

EURAXESS

Action Plan

Case number

2022RO814565

Name Organisation under review

UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST

Organisation's contact details

90, Panduri Street, Sector 5, Bucharest, ROMANIA, Bucharest, 050663,, Romania

1. Organisational Information

*Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.*

STAFF & STUDENTS**FTE**

Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *

726

Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *

15

Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *

340

Of whom are women *

400

Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *

254

Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *

313

Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *

238

Total number of students (if relevant) *

32486

Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *

2860

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)**€**

Total annual organisational budget

111267565

Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)

1640050

Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)

9263836

Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research

146500

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

Founded 150 years ago, the University of Bucharest is a comprehensive higher education organization that brings together 19 faculties, spanning the range from Theology through Physics, as well as over 50 centres and 9 research units. It currently offers around 100 undergraduate programs, over 200 master's programs and 9 teaching master's, 21 disciplinary doctoral schools and a doctoral school for interdisciplinary studies. It is positioned nationally as an institution of excellence in education and research.

We currently enrol over 34,000 students taught by 1,300 professors and supported by 1,200 administrative and other staff. Additionally, we have over 600 researcher positions.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code to open the editor and provide your answer.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

1. **A full set of operational ethics bodies:** The UB has a full set of fully functional ethics units: a university-level Ethics Commission, an IRB (the Commission for Research Ethics), and faculty-level ethics bodies. All have procedures that are easily accessible online; all procedures provide for complaint and resolution mechanisms – including within doctoral schools. The EU Ethics Commission publishes a yearly report. The Center for Action, Resources and Training for Academic Integrity (CARFIA) is responsible, among others, for raising awareness with respect to ethics and integrity issues and for developing institutional strategies in the field.
2. **Representation of students:** Students represent themselves at all levels of decision-making (the academic senate, faculty councils). This includes the councils of doctoral schools, where PhD students elect representatives on places that are especially set aside.
3. **Integrity education and tools:** Both graduate and undergraduate students take mandatory academic integrity courses, which are part of the core curriculum. At graduate level, these courses also have a research ethics component. UB members have access, based on their institutional accounts, to similarity-checking tools.
4. **Performance evaluations:** UB academics are evaluated regularly, primarily in the yearly assessment based on a standard, easily accessible procedure. The latter covers teaching, research, administrative, and outreach activities. The standards are harmonized across types of evaluations (e.g., for pay raises).
5. **Virtually all strategic documents and procedures are easily accessible** – on the University website and, for UB members, on the intranet. This also includes the periodic reports of various academic and administrative bodies, and documents such as UB policies, agreement templates, and other forms.

Weaknesses:

1. **Limited awareness with respect to the ethical review of projects:** As suggested by our HRS4R consultations, some early-career as well as experienced researchers are not fully aware of the functions of the institutional review board; and / or confuse it with the UB Ethics Commission. This is partly due to the fact that the ethical review of research projects involving human participants or animal subjects is not mandatory across the UB (though some faculties have made it obligatory for their members by an internal decision).

2. **The ethics bureaucracy:** Some ethics bodies are occasionally too slow in making decisions. For example, the ethical review of research projects remains relatively cumbersome. While documents are exchanged electronically, this is done via email and the allocation of projects for review and other procedures are sometimes sluggish.

Recruitment and selection*



Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Recruitment and selection at the UB are firmly tethered to conditions set out in the national framework laws – for better (strengths) and for worse (weaknesses).

Strengths:

