Universitat d'Alacant
Universidad de Alicante

Application of the University of Alicante to the HRS4R Award

ACTION PLAN

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1. Organisational Information

UA is a public university offering multidisciplinary study programmes in all fields of knowledge organised in six faculties and a polytechnic school. UA community is made up of about 3800 academic and administrative staff and over 25000 students enrolled in official degrees.

Our human capital is focused on overcoming the challenges of today's society with their high-quality, innovative and citizen-oriented services. We are a bilingual university with a clear international vocation for which we are firmly committed to multilingualism, both to our institution and to all members of the university community. English is being used as teaching language in some of our official degrees and in many of our cultural activities/courses.

STAFF AND STUDENTS	Fte
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	1.549
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	62
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	1.277
Of whom are women	629
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor	1.022
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	223
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	304
Total number of students (if relevant)	25.619
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	3.215

RESEARCH AND FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	249.423.138 €
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	27.646.200 €
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	11.304.917 €
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	2.909.095 €

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

2.1 Ethical and professional aspects

UA, as public Higher Education Institution HEI, is devoted to teaching and research, being fully aware of its social responsibility. One of our main concerns is to make sure recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles and standards, appropriate to each discipline, are applied while doing research, thus meeting the requirements of national, sectoral and institutional Codes of Ethics.

As a consequence, UA counts with a **General Institutional Ethical Committee**, but also with a **Research Committee,** whose main aim is to provide an agile and effective answer to support research needs in the short/medium/long term with views on the protection of Human Rights, animal wellbeing and the environment, and to the respect of bioethics principles, among others. These committees foster and monitor the accomplishment of good practices in research and experimentation.

UA researchers are operating in a **safe environment** where the health and data safety regulations, secure technological data storage, applicable data privacy regulation, etc. are fully implemented.

Research at UA is being carried out with the main purpose of **genuinely contributing towards the creation of new knowledge** and thus **to advance in areas of knowledge and technology**. The only limitation to research freedom is given by the **institutional strategic plan with its priorities** that is also linked to the **research lines defined by the different national and international donors**.

UA brings to researchers at all stages of their career, strong support in terms of **accession to competitive funds from both Regional/National/European donors**, by offering a **comprehensive search service** and **tools** (i.e. info days, tailor made newsletter, etc.) to better guide **them in finding the right instrument**. By doing this, the International Project Management Office (OGPI) guides all Rs from the initial phase when looking for the best funding option, through the administrative and financial support at the time of the proposal preparation (budget, consortium, e-tools, authorisation from the Vice Rector for Research, etc.), proposal drafting and up to the project implementation process and closure. UA main aim in this

context is to provide all Rs the best conditions to carry out research and **not allocating high efforts to bureaucracy.**

Clear and standardised procedures for reporting and justification are in place for all funded research activities being the priorities of a **correct implementation, accountability and transparency** key aspects at UA. The issue of **accountability is fully in line with national, regional and international regulations** and **fully in place,** thanks to a **centralised financial office to which all centres and units financial units respond**. The **project accountability requirements are pre-defined** by the different instruments and monitored/enforced by both **internal/ external audits.** All data related to all kinds of public/private funds received and executed is stored and updated by the corresponding Unit and is **available in real time using secure institutional IT applications**.

Research at UA is carried out in line with **high quality standards that first of all ensure relevance, rigour** and **reproducibility.** Research is implemented with an **international approach** and also carried out collaboratively with a wide range of relevant actors, not only from Higher Education (HE), but also synergy with the business sector, users, authorities, research institutions, policy makers, etc. is strongly encouraged and supported.

Special efforts are devoted to ensure **originality of research outcomes**, thus **avoiding duplication** (UA offers well-known antiplagiarism tools to detect, control and prevent plagiarism in teaching/research activities and an effective service for support for researchers dealing with research Interllectual Property Rights (IPRs) and also joint ownership). Such Service is provided by the Technology Transfer Service (STT) that also oversees and manages all issues related with Research & Development R&D protection, ownership, exploitation.

STT mission is to work towards raising the awareness on **Intellectual Property** and **Technology Transfer** and to reinforce the **visibility and exploitation of research results**. Many are the services offered, but of special interest: Technology Based firms (spin off) creation, R&D contracts and agreements and Industrial Property and Copyright, among others. UA Researchers are also encouraged to **disseminate research results** and they receive guidance on key issues related to scientific publications.

The aspect of the **general dissemination of research results has room for improvement.** According to the gap analysis findings, researchers should better disseminate their activities and results to the general public. This is due to the fact that such dissemination activities are **not included as criterion for their evaluation (teaching staff selection scales, sexenios).** The consequence is that in most of the cases, **the general dissemination of research results is not**

considered as a key task with a direct impact on their career. Nevertheless and despite the abovementioned and recently, a measure to grant **Technology Transfer Sexenios** (recognition) to researchers has just been approved at national level (Sexenios de Investigación). One of the criteria for its granting focuses and assesses the generation of research social value, where **visibility dissemination actions** (such as articles in news, etc.) **are considered crucial.** Such new recognition is thus reinforcing this aspect, where there is **still need to ensure that research activities are widely shared with the society; this will revert in a better understanding of** the inestimable contribution research brings to all fields of knowledge for the **continuous advancement in terms of economic development and well-being in the wide sense.**

Equality issues prioritization at UA is demonstrated by the fact that there is a **specific Vice Rectorate for Social Responsibility, Inclusion and Equality** that **defines gender plans** and offers a set of **tools and protocols** to enforce issues such as sexual harassment, discrimination for sexual and sexual orientation reasons, for identity attention and gender respect, among others. In addition to this, the **Students Support Centre** (CAE) is in charge of all issues related to the **access, support and inclusion of students with special needs**.

UA evaluation/appraisal systems are based on national/regional legislation, so that they are in line with national standards and the **periodic evaluation** of researchers' performance is done by ANECA and AVAP, the national and regional Accreditation Agencies, respectively. This is done on the basis of **National and European standards** with specific and **pre-defined procedures and tools**.

More details can be found in the gap analysis table and taking it into account, the corresponding actions have been duly defined in the Action Plan below.

2.2 Recruitment and selection

Recruitment standards are pre-defined and public/transparent at UA, as public HEI, and in line with the Code of Conduct Recruitment of Researchers and the OTM-R. All **selection procedures and evaluation criteria are standardised** and **publicly available** at the university website.

Job vacancies are published in the specific sections of UA website and also **disseminated via Social Media** for higher visibility (please see "Advertising and application phase" section under OTM-R document) including all key data (requirements, selection criteria, objectives, duration, merits, such as period spent researching at other HEIs, Institutes, companies, entities, etc., or when not possible, the crresponding link to the institutional website dedicated page) and with the idea of **attracting Rs from all over Europe/international candidates**.

