HRS4R - Action Plan
Award Renewal

UIC Barcelona

Universitat Internacional de Catalunya

CASE NUMBER: 2019ES346670

NAME ORGANISATION UNDER REVIEW: Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC Barcelona)

ORGANISATION'S CONTACT DETAILS:

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WEB LINK TO PUBLISHED VERSION OF ORGANISATION´S HR STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN:

https://www.uic.es/en/research/scientific-policy/hr-excellence-research-uic-barcelona

SUBMISSION DATE: FEB 5TH, 2024

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1. Organisational Information

Organisational Profile

The Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC Barcelona) was founded in 1997 with the aim of offering quality university education and promoting research that serves society. Linked to the business world and with a strong international character, today our university is home to over 9,000 students. We offer sixteen bachelor's degrees, around thirty international double degrees and a wide range of master's and postgraduate degrees, and continuing education courses on our two campuses, located in Barcelona and Sant Cugat del Vallès. We offer individual attention, a comprehensive focus on each student, consistent contact with the professional world and innovative teaching and research methods. We are connected to society and to the world of business through sixteen company-sponsored chairs, five sponsored classrooms, five research institutes and three university clinics.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	398
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	64
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	13
Of whom are women *	200
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	57
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	237
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	41
Total number of students (if relevant) *	9013
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1017

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	2.379.830,47
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	1.045.907,97

Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	9.155.72,99
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1.333.922,50

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

2.1. Ethical and professional aspects

Over the past year, we have implemented the new UIC Barcelona Strategic Plan (2023-2028), which revolves around 4 main pillars: globality, humanism, sustainability and innovation. Our university believes firmly in social engagement (9) and the professional responsibility (3) of its researchers.

In June 2023, we conducted another gap analysis to further analyse the progress made in the actions undertaken as part of the process relating to the seal in efforts to identify our strengths and weaknesses.

We detected two strengths related to ethical and professional responsibility, scoring well in terms of research freedom (1) and ethical principles (2). In our ongoing pursuit of excellence, we are applying new internal circuits to ensure that all principal investigators interested in submitting a research proposal as part of a competitive call or being assigned a research project receive the compulsory forms. The form was designed by the Technical Secretariat of the University Committees with a view to guiding researchers to the committee responsible for assessing their project.

On the other hand, the initiatives aimed at improving good practice in research (7) and the dissemination and exploitation of results (8) are gradually bearing fruit. In addition to publishing the Code of Good Practices in open access mode, efforts are being made to promote open science and the use of the institutional repository, Arxiu Digital UIC Barcelona, to further disseminate results. UIC Barcelona has also launched an internal call aimed at making resources available to research groups interested in exploiting their research results: https://www.uic.es/en/research/innovation/valorisation-projects, a direct response to the difficulties of commercially exploiting research (8). However, further efforts must be made in this regard, as these aspects represent one of our weaknesses.

Closely related to dissemination is public engagement (9). While our investigators are aware of this commitment, we would like to propose new initiatives to provide them more tools with which to engage with society. In this regard, the Department of Communication is promoting the publication of scientific outreach articles in The Conversation, a scientific media outlet.

Non-discrimination (10) is one of the University's strengths. The University recently published the 3rd Equal Opportunity Plan (2022-2026), which is available on the institutional website.

The Cooperation and Sustainable Development Office is working to improve certain aspects of the ethical principles of research (2), good practice in research (7) and public engagement (9) in a cross-cutting manner for the entire university community. Every year since the 2009-2010 academic year, we have organised the Cross-Disciplinary Workshop on Sustainability, which addresses an SDG from a multidisciplinary perspective.

The 2022-2023 academic year saw the publication of the Government of Catalonia's resolution on Research Groups, in which 24 research groups were recognised. A meeting was arranged with each to provide information on the functions and services that the Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer (VRIT) has to offer and discuss each group's objectives and needs, with a focus on professional responsibility (3), professional attitude (4), contractual and legal obligations (5) and accountability (6).

Lastly, we are considering shifting the focus of the researchers' evaluation/appraisal system (11), PDI Commitment. The reason behind this is for the University to focus efforts on securing competitive projects.

2.2. Recruitment and selection

In recent years, there have been significant internal changes among the institution's leadership positions. New appointees include a new rector in charge of the University and, this academic year, the second vice-rector for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer in the past three years. There have also been legislative changes at state and regional levels in matters of science and universities.

