HRS4R

4: ACTION PLAN

UCAM Universidad Católica de Murcia

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1. Organisational Information

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	551
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	28
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	7
Of whom are women	272
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	160
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	186
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	205
Total number of students (if relevant)	11.275
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	808

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	18.360.358 €
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	1.572.145 €
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	1.163.959 €
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	5.365.630 €

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

The UCAM Universidad Católica de Murcia is a private, catholic university located in Guadalupe, Murcia. Since its creation in 1996, the university has been offering higher education studies in the Hieronymites Monastery, a building dating from the early 18th century, declared a National Historic-Artistic Monument in 1981.

It has a diversified academic offer, with 32 official undergraduate degrees and 87 postgraduate degrees.

UCAM has considered sports as one of its fundamental pillars, as well as internationalization and research, with 101 groups and 540 lines of research, in order to promote the transfer of knowledge to the productive sector.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Thematic heading of the Charter and Code	STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES
Ethical and professional aspects	Summary of main strengths: ○ Research freedom is one of the characteristics best rated in the survey. ○ The Ethical Committee guarantees the compliance of ethical norms and core ethical principles. ○ There are specific regulations covering intellectual and industrial property. ○ Non-discrimination, equal opportunity and respect for fundamental rights are granted in the Rules of organization and operation of the UCAM. ○ The Scientific Culture Unit promotes scientific, technological and innovation culture. ○ The Office for the Transfer of Research Results (OTRI) promotes relations between research groups and companies. Summary of main weaknesses: ○ Code of Good Research Practices is still under development. ○ There isn't an evaluation process for junior researchers (R1, R2) available.

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Recruitment and selection	Summary of main strengths: ○ The current job advertisements are quite detailed. The basic requirements, working conditions and entitlements are usually included or are described in the additional document attached to the call: "Terms and conditions of the call". ○ All candidates receive a standard email by the end of the process with information about the result of their application. ○ No kind of discrimination (gender, age, ethnic, sexual etc.) on the selection processes. ○ UCAM is strongly focused on internationalization, so mobility experience is recognized as an advantage in the recruitment processes. ○ The postdoctoral positions financed by own calls are open to postdoctoral teaching and research staff in any of the fields of study at the university. ○ For selection of all profiles (R1-R4) are established 2 committees (appropriately diverse): Technical Committee, Seleccion Committee. Summary of main weaknesses: ○ The current recruitment procedure does not fully meet the C&C and OTM-R elements and is not available for candidates´review on the webpage. ○ Job advertisements are not streamlined and the details about career development prospects are missing in the posts. ○ Not enough information for researchers about OTM-R. ○ There is not one recruitment tool in place so candidates apply via different recruitment platforms, which causes difficulty in handling standardized communication with applicants. ○ The selection process is mostly based on impartial metrics, but the detailed selection criteria are not always public.
Working conditions	Summary of main strengths:

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- ○ The university guarantees that the working conditions of all its employees are adequate, as well as ensuring compliance with current legislation on equality.
- ○ UCAM ensures the optimum duration of contracts and follows the legal framework governing the labour conditions: national law and collective bargaining agreement.
- ○ Mobility is recognized at UCAM as one of the main aspects in the research career.
- ○ UCAM inaugurated the opening of the new building (Hi Tech Sport & Health Innovation Hub) so that researchers can make use of the space and equipment.
- ○ The Service of Orientation and Labour Information (SOIL) is a service directed to foster and to help the labour insertion of our students and graduates.
- ○ The OTRI is integrated in the Research and Transfer Service of the UCAM Vice-Rectorate for Research, providing services to both researchers and companies. It has developed its own regulations in order to establish a legal framework that regulates the Ownership of the Results of Research, Development and Innovation carried out by the University Community.
- ○ The university has the figure of the University Ombudsman, created by the Organic Law of Universities to ensure respect for the rights and freedoms of professors, students and administrative and service personnel in the actions of the different university bodies and services.
- ○ Researchers are represented on the Board of Trustees by the Vice-Rector for Research and have representatives in the UCAM Workers' Union.

Summary of main weaknesses:

- ○ There is no regulation concerning co-authorship for researchers.
- ○ There is no standard procedure for researchers to make changes to their working hours or teaching loads.
- ○ The welcome handbook and the guide to getting to know the institution is not used for new recruits.

