



**European
University Cyprus**

LAUREATE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS

THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS

AND

**THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF
RESEARCHERS**

ACTION PLAN

JULY 2017

VERSION 2

Background

European University Cyprus (EUC) was founded in 2007 and developed out of Cyprus College, which was established in 1961 by Ioannis Gregoriou. Today EUC is a modern university, operating six Schools, namely, the School of Arts and Education Sciences, the School of Business Administration, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Sciences, the Medical School, and the School of Law. The University belongs to Laureate International Universities, a US-based worldwide network of institutions of higher education founded in 1998. With a membership of over 80 accredited campus-based and online institutions in 28 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the network encompasses more than 150 individual campuses and over 1,000,000 students worldwide. European University Cyprus is actively engaged with local, regional and global partners to promote opportunities for long-term strategic research partnerships and innovative programs of study. The mission of the university is to educate our students for successful careers and life achievement, to understand and serve the needs of our society, and to create knowledge through research and innovation. Importantly, European University Cyprus has been selected by Microsoft to be its partner institution for the establishment of the only Microsoft Innovation Center in Cyprus, a state of art technology center for collaboration on innovative research, technology or software solutions, involving a combination of government, academic and industry participants.

Traditionally a teaching intensive higher education institution, European University Cyprus has nonetheless produced excellent research work and is already one of the leading academic institutions on the island. The University hosts a diverse and dynamic research community with experienced researchers, including Nobel Laureates Professor Robert Huber (Chemistry, 1988) and Professor Ada Yonath (Chemistry, 2009), who collaborate with colleagues in some of the best universities in the world (Harvard, Cambridge, King's College London, Imperial College London and many others). Sources of funding for research conducted by faculty members include the Horizon2020, Erasmus+, 7th Framework Program, Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013, Directorates General of the European Commission, the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation, United Nations, governmental bodies and others. European University Cyprus has accumulated approximately 2.5M euros in research funding in the last 3 years, while it ranks third among the Cypriot universities in terms of total funding from Horizon2020 (first among private universities). Furthermore, EUC is the most highly ranked university in Cyprus in citation rate according to U-Multirank (117th out of 722 in Europe; top 16%).

One of the University's aims is to create and sustain a stimulating research environment within the university for researchers at all stages of their career regardless of their contractual situation, and in extent, to improve its research reputation and scientific output. Currently, there are 64 students enrolled in PhD programs, and 24 fixed-term researchers employed in the different Research Centers and Laboratories within the University (<http://euc.ac.cy/en/research/research-centers>). The University offers a total of nine PhD programs within the School of Arts & Education Sciences, the School of Business Administration, the School of Sciences, and the School of Law. EUC has endorsed the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter & Code) in January 2011. Since the adaptation of the EUC Research Policy by the University Council in 2015 (effective as of 01/01/2016), the development and adaptation of a Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) has been a major priority. It is expected that the implementation of HRS4R will eventually attract and sustain a critical mass of research talent in the University, and more broadly in Cyprus. The HRS4R is being developed under the direct supervision of the Rector and the Vice-Rector for Research and External Affairs.

Methodology

The first step in establishing the methodology for the development and adoption of HRS4R was the briefing of the members of the Senate Research Committee on the purposes, goals, and expected outputs of HRS4R with the assistance of the EURAXESS National Contact Point. Subsequently, an ad-hoc committee was formed, consisting of academic and administrative staff that would overview the HRS4R process. Importantly, an early-career researcher employed by the University on a fixed-term contract (Dr. Andreas Papadopoulos) was included in the committee to ensure that the gap analysis and the action plan correspond to the current conditions and the needs of early-career researchers and researchers employed on fixed-term contracts. The Research Office of the University provided the members of the committee with the relevant information, while defining the roles of each member and the timeframe to be followed. The members of the **HRS4R Ad Hoc Committee** are:

Prof. Kostas Gouliamos, Rector

Prof. Andreas Efstathiou, Vice-Rector, Research & External Affairs

Dr. Andri Christoforou, Research Officer

Dr. Loizos Symeou, Dean of the School of Arts and Education Sciences

Dr. George Boustras, Dean of the School of Business Administration

Dr. Christos Kassimeris, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr. Konstantinos Tsimaras, Acting Dean of the School of Law

