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# University of Jyväskylä

## HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) Incorporating Charter and Code

### Action Plan: Development of research career and position of researchers

European Charter for Researchers  
Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Description of the HRS4R process

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Incorporating the Charter & Code (HRS4R) is a tool supporting the systematic adoption of the Charter & Code in the organisations' own human resources policy. Charter & Code (C& C) refers to two European documents:

- European Charter for Researchers and
- Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

These two documents provide means to achieve a transparent and open labour market for researchers and include general principles and requirements associated with the position, obligations and rights of researchers and their employers, as well as with the recruitment of researchers. When implementing the Charter & Code the research institutions will be seen as a more attractive and stimulating working environment to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their research project. In addition, the researchers can rely on fair and transparent recruitment and appraisal procedures in the organisation implementing the Charter and Code. (<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/strategy4Researcher>).

In autumn 2011, Rector Aino Sallinen decided that the University of Jyväskylä (JYU or the University) will participate in the HRS4R process and appointed the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) steering group in March 2012. The steering group's tasks were to guide the HRS4R process and supervise its implementation. In order to guarantee the best possible implementation, the group must widely consider the views of the various interest groups of research. The steering group comprises researcher and administrative representatives and is chaired by the vice rector responsible for HR development. The administrative members are the HR director, research director and an HR specialist. The research representatives are a professor (who also works as a dean) and a senior lecturer. Because quality assurance is an important area of HRS4R development, the head of quality assurance acts as an expert in the steering group as of November 2012.



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Incorporating Charter & Code is carried out in five main steps:

1. An internal analysis in the participating organisation, involving all key players, to compare policies and practices with the Charter & Code principles.
2. On the basis of the results of the internal analysis, the participating organisation develops its own HR strategy for researchers, including a concrete action plan.
3. The analysis and action plan will be reviewed and acknowledged by the European Commission with the right to use the 'HR Excellence in Research' logo.
4. Progress in the implementation of the strategy and action plan is self-assessed after two years.
5. An external evaluation is carried out at least every four years and the acknowledgement is to be confirmed.

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

The major tasks during the first three steps at JYU have been the following:

- identifying the interest groups within the university
- gathering and preparing background information on the policies and guidelines of the University of Jyväskylä and comparing them against the Charter & Code
- involving the interest groups in the process
- compiling the action plan.

JYU aims to complete the first three steps at the beginning of 2013.

Picture 1: Three first steps of HRS4R Process at JYU

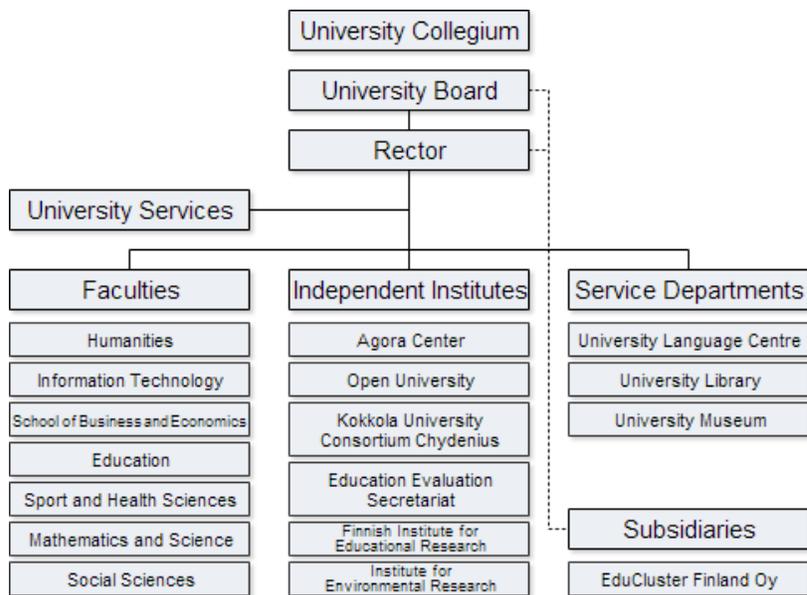




## 1.2 Background information on JYU

The University of Jyväskylä is a nationally and internationally significant research university and an expert on education that focuses on human and natural sciences. The University is Finland's leading expert in teacher education and adult education, as well as a major exporter of education. JYU incorporates seven faculties, six independent institutes and three service departments, as shown in the picture below. The University has 2,600 employees and 15,000 students.

