



UNIVERSITY of INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY and MANAGEMENT
in Rzeszów, POLAND

"Making research career at UITM
accessible and attractive"

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and Action Plan at the University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów

STRATEGY 2023-2026
3 April 2024

Strategy for 2023-2026

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I. Strategy identity and organisational profile

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ORGANISATION Wyższa Szkoła Informatyki i Zarządzania / University of Information Technology and Management

CONTACT DETAILS Sucharskiego 2, Rzeszów, Podkarpackie, 35-225, Poland

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Organisational profile

The University of Information Technology and Management (UITM) in Rzeszów is a private academic institution active since 1996. The University educates ca. 5700 students at two cycles (undergraduate and graduate) in 13 fields (including 3 conducted in English) at 4 Colleges. UITM is entitled to grant a doctoral degree within media and social communication studies. The University conducts research work in areas related to the fields of study it offers. UITM has a high level of internationality reflected in the number of international students from 71 countries. UITM is strongly engaged in activities supporting regional development and local communities.

II. Strengths and weaknesses of current practice

Evidence note

* Data refer to results of the survey on the implementation of the principles contained in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The survey was conducted in June-July 2022.

Ethical and professional aspects

Initial and interim assessment

The Gap Analysis accompanying an application for HR Excellence in Research Award showed that great majority of requirements concerning respect for professionalism and ethical principles in employing researchers was guaranteed at the level of national law and UITM's internal regulations and good practices.

Regarding the ethics, an organizational structure of UITM covers bodies that are responsible for introducing high standards of ethical principles in academic teaching and research (these are mainly Disciplinary Spokesperson and Disciplinary Committee for Academic Teachers, but also Committee for Ethics in Research and Bioethical Committee - the latter active in College of Medicine). Existing internal regulations regarding ethical dimension of academic careers (such as Regulations for Intellectual Property and Legal Protection of Intellectual Assets at UITM) are annually scrutinized and updated by the Legal Department altogether with Department of Science. The operational part of the area of Ethics and Professionalism was implemented by the Bioethical Commission that in 2017 -2018 dealt with 5 applications for opinions on ethical aspects of research conducted by faculties and students from the College of Medicine (former Department of Medicine). The establishment of the Bioethical Committee is required by the national law, however, operations of the Bioethical Committee highly contribute to achieving ethical and professional standards by UITM. The Committee of Ethics in Research, dedicated mainly to social sciences, were established according to the timeline (October 2016), however it dealt only with one application since then.

Regarding the professionalism, UITM is featured by highly professional approach to research organisation and a developed network of internal units oriented for an assistance to researchers. Department of Science provides a constant service of researchers in terms of searching funds for their research, preparing grant applications or documentation for procedures of awarding scientific degrees.

UITM is also very active in popularization of research results and provides channels to communicate research results to the general public, media, professional organization either at regional or national or international level.

Another strength of UITM is a focus on various aspects of security. Researchers are accompanied by a few internal units, such as Data Protection Officer (ABI), Work Health and Safety Inspectorate, Security Director and IT Security Sections that provide a safe and secure environment for conducting the research. Supervision as well as procedures concerning data protection became even stronger since May 2018 when the EU GDPR entered into force.

The major weakness, reported in UITM's HRS4R, was a limited freedom of young researchers resulting from a subordination to professor. This weakness was partly eliminated by an introduction of new research strategy (in November 2016) focusing mainly on achieving research results rather than a necessity to organize research groups under supervision of professors.

Award Renewal assessment (2023)

96% of employees* claim that the UITM guarantees freedom to conduct research. 91 % of employees state that in work and research in the UITM ethical and professional rules are respected. The UITM is aware of a necessity and importance on introducing internal and external activities oriented for maintain a high quality of University's activities in term of ethics and professional context. The UITM has developed a specific "ethical infrastructure" consisting of internal bodies and internal regulations concerning the ethical approach in research, teaching as well as organizational activities, including ones addressed to the wider audience. Internal bodies such as Disciplinary Spokesperson and Disciplinary Committee for Academic Teachers, Committee for Ethics in Research, etc. (described in Internal Assessment Report) continued their operations. These bodies submit their annual reports to the Rector that shares them with the University's Board and the Senate. The reports are also presented during the periodical meetings of representatives of the University's middle-level management (these are the meetings of head of key UITM's departments and deans of Colleges). Two important internal regulations regarding ethical dimension of academic careers: (1) Internal Rules for Intellectual Property and Legal Protection of Intellectual Assets at UITM and (2) Internal Rules for Using Research Infrastructure are put under scrutiny annually and updated, if necessary, by the Legal Department altogether with Department of Science

In the period of recent three years the UITM caught up with the adoption of the Code of Researchers' Ethics as it was planned in the revised UITM's HRS4R.

