

Implementation Phase Interim Assessment - EC Consensus Report

Case number: 2018ES340886

Name Organisation under assessment: UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS (URJC)

Submission date of the Interim Assessment Internal Review: 07/09/2022

Submission date: 28/11/2022

Quality assessment

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

If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:

YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?	

YES / NO / PARTLY**Recommendations**

Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers?

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Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions' current status, additions and/or modifications?

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YES / NO / PARTLY Recommendations

Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation's management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation?

Has the organisation developed an OTM-R policy?

Strengths and weaknesses

On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the organisation's national research context, how would you as an assessor judge the HR Strategy's **strengths and weaknesses?** (maximum 1000 words)

Looking carefully at all documents provided in the application and those published on the organization's website, the following strengths and weaknesses were identified.

Strengths :

- A strong commitment towards HR Strategy and AP implementation: the top management supports this endeavor; 13 WGs have been appointed to implement 18 actions therefore, it can be seen as a solid guarantee of AP implementation. The implication of R1-R4 researchers in the WGs ensures a greater engagement, and the researchers' needs are considered and addressed appropriately.
- The researchers' voice is heard: surveys were conducted on various HR-related issues, communication was seen as a priority, specific action was included in the AP, training needs were collected, and good research practices were disseminated. Investing time and resources in better communication on the HRS4R award, HR Strategy, and AP is a good approach. Effective communication will help researchers to understand and to identify the benefits of the HRS4R award.
- an interesting approach is the EURICLEA pilot mentoring program - a good opportunity for researchers to participate, and outside mentors are welcomed too.
- the training is important for the organization, which is reflected in the URJC's Training Plan for Teaching and Research Staff, and the offer of training courses is publicly available on the URJC 's website. Any interested researcher can consult the course list and choose what is closer to their needs.
- the organization has a mechanism to assess the conditions of AP implementation and to react if adjustments are needed due to organizational changes or external circumstances (e.g. Covid 19 pandemic). That is a guarantee that the organization can ensure a strong AP implementation.
- recent changes in the labour law forced the organization to revise some actions and prioritize others and it was possible because the organization demonstrates the capacity to fast reaction and to adapt their strategy and AP implementation to any new circumstances without jeopardizing the process and the expected outcomes
- mentoring is seen as being important therefore the organization designed a mentorship program for R2 researchers - looking to benchmarking it was incorporated the experience of others (such as REBECCA mentoring program from FECYT)
- I appreciate the organization's concern about the communication of HRS4R AP progress and the benefits for researchers' daily lives. AP has an action dedicated to communication and raising awareness. (good idea to organize promotional events on HRS4R on each campus)
- The organization OTM-R policy is published, which increased transparency in recruitment & selection and definitely helps organization to attract talented researchers from abroad, a necessary step in boost internationalization

Weaknesses

- not sure how the corrective measures are taken - perhaps a monitoring system of AP implementation is in place, and any deviations are signalized in time to the decision-making bodies, which can react accordingly.

- quantitative indicators to assess the level of implementation are absent for some actions. It will be beneficial to draft a monitoring system based on quantitative and qualitative indicators and for each of them to establish a minimum level of to be achieved, if not to be able to add corrective measures or attract extra resources.

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

Recommendations:

1. Supervision should constantly be in the organization's attention therefore, training courses for supervisors should be provided and somehow engage supervisors in attending such courses.
2. Work-life balance needs to be considered at all levels (R1-R4) - special action to be included in the next AP
3. Provide support and advice to young researchers in developing their career plans.
4. Disseminate best practices of others in implementing HRS4R
5. Think and act to attract and retain talented researchers nationally and internationally.
6. Consider gender balance statistics in all activities (e.g. selection committees are gender balanced?) Also, consider PhD students representation in different decision-making bodies related to their work)
7. Plan periodic consultations so every researcher's voice is heard (e.g.survey on training needs, working conditions, post-pandemic stress, accommodation with work from home, etc.). Made the results public and address these needs with specific actions and programs to everyone to see the prompt reaction of the institution to researchers' problems.
8. Encourage researchers' participation in communicating science to society; it will be important for the organization's visibility in the community and will increase prestige and market positioning.

During the transition period special conditions apply:

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

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

Recommendations

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

HRS4R embedded**HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed****HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed**

Additional comments *

The URJC demonstrates a strong commitment to the implementation of the C&C principles.

The action plan is relevant to the current context in which the organization operates.

How the entire process is organized reflects the willingness to achieve ambitious goals in HR excellence in research.

Exist good implementation mechanisms which is that guarantee efficiency.

The OTM-R policy ensures transparency in recruitment & selection, and that will attract researchers.

Explanation

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

HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed: The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. **There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**

HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed: The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. **There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**

