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HR Researcher Open Forum

Progress Update on Implementation of HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

13th January 2016





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What is the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)?

- Supports research institutions and funding organisations to implement:
 - *European Charter for Researchers &*
 - *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*

in their in their research policies and practices



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HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Step 1 – A gap analysis (2012)

Step 2 – HRS4R and Action Plan developed (2012)

Step 3 – European Commission "acknowledge" that the research institution has adopted a HRS4R and the HR Excellence in Research Logo is awarded (2013)

Step 4 - The research institution implements its HR strategy and conducts a self-assessment which is submitted to the EC (2015)

Step 5 - External evaluation by peer reviewers (2017)



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Why important?

- Tool aimed at helping organisations to provide an attractive and supportive environment to researchers
- The concrete implementation of the Charter & Code by research institutions will render them more attractive to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their research project
- For H2020 grant applications the HR Excellence in Research Logo may be considered as proof of the implementation of the Charter & Code principles



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4 Key Areas of Action

1. **Recruitment**
2. **Working Conditions and Social Security**
3. **Training**
4. **Ethical & Professional Aspects**



Recruitment: 6 Areas of Focus

1. International Recruitment

- Investment in video conferencing facilitates including Vidyeo
- Research Recruitment via: www.researchgate.net

www.naturjobs.com

www.euraxess.com

www.jobs.ac.uk

www.universityvacancies.com

2. Research Careers and Development Framework

- Vitae Resources
- “Maximising your Research Output” training programme



Recruitment: 6 Areas of Focus

3. Support for Mobility for Researchers

- Centralised support is available for work permit / hosting agreements via the HR Office
- Euraxess – EU portal supporting researcher mobility in the EU (www.euraxess.com)

4. Appropriate recruitment training for selection board members

- Unconscious Bias eLearning Programme
- The LEAD (Living Equality and Diversity) eLearning Programme
- A one day interview skills training is provided as part of the core training programme of UL



Recruitment: 6 Areas of Focus

5. Continued improvement of recruitment process

- Research funded posts go to GA for noting
- New procedures to allow for the recruitment of externally funded academic staff
- Athena Swan: 30% female gender representation is now required on all selection boards

6. Review of Advertisements

- Research recruitment packs pre-populated
- Recruitment packs are reviewed by HR to ensure job descriptions and salary scales are appropriate to the relevant grade of the position



Recruitment: Future Areas of Focus

- Implement the EU recommendations on **open, transparent and merit-based recruitment practices for researchers (OTM-R)**
- Facilitate the ease of **advertising of research posts via social media** such as Twitter and LinkedIn for PI's
- Continue to work to improve the recruitment process including developing an **online staff requisition system**
- Implement **updated interview skills training** for selection board members



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Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

1. Develop the recognition of researchers by reviewing the access researchers have to participate in relevant decision making bodies

- **Research Grades eligible to vote in GA elections**
 - now includes Research Officers.
- **Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures**
 - Allows for the Postgraduate Research Committee, in exceptional circumstances, to permit the appointment of a primary supervisor from a non-traditional academic role, including research grades.



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Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

- 2. Ensure all relevant policies/research support initiatives are communicated clearly to research staff through a series of briefing sessions/training initiatives**
 - All HR research related policies available via the HR website
 - Induction: provides new hires with information on research supports available
 - Dignity and respect training



Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

3. Continue review of health and safety as part of the HR Division's ISO quality system

- Health and safety legislation
- Health & Safety Unit provides technical assistance and specialist advice on how researchers may meet the relevant health and safety standards
- Health and Safety Information and Training Programmes for researchers
- Health and Safety Unit's activities and KPIs audited annually to ensure it continues to meet the ISO 9001 Quality Standard



Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

4. In conjunction with the gender projects review recruitment data for equality statistics and take appropriate action

- **Athena Swan** Bronze Institution Award
- **FESTA** an FP7 funded initiative looking at Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia
- Gender Equality in key decision Making committees (**GEM**)



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Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

5. Ensure information in relation to benefits for researchers are communicated to research staff. Benchmark salaries annually and take appropriate action

- UL is an Associate Member of the RESAVER Consortium
- Research salary scales available on HR website.
- UL participates in national reviews of salaries as part of the Irish Universities Association network.
- Increments may be awarded annually subject to funding body terms and PI approval. (*Currently Haddington Road increment freeze measures are applicable*).



Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

- 6. Continue to review IP management and identify opportunities for improvement by reviewing disputes arising. Undertake initiatives to support broader knowledge transfer in relation to IP.**
- During 2015 the TTO office carried out a series of lunchtime seminars to support knowledge transfer in relation to IP
 - In 2015 the Research Office expanded the UL Research Impact Programme
 - <http://ulresearchimpact.com>
 - Online Epigeum training for researchers:
 - Intellectual Property in the Research Context
 - Managing Your Research Project



Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

7. Continue to introduce and encourage flexible work practices such as shorter working year.

- There are numerous flexible work practices available to all staff of UL:
 - Shorter Working Year Scheme
 - Career Break
 - Leave of Absence Scheme
 - Flexible Working Hours Scheme
 - Job Share Scheme
 - Part-time working policy



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Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

8. Review resources available to researchers including IT equipment and space allocation and take steps to improve same

- UL's protocol and procedures for Space Management Policy
- Video conference facilities are now available throughout Plassey House
- Two videoconferencing suites located in the Library Building (book via ITD call logging system)



Working Conditions & Social Security (9 areas of focus)

9. **Communicate the research contract management policy clearly to research staff at induction training. Support researchers in their own career development through career development training / PDR process, in which discipline specific research training needs can be identified.**
 - UL's research contract management policy is outlined to PI's and researchers at recruitment stage to ensure researchers have clear expectations in relation to their contracts of employment
 - Online Epigeum training for to support career development of researchers:
 - Career Planning in the Sciences
 - Career Planning in Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
 - Research Careers & Development Framework is included at all relevant research training initiatives including HoD Training



Working Conditions & Social Security: Future Focus

- **Draft and communicate guidelines on authorship to all faculties**
 - Vancouver Authorship Guidelines are currently in operation in the faculty of EHS and area available on the EHS website: <http://www.ul.ie/ehs/research-tools/research-support>
- **IP** support seminars to be provided on **engaging with industry**
- The Technology Transfer Office is also working on creating a guide to Intellectual Property, which will be promoted to research staff once available.



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Training (5 areas of focus)

1. As a follow on from the Research Careers Framework implement training to support both the researcher and the supervisor in their roles. Develop a briefing document for PhD supervisors to act as a guide in relation to frequency of meetings, level of support required etc.
 - **Vitae:**
 - online supports for both researchers and PI's in their roles
 - **Research training initiatives** to support researchers in their roles:
 - H2020 training, networking training, IP training etc.
 - **A Guide for Research Students and Supervisors** is now available from the Graduate School website



Training (5 areas of focus)

2. **Develop a mentoring/coaching scheme for researchers, particularly for early stage researchers.**
 - **Research Coaching Scheme**
 - A voluntary system which aims to bring together those involved in research to exchange experience, and to provide guidance and support in achieving research outputs
 - **Mentoring Scheme:**
 - this scheme offers a platform through which experiences can be shared on a one-to-one informal basis providing career support to people at various stages in their careers.



Training (5 areas of focus)

3. Provide on-going IP management training to research staff.

During 2015 the TTO together with HR carried out a series of lunchtime seminars to support knowledge transfer in relation to IP:

- **IP – What does it mean for me?**
 - Barry Purdy, Lucey International Intellectual Property
- **Commercialisation Supports**
 - Majella Maher, Enterprise Ireland
- **Is there a Market for my Research?**
 - Katrina Bradley, Commercial Consultant, Montana Marketing
- **Life of a University Spinout**
 - Gabriel Leen, UL researcher & Co-founder of PolyPico



Training (5 areas of focus)

4. **Support the continued professional development of research staff by developing and promoting a comprehensive training schedule. Encourage research staff to consider and plan for their future careers via the careers support seminars, one-to-one coaching and other initiatives as may be deemed appropriate.**
 - Training Schedule available on HR website
 - UL officially launched Vitae careers services in 2015 to UL to support research careers
 - E-learning Resources:
 - The Research Skills Masters Programme (includes careers supports and planning for researchers)
 - University Leadership and Management Programme
 - Research Leadership Programme



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Training (5 areas of focus)

5. **Review international research training initiatives and adopt key leanings of this. Identify creative ways to actively advertise and encourage take up of training initiatives**
 - **“Maximising Your Research Output”**
 - A programme for established researchers to develop a research output strategy
 - **‘Research Impact’**
 - Researchers are encouraged to develop research impact case studies demonstrating a clear link between their research and its impact.
<http://ulresearchimpact.com>



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Training (5 areas of focus)

- ***Research Leadership Programme***
 - Supports research PI's in their role of research leaders
 - Includes 360 degree feedback, personal coaching, action learning, group institutional projects and training days to develop leadership skills and capabilities
- ***Research “lunch and learns”***
 - Training format whereby research members of staff can access research training during lunchtimes has proved effective



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Training: Future Focus

- **Review possibility of financial provision for discipline-specific training for researchers**
- **Provide training for PI's in mentoring and managing post-docs.**
 - All UL staff and students now have access to Vitae resources which includes online resources for managing post-docs
- **Continue to promote research coaching to increase uptake**



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Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

1. Induction: Update the researcher induction processes, both centralised induction and that given by supervisors/managers, to incorporate information on UL's research-relevant policies and practices. Introduce induction checklists to ensure all relevant topics are covered.