Picture 2: University of Jyväskylä organisation





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## 2 WORKING METHODS

The background information on the University of Jyväskylä's policies and regulations were gathered and preliminarily compared with the Charter & Code principles by the steering group in April–September 2012. In this task the template provided by the EU was used as a tool. The first gap was quickly recognised, as not all of the University's guidelines and policies were translated in English.

In order to successfully proceed, the views and opinions from the institutional interest groups were essential. Additionally, the commitment from the Rector and the University Board is essential. The steering group identified the following institutional interest groups:

- faculty councils
- science, education and societal interaction councils
- staff development, ethical, equality and labour protection committees
- different University of Jyväskylä working groups (e.g. the working group for international staff services)
- faculty deans and heads of departments
- researchers and doctoral students, including researchers working on grants
- University of Jyväskylä Graduate School for Doctoral Studies
- staff organisations
- administrative representatives, including heads of faculty administrations.

The interest groups were involved in the development during May–November 2012 and mainly in October–November. A variety of ways were used: sessions, visits and presentations at meetings as well as official information. The HRS4R poster and publication were printed and delivered.

Two main sessions with researcher involvement took place in October and November. The October session was meant for Finnish-speaking researchers and administrative representatives. Participants in that session were divided into three groups: 1) doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers 2) professors, senior lecturers, senior researchers and university teachers and 3) administration (deans, vice deans, heads of departments, directors, head of administration). Each of the three groups was asked to study and comment on a certain variety of the principles given in the Charter and Code. Group 1 studied the researcher principles and training aspects. Group 2 focused on the principles for the employer and the funder as well as training issues. Group 3 commented on the principles in the Code of Conduct for recruitment.

The November session was meant for the representatives of international employees and was held in English.

During these sessions the participants were asked to comment and give opinions on the C&C principles by asking whether the principle in question was already being put into practice at the University. If not, the groups then had to identify the gap and the development idea to fill that gap. Additionally, the participants were asked to suggest some issues which were already in good order at the University and to name the major development issues. Lively discussions



took place in groups and interesting views, opinions, gaps and development ideas were received to further the position and career development of the researcher. An important observation was to realise that the session offered an opportunity for researchers from different disciplines and at different levels to address common concerns together.

Additionally, the members of the steering group attended the meetings of the above mentioned interest groups and presented the HRS4R work and gathered views and comments. Furthermore, the heads of faculty administration, being an important link between the faculties and the JYU administration, have committed to sharing information within their own faculties.

In December 2012 and January 2013, the researcher and administrative representatives were given a chance to comment on the action plan draft.

In addition to the University of Jyväskylä, three other Finnish universities are currently working on HRS4R development. In order to help the participating universities, the Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM) in Finland has twice gathered together the first four Finnish universities participating in the HRS4R process, offering them an opportunity to share their experiences of the process and learn from each other.

It was seen as important to inform the whole university community about the development process. Therefore, a communication plan was drawn up together with University Communications. An internal bulletin was issued when the interest groups within the university were involved in the development process in late September 2012. An external bulletin will be published if and when the University of Jyväskylä is acknowledged with the 'HR Excellence in Research' badge by the EU.

The Rector of the University has endorsed the principles laid out in the Charter and Code by signing a Declaration of Commitment in late November 2012.

According to the EU instructions on the HRS4R, the output of the first three steps – the HR Strategy for Researchers including an Action Plan and a description of the internal gap analysis – is posted on a public website. The University has launched Academic Life, a development concept for the JYU staff, and the HRS4R process, which focuses on developing the researcher profession and career, is in line with the concept.



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## 3 KEY OUTCOMES

Most principles described in the Charter & Code are already in practice at the University of Jyväskylä. However, improvements and development actions have been identified and will be completed according to the Action Plan during 2013–2016.