1. **An increasingly open competition for positions:** Recruitment is in strict compliance with procedural standards for open competitions set nationally and with non-discrimination principles. Additionally, by creating a special 'promotion track' for its academics, the UB has further opened up recruitment in practice. (In the past, since recruitment was considered the only legal option available under the law, de facto promotions had to be disguised as recruitments on a higher-ranking position. This led to a stable preference for insiders over outsiders across the Romanian HE system.)
2. **Transparency:** The UB's framework regulations and procedures on hiring are easily accessible on the website; all faculties have specific regulations of their own, similarly available in faculty-level procedures and policies. Job adverts are published in advance, on a variety of venues, including on an official national portal and the UB website (and sometimes Euraxess). Contractual terms can be consulted openly. Finally, the full application packages of all candidates for any position are published on the UB website, together with the membership of selection and complaints committees, deadlines, results, judgements on complaints etc. Thus, the process and its outcomes can be judged by any interested party.
3. **Predictability:** Minimal quantitative standards for high-ranking academic positions (associate and full professor and researcher equivalents) are set nationally and therefore predictable. For lower-ranking positions, criteria are set explicitly by each faculty / department in documents that can be easily accessed by the public; these criteria take the former set of standards as a reference. Selection committees are nominated in compliance with generally applicable conditions concerning members' expertise and organizational affiliation.
4. **Increasing flexibility:** The open competition standards above can be time-consuming, especially in the context of externally funded projects that need to hire researchers quickly and, often, for relatively short periods. While still open, the procedures for the hiring of researchers have been simplified lately by, e.g., making it easier to recruit researchers who participated in the writing of the relevant project. Additionally, the UB Research Institute (ICUB) offers fellowships and grants programs that accommodate a variety of researchers in various stages of their career, including researchers between grants.
5. **Recognition:** The UB is recognized as one of the country's best comprehensive universities, which renders it attractive to aspiring researchers and academics.

Weaknesses:

1. **Limited internationalization:** The university attracts few foreign researchers and academics (though slightly more now than in the past). This is due to a variety of factors, from low pay (relative to Western academia as well as to the market) to the complicated bureaucracy which requires candidates to be present in person at least once, to confirm their candidacy. Most job adverts are published in Romanian only (researcher positions are a partial exception). More generally, language may be a barrier in another respect – the UB offers relatively few programs in English.

2. **Limited feedback:** The feedback provided to candidates who were not accepted after the competition remains limited or is altogether absent. (The exceptions are the UB Research Institute grants and fellowships competitions.) While candidates may consult their assessment in the public reports of the selection committee, these documents are not very informative, as they mainly consist of numerical ratings and averages across criteria.
3. **Recognition of informal and non-formal qualifications:** While the recognition of formal qualifications, including those obtained abroad, has seen substantial improvements after the adoption of the requisite legislation, the University lacks any framework – i.e., national or its own – for the recognition of informal and non-formal qualifications. In some fields or disciplines this may entail substantial missed opportunities.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

1. **Lump sums for conferences and publication:** Each member of the UB, including doctoral students, are awarded yearly a lump sum for participation in conferences, workshops, and other scientific events. An additional lump sum (of up to 1400 Euro) is granted annually for publication fees.
2. **Pay increases:** Tenured staff can access substantial long-term (5 years) pay increases based on competitive evaluations within each UB department.
3. **Increasing flexibility of working arrangements:** Particularly after the pandemic, teaching and research working arrangements have become more flexible, with distance working now a fully legitimate option – under prespecified conditions.

Weaknesses:

1. **Lack of spaces and other facilities:** Virtually all academics who participated in the consultations complained about the lack of adequate spaces for courses and seminars, labs, offices, canteens, and other facilities. Most of the University's buildings are old and historical (and thus protected), some were not originally designed for educational activities or for large numbers of students, and past refurbishments were often not sufficiently radical. The UB has been renting educational spaces, but not enough of them. Several of the most important buildings are now under major reconstruction – which, for the time being, amplifies the space constraints.
2. **Services for researchers not extensive enough:** Despite improvements over the past decade, services specifically targeting researchers were found wanting during consultations. Procurement remains too complex and sluggish. There is no service to assist systematically in the writing of big projects. The IPR office is minimalist. Generally speaking, bureaucratic procedures are perceived as excessive, while the bureaucracy itself is short-staffed.
3. **Limited research infrastructure:** Both large and small research infrastructure remains inadequate. For example, there is no supercomputer to process large amounts of data at the UB, large equipment is not adequately maintained and serviced, while regular equipment – including software licenses – is not adequately distributed according to need. Large equipment is dispersed across the UB's many buildings in various areas of the city and outside of it, so it cannot be easily accessed by interested researchers. The current inventory of infrastructures is dated.

