

University of Groningen

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Weblink to published version of organization's HR Strategy and Action Plan:

<http://www.rug.nl/about-us/where-do-we-stand/quality-works/room-for-talent/?lang=en>

Weblink to organizational recruitment policy (OTM-R principles):⁴⁵ Not yet available on the public website.

Weblink to information for prospective staff

<http://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/>

SUBMISSION DATE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION: 2017 OCTOBER

1. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

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

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
<i>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research</i>	3,948
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	1,597
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	1,044 ¹
<i>Of whom are women</i>	1,287
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4² = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	635 ³
<i>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</i>	1,493
<i>Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</i>	1,821
<i>Total number of students (if relevant)</i>	28,756

¹ Estimate. Refers to research FTE only (all our academic staff have both teaching and research duties). Refers to academic staff only (not to support staff).

² http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf

³ Stages R3 and R4 include associate professors and full professors.

<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	2,315 ⁴ + 3,948 ⁵ = 6,263
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	€661,131k
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, used for teaching, research, infrastructure, etc.)</i>	€364,729k
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	€93,118k
<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	See above
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)	
<p>The University of Groningen (UG) is a research university with a global outlook, deeply rooted in Groningen, City of Talent. Quality has had top priority for four hundred years, and with success: the UG is currently in or around the top 100 on several influential ranking lists. The UG provides integrated top-level teaching and research in a wide range of disciplines. Nurturing talent is one of our priorities, enabling the UG to bridge the gap between science and society. We are committed to actively collaborating with our social partners, with a special focus on the research themes Healthy Ageing, Energy and Sustainable Society. The University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG) is closely connected to the University of Groningen, but has applied on its own account for the HR Excellence in Research award.</p>	

2. NARRATIVE (MAX. 2 PAGES)

Brief summary

Over the past two years, the University of Groningen (UG) has worked hard to implement its HR Excellence in Research action plan. We have been able to complete a number of actions, making sure the improvements they targeted have been permanently embedded in the policies of both the faculties and the central departments. A large number of actions are still ongoing, requiring our sustained or renewed attention. A small number of actions still need to be addressed, or need to be reconsidered in the light of recent developments within the UG.

Recent developments

The past two years have brought major policy and organizational changes within the UG. In addition to plans to open a branch campus in the Chinese city of Yantai, major efforts have been directed at

⁴ Administrative/support staff

⁵ Academic staff

drawing up the University's new [Strategic Plan 2015-2020](#). As part of a new governance vision, faculties were given the mandate to adjust UG strategies and policies to their specific disciplines and situations, with a sound management information system and a Plan-Do-Check-Act control cycle at all levels to assess and ensure effectiveness of the faculties' strategies and to monitor outcomes. At the core of the new governance model are the faculties' strategic plans, covering research, teaching, societal impact and HR policies.

We believe that the faculties' increased responsibilities for HR policy, accompanied by an effective support and monitoring structure at the central UG level, will be and has already been successful with respect to many of the aims of our HR Excellence in Research action plan. One example is better awareness at all levels of the importance of recruitment as a vital tool in our talent development strategy. Another example is the increase in support activities directed at postdocs, where initiatives by the Faculty of Science and Engineering are being shared with other faculties. We expect faculties to further develop and strengthen their HR strategies within the context of the UG [talent development programme](#), led by the Dean of Talent Development, Prof. Ritsert Jansen, as from 2018 onwards faculties will develop their own talent development strategies supported by the central UG talent development team. Moreover, new impulses will come from the UG HR strategic agenda 2017-2020, entitled 'Every talent counts'.

The past two years have seen a number of new policy initiatives that directly or indirectly support the goals of HR Excellence in Research. Among them, the foundation of a [Young Academy of Groningen](#), a career development tool for the UG early career researchers, deserves mention, as does the 'vlootschouw' (general review), a newly introduced annual meeting between the UG Rector Magnificus and each dean to discuss each faculty's staff in the light of talent for research, teaching, management and societal impact, which will ensure all talent is identified and supported.

Another recent major development is the nationwide pilot experiment with a new form of PhD candidate, the 'Programma Promotieonderwijs' (PhD Scholarship Programme). Introduced in September 2016, the UG is one of the few in the Netherlands participating in the experiment. The novel nature of the experiment and the uncharted territory of the new student status for PhD scholarship candidates (contrasting with the employment status of our regular PhD candidates) has been taking up a lot of the time and energy of the UG employees concerned with PhD training. The requirements of the experiment have contributed to the implementation of significant improvements in our career development policies for PhD candidates (the [Career Perspectives Series](#)). While these improvements are currently directed at PhD scholarship students, the explicit aim is to make them available to all PhD candidates in the near future.