Changes in types of contract have resulted in amendments to the general principles governing the recruitment of teaching staff and economic promotion, which has in turn restructured the staff. This guide was published by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Organisation (VOAP) on the University Intranet.

The People Management Department has gone to great lengths to bring recruitment (12) into line with the new legislation, based on the principles of selection and transparency.

According to the survey given to all teaching and research staff (PDI), while all staff members are familiar with the recruitment process (12/13), our efforts must target R1 researchers. The further

along researchers are in their research career, the more familiar they are with the processes. As a result, efforts must be made to improve transparency for R1 researchers, a collective with a more diverse array of routes into the University in accordance with the funding body. To improve transparency, we offer R1 researchers webinars managed by the Doctoral School, in which members of the VRIT explain the requirements and characteristics of the various pre-doctoral grants for which they may apply (from both public and private funds).

One of the weaknesses shared by R1 and R2 researchers is related to the selection (14) process, specifically how the selection committees at the University work. This group holds the perception that the committees are not transparent and that there is a general lack of information about how they function. Among R3 and R4 researchers, on the other hand, vast improvements have been made in this regard. In efforts to decrease this gap, the Basic Recruitment Guide was published in open access mode on the University website. The aim is to increase our transparency (15), the second biggest gap overall according to survey respondents.

Working along these lines, the Secretariat-General created and routinely updates the University Transparency Portal. The Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer also regularly updates the research job offer portal, where the prioritisation criteria, lists of excluded/admitted applicants and final resolutions are published.

The efforts made in recent years have resulted in a positive assessment and perception in terms of judging merit (16), variations in the chronological order of the CVs (17), recognition of mobility experience (18), recognition of qualifications (19) and seniority (20). Particularly positive is the perception that breaks do not have a negative effect on the researchers' professional career (17), in terms of neither recruitment nor promotions. In this regard, efforts shall continue to be made to maintain or improve these results.

In the case of postdoctoral appointments (21), the VOAP has added the category of tenure track (TT) to the functional staff. All TT staff have a series of rules and guidelines that they are required to follow, a maximum duration for the type of contract and targets they must meet to maintain their position. As a result, if the candidate meets the objectives that are initially agreed upon based on their profile, UIC Barcelona ensures continuity with their research career.

2.3. Working conditions

Since UIC Barcelona obtained the logo, this is the section in which the greatest amount of effort has been made and improvements seen. The Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer (VRIT) has promoted recognition of the profession (22) and provided information on each update to the document *Researcher Career Path in Spain at a Glance!*, of which six editions have already been published.

Improvements continue to be seen in the research environment (23), and the facilities are very highly regarded following the investments made during the previous phase. The equipment is also perceived as sufficient, despite there being room for improvement.

This year, the Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer is being restructured to offer Direct Researcher Services. The aim is to improve the facilities and provide a better research environment (23), creating a common point of entry for all services that make the environment easier to use for the research community and, in a highly relevant manner, bolstering career development (28).

Working conditions (24) are the aspect that has seen the greatest improvement in this section and among all categories, particularly R3 and R4 researchers.

During the previous phase, a gap was identified in stability and permanence of employment (25). This issue, an ongoing problem across the country's scientific system, has undergone changes since the enactment of the new Science Act and the labour reform. The elimination of service and works contracts and temporary contracts has forced universities to adapt to the new reality. These legislative changes have no doubt led to an improved overall perception of this principle, which has been corroborated in the survey. While it is still too early to gauge exactly how this is affecting the university system, internally, this issue is not a concern among researchers from any of the categories.

As it does each academic year, the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Organisation and Teaching Staff (VOAP) published the new salary tables on the University Intranet. The VRIT has applied a talent recruitment and retention policy to improve funding and salaries (26). The survey results indicate a certain level of discontent in this regard (26). However, we are aware that, according to the list published and updated by the VOAP each year, the salaries at UIC Barcelona are slightly higher than those indicated in the Catalan university system's official list of staff positions. We therefore believe that more information on the internal working conditions versus the Catalan public system's official list of staff positions must be provided. UIC Barcelona is enhancing its presence in the Catalan university system, with an increasing number of researchers contacting the University to request information on the career development opportunities we offer. To us, this is a clear indication that we are moving in the right direction, despite the long road ahead.