4. **Unevenly distributed workloads:** Teaching and administrative duties are often distributed unevenly within departments, despite relatively clear and transparent rules concerning these types of activities and their distribution. The state of affairs is often deemed inequitable.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)**Strengths:**

1. **Expanding opportunities for mobilities and other exchanges:** The UB's participation in the CIVIS network has expanded participation in exchanges and blended intensive programs. Erasmus+ is fully functional for both undergraduate and graduate students and for academics. Doctoral students also receive additional funding for an additional extensive research stint abroad. All members of the UB, including doctoral students, receive a yearly lump sum for participation in scientific conferences and workshops.
2. **Internal Peer Learning workshops have taken off:** Over the past few years the UB has been organizing internal peer learning workshops which can be accessed freely by any member. These trainings, which are scheduled in advance and disseminated across the University, cover a wide range of competencies, from research methodology to practical and publishing skills.
3. **The ICUB (UB Research Institute) communities:** Through its grants and fellowships programs targeting both early-career and experienced researchers, the ICUB has been engendering – in some areas of science – inter-disciplinary communities. The networks built through the ICUB system extend not only beyond the UB, but also abroad.
4. **Improved communications and dissemination:** All UB members receive, on their institutional addresses, regular newsletters covering the latest decisions by the administration; a broad range of announcements concerning events related to the University and academic life; other opportunities (including related to funding).

Weaknesses:

1. **Uneven supervision practices:** Coordination practices across the UB's twenty doctoral schools vary substantially, depending on discipline, tradition, and internal structure. Some doctoral students report insufficiently close supervision, minimal interaction with (some members of) their doctoral guidance committees, or low levels of collaboration with their colleagues.
2. **Limited career counselling and placement services:** Career counselling services for both graduate students and academics remain insufficiently accessed. Some of the specific services and opportunities offered have not been adequately disseminated.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

<https://unibuc.ro/cercetare/hrs4r/> (<https://unibuc.ro/cercetare/hrs4r/>)

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their implementation ratings.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1

Modify the UB Methodology on Recruitment with an eye to simplifying and clarifying the conditions for recruitment on research projects, particularly with respect to the hiring of students.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 28. Career development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department of Human Resources, Department for the Management of Research Projects

Amended Methodology on Recruitment

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

Enable fully online applications for open researcher and teaching positions so as to streamline the process for foreign candidates. Translate job adverts into English to enable foreign researchers to find open positions via keyword searches.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(++) 14. Selection (Code)

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department
of Human
Resources

New online application procedures

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

Redesign the competition procedures for doctoral admissions and for postdoctoral and research positions so as to include adequate feedback to all candidates, whether successful or not.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(++) 14. Selection (Code)

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

UB Research
Institute,
Department
of Human
Resources

Amended procedures

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

Organize a formal assessment of solutions for and obstacles against incorporating in hiring adverts additional information about special benefits and career prospects. Issue a formal internal proposal based on the findings.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

(+/-) 26. Funding and salaries

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department of Human Resources, Department for the Management of Research Projects, Legal Department

Internal proposal

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

Further operationalize the current BRIDGE program to provide more flexible extension grants for researchers whose employment contract with the UB recently expired. Organize communication sessions to disseminate, across the UB, information about the opportunities offered via the BRIDGE program.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)
- (+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment
- (+/-) 26. Funding and salaries
- (+/-) 28. Career development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Research
Institute of
the
University of
Bucharest
(ICUB)

Changes to BRIDGE program Communication sessions organized

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

Organize meetings with interested academics across departments to inform them about the uses to which their faculty has put their share of the UB Research Fund.

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

(++) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector

for research,
ICUB

Dissemination meetings organized (one for each faculty)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

Conduct a joint assessment by key administrative departments on the opportunity of opening permanent researcher positions conditional on periodic evaluations and on meeting predefined performance indicators. Issue a report on the findings.