According to the findings of the analysis, **UA employs appropriate (and transparent) assessment and evaluation mechanisms for academic and professional qualifications**, and solid mechanisms that define the **degree needed to access each of the different R steps**. The **qualifications required for each of the R profile are fully in line with the job that will be performed,** so to ensure a smooth research deployment. At the end of each selection procedure, **UA publishes the list of candidates with their corresponding scoring in line with the requirements of the profile**. In this way all of them receive feedback on the aspects that are considered his/her **strong points** and added value if compared with others, but also **areas for improvement** for their information and consideration for any possible continuous professional development.

The **composition of the Evaluation Committees** (in which the inclusion of trade union representatives is mandatory in all cases) is complying national legislation that sets clear rules in **terms of members' expertise and competencies**, but also **gender balance**, **disciplines** and **experience** of each member. The only formal barrier is given by the **national universities law (LOU) that regulates the composition of the selection committees**, where all members are **eligible upon the criterion of being civil servants**. This implies that external members are not eligible by this legislative restriction.

In terms of **non-discrimination referring to gender issues**, a special selection procedure is implemented in case of two candidates (one male and the other female) obtain the same evaluation. As criterion for decision, **the least represented gender in this specific job category has selection priority**.

In terms of **accessibility of recruitment process for candidates**, UA offers application services that are partially available online, so that room for improvement has been detected in this aspect and the corresponding action has been defined in the Action Plan Document towards achieving a full IT system that **covers all application/selections stages virtually**. In addition, **room for improvement has also been detected in terms of language accessibility,** where online recruitment related content is available, in some cases, only in the two official national/regional languages (Spanish and Valencian). With this in mind, Action 9 of the Action Plan has been included with the aim of obtaining a substantial **increase of UA website key content for external candidates in English**.

At present, the **number and type of publications is considered one of the most relevant criterion** for merit judgement and its assessment is based on internationally recognised journal rankings. This is due to mandatory regulations. **Qualitative criteria as specifically foreseen under this criterion are not applied strictly in terms of qualitative perspective;** however, **career breaks or variations**

of researchers' CVs are not penalised, but considered an added value in terms of professional development.

Mobility is assessed for all Rs selection and continuous performance evaluation, and in addition to this, it is also considered a **requirement in some cases** (International PhD mention, for example). AVAP (the Regional Agency for Assessment and Perspective) is also contemplating mobility as a criterion for assessment.

When it comes **to career development prospects, UA is depending on the regulation for the National replacement rate regulation,** included within the national budget drafted on yearly basis. **Each research contractual figure has a set of pre-defined aspects** such as **duration** and **objectives** of the **appointment.** In terms of duration, the call for application clearly states the **duration, possibility of renewal** (and its limits). This is fully in line with the Organic Law 6/2001, of Universities (December 21, 2001, modified April 12, 2017) that clearly defines the different R contractual stages.

More details can be found in the gap analysis table and taking it into account, the corresponding actions have been duly defined in the Action Plan below.

2.3 Working conditions

The **continuous improvement of all Rs working conditions** is a constant priority at UA and is perceived as a **continuous area to work on and to devote resources and effort towards continuous improvement.** UA understands that **providing the flexibility Rs need as human beings and professionals** to make their job compatible with their life **will revert in a positive impact on the quality of their research.** Having said this, we also have to remind that, according to national regulations, **research staff at Spanish HEIs has also teaching duties.** This is because, their laboral contract **defines a specific percentage of dedication of their** time to be devoted to **teaching tasks** and another percentage of dedication to **research; duplicity that can cause overburden. However, this is something on which UA has no authority;** that is why, in order to compensate this, **strong logistic support** (from different perspectives) to researchers is provided, in addition to the national and regional support. This include a **wide range of actions from different points of view and areas.** Some of them are listed below (the list is non exhaustive):

- **RISK PREVENTION**: UA enforces the applicable legislation in terms of Labour Risk Prevention.

- **ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN REDUCTION:**
  - the Service for Technology Transfer and Service for Research Management are strongly supporting researchers in order to decrease their administrative burden so that they would devote their time to research activities.
  - At national level, the Spanish government has also recently approved a new regulation whose main aim is to decrease the administrative burden for researchers.
- **FACILITIES & IT INFRAESTRUCTURE:**
  - UA campus is fully adapted for persons with special needs. Example of this is the strong collaboration with national foundations such as ONCE and proof of the good results and real interaction are the different awards received by UA.
  - UA IT Service offers a wide range of videoconference rooms with the corresponding infraestructure and also a license to use the Adobe Connect platform a very useful and solid tool to get in contact with other researchers from all over the world. It has many functionalities depending on the user's needs (recording, ppt showing, chat, etc.).
  - UACloud (the UA community e-working environment) is in continuous development and it offers a wide range of working and reporting tools for researchers at all stages of their career.
- **TEACHING REDUCTION:**
  - Good practices already being implemented are for instance the criteria for teaching reduction in line with existing national legislation and with national or sectoral collective-bargaining agreement.
- **EMPLOYMENT PERMANENCE:**
  - The **stability of employment is fully guaranteed** by UA with the **exception of the national limitations** set by the Government restrictions in terms of general national budget planning on yearly basis.
  - UA has ratified a **plan for the stability and promotion of academic staff** approved by the University Council on the 27 May 2010, that also sets specific procedures for the **absorption of the contracted staff coming from** the Ramon y Cajal programme.

- **SALARY POLICY**:
  - The **salary policy (including social security provisions) is pre-defined at UA as it is at national level** and this information is **publicly available** at the university website. Then, when it comes to international funds, the regulatory framework and condition is strictly **regulated by the different donors**.
  - Even if standardised, UA is currently **negotiating and improving of the Collective Bargaining Agreement at regional level**.
- **MOBILITY:**
  - **Mobility** is recognized for all Rs **selection and continuous performance assessment**, and in addition to this, it is also **considered a requirement** in some cases (International PhD mention). AVAP (the Regional Agency for Assessment and Perspective) is contemplating mobility as a criterion for assessment.
  - UA has all mechanisms in place to ensure the **portability of both grants and social security provisions**, in accordance with national legislation.

In addition to this, and as it can be seen in the sections above and in the extensive gap analysis, **UA is also focusing on other areas that provide crucial support to Rs at all stages of their career**. They are: **structured support mechanisms** to all Rs (that should be better developed for R2-3-4), especially in terms of IT tools for more senior researchers, **protection and exploitation of IPRs** derived from R&D, **publishing** and **co-authorship**, assistance in resolving work-related **conflicts, representation in decision-making bodies**. Summing up, UA is on the **good path in terms of ensuring appropriate and attracting working conditions; however,** this has to be seen as a good and **promising starting point** to be in **constant improvement and consolidation, within the limits set by the national/regional laws and regulations**.

More details can be found in the gap analysis table and taking it into account, the corresponding actions have been duly defined in the Action Plan below.

2.4 Training and development

Especially at the first stages of their career, **junior researchers at UA are closely guided by the pre-defined protocols set out by UA Doctorate School** via a **designated supervisor**. The "Regulation for PhD at UA" is enforced by UA Doctorate School and provides specific **guidelines and tools for the formal establishment**

of such relations and as well as **tools for activities reporting and monitoring to both researchers and supervisors**, respectively. A good example of a specific tool available at UA is the RAPI tool ("activity register and research plan"), that consists in a follow up software for all kind of formative activities and follow up measures specifically designed for R1 and for their supervisors.

