

Important message to institutions:

Site Visits: All HRS4R in-house audits planned for 2021 and the foreseeable future in 2022 will be conducted remotely with the consent of the host institution. Should your institution be at renewal stage, once you submit your self-assessment online via the e-tool, the EC will be in contact with you to set a date for the remote visit together with a panel of independent experts. Should the institution prefer a classic on-site visit, the audit will be postponed. Meanwhile, institutions involved in the process can continue using the HR Excellence in research award.

Action Plan

Case number: 2020SK574179

Name Organisation under review: Slovak University of Technology

Organisation's contact details: Vazovova 5, Bratislava, 812 43

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 *	1279
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	168
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	85
Of whom are women *	430
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	482
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	52
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	745

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total number of students (if relevant) *	10678
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	2678
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	107222494
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	29487636
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	9425266
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1850463

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

The Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (STU) is a modern research and higher education institution. It continues a legacy of the 260-year-old Mining Academy in Banská Štiavnica. STU offers education in technical fields and involves students in research in natural sciences, computer sciences, construction, architecture, materials technologies, chemistry and food technologies. STU graduates are among the most desirable and the highest paid employees on the Slovakian labour market.

Research teams at the University are involved in international projects and annually deal with about 700 research projects funded through grants and hundreds of research contracts commissioned by businesses.

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:

▪ **Research freedom**

All in all, researchers from all faculties are satisfied with the research freedom. According to the Higher Education Act of Slovak Republic No 131/2002, Section 4, Paragraph 1, Letter a) , "freedom of scientific investigation, research, development or artistic and other creative activities and publicising their achievements" is guaranteed (unofficial act translation). In general, the researchers are limited only by their specialization and the terms of the grant agencies. Most national research grants are relatively open and do not strictly specify the research topics, which encourages freedom of researchers to carry out any research of their choice that fits them.

▪ **Seniority**

In general, the required qualification level is perceived as an integral requirement when filling a specific position. According to the "Rules of the recruitment procedure at STU", both the results achieved by the candidate and their life-long professional development are taken into consideration.

▪ **Recognition of the profession**

In general, researchers are acknowledged professionals in their respective area and are treated accordingly from the beginning of their career.

Weaknesses:

▪ **Ethics Committee and the Code of Ethics**

As the Ethics Committee was established just recently (the first introductory meeting took place on 30.6.2021), the awareness among employees has yet to be strengthened. The Code of Ethics of the Employee of STU (Annex no. 6 to the Staff Regulations for employees of STU) is not specific enough.

▪ **Public engagement**

Researchers feel a lack of support when it comes to presentation of their results to the public and industry, causing poor cooperation with practice and a lack of public awareness of the results achieved at the university in general.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:**▪ Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code of Conduct)**

Even though we perceive a certain issue when the career has to be interrupted due to maternity leave and the researcher subsequently fails to meet the age criteria (e.g. categorisation as 'young researcher' limited by 35 years of age), in general the variations in the chronological order of CVs are considered career development and a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers from the viewpoint of support of a broad-spectrum career path.

▪ Non-discrimination

Based on the GAP analysis and the H2020 project "CALIPER - Gender Equality in STEM Research" assessment, there are no notable issues perceived regarding discrimination on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition. The University has prepared its Gender Equality Plan (GEP) based on the Charter and Code principles and the "National Strategy for Equality between Women and Men and Equal Opportunities in the Slovak Republic for the Years 2021-2027". The GEP was published on 13.12.2021.

Weaknesses:**▪ Staff recruitment, Transparency and Recognition of qualifications**

The process of advertising vacancies is very detailed (the Higher Education Act, the Anti-discrimination Act and different internal documents, mainly the Rules of the recruitment procedure for university teachers, researchers, professors and associate professors and head employees at the STU), however the interview and hiring standards for researchers – in particular at the beginning of their career – are rather inconsistent and vague. In many cases the recruitment process is very individualised. STU does not have a sufficiently detailed description of the recruitment process, career development or mobilities.

Insufficient legislation for recruitment of researchers (and teachers) at an international level (in particular for professor and associate professor positions) poses a significant obstacle to making the university more international.

The current remuneration possibilities prevent geographical and intersectoral development (recruitment from abroad and from the industry) and recruitment of younger staff.

Global websites for researchers, such as EURAXESS, Research Gate etc. are rarely used.