Results in the four areas

Against this background, below is a brief summary of the results thus far in the four areas identified in our HR Excellence in Research action plan:

1. Recruitment

Major progress has been achieved in this area. Nearly all faculties have held pilot projects using the methodology of strategic staff plans, with evaluation rounds and noticeable effects in terms of the creation of awareness of the benefits of a strategic approach rather than ad-hoc recruitment. Significant improvements have also been achieved in the area of international recruitment, among other actions through the drafting of a recruitment guide for the [Rosalind Franklin Fellowship Programme](#) and a checklist for the onboarding of new international staff. Changes have also been made to improve the introduction programme and the provision of information for new staff. In terms of PhD recruitment, best practices have been shared among the faculties' Graduate Schools.

Another improvement concerns the development of the former partner support programme, primarily directed at the social integration of international researchers' partners, into a fully fledged dual career support programme with additional financial backing and a focus on the partners' career perspectives.

2. Evaluation and appraisal (principles from the sections 'working conditions' and 'social security')

We closely monitor the percentage of annual Results and Development (R&D) interviews⁶ held in each unit, and will continue to monitor developments as this has proven necessary to maintain the high percentage of interviews held. With respect to the R&D interviews with PhD candidates, a new form was introduced in 2015 after consultation with the Graduate Schools, supervisors and the candidates themselves, and it appears to be appreciated by all for its enhanced clarity and structure. Career development is an explicit focus of the form, as is skills development. Finally, efforts have been directed at making both employees and supervisors aware of the importance of discussing career development during R&D interviews. This aspect has been included in the training programme on R&D interviews for both employees and supervisors. HR advisors will also continue to monitor the levels of attention to career development during interviews.

3. Career development and training

With a large number of actions in this area, some are showing more progress than others. Most progress has been made in relation to career planning for PhD candidates and postdocs (as explained above), and with moving the gender balance issue even higher up the UG agenda. Gender balance has been defined as one of the central themes of the UG strategic plan (see above) and the HR Agenda 2017-2020. A Gender Equality Plan containing measures to further improve gender balance has been completed, approved by the Board of the University and is currently being implemented. First results include the appointment of two Chief Diversity Officers in 2016, the establishment of a training course on inclusive leadership for those in management functions and a training course for HR advisors on unconscious bias. Gender is also part of all PhD training.

⁶ Annual meetings between an employee and his/her supervisor to discuss progress.

Some progress has been made in improving the accessibility of the HR training programme through the creation of a searchable database called 'Corporate Academy', which is currently being developed; and in early 2018, a thorough screening of the HR training programme offer is planned to identify overlap and areas of room for improvement to ensure the training programme offer is in line with external requirements and the wishes of our staff.

Other actions in this area still need to be tackled (see below).

4. Infrastructure – communication and support (principles from 'professional and ethical aspects' section)

In a large and complex organization such as the UG, communication regarding infrastructure and support facilities will always be a challenge. The Communication Department has consulted stakeholders to improve the information and the accessibility of information on the UG website. Currently, the University Services Department, is joining forces with the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG) and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences for patents and other forms of economic exploitation of research results, having recently formed the organization 'Northern Knowledge'. With the introduction of a Financial Shared Services Centre, a start has been made in pooling the UG financial services in one central and accessible unit. Through the [Research Data Office](#), among other initiatives, the UG has significantly improved its support structures for researchers regarding the legal, technical and other aspects of research data management. Finally, the UG has launched a Language and Culture Policy to enhance the language proficiency (Dutch and English) of students and staff members and to improve intercultural competences, skills we consider crucial for both researchers and support staff in an international research university such as ours.

Looking forward

Although the UG is happy with the progress made so far in implementing the Charter and Code, there is room for further improvement regarding the gaps and goals which were published in the initial application for the HR award for Excellence in Research (2015). Section 5 contains the revised action plan for the next three years. In addition to this revised action plan, we refer to the HR strategic agenda 2017-2020. This strategic HR agenda describes the goals of the UG HR policies within the framework of an inclusive policy for academics and support staff. Talent development, diversity and social inclusion are its main themes.