The first University level action was identified already when gathering the information on the the University's guidelines and instructions: not all documents are provided in English. In addition, attention has to be paid to proper proofreading and translations in order to guarantee consistent content in Finnish and English. The second action would be to develop an appropriate intranet from which information can be easily accessed and updated.

### 3.1 Strengths

Strengths during the process have been threefold: 1) the process being linked to the overall University strategy, 2) studying the existing documents and material from several points of view as well as 3) the increased interaction between different groups at the University. Interaction has increased on three levels: between HR and Research units, between the researchers and the administration without any intermediaries (i.e. departments or faculties), and between researchers from different disciplines and different levels. All these interaction possibilities showed the importance of seeing and understanding different point of views when achieving common goals.

### 3.2 Weaknesses

Even though the idea of developing the researcher profession and career was seen to be relevant for the University, the needed time resources were limited. More researcher involvement would have been welcome. Furthermore, the HRS4R development was perhaps seen as slightly bureaucratic, because employment and profession issues seem to be at an advanced level in Finland due to the existing Finnish labour legislation which protects the employee.



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## 4 INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY AND VISION

While designing the action plan the university's overall strategy and action programmes and goals in these documents were carefully studied against the principles in the Charter and Code.

In compliance with its strategy 'Excellence and Dynamism 2017', the University of Jyväskylä aims at recruiting talented researchers globally, utilising the researcher career system that enables career progress and mobility, and promoting the development of attractive and profiled doctoral education. These objectives can be achieved by, for example, recruiting more broadly internationally and by applying the tenure track system. Furthermore, aims have been set for innovative personnel management, competitive employer status and a management and service culture that supports professional development in research, among other areas.

**The University of Jyväskylä Graduate School for Doctoral Studies**, established in March 2011, consists of doctoral schools administered by the faculties. The University Graduate School is led by the Vice-Rector, who is assisted by a Steering Board formed from the faculties' doctoral school heads.

The University Graduate School is responsible for the implementation and content-related development of doctoral training at the University of Jyväskylä, evaluation and steering of the faculties' doctoral schools, as well as assessing the need for doctors in the fields that the University represents and coordination of studies promoting transferable skills.

**The University's Research, Innovation and Infrastructure Policy**, approved by the University Board February 2011, provides practical guidelines for research.

The policy is based on the University of Jyväskylä's strategy 'Excellence and Dynamism 2017', which includes a research strategy for 2012–2017. The policy addresses such themes as the management of research, research personnel, researcher mobility, the research periods, the funding and maintenance of the University's infrastructure, research funding and innovation activity. The actions planned in the research policy coincide closely with those in the Charter & Code.

**The University of Jyväskylä Personnel Policy 2011–2017** supports and concretises the implementation of the overall University Strategy. The actions in the Personnel Policy address the same themes as in the Charter & Code, namely management and supervisory responsibilities, occupational wellness and communality, competence development as well as employment relations and career path development.

The University applies guidelines decided by the Rector in the recruitment and in the employment in addition to the Finnish labour legislation, the Universities' collective agreement and the Universities Act.



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## 5 ACTION PLAN

The identified actions fall under two main categories based on the principles given in the Charter and Code: 1) Ethical and Professional Aspects and 2) Employment and Recruitment. The actions are described in detail in the Action Plan table starting on page 9.

The University of Jyväskylä will focus on providing continuous, updated and easily accessible information and orientation to the researchers as well as training on several themes. Attention will be paid to interaction at all organisational levels in order to further influence possibilities, share information and reach common understandings.

The University will support the professional development of researchers at all stages and assess the training actions in terms of accessibility, participation and effectiveness. Opportunities to receive systematic career advice will also be checked. Two very concrete actions include the more extensive use of a supervision document and compiling a handbook for international staff. The research environment will be developed by improving the facilities and research-related IT services.



