HR STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR RESEARCHERS 2018-2021

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1. Organisational information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff &amp; Students</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research</td>
<td>1950.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</td>
<td>510.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</td>
<td>316.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are women</td>
<td>843.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are stage R3 or R4 Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf</a></td>
<td>532.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</td>
<td>331.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</td>
<td>1,086.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students (if relevant)</td>
<td>19,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</td>
<td>3,427.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Research Funding (figures for most recent fiscal year) €

| Total annual organisational budget | 329,784,861 |
| Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, used for teaching, research, infrastructure,....) | 146,732,275 |
| Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding) | 133,642,798 |
| Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research | 27,264,312 |

3. Organisational Profile (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

*The University of Antwerp is a young, dynamic and forward-thinking university. UAntwerp develops, provides access to and disseminates scientific knowledge through research, teaching and service to society. It carries out these tasks in a spirit of academic freedom and responsibility. UAntwerp fosters diversity and offers its staff and students equal opportunities and maximum potential for personal development. UAntwerp conducts creative and innovative scientific research which strives for international excellence. UAntwerp offers internationally accredited academic teaching based on scientific research, stimulates public debate and greatly values its staff members’ service to society, and it is committed to the development of its city and region. It seeks constructive partnerships in the fields of research, teaching and academic service to society. UAntwerp ensures the quality and sustainability of its activities.*
2. Narrative

Introduction
In 2013, the European Commission awarded the HR Excellence in Research award to the University of Antwerp. Two years after receiving the award (in 2015), the action plan was formally evaluated through a self-assessment procedure, which resulted in an updated action plan. The University of Antwerp is working hard to implement all of the action points in this plan, with the goal of bringing the principles of this award into practice and providing comprehensive care for career quality for researchers. Three years after the self-assessment procedure (in 2018), UAntwerp is submitting a new version of the HR Strategy action plan.

Governance
The past five years have been characterised by a change in the rector team that had led the university for eight years. The new rector team laid out its vision in a policy memorandum entitled ‘Outline of an innovative policy’. This memorandum emphasises a culture of consultation, transparency, appreciation and trust, linked to the objectives of the HR Strategy. This has been translated into the selected HR policy, which emphasises the provision of transparent, high-performance HR processes (e.g. recruitment and selection; career policy) and the confirmation of the university’s social role by investing effort in the employability of its staff members (e.g. through talent development and career development), regardless of the length of time that they spend at the institution. In addition, the job satisfaction survey for senior academic staff (Dutch: zelfstandig academisch personeel, ZAP), which was one of the actions in the action plan, was an eye-opener for the organisation, and the results will have an influence on many other actions in the action plan.

Consultation of the research community
Wherever possible the projects have been grafted onto the existing policy plans and initiatives of the departments involved, in order to decentralise the continuous monitoring process. Each action is designed from within the context of strong interaction with the research community through conversations (interviews, the Recruitment and Selection Working Group,...) electronic surveys (job satisfaction survey e.g.) or embeddedness within existing policy bodies. To support this internal monitoring, a Steering Committee was established shortly after receiving the award. The Steering Committee includes a range of members representing the Education Council, Research Council, as well as the departments of Research and Innovation, Education, Human Resources and the Antwerp Doctoral School and a representative of the Association of Assistant and Contract Research Staff (VABAP).

The University of Antwerp assigns high priority to quality assurance and innovation. The existing culture of quality is the result of policy development (strategy and actions), investment in structures and systematic attention to the base of support. Frequent consultation (through formal and informal consultation bodies) creates a continuous dynamic aimed at systematic improvement. Consultation with the target group is an integral part of project management at UAntwerp. This emphasis on quality plays a role in the implementation of the action plan. The defined actions are seen as action points that develop over time, based on achievements and insight that has been gained. Looking back on a five-year period, this has resulted in the growth of the substance of a large number of actions.

Revisit of the initial gap analysis
Based on the input of researchers, academic leaders and other stakeholders, an internal gap analysis was made (2011). The gap-analysis forms the basis for the HR Strategy action plan. Recommendations defined in the gap analysis have been translated into concrete actions, for example: generic job profiles for all ranks of the AAP/OP2, investigate the feasibility of a stress policy for senior academic staff,... An overview of the priorities and developments in these four key areas of the gap-analysis (Ethical and Professional aspects, Recruitment, Working conditions and social
security and Training and development) is provided below. Various subdomains and broader projects have been identified.

**Ethical and Professional Aspects**
Since the initial gap analysis in 2011, the Executive Board approved a comprehensive code of conduct for researchers, further clarifying the university’s position on a number of integrity-related topics such as co-authorship and open science. One of the articles further specifies that the university fully supports the international guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. In short, it states that only researchers who have made substantial contributions to a publication can be listed as authors. Open access to publications similarly constitutes a policy ambition with a respectable pedigree, to the extent that in the past period, the University of Antwerp already implemented a clear policy on open access. Also the majority of other gaps identified, were dealt with in the previous action plan. What remains to be done, is ensuring this policy is thoroughly implemented. In the spring of 2018, the Department of Research and Innovation is communicating broadly about this Code of Conduct, with the goals of incorporating its wide set of stipulations into the daily practice. Related to professional aspects, work still needs to be done in relation to the career policy for academic assistant staff (AAP). Task clarification for this group is needed, and efforts are being devoted to the creation of job profiles, followed by the development of a goal-setting interview cycle.

**Recruitment and selection**
The basic principles relating to Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) were already present in the actions concerning recruitment and selection of the initial action plan. The dialogue surrounding good recruitment and selection processes has grown, due in part to the Recruitment and Selection Working Group (with members of each faculty). Compared to five years ago, the base of support for making assessment tools available in order to assess behavioural competences (based on merit) has grown. There is also greater openness with regard to the training of selection committees. Nevertheless, the steering committee felt the need to extend these actions in the mid 2018-mid 2021 action plan, in order to provide a comprehensive response to the provisions relating to Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment.

**Working Conditions and Social Security**
The 2011 gap analysis already demonstrated that researchers in Flanders enjoy excellent working conditions, generous bursaries and full social security. Rather than the “hard” working conditions, it is the “soft” working conditions that needed to be addressed. The job satisfaction study among ZAP members in 2014 set things in motion. In 2016, a follow-up study was conducted amongst the other staff groups, including young researchers. The outcomes of this study increased the ‘urgency’ of offering career counselling to young researchers. As a result, a decision was made to establish a Talent Centre devoted to career counselling (for young researchers) within the Human Resources Department.

Another area where progress is still needed is gender equality. For example, a renewed gender action plan will be launched in the course of 2018, with the objective of increasing the presence of female academics at our university and of aiming for greater gender equality in the ranks of professors. This action plan will contain a rich collection of measures extending to a variety of topics within the HR Strategy action plan.