Since 2019 the University even strengthened its ethical infrastructure by developing a series of documents concerning antidiscriminatory & antimobbing procedures. A new function of the Rector's plenipotentiary for counteracting discrimination, mobbing and violence was set up. In 2002 the UITM also adopted the Gender Equality Plan for 2022-2025 (https://wsiz.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/PLAN_ROWNOSCI-2.pdf) – a document is strictly related to the UITM's HRS4R. The GEP is implemented by the Rector's Plenipotentiary for counteracting discrimination, mobbing and violence.

Additionally, the ethical and professional approach towards UITM's functionality was invigorated by creating and a formal adoption of the UITM Strategy on Sustainable Development for 2022-2024 (<https://wsiz.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Strategia-Zrownowazonego-Rozwoju-WSliZ-na-lata-2022-2024.pdf>). The Strategy has been the basis for a set of actions named "Green UITM". Many of these actions also contributes to achieving goals of UITM's HRS4R. The UITM started to report its activities concerning goals of sustainable development: <https://wsiz.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/raportzr.pdf>

The real weakness in the area of ethics and professional aspects are delays in implementing strategies and actions plans in recent years. The UITM is a middle size university with limited human resources that can be engaged in the implementation of ethics and professional aspects related policies. Another weakness (or rather the gap that need to be fulfilled) is a deeper engagement of academic faculties in promoting ethics of research (but also "ethics of studies") to students originating from different cultures. The field that needs improvement is also a storage of research data to make them safer and more commonly available.

Recruitment and selection

Initial and interim assessment

A recruitment process in the UITM regarding researchers and academic teachers is generally constantly open. A recruitment process is time-limited only in cases of administrative positions or post-doc positions in project teams (that are financed by external donors and projects themselves are time-constrained). Researchers can be recruited at any time, regardless an advancement of an academic year. Key factors in a selection of researchers and academic teachers are: candidate's experience gained throughout his/her professional career, his/her scientific potential measured with the scientific achievements and experience shaped throughout his/her career, as well as motivation and the presented plans of further scientific development. Deviations from chronology or changes in research direction in a candidate's CV are possible in justified cases considered a candidate's asset, as they may prove his/her creativity or inclination to search for new challenges. Academic and professional mobility is highly appreciated as a part of organizational culture of the UITM. The same applies towards professional qualifications gained outside the academic environment, also in an informal manner - if these qualifications can be transferred to research or teaching they are considered as an advantage of a candidate. A strength of a recruitment process is a very good (fast and direct) communication with candidates in a process of recruitment which results from effectiveness of the HR Consulting Department as well as a fast track of decision-making in the UITM.

Employees are guaranteed with an automatic appointment to a higher position as soon as they get a proper scientific degree (assitants are promoted to adjunct professors (PL: adiunkt) after obtaing PhD and adjunct professors are promoted to associate professors (PL: profesor uczelniany) after completing a habilitation). Appointment to a higher position in UITM's structure means that an employee is evaluated according to rules prescribed for a specific position.

General rules for a recruitment procedure are established by the UITM Statute (para. 38 in the Statute that went in force on 1 September 2019, the provision repeats the rules from the previous version of the Statute). As proposed in the UITM's HRS4R new regulation on proceeding principles with employee recruitment was prepared and went into force in January 2018. Additionally, the HR Consulting Department altogether with the Department of Science worked out a practical pattern of proceeding a researcher's application. Documents were debated on and approved by the UITM HRSR Implementation Committee in Novemebr 2017. Both documents were revised in July-August 2018 with a view to requirements of new Law on Higher Education and Science.

Apart from acts being an internal law of the University the HR Consulting Department introduces many good practices that belong to a collection of institutional good practices (new employees of the HR Consulting Department and Department of Science are acquainted with them).

Award Renewal assessment (2023)

The procedures described in the Interim Assessment are still valid and are being enforced. In 2019 a revised and updated version of OTM-R was adopted and since then it is the basic document governing the recruitment policy of the UITM. The recruitment and selection process was assessed by over 80% of employees* as good or very good in such aspects as: clear job ads, clear description of requirements, sufficient time for submitting an application, professional skills of recruitment/selection committees' members.

On the basis of the special Polish Law on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens/Refugees, adopted in March 2022, Polish universities were allowed to employ Ukrainian citizens according to simplified procedures (e.g. temporary abolishment of a duty to recognize a diploma and professional qualifications). The UITM used these legal exemptions in order to employ Ukrainian women as full time or part time employees on various positions (academic teachers, administrative and technical positions). Currently (March 2023) four Ukrainians work as academic teachers and one as a psychologist in the UITM Academic Centre for Personal Development, however a total number of persons employed by the UITM in a period of March 2022-March 2023 was 13. For Ukrainian employees the UITM introduced a special programme of adaptation into the academic community as well as a programme of social benefits.