## I. Ethical and Professional Aspects

	Principle	Action	When	Who
General Principles and Requirements applicable to Researchers	<b>Professional responsibility</b>			
	<p>The Ethical Principles of the University of Jyväskylä obligate the scientific community to make sure that all research activities observe the principles of good scientific practice and sustainable research ethics. Furthermore, JYU has committed to following the guidelines provided by the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics in Finland as stipulated in <i>Good scientific practice and procedure for handling misconduct and fraud in science</i>.</p> <p>However, although these principles are highly respected among the permanent staff, there is no systematic information on ethical issues, especially for early stage researchers and new international staff. Therefore it is important to improve internal and continuous communication to new and present staff.</p>			
	Ethical principles	Continuous information on existing rules and principles on research ethics and good practices in science (e.g. an information package or a web-based course). Training on discipline-specific ethical rules and principles to be organised by the Faculties	2013 and thereafter continuously and in the orientation for new staff	Ethical Committee, HR, Graduate School for Doctoral Studies, Faculties, Doctoral Programmes
	Professional responsibility			



	Principle	Action	When	Who
	<b>Professional development</b>			
	Act on the Right in Inventions made at Higher Education Institutions and University of Jyväskylä Regulations Regarding Inventions stipulate the legal and practical obligations of researchers in IPR issues. The institutional principles and rules provide guidelines for project management and contractual policy. These rules and practices should be adopted throughout the scientific community.			
	To improve the skills development of early stage researchers the following actions shall be taken.			
	Professional attitude	Develop training modules on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- project management</li> <li>- exploitation of research results and IPR regulations</li> <li>- university agreement policy and contractual obligations</li> <li>- rules and principles in data collection and archiving</li> <li>- researcher in media training</li> </ul> Recognising new possibilities in enhancing researchers' skills in project management	Starting 2013 once a year both in English and in Finnish	Graduate School for Doctoral Studies and University Services (Research and Innovation Services and HR)
	Contractual and legal obligations			
	Accountability			
	Good practice in research			
	Dissemination, exploitation of results			
	Public engagement			



	Principle	Action	When	Who
	<b>Quality of supervision in research</b>			
	<p><b>In the general principles of the University of Jyväskylä Graduate School for Doctoral Studies, the duties of supervisors are described as follows:</b></p> <p><b>Progress of dissertation work</b>            The director responsible for the faculty's (or department's) doctoral programmes (e.g. dean, vice-dean, programme manager) approves the dissertation supervisors. The supervisor's primary responsibility is to contribute to the progress of dissertation work. If a supervisor from a foreign university is nominated for the doctoral student, it is also possible to negotiate a dual degree with the university in question in order to ensure the student's work opportunities. At the beginning of the postgraduate studies, the student and the supervisors collaboratively create a plan for completing the studies and writing the dissertation within the target time of four years.</p> <p><b>Career guidance</b>            The supervisors discuss postdoctoral career opportunities with the student. At an initial stage of the studies, the career opportunities offered in Finland, as well as the consequent importance of learning Finnish, are also addressed in discussions with non-Finnish doctoral students. Supervisors should also make sure that doctoral studies include courses that promote transferable skills if these are not included in the master's studies. Transferable skills studies (scientific thinking, research ethical principles, research methods, intellectual property rights (IPR), business skills, entrepreneurship, management and leadership) are coordinated by the University Graduate School together with the Methodology Centre for Human Sciences (IHME), and are open to all doctoral programmes.            Each faculty doctoral schools applies their own supervising procedures, however, some common practices should be adopted in order to ensure equal and transparent treatment of all early stage researchers.</p>			
	Relation with supervisors	Supervision documents to be adopted in all faculty doctoral schools. Toolbox/check list for supervisors to be developed.	Starting 2013 Follow-up 2014	Faculty doctoral schools, HR, IHME
	Supervision and managerial duties			



