



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH ACTION PLAN



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European Research Area (2000)

- Strategic agenda: dynamic knowledge economy
- Open labour market for researchers



European Charter (2005)

- General recommendations for researchers & institutions
- UGent signs in 2006



HRS4R (2008)

- Implementation of European recommendations in institutional HR-action plan
- HR Excellence label award

Why does Ghent univ participate?

- Internal reason: Human resources = important!
-> beneficiaries: all academic staff
- Excellence label is not a target, but a 'tool' = opportunity to prioritise & implement specific HR-issues
- Need for an integrated UGent-strategy and plan: HR-aspects embedded across admin. departments & faculties
- External reason: quality label > international recognition of our efforts > attracting good researchers

Step 1: GAP-analysis

- Legislation, regulation
- Researchers' experiences

Step 2: HR strategy & action plan

- foundation: Charter & Code
- representatives, timing

Step 3: recognition EC

- Condition: webpublication of HR strategy
- Award HR excellence label



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Step 4: Self evaluation

- Every 2 years
- Internal organisation

Step 5: External evaluation

- After 4 years
- By EC & external experts

Step 1: GAP-analysis

September 2012 –
September 2013

Legislation &
regulations

Admin
experts

Research: data
& surveys

ECOOM-
studies

Researchers

Focusgroups
academic staff

Step 2: HR strategy & action plan

October 2013 –
April 2014

HR strategy
(draft DPO-
DOZA)

Researchers
(advice)

Personnel
Negotiation
Committee
(advice)

Research
Council
(advice)

Board of
Governors
(approval)

European
Commission
(HR
Excellence in
Research
label)

What is in the UGent HR-action plan?

5 key areas:

Recruitment & evaluation

Career perspectives

Labour conditions & social security

Training & Development

Ethical en professional aspects

What is in the UGent HR-action plan?

- Strategy:
 - Vision & strategy
 - Actions + responsibilities + timing
- Priorities: bottom-up process (“the voice of our researchers”)
- Quality criteria: desirable – realistic - feasible
- Current initiatives – e.g. doctoral schools activities
- Recently approved initiatives – e.g. postdoc talent, gender action plan
- Ambitious new tasks – e.g. evaluation criteria academic staff

I) Recruitment & Evaluation

Target 1: Ghent University will have the necessary processes in place to guarantee quality screening in the application procedure for all foreign Ph.D. researchers, and to introduce better quality processes in Ph.D. supervision for all Ph.D. researchers.	2015
Target 2: Ghent University will raise more awareness within faculties and research departments for making better use of various online international job portals. If feasible through an automated process, all academic vacancies will also be published on the Euraxess website.	2015
Target 3: Ghent University will implement this new mobility funding scheme at the level of the faculties according to new guidelines. Ghent University also commits itself to a regular review of this new scheme.	2014
Target 4: Ghent University will have a clear view on the feasibility of initiating an institutional sabbatical system and will act upon the recommendations of this study.	2016
Target 5: The Personnel Department regularly reviews its services for newly appointed staff – local and foreign.	ongoing
Target 6: All Ghent University administrative departments guarantee adequate and easily accessible information in English related to working at Ghent University.	ongoing
Target 7: Ghent University's personnel and research department will set up good practice guidelines for the evaluation of individual research performance at the time of recruitment of new academic & research staff.	2016
Target 8: A review of the personalized evaluation system will be carried out, and recommendations for further improvement will be implemented.	2015
Target 9: Upon implementation of both information systems, Ghent University will reduce the workload and increase transparency in the evaluation process of funding applications to its Special Research Fund, in reviewing personalized performance targets, in assessing applications for promotion, etc.	2017