3. ACTIONS

This section provides an overview of the current status of the actions and an indication of progress. **N.B. Where an action is given the status ‘completed’, we ensured the improvements it targeted have been permanently embedded in the policies of both the faculties and the central departments. Therefore, although the action in question is complete, the newly introduced processes will continue to be implemented (in this sense all completed actions are also ‘ongoing practice’ and will be monitored).**

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
Recruitment				
1. Improve implementation aspects of recruitment and selection procedures: schedule, documents in two languages, staff in ambassador role, emphasize two-way nature of the process.	HR	Q2-17	Meetings to share best practices in recruitment of international staff for HR staff; checklists for recruitment and onboarding; continuous improvement of procedures. For new goals regarding recruitment, see Section 5.	In progress.
		Q2-16	Partner Support reconfigured as Dual Career Support; positive evaluation outcomes; continuation of additional financial resources secured for the next four years. Attractiveness of the UG as a great place to work has been enhanced.	Completed.
3. Draw up a strategic staff plan for each faculty.	FB	Q2-16 Q2-17	A training programme for strategic staff planning methods, supported by a professional external advisor was implemented; nearly all	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
4. Include expectations/obligations for researchers in the introductory programme for new staff.			<p>faculties joined the programme.</p> <p>Faculties will now implement and use the techniques they learned during the programme according to their needs.</p>	
		Q2-17	The Faculty Boards have chosen different solutions to reach this goal, such as code of conduct, onboarding programme, discussion with group leader/manager.	Completed.
5. Specifically for PhD candidates: add an assessment or introduction period.	GS	Q2-17	Graduate Schools have shared best practices about assessments; recruitment internships have been introduced (remaining financial issues regarding payments are currently being resolved). Graduate Schools apply these measures wherever possible.	In progress.
Evaluation/appraisal				
6. Implement the recommendations from the evaluation of Result & Development (R&D) interviews (September 2014).	HR	Q2-16	The percentage of interviews is being monitored (4 times a year); a digital support system was implemented (to archive interview reports); optional training for staff and managers on conversation skills and formulation of goals.	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
<p>7. Improve aspects of tenure track implementation: composition and training of promotion committees, communication about time required for procedures, information on how appraisal decisions are reached.</p>		Q2-17	<p>Evaluation report finished in 2015; resulted in new UG policy document (in addition to the specific faculty policy documents relating to the tenure track programme) to improve transparency of procedures; policy document approved by the Board of the University in May 2017. See http://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/that-is-why/career-opportunities/tenuretrackpolicy memorandum2017.pdf</p> <p>For new goals regarding the tenure track programme, see Section 5.</p>	Completed.
<p>8. Improve aspects of PhD programme implementation: independent person present at Go/No-Go interview; ensure that expectations for research, teaching and career development are clearly set out in the annual R&D report.</p>	GS	Q2-17	<p>All aspects have been implemented by the Graduate Schools. A new form for the annual interviews was introduced in 2015. The form deals with all important issues.</p>	Completed.
<p>Career development</p>				

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
9. Continue to cover career development in R&D interviews and train managers in career development. ⁷	HR	Q2-17	Career development is a standard subject in the annual R&D interviews for all staff members. It is also part of advanced leadership training programmes.	Completed.
10. Set up a UG-wide system of differentiated career paths for academic staff. For each faculty, analyse the problems relating to career development for academic staff and develop specific strategies to deal with the problems.		Q2-19	See Section 5.	Still needs to be addressed.
11. Review the criteria for mobility experience, in terms of its relevance to academic positions (i.e. not only time spent abroad).		Q2-16 Q2-17	Action had to be postponed due to other urgent matters.	Still needs to be addressed.
12. In the context of gender balance, further investigate obstacles in the career step from Assistant Professor (UD) to Associate Professor (UHD) or Tenure		Q2-16	The obstacles have been addressed in a report. In 2016, a policy document, the 'UG Gender Equality Plan', was approved by the Board of the University. The document describes several measures: dashboards for monitoring at faculty level, appointment of	Completed.

⁷ Also one of the recommendations from the September 2014 evaluation of R&D interviews.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
Track Professor.			two Chief Diversity Officers, training on inclusive leadership and unconscious bias. Needs full implementation in the faculties. For new goals regarding gender balance, see Section 5.	
13. To improve the gender balance: look into how promotion criteria can be applied to academic staff with young children, without impeding their career progress.		Q2-17	See Action 7. The evaluation of our tenure track policies led to general agreement that promotion criteria should be uniformly applied to all tenure track academics. With an eye to work-life balance, the option of working part-time was introduced, as well as the possibility of extending the time for fulfilling the promotion criteria.	Completed.
14. Update postdoc policy (rules).		Q2-17	A report by the Association of the Dutch Universities (VSNU) addresses the issue of postdoc positions. A nationwide working group has recently been established to formulate a common framework for postdoc positions in the Netherlands.	In progress.
15. Mobility: in terms of creating mobility opportunities, efforts are being made to introduce teaching-free periods for staff, as well as incentives	FB	Q2-19	Information about opportunities and financial resources is provided by the International Relations Department. Faculties have their own practices to stimulate staff mobility. An indicator to monitor the	In progress.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
for gaining short periods of mobility experience.			progress of staff mobility is not yet available.	
16. In terms of implementation, ensure that the expectations of postdocs and the process after the postdoc period are discussed during the appointment procedure.		Q2-16	The Faculty of Science and Engineering has recently launched a new postdoc policy with 2 major components: a postdoc council and a postdoc community, and a programme for the professional and personal career development of postdocs. The other faculties will develop customized policies for postdocs/researchers with temporary appointments.	In progress.
17. Introduce a Postdoc Career Initiative that actively prepares postdocs for their future careers through courses and mentoring.	DTD	Q2-16 Q2-17	We have chosen to address this issue through two actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - career development training - the opportunity to visit employers outside academia (career networking) 	Completed.
18. Implement development for PhD candidates in years 1 to 4, based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. ⁸	GS	Q2-17	A Career Perspectives Series has been developed to enhance the professional development of PhD candidates. The items for year 1 (i.e. for first-year PhD candidates) were implemented in 2016/2017.	In progress.