We will continue to work to strike a gender balance (27) at all levels of the institution. To do so, we have published a new equality plan framed by regional, state and European gender equality policies in higher education. This plan is structured around three main pillars: culture, employment and people management and academic matters. The Equality Unit will monitor the performance indicators on an annual basis. These efforts are reflected in the survey, in which respondents gave the gender balance gap the third highest score.

Within the new action plan, we propose new methods for monitoring R1 researchers through satisfaction surveys, in order to enhance career development (28) and ensure proper access to career advice (30). Among R1 and R2 researchers, career development represents the most significant gap.

In this regard, we want to promote career development by also enhancing the value of mobility (29). This year has seen an increase in the budget for the internal mobility call, a competitive call intended for researchers interested in spending at least 1 month abroad. While all researchers, from R1 to R4, are eligible, particular emphasis is placed on R1 researchers.

During the previous phase, a lack of advice as to how to exploit research and a lack of information on intellectual and industrial property rights (31) were detected. In this regard, 2017 saw the approval of the UIC Barcelona intellectual and industrial property regulations, which set out the conditions governing the distribution of work and inventions generated by university staff, along with their rights and obligations. While these regulations are available on the Intranet, we have seen that there is a need for more widespread dissemination and a more easily accessible and visible location.

In this regard, UIC Barcelona has taken a step forward and created a specific foundation, known as InnoUIC, to create spin-offs. While the VRIT will provide initial guidance, the aim is to take our objectives increasingly further. In the past 3 years, entrepreneurship activities and business idea competitions have been organised for the entire university community to promote entrepreneurial culture. 2023 also saw the launch of a call for valorisation projects, giving PDI the opportunity to present business proposals based on their research results or, in the case of researchers in fields such as social sciences and humanity, take part in initiatives aimed at increasing their social impact.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, meetings were held with each research group at the University, a total of 24 groups recognised by the Government of Catalonia. These meetings allowed us to provide career guidance to all members in a more personalised manner. It also helped us identify possible synergies to promote co-authorship (32) between departments. In fact, this gap is considered one of the University's strengths by R3 researchers.

Overall, teaching (33) is perceived as having excessive weight by all staff members, particularly R4 researchers. In the case of R1 researchers, teaching is governed by state regulations, which limit it to a maximum of 60 hours per year. Researchers with a doctoral research staff contract are restricted under law to 100 hours of teaching per year. We hope that, with the changes that are expected to be applied in PDI Commitment in the coming years, a solution to this gap will be found for the rest of the teaching staff.

The University Ombudsman (34) continues to function properly through the application available on the University Intranet, which collects suggestions, complaints and appeals.

The Doctoral School (EDOC) is also undergoing structural changes as a result of new state legislation:

- Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July, amending Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral studies.

The EDOC has created a Steering Committee to undertake all organisational and management functions. Efforts are being made to ensure a balance between women and men (27), while a vote is currently being held to decide which R1 researcher will represent the PhD students in the Committee (35).

2.4. Training and development

82% of the respondents to the most recent survey undergo supervision (40). Despite having detected that R2 researchers have less of a relationship with their supervisors than researchers from other categories, most staff scored supervision and managerial duties (37) quite highly, particularly R1 researchers.

Among R1 researchers, as notified in the previous phase, we use a procedure to record the relationship with their supervisor, promoting a structured relationship and regular contact (36 and 37). Furthermore, the Doctoral School is making efforts to improve career development (38) and access to research training (39) among R1 researchers. The EDOC has worked to identify the training needs of R1 researchers through surveys, based on which new training activities for PhD students have been organised.

The VRIT also contributes to certain specific training activities for EDOC students.

Continuing professional development (38) is the biggest weakness in this section. As mentioned earlier, during the current academic year, the increase in budget has been used to restructure the VRIT and recruit new staff in areas in which the necessary support could not be offered.

This restructuring has led to the creation of Direct Researcher Services, which provide researchers support in developing their careers (38).

Note should be made of the creation of the [Methodological and Statistical Advisory Service](#) (SAME), the objective of which is to provide researchers specialised statistical and methodological support in every step of the quantitative study production process.

As explained in the section on ethics and professional aspects, efforts are being made to create a module-based training plan. This takes into account the training needs expressed by the various research groups during last year's meetings. We expect this new plan to help us improve the shortcomings detected in the continuing professional development (38) and access to research training and continuous development (39) gaps. Furthermore, we hope that the increased internal mobility call budget and launch of internal calls for knowledge

generation and valorisation projects will help in the career development of R1-R2 researchers in particular.