STU does not have a specific regulation on recognition of informal qualifications as part of professional mobility, and even though it is taken into account in the selection procedure, its impact is minimal.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:**▪ Gender balance and Participation in decision-making bodies**

Both genders are represented in the individual decision-making bodies of faculties and the university. The share of women among the employees is increasing every year which, considering the nature and focus of a technical university, is a good gender equality indicator.

Women representation in decision-making bodies:

- Vicerectors: 2 women (out of 5)
- Vicedeans: 9 women (out of 20)
- Heads of department: (16 women out of 51)

Even there has never been a female rector, female deans are not uncommon; E.g. during the previous election period, there have been 2 female deans (out of 7).

With a few exceptions, researchers feel well represented in the self-governing and decision-making bodies of the faculties and the university. According to the Higher Education Act of Slovak Republic No 131/2002, Section 4, Paragraph 1, Letter e) , a "right of members of the academic community to elect the academic community bodies and be elected for them" is guaranteed (unofficial act translation). Employees and students elect members of the university and their faculty Academic Senates, the senators appoint members of the electoral commissions to elect the rector and the deans.

Weaknesses:**▪ Research environment**

Missing technical equipment, lack of information about the equipment available at the university, which could be used and shared with another research group to achieve the required scientific output. There are no strategy and rules for a systematic maintenance of equipment of individual departments.

Researchers also frequently complained about the excessive administrative burden, which deprives them of the time for research; they would appreciate simpler processes, centralised availability of information, as well as more administrative employees.

▪ Legislation and funding of research, resp. funding of the school system in general

The main issues seem to be the remuneration of the existing staff and the uncompetitiveness when looking for quality personnel from the industry and/or abroad, recognition of qualifications (in particular with foreign researchers), the way in which the national accreditation committee functions, and the transparency of domestic grant schemes. Researchers would appreciate a more targeted lobbying, possibly

by the top three public research institutions in Slovak Republic - STU, Comenius University and the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

Training and development*



Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

▪ **Access to research training and continuous development**

Researchers have access to scientific training in the field of research and to continuous development through numerous external sources of information.

▪ **Relation with supervisors, Supervision and managerial duties, and Supervision**

Supervisors are sufficiently expert in supervising research, have the knowledge, experience, expertise, and commitment to be able to offer the research trainee appropriate support. In general, relations with supervisors are considered professional and up to standard. This includes keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such feedback, and working in accordance with the agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs. In general, senior researchers build up a constructive and positive relationship with the early-stage researchers in order to set the conditions for efficient transfer of knowledge and for the further successful development of the researchers' careers. Most of the supervisor-subordinate relations are covered by the "Staff Regulations for employees of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava".

Weaknesses:

According to many respondents, there is no clear strategy of STU steering and the thereto related public awareness of STU, no unified transparent institutional recruitment, career consulting, development, and continuous professional development strategy, no strategy for recognition of informal qualification, for evaluation and comparison of performance of researchers working in different fields, and no clear strategy that could help stabilise young researchers at STU.

The possibilities of professional development offered internally or aggregated by the university are also perceived as an issue – there is no centralised information about the possibilities of education. Employees would also appreciate a better selection of internal education offered by the university (IT technologies, telecommunication trends, foreign languages, ...) offered at affordable prices or free of charge.

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://www.stuba.sk/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

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1

Practical implementation of the STU Code of Ethics, acquainting employees with its contents and the form and possibilities of applying the code to strengthening the position of the STU Ethics Committee: - Creating a webinar for all academic staff explaining the Code of Ethics and the role of the Ethics Committee. - Interview with the Chairman of the Ethics Committee in the university magazine with emphasis on the role of the Ethics Committee. - The Code of Ethics shall form an appendix to all employment contracts of new STU employees.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- (+/-) 6. Accountability
- (++) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (++) 34. Complains/ appeals

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

Second half of 2022

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

The Vice-Rector for Science and Research

- At least 50% of all academic employees have to pass the webinar. - 100% of heads of departments will have to pass a instructive webinar every 4 years. - Every new employee will get familiar with the STU Code of Ethics and confirm it with his/her signature. - Increase of complains solved by the Ethics Committee (currently 1)

Action 2

GAP Principle(s)

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

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

STU Ethics Committee regular implementation meetings to identify improvements and facilitate amendments such as: - A representative of students should be included into the Committee. - Setting the deadlines for statements and recommendations of the Ethics Committee.