Within the recruitment process the UITM has been developing internal policy of encouraging UITM's students and graduates to academic career. The Department of Science, the HR Consulting Department as well as deans of Colleges are engaged in implementing this policy. Students are offered internships either in scientific units (chairs) or in administrative units. Selected candidates are offered a full employment when they complete the studies.

Due to the change of the Polish Law on Higher Education in the beginning of 2023 academic teachers from abroad, having a significant research or teaching background, can be employed in Polish universities even if their diplomas have not been recognized on the basis of Polish law (they are mainly academic teachers graduated from non-EU universities). As the UITM is open for employing researchers from the non-EU countries, straight after the amendment to the Polish Law on Higher Education was adopted, a proper changes to the UITM Statute were introduced (para. 38 and para. 39 of the Statute establish academic positions and general rules for recruitment process). The amendments will enter into force on 1st April 2023.

The weakness of the recruitment process is still a proper communication with candidates who did not get a job at UITM. We are working on improving a content of a feedback submitted to these candidates in order to provide them with information on their strengths and weaknesses. The mobility and interdisciplinary activities should be rated higher in work assessment. The main strength of UITM recruitment and selection procedure is an availability of academic position for people at different stages of their academic careers, regardless age and gender.

Working conditions

Initial and interim assessment

UITM introduces all employees' rights that are guaranteed by a national law covering legal rules on remuneration and its components, the right to a leave and career breaks, or incapability to perform the work. UITM provides funding for procedures of obtaining scientific degrees which is highly appreciated by employees (funding covers a fee to an institution conducting a procedure as well as all research and organizational costs associated to achieving a scientific degree). Employees that are processing their research for scientific degree are given special breaks accompanied by financial support (even if the latter is not necessarily established in a national law).

Salaries of researchers depend on a position (connected to scientific degree) and experience as well as an assignment to category N3/0-N1 (described above in a section: Recruitment and selection). Researchers belonging to categories N2 and N1 get a monthly salary supplement. There is also a bonus scheme for researchers that are extraordinarily active in publishing research results and in applying for grants. The most active researchers as well as academic faculties with special achievements are nominated for annual (financial) award of UITM President and Rector.

Vice-Rector for Research, deans and heads of chairs provide a support in career development for young researchers.

Research infrastructure is constantly developed. Employees are encouraged to submit their proposals for new appliances that can be used for research and teaching at UITM.

UITM adopted and implemented many internal rules for facilitating research and dissemination of research results. They were mentioned in the Gap Analysis accompanying the application for HR in Excellence Award (e.g. regulation of using the research infrastructure at UITM, regulation on supporting the University's research activity Uczelni and innovative activity within teaching, regulation on principles of organising or co-organising and financial settlement of conferences, congresses, seminars, courses, regulation on the principles of financing participation in scientific conferences, seminars etc.). All these regulations are still in force, however, in some cases their revised versions were adopted.

Employees are also encouraged to mobility mainly within Erasmus+ programme, but also on the basis of bilateral co-operation. In a process of recruitment for mobility programmes much attention is paid to equality of chances (in terms of gender, health, academic position, etc.).

Academic staff is also supported by a few specialized university's units such as: Department of Science, Project Office, Centre for Technology Transfer, Accountancy, Legal Service.

Employees participate in a decision-making process concerning the university at a level of the Senate (selected members of the Senate are elected).

Award Renewal assessment (2023)

84% of employees* claim that the UITM offers a stable employment. More than 80% express the opinion that working condition are so flexible that they allow for reconciling work and family life. All the elements pointed in the Interim Assessment such as a constant support for researchers in improving their scientific achievements and in applications for research grants, as well as an internal policy for rewarding the best researchers (N system) have been successfully applied. The policy of support for researchers turn out be successful as the UITM highly improved its score in the periodical evaluation of research quality conducted every 4 years by the Ministry of Higher Education. As a result of the evaluation for a period of 2017-2021 the UITM got (for the 1st time in its history) a right to award degrees of doctor and habilitated doctor in economics/finance and medical sciences.

Even if currently the Polish law on Higher Education does not put any time constraints in getting a scientific degree, academic faculties are constantly encouraged to get involved in a process to be awarded with a scientific degree. The UITM covers all the costs concerning the whole process (research and publications costs, administrative costs). Faculties awarded with dr. (PL: doktor), habilitated dr. (PL: doktor habilitowany) and professor (PL: profesor) get the (financial) reward of the UITM Rector and President for the year when the scientific degree was granted (rewards are given on annual basis).

In the period of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022) the UITM introduced friendly working environment for all employees. If only the state regulations on lockdowns allowed for that employees had a choice on their place of work (on site or home office). The University provided its employees with all possible measures of personal health protection such as face masks and disinfectant liquid. In classrooms plastic covers at desks of academic teachers were installed. Within 3 days from the announcement of lockdown in Poland teachers and students were equipped with instructions on using electronic platforms in order to start online classes.

