



## Clarifications to the Interim Report Assessment

Pursuant to the feedback received from the European Commission to the Interim Report WUELS provides the following clarifications in blue font.

### 1. General remarks

**Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?**

Yes

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

Partly

The report clearly indicates that the organization's priority for the next period is to reach OTM-R requirements. However, a clearer statement on initially set actions yet to be achieved would help follow the progress made over the period. Also, the lack of explanations on delay or postponing of actions from the initial action plan does not help in fully assessing how the 2-year implementation period went.

The undertakings marked „in progress” are an ongoing activities that are conducted on regular basis. The university assumed that all ongoing actions should be marked as “in progress” as they are constantly developed and improved, although the initial objectives from the action plan had been reached.

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

No

The assessor did not find the interim report on the institutional website. Only a brief one-page overall list of goals linked to OTM-R is published at [https://www.upwredu.pl/p/pracownicy/karta\\_naukowca/action\\_plan\\_for\\_the\\_implementation\\_phase.pdf](https://www.upwredu.pl/p/pracownicy/karta_naukowca/action_plan_for_the_implementation_phase.pdf), therefore not providing detailed information on the current status of originally set actions, additions nor modifications. Unfortunately, it lacks the expected level of details that can allow proper assessment of progress made towards the initial action plan.

The Interim Report has been published on the website dedicated to HR4SR. The action plan has been extended and a set of actions has been designated for the period of 2019-2022.

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

Yes



### Has the organisation developed an OTM-R policy?

Partly

At the time the organization applied for the HR Excellence logo in 2016, OTM-R had not been introduced in HRS4R process. At interim time, WUELS has appropriately carried out its OTM-R assessment, and has formerly committed to enhancing its recruitment process and publishing it over the next phase (years 2019-2022).

WUELS presents a promising Action plan and good general results, showing that HRS4R is fully embedded in the institution's strategy. However, the report lacks essential elements to fully appreciate the progress made and the quality of the implemented HRS4R.

## 2. Strengths

- The support and commitment from the highest representatives at WUELS is obvious, and proof is found that the institution has devoted significant time and effort to deeply and durably embed HRS4R as part of its general strategy (for that matter, the initial gap analysis and action plan are of excellent quality).
- All staff categories (members of governance, administration, teaching and research staff - including R1-R4 researchers) are involved in the development and monitoring of HRS4R. Likewise, the implementation is not limited to the HR department and encompasses all relevant administrative departments
- Set actions are clearly linked to observed gaps, particularly with regards to OTM-R (OTM-R related targets are part of a Work Package of a nationally-funded project that WUELS specifically applied for and received).
- 47% of the set goals from the initial action plan is achieved

All the goals have been achieved. Actions considered to be ongoing have been qualified as “in progress” not as “completed” since they continue to be improved on a regular basis.

## 3. Weaknesses

- The report lacks details on how the implementation and monitoring are done (“meets on a regular basis” is too vague): for instance, an update on the groups' composition (including the number of researchers and their category in each group - R1 to R4) is missing; so is the number and frequency of meetings of the various groups.

The Working Group and the Monitoring Group are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan.

The Working Group consists of researchers R1 to R4, administrative and management staff (R1 to R4 representatives for each group, the Head of HR Department, the Head of Department of Research (the



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representative of the Leading Research Groups), the Head of International Relations Office, the Vice-head of International Business Relations, the administrative staff from HR Department, Office for University Information and Promotion and Centre for Foreign Languages (14 persons in total).

<https://bip.upwr.edu.pl/akty-prawne/zarzadzenia/zarzadzenia-rektora/2020-rok/zarzadzenie-nr-1122020-rektora-universytetu-przyrodniczego-we-wroclawiu-z-dnia-14-kwietnia-2020-roku-113.html>

The tasks of the Working Group include:

- Developing OTMR policy, developing procedures and regulations in accordance with the guidelines of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in the areas: Ethical and professional aspects, Recruitment and evaluation, Working conditions and social security and training;
- Improvement of processes related to the recruitment of researchers and their adaptation in the academic environment of the Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences;
- Activities regarding the dissemination of the proceedings conducted as part of the HR logo strategy at the Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences.

The task of the **Monitoring Group** is to assess the proceedings and effects of the implementation of the HR Logo Strategy, and in particular to approve action plans within the OTMR policy based on the reports of the Working Group. The Monitoring Group consists of Vice-rector for research and international relations, the vice-rector for innovation and business cooperation, chairwoman of the Commission on Anti-Discrimination and H2020 expert – Regional Contact Point, Euraxess, in a role of an external expert (4 persons in total).

The Working Group meets once a quarter and the Monitoring Group twice in a year.