GAP Principle(s)

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

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

First half of 2023

(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility

(+/-) 6. Accountability

(++) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

(++) 34. Complains/ appeals

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Chairperson
of the Ethics
Committee

- Implementation meetings at least once every half a year.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

A online platform for sharing of information, procedures and best practices in the field of research ethics pertaining, in particular, prevention of modern forms of plagiarism, professional approach, responsibility, research integrity, dissemination and exploitation of results, including 'Open Access' and 'Open Data' and security with a vision of building a fully functional Ethics portal and creating the go-to place for all academic staff and students to find answers related to the ethics issues of their work: - Creation of an online platform at www.stuba.sk in Slovak and English - Translation of all relevant directives and internal regulations into English - Regular website maintenance and updates. For the future: - Collection and sharing of information about the best practices and practical examples in the field of research ethics. - An online form to submit questions. - Creation of a FAQ database. - Use in academic staff trainings and in the teaching process.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 2. Ethical principles
- (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility
- (+/-) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 6. Accountability
- (++) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- (++) 33. Teaching
- (++) 34. Complains/ appeals

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

Second half of 2022 and further

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Chairperson of the Ethics Committee - Increase of complains solved by the Ethics Committee (currently 1). - Decrease of information queries addressed directly to the Ethics Committee.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

Motivation for interdisciplinary cooperation in research: - Elaboration of a university guideline for motivation for interdisciplinary cooperation in the field of research that promotes sharing of knowledge and equipment of various departments / faculties / institutions and brainstorming of new ideas. - Preparing an instructive webinar for the heads of departments. The existing directives regulate the following areas of interdisciplinary collaboration: - Support of the so-called 'Excellent Scientific Teams' - Young researcher excellent team support programme - Spin-offs and Start-ups

GAP Principle(s)

(-/+) 23. Research environment

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

Second half of 2023

Responsible Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-Rector for Science and

Research Vice-rector for Strategic Projects, Development, Innovation and Praxis Legal department

- 100% of heads of departments will have to pass a instructive webinar. - A growth of the count of interdisciplinary and inter-departmental projects and projects of collaboration with external institutions by 2% annually (monitored on an annual basis). - Minimizing the equipment idle time.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

Creating an 'Open Access' and 'Open Data' repository for dissemination of research results and public engagement - Procurement of the necessary hardware - Integration with the STU web page - Preparing an instructive webinar for all academic staff

GAP Principle(s)

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

(-/+) 9. Public engagement

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

Second half of 2022

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector
for Strategic
Projects,
Development,
Innovation
and Praxis
Vice-Rector
for Foreign
and Public
Relations

- At least 50% of all academic employees have to pass the webinar. - 100% of heads of departments will have to pass the instructive webinar every 4 years.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

Promoting the 'Open Access' and 'Open Data' repository for dissemination of research results and public engagement via its integration into the design manual (e-mail signatures, footer of official documents, etc.)

GAP Principle(s)

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

(-/+) 9. Public engagement

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

First half of 2023

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-rector
for Strategic
Projects,
Development,
Innovation
and Praxis
Vice-Rector
for Foreign
and Public
Relations

- The traffic on the www.stuba.sk web page should show a rising trend ongoingly.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

Creating an online platform for sharing of recruitment related information, procedures and best practices and HR policy tools as part of the www.stuba.sk website, with the objective of creating a unified complex university-wide HR policy and an comprehensive OTM-R training. - Collection and sharing of information regarding procedures, best practices and practical examples in the field of open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment policy. Information will be collected via e-mail, revised and uploaded to the web page. - Regular website maintenance and updates in both Slovak and English. For the future: - An online form to submit questions. - Creation of a FAQ database.

GAP Principle(s)

(-/+) 12. Recruitment

(--) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

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

Second half of 2022 and further

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR departments at the Rector's Office and Faculty level Bursar

- 100% of academic staff will be informed about the initiative by e-mail. - 100% of HR staff and heads of departments will be periodically reminded to share their examples.

Action 8

Preparation of a welcome information package for new employees and its translation into English and upload it to the HR platform (part of the www.stuba.sk website).

GAP Principle(s)

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

Proposed ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility	
(-/+) 12. Recruitment	
(--) 13. Recruitment (Code)	Second half of 2022
(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)	

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR departments at the Rector's Office and Faculty level Bursar	- A link to the welcome information package will be a part of the unified style, form and manner of publishing vacancies informing candidates at the end of the selection process aswell (see action 10).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

Advertising of all researcher vacancies on the Euraxess portal, expand advertising on international portals - Preparing a explanatory webinar for heads of departments and university management.