After the Russian aggression in Ukraine the UITM organized many activities of support for Ukrainians (a direct help at the Polish-Ukrainian border, which is 100 km from Rzeszow; collections of medicines and food, organizing a special space club for Ukrainian citizens where food, educational activities, legal assistance were offered) – due to all these activities the employee volunteering in the UITM developed.

Harsh experience of COVID-2019 and the war at Ukraine increased a demand for psychological aid among faculties and students. The Academic Centre for Personal Development and Psychotherapy provides such an assistance for free.

The area that needs to be constantly improved is research infrastructure that is assessed as insufficient by some researchers. A big challenge is also to guarantee a balance between teaching, research and other activities of researchers – “multitasking” is seen as a problem to be solved by 15% of employees (due to internal survey). Employees also expressed the opinion that they would expect more activities in career advice.

Training and development

Initial and interim assessment

Many internal documents (including the Statute and Regulation of Work) impose an obligation on employees to develop professional skills and academic competence. Experienced academic faculties, mainly heads of chairs and deans, are obliged to support younger employees in developing the academic careers. Employees are constantly provided with information that are crucial for their scientific and professional development. Information are disseminated by a few organizational units (depending on the content) such as Department of Science, the HR Consulting Department, Department of Teaching.

Standard training programme for newly-employed academic teachers covers the following trainings: "Communications in didactics" and "Speaking in public". These trainings are organized by the HR Consulting Department annually, before a winter term starts (if a number of newly - recruited persons is bigger - over ten persons - trainings are repeated also before a summer term). Academic teachers are also offered other trainings such as e.g. Gamification in universities, neurodidactics and innovative forms of work with students, new technologies as tools for improving a quality of teaching, design thinking, and language courses. Administrative staff is offered trainings on business analytics, managerial coaching, effective communications in a team, controlling in university. Participation in trainings is not obligatory, however employees are encouraged to take part in them as this activity brings additional points in biannual evaluation.

Well-qualified members of UITM staff can be easily involved in a training process as well as follow-on consultations. It applies mainly to copyrights and industrial rights and legal aspects of commercialization of research results. In the latter area the Centre for Technology Transfer is involved as a training and consulting unit of UITM. Open trainings on copyrights and management of industrial property are organized once a year.

Award Renewal assessment (2023)

Only 4% of employees* do not agree with a statement that they are given opportunities to develop their skills and enhancing qualifications through trainings, conferences, courses, etc. 84% of employees claim that their supervisors are helpful in solving problems concerning scientific issues and fulfilling professional duties.

As it was mentioned in the Interim Assessment internal documents oblige employees to develop professional skills and academic competence. The UITM supports researchers - in financial and organizational aspects - in conducting research, organizing conferences, participating in conferences, and mobility activities. In the COVID-2019 the UITM provided training as well as e-learning materials on conducting classes and lectures online. The programme of trainings for newly employed academic teachers, including sessions on "Communications in didactics" and "Speaking in public", has been continued in recent three years. Moreover, Ukrainian citizens, employed by the UITM since March 2022, have had an opportunity to participate in Polish language courses at various level of advancement.

In recent years the UITM has been introducing a big training programme under which employees can improve their skills e.g. in: project management (scrum master, six sigma black belt, M_O_R foundation and practitioner, etc.), intercultural communications, active methods of teaching. The didactic short-term internships at foreign universities were also offered to academic teachers (e.g. in Spain and Switzerland).

The area that requires an improvement is creating individual plans of trainings, specifically for employees with longer employment record. Trainings programmes should be more customized, regarding different groups of employees and their special needs.

III. Strategic priorities and operating context

Short- and medium-term priorities

The UITM adopted a new strategy for 2020-2024, the strategy was supplemented in 2022 by the Sustainable Development Strategy. The UITM's strategy in a current version has been a continuation of former policy and strategic goals and it focus on three priorities: 1) teaching process resulting in high competences of graduates, 2) development of research through effective use of the potential of the academic community and research infrastructure, 3) development of cooperation with social and economic partners. The UITM's HRS4R is one of the most important tools to achieve goals of the UITM's general strategy. The overall goals of UITM's HRS4R should generally remain the same as in the previous stages of implementation, so they are as follows:

1. Enhancing and improving the current legal and practical regulations within employment policy with regard to researchers
2. Promoting the principles of researcher ethics in internal and external stakeholders
3. Improving the employee appraisal system for researchers (towards a more qualitative appraisal)
4. Constantly improving the quality of working conditions of researchers by extending the programme of trainings concerning a researcher's professional status and competences
5. Raising the competences of researchers within career and research activity management

However, taking into account sustainability goals on one side and harsh time of previous three years (dominated by the pandemic and the outbreak of war which consequences are visible in a city of Rzeszow) on the other, the UITM decided to add an additional goal to its UITM's HRS4R which is:

6. Striving for well being and care for physical and mental health of members of academic community.

The challenge of implementation of the strategy nowadays lies rather in particular activities that need to be undertaken in order to achieve the goals. In the next stage of implementation of the Strategy more attention should be paid to: 1) appreciation of mobility (including virtual mobility) and interdisciplinary activities in assessment process, 2) further improvement of recruitment practices (better orientation for candidates from abroad), 3) intensifying activities oriented for guaranteeing a well-being of UITM's employees.