Thus, **R1's research is fully and formally supported and oriented** thanks to a standardised and transparent protocol that allows, on the one side, for supervisors **keeping records of the work progress, research progress and findings** and, on the other, **for researchers, obtaining feedback, suggestions for continuous improvement, as well as adequate support from their supervisors.** All is **organised in a structured way** and in **institutionally scheduled reporting periods**.

However, despite the fact that R1 are supported and oriented, **room for improvement has been detected in terms of expanding and adapting such advisory service to, at least, R2 and gradually to all R stages for the final benefit of research carried out at UA.** This will be key for continuous improvement and consolidation.

Lifelong Learning and **continuous professional development are a must at UA.** The continuous development of Rs competences is, among other initiatives, enforced by the **UA Education Science Centre (ICE) LLL courses and workshops on a wide range of relevant topics for the different researchers at any stage of their career.** Such **offer is also based on the real demand and needs expressed by the different UA Centres** and is **in constant evaluation by all participants and suggestions for improvements or for the enlargement of the offer are constantly taken into account.** However, room for improvement has been detected in terms of **increasing the offer of such courses, especially the ones delivered in English**. In addition to this, we would also like to underline another initiative called **"Prof-teaching" focused on strengthening English teaching skills for all teaching/research staff of UA community**, useful due to the willingness of the University to actively working towards the **attraction of international students and researchers.**

Additionally to the abovementioned, UA by means of the **"institutional research support funding programme"**, assigns **funds to attend congresses, seminars, courses, publications, etc.** depending of each research group performance with the same idea of giving Rs the best conditions for their **continuous development with a strong international emphasis.**

More details can be found in the gap analysis table and taking it into account, the corresponding actions have been duly defined in the Action Plan below.

3. Actions

Proposed ACTIONS		
Action 1	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To draft, approve and disseminate the UA ethical code of research.	All principles	M1-6 (drafting and approval) Continuous dissemination (M6-24)
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	INDICATORS Quantitative: • 1 UA ethical code of research document ready • 1 UA ethical code of research approved by UA Council • Nº of downloads Qualitative: • Ethical code with objectives, principles, good practices, etc. validated by all target groups • Ethical code widely disseminated both at internal and external level (including website visibility) • Ethical code impact and results monitored thanks to pre-defined procedures with responsible and against specific KPIs. TARGETS • UA high management • UA recruitment management unit • All R groups
Action 2	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To organize and deliver sector focused seminars to raise the awareness on the Science, Technology and Innovation Law (Ley 14/2011, de 1 de junio, de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Innovación), stress on the importance of implementing a research that is applied and relevant to the market and society and also the OTM-R procedure. These seminars will be targeted to the whole UA research community, but grouped in the specific scientific research areas. Such events will also foster research fields visibility to ensure a more synergetic multidisciplinary cooperation among researchers.	(+/-) 1. Research freedom (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (++) 6. Accountability (++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 9. Public engagement (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (++) 32. Co-authorship	M1-24 on yearly basis Merged with Actions 4, 10, 13 for cost efficiency purposes and to better attract a substancial number of Rs.

	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) /Target(s)
	VR for quality and Educational Innovation + VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • 14 Seminars implemented (7 UA Centres*2 events=14) Qualitative: • Al R is better aware on the Science, Technology and Innovation Law and the importance of implementing relevant research TARGET • UA Research community (all R) • Representatives from the public/private sector, being research users.
Action 3	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To draft a research welcome manual for researchers (targeting all R stages from abroad)	(+/-) 2. Ethical principles (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (++) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 7. Good practice in research (++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 9. Public engagement (++) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (++) 34. Complains/ appeals (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	M10 and continous dissemination and use.
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • 1 welcome manual ready and widely disseminated Qualitative: • Al R accessing UA from abroad are familiar with all issues to start working (contacts, facilities, procedures, tools, regulations, etc.) TARGET • All R stages from abroad.

Action 4	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
To organize and deliver workshops to instruct the research community on their contractual and legal obligations in the framework of the different funding instruments and strengthen their links and communication with the Service for Research Management and the one for Technology Transfer.	(++) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (++) 6. Accountability	M1-24 on yearly basis (2 events per year) Merged with Action 2, 10, 13 for cost efficiency purposes and to better attract a substantial number of Rs.
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for quality and Educational Innovation + VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • 14 Seminars implemented (7 UA Centres*2 events=14) Qualitative: • Al R is better aware on their contractual and legal obligations and on the different funding instruments TARGET • UA Research community (all R)
Action 5	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To design and implement a tailor made support strategy for excellent researchers towards fostering their participation in competitive and international research instruments (mainly EU ones, H2020).	(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continous development	M1-5 and in constant progress.
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • 1 tailor made support strategy defined and implemented Qualitative: • Researchers from all disciplines are better aware on the funding opportunities they could apply for, especially at international level • Increase of UA researchers participation in international research calls (i.e. H2020, etc.). TARGET • UA Research community (all R)

Action 6	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
To improve the security measures of data storage at UA.	(+/-) 7. Good practice in research (+/-) 23. Research environment	M1-6 and in constant progress.
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Campus and Technology	Quantitative: • 1 IT system set up and maintained Qualitative: • data stored with high level of protection TARGET • The entire UA community data
Action 7	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To update the scale for teaching/research recruitment with the inclusion of the contemplation of outreach activities as a merit duly assessed (within the limits set by national/ regional laws and regulation) and explore possibilities to contract international researchers even if without their Degree equivalence (without forgetting the national, regional and institutional legal requirements).	(++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 9. Public engagement (-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)	M1-18
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Academic and Faculty Affairs	Quantitative: • All scales for teaching/research staff recruitment updated. Qualitative: • Teaching/research staff recruitment scaled include outreach as merit • Teaching/research staff recruitment allow the recruitment of international researchers without their Degree equivalence (if alllowed by the EU, national and institutional legislation/regulation) • Nª of staff recruited. TARGET • All R groups.
Action 8	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To further develop the UA e-platform functionalities for job applications. This will be implemented gradually starting from the figures of Lecturers (with and without PhD up to all profiles: lecturers, research fellow and civil servants). The new functionalities will allow: identification, payments, documents uploading, ... till the step of the adjudication.	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)	M1-12 and in constant maintenance.