GAP Principle(s)

(-/+) 12. Recruitment

(--) 13. Recruitment (Code)

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

First half of 2022

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR

departments at the Rector's Office and Faculty level

- 100% of heads of departments and university management members have to pass the webinar. - Increased number of applications from abroad by 1% annually

Action 10

Unification of recruitment procedures of all faculties and the Rector's Office in accordance with OTM-R: - Unification of the style, form and manner of publishing vacancies ("vacancy manual"). - Definition and unification of the selection of recruitment committee members. - Unification of the style, form and manner of informing candidates at the end of the selection process. - Implementation of the unified procedures into existing university guidelines. - Preparing a information webinar for heads of departments and university management.

GAP Principle(s)

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

Proposed ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(-/+) 12. Recruitment	
(--) 13. Recruitment (Code)	
(+/-) 14. Selection (Code)	
(-/+) 15. Transparency (Code)	
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)	Second half of 2023

(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Bursar HR departments at the Rector's Office and Faculty level Deans Legal department	- Interviews with HR staff (each of the 7 faculties separately and one overall brainstorming session). - All relevant university guidelines will be amended. - 100% of HR staff, heads of departments and university management members have to pass the webinar every 4 years.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

Creating a platform for sharing of information, procedures and best practices in the field of career development and professional development, with a vision of preparing a unified institutional strategy of career development of researchers as part of a comprehensive university-wide HR policy. - Creating an online platform at www.stuba.sk in Slovak and English. - Collection and sharing of information on procedures and best practices and practical examples in the field of researcher career development strategy. Information will be collected via e-mail, revised and uploaded to the web page. - Translation of all relevant directives and internal regulations into English - Regular website maintenance and updates in both Slovak and English. For the future: - An online form to submit questions. - Creation of a FAQ database.

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

(+/-) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

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

(+/-) 28. Career development

(+/-) 29. Value of mobility

(-/+) 30. Access to career advice

(+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties

(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development

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

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

Second half of 2022 and further

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Proposed ACTIONS

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR departments at the Rector's Office and Faculty level Bursar	- 100% of academic staff will be informed about the initiative by e-mail. - 100% of heads of departments will be periodically reminded to share their examples.

Action 12

Rising awareness of the Gender Equality Plan: - Preparing a training for senior staff and heads of departments with the focus on the need to implement and apply gender equality at the University.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 2. Ethical principles	
(++) 10. Non discrimination	
(++) 27. Gender balance	First half of 2023
(+/-) 28. Career development	
(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors	

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Rector	100% of senior staff and heads of departments will have to pass a gender equality training.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

Unified research, artistic activities and publication evaluation / appraisal system preparation: - Gather best practices from all the faculties and prepare a draft of an unified University-wide model (including providing information about contractual and legal obligations regarding research, artistic activities and publication funding). - Introduction of the unified model draft to all departments in the form of a webinar followed by a questionnaire survey of the inclination (and/or conditions) of the departments towards the unified model. - Brainstorming session with the vice-deans for research to improve the draft according to the conditions of surveyed departments.

GAP Principle(s)

- (+/-) 4. Professional attitude
- (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- (++) 7. Good practice in research
- (++) 10. Non discrimination
- (+/-) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- (++) 22. Recognition of the profession
- (-/+) 26. Funding and salaries
- (+/-) 32. Co-authorship
- (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors

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

First half of 2023

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-Rector
for Science
and
Research
Vice-Deans
for Research
Deans
Rector

- At least 2/3 of heads of departments (of each faculty) have to pass the introductory webinar. - At least 2/3 of departments (of each faculty) have to answer the questionnaire. - 100% of vice-deans for research have to attend the brainstorming session.

Proposed ACTIONS

Unified research, artistic activities and publication evaluation / appraisal system guideline: - Elaboration of a university guideline for the final unified University-wide model. - Preparing of an introduction webinar for all academic staff.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 4. Professional attitude	
(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations	
(++) 7. Good practice in research	
(++) 10. Non discrimination	
(+/-) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	Second half of 2023
(++) 22. Recognition of the profession	
(-/+) 26. Funding and salaries	
(+/-) 32. Co-authorship	
(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors	
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Vice-Rector for Science and Research Vice-Deans for Research Deans Rector Legal department	- At least 50% of all academic employees have to pass the webinar. - 100% of heads of departments will have to pass a instructive webinar.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 15

Elaboration of a university guideline regarding acknowledgement of co-authorship of doctoral students at the end of their studies to enable the use of their work after they finish their studies (by waiving their rights or maintaining their contact data at the university to keep in touch in case their work will be used in the future).