Changes in the operating environment

The UITM's HR strategy as such has not changed, however external circumstances have had an impact on its implementation. In the period of previous three years the most significant events that influenced the process of the implementation of the UITM's HR Strategy, as well as its revised version and further application, are as follows:

7. the COVID-19 pandemic that extremely changed working conditions for universities (research and teaching);
8. amendments to national legislation (labour law), mainly resulting from the experience of COVID-19 related lockdowns (e.g. amendments to the Polish Labour Code concerning a duty to introduce a special set of rules for home office);
9. amendments to national Law on Higher Education and Science (mainly in the area of legal framework for granting scientific degrees);
10. new opportunities for the UITM resulting from positive results of the evaluation of research quality conducted by the Polish Ministry of Higher Education and Science;
11. making an implementation of gender equality policy a requirement in applications within Horizon Europe programmes;
12. outbreak of war in Ukraine that raised a challenge of assisting researchers from Ukraine in terms of employment and organization of everyday life.

All the above factors contributed to a development of the HR Strategy and resulted in introducing a new area in the Strategy. A number of activities concerning HR policy increased, many activities that were successfully undertaken and completed were not covered by the Action Plan, even in its modified version as of 2019.

Strategic decisions affecting the Action Plan

The University currently changes an organizational structure and division of tasks related to HR issues. These changes, that are going to be completed in 2023, will certainly influence a process of implementation of the HR Strategy, however, they will hopefully bring new incentives to the HR Strategy activities. Personal changes in committees will possibly also somehow influence the implementation of the UITM's HRS4R.

In 2024 preparatory works for a new organizational strategy of the UITM will begin as a new strategy will enter into force in 2025. Still, the new strategy with highest possibility will continue the line of the previous strategy, however, the HRS4R will be also taken into account and it will influence the new UITM's strategy.

IV. Action Plan 2023-2026

The Action Plan consolidates the activities reported in the Internal Review, their timing, responsible units, indicators and current status. Actions that are recurring remain part of the strategy's implementation cycle.

ACTION 1 | Developing UITM Code of Researcher Ethics

GAP PRINCIPLES 1. Research freedom | 2. Ethical principles | 3. Professional responsibility | 6. Accountability | 7. Good practice in research | 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | 37. Supervision and managerial duties

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
October 2015-October 2016 (postponed to 1st quarter of 2020)	Team for developing the UITM Code of Researcher Ethics	Number of documents approved for implementation at the University: 0 (shall be 1)

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

A number of documents approved for implementation at the University: 1

ACTION 2 | Establishing the Committee for Ethics in Research

GAP PRINCIPLES 1. Research freedom | 2. Ethical principles | 3. Professional responsibility | 6. Accountability | 7. Good practice in research | 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | 9. Public engagement | 37. Supervision and managerial duties

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
October 2016	Department of Science	Number of documents approved for implementation at the University: 1

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

Operations of the Committee can be confirmed by periodical reports submitted to UITM's governors and protocols from particular meetings of the Committee.

ACTION 3 | Information campaign for applying to the Committee of Ethics in Research

GAP PRINCIPLES 2. Ethical principles | 3. Professional responsibility | 4. Professional attitude | 6. Accountability | 7. Good practice in research | 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
1st quarter of 2020, 2021, 2022	Department of Science	Number of researchers informed: 131

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

Because a number of applications to the Committee of Ethics in Research is very low, there is a need to enhance awareness of researchers regarding the existence of such a body that can be helpful in supporting a quality of research and a proper dissemination of results. The promotion of the Committee as a body as well as a promotion of a necessity to get an authorization of ethics of research. As pointed above (point 2) a very high percentage of researchers (91%) claim that norms, principles and ethical rules are respected. Nonetheless, this action should be continued and regularly repeated.

ACTION 4 | Organising trainings in intellectual property protection (with case study analysis)

GAP PRINCIPLES 1. Research freedom | 2. Ethical principles | 3. Professional responsibility | 4. Professional attitude

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually: April/October	UITM Legal Department	Number of researchers trained: 161

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

This action cannot be regarded as completed - this action must be regularly repeated.