Dr. George Petrikos, Acting Dean of the School of Medicine

Dr. Christos Dimopoulos, Dean of the School of Sciences

Dr. Christiana Markou, Lecturer, School of Law

Mrs. Loukia Polygerinos-Tzyrkas, Director Human Resources Department

Mrs. Maria Gallou, Human Resources & Career Coordinator

Dr. Andreas Papadopoulos, Research Fellow

As recommended by the European Commission, the next step was to conduct an internal gap analysis, comparing the 40 principles of the Charter & Code to the current practices of the University, particularly in regard to the status of PhD students and researchers on fixed-term contracts. The analysis was conducted by the Research Office in collaboration with members of the committee and after consultation in the form of individual interviews with key stakeholders including senior and junior faculty and research associates. The Research Office held extensive informal meetings with early-career researchers (PhD students; fixed-term contract researchers) in order to hear their concerns, gain a comprehensive understanding of their particular needs, and collect feedback on the potential adoption of HRS4R and compliance to the Charter & Code principles. The researchers had the opportunity to discuss different aspects of the internal gap analysis and to contribute their ideas for the implementation of the action plan.

The HRS4R Ad Hoc Committee subsequently reviewed the analysis and agreed on the actions required, responsible departments, and timeframe. The main conclusion of the gap analysis was that, while the current practices are in line with many of the Charter & Code principles, a number of areas need further development or improvement. Specifically, the committee focused broadly on the need for updating the EUC Research Policy to accommodate all Charter & Code principles, on the recruitment, selection, working conditions, and evaluation of researchers, and on the availability of career development opportunities. These issues are further discussed in the Action Plan, which outlines the actions that need to be taken in order to improve the current practices and harmonize the University's policies and procedures with the Charter & Code principles. The current Action Plan has been approved by the committee, who will remain responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the proposed actions. Both the internal gap

analysis and the action plan for the implementation of the Charter & Code principles are posted on the EUC's website.

Areas and Actions for Improvement

The main areas of improvement which have arisen from the internal gap analysis are the following:

I. Ethical and professional aspects

The University has the responsibility to inform researchers about their rights and responsibilities and to take the necessary measures for the successful implementation of existing procedures and the establishment of new ones. The researchers' rights, as well as the ethical principles, professional responsibility, contractual and legal obligations, accountability, good practice in research, dissemination and exploitation of research results are all included in the EUC Research Policy. Nonetheless, senior and established faculty/researchers are more likely than early-career researchers to be familiar with the aforementioned principles. It is suggested, therefore, that the Policy becomes mandatory reading for all permanent and temporary, full-time and part-time employees and students who engage in research. Proof through signature that the researcher has read and understood the policies and agrees to abide by them will be required. The Office of the Vice Rector for Research and External Affairs will undertake additional actions for the promotion of the Policy, including presentations at Department Councils and to researchers who are not full-time faculty.

Additionally, newly hired researchers need to be informed through an information package about the existing policies enforced by the Research Office. The information package should include the following documents, which need to be reviewed and updated according to the current needs and challenges: a. Procedures for the Submission of Research Proposals, and b. Procedures for the Administration of Research Projects. Again, proof through signature that the researcher has read and understood the policies and agrees to abide by them will be required.

The current evaluation/ appraisal systems do not apply to researchers who are not faculty members. Rather, their evaluation is at the discretion of individual principal investigators and supervisors. The development and establishment of a transparent evaluation/appraisal system targeting specifically researchers on fixed-term contracts is necessary for the researchers' professional and personal development, and in extent, the quality of the research outputs produced.

In terms of dissemination and exploitation of research results and public engagement, the Office of the VR plans a number of actions over the next two years that would enhance the visibility of research conducted within the University, such as establishment of incentives for increased participation in Researcher's Night and other similar events, organization of an annual public engagement event within the University with the involvement of all Schools, and improvement of the online presence of all EUC Research Foundations and Centres.