<https://bip.upwr.edu.pl/akty-prawne/zarzadzenia/zarzadzenia-rektora/2020-rok/zarzadzenie-nr-1132020-rektora-universytetu-przyrodniczego-we-wroclawiu-z-dnia-14-kwietnia-2020-roku-112.html>

- Referring to the various teams or bodies in charge of carrying out HRS4R while using different names makes it confusing to follow (Working group, monitoring group, Team of the C&C implementation, Committee for implementation..., ). For instance, the report mentions a HR logo coordinating team without indicating who is in it. It is unclear whether it is the same as the Working group or the Monitoring group, or if it is a whole different set of stakeholders in the university.

The clarifications can be found in the point above.

- No explanations are provided as to why some target dates from the initial action plan are not met, why there are early or late (i.e. actions 7 and 1 respectively), nor why a change in the team/department in charge was made (actions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15). It is unclear whether the target dates indicated in the interim report under the *Proposed actions* comparative table are the updated ones (if so then, why are most target dates for actions marked as "in progress" not set within the 2019-2021 period?).



As mentioned above all the goals initially set have been achieved. Actions considered to be ongoing have been qualified as “in progress” not as “completed” since they continue to be improved on a regular basis.

As the undertaken activities within Action 1 were complex and needed some structural changes of the scope of operations of the Career Office and the University's Centre of Personal Excellence this task required more time to be fulfilled, resulting in a one year delay comparing to the originally planned schedule.

The legal procedures went more effectively than planned, therefore Action 7 was completed one year in advance.

The Higher Education reform resulted in changes in the organizational structure of the university and consequently in the restructuring of administrative units and their assigned responsibilities. Therefore, there were changes in the units in charge of the planned tasks within actions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 15.

- Although indicators are defined for every action, no values are reported in the interim report (i.e. number of students who received advice, number of academics informed, number of researchers who participated in scientific grants, and so on) therefore not providing the necessary evidence to assess progress effectively.

## Actions' indicators

### **Action 1 – Access to career advice**

Since the extension of the scope of activities in providing PhD students with advice, 8 PhD students have participated in individual sessions provided by the Careers Service Office (March 2019 – May 2019).

### **Action 2 - Teaching**

Time devoted by senior members of staff to the training of the early stage researchers is adequately recognised in the academic evaluation sheet (thesis supervision and mentoring). As the interim evaluation is obligatory for every researcher, this information has reached the entire academic staff at the university.

The remuneration issues are discussed at the rector's annual speeches in the form of open public meetings, summarizing each year of the university's operation.

The researchers are informed about the mechanism of calculation of remuneration in European projects, during trainings and consultations on project proposal development.

No. of academics informed on the issue: approx. 880



### **Action 3, 4, 7 - Selection (Code), Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code), Gender balance**

Adequate regulations were introduced.

### **Action 5 - Recognition of qualifications (Code)**

The multifaceted mobility among scientists and recognition of informal qualifications is reflected in the Evaluation Sheet of the academic teacher which is obligatory for every researcher. This information has reached the entire academic staff at the university.

No. of academics informed on the issue: approx. 880

### **Action 6 - Working conditions**

The information in the scope of action 6 is available on the university websites. Moreover, it has been communicated during meetings at the faculties and the university's senate in the framework of dissemination activities within HRS4R Strategy.

### **Action 8 - Career development**

In 2019 WUELS had 25 running international research and mobility project for the sum of approx. 5 750 000 EUR

In 2019 36 micro grants within two internal programmes were awarded for the total sum of 1 383 507 PLN.

### **Action 9 - Value of mobility**

The drafted proposal of provisions concerning the inclusion of sectoral mobility (cooperation with industry) in the interim evaluation of the research and teaching staff was submitted to the Periodic Evaluation Committee.

### **Action 12 - Complains/ appeals**

In the event of circumstances indicating a conflict of interest regarding ethical issues the Committee for Ethical Conduct of Employees acts as arbitrator (Senate's Decree 106/2017). The information has been disseminated among academic staff during Faculties Assemblies and on the university's website <https://www.upwr.edu.pl/university/48947/faq.html> .

Furthermore, the university organised a full-day trainings on the mobbing and discrimination issues (26th and 27th June 2018). All the WUELS employees were obliged to participate in the training and sign a declaration of acknowledgement.



No. of academics informed on the issue: approx. 880

### **Action 13 - Participation in decision-making bodies**

The representatives of the scientists at various stages of their career are present in all collegial bodies of the university. The information is available on the university's website and it was disseminated during meetings at the faculties.

No. of academics informed on the issue: approx. 600

### **Action 15 - Supervision**

14 Leading Research Groups have been established.

[https://www.upwr.edu.pl/research/48558/leading\\_research\\_group.html](https://www.upwr.edu.pl/research/48558/leading_research_group.html)

- Neither the interim report nor an updated action plan showing the state of achievement (like a summary table similar to Annex 5 of the initial action plan) are published on the institutional website.

All planned actions have been completed. Actions considered to be ongoing have been qualified as “in progress” not as “completed” since they continue to be improved on a regular basis.