Furthermore, both the Library Service and VRIT are promoting webinars offered by Web of Science and Scopus through the FECYT. These webinars not only serve to present the service's latest developments, but also help train researchers and refresh their knowledge at different points in their career, thereby offering continuous professional development (38).

Observations

Have any of the priorities for the short and medium term changed?

Since the previous phase there has been a change of rector and multiple changes of vice-rector at UIC. As a consequence, the monitoring of the activities related to the implementation of the HRS4R, although sound, has been discontinuous. Despite this, we have progressed at a good pace, and the priorities have not changed significantly. The indicators and their analysis have led us to conclude that there is no need to reorient priorities, which is reflected in our new action plan.

A priority that we want to strengthen, derived from the need to position ourselves advantageously in the new legislative framework at regional and state level, is to offer and promote diverse careers for UIC researchers. In this way we can attract and, more importantly, retain the research talent of our University. Several new actions in our plan are aimed at strengthening this priority.

Additionally, despite the fact that these are actions that we have already launched, we want to focus on promoting actions that also allow us to improve transversal training in research at all stages of the research career. Thanks to meetings with participation of all UIC research groups, we have been able to compile the specific training needs for researchers according to the field of knowledge.

Finally, to emphasize and support the research activities of UIC faculty and increase their competitiveness, we have specific actions that focus on analyzing the weight teaching vs research activity, based on the reality of each faculty member. Moreover, we have launch a series of directed internal calls for research support and international mobility for UIC's faculty.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organization operates changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy?

The three most important changes have been all legislative, at state and regional level. On the one hand, the 2021 labor reform that eliminated work and service contracts and temporary contracts at Universities in Spain entered into force in March 2022 and entailed a widespread change in the general hiring system. On the other hand, Spanish Law 17/2022, of September 5, on Science, Technology and Innovation, as well as Catalan Law 9/2022, of December 21, on Science; that have framed strategic priorities for implementation of Science and Innovation at national and regional level. And finally, the Spanish Law 2/2023 of March 2023 Of the university System; that, among other considerations, have removed the requirement of external accreditation for entering in the faculty of universities with labor contracts and has established a period of 6 years for obtaining the first faculty accreditation to retain the faculty position in the Spanish University system.

These laws have enabled changes in the type of contracts, the limitation of teaching and the aim of modifying the age of entry into the University system.

These changes have had a direct impact on the operation of the University, which has made and is making all the necessary changes to comply with the regulations.

These legal and operational changes have not led UIC to find relevant drawbacks to continue working and comply with the commitment to the principles of the Charter and the Code, as well as the development of the Action Plan. In fact, we have found possibilities to be more flexible in the career paths of our researchers and therefore promote their research and, at the same time, that of our University.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

UIC is currently in the process of defining and implementing its 2024-2028 strategic plan. This fact will undoubtedly open new opportunities to drive our research work and therefore to accommodate new specific actions to expand the implementation of the HRS4R.

Some aspects that have already been incorporated from the beginning in the general strategic plan the UIC and, therefore, we have incorporated in our Action Plan are the re-definition of the research career and our focus on recruitment and retention of research talent.

Other opportunities open in the implementation of actions that allow us to give researchers in our University more resources to promote the socio-economic impact of their scientific production. This will be clearly reinforced by the definition of the specific 2024- 2027

strategic plan for knowledge transfer and the new creation of the InnoUIC Foundation, dedicated to the establishment and promotion of spin-off companies from the UIC.

The internationalization of our research with collegial collaborations and the formation of alliances with other European research institutions, in coordination with other governing bodies of UIC, are also specific actions that can impact our strategy for HRS4R from the heart of the vision of our University.