	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) /Target(s)
	VR for Campus and Technology	Quantitative: • 1 fully electronic application tool set up and in continuous maintenance Qualitative: • National and international research community can apply online TARGET • National and international research community from all Rs
Action 9	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To translate (or improve/expand the translation) key institutional web pages for a better access of international researchers information. Such pages will be mainly the ones related with Human Research and related issues within the framework of research (Research and Companies, Rs access, Ethics Committees, Rs contracting, PhD School).	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)	M1-24 (progressive deliveries expected per quarter)
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • Approx. 11146 words translated from: https://www.ua.es/en/index.html https://ssyf.ua.es/va/accesopdi/ https://sstti.ua.es/va/comite-etica/ https://ssyf.ua.es/va/accesopdi/ https://edua.ua.es/en/doctoral-school.html • Increased website visits Qualitative: • Better access to UA info for international Rs. TARGET • National and international research community
Action 10	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To raise the awareness among RS on the offer of support services the UA research support unit is offering (see action 5) with views on fostering synergies with them and a better exploitation of the research support service, also in cooperation with the private sectors. The support of the Service for Research Management and the one for Technology Transfer will be crucial to decrease the administrative burden of researchers.	(+/-) 23. Research environment	M1-24 on yearly basis (2 events per year) Merged with Action 2, 4, 10, 13 for cost efficiency purposes and to better attract a substantial number of Rs.

	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative: • 14 Seminars implemented (7 UA Centres*2 events=14) Qualitative: • All R is better aware on the admin. support service s/he receive at UA TARGET • UA Research community (all Rs)
Action 11	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To create formal regulation and procedures for research staff teleworking at UA (within the limits set by national/ regional laws and regulation).	(+/-) 23. Research environment (-/+) 24. Working conditions	M1-6
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Academic and Faculty Affairs + Human Resources Head	Quantitative: • 1 teleworking regulation and procedures defined and applied. Qualitative: • Researcher can enjoy a more productive work environment applied. TARGET • UA Research community (all Rs)
Action 12	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To expand the advisory services in terms of career, to at least, R2 staff.	(-/+) 30. Access to career advice	M12-18
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	• Nº of R2 supported TARGET • Worldwide researchers at all stages of their careers.
Action 13	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To organize and deliver seminars to raise the awareness on the importance of IP in research.	(++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights	M1-24 on annual basis (2 events per year) Merged with Action 2, 4, 10, for cost efficiency purposes and to better attract a substantial number of Rs.

	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer + VR for Quality and Educational Innovation	Quantitative: • 14 Seminars implemented (7 UA Centres*2 events=14) Qualitative: • All R is better aware on the potential of IP for their research TARGET • UA Research community (all R)
Action 14	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To foster the participation of a wider number of teaching / research staff at teaching and coaching courses organised by UA.	(+/-) 33. Teaching (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	M1-24
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Quality and Educational Innovation	• Nº of attendees 10% of evolution progressively TARGET • All Rs
Action 15	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To expand the advisory services in terms of career, to, at least R2 staff.	(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-) 40. Supervision	M12-18
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative • Use of 1 electronic platform for supervision. TARGET • Worldwide researchers at all stages of their careers.
Action 16	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To increase the Education Science Centre (ICE) courses offer in English.	(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	M1-18

	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Quality and Educational Innovation	INDICATOR Quantitative: • Increase courses in English by 5% for the 1st year and progressively increase the %. Qualitative: • More access, especially for international researchers, to these types of courses for their LLL. TARGET • UA Research community (all Rs)
Action 17	**GAP Principle(s)**	**Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)**
To create a Post doctoral Centre at UA as a networking focal point for continuous learning, multidisciplinary research and research internationalization.	(+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	M1-24
	Responsible Unit	**Indicator(s) /Target(s)**
	VR for Research and Knowledge Transfer	Quantitative • 1 center created. • 1 service chart ready and disseminated. TARGET • All Rs researchers at all stages of their career.

The table below illustrates the different subtasks that will be deployed to achieve the expected Actions KPIs.

REF.	TITLE	SUBTASKS
1	To draft, approve and disseminate the UA ethical code of research.	• Document structure preparation and validation • Document first draft • Final version of the document • Translation • Publication • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs on the code of research.
2	To organize and deliver sector focused seminars to raise the awareness on the Science, Technology and Innovation Law (Ley 14/2011, de 1 de junio, de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Innovación), stress on the importance of implementing a research that is applied and relevant to the market and society and also the OTM-R procedure. These seminars will be targeted to the whole UA research community, but grouped in the specific scientific research areas. Such events will also foster research fields visibility to ensure a more synergetic multidisciplinary cooperation among researchers. ACTIONS 2, 4, 10, 13 will deployed in a joint manner. This is for different reasons: – Time efficency: we cannot invite Rs and relevant target to a high number of events because this will decrease the participation gradually. – Relevance: if we bring relevant topics for Rs all together, affluency will be higher and researchers will be fostered to have synergies, joint discussions, etc. – Raising the awareness: one reseracher may be willing to attend because of his interest on for example the Science, Technology and Innovation Law. But having a broader agenda, he can come accross the importance of IP in research even if he was not aware of needing this input. - Cost/Efforts effectiveness	• Agenda preparation • Validation of the event programme • Publication and dissemination of the event call for participation • Logistic preparation and implementation (list of participants, catering, audio visual material, premises, satisfaction questionnaires, etc.) • Technical preparation (content, presentations, supporting documents for attendees, etc.) • Events conclusion report drafting • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) in the conclusions and next events relevant for Rs
3	To draft a research welcome manual for researchers (targeting all R stages from abroad)	• Document structure preparation and validation • Document first draft • Final version of the document • Translation • Publication • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs on the manual

4	To organize and deliver workshops to instruct the research community on their contractual and legal obligations in the framework of the different funding instruments and strengthen their links and communication with the Service for Research Management and the one for Technology Transfer.	• Agenda preparation • Validation of the event programme • Publication and dissemination of the event call for participation • Logistic preparation and implementation (list of participants, catering, audio visual material, premises, satisfaction questionnaires, etc.) • Technical preparation (content, presentations, supporting documents for attendees, etc.) • Events conclusion report drafting • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) in the conclusions and next events relevant for Rs
5	To design and implement a tailor made support strategy for excellent researchers towards fostering their participation in competitive and international research instruments (mainly EU ones, H2020).	• Working methodology definition and validation • Methodology procedures drafting and approval • Preparation of relevant material for researchers to be supported • Call for participation for Rs • Meetings organisation and implementation • Tailor made report drafting for Rs interested including funding opportunities • Continuous follow up • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on this service
6	To improve the security measures of data stored at UA.	• Security system set up • Security System testing • Security system continuous maintenance • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) in what achieved/available for them
7	To update the scale for teaching/research recruitment with the inclusion of the contemplation of outreach activities as a merit duly assessed (within the limits set by national/regional laws and regulation and explore possibilities to contract international researchers even if without their Degree equivalence (without forgetting the national, regional and institutional legal requirements).	• Scale for teaching/research recruitment update proposal drafting • Proposal validation and submission to the corresponding authorities • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness on the updated scale • Analysis and evaluation of alternatives to contract international researchers without the mandatory need of their degree equivalence • Draft of a procedural proposal for the approval at the institutional level
8	To further develop the UA e-platform functionalities for job applications. This will be implemented gradually starting from the figures of Lecturers (with and without PhD up to all profiles: lecturers, research fellow and civil servants). The new functionalities will allow: identification, payments, documents uploading, electronic board, till the step of the adjudication.	• Platform new functionalities workflow definition and validation • New functionalities set up • New functionalities testing • New functionalities released • Continuous maintenance • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the new functionalities

