Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

GAP ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLAN 2015-2016

HUMAN RESOURCES
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1 The institution at a glance

The University of Helsinki (UH) was founded in 1640 and currently operates on four campuses in Helsinki and at 9 other locations in Finland. The University of Helsinki is among the leading multidisciplinary research universities in the world and the most versatile institution of scholarship, education and intellectual stimulation in Finland. It has 4,500 researchers and teachers and 36,000 graduate students, also a further 30,000 students participate in adult education. The University's values are critical thinking, creativity and a quest for knowledge and truth. In addition to its 11 faculties, the University includes several independent institutes, some of which are jointly operated with other universities.

The University of Helsinki is a member of more than half of all national and Nordic centres of excellence in research. It is also the only Finnish university to have received an invitation to join the League of European Research Universities (LERU), which is an association of the leading research-intensive universities in Europe.

The Board is the supreme decision-making body of the University of Helsinki. The Board is headed by a chairman and has 13 members. The Rector manages the University's activities assisted by four vice-rectors. The Central Administration, which is headed by the Director of Administration, supports the Rector and Vice-Rectors in their duties. The Chancellor of the University of Helsinki is in charge of promoting the sciences and the university's social interaction, as well as supervising the interests and activities of the university.

2 The HRS4R background

One of the University’s strategic objectives is to be counted among the 50 leading universities in the world. We will do this by directing resources to the development of a world-class research and teaching infrastructure, by ensuring that researchers may increasingly devote time to research, by investing appropriately in spearhead research and new initiatives, by focusing on active and professional recruitment, and by ensuring the high standard and systematic planning of teaching and learning. We also want the high-quality teaching and research conducted at the University to be highly and extensively visible in society, both in Finland and abroad. Our goal is for the University to be known for utilising its research results and learning environment as it recognises and fulfils its role in promoting wellbeing and justice.

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers are in many ways in line with university’s strategic objectives. We aim to be a thriving and inspiring community and an attractive workplace for researchers. Personnel’s wellbeing, training and equal treatment are seen as key factors in doing this. Participating the HRS4R-project is seen as a valuable means to support our strategic goals. University of Helsinki considers pursuing the HR Excellence in Research award to be an important way of expressing our strong intention to engage to this transnational effort to improve the conditions for researchers throughout Europe.

Finnish Counsil of University Rectors’s declaration of Commitment to the Principles of the European Commission’s Recommendation for the Charter and the Code

3 The approach and methodology applied

A project group was set up in late 2012 to be responsible of the practical implementation of the HRS4R-work. The project group consisted of university’s legal counsels (Elina Tuisku, Nora Wetterstrand), university’s equality adviser (Terhi Somerkallio), Head of Personnell Management (Jaana Sirkiä) and HR specilists (Hannamari Hander, Kirsi Korhonen).

The assessment group for teaching and research staff has acted as a steering group for the project. Different academic disciplines are represented in the group. The members of the steering group are: HR Director Kira...
Vice-Rector Anna Mauranen serves as the rector’s deputy. She is responsible for international affairs, community relations, human resources policy, academic quality assurance as well as library and facility matters.

3.1 Main activities

University of Helsinki has conducted several surveys and questionnaires for its teaching and research personnel over the years. We decided to use this material as one part of the internal analysis to identify and assess the arising strengths and weaknesses.

Following practical steps have been taken over 2013-2015 to conduct the internal gap analysis:

1. Existing national legislation and the University’s own guidelines were cross-checked with the principles of the Charter & Code by the project group (early 2013)

2. Project group analysed the material of the following surveys and questionnaires (last part of the year 2013):
   - Workplace wellbeing survey (conducted 2011 ja 2013)
   - Questionnaire on the development needs of researchers (conducted 2011)
   - Questionnaire from the lifecycle of research ventures project (conducted 2013)

3. HRS4R-work was presented and discussed in different committees with researchers’ representatives from different academic disciplines (during 2013-2014). All committees endorsed the HR strategy work.
   - Advisory Committee for Human Resources Policy (members inc. professors, doctoral students, HR and HRD specialists)
   - Steering and Monitoring Group for the Tenure track system (members inc. vice rector, professors, HR director)
   - Equality Committee (members inc. vice rector, professors, postdoctoral researchers, university lecturers)
   - Co-ordinators of doctoral schools

4. In addition, the HRS4R-project has been introduced to the university community in the university’s intranet, where employees are able to comment and present their development ideas concerning the HRS4R-work.

The gap analysis showed that the Finnish legislation as well as the university’s own guidelines, most importantly University’s Strategy and its implementation programs such as HR policy, are well in accordance with the principles of the charter and code. University’s HR policy states, among others, about recruitment, salaries, working hours and research periods, the use of fixed-term contracts, advancement in teaching and research positions and equality and non-discrimination.