3. Updated action plan

		GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
1. Cooperation agreements with other institutions	To promote research freedom and agreements with other institutions with facilities that UIC Barcelona cannot have. For example, the lack of animal facilities need not limit research where it is possible to reach agreements with nearby institutions	1. Research freedom	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT	1) Number of agreements with other institutions
2. New PDI directory	To enhance the visibility and further disseminate research by the University's PDI, affirming their public engagement. Another academic category will be added	8. Dissemination and exploitation of results 9. Public engagement 22. Recognition of the profession	8 SEMESTERS (March 2026)	Communications Management	1) URL of new directory
3. Support for economic justifications	The VRIT's economic management helps manage and review expenditure chargeable to projects for reasons of justification and internal and external audits	5. Contractual and legal obligations 6. Accountability	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT	1) Number of projects justified per year 2) Number of audits per year
4. Guidance and support from committees	All projects, including PhD theses, must be submitted to the relevant committees before research begins	2. Ethical principles 3. Professional responsibility 4. Professional attitude 5. Contractual and legal obligations 7. Good practice in research	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT	1) Number of projects evaluated by each committee per year
5. Position defences	Once a PDI is accredited following an assessment by an external agency, they must defend their position before a panel to access higher categories. Non-discrimination and gender equality are ensured	10. Non-discrimination 11. Evaluation/appraisal systems 27. Gender equality	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VOAP / Faculties / Departments	1) Number of positions defended per year 2) Number of female staff members per year
6. New prioritisation criteria for internal R1 calls	Application of new prioritisation criteria in internal R1 calls. Under these criteria, all of the applicants' experience (academic record, mobility, research experience, outreach experience, etc.) will be assessed in a cross-cutting manner	15. Transparency 16. Judging merit 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs 18. Recognition of mobility experience 19. Recognition of qualifications	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT	1) No. of calls published with open and transparent prioritisation criteria 2) No. of grants awarded per year and fields of knowledge of R1 researchers
7. PDI with dual affiliations	To promote co-authorship and place value on mobility, we want to raise the profile of PDI with a dual affiliation with UIC Barcelona. To extend our	29. Value of mobility 32. Co-authorship	4 SEMESTERS (March 2025)	VRIT	1) Number of PDI with dual affiliations

	network and maximise interdisciplinarity.				
8. New talent recruitment and retention policy	The objective is to attract individuals with potential and retain them through an internal policy of salary co-funding and internal agreements between departments to ensure stability of employment	25. Stability and permanence of employment 26. Funding and salaries	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT / VOAP / Faculties / Departments	1) Number of agreements for attracting researchers per year 2) Number of contracts signed thanks to a prior agreement
9. Increased funds for internal mobility call	To promote PDI mobility in all stages of their research career. Special emphasis on R1 researchers.	23. Research environment 26. Funding and salaries 28. Career development 29. Value of mobility	3 SEMESTERS (September 2024)	VRIT	1) Number of grants awarded annually 2) Research category of recipients per year
10. Module-based training plan	Approval by the Board of Governors of the module-based training plan (competitive projects, non-competitive projects, accreditations and six-yearly increments, European projects). To implement the training plan during the 2024-2025 academic year.	7. Good practice in research 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice 31. Intellectual property rights 38. Continuous professional development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	2 SEMESTERS (June 2024)	VRIT / VOAP / People Management	1) date of approval 2) courses held 3) attendees per category (R1 to R4)
11. New annual monitoring form for UIC Barcelona predocs	UIC Barcelona predocs must complete an annual assessment form on the progress made on their thesis and their supervisor's supervision.	36. Relation with supervisors 37. Supervision and managerial duties 40. Supervisor	4 SEMESTERS (March 2025)	VRIT	1) No. of forms received per year
12. Internal competitive calls	With a view to making PDI at UIC Barcelona more competitive when applying for projects from external funders, several calls will be launched, some geared towards valorisation and knowledge transfer and others towards knowledge production.	3. Professional responsibility 4. Professional attitude 16. Judging merit 23. Research environment 28. Career development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	1 SEMESTER (March 2024)	VRIT	1) number of calls 2) projects funded
13. Redefining the Research Career	With the aim of attracting and retaining more research talent and making the different PDI career options more flexible. We will redefine the different contractual figures exclusively doing research at UIC, in all stages, R1-R4.	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code)	4 TRIMESTER (March 2025)	VRIT / VOAP	1) research career with various contractual figures 2) number of researchers in research career

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan

In order to properly assess the implementation of the action plan, a survey has been carried out again among all the teaching and research staff and doctoral students. There were 40 questions structured in four blocks to locate the weak points and focus our efforts on the new action plan.