⁸<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework>

Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities: The knowledge, intellectual abilities and techniques to do research

Domain B: Personal effectiveness: The personal qualities and approach to be an effective researcher

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
19. Engage mentors from the business world/professional field to assist in career preparation for PhD candidates.			<p>Items for years 2-4 will be implemented over the coming years. The items for year 2 will be operational in 2017/2018.</p> <p>Indicators: good evaluations by workshop participants; PhD survey</p>	
		Q2-17	<p>Professionals from businesses and other fields have been invited to lead workshops and give presentations to PhD candidates.</p> <p>The network of mentors from the business world/professional field will be operational by 2018/2019.</p>	In progress.
Training and development				
20. Include the acquisition of teaching skills in the training programme for PhD candidates (UTQ-mini).	GS	Q2-17	<p>The Department of Educational Support and Innovation will offer a training course 'Start to teach', for PhD candidates in 2017/2018, about teaching skills in an academic context. In 2018/2019, teachings skills for other educational contexts will be added (secondary schools, universities of applied sciences).</p>	In progress.
21. Screen the form and content of the current range of courses to see	HR	Q2-17	<p>First priority is given to Action 22 to establish a Corporate Academy. The next step is to align the courses with the</p>	Still needs to be addressed.

[Domain C: Research governance and organisation:](#)
 Knowledge of the professional standards and requirements to do research

[Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact:](#) The knowledge and skills to work with others to ensure the wider impact of research