II) Career perspectives

Target 10: Ghent University increases its number of initiatives drawing attention to the competencies of doctorate holders and raising awareness in the non-academic labour market regarding the value of research experience .	ongoing
<p>Target 11: the outcome of this project on postdoc talent management will be: Postdoctoral training (see under “talent and development”)</p> <p>Contact events in order to increase the exposure to other labour markets (academic and non-academic)</p> <p>A postdoc community, a grass roots postdoc association, intended to strengthen the mutual career interests of this group.</p>	2014
Target 12: An open communication about realistic career perspectives within Ghent University is part of the strategy, both at the institutional level as on the departmental level, involving the heads of department and the PhD supervisors. They have the responsibility to raise career awareness amongst their research staff.	ongoing
Target 13: Ghent University will complete a feasibility study investigating the possibility of a new type of long-term appointment for researchers.	2016

III) Labour conditions & social security

Target 14: Ghent University initiates a favourable pension rights plan for all researchers (employed by the university).	2014
Target 15: A feasibility study is undertaken with the aim to abandon the current ad hoc flexiwork arrangements. Subsequently, its findings will be implemented.	2014
Target 16: Ghent University will implement the actions of its recently launched gender policy plan.	2014
Target 17: Ghent University will implement the actions of its recently launched policy plan for researchers with disabilities	2014
Target 18: Ghent University will ensure a better evaluation and recognition of teaching skills in both the recruitment process (e.g. by explicitly mentioning teaching responsibilities in researcher vacancies) and in the general evaluation/appraisal system.	2016
Target 19: Ghent University will make sure that faculties adopt the current regulation for postdocs with substantive teaching responsibilities to be formally entitled as co-lecturer.	2015
Target 20: Ghent University will develop a policy in which budget management and a co-supervising role for postdocs can be formally recognized.	2015

IV) Training & development

Target 21: Ghent University will further develop strategies for embedding the doctoral training programme in the everyday research practice of PhD students and supervisors.	Ongoing
Target 22: In addition to career management, a postdoc training programme will be available designed to position them in good jobs either inside or outside academia. These are 3 clusters of skills training: Leadership (e.g. supervising PhD students) Research management and grant writing Innovation management and entrepreneurial skills	2014
Target 23: Ghent University will continue elaborating academic leadership and development for its professorial staff at all levels in close collaboration with the concrete needs of the target group (i.e. short and experience-based).	Ongoing
Target 24: Ghent University will co-organize a new programme on strategic leadership for senior management spread over 4 sessions of 2 days, for 20 top managers in total (5 participants per university).	2014-2016

V) Ethical & professional aspects

Target 25: As part of its review of evaluation criteria, Ghent University will incorporate social impact and public engagement as an aspect of research practice that deserves specific incentives and requires recognition in research evaluation. See also “Evaluation criteria”.	2016
Target 26: the Doctoral Training Programme will have sessions on scientific integrity and on the professional responsibilities of researchers as part of its regular programme.	2015
Target 27: A Code of Conduct will be drawn up serving as a framework for good practices in the supervisor – PhD researcher relationship.	2015
Target 28: Ghent University develops an Open Data policy. Depending on the feasibility of the initiative, an efficient structure for the storage, access and processing of open data will be developed subsequently.	2015

Step 2: HR strategy & action plan

- Approval by Ghent University Board - 4 April 2014
- Publication HR strategy - 10 April 2014

Step 3: Acceptance EC – Award excellence label

- Label received 16 May 2014



Step 4: Self evaluation

- Every 2 years
- Internal organisation

Step 5: External evaluation

- After 4 years
- By EC & experts

Step 3: HR Excellence in Research Label awarded 16/5/2014

- **University wide communication**
 - Action plan on the university website
 - Communication to faculties
- **Implementation**
 - Responsible person/department for each action
 - Steering group watches over timing & supports responsible actors
 - Internal evaluation in 2016



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Lots of information freely available:

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/>



EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion is a unique pan-European initiative providing access to a complete range of information and support services to researchers wishing to pursue their research careers in Europe or stay connected to it.

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/strategy4Researcher>



Any questions or suggestions?



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