

## HR Excellence in Research

# Internal Review

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## Internal Review

### Case number

2019SE372597

### Name Organisation under review

Halmstad University

### Organisation's contact details

Kristian IV:s väg 3, Halmstad, 30118, Sweden

### Submission date to the European Commission

17/10/2025

### 1. Organisational Information

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked \* are compulsory.

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/my/hrs4r/case/18634/task/24205/document-type/internal-review?referrer=24204&print=true>

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STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	393
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	67
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	220
Of whom are women *	192
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	284
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	23
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	86
Total number of students (if relevant) *	6139
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	703
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	78925090
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	9650896
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	9093996
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1980914

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

Halmstad University adds value, drives innovation and prepares people and society for the future. Ever since the start beginning in 1983, innovation and collaboration with society have characterised the University's education and research. Today, the University has a wide range of educational programmes. The research is internationally renowned and is conducted in multidisciplinary innovation and research environments within the University's two focus areas: Health Innovation and Smart Cities and Communities. The University participates actively in the development of society through extensive and high-profile collaboration with both industry and the public sector.

For more information, see <https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/facts-about-halmstad-university.html> (<https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/facts-about-halmstad-university.html>)

## 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code, as provided by your organisation in the initial assessment phase. When doing so, you should do not only look back, but also consider new priorities, strategic decisions, etc. which may further influence the action plan. Please also provide a brief commentary in the "Remarks" column if major changes have occurred versus the initial plan.

**Note:** Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter & Code to open the editor and provide your answers in the Internal Review for Interim Assessment dedicated section.

### Ethical and professional aspects\*

#### Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

**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.

**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.

#### Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

Ethical and professional aspects are upheld at HH through regulations and policies, working routines and guidelines, as well as national legislation. There are clear and well-documented procedures for ethical governance and decision-making.

In the spring of 2021, a Research Ethics Advisory Board, reporting to the Vice-Chancellor, was established in response to tighter national legislation regarding research ethics and the consequences of non-compliance. The board advises researchers on the necessity and requirements for ethical permissions. The role and mandate of the board is under development.

The gap analysis highlighted challenges in developing good internal routines regarding legislations such as GDPR, data storage, ethical considerations, IPR and Open Data. There is now effective management within the area of GDPR (education, internal advisory group). As regards Open Data, there are now clear guidelines on how researchers should handle research data at different stages. There are systems for the management of such data and an internal advisory group is in place to assist researchers. As regards IPR issues, further work needs to be carried out. However, HH has strengthened its legal services to two employed lawyers who provide support to researchers. Such support includes:

- Education for researchers regarding contract law and ethics.
- Personal Data Processing Agreement templates and instructions have been developed and are available on the University's intranet.
- Template has been developed regarding financing and conditions for industrial doctoral students.
- Templates for and assistance with collaboration agreements for collaborative research projects have been developed.

In terms of Open Data, a new action plan is under development. New activities within the areas of GDPR, data storage and IPR, including more information on the University's webpages, are taken up in the action plan for the coming three years.

Another area of development that was identified in the gap analysis was gender balance. Initiatives (see Actions) have now been taken in accordance with the Gender Mainstreaming Plan 2020-2022 (<https://hh.se/download/18.5cd70dd817512d84730cd621/1602494017722/plan-jamstalldhetsintegrering-2020-2022.pdf> (<https://hh.se/download/18.5cd70dd817512d84730cd621/1602494017722/plan-jamstalldhetsintegrering-2020-2022.pdf>)). The plan was renewed in spring 2022.

A project management training programme was developed in 2018 and subsequently modified in autumn 2021 to also include the areas of gender, sustainability, open science and open data. Since 2018, some 80 people have attended this programme, which is aimed at researchers running projects and those who plan to run projects in the future.

#### Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

### Ethical and professional aspects

One priority in HH's 2022–2025 action plan (Action 14) has been to develop effective training for researchers in GDPR, data storage, ethical regulations, IPR, and contract law. In response, a comprehensive digital Researchers' Guide has been developed on the intranet through a process-oriented approach led by a researcher. The guide offers step-by-step support throughout the research lifecycle—from proposal writing to project completion and dissemination. It includes guidance on personal data processing, legal basis, ethical approval, information obligations, security measures, and archiving. However there are challenges related to low traffic to the Researchers' Guide.

In 2021, when preparing the development of the Researchers' Guide, a decision was made to pause the project management training. While project management training is currently not offered, there is demand for initiatives focused on leading research projects. These will be addressed. (New Action 22).

A digital platform (VISMA) has been implemented to simplify but also ensure quality GDPR compliance, risk management, and impact assessments (DPIA). The system automates documentation with clear role overviews, risk assessments, and contract follow-up and will soon be made available to researchers.

In 2023, a university-wide GDPR information initiative was carried out, and training continues as needed. Overall awareness has improved, but further efforts are required to reach all researchers.

Strategic funding has been allocated to stimulate Open Access publishing from 2025 to 2027. There is already a dedicated group for open science working to strengthen data management through the Data Access Unit (DAU) and the use of DMPonline for data management plans. Although tools and processes are in place, there is a challenge in demonstrating to researchers the benefits of a data management plan and open data.

The university benefits from strong national collaborations, particularly through "Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions" (SUHF), which adds significant value.

The Ethics Advisory Board provides valuable guidance for ethics applications but is underutilized. Upcoming legislation in 2026 is expected to increase its relevance and use.

Cybersecurity, IPR, and contract matters are supported by clear routines and digital systems, but active participation and understanding among researchers remain a challenge. The next step is to improve outreach and integrate these topics into training efforts.

Action 14 is still open and will be extended into 2027.

In terms of gender mainstreaming related to staff composition, mapping has been carried out through follow-ups and focus group discussions to provide a solid foundation for the new gender mainstreaming plan. Work has also been conducted on a local level (see Action 15, which includes former Action 17). Gender balance across Schools remains uneven, with a clear predominance of women in fields such as health and nursing, and of men in information technology, although at the level of career positions and doctoral students in IT, there is balance.

The work with gender mainstreaming needs to continue and will be taken forward in the new Action 23.

#### Remarks (max 500 words)

Legal aspects are an area of fluidity and complexity which are developing rapidly. Therefore, our activities need to follow accordingly.

Gender mainstreaming is and will remain an ongoing activity.

#### Recruitment and selection\*

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

**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 competent academic staff.

**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.

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

The new (2020) reworked Appointments Procedure at HH (<https://hh.se/download/18.7241feef17f9f4c277fad18f1647865117231/Appointments-procedure-220321.pdf>) provides a general description of the University's eligibility requirements, assessment criteria and recruitment ethics for both appointments and promotions. The most important change was the introduction of two new forms of employment: First Lecturer and Deputy Professor.

The Guidelines for Recruitment and Promotion (2021) (<https://hh.se/download/18.276c117a17efbde981be5d3f1645192189014/Guidelines-recruitment-promotion-220218.pdf>) describe the process of recruitment and promotion, and clarify assessment criteria. Both these documents are published in Swedish and English.

A webpage (<https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html>) describes the process of Career Paths and Promotion. Euraxess is nowadays used for all advertisements that are published in English.

All steps in the recruitment process have been gender-integrated and training on gender mainstreaming has been conducted in accordance with the action plan. A self-help tool is available on the HH intranet to support the persons in the recruitment group with relevant questions to ask oneself and reflect on in order to secure merit-based recruitment. As part of the gender mainstreaming plan, a follow-up will be carried out on how the supporting material and reflection questions are applied and experienced in practice. See Action 17.

The proportion of research-qualified university lecturers increased in line with the ambition of the University. Two-thirds of research and teaching staff have a research degree. The Vice-Chancellor has provided strategic funding primarily for R2 positions; recruitment is currently underway. Preliminary results show that Schools that previously had few R2 positions are now employing more people to this type of employment.

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

###### Recruitment and selection

The University has significantly increased the proportion of staff with doctoral degrees through both recruitment and promotion. Career-development positions have also expanded, especially in areas where they were previously rare. Recruitment challenges remain in specific areas, such as doctoral-level staff for nursing programmes, and engineers due to industry competition. Several of these are competences that are generally difficult to recruit in Sweden.

