

Developing a sustainable and attractive research environment

EURAXESS Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

Revised Action Plan 2017-2020

Endorsed on November 15, 2017



Jari Kuusisto, Rector



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The University of Vaasa HRS4R Action Plan for the strategic period 2017 – 2020:

Making major investments in renewal

We are building a future-proof university and making major investments in renewal. We aim to operate as a clearly profiled, financially efficient, high-quality independent unit. Well-being of our staff and the activities supporting well-being at work (e.g. actions in the HRS4R strategy / the HRM strategy) are essential and will point our development activities in the right direction.

However, we strongly feel that when the new Schools and the new research platforms (led by the newly appointed Deans and Directors) start their operations in January 2018, the HRM strategy and the HRS4R action plan will need to be reconsidered in the light of the new organization. Even though the next step after the internal assessment in University of Vaasa HRS4R process is in fact the external assessment in 2020, **we anticipate the need to revise the action plan already at an earlier stage**. If/when needed, a revised action plan, created in cooperation of the Deans and research staff of the new schools, will be submitted to the Commission one year of following the strategy implementation.

Please find below our revised Action Plan for the strategic period 2017 – 2020.

Title action	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HRM action plan theme: Management and leadership			
<i>Clear roles and responsibilities for managers</i>	Q1- Q2 / 2018	Management Group supported by all services, The training programme will be coordinated by the HR Services	Regular and systematic manager training and induction (in part compulsory)
<i>Development of the management system</i>	Q1- Q2 / 2018	Management Group supported by all services, The training programme will be coordinated by the HR Services	<p>The roles of the Deans, the Managers, the research platform Directors and others in managerial positions are now more clearly defined in the updated University, which will come into force 1.1.2018 along with the new organisational structure.</p> <p>The roles will be further strengthened by offering regular and systematic manager training, and strengthening the induction of new Managers upon work start. The training will be tailor-made to meet the needs of different managerial positions.</p> <p>Further indicator: Regular work wellbeing survey results: questions in sub-area 4: Managerial work</p>

HRM action plan theme: Culture of co-operation and developing work place climate as well as work well-being			
<p><i>Modern and flexible working arrangements</i></p> <p><i>Increased opportunities for distance work and sabbaticals</i></p>	Q2/2018	The Management Group, The HR Services	<p><i>Revised guidelines and practices for distance work (according to the new legislation on work time). The working time regulations for teaching and research staff are flexible (the annual working time is 1624 hrs and the work is carried out according to the annual work plan).</i></p> <p><i>Concerning distance work: The working location is determined based on the position but as a general rule the location is Vaasa. In order to actively contribute to the research and teaching environment, the selected candidate is expected to spend around three days a week in Vaasa.</i></p>
	Q4/2017 – Q1/2018	The Management Group, the Facility Services	<i>New Campus Strategy, planning phase: remodelling the university facilities: creating modern and flexible study and work environments that support team working and interaction.</i>
	Q3/2018	The Management Group, the Facility Services	<i>The remodelling will start in practice</i>
	Q2/2017	ICT Services	<i>Instead of purchasing IT equipment (computers, mobile devices etc.), a lease agreement will guarantee modern and up-to-date working equipment</i>
<p><i>Setting goals and leading (driving force) cooperation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Enabling and arranging forums for formal and informal experience and knowledge sharing as well as collaboration across organisational borders.</i> 	Q2/2018 – Q4/2020	<p><i>Management Group</i></p> <p><i>Marketing and Communication Services (along with other internal functions)</i></p>	<p><i>Developing cross-functional cooperation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Implementation of the new organization. The new Deans and managers start building up collaboration within and across the Schools.</i> <i>The new intranet Navi is an interactive portal based on wikis, communities and social media features, which also enables it to become a tool for more interactive, real-time communication and information sharing. Implementation of the new communities will continue in 2018.</i>