Since the 2011 gap analysis the need for streamlined support for international researchers has been met with the establishment of an International Staff Office, which serves as the University of Antwerp Euraxess Centre. They regularly chart the various needs for services (and the associated support) in faculties. They are evaluated and addressed in a project-based approach, with due consideration of the profiles of individual staff members. In this way, new developments are monitored closely and continued improvement is made.
Training and development

The revisit of the initial gap analysis revealed that the actions relating to leadership development, which had initially been scheduled to address at a later stage, have gained priority attention amongst the research community. Therefore, these actions will get priority in the current action plan. First, the base of support for discussing behavioural competences has increased within the organisation (cf. a culture of consultation, transparency, appreciation and trust). Second, the results of the job satisfaction study emphasise the role of supervisors as a buffer against stress. Third, in 2018, elections for deans are held, with most faculties electing new deans. ‘Academic leadership’ is thus a much-debated topic, given that these deans serve as role models for supervisors in the organisation. More effort is also needed to address the ‘employability’ of our PhD students and post-doctoral researchers, regardless of the amount of time that they spend at the institution, with the goal of providing sustainable direction to their careers. This is because we do not aim for lifelong employment but instead we invest in lifelong employability. Various stakeholders within the organisation (the Antwerp Doctoral School, the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation and the HR Department) are developing initiatives to this end. The establishment of the Talent Centre within the HR Department lends support to this objective.
3. Actions

The University of Antwerp’s action plan includes for key areas: resourcing, working conditions, talent development and career counselling. Within these areas, various subdomains and broader project have been identified. Eight actions of the initial action plan have now been completed, four new actions are new. The content of the other actions has been elaborated.
3.1. Resourcing

3.1.1. Recruitment and selection

The University of Antwerp earned the HR Excellence award (2013) before the stricter procedure for Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) took effect (2015). The initial action plan and the self-assessment report contained several action points that corresponded to the principles of OTM-R. UAntwerp has now expanded the action points concerning recruitment and selection to include all OTM-R aspects from the OTM-R checklist and the report of the Human Resources Management working group under the European Research area. The updated action points are accompanied by a reference to the relevant point from the OTM-R checklist. The OTM-R checklist is included in Appendix 1.

Public announcement of vacancies

| Action 1 | Maximise the public announcement of positions through a diversified policy. | Project leader: HR  
| Status: completed |
| Develop a new e-recruitment tool. | Project leader: HR and ICT  
| Status: ongoing |

Objectives:
- Maximise the public announcement of positions through a diversified policy - completed
- Establish guidelines about the public announcement of vacancies, possibly including the automatic opening of vacancies under specific conditions - completed
- Improve disclosure concerning the process of opening vacancies - completed
- Minimise the administrative burden - completed

All vacancies that are approved by a governing body will be published on the job site of the University of Antwerp and distributed according to the standard job matrix. The EURAXESS job site will continue to be a standard publication channel for scientific vacancies. In addition, faculties are encouraged to use their own publication channels and networks. The Executive Board regularly checks for vacancies that have yet to be filled. The public announcement of vacancies is also encouraged by the Human Resources (HR) Department for positions to be paid with external funding. Examples include clear process descriptions on Pintra (the intranet of the UAntwerp) concerning how to recruit external employees, with references to generic texts for vacancies and the job matrix and by making the existing application tool available for all vacant positions. This will reduce the administrative burden for the organisation while removing an important obstacle to the even more public announcement of vacancies.

New objectives:
- Ensure sufficient use of e-recruitment tools (OTM-R checklist, Point 4)
  - Automation of the front office of the application module (candidate gateway) - 2019 Q2
  - Automation of the back office of the application module - 2020 Q4
  - Automation of reporting concerning information on candidates - 2021 Q4
Minimise the administrative burden for candidates (OTM-R checklist, Point 15) - ongoing

For some time, UAntwerp has had an e-recruitment tool for applications. The current tool primarily facilitates the front-office process. To increase the efficiency gain, the possibility of a new application module within the existing staff-administration system (PeopleSoft) was explored, aiming at applicant-friendliness, the comprehensive automation of the back-office process, the flow of information to the other HR processes (e.g. staff management) and the facilitation of CV screening by end users (faculties, supervisors and the university administration). After extensive functional analysis, the development was started in 2016, following the release of the new version of the software system. We nevertheless regularly encounter the limitations of the system, as well as the paradox between ‘standardisation’ and the incorporation of ‘customisation’, as it has implications in the case of new releases of the staff-administration system. Applicant-friendliness always takes precedence in this procedure. The Dutch candidate gateway has been developed. The next steps to be taken (possibly simultaneously) include the following: (1) have the application module tested by a testing group, (2) submit the application module and associated application reports to the end users in faculties and (3) translate the candidate gateway into English. The development of the back office will start once these steps have been completed. The administrative burden to candidates will be monitored throughout the development process. Following the launch of the basic module (2020 Q4), efforts will be devoted to the comprehensive integration of the unique scientific identification numbers of authors of scientific works (e.g. ORCID).

Indicators/Targets:
- Commissioning of the front office (candidate gateway)
- Commissioning of the back office
- Commissioning of automatic reporting (concerning applicants) in application procedures (cf. monitoring as mentioned in Action 2)

Vacancy Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 2</th>
<th>Evaluate and update the job matrix.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Objectives:
- The OTM-R policy encourages external candidate to apply (OTM-R checklist, Point 6) - completed
- Utilise other job advertising tools (OTM-R checklist, Point 14) - ongoing
  - Evaluate the job matrix - completed
  - Focus on attracting more international talent with the job matrix - ongoing, 2018 Q3
  - Integrate social media into the job matrix - completed
  - Make full use of EURAXESS to ensure reaching a wide audience - completed
  - Use leading (international) networks of the research domain in the job matrix - ongoing, 2018 Q4
  - Proceeding from the new application module, monitor whether the most suitable candidates apply (OTM-R checklist, Point 10) - 2021 Q2

Over the years, the HR Department has evaluated the standard range of recruitment channels (job matrix). The evaluation of the job matrix and the related vacancy policy was implemented in cooperation with the faculties (within the Recruitment & Selection Working Group). The channels in the job matrix and their uses are evaluated according to a survey on the reach of commercial websites and networks. A list of other potentially interesting recruitment channels is also being compiled, with a view to attracting high-quality, high-performance researchers. With the goal of...
targeting international talent even more through the systematic international public announcement of vacancies, pilot tests were conducted with new recruitment channels (including Academic Transfer, Academic Positions, Researchgate), and the potential of other recruitment channels has been investigated. Additional recruitment channels will be examined in the coming period. In addition, we will examine whether the networks in which UAntwerp participates (YERUN, Aurora,...) could also be used for recruitment purposes. Vacancies are systematically posted to the European ‘EURAXESS’ portal. A large number of vacancies for academic positions are currently published in English.

The university is also exploring ways of using social media. Numerous discussions on this topic have already been held with various partners. The evaluation of these new recruitment channels has not always been positive. At this time, the university has a clear overview of how it would like to direct its social media channels (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook) towards recruitment purposes. Methods for investing in leading (international) networks of research domains are currently being reviewed. To ensure the entry of sufficient numbers of female academics, we are examining the possibility of working with a gender-search committee or a gender vanguard. The goal is to be proactive in notifying women of vacancies for senior (or other) academic staff.