An external audit in 2023 confirmed that recruitment processes are well-functioning and time-efficient by sector standards. New support materials have been developed to assist managers during interviews and competence assessments. A follow-up (within action 15) shows these materials are well known among managers.

A webpage for external experts has been launched to clarify their role and improve process quality (Action 18): <https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/information-for-external-experts.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/information-for-external-experts.html>)

There is now a structured training in recruitment (Action 16) available for both managers and Recruitment Committee members.

The University has become a CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) signatory, supporting new methods for evaluating researchers. Nationally, a merit assessment framework is being developed in line with CoARA and the HR Strategy for Researchers. The University will need to engage in collegial dialogue and review its appointment regulations and OTM-R policy (Action 24). Collaborative competence and alternative career paths are highly valued, and broader experiences are to be recognized. This will require a comprehensive effort across roles and bodies.

Gender mainstreaming will be addressed in the upcoming action plan as well (Action 23). Gender balance across Schools remains uneven, with a clear predominance of women (>60%) in fields such as health and nursing, and of men in information technology. However, on the younger levels (PhD students, postdocs, and associate senior lecturers), the balance is even in information technology. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency highlights that persistent gender-based educational choices in Sweden affect skill supply in gender-imbalanced shortage occupations.

The total proportion of female professors at Halmstad University increased in 2024 to 35% from 32% in 2021, reflecting progress in line with the public service agreements, which call for the University to ensure a higher share of women among newly recruited professors.

**Remarks (max 500 words)**

Working conditions\*



**Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)**

**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.

**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 the authority 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.

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)**

The University code of conduct for researchers emphasises the importance of attractive work conditions. The co-worker policy "We make each other better" (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/benefits-and-work-environment.html>) (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/benefits-and-work-environment.html>) describes the University's goals and expectations in the area of work environment, co-workership, leadership and equality. Through a work environment where co-workers involve, support and stand up for each other, HH can create the conditions for job satisfaction and good performance. All schools at the university have been asked by the Vice-Chancellor to ensure that the code of conduct is introduced into daily operations.

There is a well functioning work environment organisation and structure that ensures that the development of the work environment is performed in collaboration between employers, employees, students, and work and student work environment representatives. Protocols from these meetings are available on the University intranet. Besides the doctoral student barometer that was mentioned above, there is also a regularly conducted co-worker survey. This is usually characterised by a high participation rate of over 75%. The results are discussed together with employees to identify suitable actions. The most recent employee survey has indicated that there is a need to work with work/life balance and stress. Risk assessment has been made and action plans have been formulated on all levels in the organisation.

The doctoral student barometer was conducted in 2020 and gave some valuable insights into areas for improvement in the university. One particular area that the barometer highlighted was the reception and introduction programme for R1 researchers. Digital introduction support using on-line films has been introduced as a first step in the process but further activities are necessary. From 2022, the doctoral barometer will be carried out biennially instead of every three years.

The pandemic has generally hastened the availability of introduction material on the University's intranet, which is a positive development. This information can be accessed by new employees who can create a login prior to arrival. HH now offers digital introduction meetings for all employees, which has increased the participation. However, participation among research personnel could still be improved.

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \***

**Working conditions**

Support for international staff is given through a combination of local and central initiatives. Much practical support still happens locally, but one HR specialist has focused on international matters and supports both relocation planning and onboarding. Academic-related support has been strengthened to better address practical needs. Centrally, efforts have been made to ensure accessible information before and after arrival, including joint introduction sessions and meetings with the Vice-Chancellor (Action 7). Swedish language courses are also offered across the university (Action 6). There is increasing exchange of experience between Schools, which is positive. Challenges remain for Schools with few international staff, where structures and English proficiency may be limited.

The University has decided to develop as a campus-based institution, which is also expected to have a positive impact on international staff by facilitating inclusion on site. Today, 85% of the tuition is on site.

In the external website, there are pages directed at doctoral students, known as the Doctoral Guide. It gathers information about HH's doctoral education and is continuously updated based on input from, among others, the Doctoral Student Survey and the Supervisor Survey, as well as questions raised by doctoral students or directors of studies in the Research Education Committee. However, doctoral students are not quite finding their way to the information available. Information and introduction remain a priority ahead since there is a bit more to do to secure a positive and professional PhD student welcoming. (Action 19)

Conditions for industrial PhD students have been clarified in the agreement between the parties, including both formal terms and practical matters such as work environment and insurance. For PhD students in general, clearer guidance has been provided in the Doctoral Guide regarding study and work environment, and where to turn for support. <https://www.hh.se/english/research/doctoral-education/doctoral-student-guide/doctoral-students-work-and-study-environment.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/research/doctoral-education/doctoral-student-guide/doctoral-students-work-and-study-environment.html>)

In connection with the Doctoral Student Barometer mentioned before, a supervisor survey is also conducted – that is, the teachers who serve as main or co-supervisors are given the opportunity to provide feedback on how the supervision works and their needs for professional development, among other things.

The University has a new Vice-Chancellor with a strong focus on the work environment. The Vice-Chancellor regularly attends workplace meetings to hear staff perspectives and suggestions for improvement. At an overall level, the results of the employee survey show a positive trend in all respects. Previous employee surveys highlighted the need to address work/life balance and stress. Measures have been taken, and stress levels have improved in recent years. Different conditions prevail across the Schools regarding the setting connected to the educational offerings, and at some Schools work environment-related challenges are perceived in connection with the working hours agreement. A dialogue on these issues is being conducted with the trade unions.

There is a clear focus from the Vice-Chancellor on communication and respectful interaction to prevent destructive conflicts and feelings of exclusion or vulnerability. All staff have participated in workshops on handling friction and conflict. The process for managing harassment and bullying has also been reviewed and clarified.

**Remarks (max 500 words)**

Training and development\*



**Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)**

**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.

**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 conditions, gender and discrimination (see the Doctoral student Questionnaire). 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. Several 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.

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)**

The gap analysis identified development needs regarding career support. The challenge is to find activities that are reasonable to implement for a small to medium-sized university. The University has had an activity in the action plan to map and collate activities currently offered. Career development at HH can be found at <https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html>). New routines have been developed for collecting needs that are expressed in the formal employee dialogues.

Working together with other regional universities of a similar size, it may be possible to pool resources regarding career advisory services. This will be further investigated. See Action 12.

The University will conduct a university-wide survey to gain knowledge about how women and men experience their possibilities to have a career and develop in both researcher and teacher roles. See Action 15.

The Centre for Pedagogical Support and Consultation (HPC) offers courses and support in supervisory activities, as well as courses in teaching methods and aids. These have been particularly useful during the pandemic.

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \***

**Training and development**

The University promotes a culture of academic development and merit. The proportion of staff with doctoral degrees has increased significantly through recruitment and internal promotion. A key initiative has been expanding career-development roles such as assistant professors and post-docs, which grew from 40 to 50 in 2024—mainly through post-doc appointments, often filled by former PhD students or research engineers.

A professional development program for lecturers (2023–2025) has enabled 28 individuals to focus on building research qualifications. In 2020, two new roles—Associate Professor and First Lecturer—were introduced to offer alternative academic career paths. Since then, seven have been promoted to Associate Professor. However, no promotions to First Lecturer have occurred, likely due to the scholarly requirements.

Despite progress, continued focus on career support is essential. The internal research evaluation ARC24 highlights the need to further develop support for junior researchers (Action 20). Competence development remains a priority, with new seminar formats being tested. There is a need for academic skills training for early-career researchers (R1–R2) (Action 21), and senior researchers express a need for training in leading large projects, including modules on grant writing, collaboration, and leadership (Action 22).

The University has developed a comprehensive "Researchers' Guide" to support research project management. Although well-designed, it is underused. To improve awareness, the University Library is piloting short seminars, and the guide will be integrated into upcoming career support initiatives.

The PhD Barometer shows improvements in onboarding and introduction for doctoral students (Action 10), largely due to local efforts. Cross-faculty collaboration and joint training with other institutions have increased. A doctoral committee has been established to support social integration. However, challenges remain in ensuring structured introductions and effective communication (Action 19).