		<p><i>HR Services (along with other internal functions)</i></p> <p><i>Graduate School, Research Services</i></p> <p><i>Education Services</i></p> <p><i>Management Group, Deans, Council of Research and Education</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Personnel Trainings and workshops</i> <p><i>Forums dedicated specifically for development of teaching and research:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research related intranet Navi communities e.g.: EU-funding, Researchers, Doctoral students.</i> • <i>Investments to the development of digital competence in teaching: Edulab, Education Services supported by the recently Digital learning coach</i> • <i>Starting in 2018, the University's Council of Research and Education, will streamline the processes and facilitate information flow between Schools and services</i> <p><i>Further indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regular work wellbeing survey questions results from sub-area 1: sense of community and cooperation in the work environment</i>
	<i>Q1/2018 – continuous arrangement</i>	<i>Well-being at work group, HR Services</i>	<p><i>Informal forums for collaboration and sense of community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The university will support its personnel's spare-time clubs financially. The first round of applications was organised in Q3/2017, and the clubs will start their activities in 2018. In the future, there will be an annual application time for the financial support.</i> • <i>Different types of get-togethers: Christmas parties, Friend day celebrations, summer picnics, annual well-being week</i> • <i>Activities organized by the University's well-being at work group</i>
<p><i>Setting goals and leading (driving force) cooperation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Platforms and opportunities for multidisciplinary research</i> 	<i>Q1/2018 – Q4/2018</i>	<i>The Directors of the research platforms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introducing the new Research Platforms, where cross-disciplinary, challenge and phenomena driven research is conducted.</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creating interaction across academic disciplines within their research programmes.</i> • <i>Create collaboration with industry and research partners, thus being drivers of renewal and societal impact.</i>
Organising work wellbeing campaigns	<p>Q4/2018, Q4/2019, Q4/2020</p> <p>Q1/2018 – on-going</p>	<p>Education Services, HR Services</p> <p>HR Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organising the annual work wellbeing week (in cooperation with the students)</i> • <i>Comprehensive occupational health care and trainings, workshops and campaigns organized in cooperation with the occupational health care provider</i> • <i>Continuous investments in work wellbeing in the shape of personnel trainings, e.g. change management, mindfulness, time management, physical and mental wellbeing</i> <p><i>Indicator: Regular work wellbeing survey questions results from sub-area 3: working conditions</i></p> <p><i>Indicator: Työoptimi surveys, that are conducted in specific departments / units / buildings. The survey results indicate the well-being of staff. Based on the findings, the university management, the HR Services and the Occupational Health Care provider seek to find solutions and support measures to eliminate and prevent stress factors.</i></p>
Development of internal communication throughout the organisation and continuing a collaborative way-of-working	Q1/2018 – on-going	All services, led by the Marketing and Communication Services	<p><i>Development work of the new intranet continues. Use of the intranet among the research staff needs to be monitored.</i></p> <p><i>Implementation of the new organization. The newly appointed Deans and managers start building up collaboration within and across the Schools.</i></p> <p><i>Indicator: Regular work wellbeing survey questions results from sub-area 1: sense of community and cooperation in the work environment</i></p>
<p>Language Policy: promoting equal opportunities throughout the operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel language courses</i> 	Q2/2018	University Management Group	<p><i>Confirming the Language Policy Guidelines and putting the policy into action.</i></p> <p><i>As the university is internationalising</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offering translation and proof-reading services • clarifying daily language-use requirements 		<p>Management Group,</p> <p>HR Services Language Center</p>	<p>increasingly (e.g. implementing the Tenure Track), the Management Group will start using English as the working language.</p> <p>A closer cooperation in organising personnel language courses between the HR training team and the Language Center: planning, regular need-assessments and follow-up on the course results</p>
Skills development and career management			
Implementation of Tenure track career opportunities	Q1/2018 – on-going	Rector, The University's Appointment Committee, Deans (supported by the Faculty and HR Services)	Monitoring and evaluating the tenure track recruitments and the process. The first Tenure Track positions were opened Q4/2017. Further recruitments in 2018. The process has been agreed in university guidelines and defines the timelines and practices for evaluation and monitoring.
Strengthening career guidance and increasing competence development opportunities for researchers	Q1/2018 - Q4/2018	Deans, Managers	<p>Starting 1.1.2018 in the new university structure, the Schools are led by the Deans. Each of the professors will also be a manager to her/his research group. As defined in the University's rule of procedure:</p> <p>[...] The manager is responsible for the personnel and the personnel's occupational well-being. The manager is responsible for determining his/her subordinates' job descriptions, setting personal targets, monitoring performance and progress against targets, and developing competences.</p> <p>This includes continuously discussing career development options with the Doctoral students, not only within the university but also outside the university. Also inter-sectoral mobility (academia – enterprises) will be made possible.</p>
		Graduate School	Development of a digital study package to support working-life relevance
Developing the digital and pedagogical competences of teachers and other personnel	Q3/2018 – Q4/2018	Management Group supported by the Educational Services and the HR Services	A further specification of what teaching / pedagogical skills are required in the different career stages
Supporting supervision of doctoral students incl study progress follow-up.	Q2/2018	Council of Research and Education, Deans, Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring following the university level guidelines in all operations concerning supervision of Doctoral students.