**Indicators/targets:**

- Updated job matrix and publication policy on the Intranet Pintra, including the use of social media and faculty-specific publication channels (OTM-R, Checklist, Point 6 & 14)
- Organisation of pilots with new advertising channels, potentially leading to increases in the number of high-quality international research candidates (OTM-R, Checklist, Point 14)
- Proceeding from the implementation of the new application module, monitoring whether the most suitable candidates apply (OTM-R checklist, Point 10): the share of female candidates (OTM-R checklist, Point 8), the share of international candidates (OTM-R checklist, Point 7 & 8), the share of internal and external candidates (OTM-R checklist, Points 6 & 9), the share of vacancy announcements posted on EURAXESS (OTM-R checklist, Point 13)
- Exploration of possibilities for working with a gender vanguard and/or gender-search committee in order to guarantee the entry of female academics (OTM-R checklist, Point 8).

**Vacancy text**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 3</th>
<th>Make generic vacancy texts more appealing within the academic environment.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Status: ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives:**

- Strike a balance in the vacancy texts between generic and more specialised descriptions - completed
- Have clear guidelines or templates (e.g. EURAXESS) for advertising (OTM-R Checklist, Point 11) - completed
- Publish vacancies for academic personnel in English by default - completed

A generic vacancy text exists for each job profile of the academic staff. These generic vacancy texts are made available through the internal website (Pintra) for all personnel of the University of Antwerp. We have determined that there are not enough generic vacancy texts for externally funded scientific vacancies. To this end, additional vacancy texts have been developed in Dutch and in English. Many vacancies are published in both Dutch and English. The extent to which these vacancies are systematically disseminated in both languages varies, depending on the faculty and the
discipline. The improvement of language usage and layout is being reviewed in the light of Employer Branding (see Action 17).

**New objectives:**
- Include references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit in the vacancy announcements (OTM-R, checklist, Point 12) - 2019 Q2
- Improve the language usage and layout of vacancy texts - 2019 Q1
- Implement the new employer branding campaign - 2018 Q3

The following elements are currently stated in the vacancy texts/templates: organisation and recruiting unit, starting date, job title, specifications, number of available positions, entitlements (e.g. salary, other benefits) and type of contract. They include an indication of the competences that are required and desired. Additional information with regard to the work place, working conditions, training opportunities and career development can be shared in the templates or on the job site. Clarification with regard to the duration and content of the selection procedure is desired as well, as is a general reference to the OTM-R policy and the institution’s equal-opportunity policy. In the vacancy texts/templates, attention is paid to diversity and gender-conscious communication: the importance that UAntwerp attaches to family-friendly policy, equal opportunities and diversity is explained. The possible necessity of further adjustments to the vacancy templates and the job site with regard to gender-conscious communication is being investigated.

In order to position the University of Antwerp as an attractive organisation for students, researchers and other employees, we are elaborating a consistent message, image and style of communication. Ideally, recruitment messages should be consistent with the image of the university that is conveyed to current and future students. In order to achieve this, the HR Department has cooperated with the Department of Communication and an external communication consultant. The development and implementation of the new employer branding campaign has been more difficult than expected. The employer branding campaign builds on the student campaign, the format of which has undergone several changes in recent years. Changes have also occurred in the cooperation with external consultants for student recruitment and employer branding. As a result, the employer branding campaign has been postponed or elaborated only in part several times. To avoid further postponement, it was decided in late 2017 to develop the student and employer branding campaigns at the same time. The simultaneous development of visual materials for the two campaigns was started in the first part of 2018. In this process, attention was paid to gender-conscious imaging and diversity.

**Indicators/targets:**
- The share of updated templates (including elements stated in the toolkit) for advertising on Pintra (OTM-R Checklist, Point 11 and CL, Point 12)
- Implementation of the new employer branding campaign
- Update of the job site with regard to training opportunities and career development

### Selection process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 4</th>
<th>Optimise the selection process for academic staff in general and for tenured research professors in particular.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR / Departement of Research and Innovation (ADOC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Status: ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Assess opportunities for the further streamlining of the selection process for senior academic staff, including research professors - completed
• Strive to achieve at least a minimum level of standardisation and transparency in the formal aspects of the selection process - completed
  o Inform all applicants at the end of the selection process (OTM-R checklist, Point 20) - completed
  o Provide adequate feedback to interviewees (OTM-R checklist, Point 21) - completed
• Have an appropriate complaint mechanism in place (OTM-R checklist, Point 22) - 2020 Q1

The information for each recruitment procedure has been reworked on the renewed internal website for university personnel (Pintra), thus making it easier for employees to find the available tools. A template was established for writing motivations for academic positions. The process for grading senior academic staff and academic assistant staff has become more efficient, due to stricter timing and a clear procedure and template for the grading proposal. The Department of Research and Innovation (ADOC) has developed a separate procedure specifically for research professors (PROC-ADOC-004), which specifies the tasks and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders (including ADOC, ADP&O, the faculty administration) as part of the procedure for recruiting academic personnel, from the opening of vacancies to the selection, appointment and evaluation of new employees paid through the resources of the University Research Fund (in Dutch, Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds or BOF). The Internal Rules of Procedure (which were approved by the Executive Board on 17/11/2015) concerning the allocation of resources from the BOF also contains specific provisions for research professors with regard to their assignments, modalities of appointment, extension, replacement and termination.

The differences in terms of selection practices across faculties are discussed in the Recruitment and Selection Working Group (with representatives from each faculty, as well as from ADOC). This consultation is useful, as it provides a platform for sharing good practices. Where possible, however, it also contributes to more streamlining. In this working group, the process of providing feedback to candidates for academic positions was discussed, the distribution of roles between the faculties and the Human Resources Department was clarified and efforts were made to develop generic templates for feedback to candidates. Standard templates are available for inviting candidates to a subsequent step in the selection procedure. There are also standardised email messages for candidates who have not been selected after the pre-selection, as well as for candidates that have not been retained following the interview, complete with contact information for personal feedback. Candidates who have progressed to the interview and have been ranked for a vacant position charged to operational funds receive targeted, transparent written feedback on their applications. The administrative body’s motivation is shared with them in full. UAntwerp is examining how to monitor complaints in line with existing mechanisms.