Action 15 revealed gender-based differences in career experiences. Men often see career progression as an individual responsibility, while women highlight structural barriers and seek more collegial dialogue. Common challenges include time constraints and limited research support. Career opportunities are closely tied to the research environment and financial conditions of each faculty. These issues will be addressed in Action 23.

Lastly, the former Pedagogical Support and Consultation (HPC) has been replaced by a new model—Support for Teaching and Learning (STUL)—which integrates support units and pedagogical activities. While implementation is underway, further development of processes and methods is needed. Pedagogical support for digital tools has been strengthened with two new positions.

#### Remarks (max 500 words)

Despite progress, continued career support development is essential.

#### Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed? (max 500 words)

The university has assessed that many of the previous gaps and priorities are also relevant for the coming period. A number of points have been added as listed below.

The issue of merit assessment has developed into a priority with CoARA and the new national framework for merit assessment that is currently being presented to Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF).

The economic situation in the national university world makes it even more urgent to find smart solutions and collaborations with other universities, not least in matters of career support and competence development.

The recruitment process – here we consider the University to be far advanced. In addition to merit assessment, the focus going forward will be on skills development (including skills within action 14), career support, reception of doctoral students (and others) and gender mainstreaming.

Since 2022, the university has had a new Vice-Chancellor who has a strong focus on work environment issues such as communication and reception of staff. This work is carried out within the framework of the work environment organization and has a positive impact on working conditions.

Our participation in the EUA Heroes (<https://www.heroesuniversity.eu/>) is a new cooperation that opens up new opportunities for European exchange of experience.

#### Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? (max 500 words)

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/my/hrs4r/case/18634/task/24205/document-type/internal-review?referrer=24204&print=true>

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The university's financial situation is more strained than before. The development of government funding is lower than the increase in costs, and the university has run financial deficits for several years. At the same time, costs for pensions have increased. Measures are being taken to restore financial balance.

The economy is causing some difficulties for the organization. For instance, the reduced funding has affected personnel hiring and replacement, for example, transition processes involving termination of staff and restrictions when it comes to new hiring. Transition work takes and will consume resources, which may affect development work at times.

Recent changes have been made to the Swedish Employment Protection Act. One of the most significant changes is that general fixed-term employment is replaced by special fixed-term employment. One difference between the forms of employment is that the time for the transition from fixed-term to permanent employment has been shortened from two years to one year. This has also impacted the university's funding streams. A new national postdoc agreement came into force in 2022, allowing three-year employment instead of two years has on the other hand helped.

Various aspects of security have in recent years taken up a larger part of the work, including IT security, hacking, and preparedness for attacks, etc. Dialogue around these issues, security efforts, and training in these areas compete for the limited space available to reach researchers with important information and education.

The rapid development of AI has made it important to provide training for all staff. This has been prioritized.

The geo-political situation, Sweden joining NATO, and the general threat to personal integrity has not only led to an increased demand for and shortage of researchers and teachers in domains addressing these questions, but also that universities need to address how to secure competence in case of more severe crisis, e.g. nursing education.

The role of universities regarding life-long learning is being addressed by the government as a prioritized question, and we are expecting a new model for funding shorter courses (micro credentials) for adults will soon be in place. Halmstad University has already received funding for developing and giving such courses, and we expect the volume to increase, which will be a challenge. Adopting existing courses in form and content to better meet the needs of industry and public sector requires more staff who are comfortable with collaboration with external partners.

The Ministry of Education has presented a proposal for a new law concerning research ethics requirements and ethical review of research involving humans. If adopted, this will become a prioritized area of work.

#### Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan? (max 500 words)

The University has continued its work to focus its efforts and profile its research from a national and international perspective within the two focus areas Health Innovation and Smart Cities and Communities. Each focus area is led by a focus area manager who continuously checks in with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for research and doctoral education to work towards the set goals, the vision document Towards 2030 (<https://dokumentarkiv.hh.se/api/showDocument/17951B53-EE5D-4975-8005-5D5563E43CAB>) (in Swedish) and the Research Strategy 2022-2030 (<https://dokumentarkiv.hh.se/api/showDocument/E81946E2-1B37-422B-8573-C7E5C6299C9E>) <https://dokumentarkiv.hh.se/api/showDocument/E81946E2-1B37-422B-8573-C7E5C6299C9E>) (in Swedish).

The University's Research Strategy extends to 2030 and is described in seven dimensions: positioning, profiling, quality, competence, funding, research related to education, and societal relevance. The Research Strategy also specifies the University's goal of at least two-thirds of the staff having a PhD and the goal to have 40% research and 60% teaching, on average, for the university teaching and researching staff. To achieve the latter, a 60% external funding ratio is needed in research.

In September 2025, the University Board decided on the University's new Education Strategy 2025-2035 (<https://dokumentarkiv.hh.se/api/showDocument/C9F39734-90A8-4A13-BEB8-3B6AF7765E6A>) <https://dokumentarkiv.hh.se/api/showDocument/C9F39734-90A8-4A13-BEB8-3B6AF7765E6A>) (in Swedish). It states, among other things, that we aim to have university-wide doctoral education with international competitiveness. The Education Strategy is based on the objectives set out in the Research Strategy and aims to translate them into an educational context. The Strategy includes the following linked to doctoral students and doctoral education:

- The University must offer a welcoming reception and a clear introduction for new doctoral students.

- The University must ensure that all doctoral students have good conditions for pursuing their studies where doctoral student employment is the norm (except for collaborative doctoral students) and alternative solutions are only used after careful consideration.
- The University must offer structured career support, to strengthen doctoral students' opportunities for continued careers within or outside academia.

The University has high expectations that teaching staff continuously develop their pedagogical and subject-related competence. In order for these expectations to be met, the University must also actively create the conditions for competence development through clear governance, prioritization in time and resources, and a collegial supportive climate. Competence development is thus not only an individual responsibility, but a joint and long-term commitment for the entire organization.

Within the framework of the University's quality system, the component Follow-up of research has been implemented and it will provide a basis for analysis for the Schools' annual reports and be translated into activities in operational plans in a more systematic way than previously.

### 3. Actions

Please consult the [list of all actions](#) you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview [the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators](#). If any actions have been altered or omitted, please provide a commentary for each action. You can also add new objectives.

**Note:** Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their ratings.

#### Proposed ACTIONS

##### Action 1

Gap: 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. Action: HH intends to focus on implementing actions stated in our guidelines for recruitment and the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan in the recruitment process. HH intends to ensure its compliance for instance via training for staff involved in recruitment processes and for managers, via focused information, reminders, follow-ups, evaluations etc.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)	2021/Q3	HR	Training events for staff involved in recruitment processes and for managers. Information published.
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
COMPLETED	<p>- New procedures for recruitment and (career) promotion have been developed and are currently in the phase of implementation. The procedures are competence based (OTM-R) and include gender aspects. Information on the processes is available on both the University's Internet and intranet sites. - A seminar was held in December 2019 on "Gender balanced career paths in academia" run by a senior researcher in political science from the University of Gothenburg. The half-day seminar, attended by about 30 people, was aimed at managers and programme managers. A group discussion followed. - In September 2021, a half-day seminar/training session was held on Competence based Recruitment in Academia (including gender aspects), putting forward new processes for a group discussion among the 25 attendees. This seminar topic was followed up in October 2021 focusing on processes for promotions and the two recently introduced new employment positions. The Vice-Chancellor attended and was involved in the discussions. - These training events will be further developed and continued, see Action 16. - Implementation of process support in recruitment will be followed up, see Action 17. See <a href="https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions.html">https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions.html</a>, <a href="https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/how-to-apply.html">https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/how-to-apply.html</a>, and <a href="https://hh.se/download/18.276c117a17efbde981be5d3f/1645192189014/Guidelines-recruitment-promotion-220218.pdf">https://hh.se/download/18.276c117a17efbde981be5d3f/1645192189014/Guidelines-recruitment-promotion-220218.pdf</a></p>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 2

Gap: 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. Action: Evaluation of the implementation of HH's Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan in the recruitment process will be done 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.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 27. Gender balance	2021/Q3	HR	Evaluation report, and possibly revised action plan.
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Evaluation report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.1e72605f181c637448d75b36/1657021464033/action-2-gender-mainstreaming-action-plan-recruitment-process.docx">https://www.hh.se/download/18.1e72605f181c637448d75b36/1657021464033/action-2-gender-mainstreaming-action-plan-recruitment-process.docx</a> . Please note that the report is in Swedish. The document can be opened and translated in Word. New action plan and a description of how the work is being run can be found at ( <a href="https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/gender-mainstreaming.html">https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/gender-mainstreaming.html</a> ). See also Action 15.		

