



## OTM-R UMU SUMMARY DOCUMENT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Murcia (UMU) is a public university in southern Spain with over 32,000 students, 2600 members of teaching staff who are distributed around 5 campuses. The university offers high quality further education qualifications and innovative research. Each campus has differentiating features, but all of them have the ultimate goal of catering to the overall needs of society and the individual needs of students. The La Merced campus is an historical urban site. It is the site of the original university where the Philosophy, Arts and Law faculties are now located. The Espinardo campus is where most of the undergraduate and PhD degrees are located, along with the research centres. The Medicine and Healthcare Studies campus are located in Ciudad Sanitaria Virgen de la Arrixaca (El Palmar), where students are in direct contact with the community. The Sports Science and Lorca campuses are located at several sites around the Region. UMU offers 56 Degree programmes, 78 Master's degrees and 29 doctorate degrees.

The "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers" (HRS4R) strategy is a tool adopted by the European Commission to support universities and research institutions in the application of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, with the goal of contributing to the development of an attractive European job market for researchers. The University of Murcia signed its adhesion to the principles described in the "[European Charter for Researchers](#)" and in the "[Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#)" in 2013.

We have now taken yet another step forward, and we are working on defining the "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers" (HRS4R), which highlights our institutional commitment to promote and improve recruitment, working conditions and research careers, thereby contributing to the development of the European Research Area.

This process culminated in June 2020 with the awarding of the quality seal granted by the European Commission "HR Excellence in Research", which identifies universities and institutions which create and support a stimulating environment that is favourable for research.

UMU is currently in the second of the five stages this process consists of. Since we were awarded the "HR Excellence in Research" seal, our institution has been working to implement improvements in our human resources policy, as described in the [Action Plan](#).



In **June 2022**, the European Commission will conduct an interim assessment. After successfully passing this assessment, a period of 36 months will kick-off during which the University of Murcia will have to implement these actions again in order to have its HR Excellence in Research seal renewed.

## 2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The University of Murcia is committed to ensuring that selection and recruitment processes are fair and transparent in accordance with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. Furthermore, researchers' merits must not only be measured by the number of publications, but also by a wider range of assessment criteria, such as education and teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, international mobility experience and awareness activities.

Consequently, the University of Murcia has designed a guide to improve its OTM-R practices, where the different steps in the selection and recruitment process are outlined in chronological order. The objective of this guide is to establish a system for the recruitment of researchers within the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter>), providing more detailed information, practical solutions and examples of best practices.

The selection and recruitment process at the University of Murcia consists of three main stages: (i) the announcement and application stage, (ii) assessment and selection stage, and (iii) the appointment stage. Each of these stages must be completed in accordance with the [Statutes of the University of Murcia](#).

### 1. *Announcement and application stage.*

#### *a) Publishing the position offered.*

In line with the "Recruiting" and "Transparency" principles in the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers, publishing an announcement of the position including a description of the requirements, as concise as possible, including links to more detailed information on-line is recommended. Applicants should be able to find information about:

- Organisation and contracting department.
- Job title, specifications and start date.
- Researcher's career profile (R1-R4) identifying the "required" and "desirable" skills.
- The selection criteria (and possibly their respective "weighting"), including professional knowledge and experience (differentiating between "required" and "desirable").
- Number of available vacancies.
- Working conditions, workplace, rights (salary, other fringe benefits, etc.), type of contract.
- Professional development opportunities.
- Career perspectives.



It should also include:

- The application procedure and deadline. As a general rule, this should be at least two months after the date the announcement is published, and should take any holiday periods into account.
- A reference to the institution's OTM-R policy.
- A reference to the institution's equal opportunities policy (e.g. positive discrimination, double degrees, etc.).
- Contact details.

All vacancies must be published in EURAXESS. This means that the announcement must at least be published in the national language and in the English language. Although exceptions to the above may be allowed, they must be duly justified in the recruitment procedure.

***b) Keeping the administrative burden to a minimum.***

Requesting justification documents should be restricted to those that are strictly necessary for fair, transparent selection based on applicants' merits. Furthermore, in any cases when certain documents are a legal prerequisite, applicants shall be allowed to submit a statement undertaking to furnish the evidence after the selection process has concluded. For example, applicants should not have to submit translated certificates related to their qualifications in their initial applications. Permitting the inclusion of documents by e-mail and developing an on-line application, selection and recruitment system is strongly recommended.