183 researchers answered out of 398 (45.98%), distributed as follows:

- R1: 78
- R2: 45
- R3: 45
- R4: 15

Thanks to the Gap analysis, 13 new actions have been proposed with the aim of improving the transparency of our procedures as well as the improvement and expansion of researcher support services. After all the changes in the governing bodies of the University, a new Action Plan Monitoring Committee has been established, which will meet twice a year. The aim is to have a representation of the entire university community through the Committee to be able to assess the degree of completion of each action and to be able to apply the necessary corrective changes.

The members of the Committee are:

- Dr. Conrado Aparicio, Vice-Rector for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer
- Òscar Carbó, Director of the Knowledge Transfer and Research Valorization Centre
- Lucas García, Director of the Vice-Rector's Office for Academic Organisation and Teaching Staff
- Dr. Núria Casals, Director of the Doctoral School of UIC Barcelona
- Dr. Marta Mas, senior researcher and current dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business
- R1 researcher, an elected representative of the PhD students on the Doctoral School Committee.
- Mònica Argemí, Head of Personal Development and Institutional Culture Service

On the other hand, the definitive approval of the basic contracting guide has served to confirm the commitment of the Governing Board to the principles of HRS4R. In addition, the different departments involved in the action plan for the first and second phases have continued to work on updating the regulations published on the institutional website and creating new content. For example, the new UIC Barcelona Equal Opportunities Plan (2022-

2026) as well as the Sustainability Office portal´s report, which has been updated every year since the 21/22 academic year.

With the new action plan and the Monitoring Committee we will continue to work to maintain the alignment of all departments towards the fulfilment of the principles of transparency, quality, integrity, equal opportunities, excellence and social responsibility.

How have you prepared for the internal review?

For the internal evaluation, the following actions were carried out:

- The new HRS4R manager, Laura Segarra, met with those individuals who had previously been involved in the design and implementation of HRS4R. The purpose was to learn in detail about the process followed to obtain accreditation and to assess the status of implementation of all the actions outlined in the action plan.

- With the renewal of the Rectorate and Vice-Rectorate, the Monitoring Committee has been restructured, made up of government officials, R1 to R4 researchers and research-support staff.

- Once the actions had been implemented or initiated by the services, the heads of each department were responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the actions they were responsible for.

- The transversal actions were managed directly by the Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer at UIC.

- A survey was carried out based on the 40 principles of the Charter and the Code, which facilitated assessment of the degree of satisfaction with the implementation of the action plan as well as proposal of new actions. It also allowed us to identify the evolution of the perception of improvement for each gap.

- The Basic Guide for Hiring, developed by the three Vice-Rectors (VRIT, VOAP and VCU) and validated by the Governing Board off UIC, has been approved and published.

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?

- Representatives of the researchers and service staff are members of the working group for the implementation of HRS4R.

- Each department head involved in the action plan is responsible for communicating the principles and monitoring of the actions to their staff.

- All researchers will be invited to participate in the electronic survey for the new Gap Analysis.

- A training plan has been laid out and will be offered during 2024 for the first time that includes elements of responsibility and good practice in research, as well as communication of the HRS4R principles.

Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?

We have created a new Monitoring Committee to follow up the implementation of the action plan. As mentioned above, the members of the Monitoring Committee are:

- Dr. Conrado Aparicio, Vice-Rector for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer
- Òscar Carbó, Director of the Knowledge Transfer Centre
- Lucas García, Director of the Vice-Rector's Office for Academic Organisation and Teaching Staff
- Dr. Núria Casals, Director of the Doctoral School of UIC Barcelona
- Dr. Marta Mas, senior researcher and current dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business
- R1 researcher, an elected representive for the PhD students on the Doctoral School Committee.
- Mònica Argemí, Head of Personal Development and Institutional Culture Service

The Committee currently meets twice a year to monitor the action plan.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy

Work is underway to finalize the 2024-2028 strategic plan of UIC. There is specific mention in this strategic plan of the need for alignment of strategies of recruiting researchers to support our research mission with those of the HRS4R codes. The vicerectorates for Research and Faculty have worked and will work in collaboration with the HR office at UIC to progressively implement a joint recruitment policy that is not limited to researchers.

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?

Firstly, the commitment to HRS4R is included in the UIC Barcelona Board of Governors' programme and it is also part of the next Strategic Plan.

Many people in key positions are very aware of the changes that need to be made and are committed to furthering them.

The Monitoring Committee will make sure that the action plan is implemented according to the goals for covering the HRS4R requirements.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?