## Action 3

Gap 28: 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 handled mainly via the annual development dialogues between managers and employees. In addition, an employee and leadership strategy is under development at HH, that aims for mutual support and learning from each other. Gap 30: Some needs for improvements have, however, been recognized in the HRS4R gap-analysis. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) 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.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2020/Q3	HR	i) Information published.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	- New information on Career paths and promotion opportunities can be found at <a href="https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html">https://hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html</a> - More detailed information can be found on the University's intranet, including lists of educational courses, international exchanges, opportunities for gaining merits, other career development courses etc. - In general, some additional material on the intranet needs to be translated into English. It was not deemed necessary to create an additional action since this is an ongoing activity.		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 4

Points 28 and 30 are treated jointly. See text under Action 3. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) intend to improve the support for career development at HH: ii. Monitor the needs for development of additional courses and activities related to career support at HH.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2021/Q2	Chancery, HR	ii) Report and action plan finalized.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae10/1657194276822/action-4-report-monitor-needs-additional-career-support.docx">https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae10/1657194276822/action-4-report-monitor-needs-additional-career-support.docx</a> . Please note that the report is in Swedish. The document can be opened and translated in Word. Next steps – these are described in the report above but are included below for clarity. - A survey will be conducted during 2023-2025 on employees' experience of career support and whether this differs between men and women. (See Action15, new.) - The University will also investigate possible collaborations with other universities regarding career support and competence development activities. (See Action 12, new) - Mentoring for doctoral students and support in applying to associate professorships will be priority issues. (See Action 8) - Introduction for R1 researchers (Doctoral students), Swedish as well as international researchers. (See Action 10, new) Responsibility for each item is stated in the University's operational planning.		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 5

Points 28 and 30 are treated jointly. See text under Action 3. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) intend to improve the support for career development at HH: 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.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2020/Q3	Chancery, HR	Process (tool) ready. Guiding information published and spread.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	<p>Evaluation report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae11/1657194276833/action-5-process-needs-career-support.docx">https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae11/1657194276833/action-5-process-needs-career-support.docx</a>. Please note that the report is in Swedish. The document can be opened and translated in Word. - Every year, each employee has an appraisal meeting with their manager to discuss past achievement and future plans. This meeting has a standardised structure, with specific questions as well as a free discussion. Several of the standardised questions cover career support and development. - The results of these appraisals are channelled back to the heads of the school, who aggregate the results and feed them back to the University management. This process is used as a way to monitor the needs of career support and development.</p>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 6

Points 28 and 30 are treated jointly. See text under Action 3. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) intend to improve the support for career development at HH: iv. Offer specific language training for internationally recruited researchers at HH.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2021/Q2 New timings: 1.	HR	Report and action plan finalized.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice	2022/Q3 2. 2023/Q2		
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	<p>Language training was during the previous period implemented in the school that has the most incoming international co-workers. The action was a extended. The current action plan involved: 1. Move responsibility to HR and open up to the whole University. 2. Investigate interest in group Swedish/English lunches with Swedish people who wish to learn better English and international researchers who wish to learn Swedish. Conclusion - Swedish language instruction has been broadened to encompass the entire university, with HR serving as the coordinating body. Currently, the training is conducted in-house, but depending on demand, other training may be considered, as the previously identified need has been met, and recruitment of new international staff is currently lower due to economic factors. The lunch initiative turned out to be unfeasible for tax reasons. The action is deemed to be concluded. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdd9/1760634583763/action-6-swedish-language-training-for-internationally-recruited-researchers.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdd9/1760634583763/action-6-swedish-language-training-for-internationally-recruited-researchers.pdf</a></p>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 7

Points 28 and 30 are treated jointly. See text under Action 3. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) intend to improve the support for career development at HH: v. Improve reception of international researchers; internal routines for this etc.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2021/Q4 New timing: 2025/Q2	HR	Report on current reception. Suggestions for improved system.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	During the previous period internal routines have been developed by HR including instructions and checklists. These materials are sent to all new incoming international researchers and are also published on HH's website under International Staff Support, <a href="https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/international-staff-support.html">https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/international-staff-support.html</a> . - From 1 April 2022, a relocation company ( <a href="https://nrgab.com/">https://nrgab.com/</a> ), procured by the University of Gothenburg, has been contracted to assist with immigration services. The current action plan involved: Continued development of internal processes and routines regarding international recruitments according to suggestions in the above report. (See also Action 10: Introduction for R1-researchers.) Conclusion - Several concrete improvements have been implemented to strengthen the reception of international researchers. These include enhanced pre-boarding routines, personalized introductions, and structured support programs. The measures have contributed to smoother onboarding. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdda/1760634583792/action-7-report-improve-reception-of-international-researchers.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdda/1760634583792/action-7-report-improve-reception-of-international-researchers.pdf</a>

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 8

Points 28 and 30: are treated jointly. See text under Action 3. Action: Following six actions (see text under Action 3 to Action 8) intend to improve the support for career development at HH: vi. Develop mentoring systems for researchers at different levels at HH. Existing systems at some HH schools will be used as best practices examples.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2021/Q4 New timing: 2025/Q2	HR	Report on existing systems. Suggestions for improved system.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	During the last period we made an internal and external investigation of forms of mentorship. It was decided that all schools should develop mentorship for docent applications, inspired by good practices at LHS and HOV. It was also decided that mentorship for doctoral students should be prioritised. Other than that the schools were expected to find their own ways. Conclusion - Approaches still vary when it comes to support during docent applications—some have structured programs, others rely on informal initiatives. A joint mentorship program for junior researchers, especially postdocs, has been conducted. Mentorship for doctoral students is offered both formally and informally, often coordinated by supervisors or research coordinators. Efforts to introduce mentorship early in the doctoral process have improved the support environment across schools. The action is deemed completed, but mentorship remains part of the broader work in Action 20 on career support for junior researchers. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddb/1760634583817/action-8-report-develop-mentoring-systems-for-researchers-at-different-levels-at-hh.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddb/1760634583817/action-8-report-develop-mentoring-systems-for-researchers-at-different-levels-at-hh.pdf</a>

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 9

ACTION: HH will investigate becoming a Euraxess centre. If investigation is positive, HH will apply to become a Euraxess centre.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	2024/Q1	HR	Report on pros and cons. Decision on establishment of Euraxess centre.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Decision - On December 11, 2024, the steering group decided, based on the presented material, not to proceed with becoming a Euraxess Centre at this time. In a period of prioritization, the benefits are currently not deemed sufficient to justify the effort and resources necessary. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddc/1760634583844/action-9-report-becoming-an-euraxess-centre.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddc/1760634583844/action-9-report-becoming-an-euraxess-centre.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 10

Introduction for R1 researchers (Doctoral students), Swedish as well as international researchers. This is a development of Action 7. GAP: Doctoral students have expressed that their arrival reception can be improved. A new digital introductory programme is available on one of the University's platforms. This covers many administrative details but is not physically welcoming, social or face-to-face, which is missing. ACTIONS: A: Benchmark with other universities to see how they welcome new researchers. Focus will be on establishing relationships and welcoming activities. B: Draw up a suggestion based on best practice and a plan that suits the University, taking into account existing activities. Will be carried out together with the doctoral student association at the University (HRSS) and Destination Halmstad, a local tourist agency. C: Schools produce suggestions regarding introductory programmes, together with doctoral student representatives. D: Review and comparison of the programmes after 2 years with feedback from the Schools and from R1 researchers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 24. Working conditions	Action A: 2023/Q1 Action B: 2023/Q3 Action C: 2023/Q4 Action D: 2025/Q4	HR Chancellery All schools	Action A: 3-5 universities benchmarked. Report with suggestions. Action B: each School describes how they have worked to improve the introduction. Action C: review report with feedback and suggestions for future. Action D: report on comparisons.
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - The University considers that the objectives set out in Action 10 have been achieved. However, the quality evaluation has highlighted a continued need for development regarding both the reception and ongoing support of doctoral students. The needs expressed by doctoral students have resulted in some new activities. As a result, the University is initiating a new action (Action 19) that addresses these areas. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d027952e/1760691242801/action-10-report-introduction-for-r1-researchers.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d027952e/1760691242801/action-10-report-introduction-for-r1-researchers.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 11

