

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

‘The European Charter for Researchers’ and ‘the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers’ were adopted by the European Commission as a Recommendation to the Member States in 2005. The aim is to improve working conditions and to ensure attractive research careers within the European Research Area.

‘The European Charter for Researchers’ constitutes a framework which specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers as well as of employers of researchers. It takes into account the multiple roles of researchers, who are appointed not only to conduct research, but are also involved in supervision, mentoring, management and/or administrative tasks.

‘The Code of Conduct’ consists of a set of general principles and requirements that should be followed by employers and/or funders when appointing or recruiting researchers. These principles and requirements ensure the observance of values such as a fair recruitment processes, career development opportunities, transnational mobility, equal opportunities and research ethics.

The ‘Charter & Code’ address the following four areas:

- Ethical and Professional Aspects
- Recruitment and Selection
- Working Conditions and Social Security
- Training and Development

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and ‘Open, Transparent and merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R)’

The ‘Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)’ is a tool that helps employers to implement the principles of the ‘Charter & Code’ in their institutions. The intention of the HRS4R-initiative is to foster the development of strong research cultures at universities, to create better working conditions for researchers, and to promote academic careers.

The principles and requirements of **‘Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R)’** form a further core element of HRS4R and have to be equally addressed. Those include fair and transparent selection and appointment processes for researchers, clear guidelines and regulations on recruitment, equal opportunity, etc.

By implementing its own HRS4R, HHU aims to improve the working conditions for its researchers and to enhance the attractiveness of research careers at HHU.

Under the direction of the Vice-President for Research and Transfer a working group was established in spring 2017 in order to identify gaps and to agree on concrete steps to improve working conditions in those areas addressed by the 'Charter & Code' as well as the OTM-R.

The working group consists of, among others, representatives from the five faculties (researchers at all career levels), the Senate, HeRA, relevant administrative units of the university as well as the university hospital, the equal opportunities and diversity officers, etc. Additionally, particular attention was paid to **the involvement of further stakeholders**, such as researchers at all career levels, standing committees and relevant administrative units.

On the basis of the results of those discussions a **gap analysis and action plan** were drafted and submitted to the European Commission at the end of May 2018. The report was evaluated by international experts in a peer review process. On 11 December 2018 HHU was granted the '**HR Excellence in Research Award**', which recognises HHU's commitment to good working conditions and career development activities for researchers. In December 2020 HHU handed the first interim assessment of the action plan.

Further information

Euraxess

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r>

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

<https://www.hrk.de/themen/forschung/europaeischer-forschungsraum/>

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