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	○ UCAM must assign a person in the Vice-Challencor for Research department for career counseling and set up a registration form for enquiries. ○ The current carrier plan document is available only in Spanish and is not public.
Training and development	Summary of main strengths: ○ The doctoral program regulations establish the organisation, procedures and supervision of the Ph.D. studies for junior researchers. ○ UCAM is fully committed to professional development of the staff in order to achieve their full potential, providing specific courses and training activities in transversal skills. Every employee at any stage of their career has access to internal and external training, and support of the Knowledge Transfer Office. Summary of main weaknesses: ○ Supervision practices are not contained in a specific document, they will be included in the Code of Good Research Practices (under development). ○ There is no standard procedure by which researchers can request specific training. Therefore, an online form will be created to enable these requests to be made and the research community will be informed of this.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website. Link to the organisation's HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

URL: https://investigacion.ucam.edu/vicerrectorado/transparencia/hrs4r

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Proposed ACTIONS	Gap Principle(s)	Timing		Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
		2022	**2023**		
ACTION 1: Create the handbook: "Code of Good Research Practices". 1. 1. Create the handbook: "Code of Good Research Practices" in both languages (English and Spanish) in order to cover all aspects of the work as a researcher and facilitate important information in one document only. A special special attention will be paid to the following points: ○ information and links related to the professional attitude ○ research dissemination ○ intellectual property rights ○ co-authorships ○ good supervision practices ○ training opportunities	4, 7, 9, 32, 37	Q4		Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research International Doctoral School	**Indicator(s):** ○ Approval of the handbook by the governing bodies. ○ Publication on the UCAM website. ○ The link to the code included in the Welcome Handbook. **Target(s):** ○ 100% of the researchers are informed about the new handbook.
ACTION 2: Give visibility to the legal framework governing the labour contracts.	5	Q3		Human Resources	**Indicator(s):** ○ Publication of the legal framework on the Employee Portal.

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Action					Indicators/Targets
2.1. Create a section dedicated to the legal framework in the Employee Portal. All researchers have access to this tool and its idea is to communicate all important HR topics by this service. 2.2. Upload "Spanish´s legislation for Workers Regulations" and Collective Bargaining Agreement to Employee Portal. 2.3. Update relevant information in the Welcome Handbook.					**Target(s):** ○ Number of visits to the dedicated section in the Employee Portal.
ACTION 3. Create a guideline for foreign researchers willing to live and work in Spain. 3.1. Work on a guideline in English for foreign researchers to cover the basic topic related to working and living in Spain and thus reduce or eliminate the fears of relocation. The guideline will cover among other things: immigration issues, visa processing, accommodation, country information, basic labour rules in Spain.	5	Q4		Human Resources	**Indicator(s):** ○ Approval of the guideline by governing bodies. ○ Publication on the UCAM website. **Target(s):** ○ 30% increase in applications from abroad.
ACTION 4: Design a Welcome Handbook for the incoming researchers. 4.1. Create a Welcome Handbook for the incoming researchers as currently information is scattered amongst several documents and new hires are not always familiar	5, 21, 35	Q3		Human Resources IT	**Indicator(s):** Approval of the Welcome Handbook by governing bodies. **Target(s):**

with the rules, procedures, actions and services available at university.
The Welcome Handbook will cover among others the following topics:
   ○ legal framework;
   ○ the role and functions of OTRI department;
   ○ professional development opportunities at UCAM;
   ○ decision making bodies at UCAM etc.
 	
4.2. Attach the Handbook to the welcome email.
					Welcome Handbook shared with 100% of incoming researchers.

ACTION 5: Create and publish the OTM-R policy.
 	
5.1. Create the recruitment procedure and make it comply with all and C&C criteria and OTM-R as described in the Gap Analysis. Special attention will be paid to the gaps and needs identified during the HRS4R process for principles: 12. (Recruitment), 14 Selection), 16 (Judging merit), 17 (Variations in the chronological order of CVs), 20 (Seniority), OTM-R checklist.
 	