GAP: It is difficult for international postdocs to gain the teaching experience that is needed to meet the assessment criteria for a position as a senior lecturer as stated in The Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 4 §4): "The assessment criteria for appointment as a senior lecturer shall be the degree of the expertise required as a qualification for employment. As much attention shall be given to the assessment of teaching expertise as to the assessment of other qualifying criteria laid down in the first paragraph...." ACTIONS: A. Assess the current degree of involvement of international postdocs in teaching/supervision of undergraduate/Masters courses. B. Assess the opportunities for postdocs to teach/supervise undergraduate and Masters courses/projects in English. Assess what new courses could be held in English. This should include a timeplan for introducing courses. Present results for decision.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development			
(++) 33. Teaching	Action A: 2024/Q2	All heads of schools.	Action A: Assessment report available. Action B: Assessment report and timeplan available. Decision made.
(++) 37. Supervision and managerial duties	Action B: 2025/Q2		
(++) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - Mainly due to the increased number of courses offered in English, the gap is not considered a problem anymore. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddd/1760634583865/action-11-education-experience-post-docs.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddd/1760634583865/action-11-education-experience-post-docs.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 12

GAP: Small and medium sized universities do not have the resources to provide significant activities in the area of career advisory activities and competence development. ACTIONS: Investigate the possibility of collaboration with other regional small and medium sized universities in the area of career advisory activities and competence development. By collaboration with other local actors, a more extensive pallet of activities can be offered. A. What sort of activities could be run? How frequently? Funding? Logistics? B. After such discussions, if it is deemed to be a good concept to pursue, a report should be drawn up by all the participating universities suggesting activities that can be offered. This report needs to be accepted by the managements of all the participating universities. C. Organisation of activities. D. Follow-up and evaluation.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development			
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice	Action A: 2024/Q1	HR Chancellery	Action A: discussion(s) with 3-5 local small universities. Action B: if there is interest, report available on what each university can offer. Action C: start organising events. Action D: report on follow-up of event. Decision on future events.
(++) 38. Continuing Professional Development	Action B: 2024/Q3 Action C: 2025/Q1 Action D: 2027/Q1		
(++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - The experience of carrying out this type of initiative through joint efforts has been very positive. Some initiatives have proven more successful than others, and one has yet to begin, but it is clear that the strategy itself is a success factor that should continue. However, the University has chosen to close action 12 and include the perspective of exchange of ideas and possible cooperation with other Universities in the new activities related to competence development and career support (Actions 20 & 22). Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdde/1760634583880/action-12-report-collaboration-in-the-area-of-career-advisory-and-competence-development.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bdde/1760634583880/action-12-report-collaboration-in-the-area-of-career-advisory-and-competence-development.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 13

GAP: Industry-financed R1 researchers are not employed by the University, they remain employed by their industrial employer and work at both sites. Since they are not employed by the University, a number of questions regarding conditions, responsibility for working environment, insurance etc. need to be clarified. ACTIONS: Review employment routines and conditions for industry-financed doctoral students with the aim of avoiding situations of uncertainty that may arise. A. Clarify responsibilities from both sides, for instance with respect to responsibilities for working environment. B. Produce checklist to use to ensure that external financiers are financially solid and have the prerequisites to employ a doctoral student for the whole of the study period. Includes both national and international financiers. C. Ensure that industry-financed R1 researchers are aware of the terms of the contracts and other university-related conditions and responsibilities.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 3. Professional responsibility			
(++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations	Action A: 2023/Q2 Action B: 2023/Q1 Action C: 2024/Q1	Chancellery (Legal Unit)	Action A: responsibilities clarified and documented. Action B: checklist available. Action C: information programme available and rolled out.
(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
(++) 23. Research environment			
(++) 24. Working conditions			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion -The agreement clarifies matters that were previously unclear. The checklist helps to ensure that financing for the doctoral student in question is solid. The industry-financed doctoral students are involved in reviewing the agreement. Information for this target group is published on the website. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddf/1760634583902/action-13-report-Industry-financed-doctoral-students.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bddf/1760634583902/action-13-report-Industry-financed-doctoral-students.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 14

GAP: There is still a general lack of knowledge among researchers regarding GDPR, data storage, ethical regulations, IPR and the significance of the impact of non-compliance with research contracts. ACTION: Develop a programme of further training (in whatever form is the most effective) for researchers regarding the application of GDPR, data storage, ethical regulations, IPR and contract law in research projects. This should cover R1-R4 researchers who also need to understand the consequences of non-compliance. Programmes may need to be adapted to the prerequisites of each School at the University.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 2. Ethical principles			
(++) 3. Professional responsibility			Action A: best way to provide such knowledge determined. There may be several methods. Action B: new materials drawn up (if required).
(++) 4. Professional attitude	Action A: 2023/Q2 Action B: 2023/Q4 Action C: 2024/Q2 Action D: 2026/Q4	Chancellery (Grants & Innovation Office)	Action C: information campaign regarding new training available.
(++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations			Action D: At least 80% of researchers trained by final date.
(++) 6. Accountability			
(++) 7. Good practice in research			
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	Conclusion - The university has implemented effective digital systems and routines for GDPR, risk management, cybersecurity, data management, and IPR, enhancing transparency and security. Strengths include systematic processes, supportive guides, and centralized platforms. The next step is to reach out to researchers with information and find forms for training. The action is extended, since an insufficient number of researchers has been reached. We envisage that the action will be completed by December 2027. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde0/1760634583934/action-14-report-knowledge-ipr-gdpr.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde0/1760634583934/action-14-report-knowledge-ipr-gdpr.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 15

There is a continued necessity to analyse and work with gender equality in recruitment and career progression. ACTIONS: A. The University will conduct a university-wide survey to gain knowledge about how women and men experience their opportunities to make a career and to develop in their research and teaching roles. B. A comparison will be made from a gender perspective with the analysis of the employee survey, specifically the area of balance of work and life. Based on the results, a risk assessment and analysis of any measures will be made. C. The schools will work with specific goals for increased gender equality based on each school's prerequisites. The work will be documented within the framework of the regular quality work and performance management. (This step also maps out what the gender distribution looks like in different positions linked to teaching, research and administration.) These actions are all part of the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan 2022-2024 at Halmstad University (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/gender-mainstreaming.html>). Action Plan is currently only officially published in Swedish but an English version is available in the following link until official publication during 2022/Q3 (<https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae14/1657194276861/gender-mainstreaming-plan-2022-2024.docx>). Note that this area, objective and action also touches on the area of "Gender balance in leadership and decision-making", which the EU Framework Programme recommends that higher education institutions relate to in their gender equality plan.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 27. Gender balance	Action A: 2023/Q3	Programme manager for gender mainstreaming and HR (A + B). Heads of departments and schools (C).	Action A: Report published. Action B: Report published. Action C: Activities underway. Reported within framework of quality follow-up.
(+/-) 28. Career development	Action B: 2024/Q2		
	Action C: 2024/Q4		
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - Focus groups regarding career possibilities have been carried out. A comparison with the employee survey has been done, statistics regarding gender balance have been analysed. The Schools have worked with local challenges. The measures that have been implemented have added value to the continued work on gender mainstreaming, which is an effort that needs to be ongoing. Gender equality within recruitment and career development will remain a priority. A new action 23 will be started. Action 17 has as requested by the reviewers been incorporated in Action 15 as activity D: "Follow-up of the application and experience of support material for equal opportunities in the recruitment process." This has also been conducted. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde1/1760634583947/action-15-report-gender-equality-in-recruitment-and-career-development.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde1/1760634583947/action-15-report-gender-equality-in-recruitment-and-career-development.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 16