Indicators/targets:
• Publication of templates for feedback to applicants on Pintra (completed, OTM-R checklist, Points 20 & 21)
• Publication of guidelines for feedback to applicants on Pintra (completed, OTM-R checklist, Points 20 & 21)
• For research professors: provision of the full overview of the pre-determined criteria for tenure-track (ZAP)BOF to all applicants invited for interviews, so that they will have a clear overview of the expectations associated with the function.
• For research professors: provision of a limited budget for travel costs to international applicants.
• Implementation of a complaint mechanism and systematic monitoring of complaints (OTM-R checklist, Point 22)
**Action 4bis**
New action

**Monitor the composition of the selection committee.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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</table>

**Objectives:**
- Have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees (OTM-R checklist, Point 16) - completed
- Have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees (OTM-R checklist, Point 17) - completed
- Ensure that the committees are sufficiently gender-balanced (completed, OTM-R checklist, Point 18) - completed
- Share best practices in the form of guidelines for selection procedures for positions charged to external funds – 2020 Q1

The University of Antwerp has clear guidelines for the composition (including in terms of gender and the involvement of external experts) of selection committees for positions based on operating funds. The composition of the selection committees for temporary (or other) positions charged to external funds is less transparent. The first steps towards collecting best practices and guidelines for selection committees charged to external funds were taken in the Recruitment and Selection Working Group.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Publication of guidelines concerning the appointment and composition of selection committees on Pintra (OTM-R checklist, Point 16 & 17). These guidelines exist for vacancies charged to operational funds, but best practices can be shared for vacancies charged to external funds.
- Proceeding from new application module, monitoring the composition of selection committees with a specific focus on gender balance for both formal and informal selection procedures (OTM-R checklist, Point 18)

**Selection Tools**

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<th>Action 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Expand selection tools to include job criteria (evaluation grid), tools for assessing behavioural skills and merit, and examine the need for additional support from the HR Department.</td>
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<th>Project leader: HR</th>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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**Objectives:**
- Enable members of selection committees to attend to behavioural competences and recognise combined/exceptional careers
  - Have clear guidelines for selection committees that help to judge merit in a way that will lead to the identification of the best candidate (OTM-R checklist, Point 19), paying attention to the principles of the code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers:
    - Start a substantive discussion concerning how to cope with ‘variations in the chronology of CVs’ and the ‘recognition of mobility experience’ (cf. elements of the code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers) – 2019 Q1
  - Ensure that everyone involved in the area of OTM-R is sufficiently trained (OTM-R checklist, Point 3) 2020 - 2021
Assess the need for additional selection tools and additional support by the HR Department - 2019 Q1
Explore the possibility of designating a member of the selection committee as a gender vanguard – 2019

The Recruitment and Selection Working Group has concluded that additional substantive (and other) support is needed during the selection process. The faculties are anticipating the development of a script for a selection interview, which will also contain a behaviour-oriented approach to the assessment of competences. A first draft has already been prepared for a more extensive selection interview script. It emphasises behavioural competences, linked to the key result areas for senior academic staff and the competence profile. This selection protocol is being expanded with additional elements that are important to the organisational objectives concerning gender and diversity. There is also a need for substantive discussions concerning how to cope with variations in the chronology of CVs and the recognition of mobility experience. We need to search for ways to ensure that the permanent members of the selection committees adhere to this script. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of designating a member of the selection committee as a gender vanguard: a member of the selection committee who has a heart for gender equality and who will monitor gender equality in the various phases of the selection procedure.

A few years ago, there was less consensus and support for other tools with which to evaluate behavioural competences/key result areas (e.g. intensive support by the HR Department during selection interviews, working with personality questionnaires, tools for assessing leadership qualities, organising an assessment). The need for assessment tools for evaluating behavioural competences has since been endorsed.

Given that the selection of academic staff members is a decentralised process (and the responsibility of the faculty), we have currently opted to support selection committees in their role by providing non-binding selection tools and by providing training for the members of the selection committees. At present, there is no university-wide demand for expanding selection committees to include a member of the central HR department. In the coming three years, efforts will be directed towards offering assessment tools and elaborating training for members of the selection committees.

Indicators/targets:
- Guidelines for assessing merit on Pintra, including in the form of a selection protocol and guidelines (OTM-R checklist, Point 19)
- Training for selection committees (OTM-R checklist, Points 3 & 19)
- Monitoring of increases in the number of participants in the trainings (OTM-R checklist, Point 3 & 19)
- Creation of additional assessment (or other) tools for selection committees (OTM-R checklist, Point 19)

**Action 5bis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New action</th>
<th>Create an OTM-R (Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment) policy.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project leader: HR</td>
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Objectives:
- Publish a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English) (OTM-R checklist, Point 1) that encourages external candidates to apply (Point 6), attracts researchers from abroad (CL Point 7) and from under-represented groups (Point8), and that provides attractive working conditions for researchers (CL Point 9) - 2021 Q1
- Have an internal guide specifying clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions (OTM-R Point 2) - 2020 Q1
- Have a quality control mechanism for OTM-R in place (OTM-R checklist, Point 5) that assesses whether OTM-R is delivering on its objectives (Point23) – 2021 Q2

Various elements of the OTM-R policy have already been elaborated in existing HR Strategy action points or previous HR projects. To date, UAntwerp has not yet written an overarching OTM-R policy. However, the underlying principles are already being applied. Efforts are being directed towards developing an overarching OTM-R policy containing all of the aforementioned elements. This OTM-R policy will be translated into an internal handbook containing guidelines and an information brochure for applicants. The objectives of the OTM-R policy will be monitored through the application of the selected indicators for each of the aforementioned actions. The OTM-R objectives and the associated indicators are systematically followed up in the HR Strategy steering committee.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Publish a version of our OTM-R policy on our external jobsite (OTM-R checklist, Point 1)
- Have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions published on the intranet Pintra (OTM-R checklist, Point 2)
- Systematically follow up on the OTM-R indicators, adjusting actions as needed (OTM-R checklist, Point 5 and OTM-R checklist Point 23)

### 3.1.2. Welcoming new researchers

**Central reception**

| Action 6 | Ensure individual and collective reception for each new researcher. | Project leader: HR  
Status: ongoing |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|

**Objectives:**
- Continue to organise transparent communication about the terms of employment - ongoing, 2018 Q1
- Provide individual reception for each new employee - completed
- Encourage attendance at general welcome sessions - 2018 Q4
- Encourage attendance at individual welcome sessions - 2018 Q4
- Re-invent individual reception for new employees - 2019 Q2

**Previous period 2013-2018**
The transparency and completeness of the information about the terms of employment is assured even more than was the case in the past through the formal recording of the reception process based on a checklist. The collective welcome sessions have also been adapted to ensure that the information provided is relevant for the target audience and to facilitate new networks. This is increasing the appeal of and participation in these welcome sessions. The Department of Research and Innovation is also organising a specific welcome session for all new members of the senior academic staff.

**Future period 2018-2021**
For the future, we must take action to ensure that the individual reception is scheduled sooner and to convince every new employee to accept the invitation. We must also find ways of explaining Pintra more actively during the reception interview, possibly even replacing the introductory USB stick in the long run.
The concept of an individual reception for each staff member is being reviewed. One idea that is being considered involves collective receptions that are held at certain times. One possible point for attention in this regard has to do with the opportunity to address personal questions. Another recommendation is to ‘rediscover’ the personalised reception (e.g. by providing information to new staff members in a structured and manageable manner through e-learning, online videos, intranet and other media), taking into account the capacities and resources of the university. This would provide staff members with access to the most recent information, in contrast to the outdated reception information that is not updated on the USB stick. Beginning 1 March 2018, the cycle for the recruitment and selection of graduate teaching and research assistants and principal research fellows will be shorter, due to administrative simplification (delegation of authority from the Executive Board to the faculty). This could lead to decisions on new recruitments being taken earlier, so that reception interviews can be scheduled earlier.