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

(+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment

(+/-) 28. Career development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

ICUB,
Department
for the
Management
of Research
Projects,
Department
of Human
Resources

Report with findings

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

Formalize a general policy for the onboarding of new researchers by extending current good practices at the UB Research Institute; additionally explore, through internal meetings, opportunities for enhancing onboarding support.

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

(++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

(+/-) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

09.2024

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

(+/-) 29. Value of mobility

Proposed ACTIONS

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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ICUB, Department for the Management of Research Projects, Department for Career Counselling and Orientation	Onboarding policy
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Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

Design the UB Pilot Mentorship Program, covering both career development advice (mobility, training, professional paths, etc.) and academic advice. Draft and disseminate a Guide of good mentorship practices.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 28. Career development
- (-/+) 30. Access to career advice
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship
- (+/-) 33. Teaching
- (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors
- (+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties
- (+/-) 40. Supervision

02.2025

Responsible

Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department for Career Counselling and Orientation	Mentorship program piloted Guide of good mentorship practices
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Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10

Conduct a thorough inventory of all courses provided by all CIVIS and UB doctoral schools and research master's programmes; publish a complete catalogue of courses; disseminate said catalogue among all current and future doctoral students and schools.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 28. Career development

(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

All doctoral school secretariates, the CIVIS Officer with the Department of International Relations, Erasmus Office

Catalogue of curses published and disseminated across the university

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

Organize a series of round tables with all heads of doctoral schools and vice-deans for research in which to raise the idea of organizing an open Journal Club (or similar regular event) in each doctoral school and/or department.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- (+/-) 9. Public engagement
- (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector for research, Faculty vice-deans for research

Round tables with doctoral school heads and vice-deans for research organized Proposal plans

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 12

Carry out an inventory of all faculty- and department-level ethics bodies across the University, with an eye to facilitating complaints and appeals. Then organize a workshop with said bodies and the UB Department for Quality Management on the best available solutions towards expanding provisions concerning complaints and appeals. Issue a report with findings and proposals. Develop a Welcome Guide in both Romanian and English, with explicit references to the HRS4R strategy, the Charter and the Code. Provide to R1 & R2 a list of foreign language resources and persons to whom they may refer in case of problems.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 28. Career development
- (+/-) 33. Teaching
- (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

02.2025

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department
for Quality
Management,
CARFIA,
Ethics
Commission

Workshop organized
Report with findings and proposals
List of available resources and persons disseminated
Welcome Guide in EN and RO

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

Create a dedicated section, on the website of each doctoral school / faculty, that disseminates information concerning training opportunities available to doctoral students.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 28. Career development

09.2024

(+/-) 33. Teaching

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Public Relations Department

Dedicated sections on all doctoral school websites created

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14

Organize two workshops on the exchange of good practices among doctoral schools, with an eye to extending the adoption of such practices.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 28. Career development

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

09.2024

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector
for research,
Head of the
Council of
UB Doctoral
Schools,
Doctoral
school
directors

Two workshops with doctoral schools organized

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 15

Organize two workshops on academic integrity in UB doctoral schools, with a focus on the duties of supervision and coordination and on improving related practices.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 10. Non discrimination
- (++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies
- (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors
- (+/-) 40. Supervision

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

CARFIA,
Department
for Quality
Management

Two workshops with doctoral schools organized

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

Publish online the full job description of the project officer in order to unambiguously clarify the latter's duties for all the parties involved.

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

02.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department
for the

Management
of Research
Projects

Full job description published

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 17

Organize in each faculty training sessions to familiarize all researchers with current standards and practices in IRB-type research project reviews.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility

(+/-) 4. Professional attitude

(++) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Commission
for Research
Ethics (IRB),
CARFIA

Sessions organized in all faculties

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 18

Fully digitize the process of submission, review and oversight of research projects for ethical approval (ethical review board).