GAP: Further education/training of those involved in recruitment processes has been deemed of continuous importance. ACTION: Create a training structure around the training in recruitment with a basic course and a regular "Catch Up" session for refreshing knowledge. Follow up participation. Target groups: Managers and Recruitment Committee.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 12. Recruitment			
(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)	1. 2023/Q2 2. 2023/Q4 3. 2025/Q2	HR	1. Training structure developed. 2. Courses up and running. 3. Report on participation.
(++) 14. Selection (Code)			
(++) 15. Transparency (Code)			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - A structure for training managers and members of the recruitment committee in the recruitment process has been created and launched, albeit with some delay. The structure will continue to be used, which is ensured, among other things, through an integration with a checklist for onboarding new managers. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde2/1760634584153/action-16-report-recruitment-training-structure.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d021bde2/1760634584153/action-16-report-recruitment-training-structure.pdf</a>		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 17

GAP: There is a risk that the supportive reflection questions concerning gender equality and equal opportunities in the University's competence-based recruitment and assessment process are not applied in practice. ACTION: A follow-up will be carried out of how the supporting reflection questions are applied and experienced in practice. The follow-up will be carried out by a person externally or internally who has expertise in the field of recruitment, gender equality and equal opportunities. The result of the follow-up is then translated into adequate measures, which could, for example, be additional measures to improve the impact and/or a revision of the supporting material. Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan 2022-2024 at Halmstad University (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/gender-mainstreaming.html>). Action Plan is currently only officially published in Swedish but an English version is available in the following link until official publication during 2022/Q3 (<https://www.hh.se/download/18.4b783727181d6ad64811ae14/1657194276861/gender-mainstreaming-plan-2022-2024.docx>).

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 12. Recruitment			
(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
(++) 14. Selection (Code)		Coordinator for Equal Opportunities Programme.	
(++) 15. Transparency (Code)	1. 2023/Q3 2. 2024/Q2	Manager for Gender Mainstreaming.	1. Follow-up report. 2. New measures developed.
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
(+/-) 27. Gender balance			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Action 17 has as requested by the reviewers been incorporated in Action 15 as activity D. Full report can be found under Action 15.		

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 18

OTM-R actions. These are not included in the original Gap Analysis but the University feels that they should be included in the Action Plan. A. Develop advertisements (format, content). - Review and improve content in advertisements. Review and implement improved dissemination of advertisements, including via Euraxess, to attract a wider selection of candidates. - Include more links to useful information in advertisements. B. Better use of digital recruitment systems. - Review all available modules in the Varbi recruitment system to optimise use of the system. C. Streamline review processes. - Review how the review processes work today and identify areas for improvement/optimisation. - Implement identified areas for improvement. - Review results after 2-3 years.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 12. Recruitment			
(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)	A. 2023/Q2 B. 2024/Q4 C. 2023/Q3	HR	A. Improved advert format and dissemination. B. System checked. New templates in use. C. New review routines implemented.
(++) 14. Selection (Code)			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Conclusion - The most extensive part of this action has concerned the handling of experts, and this was also the area prioritized first—with good results. The recruitment system is continuously developing new features. We assess that we are utilizing the functions that suit the needs of the organization. Managers find the possibility of conducting digital reference checks particularly valuable. Regarding the development of job advertisements and advertising, these have been reviewed and adjusted. Further work will be carried out in day-to-day operations in this area. The action is deemed completed. Full report can be found at <a href="https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d0269bad/1760681692799/action-18-report-advertisement-recruitment-system-review-process.pdf">https://www.hh.se/download/18.3b3ea305199ecfc4d0269bad/1760681692799/action-18-report-advertisement-recruitment-system-review-process.pdf</a>		

## Action 19

Continued focus on reception/introduction for doctoral students (R1) (Follow-on from Action 10) Gap: Despite major advances, improvements to the reception process for doctoral students continue to be necessary and are a management priority. The necessary improvements are: A. Develop, agree and implement local routines and structures (in each School), ensuring that they are not person dependent. (Each School) B. Investigate and implement better ways of delivering information, e.g. with the help of a Chatbot. (Chancellery) C. Develop and implement reception activities during joint doctoral student days. (FUU) D. As a result of the above, note any activities that could be used during the introduction of other international staff. This may result in an action in three years' time. (HR)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 12. Recruitment	A. Q4/2026 B. Q3/2028 C. Q4/2026 D. Q4/2027	Schools, Committee for Doctoral Education (FUU), Chancellery, HR	A. Reports from all schools, summary B. Information system tested and implemented C. List of activities - implemented, tested D. Continuously updated list
(++) 24. Working conditions			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 20

Career support for junior researchers (R1-R2) (Follow-on from actions 8; Mentorship and 12; Collaboration in the area of competence development and career support.)  
Gap: Junior researchers require further interventions with regard to career support. A. One school (HOV) has recently carried out a national benchmarking on career services for R2 researchers. Based on the results, determine activities that are relevant for each School. Also consider R1 researchers. (Each school) B. Determine if there are any activities that can be carried out for HH overall and in conjunction with other universities. (Research Support) C. Package and disseminate the new career support interventions throughout the university. (Research Support) D. Implementation, if applicable. Measure uptake. E. Assess and modify as necessary. (Each school, Research Support)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 28. Career development	A. Q2/2026 B. Q4/2026 C. Q2/2027 D. Q4/2027 E. Q4/2028	Each school, Research Support, HR	A. Reports from each school, amalgamated to one report by HR B. Report on activities C. Report on suggested new interventions D. New interventions implemented (courses, webpages etc.). E. Measurements of uptake (webpage visits, numbers attending courses, feedback from focus groups etc.). Modifications as necessary.
(-/+ ) 30. Access to career advice			
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
NEW			

## Action 21

Competence development for R1 and R2 researchers Gap: A need has arisen to establish a university-wide course in Academic Skills aimed at strengthening doctoral students' generic academic competencies. The course is proposed to consist of a number of stand-alone modules in areas such as academic writing and publishing, research communication, research funding, career planning, and project management and time management. A. Determine what courses are available at present. B. Develop courses internally or externally with other universities. C. Run courses, measure uptake. D. Assess and modify as necessary.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 38. Continuing Professional Development	A. Q2/2026 B. Q1/2027 C. Q2/2027 D. Q3/2028	Committee for Doctoral Education (FUU)	A. List of existing courses. B. List of courses ready to implement including content. C. Implementation. At least one full course per academic term. Measure uptake. D. Report after one year.
(++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
NEW			

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 22

Competence development for R3 and R4 researchers Gap: A need has been identified by R3 and R4 researchers for additional competence development. This is linked to merit assessment, where taking responsibility will be highly valued. A. Identify competences (e.g. leading research projects, applying for research funding, etc.) that need to be developed. B. Develop courses internally or externally with other universities (see also Action 21). C. Run courses, measure uptake. D. Assess and modify as necessary.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 38. Continuing Professional Development	A. Q2/2026 B. Q4/2026 C. Q2/2027 D. Q3/2028	Research Support	A. List of competences required. B. List of courses ready to implement including content. C. Implementation. Measurements of uptake D. Report after one year
(++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
NEW			

## Action 23

Gender equality in recruitment and career development (Follow-on from Action 15.)  
Gap: The university's plan for gender mainstreaming needs to be renewed. The work on equal opportunities based on the Discrimination Act needs to be developed, along with smart solutions. A. Based on the report from the internal focus group discussions, the comparison with the results of the employee survey and the mapping of the gender distribution identify a common strategy that will form part of the new Plan for gender mainstreaming. B. In the operational plan, each organizational unit formulates goals and activities based on its conditions and challenges. (Schools) C. Exchange of experience with higher education institutions within the framework of Heroes (EUA, <https://www.heroesuniversity.eu/>) on how they work with gender equality. D. Develop the University's work according to current discrimination legislation.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 12. Recruitment	A. Q3/2026 B. Q4/2026 C. Q2/2027 D. Q4/2029	Gender Mainstreaming Coordinator, Coordinator Equal Opportunities, Schools	A. Plan for gender mainstreaming approved and translated to English B. Actions entered into operational plan C. Steering document approved and published, instructions D. Report on assessment of gender mainstreaming activities
(+/-) 27. Gender balance			
(+/-) 28. Career development			
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
NEW			

## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 24

Merit Assessment Gap: There is a need to review and revise the current merit assessment system in accordance with the upcoming national framework for merit assessment (<https://suhf.se/arbetsgrupper/arbetsgruppen-for-meritbedomningar/>, in Swedish) and based on upcoming recommendations developed through the Swedish CoARA chapter. The work with CoARA will be necessary for initiating the next review with the new European Charter for Researchers. A. Collegial discussions about the meaning of the framework. B. Review of the Appointments Procedure and OTMR guidelines regarding new ideas for merit assessment. C. Update instructions to external experts based on any changes D. Training of the recruitment committee and managers in possible changes. E. Assess and modify as necessary.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
(++) 14. Selection (Code)			
(++) 15. Transparency (Code)	A. Q4/2027 B. Q2/2028 C. Q3/2028 D. Q1/2029 E. Q2/2030	HR	A. Report on discussions with School representatives. Input from at least 6 researchers per School. B. Report on suggested changes to Appointments Procedure and OTMR guidelines. Reported approved and published. C. New instructions approved and published. D. Training complete, at least 80% uptake from relevant people. E. Assessment through discussion. Modification as necessary.
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
(++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)			
(++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			
(++) 29. Value of mobility			

## Current Status Remarks

NEW

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/my/hrs4r/case/18634/task/24205/document-type/internal-review?referrer=24204&print=true>

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## Proposed ACTIONS

## Action 25

Updating to comply with new European Charter for Researchers Gap: The next review will be carried out according to the new Charter for Researchers. Since there is little experience of this in Sweden, we need to find best way to carry out a Gap Analysis etc.). A. Modify texts such as Appointments Procedure to comply with new terminology. B. Modify webpages to comply with new terminology. C. Carry out new Gap Analysis based on the 20-principle structure. D. Modify existing and develop new actions based on the new structure.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	A. Q3/2028 B. Q3/2028 C. Q2/2028 D. Q3/2028	HR	A. Updated version of Appointments Procedure approved and published. B. All relevant webpages identified, updated and published. C. New Gap Analysis with researcher engagement carried out. At least six participants in each researcher level. D. New action plan developed based on 20-principle structure. Approved by Steering Committee.

## Current Status Remarks

NEW

Remarks This might not be regarded as a gap in the true sense of the meaning in this instance, but we believe that creating a special action for this work will ensure that it is systematically carried out, quality checked and implemented. This action applies to all principles.

## Unselected principles:

(++)1. Research freedom (++)8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++)9. Public engagement (++)10. Non discrimination (++)17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)  
 (++)20. Seniority (Code) (++)21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (++)22. Recognition of the profession (++)25. Stability and permanence of employment (++)26. Funding and salaries  
 (++)31. Intellectual Property Rights (++)32. Co-authorship (++)34. Complaints/ appeals (++)35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++)36. Relation with supervisors  
 (++)40. Supervision

The extended version of the reviewed HR Strategy for your organisation for the next 3 years, including the OTM-R policy must be published on your organisation's website. Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's web site, multiple links must be comma separated \*:

## URL \*:

[www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html](http://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html) ([www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html](http://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vacant-positions/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html))

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/my/hrs4r/case/18634/task/24205/document-type/internal-review?referrer=24204&print=true>

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If your organisation has already filled in the OTM-R checklist in the Initial Phase, please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above in the action plan (as emerged from the Gap Analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress.

#### Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Initial Phase)

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 and 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.

#### Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment)

The recruitment processes at HH are under continuous development. Applicants always receive answers at the end of the process. The dialogue with candidates during the recruitment process is now also being improved. This includes informing applicants, filtered out due to insufficient/incorrect qualifications, earlier on in the process. The Varbi e-recruitment tool is now also used for publishing information about the employment decisions taken. Job advertisements have been improved using more links and better use of templates, but can be improved further. Better and more efficient handling of external referees (expert process) is being investigated and we are working hard to ensure a gender balance in expert groups. In general, we are now focusing on optimising the use of the Varbi tool to streamline and improve the recruitment and feedback process.

##### Progress with OTM-R points from the application

OTM-R policy: this is considered to be the University Appointments Procedure (<https://hh.se/download/18.7241feef17f9f4c277fad18f1647865117231/Appointments-procedure-220321.pdf>) (<https://hh.se/download/18.7241feef17f9f4c277fad18f1647865117231/Appointments-procedure-220321.pdf>).

The recruitment goals at the University are to provide the activities with the best possible expertise that is required to perform the assignments in research, education and other activities.

The central concepts that shall permeate the University's recruitment and promotion processes are: openness, transparency, and merit-based assessment, in line with the guidelines of the EU Commission on the recruitment of researchers – "The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers". Any potential conflict of interest must be taken into consideration in each individual case.

The aims of the University's recruitment strategies are to:

- increase the proportion of research-educated teachers
- increase the proportion of teachers with training in teaching and learning in higher education
- promote increased exchanges with other higher education institutions, public authorities, the business community, schools and society at large
- actively recruit members of the under-represented gender
- actively work towards greater diversity and internationalisation

The following points from the OTM-R analysis in the original application were not given a ++ rating:

- Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?  
\*\*\* Yes - see previous sections.

- Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?  
\*\*\* Yes. Regular workshops will be developed for the future.
- Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?  
\*\*\* The assessment criteria in our recruitment process will lead to appointing candidates who can also contribute to a better work environment.
- Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?  
\*\*\* Obviously no process can guarantee this. We can see that for most research positions, there are many qualified applicants.
- Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?  
\*\*\* Yes, this is now done as a part of new routines. Unsuitable candidates detected early on the process are informed earlier. All candidates are now informed regarding the employment decision.
- Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?  
\*\*\* The Recruitment Committee and the HR department regularly review the process according to OTM-R standards. In addition, during 2022/Q3, there will be an external review of the University's recruitment processes.

#### Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Award Renewal)

Beside the University Appointments Procedure mentioned above there are guidelines for recruitment and promotions. (<https://www.hh.se/download/18.276c117a17efbde981be5d3f1760706576124/guidelines-recruitment-promotion-220218.pdf> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html>)) These two documents together form the University's OTMR-policy.

Much of the recent work on OTM-R at HH has been integrated into Action 18. Such work included developing job advertisements (in terms of design and dissemination), reviewing the use of the digital recruitment tool to ensure its full potential was being utilized, and examining the expert review process to identify areas for improvement.

We note that the expression Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment is used in a number of our policy documents without the abbreviation OTM-R. We are taking steps to include the abbreviation. At the same time, we will update documents to suit the new nomenclature in the European Charter for Researchers.

An external audit of the recruitment process indicated that the recruitment process generally functions well, and the expert review processes are relatively short compared to other universities. The outcome provided valuable input regarding the needs of the organization.

- Developing advertisements

A formal procedure has been implemented for publishing all international job advertisements on Euraxess. Introductory texts have been revised to improve clarity for users, ensure consistency, reflect current operations, and align with the university's employer branding. Links are provided that direct users to pages with relevant and supplementary information. Additionally, the HR Excellence in Research logo has been given a designated place in the university's job advertisements.

Following feedback from managers, we have developed new materials, including descriptions of various competences, interview guides, and question templates to support managers in evaluating these aspects during interviews and reference checks.

- Better use of digital recruitment system

A digital reference management service, Refapp, has been integrated into our recruitment system, Grade Varbi. This enables a streamlined and fully digital process for conducting reference checks, thereby improving efficiency and reducing manual workload. This creates a more cohesive and user-friendly workflow for recruiters, candidates, and referees alike. The recruitment system has also been expanded to encompass the management of internal promotions. The recruitment system is being continuously developed with new features that will doubtless be valuable to us.

- Streamline review process

A review of the expert evaluation and review process has been carried out to streamline and ensure the quality of the procedure. Communication with, as well as the information and instructions provided to appointed experts, has been reviewed and revised. Templates for email communication have been developed while a webpage (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/information-for-external-experts.html>) is used for information and instructions for appointed experts.