- Induction: information on research supports provided
- Induction checklists are available on the HR website for Departments/PI's



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

- 2. Update researcher information resources, such as internal websites, guidelines and training programmes, to ensure UL's research-relevant policies and practices are clearly documented in a visible manner. Provide a search facility to allow easy access to such information.**
 - The Research Office website contains links to all the relevant research policies and information.
 - Continuing to improve the website to include research support functions to allow for easier access to information



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

3. **Update ethics guidelines, and corresponding training, to provide clarity on relationships between the various ethics approval committees, in particular those at UL and the HSE.**
 - **The University's Research Ethics and Governance Structure**
 - Outlined on the ULREG website, including the relationship between the UL and HSE ethics approval committee
 - **Faculty Research Ethics Websites:**
 - Clearly outlines the guidelines and structure for research ethics applications.



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

4. **Implement consistent guidelines on the collection, use and retention of data for research purposes. Provide guidelines and training on procedures to ensure research data is secure and reliably backed-up**
 - **Corporate Secretary's Office**
 - has responsibility for promoting consistent records management and retention within UL
 - **Information & Compliance Officer**
 - Provides guidance on records management and data protection issues.
 - **Record Management Training Sessions Available**



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Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

- University of Limerick Research Ethics Governance Committee (ULREG) and the Research Ethics Committees ensure proposed Research Projects reach ethical standards
- ‘National policy statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland’ (IUA)
- Training in research ethics is part of UL’s core training programme



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

5. **Provide training for researchers in public engagement activities, including media training.**
 - Research Lunch and Learn:
 - **“Utilising the Media to Enhance Your Research Profile”**
 - One Day Training Programme:
 - **“Using Social Media to boost your Academic/Research Profile”**



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

6. **Identify mechanisms and supports for researchers to engage in public dissemination, such as through the UL press office, and through the creation of a community forum to allow research findings to be shared with the broader community**
 - **A Dissemination & Communications Working Group**
 - to champion and embed best practice, innovations and training requirements in support of research dissemination and communication.
 - **Corporate Affairs Division**
 - has an on-going focus on Research PR, placing research stories in local, national and international media.
 - **Faculties and Departments run Public Lecture Series Events**
 - e.g. Irish Times Innovation Roadshow (Research & KBS), GEMS Annual Public Lecture, Journalism Lecture Series.



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

7. Provide on-line diversity training

- **LEAD** (Living Equality & Diversity) ELearning Programme
- **Unconscious Bias On Line Training**
- **Irish Equality Authority**
 - UL was also awarded funding in 2013 from the Irish Equality Authority to enhance supports offered to staff with disabilities.
 - Initiatives will include staff training in this area.



Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

8. **Examine mechanisms to provide for replacement of staff on research projects during situations of sick leave or maternity leave**
 - **Guidelines for Maternity, Paternity or Adoption Leave Cover for Research Staff**
 - Where funding is not provided for the replacement of staff within the specific research project then replacement costs will be covered by UL.
 - **Research Grant for Returning Academic Carers' (RGRAC)**
 - Returning Academic Carers' will be able to avail of 6 months protected research time on return from carers' leave **or** hire a research assistant for the period of the carers' leave to maintain their research.



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Ethical & Professional Aspects – 9 Areas of Focus

9. Identify mechanisms to reward outstanding research performance

- **UL Research Awards:**
 - Award for Excellence in Research &
 - Award for Excellence in Research (Early Career)



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Ethical & Professional Aspects: Future Focus

- **Update UL policies and practices as appropriate**, based on the outcomes of national initiatives, e.g. the IUA national code of conduct for research ethics and integrity, the national IP framework.
- **Launch online induction** facility
- **Develop strategy for compliance with data protection guidelines**, including addressing issues such as open-plan workspaces, data retention requirements exceeding student/staff time at the university.



Ethical & Professional Aspects: Future Focus

- Examine potential mechanisms to assist researchers in understanding **commonly used contractual terms and conditions**, such as guideline documents, help-desk services, etc.
- Examine potential mechanisms to **improve the ethics review and approval process**, including possible mechanisms to simplify the process & mechanisms for two-way feedback/exchange between researchers and the approval committees.
- Review the **PDR for Research Staff** to include a greater focus on future career development of researchers.



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Questions / Feedback /Comments ?

Copy of Presentation available on HR Website:

<http://www.ul.ie/hr/hr-strategy-researchers-hrs4r>



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Appendix



Research Careers & Development Model