9	To translate (or improve/expand the translation) key institutional web pages for a better access of international researchers information. Such pages will be mainly the ones related with Human Research and related issues within the framework of research (Research and Companies, Rs access, Ethics Committees, Rs contracting, PhD School).	• Web pages selection validation • Translation • Proofreading & validation by the corresponding responsible unit • Release of the translated pages • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the new pages language version available. However and in terms of continous improvement, we would like to mention that some researchers have expressed the problematic for the candidate to have his/her degree with the Spanish equivalence for the contracting process. This can cause challenges at the time of recruiting international researchers with their corresponding national degrees. Please see Action 7 of the action plan.
10	To raise the awareness among researchers on the offer of support services the UA research support unit is offering (see action 5) with views on fostering synergies with them and a better exploitation of the research support service, also in cooperation with the private sectors. The support of the Service for Technology Transfer and the Research Management Service will be crucial to decrease the administrative burden of researchers.	• Agenda preparation • Validation of the event programme • Publication and dissemination of the events calls for participation • Logistic preparation and implementation (list of participants, catering, audio visual material, premises, satisfaction questionnaires, etc.) • Technical preparation (content, presentations, supporting documents for attendees, etc.) • Events conclusion report drafting. • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) in the conclusions and next events relevant for Rs
11	To create formal regulation and procedures for research staff teleworking at UA (within the limits set by national/regional laws and regulation).	• Draft regulation update • Validation update • Regulation update approval • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the new regulation
12	To expand the advisory services in terms of career to Rs	• Definition of services provision and methodology • Validation of the new services provision • Creation of supporting materials for the provision of the services and related and already existing tools update • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the advisory services/tools
13	To organize and deliver seminars to raise the awareness on the importance of IP in research.	• Agenda preparation • Validation of the event programme • Publication and dissemination of the event call for participation • Logistic preparation and implementation (list of participants, catering, audio visual material, premises, satisfaction questionnaires, etc.) • Technical preparation (content, presentations, supporting documents for attendees, etc.) • Events conclusion report drafting. • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) in the conclusions and next events relevant for Rs

14	To foster the participation of a wider number of teaching /research staff at teaching and coaching courses organised by UA.	• Drafting of new courses offer (relevant, attractive delivery format, attractive speaker, on trending topics for researchers, etc.) • Courses organisation (formal, logistic, technical) • Dissemination activities to provide high visibility to the courses and attract relevant participants • Course delivery • Course reporting
15	To expand the advisory services in terms of continuous follow up and training to at least R2 staff.	• Definition of services provision and methodology • Validation of the new services provision • Creation of supporting materials for the provision of the services and related and already existing tools update • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the services
16	To increase the Education Science Centre (ICE) courses offer in English.	• Drafting of new courses offer (relevant, attractive delivery format, attractive speaker, on trending topics for researchers ,etc.) • Courses organisation (formal, logistic, technical) • Dissemination activities to provide high visibility to the courses and attract relevant participants to both researchers and supervisors
17	To create a Post-doctoral Centre at UA as a networking focal point for continuous learning, multidisciplinary research and research internationalization.	• Post-doctoral Centre mission, vision, list of services draft and validation • Staff assignment & premises set up • Provision of services to the research community • Dissemination activities to raise the awareness of Rs (mainly but not limited to) on the Centre and its service and foster its use • Countinous performance evaluation and improvement procedures

The table below present the workplan of the different Actions implementations. As you can see. The time frame is M1-24 since we are applying to the first phase of the HRS4R;however, they will be also implemented in the medium/long term because of high interest for the Institution.

	Implementation period
	Deadline and/or periodicity

REF	TITLE	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24
1	Draft, approve and disseminate the UA ethical code of research.																								
2	To organize and deliver sector focused seminars to raise the awareness on the Science, Technology and Innovation Law (Ley 14/2011, de 1 de junio, de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Innovación), stress on the importance of implementing a research that is applied and relevant to the market and society and also the OTM-R procedure. These seminars will be targeted to the whole UA research community, but grouped in the specific scientific research areas. Such events will also foster research fields visibility to ensure a more synergetic multidisciplinary cooperation among researchers.																								
3	Draft a research welcome manual for researchers (targeting all R stages from abroad)																								
4	To organize and deliver workshops to instruct the research community on their contractual and legal obligations in the framework of the different funding instruments and strengthen their links and communication with the Service for Research Management and the one for Technology Transfer.																								

REF	TITLE	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24
5	To design and implement a tailor made support strategy for excellent researchers towards fostering their participation in competitive and international research instruments (mainly EU ones, H2020).																								
6	To improve the security measures of data stored at UA.																								
7	Update the scale for teaching/research recruitment with the inclusion of the contemplation of outreach activities as a merit duly assessed (within the limits set by national/regional laws and regulation) and explore possibilities to contract researchers even if without their Degree equivalence (without forgetting the national, regional and institutional legal requirements).																								
8	Further develop the UA e-platform functionalities for job applications. This will be implemented gradually starting from the figures of Lecturers (with and without PhD up to all profiles: lecturers, research fellow and civil servants). The new functionalities will allow: identification, payments, documents uploading, ... , till the step of the adjudication.																								
9	To translate (or improve/expand the translation) key institutional web pages for a better access of international researchers information. Such pages will be mainly the ones related with Human Research and related issues within the framework of research (Research and Companies, Rs access, Ethics Committees, Rs contracting, PhD School).																								

REF	TITLE	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24
10	To raise the awareness among researchers on the offer of support services the UA research support unit is offering (see action 5) with views on fostering synergies with them and a better exploitation of the research support service, also in cooperation with the private sectors. The support of the Service for Research Management and the one for Technology Transfer will be crucial to decrease the administrative burden of researchers.																								
11	To create formal regulation and procedures for research staff teleworking at UA (within the limits set by national/regional laws and regulation).																								
12	To expand the advisory services in terms of career to Rs																								
13	To organize and deliver seminars to raise the awareness on the importance of IP in research.																								
14	To foster the participation of a wider number of teaching /research staff at teaching and coaching courses organised by UA.																								
15	To expand the advisory services in terms of continuous follow up and training to at least R2 staff.																								
16	To increase the Education Science Centre (ICE) courses offer in English.																								
17	To create a Post-doctoral Centre at UA as a networking focal point for continuous learning, multidisciplinary research and research internationalization.																								

4. Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Action Plan

The proposed actions detailed in the table below, related with OTM-R, are the results of an in-depth analysis of the current status of the University of Alicante against the OTM-R criteria and have been drafted in accordance also with the Gap Analysis. OTM-R actions have been proposed and meant not to be a duplication of the Action Plan, but a complement that will bring added value to the HRS4R process and the continous improvement of the recruitment strategy at institutional level.