The Vice-Rectorate for Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer (VRIT) is responsible for the leadership and management of the entire process.

The performance indicators chosen for each action are being reviewed and reported to the monitoring committee, which adopts corrective measures in the event of deviations in time or scope.

The annual results of the online survey will also be reported to the Monitoring Committee to ensure that the whole process is properly monitored.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

- The next evaluation will be conducted by the Monitoring Committee. They will also be in charge of preparing the visit.

- The aim is to increase the participation of HR and the Quality Service in the monitoring group, both so that all the agents involved in the contracting process take part, and so that the process is adequately monitored.

- This will be done by reviewing the progress of the project in accordance with the commitments of the Action Plan, the review of the indicator reports and the completion of the roadmaps for each action. This will lead to an interim report after 12 months of activity.

- As we have done in this internal review, a new survey will be carried out to provide the researchers' view of the state of the situation. This look back will allow us to correct the status of the Action Plan and design the new one.

5. OTM-R Award Renewal

Template 1 – Annex: Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Check-list[1]					
OTM-R checklist for organisations					
	Open	**Trans-parent**	**Merit-based**	**Answer:** **++ Yes, c***ompletely* **+/-Yes, *substantially*** **-/+ Yes, partially** **-- No**	**Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)**
OTM-R system					
1. 1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	**+/-Yes, *substantially***	A basic guide to contracting in the three languages has been published. https://www.uic.es/sites/default/files/2024-01/Guia_b%C3%A0sica_contractaci%C3%B3_EN.pdf
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	**+/-Yes, *substantially***	An internal guide has been produced, which defines the recruitment procedures for all the research posts and sets out the procedures for all types of positions (R1-R4). This guide is

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[1] *http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/researchPolicies*

					being applied in the recruitment of researchers, but needs to be posted on the intranet.
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R	x	x	x	*-/+ Yes, partially*	Vice Rectorate for Research and Innovation Transfer (VRIT) and Vice-Rectorate of Academic Affairs (VOAP) are specially trained. The new Action Plan set out the training of HR and the quality management team. Indicator: Attendance at modular training and board trainings.
4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x			*+/-Yes, substantially*	Electronic tools are used for all stages of recruitment: - Advertising and applications: UIC has a specific portal for the publication of job offers https://www.uic.es/en/university/uic-barcelona/work-us-uic-barcelona/teaching-and-research-staff Job offers are always published on EURAXESS and other external channels. The candidates send in their CV and documents electronically and these are stored in our internal platform. In the case of the predoc and postdoc internal calls, Google Forms are generated to automatically file the documentation. - Evaluation and selection: evaluation is carried out on the basis of documentation received electronically, as is pre-selection.

					Communication with shortlisted applicants is also online. - Interview and appointment: Shortlisted candidates carry out an interview or oral defence in person or virtually, if they live abroad. Indicator: https://www.uic.es/en/university/uic-barcelona/work-us-uic-barcelona/teaching-and-research-staff
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	*-/+ Yes, partially*	We have quality management systems in place for calls and documentation. However, we need to involve the Educational Innovation and Quality Service (SIQE) throughout the process to establish a more effective system. Proposed indicator: Link to control mechanisms
6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	Since we started the competitive recruitment procedure, there has been a substantial increase in the number of staff recruited from outside UIC. INDICATOR: -Trend in proportion of applicants from outside UIC:

					R1 2018/19: 18 candidates/6 Masters taken outside UIC R1 2019/20: 21 candidates /14 Masters taken outside UIC R2/R3 2018/19: 173 candidates/167 from outside UIC
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	*-/+ Yes, partially*	The procedure has been changed and advertisements are published to EURAXESS in order to reach foreign candidates, thus complying with the policies for attracting researchers. We may still need to develop procedures for reception of these researchers to facilitate their recruitment. INDICATOR: - Trend in proportion of foreign applicants R1 2018/19: 18 candidates /9 foreign R1 2019/20: 21 candidates /7 foreign R2/R3 2018/19: 173 candidates /101 foreign R1 2020/2021: 21 candidates / 11 foreign R1 2021/2022: 30 candidates /6 foreign R1 2022/2023: 18 candidates /4 foreign
8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	We have a high rate of female employment. We do not have any notable minorities, or groups requiring special protection. We need to pay special attention to people with disabilities.