5.2. Publish English and Spanish versions of the OTM-R procedure on UCAM´s website.
	12,14, 16, 17, 20	Q4		Human Resources
				
				Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research
					Indicator(s):
					   ○ Approval of the policy by governing bodies.
					   ○ Publication on the UCAM website.
					
					Target(s):
					   ○ 100% of employees involved in the recruitment trained on OTM-R.
					   ○ Link to the OTM-R policy included in 100% of job advertisements for research roles.

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ACTION 6: Organize OTM-R training. 6.1. Train each person involved in the selection process of researchers on OTM-R. 6.2. Send an informative email to researchers or include the information in the monthly newsletter about the OTM-R in order to increase the awareness of the selection procedure at UCAM. 6.3. Inform the whole university community about the training session.	13, 14, 20	Continuous	Human Resources Vice Chancellor for Research Knowledge Transfer Office Comunicacion Office	**Indicator(s):** ○ Min. 2 training courses on OTM-R per year. ○ Ad-hoc training for each new hire involved in the recruitment. **Target(s):** ○ 100% of the selection staff trained in OTM-R. ○ 100% of the employees are informed about the HRS4R and OTM-R.
ACTION 7: Develop a standard template for research job advertisement. 7.1. Create a standard template for the research job advertisement to ensure that all postings meet the principles of the C&C and OTM-R rules. 7.2. Garantie, that information about the career development prospects appears in each job posting. 7.3. Share the job advertising template with employees involved in the selection process of researchers.	13,15	Q4	Human Resources	**Indicator(s):** ○ Approval of the template by HR Director. ○ Communication to the staff involved in recruitment. **Target(s):** ○ 100% of the selection staff is informed. ○ 100% of the job advertisements for research roles published

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					according to the template.
ACTION 8: Implement an evaluation template of merits in the recruitment process of researchers. 8.1. Implement an evaluation template for the preselection of candidates to judge the merits quantitatively and qualitatively and thereby streamline the whole selection criteria. 8.2. Share the template with employees involved in the selection process of researchers.	16, 17, 19	Q4		Human Resources Knowledge Transfer and Research Support Office	**Indicator(s):** ○ Approval of the template by HR Director. ○ Communication to the staff involved in recruitment. **Target(s):** Use the evaluation template in 100% of the selection processes of researchers.
ACTION 9: Launch only one recruitment tool. 9.1. Launch only one recruitment tool in both languages (English, Spanish) for all selection processes of R1-R4 to streamline the application and selection process. 9.2. Use the tool for the automatization and improvement of the communication between UCAM and candidate.	15		Q4	IT Human Resources Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research	**Indicator(s):** Launched the new recruitment tool **Target(s):** 100% of the applications received via the new recruitment system.

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Action					
ACTION 10: Review and update the current career plan document for researchers. 10.1. Revise and make necessary updates to the current carrier plan document on Employee Portal: "Directrices de carrera profesional del Personal Investigador de la UCAM" with better descriptions of the researcher functions, skills, mobility and adopting it the EU Charter and Code for Researcher. 10.2. Translate to English the carrier plan. 10.3. Publish the plan on the UCAM´s website in both languages (English and Spanish).	21, 28, 29		Q4	Human Resources	**Indicator(s):** ○ Research Career Path review approved by governing bodies. ○ Publication on the UCAM website in both languages. **Target(s):** Min. 300 visits per year to the career development section.
ACTION 11: Establish a point of contact for a research career development. 11.1. Appoint a 1 person in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research advising about the research career development. 11.2. Create a registration form requesting a consultation. 11.3. Update relevant information in the Welcome Handbook and career plan document for researchers.	28, 30		Q4	Knowledge Transfer and Research Support Office Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research	**Indicator(s):** ○ The carrier advisor - appointed. ○ Registration form published. **Target(s):** Min. 100 assessments given.