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

11.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Commission
for Research
Ethics (IRB)

New IRB platform

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 19

Hire an additional expert (1 full position) to improve technological transfer services.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 4. Professional attitude

(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(-/+) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

**Timing (at least by
year's
quarter/semester)**

05.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector
for research

One expert hired

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 20

Hire 6 additional officers in the Procurement Department.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 6. Accountability

09.2024

(+/-) 23. Research environment

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Procurement
Department,
Department
of Human
Resources

Six staff hired

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 21

Organize a workshop with all faculty deans to examine the opportunity of hiring additional faculty-level administrators to act as an internal liaison between academics and the central administration. Issue an internal report with the findings.

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 23. Research environment

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

05.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department
for the
Management
of Research
Projects,
Department
of Human
Resources

Workshop organized Report on findings

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 22

Create a dedicated newsletter on research funding opportunities to replace the current section in the general newsletter. Organize a workshop to familiarize all interested UB researchers with the existing functions of the institutional Research Professional account, currently available to all academics in the University.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- (+/-) 23. Research environment
- (+/-) 28. Career development
- (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

04.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department of Public Relations, Vice-rector for research

Newsletter Workshop organized

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 23

Hire an officer with the Department for the Management of Research Projects to assist in project writing.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 26. Funding and salaries

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

05.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Department
for the
Management
of Research
Projects

Expert hired

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 24

Conduct an inventory of all large research infrastructures at the UB, compile a catalogue thereof, and advertise it among academics. Introduce a system of vouchers to improve access for all UB members to said infrastructures.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

09.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

IT

Department,
UB Research
Institute

Updated inventory of UB infrastructures Catalogue of UB
infrastructures published Voucher policy adopted

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 25

Expedite the re-drafting of the UB Code of Ethics, of the Code of Ethics in Research, and of the related guidelines on good practices in research activity. Focus particularly on more explicit and expanded provisions on the ethics of publishing and (co-)authorship. Disseminate the codes and the guidelines particularly among doctoral schools.

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

GAP Principle(s)

- (++) 1. Research freedom
- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 10. Non discrimination
- (-/+) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship
- (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals

06.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Ethics Commission, Commission on Research Ethics, CARFIA

New UB Code of Ethics
 New Code of Ethics in Research
 Ethics Guidelines
 Codes and guidelines disseminated among departments and doctoral schools

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 26

Extend the UB intranet with new functions, including an inventory of UB spaces and other facilities openly available for a variety of appropriate academic uses. Introduce a procedure whereby interested academics may schedule directly, online via the UB intranet, activities in such spaces.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

07.2024

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

IT

Intranet expanded with inventory of spaces and facilities

Department

Procedure drafted

Unselected principles:

(+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) (++) 20. Seniority (Code)

(++) 22. Recognition of the profession (+/-) 27. Gender balance

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) *

At the present time, the University of Bucharest is very close to fully implementing all recommended OTM-R practices. To a great degree, this is the case because all accredited Romanian universities must comply with legal provisions that are very strict as well as quite specific on a range of relevant dimensions, such as openness and transparency in academic hiring, the structure and composition of selection committees etc.

Specifically, academic job adverts follow a standard template and include every item in the OTM-R Toolkit except for professional development opportunities, career development prospects, and a reference to the institution's equal opportunities policy (which, however, is strictly regulated under national laws). One of the actions above will explore ways to include these additional details.

Vacancies are posted in advance in a number of locations, including the Official Gazette. All vacancies are advertised on several online portals, including the UB website and an official portal maintained by the Ministry of Education. However, only a minority of open posts are advertised in English - in part because most pertain to teaching-and-research positions that, in the vast majority of cases, imply teaching in Romanian. That said, researcher positions are more frequently advertised in English; and more frequently posted on Euraxess. In the latter case, one barrier – also raised during our consultations with researchers – has been the need for foreign candidates to sign off on the package in person.

One of the actions proposed above is to introduce a policy whereby positions have to be advertised in English where they do not require Romanian for key duties (such as substantial teaching duties); and, secondly, to make it possible for applicants not to be present in person at any point during the application process.