ACTION 5 | Improving recruitment procedure principles (1st stage) Full introduction of OTM-R

GAP PRINCIPLES 12. Recruitment | 13. Recruitment (Code) | 14. Selection (Code) | 15. Transparency (Code) | 16. Judging merit (Code) | 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) | 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) | 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) | 20. Seniority (Code) | 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) | 22. Recognition of the profession | 27. Gender balance

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
November 2017-November 2018 (1st stage) December 2020 (2nd stage)	HR Consulting Department; Department of Science	Number of internal documents adopted: 3

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

The OTM-R was finally adopted and has been implemented since then.

ACTION 6 | Organising information seminars on the internal support system for researchers and on the new model for scientific evaluation of research units

GAP PRINCIPLES 28. Career development

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually: 4th quarter	Department of Science; Coordinator for Erasmus +	Number of researchers trained: 120 (since October 2020: 131)

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

This action cannot be regarded as completed - this action must be regularly repeated. the topic of seminars were extended in comparison with the original version of UITM HRS4R.

ACTION 7 | Trainings for newly employed academic teachers

GAP PRINCIPLES 24. Working conditions

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually (September, incidentally: June)	HR Consulting Department	Number of persons trained: 5 (per session)

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

The constant activity being a part of the onboarding process: all newly employed persons need to complete the trainings on "Communications in didactics" and "Speaking in public" These trainings are organized every term (twice a year) and a number of participants varies, depending on a number of faculties have been employed.

ACTION 8 | Organising trainings connected with discussion panels in two thematic blocks: 1) entrepreneurship for researchers (within commercialising research results), 2) industrial rights property management

GAP PRINCIPLES 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | 28. Career development | 31. Intellectual Property Rights | 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually: 2nd quarter	Centre for Technology Transfer	Number of researchers trained: 90

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

This action cannot be regarded as completed - this action must be regularly repeated.

ACTION 9 | Revision of regulations regarding (1) recruitment, (2) research infrastructure, (3) protection of intellectual property rights, (4) trainings

GAP PRINCIPLES 3. Professional responsibility | 4. Professional attitude | 5. Contractual and legal obligations | 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | 12. Recruitment | 23. Research environment | 24. Working conditions | 31. Intellectual Property Rights | 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually: 3rd quarter	Department for Science Legal Department HR Consulting Department	Number of documents under revision: 5 per year

CURRENT STATUS / REMARKS

These are long term activities that need to be undertaken due to amendments of external circumstances and legal changes. Documents under revision are e.g. the UITM's Statute, Work Regulation for Academic Teachers, Regulations for Intellectual Property and Legal Protection of Intellectual Assets at UITM, etc.

ACTION 10 | More respect for gender equality

GAP PRINCIPLES 2. Ethical principles | 3. Professional responsibility | 10. Non discrimination | 12. Recruitment | 24. Working conditions | 25. Stability and permanence of employment | 26. Funding and salaries | 27. Gender balance | 28. Career development | 35. Participation in decision-making bodies

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
2022: adoption of GEP Anually (4th quater): evaluation of the GEP implementation process)	Rector's Plenipotentiary for Counteracting Discrimination, Mobbing and Violence	Number of policy document (GEP): 1 Number of evaluation report: 1 per year

ACTION 11 | Appreciation of mobility (including virtual mobility) and interdisciplinary activities in assessment process

GAP PRINCIPLES 3. Professional responsibility | 4. Professional attitude | 5. Contractual and legal obligations | 6. Accountability | 10. Non discrimination | 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems | 12. Recruitment | 23. Research environment | 24. Working conditions | 28. Career development | 29. Value of mobility | 33. Teaching

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
2024 (1st quarter): internal policy paper on mobility; changes in internal documents related to employees' assessment process	HR Consulting Department Department of Mobility and International Projects V-ce Rector for Science and International Cooperation Department of Science	Number of new documents: 1 Number of documents revised: 3

ACTION 12 | Working conditions supporting a well-being (physical and mental health) of researchers

GAP PRINCIPLES 3. Professional responsibility | 4. Professional attitude | 5. Contractual and legal obligations | 6. Accountability | 9. Public engagement | 10. Non discrimination | 23. Research environment | 24. Working conditions | 25. Stability and permanence of employment | 37. Supervision and managerial duties | 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / target(s)
Annually: 1st quarter (adoption of annual plan) 4th quarter (report)	Academic Centre for Personal Support and Psychotherapy Office for Organization and Cooperation with External Partners	Number of researchers benefiting from general support: 90 Number of researchers benefiting from customized service: 6

Principles not selected in the action matrix

- 30. Access to career advice
- 32. Co-authorship
- 34. Complaints/ appeals
- 36. Relation with supervisors
- 38. Continuing Professional Development
- 40. Supervision