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(+/-) 4. Professional attitude

(+/-) 32. Co-authorship

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

First half of 2023

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-Rector
for Science
and
Research
Legal
department

- 100% of academic staff will be informed about the guideline by e-mail. - 100% of heads of departments will be periodically reminded to communicate this guideline to their doctoral students.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

Dealing with outdated facilities and worrying conditions at the workplace: - Project ACCORD (Advancing University Capacity and Competence in Research), aiming towards boosting the research infrastructure of the university:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/projects/Slovakia/accord-upgrading-research-capacity-facilities-at-two-top-slovak-universities - STU recently opened a kindergarten for 22 (2 - 6 years old) children of young staff members. - Home-office (after approval of supervisor).

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

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

Second half of 2023 (ongoing)

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Rector
Bursar
Deans

- Increase in number of students (domestic and foreign) by 2% - Increase the share of former students joining the university as employees by 1%. - Increase of the possibility of sharing of knowledge and equipment of various departments / faculties / institutions (in synergy with Action 4). - Increase in number and value of contracts for work and research by 2% annually.

Unselected principles:

(++) 1. Research freedom (++) 20. Seniority (Code) (++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment

(++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++) 40. Supervision

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) *

Besides other things, the legislative framework for labour-law relations includes the Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education, the Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on Equal Treatment, and the Act. No. 552/2003 Coll. on Performance of Work in the Public Interest. The specifics of performing research require additional requirements to be formulated and additional obligations of both parties to be introduced beyond the scope of the obligations stipulated by the law. Creating a platform for sharing of information, procedures and best examples in the field of career development and recruitment policy and HR policy tools, will provide a good basis for the development and implementation of a centralised and complex university-wide HR policy which will, over time, be fully in line with the standards of an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment policy stemming from the Charter and the Code of Conduct.

It will also be necessary to organise training for HR staff with the objective of adopting the HRS4R strategy and developing the necessary soft-skills (addressing Slovak Academic Information Agency, Matej Bel University, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Comenius University, ... in order to share the best practice and HR related know-how) and train administrative staff so that they are able to communicate in a foreign language (English).

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://www.stuba.sk/buxus/docs/stu/pracoviska/rektorat/odd_veda_vyskum/HRS4R/Rules_of_the_recruitment_procedure_at_STU.pdf

4. Implementation

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

With the objective of unifying the procedures of individual faculties and the university as a whole with the principles of the Charter and the Code of Conduct, the implementation will take place using the measures specified above. Great importance will be attached to sharing best practice among individual faculties. Most of the measures adopted at a central level will be of a framework nature and the faculties will be provided with the necessary cooperation and methodological support.

The implementation timing will be semestral, however implementation supervision will be provided in the form of regular meetings of the STU management, which is also the Steering Committee of STU for implementation of HRS4R and meetings of the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research, which is also the Monitoring Committee for implementation of HRS4R. Issues related to the implementation of HRS4R will be discussed at least once a quarter (as these bodies meet more often, they can react to implementation issues that may arise more agilely).

Objectives we want to achieve by implementing the mentioned steps:

- simplify the access of local and foreign applicants to the university by advertising all open research positions on the Euraxess portal, by unifying and translating the necessary regulations, documents, and forms into English and by preparing a 'welcome package' for all new employees as well as improving the English language communication skills of administrative staff;

- popularization and practical implementation of the STU Code of Ethics into everyday life at the University, acquainting employees with its contents and the form and possibilities of applying the code to strengthening the position and evolution of the STU Ethics Committee;
- training of researchers in the field of ethics and intellectual property rights, create a platform for sharing of information, procedures, and best practices in the field of research ethics;
- unify the recruitment procedures of faculties and the Rector's Office according to OTM-R and establish a platform for the sharing of information, procedures, and best practices in the field of recruitment, career growth and professional development with the objective of identifying the needs and risks that need to be taken into consideration when preparing and implementing a complex and unified OTM-R policy;
- analyse opportunities for improvement of the working conditions of researchers with an emphasis on selected topics – possibilities of improving pay conditions, harmonising family and career, improving access for disabled researchers, improving the position of doctoral and post-doctoral candidates.