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
<p>whether they are aligned with the needs of the target groups, in view of possible required developments (e.g. internationalization, digitization).</p>			<p>needs of the target groups.</p> <p>Indicator: after implementation, a survey to evaluate the satisfaction of users.</p>	
<p>22. Bring together the courses offered by in-house providers to form a Corporate Academy (e.g. using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework) and categorize them by target group.</p>		Q2-16	<p>The Corporate Academy system will soon be operational.</p>	Completed.
<p>23. Regarding implementation: emphasize that tenure track staff should take the course on supervising PhD candidates.</p>		Q2-16	<p>See Action 7. The course, ‘Supervising PhD Candidates, will be a regular part of the tenure track support programme.</p> <p>For a new goal regarding the implementation of the Tenure Track support programme, see Section 5.</p>	Completed.
<p>24. Ensure that the importance of teaching is reflected in HR strategy and policy.</p>	CvB	Q2-16	<p>See University of Groningen Strategic Plan 2015-2020: http://www.rug.nl/about-us/who-are-we/strategic-plan/?lang=en and HR strategic agenda 2017-2020</p>	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
25. Ask the Teaching Strategy Committee to share faculty principles and best practices for teaching-load models.		Q2-16	The teaching-load models were shared. Faculties concluded that these models are custom-made for the specific teaching contexts of different faculties and cannot easily be implemented in other faculties.	Completed.
26. Monitor compliance with guideline stipulating that 2% of each unit's wage costs must be reserved for training and continued development.		Q2-16	Postponed to Q2 2018 pending the results of Action 27.	In preparation.
27. Include personal development budget in Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities (CAO NU) via the VSNU (Association of Universities in the Netherlands).		Q2-17	The proposal to include the subject in the negotiations for a new Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities was not successful.	Completed.
28. Promote empowerment, giving feedback to supervisors, self-direction and self-	GS	Q2-17	These issues have been added to the faculties' compulsory courses on academic integrity, and to the Introductory Event for all PhD candidates organized by the UG. Other	In progress.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
management in the first year through compulsory elements in the training programme.			courses which will promote empowerment are currently in preparation: a workshop on empowerment for female PhD candidates, and a workshop for minority PhD candidates.	
29. Clarification of roles and professionalization of GS/PhD candidate coordinators in the research institutes.		Q2-17	The Graduate Schools regularly meet to discuss issues regarding PhD training. These meetings contribute to the professionalization of PhD coordinators and are sufficient to achieve this goal.	Completed.
30. Meetings for professors/supervisors on how to conduct discussions and on peer-to-peer coaching in difficult supervision situations, possibly on an individual basis.			There are currently workshops and meetings on offer for supervisors about this topic. The UG intends to make these workshops compulsory (attendance is currently on a voluntary basis). Indicators: number of attendees, satisfaction of PhD candidates.	In progress.
Communication and information provision				
31. Ethical and professional aspects. Draw up a plan to ensure effective communication relating to ethical principles and	ABJZ	Q2-17	A new integrity code and a communication plan are currently being developed. The documents will be completed by Q3 2017, after which the actions set out in them will be implemented.	In progress.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
<p>academic integrity. The plan must cover the following: the facilitation of discussions at department level, an internet dossier with examples relating to top academics/scientists, a summarized Code of Conduct (2x A4).</p>			<p>From Q3 2017 onwards, there will be regular meetings between the UG Academic Integrity Committee, the confidential advisors and the Rector Magnificus to monitor the progress and communication on academic integrity.</p> <p>PhD candidates now follow mandatory courses on academic integrity.</p>	
<p>32. Organize UG-wide coordination with faculty contact persons and adopt a cross-faculty approach (e.g. meetings of funding officers) in order to improve the provision of information about contractual and legal obligations.</p>		Q2-17	<p>Regular meetings are organized between the Faculty Funding Officers with policy advisors of the central Office of the University.</p>	Completed.
<p>33. Ensure that additional interests and additional positions are properly reported on the staff profile pages.</p>		Q1-16	<p>Annual monitoring in the R&D interviews for all staff members; an annual check by HR of professors' web pages.</p> <p>Indicator: % of professors without proper registration of additional interests and positions is published in a list by the VSNU.</p>	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
34. Ensure that all information on a specific subject is brought together in one place on the website.	COM	Q2-19	The Communication Department has started a process of consultation of staff members to improve the accessibility of the information on the website.	In progress.
35. Communicate UG-wide policy on data storage and working with data and systems, ensuring that communication is effective and that further bureaucratization is prevented.	UB	Q2-19	<p>A policy document was approved by the Board of the University in 2015. Several faculties and research institutes have developed specific procedures relevant to their research.</p> <p>Communication on Research Data Management and support for researchers by a specialized team at Researchdata@rug.nl (a combined effort of the University Library and the Center for Information Technology of the University). See also:</p> <p>http://www.rug.nl/researchdata</p> <p>For new goals regarding data management, see Section 5.</p>	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
<p>36. Provide more information on existing UG units (SBGG, R&V, ABJZ), to which researchers can address their questions about the dissemination and exploitation (e.g. commercial) of research results. This can also be realized through newsletters and by involving staff who work in positions closer to the researchers (e.g. funding officers).</p>	R&V	Q2-17	<p>Researchers starting a new contract research project (involving third parties) automatically receive the brochure 'The Value of Knowledge' (about the UG patent policy).</p> <p>New specialists on the subject of patents and intellectual property rights have been hired.</p> <p>In July 2017, the Northern Knowledge organization was founded to combine the valorization activities of the UG, the UMCG, and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences.</p> <p>Indicator: satisfaction survey.</p>	In progress.
<p>37. Designate contact persons in the workplace who can refer staff to the relevant experts if this has not yet been done.</p>	FB	Q2-17	<p>The Faculty Funding Officers have taken on the role of referring staff to the relevant experts.</p>	Completed.
<p>38. Mobility. Improve information provision on opportunities and support for staff mobility (in conjunction with mobility criteria, Action 11).</p>		Q2-17	<p>The HR department has set up a dedicated support team for outgoing staff at: crossborderlabour@rug.nl.</p> <p>Faculties have different practices according their specific needs.</p>	Completed.

Title of action	Unit	Timing	Indicators/Target	Current status
Support				
39. Clearly communicate financial regulations, frameworks and reports through financial departments and business coordinators.	FB	Q2-17	The financial department has set up a shared services centre. Financial support for research projects is provided within the faculties.	Completed.
40. Further professionalization for support staff by offering English-language courses.		Q2-17	The UG has provided additional resources for language learning and for intercultural competences. All faculties have joined the Language and Culture Policy project and offer language courses.	In progress.