Selection committees also follow closely the OTM-R guidelines, for example with respect to size, independence, competencies, transparency, and the inclusion of external experts. There is no requirement concerning gender balance, but the UB's current Gender Equality Plan addresses some of these concerns through its Objective 3: Human Resources – Recruitment, Promotion, Retention (see <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bDghYbleAa07TGEMalUmWnGNHMHDTjhN> (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bDghYbleAa07TGEMalUmWnGNHMHDTjhN>)). As per OTM-R good practices, all application files are registered under a number that is communicated to the submitter, are screened for conformity by the HR Department (and applicants are contacted for any issues), then screened separately for eligibility by a commission distinct from the selection committee. The composition of all commissions involved in the selection phase, including the complaints committee, is posted online. So are the results of the recruitment assessments, including the judgments of the complaints commission (where applicable).

There is some variation in how merit is judged depending on the type of position (teaching-and-research and research-only), but standards are explained clearly in the job advert. They are stated in the UB's framework methodology on recruitment, in the relevant department's / research centre's specific methodology, and in the UB Research Institute's relevant materials (for ICUB grants and fellowships). Virtually all of the standards in the OTM-R Toolkit are considered. Indeed, they are part and parcel of the set of national minimum standards for the higher ranking positions of full and associate professor (and the corresponding researcher positions). Lower-ranking job titles (assistant lecturer and assistant professor, and the corresponding researcher titles) are based on the same structure at the UB, though departments and research centers enjoy some room in defining the specific criteria.

One respect in which practice at the UB falls short of the Toolkit is feedback after the competition for the relevant position. Currently, only the grants and fellowships programs at the ICUB provide all candidates with detailed feedback. While the appraisals by the regular hiring commissions are posted online, they consist mostly of numerical evaluations across the major criteria / tests. Substantive feedback is absent for those who lost the competition. One of the actions proposed above is meant to deal directly with this issue.

If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website:

URL:

<https://unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Metodologia-consolidata-de-concurs-pentru-ocuparea-posturilor-didactice-adoptata-in-sedinta-Senatului-6-iulie-2020.pdf>
(<https://unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Metodologia-consolidata-de-concurs-pentru-ocuparea-posturilor-didactice-adoptata-in-sedinta-Senatului-6-iulie-2020.pdf>)

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

It is worth emphasizing, at the outset, that the 26 measures in the action plan were developed collaboratively, which in itself represents an important first step towards a successful implementation. The measures have been directly inspired by proposals, observations and comments coming from 34 UB researchers from across the disciplines and with varied levels of experience. These researchers participated in the 6 focus-group consultations carried out specifically for the HRS4R initial phase. The measures were further inspired by suggestions made by around 200 UB academics in this year's UB Opinion Barometer survey; and by internal discussions between the working group and all relevant administrative departments at the University.

In other words, the action plan:

- (a) was drafted with specific proposals in mind coming directly from the interested parties - and was guided by the Gap Analysis;
- (b) has been discussed, in terms of the measures' feasibility on a short-to-medium term, with the administrative members of the working group and the Steering Committee; and
- (c) has been signed off by the UB Vice-Rector for Research.

The action plan will be implemented under the supervision of the Steering Committee, headed by the Vice-Rector for Research and consisting of a representative of each relevant administrative department involved in key measures of the Action Plan. Each measure in the Plan is assigned to a responsible unit. Where relevant, academics themselves will be involved directly via the faculty deans, department heads, and/or research centres.

To facilitate the involvement of academics, the Action Plan will be launched in an official event. A summary information package will be prepared to inform the academic community, in addition to the materials posted on the UB's official HRS4R website. Furthermore, the community as a whole will be notified with respect to the implementation process via institutional email. An administrative officer will be tasked with collecting questions from and providing responses to interested academics.

The Steering Committee will first define and then keep track of the calendar, progress, and delivery of each measure, as well as of any impediments in the execution of the latter. Where additional conditions have to be put in place for the successful completion of a measure, it will be the task of the Committee, and of its head in particular, to take the matter up to the relevant decision-making body (e.g., the Academic Senate, the Rector).

The indicators listed for each measure will be assessed at the end of the implementation process and monitored throughout. The yearly UB Opinion Barometer will provide an additional opportunity to test whether the measures will have had the desired effect – at least in terms of UB members' perception.