II. Recruitment

While the University has clear and transparent procedures for the recruitment and selection of academic staff, administrative staff, and PhD students, the recruitment and selection processes for researchers on fixed-term contracts are at the discretion of principal investigators. This practice is mainly due to practical constraints such as time and human resources limitations. Based on the University's commitment to the principles of Charter & Code, as well as to the development of open and transparent recruitment and selection procedures for all positions, it is

expected that that Office of the Vice Rector for Research and External Affairs and the Human Resources Department will develop and adopt the '**Guide on the Recruitment of Researchers**' according to the Commission's Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The Guide should include information on the following:

- Recruitment procedures which are open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable, as well as tailored to the type of positions advertised
- Content and structure of advertisements for research positions (e.g. description of working conditions, entitlements, and career development prospects), as well as placement of advertisements (i.e. publication of all fixed-term positions at EURAXESS Job Portal)
- Desirable characteristics of the selection committees (e.g. diverse expertise and competences, gender balance, inclusion of members from different sectors, disciplines, and countries) and training procedures
- Appropriate selection practices (e.g. external expert assessments, face-to-face interviews etc.)
- Detailed criteria for the selection process including taking into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates, achievements and qualifications within or outside academia, mobility (geographical or inter-sectoral), and the pattern of lifelong professional development.
- Information provided to candidates prior to selection (recruitment process, selection criteria, number of available positions, career development prospects) and information provided after the selection regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the respective applications.

The principles of gender balance will be enforced at all levels.

In addition, the 'EUC Academic Research Staff Policy' should be reviewed for any potential changes or additions and incorporated in the EUC Research Policy. The revised EUC Research Policy will then pass through the Senate and the University Council for approval and implementation.

Last, but not least, the University commits to establish specific, centralized procedures for the publishing of research jobs at the EURAXESS portal and to include the anti-discrimination clauses in job postings.

III. Working conditions and social security

PhD students are mainly treated as students by the different departments and structures of the University, rather than as early-career researchers or researchers-in-training. The career development prospects are, again, at the discretion of principal investigators and subject to securing external funding, while mentoring is currently performed on a voluntary basis and applied inconsistently among different Departments and Schools.

First, provisions will be established for the representation of fixed-term researchers in the Department Councils, School Councils, and Senate. These should be adopted by the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs and included in the University Charter.

Secondly, through the adoption of a '**Career Development Strategy**', the University will ensure that all researchers are offered opportunities for career and personal development. The Strategy will take into consideration the value of mobility, networking, and access to career advice, and will provide information on available training opportunities, including training for teaching and coaching. In addition, training opportunities tailored specifically for early-career researchers might be established in the framework of the Strategy on topics such as research funding, proposal writing, project management, presentation skills, etc. according to the researchers' needs. The Strategy will include a detailed 'Mentorship Scheme', under which mentors will become available

for researchers at all levels under specific guidelines. Again, it is expected that the principles of gender balance will be applied at all levels.

Last, but not least, salary ranges for the different ranks should be defined according to the level of qualifications and responsibilities and included in the '**Guide on the Recruitment of Researchers**'. The establishment of salary ranges for researchers will replace the existing practices, whereby salaries of the fixed-term researchers are at the discretion of principal investigators.

The University is committed to improve researchers' employment conditions and prospects for permanent employment through the adoption of the aforementioned measures.

IV. Training

Continuous professional development is highly supported, encouraged, and in some cases required for full-time academic and administrative staff. The research training and career development of PhD students and fixed-term researchers, however, depends on the policies of each School and/or on individual principal investigators/supervisors. There is currently no mechanism in place for monitoring and evaluating the accessibility, take-up and effectiveness of existing training and career development opportunities. A comprehensive 'Guide for Doctoral Studies' will be established and adopted that will include specific rules and procedures that guide the relationship between the supervisor, the PhD student, and the Department (including keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such feedback and working in accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs).

Action Plan

The HRS4R Ad Hoc Committee has decided on the implementation of the following action plan based on the University's priorities and available resources. Coordination of the different actions will be undertaken by the Office of the Vice-Rector for Research & External Affairs.

Note: The academic year at European University Cyprus consists of a Fall and a Spring Semester, each 17 weeks long, inclusive of registration, holidays, and final examinations. The Fall Semester begins in the last week of September, and the Spring Semester begins in the first week of February.