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Comment on the implementation of Open, Transparent, Merit-Based Recruitment principles (OTM-R):⁹

The University of Groningen joined the HRS4R process prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015). The UG subscribes to the principle of basing its recruitment and selection procedures preferably on open recruitment, process transparency and quality-based selection (OTM-R). Using the checklist as a tool to detect gaps between principles and practice, we have concluded improvement is possible with respect to a number of actions related

⁹ See separate Checklist OTM-R University of Groningen document.

to communication. For example, the UG recruitment policy documents are only accessible to employees of the UG, not to external candidates. Nor is a practical guide available for members of selection committees. Training sessions (individual/group) in OTM-R by HR advisors for unexperienced members of selection committees will be organized. Moreover, an annual report on recruitment analytics and process evaluation of vacant positions will be written to monitor the quality of recruitment processes. These actions on the subject of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment are included in the revised action plan for HR Excellence in Research 2017-2020.

4. IMPLEMENTATION (MAX. 1 PAGE)

A working group and the steering group for HR Excellence continued their work after acknowledgement by the EC. The stakeholders responsible for the actions have started implementation. Information about the process of implementing the Charter and Code is available on the website and accessible to all. Special meetings/workshops were organized to inform all stakeholders about the action plan and to discuss its implementation. Every year a progress report is written for the steering group. All parties responsible for the implementation process have provided information about progress until Q2 2017. The principles of the Charter and Code are also apparent in the new Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and in the HR Strategic Agenda 2017-2020, 'Every Talent Counts'. This progress report was shared with and commented on by various committees within the UG, constituting a representative selection of the UG stakeholders. The Board of the University will approve the internal review after consulting the University Council.

Members of the HR Excellence in Research steering group

Prof. J. Knoester, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Engineering
Dr R.J. Landeweerd, Treasurer, Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences
Prof. L.F.M.H. de Leij, Dean of Graduate Schools
M.T.J. Stolp, Director of Human Resources, chair of steering group
Prof. G.C. Wakker, Dean of the Faculty of Arts

Members of the HR Excellence in Research working group

S.R van Dijk, Legal Affairs
Dr K.J. Ganzeveld, Research & Valorisation (until 2015/2016)
G. van der Meer, HR, University of Groningen, chair of working group
Dr A. Schuster-Koster, Research & Valorisation (from 2016/2017)

Stakeholder meetings on progress report

UCW: University of Groningen Committee for Academic Practice (Advisory committee with members from all faculties); CRS: University of Groningen Research Strategy Committee (deans or vice deans of all faculties); YAG: Young Academy Groningen; Committee Graduate Schools; Meeting of Managing Directors of faculties and service departments; Meeting of Faculty Funding Officers.

5. Revised HR Excellence in Research action plan – overview of action points for 2017-2020

The 40 principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers form the basis of the University of Groningen's strategy and action plan for researchers. The UG wishes to provide an attractive work environment for researchers, including open recruitment and the selection of the best candidates for vacancies, promote career opportunities for outstanding academics and a work climate in which there is sustained attention paid to the implementation and improvement of the principles in practice. The points for action listed below have been formulated on the basis of a policy analysis and consultations with researchers regarding the situation in practice. A self-assessment and modification of the strategy and action plan took place in the summer of 2017. Completed actions have been identified, new actions and a new time line have been added. According to the strengthened procedure for the HR Excellence in Research award, the University of Groningen will publish the next assessment of progress and a new action plan for the next three years in 2020. In 2020, there will also be a site visit by an external committee to decide on the renewal of the award. Because of the strengthened procedure, actions on the subject of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment will be included in the revised action plan. Another source is the HR strategic agenda, 2017-2020, 'Every Talent Counts'.

The action points are categorized below under the following headings: Recruitment, Evaluation/Appraisal, Career Development, Training and Development, Communication and Information Provision and, finally, Support. The department, board or committee with primary responsibility is listed for each action point. The deadline for each action point is also presented.

Pilot study/preparation	
Organize and implement action	

Abbreviations

<p>ABJZ (<i>Algemeen Bestuurlijke en Juridische Zaken</i>) = General Administrative and Legal Affairs department</p> <p>CvB (<i>College van Bestuur</i>) = Board of the University</p> <p>Comm = Communication Department</p> <p>DTD = Dean of Talent Development</p> <p>FB = Faculty Board(s)</p>	<p>GS = Graduate Schools or Dean of Graduate School</p> <p>HR = Human Resources Department</p> <p>R&V = Research & Valorisation Department</p> <p>UB = University Library</p>
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Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
Recruitment					
<p>1. Improve elements according to OTM-R implementation aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish University of Groningen OTM-R policy online - Publish internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions - Training sessions (individual/group) on OTM-R by HR advisor for inexperienced members of selection committees - Annual report on recruitment analytics and process evaluation of vacant positions 	HR	Q2-18			
		Q2-18			
			Q2-19		
<p>2. <i>Strategic HR agenda 2017-2020</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Combining offline and online recruitment campaigns for multiple positions/faculties simultaneously b. Data analysis of recruitment campaigns based on quality, nationality and gender 					
<p>3. Improve implementation aspects of recruitment and selection procedures, onboarding practices at faculties.</p>					
<p>4. Regarding recruitment internships: resolve remaining financial issues regarding payments.</p>	GS	Q2-18			
Evaluation/appraisal		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
<p>5. <i>Strategic HR agenda 2017-2020</i></p> <p>Implementing a UG-wide support programme</p>			Q2-19		

Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
for tenure-track staff members http://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/that-is-why/career-opportunities/tenuretrackpolicymemorandum2017.pdf	HR				
Career development		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
6. <i>Strategic HR agenda 2017-2020</i> Set up a UG-wide system of differentiated career paths for academic staff. For each faculty, analyse the problems with career development for academic staff and develop specific strategies to deal with the issues.	HR			Q4-19	
7. Review the criteria for mobility experience in terms of its relevance for academic positions (i.e. not only time spent abroad).		Q2-18			
8. <i>Strategic HR agenda 2017-2020</i> Gender balance; implementation of UG policy in faculty gender-equality plans with clear indicators/goals on the percentage of women for academic positions.		Q4-2017			Q4-20
9. Update postdoc policy and develop a broad common framework for postdoc positions in the Netherlands in cooperation with all Dutch Universities. Use this framework for the design of a UG support programme.		Q2-18		Q4-19	
10. Mobility: in terms of creating mobility opportunities, efforts are being made to introduce teaching-free	FB	Q2-18		Q2-20	

Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
periods for staff, as well as incentives for short periods of mobility experience. Monitoring of staff mobility.					
11. In terms of implementation, ensure that the expectations of postdocs and the process after the postdoc period are discussed during the appointment procedure. Share best practices of the Faculty of Science and Engineering (postdoc community, programme for professional and personal career development) with other faculties.		Q2-18		Q2-20	
12. Implement the Career Perspectives Series for PhD candidates in years 2 to 4, based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. Indicators: number of attendees and evaluations by participants.	GS			Q2-20	
13. Engage mentors from the business world/professional field to assist in career preparation for PhD candidates.			Q2-19		
14. The deadlines for finishing a PhD thesis are rarely met. This is a considerable organizational problem with no simple solution. A first step is to raise awareness amongst supervisors of the importance of PhD candidates finishing their doctoral projects on time.				Q2-20	
Training and development		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
15. Include the acquisition of teaching skills in the training programme for PhD candidates (UTQ-mini).	GS		Q2-19		
16. Screen the form and content of the current range of courses to see whether they are aligned with the needs of the target groups in view of external	HR	Q1-18			

Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
developments (e.g. internationalization, digitization). Indicator: survey.					
17. Monitor compliance with guideline, stipulating that 2% of each unit's wage costs must be reserved for training and continued development.	CvB	Q2-18			
18. Promote PhD candidate empowerment through the development of courses.	GS		Q2-19		
19. Conduct UG-wide discussion on making courses for supervisors on PhD candidate supervision compulsory. Indicators: number of attendees, satisfaction of PhD candidates.		Q2-18			
Communication and information provision		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
20. Ethical and professional aspects: Draw up a plan to ensure effective communication and implementation relating to the new policy and integrity code.	ABJZ	Q3-17			
21. Monitoring of progress and communication on academic integrity by regular meetings of a special committee, the confidential advisors and the Rector.		Q3-17			

Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
22. Ensure that all information regarding aspects of working as a researcher at the UG is easily accessible in a secure area on the website (My University).	COM			Q-20	
23. Ensure that information regarding tenure track policies is easily accessible on My University.	HR		Q2-19		
24. Research Data Management. The long-term investment plan for IT services 2016-2020 enables the realization of proposals for the enhancement of tools, facilities and services for research data management; more specifically, on secure data handling, storage, GDPR compliancy and implementation of FAIR principles. The HSR Programme, financed by the UG and the UMCG, is developing additional tools and methods for research with human data: http://www.rug.nl/cit/mjp2016-2020/ . Internal audits and new proposals will follow.	UB		Q2-19		
25. Provide more information on existing UG units (Northern Knowledge, ABJZ), to which researchers can address their questions about the dissemination and exploitation (e.g. commercial) of research results. This can also be realized through newsletters and by involving staff who work in positions closer to researchers (e.g. funding officers).	R&V		Q2-19		
Support		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020

Action	Who	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020
26. Language and Culture Policy project to enhance language proficiency in English and to enhance intercultural competences. Indicator: progress reports.	FB		Q2-19		

Please note that the revised HR strategy and Action Plan must also be published upon completion of the internal assessment.