***c) Acknowledgement of receipt and delivery of additional information.***

All applicants must receive an e-mail (automatic reply) confirming that their applications have been received and providing further information about the recruitment process, describing the next steps and including an estimated schedule (short-listed or not, interview period, appointment date). Care should be taken to ensure sufficient time is allowed before the interview for foreign candidates to make their travel arrangements and get ready for the interview. If there are any significant changes or delays to this process at a later date, all applicants should be informed accordingly in due time by e-mail (standard).

***2. Assessment and selection stage.***

***a) Establishing the selection committee.***

In accordance with the principle of "Selection" in the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers, selection committees for all profiles (R1-R4) should be established, although the size and composition of the committees may vary according to the profile and type of contract. The process to nominate and appoint the committee members must be transparent and made public.



Selection committees must be independent. Their members must not have any conflicting interests and their decisions must be objective and based on the evidence rather than on personal preferences. Committees should make the best use of experts' experience. Committee composition should be appropriately diversified. To do so, the following criteria shall be considered:

- A minimum number of 3 members.
- Balanced gender, e.g. no less than one third of either gender on the committee.
- Inclusion of external experts on all committees (external being understood as experts from outside the institution).
- Inclusion of (or contribution by) international experts, who must have command of the language(s) in which the process is being carried out.
- Inclusion of experts from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic), whenever such is appropriate and feasible.
- The committee as a whole must have all relevant experience, qualifications and knowledge to assess candidates.

Any derogation of a specific post, type of contract or specific discipline, must be clearly stated.

#### ***b) Selection and interview.***

All applications must be examined. Depending to a large extent on the number of applicants, and the available internal human resources, the process may involve one or more steps, for example pre-selection to verify eligibility, short-listing of candidates for interviews, remote interviews by telephone or Skype, face-to-face interviews. While remote interviews may often be appropriate, particularly in the first stage of the interviewing process, they should not completely replace face-to-face interviews, similar to those held with internal candidates. All candidates must be treated equally and in the same way. We recommend that the same selection committee takes part in all stages, although we are aware that this is not always feasible and that one committee may make the initial selection and another may interview the short-listed candidates, for example. Consequently, we recommend that the process is fully transparent and made known to all the applicants, including informing them about the different stages. In the case of face-to-face interviews, the institution must cover the interviewees' travelling and accommodation costs.

#### ***c) Assessment of merits and future potential.***

The criteria for selecting researchers must focus on the performance of previous work by the candidates and their future potential. The emphasis is likely to change depending on the profile of the offered vacancy, for example when an R1 researcher is recruited, his/her future potential will most probably exceed his/her past merits. In line with the principles of "Judging by merit", "Variations in the curricular order", "Recognition of mobility" and "seniority" in the Code of Conduct for recruiting researchers, the assessment criteria must be consistent with the requirements of the vacancy in regard to research, supervision, or teaching skills, for



example. Merit must be judged in terms of quality and quantity, focusing on the results within a diversified career, taking any professional time out into account, lifelong professional development and the added value of the researchers' experience.

A wide range of assessment criteria should be used and balanced, in accordance with the vacancy to be covered. Depending on the specific profile required for the vacancy, this should include the following items (in alphabetical order, not hierarchical order):

- Generation of social impact.
- International career (including mobility).
- Knowledge transfer and exchange.
- Organisational skills / experience.
- Public dissemination / awareness activities.
- Research and innovation management.
- Research performance.
- Securing of funds.
- Supervision and tutoring.
- Teaching.
- Teamwork.

Using the European Framework for Research Careers (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/career-development/researchers>) is strongly recommended, which identifies the required and desirable skills for each of the four researcher profiles (R1 to R4).

### **3. Appointment stage.**

#### **a) Feedback.**

In accordance with the principle of “transparency” in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, all applicants should receive information by letter or e-mail about the end of the recruitment process, approximately within one month without any unnecessary delays. Informing all the applicants who were interviewed about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications is strongly recommended.

All applicants who did not reach the final stages should be informed by means of a standard e-mail about the results. All applications have the right to further comments if they ask for them.