As explained in the OTM-R analysis document, the University of Alicante does not have an OTM-R strategy as a document itself; however, it must be underlined that UA has its institutional procedures in terms of researchers' recruitment in place, that are, im most of the cases, in line with the OTM-R principles. Thus, UA will work towards the drafting, dissemination and implementation of an overall OTM-R strategy that will also contemplate all tools and meachanisms associated (in addition to the already existing ones). All this, will be accompanied by specific implementation guidelines, as well as training sessions and follow up mechanisms to ensure its proper exploitation and consequential impact that will revert in benefit for Rs.

The implementation teams will be the same as the one in charge of the Action Plan (please see page 32 of the present document); this will ensure time and cost efficiency and at the same time will strengthen cohesion and coherence, avoiding unnecessary duplication.

Proposed ACTIONS	OTM-R Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
OTM-R 1 Define, publish and implement a full and comprehensive OTM-R policy at UA (incl. 2 training sessions per year to relevant UA staff)	- Question Nº1 - Question Nº2	M1-24	VR for Academic & Faculty Affairs	INDICATOR Quantitative: • 1 OTM-R policy and related procedures and tools (M6) • 2 training sessions per year Qualitative: • The OTM-R policy is fully implemented so that all its principles are ensured for the benefits of the wide research community. TARGET • UA staff • National and international research community
OTM-R 2 Publish job offers on EURAXESS (and any other relevant portal and other relevant portal)	- Question Nº 4 - Question Nº 11 - Question Nº 12 - Question Nº 13 - Question Nº 14	6 months	Office of the Controller	INDICATOR Quantitative: • One set of guidelines and procedures to publish in line with EURAXESS requirements. Qualitative: • UA research job offers are widely disseminated and visible (nationally and internationally) TARGET • National and international research community
OTM-R 3 Build up a Quality Assurance framework approach to be able to effectively monitor OTM-R policy and deployment.	- Question Nº 5 - Question Nº 23	M1-24	VR for Academic and Faculty Affairs	INDICATOR • 1 QA procedures TARGET • OTR-M policy and deployment assessed and monitored.
OTM-R 4 Monitor indicators of external candidates applications	- Question Nº 6 - Question Nº 7	On annual basis	Office of the Controller	INDICATOR • % of external candidates applications TARGET • All external Rs
OTM-R 5 Provide an English native staff to support candidates from abroad (as an helpdesk available per email)	- Question Nº 7	M1-24	Office of the Controller	INDICATOR • 1 native staff • Nº of applications supported TARGET • All external Rs

5. Action plan implementation

In order to fully understand the implementation process, we would need to underline that the **actions proposed within the action plan** were designed as result of the first step of the hrs4r process and it has been **conceived and integrated into the regular institution workplan** not to be perceived as an extra burden for all staff involved, but absorbed as part of the normal and continous improvement process within UA. This has been done for two main reasons:

1) To **ensure ownership** of what is being achieved by all staff involved and above all, researchers; and
2) **Not to generate additional processes** at institutional level that will complicate the already complex "institutional machinery" and to ensure the same **quality assurance procedures standards, documentation monitoring and reporting**.

As mentioned above, as key actors, **researchers have been involved at all stages of the HRS4R process. Being the main beneficiaries of such action, their point of view, input and suggestions were considered cornerstone for the achievement of solid results with views on impact in both the short, but also the medium and long-term impact.**

The output of this first step of the HRS4R process was the drafting of the action plan that is the **result of an in depth institutional gap analysis carried out against the 40 principles of the CoC, as well as the OTM-R strategy.** All tasks have been proposed as a result of an **exhaustive analysis of UA policy, documentation, procedures and tools**, so to be **coherent** and **in line with the areas for improvement identified in the analysis phase** that has been possible thanks to the active involved of all units and responsible staff at UA per each of the criterion, as well as the active participation of researchers (representatives and individuals). In addition to the documental analysis, all **comments** and **suggestions** raised during the focus groups with the 4 researchers categories have been also **analysed** and **included**.

With views on its effective and successful implementation, the action plan has been drafted to be:

- **Realistic**: specific deadlines are included.
- **Coherent with UA institutional Policy and Strategic Planning**: where all actions are in line with UA mandate and strategic plan.
- **Imputable**: each action implementation was assigned to the corresponding unit at UA to ensure a proper monitoring, achievement of results and the implementation of contingency measures, if needed.
- **Time bound**: the action plan covers a total amount of 24 months; however most of the activities will also continue after this implementation period. Specific deadlines have been set for each of the activities.
- **Cost effective**: especially in terms of events organisation, some activities will be merged to increase the outreach and at the same time to increment the impact, while reducing the organisation costs.

The Action Plan implementation will take into account all **potential suggestions provided by the external experts** in charge of assessing this first phase for the HRS4R process for UA and, of course **ongoing feedback from R1-R4.**

Even if in the sections below more details will be provided, it is worth mentioning that t**hree will be the Groups that will play at the forefront of the action plan implementation process**. They are:

1) **Steering Committee (SC):** composed by the management staff responsible of the Actions implementation. This Committee will be responsible for the strategic input and enforcement of the action plan implementation. The IC and IS will report to them. The members have been selected due to their relevant and strategic positions in the key areas for the HRS4R process and at the same time to ensure continuity and coherence in the implementation process.
2) **Action Plan Implementation Committee (IC):** composed by all Directors of Secretariat from the Vice rectorates included in the SC. They will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the different tasks included in the action plan and will be coordinated with their teams for the fulfilment of each requirement and the accomplishment of qualitative and quantitative indicators. Also here continuity was considered key for coherence, consistency and also ownership of the staff involved. Each Unit will integrate their corresponding actions into their day to day action plan and consequently, follow up system.

3) **Implementation Secretariat (IS):** composed by the International Project Management Office staff and Quality Assurance Unit, will be in charge of coordinating the implementation teams (regular meetings, continuous improvement measures, etc.) and ensure the quality of each result and corresponding documentation (deliverables, etc.). The IS will be also managing the implementing the following steps of the HRS4R process on day to day basis in strong coordination with SC and IC.

More details on the composition of the teams can be find in sections below.

In terms of **action plan implementation assessment**, this will conducted by the SC with the IS by means of:

- **Periodic update of activities**, on six monthly basis (M6-12-18-24)
  - It will consist in an update of the progress, using a matrix, per each task.
  - It will be filled in by the IC and reported to the SC and IS.
- **Annual report** (M12-M24), a more extensive report that will present the implementation methodology and results. It will be elaborated by the IS with the support of the IC and delivered to the SC.
- **Final report**, using HRS4R templates, as stated in the process guidelines (M24). Final and extensive report on the action plan implementation process elaborated by the IC and IS and delivered to the SC.