	Principle	Action	When	Who
General Principles and Requirements applicable to Employers and Funders	<b>Continuing professional development</b> The University strategy values international cooperation and international mobility. High-level research is global and attracts top international researchers to JYU. It also enables career advancement at foreign universities for young researchers trained at JYU. The University promotes researcher mobility by offering travel grants for research visits abroad. The JYU Graduate School supports the internationalisation of doctoral programmes by paying a doctoral candidate 's fourth-year salary in international programmes with three-year funding (e.g. Erasmus Mundus and Marie Curie doctoral programmes). The University has developed the research period system which enables professors and senior researchers and senior lecturers to concentrate on research for a period of one year.  According to the University strategy, research and education strengthen each other. This is best achieved if research and education are conducted by the same people. Professors and senior researchers (senior lecturers), as a rule, are involved both in teaching and research. Postdoctoral researchers and doctoral students are mainly responsible for research, but they are also expected to undertake a small amount of teaching. The recruitment of research personnel (doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, senior researchers, senior lecturers and professors) is, as a rule, international. To further improve and achieve the University's strategic objective the following actions shall be taken.			
	Continuing professional development	The university supports the professional development of researchers at all stages. The objective is to further enhance	Continuous, check point 2014    2014	Science Council, Rector's Office, HR
	Value of mobility	- international mobility		
	Access to research training and continuous development	- participation in scientific conferences - implementation of research periods - pedagogical skills of researchers		
	Co-authorship	- co-authorship		
Teaching	- teaching possibilities of early stage researchers and clarify JYU procedures  To assess the training actions in terms of accessibility, participation and effectiveness			



## II. Employment and Recruitment

	Principle	Action	When	Who
General Principles and Requirements applicable to Employers and Funders	<b>Employment</b>			
	Finnish working life is regulated by different labour laws (acts) and collective agreements. The laws and respective collective agreement are applied to all employees working for Finnish employers regardless of their nationality. The Finnish labour legislation is for employee protection and guarantees equal treatment.			
	In addition to the above mentioned labour legislation, University guidelines on employment and recruitment issues are in several documents: JYU Strategy 'Excellence and Dynamism 2017', JYU Regulations, Rector's decision on personnel issues, Personnel Policy 2011–2017, Ethical Principles, Equality Plan and Early Invention and Support Model. According to the University Strategy a strong employer policy promoting the strategic objectives and staff wellbeing will be created at the University.			
	The University continues to develop internal communication at several levels including employee and supervisor training and orientation on employment-related issues as well as to develop the research environment.			
	Non-discrimination Gender balance	Non-discrimination and equality issues as well as early support model, ethical principles to be highlighted in orientations and training	2013	University Services
	Research environment	Tele-working possibilities to be ensured Continuous development of facilities Continuous information on health and safety issues to be provided	Continuously	IT Services, University Board and University Services, HR & Head of Safety



	<b>Principle</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>
	Working conditions	Handbook for international staff Information on applying total working hour system to be added and support mechanisms to be adapted	2013	HR
	Participation in decision-making bodies	Support at all levels for the creation of new ways of experiencing ownership of the University community	2013–2016	Directors, HR, Employees
	Funding and salaries	Transparent salary principles to be further communicated to the staff	2013	Supervisors, HR
	Evaluation /appraisal systems	Tenure track and evaluation principles to be communicated in a more foreseeable way Further development (criteria) of bonus system	2013-2014	HR
	Complaints /appeals	Feedback system to be created  To define the roles and responsibilities in managing disputes and conflicts	2013-2014	HR
	<b>Principle</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>
	<b>Career Development</b>			
	The University aims at innovative personnel management that supports the holistic, constant governance of human resources. New guidelines and operating models will be created to harmoniously further the career-long commitment of staff, as well as to enhance the development of core competence and human capacity. The University will utilise a tenure track system that enables career advancement and mobility.			
	Access to career advice	Systematic career advice possibilities to be sorted out	2015–2016	HR, Faculty Doctoral Schools



Recruitment				
According to its strategy the University of Jyväskylä aims to recruit talented researchers globally, utilising the researcher career system that enables career progress and mobility, and promoting the development of attractive and profiled doctoral education. These objectives can be achieved by, for example, recruiting more broadly internationally and by applying the tenure track system.				
Principle		Action	When	Who
Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers	Recruitment	International recruitment process to be evaluated	2013	HR
	Variations in the chronological order of CVs	Understanding of CV variations to be increased		
	Recognition of qualifications	Information to be provided on existing rules, procedures and standards in recognition of qualifications	2014	HR