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Action				Responsible	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
ACTION 12. Design and complete the training plan for researchers. 12.1. Create an online request form to communicate training needs and organize future curses based on the requests. 12.2. Inform all researchers about the existence of the new form. 12.3. Offer trainings on the specific areas detected during the HRS4R process: *opportunities of searching and requesting research projects; *teaching skills improvement; *dissemination of the research result *ANECA accreditation etc. 12.4. Update relevant information in the Welcome Handbook.	9, 25, 26, 33, 39		Q1, Q2, Q3	Human Resources Knowledge Transfer and Research Support Office International Project Office International Doctoral School Scientific and Innovation Culture Units Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research	**Indicator(s):** ○ Online request form designed. Online request form published and shared with the research community. ○ Training on detected areas during HRS4R offered to researchers **Target(s):** ○ 100% of the researchers are informed about the process. ○ 100% of training needs detected during HRS4R offered.
ACTION 13: Streamline some relevant HR processes. 13.1. Simplify and make clear some HR processes identified during the HRS4R project by creating a request form in order to ask for a part-time work, sabbatical leave etc. 13.2. Publish the link to the forms on UCAM´website or Employee Portal.	24, 33	Q4		Human Resources Vice Chancellor for Research	**Indicator(s):** ○ Online request form created. ○ Online request form published and shared with researchers. **Target(s):** 100% of the researchers

13.3. Update relevant information in the Welcome Handbook.					informed about the process.
ACTION 14: Define an evaluation procedure for the R1 and R2 researchers 14.1 Define an evaluation procedure for the R1 and R2 researchers hired within research projects taking into account their overall research creativity and research results. 14.2 Update relevant information in the Welcome Handbook.	11		Q1	Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research Vice Chancellor for Research	**Indicator(s):** ○ Evaluation process defined. ○ Evaluation process approved by the Vice Chancellor for Research **Target(s):** 100% of the R1, R2 researchers hired within the research projects evaluated.
ACTION 15: Increase the awareness of the complaint mechanism 16.1. Make visible the existence of the ombudsman as a mediator in the conflicts between researchers and explain its functions by including relevant information in the Welcome handbook and Code of Good Research Practices.	29	Q4		Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research Human Resources	**Indicator(s):** ○ Welcome handbook and Code of Good Research Practices updated. ○ Number of complaints received. ○ Number of complaints mediated. ○ Number of complaints solved. **Target(s):**

					0 complaints received as the main goal of UCAM is to create a collaborative work environment.

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According to the Spanish Labour Code there is an obligation to follow the constitutional principles of equality, merit, capacity, and publicity in all recruitment processes and UCAM complies with those requirements, therefore many of the rules of the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment are already met.

In the Action Plan described above there are several actions related to the principles of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment.

First of all UCAM understands the importance of the Open Recruitment Policy and is committed to create and make public the official guideline as soon as possible (action 5: Update and publish the OTM-R policy). The general goal pursued by the University with this policy is to streamline the process, to guarantee the best possible match between the person and the job, increase the hiring of researchers and deliver the best experience to candidates/employees during the recruitment and whole employee life cycle.

As soon as the document is ready, UCAM will organise a training for staff involved in the selection process on OTM-R (action 6: Organize OTM-R training) in order to make sure that all employees understand the rules and will apply them to daily tasks.

Based on the results of the OTM-R checklist, UCAM is going to take the following actions:

1. OTM-R system:

1.1. Build an integrated e-recruitment tool for application, selection and contact with candidates (action 9. Launch only one recruitment tool).

1.2. An OTM-R working group has been established to create the recruitment policy and work on a quality control mechanism together with the working group for implementation of OTM-R.

2. Advertising and application phase:

2.1 Create a standard template for the job advertisement: (action 7. Develop a standard template for the jobs advertising) to ensure that all job posts meet the principles of the C&C and OTM-R rules.

3. Evaluation and selection phase:

3.1. Design an evaluation template (action 8: Implement an evaluation template) for the preselection of candidates, to judge the merits of applicants quantitatively and qualitatively and thereby streamline the whole selection criteria.

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3.2. Include the details related to the composition of the selection comites in the OTM-R policy.

4. Appointment phase

4.1. Describe a complaint mechanism for candidates, who are not satisfied with the result of the recruitment process.

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected implementation process:

The main benefit of the HRS4R implementation process for UCAM is the change in the organizational culture, streamlining   the crucial HR processes and improvement in the overall communication at the university. As HRS4R is beneficial for the whole academic community, all employees (researchers R1-R4, management, administrative staff) are involved in the process.
All the actions mentioned in the Action Plan are relatively diverse in their thematic focus, therefore there are different teams responsible for the execution of the assigned tasks: Human Resources; Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, Knowledge Transfer and Research Support Office, International Project Office, International Doctoral School, Scientific and Innovation Culture Units, Communication Office, IT etc.