This documentation, together with **supporting documents** and **evidences**, will be provided for the **external evaluation by the HRS4R external panel.**

5.1 How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?

The UA HRS4R action plan implementation structure and mechanisms have been conceived to be **agile** and **effective** and **not to constitute an additional burden for the parties involved.**

Continuity was also relevant at the time of defining the Committees in charge of overseing and implementing the Action Plan. As we will see below, the Steering Committee that will oversee the progress of the Action Plan implementation has the same composition of the one designed for the Gap Analysis in which all Vice Rectors and Management staff responsible for the different Actions are included. This will ensure **coherence** and **high performance and thus, impact.**

STEERING COMMITTEE (SC)

The correct **implementation** and **excellent performance** of the action plan will be ultimate **responsibility of the Steering Committee** who is the **outmost responsible staff at UA for the areas addressed by the HRS4R action plan** and process in general**.** As it can be seen in the table below, in addition to the **relevant management staff, researchers (R1-R4) representatives** are included since their involvement is essential to **provide strategic orientation for the ongoing activities** and also to foster the **continous participation of researchers in all of them.**

The SC will be composed by the following staff:

Name	Position	Management line/ Department
Amparo Navarro Faure	Vice President of Research and Knowledge Transfer	Office of the Vice President for Research and Knowledge Transfer
Jose Leandro Penadés Martinez	Vice President for Academic & Faculty Affairs	Office of the Vice President for Academic & Faculty Affairs
Francisco José Torres Alfosea	Vice President for Quality and Educational Innovation	Office of the Vice President for Quality and Educational Innovation
Rafael Muñoz Guillena	Vice President for Campus facilities and Technology	Office of the Vice President for Campus facilities and Technology
Rafael Plá Penalva	General Manager	Office of the General Manager
Ramón Rizo Aldeguer	Deputy Director for Institutional Projects	Institutional Projects Area (Rectorate)
Alberto Antonio de Ramón Fernández	Researcher in training, R1	Department of Information Technology and Computation
Elizabeth Gil García	Assistant Professor and Researcher, R2	Department of Tax Law and Economics
Fernando Prados Martinez	Senior Lecturer and Researcher, R3	Department of Prehistory, Archaeology, Ancient History, Greek and Latin
María José Caturla Terol	Professor and Researcher, R4	Department of Applied Physics

ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (IC)

The SC will refer to the IC composed by the **Directors of Secretariats staff from the Vice rectorates included in the SC.** They will be responsible for the day to day implementation of the different tasks included in the action plan and will **coordinate their teams** for the successful deployment of the actions and the achievement of qualitative and quantitative indicators defined. As explained above, the work methodology will be embedded within normal UA institutional channels.

IC members are listed in the table below, and also in this case, **R1-R4 will be represented via the Trade Union representative** who will be in charge of **contributing and facilitating the implementation of the different tasks** and **ensure researchers are being informed and addressed in an effective way** and **their feedback is being taken into account for improving next activities.**

Name	Position	Management line/ Department
Juan Mora Pastor	Director of Research	Office of the Vice President for Research and Knowledge Transfer
David Guijarro Espí	Director of Academic Affairs	Office of the Vice President for Academic & Faculty Affairs
Ángel Grediaga	Director of Quality and Educational Innovation	Office of the Vice President for Quality and Educational Innovation
Yolanda Gil Barranco	Human Resources Deputy Manager	Office of the General Manager
Víctor Manuel Pérez Lozano	Director of Service for Technology Transfer	Service for Technology Transfer
Ferrán Josep Verdú Monitor	Director of Technological Resources	Office of the Vice President for Campus facilities and Technology
Adoración Asunción Carratalá Giménez	Trade Union Representative	Trade Union Section

IMPLEMENTATION SECRETARIAT (IS)

The IS will be the one dealing with the day to day coordination of the implementation process. It will ensure a correct implementation of the workflow between SC and IC and will ensure the quality of the results obtained and suggest the implementation of contingency/mitigation measures, if needed. The IS will maintain a watch brief on the **full compliance with the HRS4R process**

requirements (corresponding documentation, deadline, deliverables, etc.) and will be also coordinating the preparation of the following HRS4R step, including the external panel visit.

Name	Position	Management line/ Department
Vicent Bonmatí Sánchez	Statistical Technician	Technical Unit for Quality Assurance
Ester Boldrini	Director	International Project Management Office

Please find below a matrix detailing responsibilities distribution for the three Committees:

	IS	IC	SC
PERIODIC REPORT (six monthly)	Follows up	Compiles data & draft	Monitors on continuous basis
ANNUAL REPORT (annual)	Follows up & reminders	Compiles data & drafts	Validates
FINAL REPORT (bi-annual)	Follows up, supports & reviews	Compiles data & drafts	Validates

Periodic meetings of the three Committees will be scheduled on three monthly basis and additional ones, when needed.

The IC will meet on regular basis and as part of their normal activities, since the actions will be integrated in their annual workplan.

The IS will have monthly meetings with the IC.

5.2 How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?

Being the main **beneficiaries, researchers' intensive involvement** in the action plan implementation process will be **cornerstone to ensure that the activities are reaching the correct target groups and are being relevant for them** (researchers at all stages of their career will be addressed).

As explained in section above, researchers will be full members of the SC and IC, so that to provide input at strategic level (SC) and also in terms of corrective measures for continuous improvement basing in the action plan implementation performance and researchers' feedback (formal and informal).

The implementation of the action plan will be enforced by:

- **INTERNAL DISSEMINATION PLAN:** focused on targeting relevant stakeholders within UA.
- **EXTERNAL DISSEMINATION PLAN:** focused on targeting relevant stakeholders beyond the institutional level.

Visibility activities will be cornerstone to:

- **Raise the awareness** on the HRS4R process, on its importance and potential benefit.
- **Foster researchers' (R1–R4) involvement and participation** in the different activities foreseen of the action plan, and thus ensure positive impact.
- Share **progress being achieved** with all stakeholders.
- **Inform** the European and international research communities that UA **complies with certain standards** in terms of **Researchers' recruitment** and thus **increase its potential for attracting researchers.**
- Within this framework, and with these different aims in mind, the **dedicated institutional UA webpage (and related tools)** will be focal point to **advertise** the different activities and thus **foster high participation** and **provide feedback** on the activities implemented. For this purpose, **institutional Social Media** will be also highly exploited as real time and key channel for **researchers outreach** and to **foster their participation in the different activities**.

5.3 How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy

The HRS4R process is considered a priority at UA. As explained above, the Action Plan will be **integrated into all competent corresponding UA units annual action plans** and its **milestones included into UA institutional action plan associated to the Strategic Plan,** whose indicators will be duly updated to comply with this purpose.

At the time of defining the Action Plan presented herein, special attention was paid to the **coherency and consistency of each and every single action** to make sure all tasks are **fully in line with the relevant Units missions and activities**, but

also to the fact that their integration into the different Units action plans could provide **added value** and **not duplicate any of the already ongoing initiatives.**

This will be possible due to the fact that the in-depth analysis has been carried out in an extremely scrupulous way, using a wide range of **documentation**, and **input** (documental, procedural at national, regional and institutional level), **interviews, focus groups, surveys, spontaneous feedback** and **suggestions.**

In addition, both the **SC and the WG (both Committees including researchers' representatives) have been constantly involved as real actors** in this first HRS4R process, thus **ensuring a high quality and reliable output**. The final version of the action plan is the result of **input from all key actors,** an in-depth **analysis** and **evaluation from the relevant** units (and management of those units) who will be the real actors involved in the action plan implementation process. Last but not the least, **suggestions for improvement expressed by UA researchers at all stages of their career have been shaped into action plan tasks and the final document was also validated by the Rs representatives included in both Committees.**

The action plan measures have been defined in a way so that their **short, medium and long term exploitation and sustainability will be possible and always taking into account** continuous improvement.