V. OTM-R policy and publication

Dedicated webpage

<https://wsiz.edu.pl/uczelnia/hr-excellence-in-research/>

Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment

UITM as a private university is still commonly treated as less attractive and less prestigious workplace in Poland than public universities. Simultaneously, UITM has a great demand for well-qualified, ambitious academic teachers that would be eager to face challenges of an organization of a private university whose incomes strongly (for sure much stronger than in case of public universities) depend on a quality of services (including research and teaching). Regarding this situation UITM pays a lot of attention to a high quality of recruitment process in order to attract as many candidates as possible. UITM tends to build its position on an international academic forum as an organization featured with openness and equality so these values are highlighted in recruitment procedures.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Award Renewal)The difference in positions of public and private universities highlighted in Internal Review for Interim Assessment still exists. The recruitment and selection process are based on the following principles: - non-discrimination and equal opportunities, transparency, merit-based decisions, low administrative burdens for applicants.

Due to a high level of internationalization of UITM's academic community job advertisements need to be distributed also in countries outside the EU (Central and Eastern Asia, China, India, Vietnam, the USA) by UITM employees visiting those communities and by UITM partners what makes the whole process challenging in terms of culture differences.

In recent 3 years more e-tools in recruitment and selection processes were introduced.

In case of Ukrainian researchers fleeing from their country under the Russian aggression recruitment and selection procedures were implemented in a more flexible manner (but still with a full respect for EU law, national law and UITM's binding internal rules).

VI. Implementation, governance and monitoring

General overview of the implementation process

The HRS4R implementation process has been seen by the UITM as a chance to develop HR policy and systemize activities that used to be implemented randomly and chaotically by various UITM departments (and other organizational unit). This goal was achieved even if – because the new Law – the implementation process met many challenges because a scope of necessary

activities became much bigger than originally planned. Moreover, many activities (mainly trainings) had to be undertaken with a very high level of legal uncertainty (legal works concerning the new Law took much more time than it was predicted, executive acts having a great impact on university's functioning were also delayed in many cases). This issue surely influenced an efficiency of the implementation process (just as an example: it is very difficult to provide advice on academic career development if –because of meanders of law making process – for over 2 years it is not clear if a habilitation is still (as it used to be) an obligatory step in academic career). Because of a longer than expected duration of a period in which the UITM waited for a decision awarding HR Excellence in Research (application lodged in May 2016, decision on HR Excellence in Research Award in September 2017), some actions (specially ones that were planned for 2016) were postponed till 2017 and beyond.

In March 2020 the UITM got a decision on a positive result of the Interim Assessment and a prolongation of the award for three more years. Since then two factors highly influenced the implementation of the HR Strategy: the COVID-2019 pandemic (a necessity to provide new working conditions for researchers) and the outbreak of the war in Ukraine (due to a localization of the UITM in Rzeszow the university has been engaged in assistance and receiving researchers from Ukraine. Currently, at the beginning of 2023 the impact of these two factors on the HR policy of UITM must be assessed positively: new forms of providing work were introduced, new tools of communications were introduced, new areas and scopes of services for researchers occurred. In the recent three years the UITM managed to catch up with some delays reported in the Interim Assessment. In 2022 the goals of HR Strategy was also incorporated in the Strategy on Sustainable Development ("Green UITM"). In 2022 a new policy document that was even not prescribed in the Action Plan presented in the Interim Assessment in 2019 was adopted (Gender Equality Plan). To sum up in a period of 2020-2022 the UITM's HRS4R covered more activities than expected due to the Action Plan. New unit: Rector's Plenipotentiary for Counteracting Discrimination, Mobbing and Violence joined a set of units responsible for implementation of HRS4R.

Preparation of the internal review

The internal review was prepared in accordance with monitoring strategy described in point V. UITM HRS4R.

The internal review was based on the periodic (annual) reports on progress in implementation of the UITM HRS4R worked out by the UITM HRS4R Working Group. The Group is in charge of a constant monitoring of internal acts and practices applied in the UITM - they are checked in terms of compliance with goals, deadline and principles of the European Charter and Code for Researchers and the UITM HRS4R (including the Action Plan). In its monitoring activities the UITM HRS4R Working Group used also the following documents:

- analysis of activity reports of UITM units directly involved in an implementation process (the Science Department, the Teaching Department, the HR Consulting Departments, the Legal Department, Rector's Plenipotentiary for Counteracting Discrimination, Mobbing and Violence);
- analysis of activity reports of other units that are not directly involved in an implementation process (e.g. the Team for Analysis of Educational Needs, the Project Management Office, Office for International Projects and Mobility),
- interviews with individual employees, mainly researchers and academic teachers;
- results of the survey on the implementation of the principles contained in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The survey was conducted in June-July 2022.

The final version of the internal review was presented to the Steering Group in December 2023. After a positive recommendation of the Steering Committee (January 2023) the internal review was discussed at the meeting of UITM's college of governors (rector, v-ce rector, president and v-ce president of the University) and finally accepted by Rector.