The topics may overlap but the overall work efficiency is ensured by the HRS4R Working Group who will strictly collaborate with the implementation teams and supervise the work progress.
The HRS4R Woking Group has prepared the final documentation of the Gap Analysis and the Action Plan, so it is going to play the role of an implementation committee as well.

Steering group will be regularly overseeing the progress in OTM-R strategy implementation.

In order to make sure that the actions mentioned in the Action Plan are fully implemented, each of them is assigned to the specific department in charge of implementation with a clear deadline. Close to the deadline the Working Group is going to request the results and ask for progress.
After the 24 months of Action Plan implementation, UCAM will execute the interim assessment and a report will be prepared for external evaluation. A proper justification will be given for all deviations in the actions, taking into account external circumstances not known at the time of establishing the initial action plan. Within three years, UCAM will implement and monitor the proposed actions according to the revised action plan adding feedback from the interim assessment.

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Checklist	*Detailed description and duly justification
How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?	The Steering Committee will meet the Working Group HRS4R biannual or operatively if needed. The Working Group HRS4R presents a report on the progress in implementation of the Action Plan to the Steering Committee based on the information from the Implementation Teams. Each Team assesses the progress in the development of their activities every three months. The Steering Committee has a right to: ● make comments regarding the implementation and suggest a corrections needed; ● monitor timely achievement of the tasks assigned; ● evaluate potential risks and propose preventive steps. By the end of each calendar year, the representative of the Steering Committee will give to the Comunicacion Office of UCAM an overview of what has been achieved and what the prospects are for the following year in the area of the HRS4R implementation. The Comunicacion Office will publish a report on the progress in the university newsletter or UCAM webpage.
How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?	The process of implementation of the Action plan is considered as open, so it means that each member of the research community: ● can join the Implementation teams and take part actively in the executions of the tasks at any time, ● participate in the OTM-R training, ● a specific webpage will be maintained with all HRS4R related documentation for the consultation for a whole academic community, ● all people interested in giving feedback/suggestions on HRS4R will find an email address to contact the HRS4R Woking Group.

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	The whole implementation structure is designed in such a way that it reflects the actual needs of employees and that every employee can suggest a proposal or specific solution.
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.	The Management Board has confirmed the compliance of the measures performed as part of HRS4R implementation with the institutional regulations, the adopted or planned measures are not in contradiction with the organizational rules and their implementation is supported by the management. The OTM-R working group is going to revise the HR processes and adapt them to the requirements of HRS4R.
How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?	The timeline of the actions was thoroughly discussed with the responsible teams. For each action, tangible indicators and targets are identified. Their implementation will be continuously monitored by the HRS4R Working Group and evaluated by the Steering Committee. The Implementation Teams will report every 3 months to the Working Group on the progress of the tasks assigned. The Working Group will be responsible for timely identification of risks and giving proposals of measures if there is a conflict with the schedule. The Working Group is going to give a biannual report to the Steering Committee on the progress.
How will you monitor progress (timeline)?	The timeline of each action is clearly identified in the Action Plan. The Implementation Teams will meet once a month and will evaluate together the progress achieved. All delays will be reported to the HRS4R Working Group and should be discussed in order to propose the measures, take all possible efforts to overcome the issue, and meet the deadline. The information on the achieved progress will be reported to the Steering Committee biannual by a respective member of the Working Group. The Operational Action Plans will be revised once a year.

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How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?	UCAM will fully adhere to the specific rules for applicants of HR excelente certificate, according to which within 24 months after the "HR Award" is presented for the first time, the recipient is required to provide the European Commission with an interim evaluation of the institution including an Action Plan review. Before the period of 24 months, the Working Group for HRS4R will perform an internal evaluation in compliance with the requirements of the European Commission (using the respective template). The Working Group will revise the fulfillment of the approved Action Plan and evaluate and indicators and compilation of the targets. Prior to being sent to the European Commission, the evaluation will be submitted to the Steering Committee for its approval. An online questionnaire will be sent to the research community in order to find out how satisfied the employees are and how they perceive the changes being performed from the viewpoint of their work.