After the expiry of the implementation date, the process will be subject to a HRS4R progress report, assessing the degree of implementation and the steps to come.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

Note: Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Steering Committee will establish, in its initial meetings:

- an implementation calendar for each measure;
- milestones for all measures wherein defining such stages is appropriate;
- one or several officers within the responsible units tasked with the execution of (key phases of) each measure;
- one Committee member in charge of monitoring the progress of each measure.

The Steering Committee will then convene periodically to take stock of the progress in the implementation of the measures, hearing progress reports from the responsible Committee members and making the corresponding decisions where necessary.

How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The 26 measures in the action plan were developed collaboratively with academics at the UB.

To facilitate the involvement of academics in the implementation process, the Action Plan will be launched in an official event. A summary information package will be prepared to inform the academic community, in addition to the materials posted on the UB's official HRS4R website. Furthermore, all members of the academic community will be notified with respect to the implementation process via institutional email. An administrative officer will be tasked with collecting questions from and providing feedback to interested academics.

Additionally, several of the measures involve working directly with academics themselves (e.g. doctoral advisers). For other measures, vice-deans for research, department heads, and/or coordinators in research centres will be the main interface between the administration and academics. Under these circumstances, the vice-deans, departments heads, and the heads of research centres are expected to consult with academics within their units, provide suggestions and feedback, and inform them with respect to the relevant measures and their progress.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy. *



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The measures in the Action Plan are generally in line with the UB Rector's current strategic plan. These measures and the HRS4R framework as a whole are also closely aligned with the (goals of the) UB's methodologies and policies on recruitment and promotion. The HRS4R will be explicitly mentioned in the relevant strategic instruments of the University of Bucharest. Relevant actions by the administration will be linked to the effort to harmonize the University's human resources policies with the Charter, the Code, and with the HRS4R framework specifically.

More generally, as UB methodologies and policies are progressively altered or updated, officers with the HR Department will monitor closely their alignment with the HRS4R and suggest appropriate changes to facilitate harmonization.

How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Steering Committee will ensure that the measures in the Action Plan are implemented by:

- launching the measures in the Action Plan publicly and informing the UB community;
- deciding on an implementation calendar for each measure and, where relevant, on milestones;
- assigning officers in the responsible units to implement the measures;
- ensuring that appropriate resources are committed for each measure;
- consulting the interested parties in the University whenever necessary;
- monitoring each measure to identify obstacles to implementation or delays, determining their causes, and undertaking corrective actions.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Each Steering Committee member will be responsible for monitoring / overseeing one or several measures of the Action Plan.

Based on the calendar and milestones established by the Committee in its initial meetings, each responsible Committee members will:

- monitor the relevant measure(s);
- identify obstacles, delays, or other departures from the original plan;
- gather and convey feedback from the responsible units;
- request feedback from other interested parties (e.g. academics);
- propose corrective actions;
- where absolutely necessary, propose changes in the original measure or in the implementation timeline.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Assessing progress depends on the individual measure in question. Most measures in the Action Plan are straightforward; associated indicators were formulated in such a way as to make success / failure relatively clear.

Some measures are more open-ended, in the sense that they represent a first step towards a more significant change (for example, the change in the system of feedback to candidates). In such cases, we will monitor relevant changes over time (e.g. number of foreign researchers, number of young researchers accessing career advice services). We will consult directly with the academic community, as we have done for the HRS4R initial phase, through focus groups and in more informal ways.

More generally, the UB Opinion Barometer, a survey of all academics (and, separately, of students) conducted yearly by the Office of Statistics, can be useful in gauging the changes in perception within the UB community.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

The Action Plan consists, essentially, of piecemeal measures. Together, they will improve considerably researchers' experiences at the UB across a number of important dimensions. That said, the University will need to undertake a broader effort to include at least some of these dimensions into its basic strategic instruments. This would entail ampler consultations as well as a more systematic, holistic endeavor. The coming stages of the HRS4R process could provide an opportunity in that direction.