Action	Implementation Procedure	Timeframe	Leadership
Ethical & professional aspects			
1. Promotion of EUC Research Policy (briefing of researchers at all levels about the Policy's provisions)	<p>Presentations at Department Councils</p> <p>Presentations to researchers who are not full-time faculty</p> <p>The EUC Research Policy to become mandatory reading for all permanent and temporary, full-time and part-time employees and students who engage in research. Proof through signature that the researcher has read and understood the policies and agrees to abide by them</p>	Fall 2017	Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs
2. Briefing of new researchers at all levels on the institutional procedures and policies related to the submission of research proposals and administration of grants	<p>Review and Update the 'Procedures for the Submission of Research Proposals', and the 'Procedures for the Administration of Research Projects'</p> <p>Inform researchers at all levels about the Procedures through presentations, emailing and intranet publication</p>	Fall 2017	Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs

	Proof through signature that the researcher has read and understood the procedures and agrees to abide by them		
3. Development of an evaluation/appraisal system for fixed-term researchers	<p>Decide on the areas of evaluation Develop and finalize the evaluation/appraisal system</p> <p>Piloting and adoption of the evaluation/appraisal system by the principal investigators</p> <p>Approval of the Guide by the relevant University Bodies</p> <p>Promotion of the Guide among the researcher community through presentations, emailing and intranet publication</p>	Spring 2018	Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources Department, Research Senate Committee, Principal Investigators (current).
4. Promoting dissemination and exploitation of research results and public engagement	<p>Enhancement of the online presence of EUC Research Foundations and Centres</p> <p>Organization of annual public engagement events at the University with the involvement of all Schools</p> <p>Encourage faculty's participation in Researcher's Night and other similar events</p>	<p>Fall 2017</p> <p>Fall 2017 & Spring 2018/ Ongoing</p>	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Directors of Research Foundations and Centres</p> <p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Senate Research Committee, Deans</p>

Recruitment			
<p>1. Development and Adoption of 'Guide on the Recruitment of Researchers'</p>	<p>Create an ad hoc committee</p> <p>Familiarity with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers</p> <p>Map the main areas of content</p> <p>Develop and finalize the Guide</p> <p>Approval of the Guide by the relevant University Bodies</p> <p>Promotion of the Guide among the researcher community through presentations, emailing and intranet publication</p>	<p>Spring 2018</p>	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee and Senate Research Committee</p> <p>Rectorate Committee, Senate</p> <p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources</p>
<p>2. Incorporate 'EUC Academic Research Staff Policy' in EUC Research Policy</p>	<p>Review Existing Research Staff Policy</p> <p>Revise and Expand Policy as necessary</p> <p>Incorporate Policy in EUC Research Policy</p>	<p>Spring 2018</p>	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources</p> <p>Rectorate Committee, Senate, University Council</p>
Working conditions and social security			
<p>1. Establishment of provisions for the representation of fixed-term researchers in decision-making bodies</p>	<p>Recommendation to the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs for representation of fixed-term researchers in Department</p>	<p>Fall 2018</p>	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Office of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs</p>

	<p>Councils, School Councils and the Senate.</p> <p>Approval by the relevant University Bodies</p> <p>Inclusion of the provisions in the University Charter</p>		<p>Rectorate Committee, Senate</p> <p>Office of the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs</p>
2. Development and Adoption of the 'Career Development Strategy'	<p>Create an ad hoc committee</p> <p>Needs Assessment</p> <p>Map the main areas of content</p> <p>Develop and finalize the Strategy</p> <p>Approval of the Guide by the relevant University Bodies</p> <p>Promotion of the Strategy among the researcher community through presentations, emailing and intranet publication</p>	Spring 2019	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee, Research Senate Committee</p> <p>Rectorate Committee, Senate</p> <p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources</p>
3. Establishment of salary ranges for researchers	<p>Review of current situation</p> <p>Definition of salary ranges for the different ranks according to level of qualifications and responsibilities</p>	Fall 2017	Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Human Resources

	Incorporate this information in the 'Guide on the Recruitment of Researchers'.		
Training			
1. Development of a comprehensive 'Guide for Doctoral Studies'	<p>Create an ad hoc committee</p> <p>Review of the 'Guide for Doctoral Studies' already developed by the School of Arts and Education Sciences</p> <p>Development of a comprehensive 'Guide for Doctoral Studies'</p> <p>Approval of the Guide by the relevant University Bodies</p> <p>Adoption of the Guide by all Schools</p>	Fall 2018	<p>Office of the Vice Rector for Research & External Affairs, Senate Research Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Ad hoc Committee</p> <p>Senate</p> <p>Rectorate Committee</p>

