2021 vi) December 2021	i) Chancellery ii) Chancellery, HR iii) Chancellery, HR iv) HR v) HR vi) HR	i) Information published ii) Report and action plan finalized. iii) Process (tool) ready. Guiding information published and spread. iv) Report and action plan finalized v) Report on

<p>iii. Develop process to gather and aggregate needs for career support, recognized e.g. during the annual development dialogues. This in order to improve the follow up of the individual plans emerged from the dialogues, and possibly to coordinate joint activities etc.</p> <p>iv. Offer specific language training for internationally recruited researchers at HH.</p> <p>v. Improve reception of international researchers; internal routines for this etc.</p> <p>vi. Develop mentoring systems for researchers at different levels at HH. Existing systems at some HH schools will be used as best practices examples.</p>	<p>support and learning from each other. Gap: Some needs for improvements have, however, been recognized in the HRS4R gap-analysis.</p>			<p>current reception. Suggestions for improved system. vi) Report on existing systems. Suggestions for improved system.</p>
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The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan.

Overall, during the past years processes of continuous development and quality improvement imbues all activities at Halmstad University (HH). This is valid also on recruitment and other HR-activities as part of the 'normal' ongoing development and quality processes at the university. The principles of the EU Charter and Code, and the HRS4R process itself, has contributed with much inspirational input to HH and the HR-department, already during the preparation phase for the application to the European Commission. We consider the current guidelines and processes regarding recruitment of researchers at HH as being efficient, transparent and merit-based, and to a large extent open, and the HR-strategy thus to be mainly OTM-R based. Halmstad University has, however, an ambition to strive for continuous improvements, especially on areas where needs are identified. The HR department has stated in its current development plan that the European Charter & Code for Researchers will be a guiding star for all development onwards, and the HRS4R is thus already an important tool e.g. to identify such needs and develop actions. Currently (with deadline in March 2020) a revision is undertaken of the guidelines for recruitment and employment at HH, including a translation of the guidelines to English. The European Code of conduct and the toolkit provided in the OTM-R report (e.g. the checklist and step-by-step guide) will onwards be used as important input and guiding star in this type of revisions as well as in future revisions of the HR-department's development plans.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

General overview of the expected implementation process:

The implementation of the Action plan emanated in the HRS4R-process will become part of the 'normal' ongoing development and quality processes at HH. The university's quality work is integrated into all activities, and of joint concern for the University's staff and students and ultimately part of the daily work for every teacher, researcher, technical and administrative staff and students in order to create the conditions for good education, research and collaboration. In promoting a positive quality culture, both staff and students should part of and feel a responsibility and commitment to develop and drive quality. The university's quality culture is characterized by participation, dialogue and continuous improvement.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

Checklist	*Detailed description and duly justification
How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?	The implementation of Action plan emanated in the HRS4R-process will be governed by the Quality Council at HH. This is an advisory body that is responsible for development and preparation of suggestions for a comprehensive quality development program and quality policy.
How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?	Involvement of the research community and main stakeholders is ensured by the composition of the Quality Council, with representatives from research environments, and from stakeholder representatives in the Research and Education Board (FUN); the overarching collegial body responsible for research as well as for education and for the overall long-term strategic priorities for research and education.
How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.	The regularly recurring evaluations of Action plans (and revised Actions plans) in the HRS4R-process will contribute with important input in the 'normal' ongoing development and quality processes at HH.
How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?	The activities in the HRS4R Action plans will become part of 'normal' development plans for each responsible unit at HH.
How will you monitor progress	The progress will be monitored in the processes

(timeline)?	for the 'normal' development plans and its follow-ups, and the overall HRS4R work, as one of several quality systems, is monitored by the Quality Council at HH. The HRS4R will become one of more than 15 pieces in the 'quality pyramid' at HH, with various regularity in the follow-ups.
How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?	The indicators suggested for the HRS4R Action plan will be measured to estimate the success and progress in the processes for the 'normal' development plans and its follow-ups.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process:

(free text, 1000 words maximum)