Indicators/targets:
- Survey of new staff members of various ranks concerning their reception experiences and any needs that they might have.
- Development of an updated individual/collective reception formula
- Monitoring the level of attendance at collective and individual welcome sessions

Decentralised reception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 7</th>
<th>Ensure decentralised reception in the work place, and coordinate it with the centralised reception.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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Objectives:
- Make managers aware of their role in the reception of new employees in their service or department - ongoing
- Distribute the checklist for decentralised reception more actively - completed
- Coordinate the individual reception at HR with the reception in the work place - 2018 Q4
- Organise collective welcome sessions for researchers - 2019 Q4
- Organise collective welcome sessions for postdoctoral researchers - 2019-Q2

Previous period 2013-2018
The existing checklists will remain available on Pintra. A new process must be developed to provide support to managers with regard to their responsibility for the decentralised reception of new employees. This project will be launched by the informal consultation platform for faculty directors and the HR Department.

Future period 2018-2021
We aim to coordinate the various welcome sessions with each other. More specifically, this concerns the reception by a staff member from the HR department, the reception in the work place by the supervisor (or delegated party) and the collective welcome session. A collective welcome session is organised for PhD students and, in the future, we would like to organise one for researchers and postdoctoral staff. This could contribute to building a network.

Indicators/targets:
- Consultation with the various actors in the reception process. First, consult with faculties and departments in which new staff members are being employed, the Communications
Department and the Health and Safety Department. Ask which information is currently being provided or is lacking, and which information should ideally be provided.

- Inventory and streamlining of the information that is provided to new staff members, both centrally and decentrally
- Development of an online platform for providing information to new staff members

3.2. Working conditions

3.2.1. Safety and well-being

Safety policy

| Action 8 | Ensure the consistent implementation and monitoring of the well-being policy on all campuses. | Project leader: Health & Safety Department  
Status: ongoing |

Objectives:

- Ensure the consistent implementation of the safety policy on all campuses - ongoing
- Adapt communication to the various target audiences - ongoing
  - Translate the essential information on Pintra - 2018 Q4
- Design a new approach to surveying knowledge of the safety and well-being policy – 2019 Q4

Previous period 2013 – 2018

In 2013, plans were made to fine tune the centralised operation of the Health and Safety Department. New team members with new responsibilities joined the team and are supporting the department in reviewing the University of Antwerp’s well-being policy. The University of Antwerp has purposefully chosen to monitor the well-being policy from the field, on the work floor. Campus working groups have been established on every campus to discuss daily operations. Every month, representatives of the various faculties and central services review the events that could potentially have an impact on the health and safety of employees, in addition to formulating proposals for improvement. A campus advisor is appointed for every campus, who monitors practices and who is the focal point for the services and for individual employees. This campus-wide approach guarantees the consistent interpretation and implementation of the safety policy on all campuses. More faculties and Central Services have also become involved in the Health and Safety committee. There is broader representation on both the employer and staff sides. The vice-rectors are also involved, thereby ensuring feedback to the policy level. Faculty directors are more closely involved in the implementation of the well-being policy (e.g. by disseminating the applicable points through their faculty channels).

Finally, efforts have been made to improve the bilingual communication policy on well-being (see Action 13). All emails and communication from the Health and Safety Department will henceforth be sent in both Dutch and English to all employees, in order to ensure that our international employees also receive information about the well-being policy. Efforts will be directed towards the optimal use of the internal channels of communication, including Pintra (intranet), the weekly Pintra newsletter to all staff members and the staff magazine. Although the weekly newsletter for staff members is bilingual (Dutch–English), the underlying Pintra pages of the Health and Safety Department are not always bilingual.

An inventory has been compiled of problems and areas for improvement with regard to targeted communication, for purposes of sending general or specific mailings, or for working with calendars,
posters or other media. Important procedures and forms (e.g. emergency procedures, risk analyses, reception handbook for new staff members, procedures for products that are subject to authorisation). In addition to communication, bringing a well-being policy into practice requires training staff members. As in years past, substantial effort has been invested in training all staff members. These practice-based trainings are intended to serve a dual objective. First, they are aimed at allowing researchers to acquire expertise that is either not addressed or that is insufficiently addressed in the various curriculums. They are also aimed at assisting supervising researchers with regard to their obligation to train their staff.

Future period 2018-2021
In the coming three years, further investments will be made in finding the proper combination of communication to staff members. We have examined the possibility of using the screens in public and semi-public spaces for this purpose. Communication through Blackboard (an electronic learning environment) will also be examined. In addition, investments will be made in clear communication to PhD students. In cooperation with the Antwerp Doctoral School and the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation, a welcome session will be organised for PhD students, and investments will be made in targeted communication to PhD students. Plans also call for further streamlining, updating and translation of the essential information on Pintra.

The broad range of training topics will be expanded even further, in part at the request of researchers. Targeted training on the Social Welfare Act and the well-being policy will equip our researchers to take on supervisory duties within or outside the organisation. The previous tours will be replaced with an auditing tool that will involve surveying the level of knowledge concerning the safety and welfare policy and its implementation at the service level. This project consists of several phases: (1) charting the current situation at the service and organisational levels, (2) collecting good practices and preparing a proposal for a uniform working method, (3) helping to identify priority action points and (4) pursuing the objective of continuing improvement. These phases will run both sequentially and simultaneously.

Indicators/targets:
- Translation of the essential general information on Pintra
- Development/finetuning of an auditing tool and proceed through Phase 1
- Positive development in the participation rate of researchers and PhD students in welcome sessions and training
- Knowledge and implementation of legal obligations relating to well-being: increase in assurance procedures (Deming Cycle) based on the new auditing tool

Risk assessment and evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 9</th>
<th>Complete the preparation of the process for risk assessment and evaluation.</th>
<th>Project leader: Health &amp; Safety Department</th>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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Objectives:
- Establish a digital RIE procedure - 2018-2019
- Implement compulsory training for all supervisors - ongoing
- Develop a PeopleSoft self-service tool for streamlining the risk inventory - 2019
In the framework of the risk inventory and assessment, a training programme was rolled out for all supervisors in 2014. The aim is to ensure that all supervisors are aware of their responsibilities in terms of safety and well-being. This project is still in process, and it will be continued during the next period. To date, about half of all the supervisors have taken the training. To date, we have achieved coverage from 0%-80%, depending upon the faculty. Full coverage has yet to be achieved with the training, as the population of supervisors continues to change. In the 2017-2018 period, the training for the hierarchical line is being updated in response to the new regulations. Responsibility for following up on the hierarchical training will be transferred to the faculties beginning in the second half of 2018.

We have adjusted our approach with regard to establishing a risk inventory and evaluation procedure. We started by organising a number of pilot projects, for which the services can rely on support from the Health & Safety Department on the work floor. Risk analyses were prepared with employees, with the goal of learning from the best practices of other services. While this approach is quite labour-intensive, it is worth it, as the motivation of the stakeholders appears to have increased.