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers

OTM-R

University of Groningen 2017

	Open	Transparent	Merit-based	Answer: Yes, completely/ Yes, substantiall y/ Yes, partially/No	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	Not yet	<i>University of Groningen Professor Policy 2013 Recruitment, Priority Status and From Work to Work Supervision Regulations 2017</i>
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	Not yet	
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	Not yet	- Training programme, Unconscious Bias - HR advisor supports recruitment committees - <i>University of Groningen Professor Policy 2013</i>

					- Recruitment, Priority Status and From Work to Work Supervision Regulations 2017
4. Do we make sufficient use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		Yes	Web-based tool called Tismanager
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	No	For positions such as professor, the Rector Magnificus and the two Chief Diversity Officers monitor compliance with UG policies

6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	Yes	See Question 9																														
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	Yes	<p><i>Academic Staff:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NLD</td> <td>24,41%</td> <td>21,02%</td> <td>24,17%</td> <td>21,70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-NLD</td> <td>75,59%</td> <td>78,98%</td> <td>75,83%</td> <td>78,30%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Non-Academic Staff:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>NLD</td> <td>81,32%</td> <td>62,78%</td> <td>86,23%</td> <td>79,64%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-NLD</td> <td>18,68%</td> <td>37,22%</td> <td>13,77%</td> <td>20,36%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2014	2015	2016	2017	NLD	24,41%	21,02%	24,17%	21,70%	Non-NLD	75,59%	78,98%	75,83%	78,30%		2014	2015	2016	2017	NLD	81,32%	62,78%	86,23%	79,64%	Non-NLD	18,68%	37,22%	13,77%	20,36%
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8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	Yes	<p><i>Academic Staff:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Percentage Male and Female</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Man</td> <td>54,07%</td> <td>55,92%</td> <td>63,55%</td> <td>60,82%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vrouw</td> <td>45,93%</td> <td>44,08%</td> <td>36,45%</td> <td>39,18%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Non-Academic Staff:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Percentage Male and Female</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Man</td> <td>34,49%</td> <td>33,74%</td> <td>32,84%</td> <td>32,62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vrouw</td> <td>65,51%</td> <td>66,26%</td> <td>67,16%</td> <td>67,38%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Percentage Male and Female	2014	2015	2016	2017	Man	54,07%	55,92%	63,55%	60,82%	Vrouw	45,93%	44,08%	36,45%	39,18%	Percentage Male and Female	2014	2015	2016	2017	Man	34,49%	33,74%	32,84%	32,62%	Vrouw	65,51%	66,26%	67,16%	67,38%
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9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	Yes	<p><i>Percentage of External Applicants:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Academic</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>%age External Applications (from all the candidates who filled in the details)</td> <td>77%</td> <td>88%</td> <td>91%</td> <td>91%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Non Academic</th> <th>2014</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>%age External Applications (from all the candidates who filled in the details)</td> <td>62%</td> <td>68%</td> <td>66%</td> <td>69%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Web-link to information for prospective staff: http://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/</p>	Academic	2014	2015	2016	2017	%age External Applications (from all the candidates who filled in the details)	77%	88%	91%	91%	Non Academic	2014	2015	2016	2017	%age External Applications (from all the candidates who filled in the details)	62%	68%	66%	69%
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10. Do we have the means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				Yes	We monitor the number of applicants for the position. We make long lists and short lists of qualified applicants																				

Advertising and application phase													
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g. EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		Yes	HR Services								
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit? (see Chapter 4.4.1 a)	x	x		Yes	http://www.rug.nl/about-us/work-with-us/								
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x			<p><i>The share of job adverts posted on EURAXESS:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Source</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>EURAXESS</td> <td>150</td> <td>178</td> <td>136</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Percentage of External Applicants:</i></p>	Source	2015	2016	2017	EURAXESS	150	178	136
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14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Source</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Academic Transfer</td> <td>243</td> <td>254</td> <td>252</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Source	2015	2016	2017	Academic Transfer	243	254	252												
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Academic Transfer	243	254	252																						
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate? (see Chapter 4.4.1 b)	x			Yes																					
Selection and evaluation phase																									
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees? (see Chapter 4.4.2 a)		x	x	Yes																					
17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?		x	x		Written guidelines <i>University of Groningen Professor Policy 2013</i> <i>Memorandum on University of Groningen tenure track policy</i>																				
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x																						
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	Yes substantially	Written guidelines Rosalind Franklin Fellow recruitment guidelines																				
Appointment phase																									
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?		x		Yes																					

21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		Yes	
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		Yes	
Overall assessment					
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				Not yet	No regular systematic evaluation of the recruitment process