**Please be aware that your OTM-R policy should be 'embedded' into the institutional HR strategy at the award renewal phase. The extended version of the reviewed HR strategy including the OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.**

#### 4. Implementation process

##### General overview of the implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

The focus during the last three years has remained on conducting development work and addressing the previously identified gaps, some of which are still considered relevant.

The Implementation Group has been led by the Deputy HR Manager in close collaboration with the Research Support function. Ownership of the activities has been shared between the faculties and departments within operational support, primarily the HR Department and the Chancellery that includes Research support. The Coordinator for Equal Opportunities has also played a significant role in the implementation. The Steering Committee has contributed valuable direction and expertise.

Activities have been integrated into the University's regular operations as far as possible, which has helped clarify responsibilities, implementation, and follow-up.

Most of the identified activities have been perceived as meaningful and inspiring to work with, although some have lost relevance over time.

Although the group does not formally report to the Advisory Board for Quality Assurance, the board invites the implementation group twice a year to follow up on the work and its connection to the University's quality processes.

During the initial years, many of the activities in the action plan were carried out without consistently communicating their connection to the HR Excellence in Research initiative. In recent years, efforts have been made to increase awareness of the HR Excellence in Research award and how it benefits individual researchers.

Visibility has also been improved in job advertisements, on the website, intranet, and other communication channels. The logo has been complemented with an explanatory text.

Since the term "HRS4R" has been perceived as difficult for staff to remember, the designation "HR Strategy for Researchers" has been used in communication along with "HR Excellence in Research". This turns out to be in agreement with the new European Charter for Researchers.

The work with HR Excellence in Research has stimulated increased exchange with other higher education institutions, both regarding the initiative itself and in other areas.

The Deputy HR Manager coordinating the work also participates in a national working group on merit assessment and has contributed knowledge about HR Excellence in Research in that context.

How have you prepared for the Internal Review? 500 words

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

**Note:** Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How have you prepared the internal review?\*

##### Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Preparatory work ahead of the review has included the following activities:

- Meeting researchers and other staff in various forums to listen to their views on what works well and what needs to be strengthened. Consulting them on proposals for new activities. (See next heading for details on the forums.)
- Analyzing the outcomes of activities carried out under the current action plan and engaging in dialogue about them. Secured proper documentation of what's been done.
- Drawing on the extensive evaluation work carried out at the University (ARC 24), which has also covered areas central to the University's work with the HR Strategy for Researchers.
- Taking part of the report from the ongoing service design project "Support for Researchers", in which researchers have been interviewed about various needs and wishes related to research.
- Reviewing and analyzing the Doctoral Student Barometer and employee surveys, and discussing these within the framework of the work environment organization.
- Organizing workshops on career support.
- At the management level, aggregating and discussing insights from the annual performance reviews/coworker dialogues.
- Exchanging experiences with other higher education institutions.
- Proposals for activities have been reviewed with all researchers to ensure that the identified needs have been correctly understood.
- An external person was contracted to review the work carried out and the final report, commenting on work carried out and new actions suggested. This person has previous experience of HR Excellence in Research applications and reviews.

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?\*



**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

**Faculty (Schools) engagement:**

Two rounds of visits to all Schools:

- First visit: presented work with HR Strategy for Researchers. Encouraged researchers to get in touch to share ongoing activities or express wishes for what should be done. (Total reach of about 150 researchers.)
- Second visit: presented proposed new actions and ensured correct understanding of needs and priorities. (Total reach of 100 researchers.) Collected input from individual researchers using Poll Everywhere (<https://www.poll Everywhere.com/>).

**Workshops and dialogue:**

- Career support workshop with 50 participants (researchers and coordinators)
- Workshops on gender mainstreaming (about 10 participants)
- Dialogue with Directors of Studies for doctoral education
- Service design project "Support for Researchers" included interviews with ~15 researchers. Focused on identifying needs and expectations related to research support.

**Dialogue with researchers in formal forums:**

- Advisory Board for Quality Assurance (50% researchers)
- Committee for Doctoral Education (research and teaching staff)
- Advisory Council to the Vice-Chancellor (includes heads of schools who are researchers)
- Workshops with all managers (who are also researchers) on career support priorities

**Steering Committee involvement:**

- Includes two active researchers and one doctoral student representative
- Reviewed and approved the final draft of the internal review

**Annual Performance Reviews:**

- Conducted with all employees. Includes career development questions and open feedback
- Feedback is aggregated and forwarded to University management

**Surveys and feedback tools:**

- Doctoral Student Barometer (every other year)
- Employee surveys conducted every two years with varying focus areas

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/my/hrs4r/case/18634/task/24205/document-type/internal-review?referrer=24204&print=true>

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Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?\*



**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

**Implementation Group and Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee has overseen the work carried out by the Implementation Group. The current Steering Committee consists of:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research & Doctoral Education (Chair)
- University Director
- Researcher as well as Department Manager, international experience
- HR Manager
- Doctoral Student representative

The Implementation Group consists of:

- Deputy HR Manager and HR specialist, experienced in international coworkers
- Research Strategist
- Representation from the Communications Department.

Several individuals who have been responsible for activities in the current action plan have also actively participated in the Implementation Group. These include:

- Coordinator for Equal Opportunities
- Coordinator for Gender Mainstreaming
- University Legal Advisor
- Education and Research Officer

In addition, the Analyst working with the University's quality assurance system has played a significant role. Some of these individuals will be formally included in the Implementation Group going forward.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy\* ▼

**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

Organizational policies are listed in the websites below.

Appointments Procedure

<https://www.hh.se/download/18.7241feef17f9f4c277fad18f1647865117231/Appointments-procedure-220321.pdf>  
(<https://www.hh.se/download/18.7241feef17f9f4c277fad18f1647865117231/Appointments-procedure-220321.pdf>)

Guidelines for recruitment and promotion

<https://www.hh.se/download/18.276c117a17efbde981be5d3f1760706576124/guidelines-recruitment-promotion-220218.pdf> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html>)

Vision, goals and strategies

<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/goals.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/vision-goals-and-strategies/goals.html>)

Information about our research:

<https://www.hh.se/english/research/our-research.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/research/our-research.html>)

Text on site for potential applicants

<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us.html> (<https://www.hh.se/english/about-the-university/work-with-us/career-paths-and-promotion-opportunities.html>)

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?\* ▼

**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

Wherever possible, proposed actions are integrated into the University's annual operational planning. These activities are entered into the University's digital planning system, including assigned responsible individuals or groups and timelines for completion. Progress is reviewed twice a year, and any deviations are addressed by University management.

The activities are also followed up by the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board for Quality Assurance. Actions not yet included in the planning system are monitored manually by the Implementation Group and the Steering Committee.

If an activity is deemed irrelevant for any reason, this must be accounted for.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?\* ▼

**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

See section above.

The actions are included in the University's digital planning tool with timings and groups/people responsible. Monitoring and follow-up are therefore part of the University's routine administrative operations.

Furthermore, there is reporting twice a year to the Advisory Board for Quality Assurance and regular reporting to the Steering Committee.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?\* ▼

**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

All actions are formulated in such a way that they can be included in the University's digital planning tool. Reports on progress and any deviations will be submitted regularly to the Steering Committee for information and corrective measures where needed.

Before the next assessment, a comprehensive evaluation will be carried out covering activities and results from the previous three years. See also the following section.

A new gap analysis will be conducted, and future activities will be aligned with the revised Charter and its principles.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?\*



**Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)**

- Engage relevant roles and competences.
- We will ensure that all the necessary documentation is available for the site visit, that all documentation is available in English.
- We will review the webpages and associated documents to ensure they are current and accurate.
- We will make sure that the visit agenda is well planned to ensure that the reviewers can work in the most efficient way.

**Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)**

This evaluation is based on the previous set of principles, which will be incorporated into a new action plan aligned with the revised Charter in the next review.

Due to the recent introduction of the updated principles and the lack of accessible and well-developed supporting materials, the identification of new gaps was postponed. Instead, the focus has remained on previously identified gaps that have been confirmed as relevant and important.