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 - consisting of members of the STU Management - has the task of supervising the activities of the Monitoring Committee in the form of a regular (at least) quarterly interim report on the situation and progress submitted by the head of the Monitoring Committee for HRS4R implementation (Vice-Rector for Science, Research & Doctoral Studies) at the meeting of the Steering Committee resp. the university management. The university is obliged to publish the minutes of the meeting of the STU management on the STU website. The Steering Committee (resp. the STU management) is entitled to adopt strategic resolutions in line with practical implementation of the Action Plan.

The Monitoring Committee consists of Vice-Deans for Science and Research of individual faculties, the head of the Institute of Management, the head of the HR Department and the head of the Department of Science and International Scientific Cooperation. Its role is to supervise the activities of faculty working groups and their methodological guidance in the implementation of activities arising from the action plan at the faculty level, as well as the preparation of regular interim reports on the situation and progress in implementing the Action Plan in practice for the Steering Committee.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Researchers will be involved through faculty working groups (similarly as with preparation of the GAP analysis). Each such working group includes the Vice-Dean for Research (as the representative of researchers), a representative of the HR department, a representative of research support workers and a representative of the unions. All proposed actions will be discussed on all levels – in the working groups, in the Monitoring Committee and in the Steering Committee. The proposed measures will also be published on the STU website where employees will be able to contact the relevant working group. In this way, every researcher will have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

Researchers will be contacted once a year through online questionnaires in which they will be able to evaluate the success and quality of the mentioned measures from the viewpoint of the research community.

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 introduction of principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in the processes of STU forms a part of the draft amendment to the Long-term STU programme and one of the tools of implementation of strategic university objectives in Area No. 2 'Research and Creative Activity: Global Excellence'.

Addendum 7 to the Staff Regulations for Employees of STU in Bratislava approved in the first half of 2020 also includes provisions regarding implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers at STU, as well as the Code of Ethics referring to the principles of the Charter and the Code.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The proposed measures will be implemented at the faculty level through members of individual faculty working groups. At the university level, implementation is ensured through the Monitoring Committee as the implementation body supported by the Steering Committee. The Rector as the head of the Steering Committee provides for efficient implementation of all measures. The implementation of the HRS4R action plan is part of the proposal to supplement the Long-term STU programme. When developing the tasks of the long-term plan of STU, the tasks formulated in the action plan will also be reflected in the tasks of the executive and management units of STU and the faculties.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress monitoring is the responsibility of the Monitoring Committee. The committee shall include all important individuals required to monitor progress, including: The Vice-Rector for Science, Research & Doctoral Studies (head of the committee), a representative of the HR Department, a representative of the Department of Science and International Scientific and Technical Cooperation, as well as Vice-Deans for Research from all faculties.

Progress will also be discussed at the regular meetings of the Board of Vice-Deans for Research (Vice-Rector for Science, Research and Doctoral Studies, Vice-Deans for Research) and at the university management meetings. Considering the milestones specified above, all measures need to be approved in advance and evaluated and presented once implemented. The Vice-Rector for Science, Research & Doctoral Studies will submit a progress report to the Rector, the management and, if necessary, also to the university board.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

All respective committees supported by members of the faculty working groups will be involved in the process of progress measurement and evaluation preparation. The Vice-Rector for Science and Research will be responsible for preparation of the final version of the internal and external evaluation.

The researchers' opinion will be presented by the heads of the faculty working groups – Vice-Deans for Science and Research.

Qualitative evaluation of researchers' satisfaction with the implementation of individual steps of the HRS4R strategy will be carried out once a year through an online questionnaire, in which researchers will be able to express whether and to what extent the implemented measures have brought improvements to their subjective practice and suggest possible improvements. The main indicator of the desired outcome will be the year-on-year increase in the satisfaction of researchers with the implementation of the principles of the Charter and the Code.

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

The proposed action plan will be implemented over the next two years, following which it will be revised to remove any inconsistencies and shortcomings.

Edit:

During the initial assessment period, STU managed to establish a functioning Ethics Committee - an independent body able to decide both in cases of research ethics as well as in cases of personal misconduct against any of the Charter and Code principles the STU Code of Ethics is based on. The STU also approved a Gender Equality Plan. Therefore some actions have been updated.

Many actions from the first submitted Action plan got delayed, as the University management and administration is occupied with adopting a major legislative change - an extensive but short-noticed amendment from 25.4.2022 mainly to the Higher Education Act of Slovak Republic.