In addition, we are continuously working to develop measures for the further extension of the risk inventory and assessment process across the entire organisation, as well as for its automation with databases and electronic document flows. This had already been a point for attention in the process of preparing the risk analyses and work station sheets for trainees, new employees and student workers.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Increase in the percentage of people trained in the hierarchical line
- Implementation of a self-service risk analysis in PeopleSoft that will streamline the risk-inventory process and the actions associated with it (e.g. health oversight and required training)

| Action | Investigate the feasibility of a stress policy for senior academic staff | Project leader: HR with support of the Health and Safety Department | Status: ongoing |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Objectives:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Chart the job satisfaction of professors - completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compile a targeted action plan for senior academic staff - completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a job satisfaction study among all other staff categories (e.g. researchers of Stages 1 and 2) - completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compile a targeted action plan (e.g. for researchers of Stages 1 and 2) - 2018 Q2</td>
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</table>

**Stress policy for senior academic staff**

Previous period 2013-2018

Various stakeholders within the University of Antwerp have joined forces to conduct a job satisfaction survey among professors (senior academic staff): the HR Department, the Health and Safety Department and the external Health and Safety authorities. This survey was conducted by University of Antwerp researchers using internationally recognised instruments. In all, 319 valid questionnaires were collected, which translates to a response rate of 50.1%. The output of the survey was a detailed, scientifically substantiated report containing both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The findings of this study were submitted to various consultation and executive bodies within the university, thus encouraging open discussion concerning the issue of stress within the organisation. This generated widespread support for developing an action plan consisting of
measures at various levels: primary interventions, secondary interventions and tertiary interventions. In addition to a curative offering, this action plan also adheres to a proactive policy, including administrative simplification and relieving the administrative burden. One of the first support measures that was implemented was the use of FAKIR. The FAKIR plan is a tool developed by the business-model working group and the administration as a follow-up to the stress policy for senior academic staff. It makes additional HR resources available to the faculties, thus allowing them to take measures to provide better support for senior academic staff. The action plan was received favourably by the management of the faculties and the Executive Board. Regular progress reports will be provided in order to check the implementation of these measures. In 2016, this job satisfaction study was extended to include all other personnel categories.

Future period 2018-2021
In late 2016, a new job satisfaction study was launched for all other staff categories (e.g. researchers of Stages 1 and 2). This study resulted in a similar, comprehensive scientific report. The results were published in late 2017, and a call was issued to all stakeholders to contribute input for a stress action plan for these target groups.

Indicators/targets:
- Execution of a job satisfaction survey among professors (senior academic staff)
- Definition of a related action plan (senior academic staff)
- Execution of a job satisfaction survey amongst the other staff categories
- Definition of a related action plan (other staff categories)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 11</th>
<th>Investigate the possibility of having an ombudsperson for PhD students.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project leader: Antwerp Doctoral School</td>
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<td>Status: closed after 2015 self-assessment</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 11</th>
<th>Provide for the constant monitoring of all ombuds files concerning PhD students.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project leader: Antwerp Doctoral School</td>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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Objectives:
- Investigate the possibility of having an ombudsperson for PhD students - completed
- Conduct annual follow-up on the ombuds files relating to PhD students - ongoing

The demand for a separate ombudsperson for PhD students became apparent during the gap analysis in 2012. Since its founding, UAntwerp has employed both a central ombudsperson and individual faculty ombudspersons. The duties of these officials are specified in the university’s Education and Examination Regulation. One of the tasks of the central ombudsperson is to ‘mediate in the event of problems between PhD students and their supervisors’. Contact details for the central ombudsperson are available on the website of the Antwerp Doctoral School. Each year, the central ombudsperson prepares a report for the Education Council describing any interventions that have been made between PhD students and their supervisors, along with any solutions that have been advanced. The number of problems reported is small, with a median of two cases per academic year between the academic years 2008-2009 and 2013-2014. Nevertheless, each ombuds issue relating to PhD students at UAntwerp is closely followed up by the Antwerp Doctoral School. This is done in order to ensure the best possible supervision for the PhD students involved, as well as for all current and future PhD students at the institution.

Targets:
- Continued monitoring of the number and nature of ombuds files involving PhD students.

### 3.2.2. Internationalisation

**Mobility centre**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Conduct project involving services for international researchers.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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**Objectives:**
- Define actions that facilitate day-to-day international administration - 2018 Q2
- Establish an International Staff Office and develop it into a mobility centre - 2020 Q1
- Establish and develop services for international staff members and their family - 2019 Q1

**Previous period 2013-2018**

The project for developing a professional, university-wide structure for all service processes for international employees, within a specific framework, was put into practice in January 2014 with the establishment of an International Staff Office. This unit offers advice and develops a comprehensive approach for the target audience, which consists of incoming international academic staff/researchers and outgoing employees. The International Staff Office developed from a knowledge centre to a mobility centre for the target groups, providing custom advice and coordinating various services. The subsidiarity principle has been applied in this context. The administrative tasks performed by the mobility centre are limited. Various internal and external services are included in the decentralised service provided to incoming or outgoing employees.

In 2016, the International Staff Office strengthened its collaboration with the Immigration Office in Antwerp with regard to applying for residence permits for their international staff members. All applications are now made through the university (except for staff members living outside Antwerp and PhD students, who must apply through the International Relations Office), thereby reducing the turnaround time significantly from several months to an average maximum of 6-8 weeks. All residence permits and work permits are registered in the staff database, in order to facilitate and follow-up the extensions.

Information sheets about the visa procedure for various staff categories and their family members have been prepared and made available for future staff members and their families through the HR Officers. Custom advice is provided by the International Staff Office, especially when family members will be accompanying future international staff members.

In 2017, the International Staff Office explored the possibility of starting a partnership with various health insurance funds in order to make registration for international staff easier and less time-consuming. Employees can process enrolment with their health insurance funds electronically through the university, and they can direct their questions to a dedicated contact person from their health insurance funds.

The process of screening cases of international employment (simultaneous employment or secondment) has been fine-tuned in order to take the actions required for social security and taxes. If needed, additional advice will be requested from the authorities with regard to the interpretation of double-tax treaties and EU regulations concerning social security. New international payrolls have been/will be started.
In terms of networking, the International Staff Office participates actively in Flemish and international platforms. Results of this participation include a letter of recommendation by the Belgian universities concerning new European regulations and an extensive memorandum on the administrative (and other) obstacles that international researchers face when coming to or staying in Belgium. Within these Flemish platforms, the various universities also share good practices, in order to streamline the administration involved with international employment.

Future period 2018-2021
In 2018, the International Staff Office will closely follow-up on the changes that will take place in the Belgian legislation concerning the visa-application process, work permits and residence permits, as a result of new European legislation that is being transposed to Belgian legislation. We will continue to work through the existing platforms to promote the interests of universities and international staff to ensure that administrative procedures are simplified and streamlined. Once the European legislation has been converted into Belgian legislation, the International Staff Office will integrate these changes as efficiently as possible into the internal operations of the HR Department. The information available on the website and the Pintra page will be adapted as needed, and information sessions will be organised for the HR Officers of the HR Department.