The project group observed the C&C requirements in parallel with the university’s strategy to find the strategic objectives that best fit and support the C&C principles. These were:

- The University ranks among the 50 leading Universities in the World
- The University is a responsible social force
- The University is a thriving and inspiring community

Development areas that best support these strategic objectives were chosen based on the Gap Analysis. The greatest potential for improvement was found especially in the support and development of PhD students’ careers. In the questionnaire conducted during the lifecycle of research ventures -project in 2013 (263 respondents, all career stages represented) a significant amount of respondents highlighted the importance of a predictable career
path as well as the stability and permanence of the employment. In the Workplace wellbeing survey 2011, the score for the question “I have the opportunity to move on in my career” was 2.67, maximum score being 5.

Actions which best promote the objectives of the C&C were chosen based on the development areas. Gap analysis and the chosen development areas and actions to be taken were presented to the steering group for commenting.

### 4 Action plan

On the basis of the Gap Analasys, the project group draw up an Action plan summarizing the development areas and actions to be taken. Action plan also details who is responsible for each measure, when it shall take place and the documentation that will form during action. The Action Plan was published in November 2014.

University will provide personnel with various trainings concerning recruitment, researcher's career path, terms of employment, project management and many others. We will look closely into our guidelines, modify and update them to meet up the C&C principles.

SAP HR e-Recruiting tool will be implemented and eventually used in all recruitments. It provides new ways of communicating with the candidates and standardizes the recruitment processes. We have looked through our recruiting processes and guidelines during this process and some functions have or will be made more straightforward. Also new guidelines concerning recruitment will be given and more concrete and concentrated support to the recruiting units will be available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C&amp;C Development area</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Stability and permanence of employment</td>
<td>Improving knowledge about the importance of the quality of personnel planning via training and coaching. Targeted to supervisors and leaders.</td>
<td>Faculties and institutes, Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>As a continuous activity since Q3/2015.</td>
<td>Training schedules and programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Researchers entering the career path are given a realistic picture of the possible career path (expectation management). Information will be included in the trainings organized by doctoral schools.</td>
<td>Faculties and institutes, Doctoral Schools, Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>As a continuous activity since Q3/2015.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On steps 1 and 2 of the career path the appropriate duration of the employment contracts</td>
<td>Faculties and institutes, Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>As a continuous activity since Q3/2015.</td>
<td>Supervisors will be reminded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training material and guidelines
(enabling the finalization of doctoral thesis, sufficient post doc periods) will be communicated to supervisors through training and guidelines.

Improving the recruitment process of senior academics. The instructions of the university will be modified and new guidelines for the recruitment of Assistant Professors and Professors will be implemented.

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<tr>
<th>Process on demand.</th>
<th>Promotion of mobility</th>
<th>Development of support services for mobility. The HR system SAP HR will provide tools to support incoming and outgoing researchers. The tools include reminders, information packages and surveys to researchers to find out their needs for assistance when relocating to Finland.</th>
<th>Human Resources and Legal Affairs</th>
<th>Implementation Q1/2015</th>
<th>Statistics on international mobility</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Updating guidelines and intranet for mobility issues and international recruitment. Including Arrival guide for international staff.</td>
<td>Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>Continuously, last update Q2/2015</td>
<td>Guidelines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>Access to career advice</td>
<td>Implementing the courses of the project ‘PhDs to Business Life’ into the study programs of the doctoral schools. Courses such as Career Coaching, Opportunity Creation and Assessment, Communication and Negotiation Skills, Project Management, Quality Standards, Requirements and Guidelines, Biobusiness Day, Innovate, Protect, Spin it off and Start it up!</td>
<td>Research Sector, doctoral schools, Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>ongoing trainings, starting from Q3/2015</td>
<td>Training schedules and programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering the information on existing trainings which support preparedness for working life. Trainings are organized by different units of</td>
<td>Human Resources and Legal Affairs</td>
<td>Q3-Q4/2015</td>
<td>Description of the existing trainings in the intranet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the university and are targeted to researchers.

| Career development | Further development of Tenure track career path | Updating the guidelines of the Tenure track system. | Human Resources and Legal Affairs | Q3/2015 | Updated guidelines |

The strategic objectives of the University of Helsinki that best fit the principles of the C&C were picked from UH’s Strategic Plan and are seen in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Strategic Objectives of the University of Helsinki</th>
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<td>C&amp;C</td>
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</table>
| Recruitment | -Professional recruitment process  
 | -Proactive recruitment |  |
| Transparency | -Professional recruitment process (communication on recruitment) |  |
| Stability and permanence of employment | -Proactive recruitment |  |
| Career development | -Further development of Tenure track | -Development of Career Advice and strengthening preparedness for working life (PhDs to Business Life) |  |
| Value of mobility | -Encouraging mobility, valuing mobility |  |
| Access to career advice | -Development of Career Advice and strengthening preparedness for working life (PhDs to Business Life) |  |
5 Follow up

According to the HRS4R process, the University of Helsinki conducts a self-assessment of the realization of the Action Plan every second year after the plan has been approved. Action Plan will be revised and kept updated in the intranet. An external evaluation will be conducted every four years.

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