Involvement of the research community and stakeholders

The majority of representatives of research community have been involved in the implementation process as beneficiaries of activities undertaken within UITM HRS4R, as participants in public consultation of documents or strategies as well as members of decision making bodies such as the Senate or the Scientific Councils. As direct beneficiaries employees could evaluate individual activities and event (such as trainings). Researchers were individually or collectively (as a team of a chair or an institute) consulted on in a process of preparation amendments to the UITM's Strategy, known as "Sustainable Development Strategy" (Green UITM), in July-August 2022. In April-May 2022 UITM's researchers had a chance to participate in a survey aiming at a functioning of university's canteen in the post-pandemic period. In October 2022 the new rector and v-ce rectors meet with all researchers in person - the meeting was dedicated to working conditions and research environment in the UITM. Proposals presented by researchers were taken into account in many decisions concerning labour contracts and appraisal process in the 4th quarter of 2022. Researchers can also submit their remarks concerning the HR are directly to the Rector or to deans of Colleges and heads of chairs and other organizational units - these voices are discussed during the meetings of the UITM's governors. Because of a quite limited number of academics at UITM, many researchers are also involved in programming and monitoring the UITM HRS4R through the UITM HRS4R Working Group).

Implementation committee and steering group

In May 2020 the Steering Committee and the HRS4R Working Group were restructured, responsibilities were reformulated and a new division of tasks was introduced.

The Steering Committee takes crucial decisions on strategic goals of the HRS4R and it approves of the monitoring reports submitted by the HRSR Working Group. The Committee meets once a year (January) - it approves of the report on the implementation of the HR Strategy and creates recommendations for particular units of the UITM. Once a year the report of the implementation is also presented to the Rector.

The HRSR Working Group is responsible for ongoing analysis of UITM's internal acts and practices in terms of their compliance with the European Charter and Code for Researchers. The Group proposes updates to the Action Plan and goals of the HR Strategy. The HRS4R Working Group is responsible for collecting information on the HR Strategy implementation process and for getting a feedback from researchers. The results of works of the Group (that meets every three months) is presented to the Steering Committee.

Alignment of organisational policies with HRS4R

The UITM HRS4R is not isolated from other activities of UITM. Even if HR policy is treated as an individual policy, it has a subsidiary role towards key university policies which are research policy educational (academic teaching development). Key priorities of the UITM's research and educational policy are identified in the UITM Strategy (publicly available, in Polish). UITM HRS4R is treated as a tool to implement UITM Strategy, even if HRS4R is not directly mentioned there. The mission of the UITM is a development of research staff. The correlation between the general UITM Strategy was even highlighted by the amendments introduced to the Strategy by the Sustainable Development Strategy (Green UITM) that strongly promotes corporate social responsibility covering also employment issues.

The UITM HRS4R is also correlated to other internal policy documents such as: UITM's Research Policy and UITM's Internationalization Policy. Naturally, the HRS4R is lined to Gender Equality Plan, the Policy of Counteracting Discrimination. Mobbing and Violence against Employees, the Policy for the Disabled.

Ensuring implementation of the proposed actions

The proposed actions were worked out in a complex process - mainly as a result of a dialog of the HRS4R Working Group and academic community and between the Working Group and the Steering Committee. The proposal are well grounded in the previous analysis, observations, recommendations and results of surveys. Moreover, the implementation process of HRS4R has been a part of daily routine of all units engaged in the process, many stakeholders are acquainted with the HRS4R, the UITM as an organization has 5 years of experience with implementation of the HRS4R, so a risk of non-fulfilment of the proposed actions seems to be close to zero.

Monitoring progress and the timeline

As pointed above checking the compliance with the timeline is a task assigned to the HRS4R Working Group. In case of delays the Group can submit a proper feedback to the unit in charge of the delayed action. Small-scale amendments can be introduced in the Action Plan by the working Group itself. Delays can be also reported to the Steering Committee that is obliged to take a decision on changes in the Action Plan in serious cases.

Measuring progress

Measures will not be significantly changed in next three years - these will be still a number of documents (adopted/modified/revised), a number of persons (e.g. trained/consulted on/recruited) or a number of services delivered by the University's units. These numbers (indicators) are reported by units being responsible for an implementation of a particular activity. The HRS4R Working Group is in charge of collecting the data. The survey among employees will be repeated in three years (2025) as the basis for future periodic assessment.

Preparation for the external review

The implementation process of HRS4R has been in great extent archived and the UITM is ready to provide external visitors with particular documents (although not all of them are available in English). Members of the UITM HRS4R Steering Committee and the HRS4R Working Group will be ready and prepared for answering the questions within the external review. Employee of the UITM will be also encouraged to share their opinions on the implementation process with external reviewers.