In addition to optimising existing services for international staff members and their families, the International Staff Office will gradually expand and strengthen its services to further its development into a mobility centre. In 2018, the International Staff Office will provide further support for registering with health insurance funds upon arrival in Belgium. This service will be further expanded and communicated to international staff members upon arrival. Application for new residence permits and for the extension of residence permits will be done by the International Staff Office (or by the International Relations office for PhD students). The International Staff Office will use the monthly reporting tool to be pro-active in following up on this process, and it will add a copy of the residence permit to the international staff member’s personnel file.

The International Staff Office will develop further assistance and guidance concerning tax returns. We will also explore the possibility of simplifying and, where possible, automating the application for and follow-up on double-tax treaties.

Support and services for family members of international staff members will be elaborated further. For example, the International Staff Office will continue to explore possibilities for starting dual-career support for the partners of new international staff members. It will also develop further support with regard to childcare facilities and schools. Finally, the International Staff Office would also like to provide additional support (e.g. in terms of housing) to international staff members and their families when relocating to Belgium.

Indicators/targets:
- The International Staff Office will follow up on applications for residence permits and their extension for all international staff members (except PhD students and staff living outside Antwerp)
- International staff members will be informed about the possibility of registering with their health insurance funds through the university. All necessary information concerning registration with health insurance funds will be made available on the intranet.
- The International Staff Office will develop an action plan for implementing dual-career support for the partners of international members of the university staff.
English-language information facilities

| Action 13 | Conduct project involving services for international researchers – specific actions regarding the English-language information facilities and a new English website. | Project leader: Communications Department Status: ongoing |

Objectives:
- Establish a clear policy regarding the bilingualism of our university (e.g. meetings and internal communication) and the resources needed for translating information for international employees - completed
- Make systematic additions to the English-language versions of Pintra sub-sites - 2019
- Provide new signage with directions to the campus - 2021
- Launch the ‘Mondo’ network for international students and staff members - 2019

Past period 2013-2018

Several important steps have already been taken in relation to the English-language information facilities. The website of the University of Antwerp is structurally bilingual (Dutch-English).

Efforts are also being directed towards improving the English version of the intranet. For example, the Department of Research and Innovation is now trying to ensure that information intended for internal distribution is made available in English wherever possible. This is already being done for information services relating to external research funding. The majority of information sessions are now held in English as well.

We are also actively working to improve the English-language intranet. International employees who speak other languages can now select the ‘English’ option when logging in to the system. In the short term, this system will be replaced by adding an English-language option to PeopleSoft HR. As a result, employees will automatically see other links, tabs and modules in their preferred language in Pintra and PeopleSoft. In addition, staff members currently receive automatic newsletters and invitations in their preferred languages. This option must be linked to employees for whom English has been registered as a preferred language in PeopleSoft HR. The HR Department organised a survey to complete the registration of the preferred languages of foreign employees in PeopleSoft. Some sub-sites have been translated from scratch. Other sub-sites, in particular the Infrastructure sub-site, offer possibilities for sharing useful information for non-Dutch-speaking newcomers. The Pintra newsletter has an English-language version containing ‘need to know’ and ‘nice to know’.

In relation to the university’s internal language policy, the Internationalisation Steering Committee referred to the recent memorandum entitled ‘Naar een internationale campus’ (‘Towards an international campus’, September 2015), which was developed by the International Students Office and submitted to the Internationalisation of Education working group.

Future period 2018-2021

When communicating directly with employees, we always try to use the preferred languages of staff members or to communicate in two languages. All relevant documents, brochures and forms that are available within the institution are gradually being translated. Faculty boards with international senior academic staff organise their meetings in English. The minutes are taken in Dutch, as required by law. This regulation must be considered as long as such legislation is in force.

We encourage employees to communicate orally with individual staff members in their preferred languages. Because this is not evident for all employees, we organise custom training sessions that address specific terminology, thus helping them to master the English language. The English Style
Guide, which has been available for several years, includes translations for the names of departments, faculties, job titles and other matters. Employees who are trying to learn Dutch are encouraged to express themselves in Dutch.

A network has been established for international students and staff members: ‘Mondo’. A targeted communication strategy is being elaborated in order to publicise the network and generate interest in its activities.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Performance of primary maintenance of the Pintra sub-site ‘Research and Innovation’ in English (indicator for customary web statistics)
- Adjustment of the English-language Infrastructure sub-site in order to share even more valuable information for newcomers (particularly for non-Dutch speakers).
- Systematic monitoring of the web statistics for the Pintra sub-sites and newsletters.
- An increasing readership of the English newsletter
- An increasing number of topics in the English newsletter
- Number of participants in the activities of Mondo

**Reception of foreign researchers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 14</th>
<th>Conduct project involving services for international researchers – specific actions regarding onboarding.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: ongoing</th>
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</table>

**Objectives:**
- Develop an intranet page containing extended information for international staff members and faculties - 2018 Q3
- Develop a welcome brochure for international PhD students - 2018 Q3
- Organise training sessions on international employment for faculty members - 2018 Q3
- Organise welcome sessions specifically for international staff members - 2019 Q1

**Previous period 2013-2017**
The first step in improving the process of onboarding was to create the website of the International Staff Office. This website contains all of the information that new employees need when preparing to relocate to Antwerp, including instructions for applying for visas, work permits and residence permits.

In addition, the HR Officer uses customised information sheets on applications for visas and work permits (including information for family members, when applicable) in the initial email contact with new staff members. Custom information is also provided by the HR Officer and the International Staff Office, in order to facilitate relocation to Belgium.

The Antwerp Doctoral School has developed a welcome brochure for international PhD students, in close collaboration with the International Staff Office and the International Student Office. This brochure will provide international PhD students with the information and orientation needed to ensure a good start at our university.

During salary negotiations with future senior academic staff, the International Staff Office provides custom advice on professional and personal life, including information on legal issues, social security and taxes, health, personal life and family support.
Future period 2018-2020
The International Staff Office will develop a page on the University’s intranet with extended information for international staff members upon their arrival and during their stay in Belgium. In addition to the important information that international staff members need upon their arrival, the site will provide extensive information about living and working in Belgium. At the same time, the external website will also be reviewed and updated as needed.

This information will also be used during the welcome meeting to orient new international staff members to and guide them with regard to living and working in Belgium.

The International Staff Office will also improve the support to the faculty in hiring international staff. The future intranet page of the International Staff Office will provide clear instructions on how to hire international researchers. In addition, training programmes will be organised for faculty employees and supervisors to explain the legislation that applies when international employees relocate to Belgium.

Welcome sessions for international staff will be organised to provide practical information (relating to HR and other matters) for newly arrived international staff members.

For PhD students, a welcome brochure from the Doctoral School will be launched, and every new PhD student will receive a copy after being accepted as a PhD student.

Indicators/targets:
- All new PhD students will receive the welcome brochure electronically as soon as they have been accepted as PhD students at the University of Antwerp.
- The intranet will include information for international incoming staff, outgoing staff and faculties hiring international staff members.
- Training sessions on international employment for faculty members will be organised.
- At least three welcome sessions will be organised each year for international staff members. At the end of 2018, these welcome sessions will be evaluated and adjusted where necessary, according to the needs of our international staff members.