	Q3/2018	Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting a two-supervisor model in all Schools. Coaching and support for supervisors A tool for discussions between the supervisor and the Doctoral student concerning career development and career management will be created (also a part of the national TOHTOS project). Creating the electronic personal study plan
Developing researchers' expertise in international and intersectoral environments	Q3/2018	Board, Management Group (budgeting) Deans, Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing for international mobility will be directly channelled into the Schools. Further focus on inter-sectoral mobility (academia – enterprises) as a way of developing researchers competences, developed through the research platforms
Performance managements, rewarding and benefits			
Expanding university level performance rewarding schemes: Developing a flexible reward system that also enables individual managers to recognise excellent employee performance	Q3/2018	HR Services (in cooperation with the Schools and the reward committee)	Developing a flexible reward system that the managers can use to recognise and reward excellent employee performance (monetary and non-monetary)
Developing a reward system that also recognises other areas of excellence such as teaching and societal interaction	Q1/2018	<p>The Board, The Rector, The Management Group</p> <p>The Board, The Rector</p> <p>The Rector The Management Group The HR Services</p>	<p>Adopting additional merit based payments for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions supporting the strategic renewal of the university Rewards for societal interaction <p>Continuing rewards for publications of a high classification</p> <p>The University will also continue with the annual Teaching accomplishment of the year and the Research accomplishment of the year –awards.</p> <p>Annual assessment of the reward system and further development</p> <p>As a token of appreciation for promoting equality and diversity at the university, an award will be given annually to a nominated person or a group / project that has contributed significantly to the cause. Planning of the rewarding process will start in 2018, the first nomination in 2019.</p>

Personnel planning, recruitment and induction			
<i>Developing a recruitment process with particular attention to international recruitment and required support services (such as relocation services, dual careers)</i>	<i>Q2/2018</i>	<i>Management Group HR Services in cooperation with the Deans of the Schools</i>	<i>Strengthening further the support services for international incoming researchers (e.g. relocation services, networking events, dual career services).</i>
<i>Focusing on further strengthening the employer brand</i>	<i>Q2/2018</i>	<i>HR Services, Marketing and Communication Services in cooperation with School representatives</i>	<i>Continuing the employer branding work by further promoting the research and teaching careers and the working environment, including the OTM-R Policy.</i>
<i>Digitalisation of the induction process:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Module for occupational safety</i> • <i>Module for incoming foreign staff members</i> • <i>Module for ICT security</i> 	<i>Q1/2018 – Q3/2018</i>	<i>Work Safety Committee HR Services</i>	<i>The Induction Modules will be gradually digitalised.</i> <i>The first modules to be digitalised are the Induction Module for incoming foreign staff members and the Module for work safety and the Module for ICT Security.</i>
<i>Clarifying doctoral students' status (student, employee, scholarship) and its implications</i>	<i>Q2/2018</i>	<i>The Education Services, The HR Services, The Research Services led by the Faculty services and HR Services</i>	<i>A working group is to be established for clarifying the status of scholarship researchers</i>