#### **b) Claims method.**

The institution has established a procedure for processing complaints lodged by applicants who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly. This procedure must be transparent and public. It must include the deadline for claimants to receive a reply, which should initially not exceed one month.



### 3. REVIEW OF CURRENT PRACTICES OTM-R UMU

Since obtaining the HR Excellence in Research seal, UMU has been working on the implementation of the actions committed to with the European Commission. Within the Action Plan, those actions that have a direct impact on the OTM-R strategy are the following:

Action	Description	Impact OTM-R
<b>Action 1b.</b> English version of the e-recruitment tool "Convocum"	<b>Adaptation to English of <a href="#">CONVOCUM</a></b> , an application for the presentation, consultation of applications and monitoring of calls for personnel selection at the University of Murcia.	Improve <b>open access to the positions</b> of PAS, PDI, LE and PI published by UMU..
<b>Action 2.</b> Translation into English of the internal UMU policies and documents linked to the HRS4R activities and the relevant sections of UMU website.	Creation and continuous updating of the <a href="#">HRS4R UMU</a> website as well as the homepages of the <a href="#">Equality Unit</a> , the <a href="#">Ethics Committee</a> and the <a href="#">Teacher Training Centre</a> . All <b>HRS4R-related documents have been translated</b> to date, as well as the model labour contracts.	Improve <b>open access and transparency of the UMU website</b> in relation to the topics included in the HRS4R Seal of Excellence.
<b>Action 5.</b> Development of a new feedback evaluation report for the human resources selection processes at UMU.	Pilot action in the <a href="#">Call for pre-doctoral contracts of the Research Promotion Plan of the University of Murcia for 2022</a> , where the model/s of the report are available. The report has been sent to the candidates.	<b>Transparency</b> and improvement of <b>merit-based assessment</b> for UMU candidates.
<b>Action 6.</b> Creation of a general merit model rule	This action focuses on the creation of a <b>general merit model</b> that can be downloaded by those responsible for selection processes and that includes the aspects recommended in the code. In order to align them with the OTM-R policy, the Governing Council (30/04/2021, 26/11/2021) has approved the modifications to <a href="#">the scales for teaching and research staff positions</a> (Assistant Lecturer, Associate Lecturer, employment exchanges for hiring replacement teaching staff). It has been drawn up a document, which containing the guidelines for the recruitment of staff for research projects. This document is currently being revised, so as to be adapted to the " <a href="#">Royal Decree-Law 32/2021, of 28 December, on urgent</a>	Ensure a <b>fair and balanced merit-based recruitment</b> process.



Action	Description	Impact OTM-R
	<a href="#">measures for labour reform, the guarantee of employment stability and the transformation of the labour market</a> ". Once revised, it will be made public at the following link: <a href="https://www.um.es/web/pdi/normativa">https://www.um.es/web/pdi/normativa</a>	
<b>Action 7.</b> Publication of positions linked to international research projects in Euraxess	This action has been in place since the beginning of the Action Plan and posts advertised are monitored for progress.	<b>Open access and transparency</b> of UMU jobs.
<b>Action 8.</b> Involvement of the Gender Unit in the evaluation and selection commissions for recruitment of researchers.	This action aims to cover the <b>participation of the Unit for the Equality of Men and Women</b> in the <b>evaluation and selection commissions</b> for the hiring of researchers and thesis tribunals. Included in the <a href="#">2nd UMU Equality Plan (2021-2025)</a> "Action 4.1.3. Ensure the balanced presence of women and men in the evaluation commissions and tribunals, both for Teaching and Research Staff and for Administration and Services Staff". Included in the <a href="#">Regulations governing official doctoral studies at the University of Murcia</a> "Article 22. The doctoral thesis assessment board. 2. e) Whenever possible, a balanced presence of women and men on the panel shall be sought, except for well-founded and objective reasons, duly justified".	Ensure a <b>fair and balanced merit-based</b> recruitment process.
<b>Action 9.</b> Broaden the assumptions allowing for the consideration of interruptions in the research career without sanction.	In this action, it has been working to broaden the assumptions that allow the consideration of <b>interruptions in the research career without sanction</b> , to adapt them to the current needs of the UMU. A measure for maternity and paternity (1-year term extension) was included in the <a href="#">calls for postdoctoral contracts of the UMU's own research promotion plan for 2017 and 2018</a> , "II Eligibility Conditions (letter f). In addition, in the <a href="#">Call for generational renewal contracts for the promotion of UMU research for 2020</a> ", and in the <a href="#">Call for pre-doctoral contracts of the Plan for the Promotion of Research of the University of Murcia for 2022</a> ", the extension of the term of incorporation due to maternity or paternity was included in the clause "Obligations of the awardees". -Extension of the measure: a guideline was approved by the EIDUM Steering Committee on 3 March 2020: "To include in all relevant documents and make public using the necessary means that "the recent maternity or paternity of the doctoral student will be a reason for temporary leave from the doctoral programme" <a href="https://www.um.es/en/web/hrs4r/ethics/buenas_practicas_eidum">https://www.um.es/en/web/hrs4r/ethics/buenas_practicas_eidum</a>	Ensure a <b>fair and balanced merit-based</b> recruitment process.
<b>Action 10.</b> Inclusion of the recognition of	Very much in line with action 9, recognition of mobility has been included in the modifications to the <a href="#">scales for PDI</a> and in	Ensure a <b>fair and</b>