					INDICATOR: -Trend in the proportion of under-represented groups (women) in applications: R1 2018/19: 18 candidates/8 women R1 2019/20: 21 candidates/12 women R2/R3 2018/19: 173 candidates/59 women R1 2020/2021: 21 candidates / 17 women R1 2021/2022: 30 candidates / 17 women R1 2022/2023: 18 candidates / 12 women
9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	Salary is essentially the most attractive element for researchers. However, we are working on an internal policy of attracting personalised talent, which has been bearing fruit in recent years.
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				*+/-Yes, substantially*	Anyone can apply, but there are mandatory requirements for each vacancy according to the type of researcher which ensure the best candidates reach us. For R1 calls it is mandatory to go through the process for external competitive calls before going through the internal process, therefore some of this information has already been dealt with. INDICATOR: - Trend in the proportion of suitable applicants. R1 2018/19: 18 candidates/10 excluded

					R1 2019/20: 21 candidates/4 excluded
Advertising and application phase					
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions	x	x			**++ Yes, c**ompletely*	The internal recruitment guide sets out the recruitment guidelines. Advertisements are managed centrally from VRIT and VOAP. UIC has a job offer template that is provided by ViceRectorates to the recruiting area. Once it has been filled out, the information is validated by the departments and posted on the various platforms.
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit? [see Chapter 4.4.1 a) of the OTM-R expert report2	x	x			*-/+ Yes, partially*	UIC has a template for job offers that specifies all the elements: Organisation offering the job, job title, professional level (R1-R4), selection criteria, required and desirable competences, working conditions (salary, type of contract...) and opportunities and prospects for career development. We are currently developing a recruitment policy for the institution, and a new equality policy will need to be defined. When these have been defined, the advertisements will link to them.

					INDICATOR: - Any UIC advertisement on EURAXESS: https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/508087 show Toolkit items
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		**++ Yes, c***ompletely*	The basic recruitment guide specifies that Euraxess must be used in addition to using our own recruitment tools. We plan to use Euraxess for competitive calls for pre-doc positions. INDICATOR: - % of advertisements published on EURAXESS; 90% - % of advertisements published in three languages: 100% - Trend in foreign applicants hired from outside UIC Barcelona/abroad: R1 2018/19: 7 hired/0 foreigners R1 2019/20: 7 hired /1 foreigners R2/R3 2018/19: 8 hired /5 foreigners
14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		**++ Yes, c***ompletely*	We publish all job offers on our own website: https://www.uic.es/en/university/uic-

					barcelona/work-us-uic-barcelona/teaching-and-research-staff https://butlleti-recerca.uic.es/recerca-i-divulgacio/ofertes-de-recerca-uic Other platforms such as Red IRIS, ResearchGate and LinkedIn are also used.
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate? [see Chapter 4.4.1 b) 45]	x			*+/-Yes, substantially*	The submission of documentation and contract signing are handled digitally with the candidate, reducing the administrative burden on the candidates. For competitive calls, we ask for the documentation to be submitted to us by email. The originals are only requested to sign the contract.
Selection and evaluation phase					
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees? [see Chapter 4.4.2 a) 45]		x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	The basic recruitment guide defines the commissions according to the type of vacancy (R1, R2, R3 or R4). For stable positions, the appointment of the committee is made at the time of the call.

17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?	x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	The basic recruitment guide defines the selection committees according to the type of vacancy (R1, R2, R3 or R4), and include external experts according to the professional level of the candidate sought (R1R4).
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?	x	x	*+/-Yes, substantially*	Yes, we try to always ensure this.
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?		x	*-/+ Yes, partially*	There are no written guidelines. For permanent positions, the selection criteria are defined through agreement. For predoc calls, objective selection criteria are defined that enable selection of the best candidate.
Appointment phase				
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?	x		*++ Yes, completely*	We inform all applicants electronically or by telephone. In all selection processes, the results and the information regarding the various stages are published in good time for the candidates. In addition, we contact candidates directly to inform them of the results.

21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		**++ Yes, c***ompletely*	All candidates are informed of their own results and the results of all the other candidates. For competitive calls based on objective criteria, the marks are published for each of the sections, and communication is maintained via email for any queries they may have.
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		**++ Yes, c***ompletely*	UIC's ombudsman, HR and VRIT are available to candidates for any complaints they may have.
Overall assessment					
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTMR delivers on its objectives?				***-- No***	The system is in the process of being defined.