5.4 How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?

As indicated in the Action Plan table, all tasks have been defined with the following constraints:

- Precise timeline (deadlines and periodicity).
- Responsible.
- Qualitative and quantitative indicators to be achieved.
- Beneficiary target groups.

Such level of detail is crucial to have solid basis for the continuous monitoring of the action plan deployment and to implement contingency measures, if needed.

MONITORING TOOLS

A **monitoring matrix will be drawn from the Action Plan itself**. It will beased on a ticketing system (JIRA based). Such matrix will provide an overview of all KPIs to be achieved and all actions details and will be used to monitor the

progress on daily basis. The tool will be available in electrionic and accessible format on the JIRA platform of the University. Different profiles will be created and access granted to the staff involved. Workflow will be defined and the JIRA ticketing system used and thus all automatic functionalities provided by this user friendly tools will support the Action Plan implementation success and good coordination. Data on KPIs will be stored and available on real time basis. And using this data the different periodic reports will be compiled, being the first the six monthly report.

In addition to this six monthly reporting, a **comprehensive annual report** will be drafted indicating not only the results achieved, but also the methodology and a SWOT analysis of what carried out. Such report will also set solid basis for the second year action plan.

The **bi-annual report** will be drafted by the IC and IS with the input of all responsible staff involved and in compliance with the requirement of the HRS4R process and with the strong support of the SC.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION SECRETARIAT

The IS will have the crucial role of dealing with the d**ay-to-day coordination and follow up of all implementation teams**and to ensure the compliance with the HRS4R requirements, procedures, deadlines, KPIs, etc.

5.5 How will you monitor progress (timeline)?

As explained in the section above, a JIRA system will be set up and employed for the action plan implementation. The Action Plan already defines a set of **sub-tasks associated to each of the action**; however the IC will set also sub deadlines and monitor itsprogress, with the support of the JIRA platform. Different types of accesses will be granted to the Platform that will also generate real time reporting overview and the possibility of follow up of any intermediate deadlines (the ones of the subtasks).

- The **JIRA ticketing system** will be set up in order for all interested staff, to have access to the action plan progress.
    - Main features of such system:
        - **No cost**: UA already has the license to use it.
        - **Tailor made access**: depending on their role, staff will be granted a specific access with a tailor made view and functionalities.

- **Automatic alerts** will be set up for all deadlines and sent only to the staff in charge.
- In case of unexpected challenge, an **alarm** (automatic notifiocations) can be activated and the application of **contingency measures** followed up
- **Efficiency in the different tasks implementation** will be ensured thanks to the different workflows defined per each task. The workflow will allow sending automatic emails and guide the staff through the task implementation process.
- **Real time progress data (KPIs) consultation.**

5.6 How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?

The JIRA will be the main supporting tool for the SC/IC/IS KPIs monitoring.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS MONITORING: KPIs will be monitored against the full list of quantitative indicators detailed per each Action and special attention will be paid in terms of addressing such activities to the correct target groups: researchers at all stages of their career.

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS MONITORING: satisfaction feedback (in different formats) will be used to measure target groups' opinion on the activities carried out and collect their suggestions for future improvement. This data will be exploited for continuous improvement. In this context, the classical **PDCA cycle** approach (plan, do check, act) will be applied to all actions.

6. Additional remarks

Raising the awareness on the importance for UA on improving and implementing new policies and practices in terms of human resources management in research, in line with the HRS4R principles, was considered a ***conditio sine qua non*** **for the correct and effective implementation of this first stage of the process** that includes both the **gap analysis** and the **action plan definition** and will set **solid basis for a satisfactory** and **effective implementation**.

Dissemination activities started from the very beginning, and **continued through the whole time frame of the process**, and are **still in progress** via a number of **different channels** and **tools**, also depending on the **message to be transmitted and the target to be achieved.** This is because **without visibility and awareness among UA community and beyond, there would have been no real involvement of all stakeholders, no input, no suggestions for improvement, no ownership and thus, no successful action plan implementation and no real impact of the HRS4R process for the benefit of UA research and researchers.**

With this idea in mind, the **UA HRS4R dedicated webpage** was created (a living tool constantly updated and improved) **under the umbrella of the institutional website** (https://hrs4r.ua.es/) that was considered the **main entry point for all targets to get familiar with the fundamentals of HRS4R and to understand the process implementation.** With this purpose of information in mind, the web page (available in **English, Spanish and Catalan**) was designed with a **simple** and **clear layout**, so that to be as much **user-friendly** and **informative** as possible.

The link to the UA HRS4R website has proven to be extremely useful to be included in all types of communication, especially with the Committees and all researchers, so that everybody always had **immediate access to the key information** to be in the position of contributing in the best way to the process. In addition to this, a **dedicated institutional mailbox** was also created and is being used for all communications related to the subject (hrs4r@ua.es).

In terms of target groups approach strategy, **meetings have been very effective at all stages of the process** to **raise the awareness, foster commitment** and **participation, keep target groups informed**, etc.

Interviews were exploited **to get a in–depth overview** (bilateral) with the **different Rs representatives**, as well as with the **members of the Committees**.

Focus froups: the **qualitative** methodology had an **exploratory approach**. The Rs groups composition (R1-2-3-4) was designed taking into account three variables: genre, R profile and area of knowledge. By doing this, representativeness was the main focus to obtain **heterogeneous** and **homogeneous groups**. The groups answered to a set of pre-defined topics/broad questions posed by a moderator. This was done with the objective of **fostering a spontaneous conversation and interaction** between participants. Ideas were launched and then developed by participants.

Survey was employed for **quantitative information** collection and launched to the whole UA research community. Its objective was to obtain quantitative assessment (agreement or disagreement on a scale from 1 to 5) on the most relevant aspects of the C&C principles. The design, launch and data collection was done using the IT application UACloud (virtual campus of the University of Alicante). This tool was used due to its **institutional nature and reliability**. It is well-known and employed by UA academic community, it has been tested, and it offers guarantees in terms of **respondents' identification**. The high participation obtained was possible thanks to the **predisposition of UA researcher community** to **join and contribute** to this initiative and thanks also to the easy fill in of the survey. The survey launch was accompanied by an **invitation email** that, in addition of including the link to the institutional web page of HRS4R with all relevant information, it also included a **supporting letter** signed by the Vice President for Research and Knowledge Transfer. Moreover, and with the aim of increasing the response ratio obtained, a **reminder** was sent. The overall response ratio was of **21%, data that confers external validity and representativeness to the results obtained.**

All the above mentioned was complemented by a **set of planned, but also spontaneous meetings of different formats** that have been mainly used to **reinforce and make the process as much agile and effective as possible**.