Action	Description	Impact OTM-R
mobility in the standard scale model.	the <a href="#">own Plan contracts</a> . Recognition of mobility is being considered to include in the document with the guidelines for the hiring of temporary staff to carry out scientific and technical research projects, which is currently being revised to adapt it to the new labour legislation.	<b>balanced merit-based</b> recruitment process.
<b>Action 11.</b> Improvement of the document on "recommendations/good practices in the performance of the selection boards for official staff"	UMU has a draft document entitled " <b>Instructions for the Selection Board</b> ". This document has served as the basis for the drafting of the guidelines for the recruitment of temporary staff for scientific and technical research projects, which is currently being revised to adapt it to the new labour legislation. Once revised, it will be made public at the following link: <a href="https://www.um.es/es/web/pdi/normativa">https://www.um.es/es/web/pdi/normativa</a>	Ensure a <b>fair and balanced merit-based</b> recruitment process.

All the information described above is bound to the "**Action 4. OTM-R Document**", which deliverable is this "logbook" that will serve as a guide for the final implementation of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment policies within the University of Murcia.

#### 4. ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS

With a view to the renewal phase of the HRS4R Seal of Excellence in 2025, the following actions have been included in the **new UMU Action Plan (2022-2025)**, which is directly related to the objective of implementing and embedding OTM-R policies in the day-to-day life of the UMU

Action	Status	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators
<b>Action 11.</b> Improvement of the document on "recommendations/good practices in the performance of the selection boards for official staff"	In progress	Q2 2023	Human Resources Area	Date of publication
<b>Action 17.</b> Analysis of UMU's strategic plans and general policies. a) to review and analyse, in detail and in time, the main UMU policies b) elaborate the HR updated documents and a final document which compile the OTM-R policy main lines	New	a) Q2 2024 b) Q1 2025	Institutional Management Unit, Human Resources Area Vice-rectorate for Teaching Vice-rectorate for Research	Date of approval by UMU's government of the revised plans and policies
<b>Action 18.</b> Incorporating OTM-R organically at UMU (everything related to the HRS4R strategy will be included in the gender and ethics plans of the university and approved by the corresponding boards.)	New	Q2 2025	Institutional Management Unit, Human Resources Area Vice-rectorate for Research	Date of approval by UMU's government of the revised gender and ethics plan.





Action	Status	Timing	Reponsible Unit	Indicators
<b>Action 21.</b> Communication plan that includes information of an institutional nature in relation to the HR Seal within the UMU's own policies	New	Q2 2024	Institutional Management Unit, Vice-rectorate for Research, Vice-Rector for Research Transfer, Communication and Scientific Dissemination	Nº of newsletter, post on social networks, short explanatory videos reviewed and published.
<b>Action 22.</b> Increase the number of different positions published in Euraxess	New	Q1 2024	Human Resources Area, Vice-rectorate for Teaching	Nº of calls published in Euraxess

## 5. PUBLICITY

Progress in the [OTM Policy-R](#) is published in an easily accessible section of the [UMU HRS4R](#) website, covering the minimum set of requirements established by the European Commission, whilst at the same time respecting institutional autonomy and diversity.