Outgoing mobility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 15</th>
<th>Actively promote outgoing mobility by providing targeted information and by facilitating and validating mobility.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
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<td>Status: ongoing</td>
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Objectives:
- Develop a registration and reporting tool for outgoing mobility - 2019 Q3
- Systematise outgoing mobility in the internal HR processes - 2019 Q3
- Introduce targeted information, benefits and appreciation, while facilitating various forms of mobility - 2019 Q3
- Actively promote outgoing mobility for all researchers throughout their entire career at the university – 2020 Q3

Previous period 2013-2017
The University of Antwerp assigns high priority to internationalisation. This involves more than merely attracting foreign researchers, but also includes promoting the mobility of our own researchers as much as possible.
We have observed that researchers often organise their outgoing mobility themselves and do not always report (in writing) to the faculty or central services. In many cases, the registration of foreign residencies is arranged only with the researcher’s supervisor or service, and it is not always formally communicated to the HR Department. When the HR Department is notified, the International Staff Office will provide custom advice to the outgoing employee and will take the administrative steps that are needed, in close collaboration with the HR Officer.

In the coming period, we would like to be more systematic in promoting and following up on outgoing mobility.

In 2017, the International Staff Office conducted a needs assessment within the faculties and the HR Department with regard to outgoing mobility. Registration and reporting are the most important needs of both the faculties and the HR Department.

Future period 2018-2020
A registration and reporting tool for outgoing mobility will be launched. The registration and reporting will be linked to the consequences and obligations of the legislation for outgoing mobility. An overview of the administrative steps that must be taken in case of outgoing mobility will be made available on the intranet page of the International Staff Office. The International Staff Office will organise internal training on outgoing mobility and reporting for the HR officers at the HR Department. All new outgoing employment will be screened by the HR Department, and necessary actions with regard to social security, taxes and other administrative steps will be monitored.

Based on the overview of the effective outgoing mobility, new actions and initiatives will be developed to stimulate further mobility. By extension, the International Staff Office will formulate proposals for offering additional services to outgoing employees (e.g. assistance with visa applications, information about taxation and social security).

Indicators/targets:
- The HR Department will develop a tool for registering outgoing mobility, in close collaboration with the ICT Department.
- A tool for reporting outgoing mobility will be made available to faculties through the self-service system.
- A step-by-step manual for outgoing mobility will be made available to faculties and outgoing employees.
- All HR officers will have followed internal training on outgoing mobility.

3.2.3. Diversity

Diversity policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 16</th>
<th>Perpetuate existing policies (including studies) on diversity and equal opportunities.</th>
<th>Project leader: Diversity and Equal Opportunity team (Department of University and Society) Status: ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Objectives:
- Update gender action plan – 2018 Q2
- Attend to gender and equal opportunities at the various stages of an academic career (implementation of the gender action plan for 2018-2022)
The academic Equal Opportunity and Diversity Steering Committee is tasked with overseeing the University of Antwerp’s diversity and gender policy as a whole, while monitoring the existing and new policy lines in relation to this theme. In this framework, a gender action plan was drafted, entitled ‘Durable gender policy for academic staff’, and it was approved by the Board of Governors on 21 January 2014. Several actions in the action plan have since been launched or completed, including:

- Respect gender balance (1/3 norm) in all of the University of Antwerp’s administrative and advisory bodies
- Develop a policy paper entitled ‘Diversity policy at the University of Antwerp’, which explains the University of Antwerp’s views on diversity and equal opportunities in accordance with its mission and the strategic lines of its institutional policy
- Ensure the university’s commitment to organise one event or action focusing on the topic of gender each year
- Organise biannual meetings of the Board of Governors and the Council of Deans, during which the topic of gender is included on the agenda
- Perform quantitative analysis of the recruitment, promotion and outflow of men and women in the senior academic staff according to the new method that was developed in the University of Antwerp’s Business Intelligence System.
- The ‘Equality@University’ survey was organised again in 2014-2015.
- To support and guide foreign researchers, lecturers and students, an International Staff Office and an International Students Office were established alongside the existing International Relations Office. The activities of these offices include providing good information, facilitating contacts and elaborating a partner policy for partners and children accompanying incoming international staff members.
- Preschool childcare for staff members: Various avenues are being explored for providing preschool childcare to staff members. UAntwerp is currently operating a pilot project involving the reservation of five places at a childcare centre close to the Stadscampus. The possibility of similar pilot projects for the remote campuses is being explored.
- Funding for the replacement of ZAP during maternity leave, parental leave, palliative leave and leave for medical assistance: The policy memorandum ‘Replacing ZAP during maternity leave, parental leave, palliative leave and leave for medical assistance’ was approved by the Executive Board on 9 December 2014 and took effect on 1 January 2015.

In June 2018, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Steering Committee will submit an update of the gender report to the university administration. This version will contain the current state of affairs with regard to the male/female ration amongst students and academic staff members at recruitment and promotion. In addition, an overview of the actions that have already been realised will be compiled, and policy recommendations for the future will be written.

**Indicators/targets:**

- Delivery of the updated gender report with recommendations for the 2018-2022 period
3.2.4. Information flow

Employer branding

| Action 17 | Reconstructing the University of Antwerp website to a user-centred design. | Project leader: Department of Communications  
Status: ongoing  
The action has been redefined; the initial action has been completed |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Objectives:
- Bring the new external website of the University of Antwerp into operation - completed
- Adopt an employer branding strategy (consistent message, style and communication) to position the University of Antwerp as an attractive organisation for students, researchers and other employees - completed
- Develop an international website that scores well in the area of user-centred design – 2018 - 2022

Previous period 2013-2018
The external website was thoroughly renewed, and it now looks more dynamic. The job site was also updated and expanded. This new job site could be further optimised by capitalising on the unique selling properties of the University of Antwerp as an employer (employer branding; see Action 3).

Future period 2018-2021
A four-year project (2018-2022) involving the systematic optimisation of the UAntwerp website into a mobile, accessible and user-friendly website has been launched. The project is based on the results of an extensive user research. It also involves a new concept for the international website, which will receive a more ‘user-centred’ design as a result. In advance, indicators were defined: a dashboard with 10 ‘key performance indicators’ is expected to guarantee permanent user-friendliness.

Indicators/targets:
- Development of a new concept for the international website based on user-centered design
- Systematic follow-up on a dashboard with 10 ‘key performance indicators’

Target group for information facilities (partly human resource management)

| Action 18 | Construct the new University of Antwerp website – Personnel Area – with regard to human resources management. | Project leader: HR  
Status: ongoing |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Objectives:
- Improve the availability of task-oriented information through Pintra (aimed at a specific target audience) - completed
- Increase the availability of legal documents in English - ongoing

In order to reach new and other researchers even better, the university has adopted on the one hand a demand-driven approach through its renewed intranet, called Pintra. Compared with the old internal website, Pintra was designed based on the needs and reasoning of the end users instead of using the internal department structures as a starting point. A point of attention for this period was bilingual information (see action 13, internal language policy). Currently all webpages on Pintra containing HR
information are bilingual. All forms (applications, requests, permissions,..) are also available in both Dutch and English. However, some legal documents (statutes, rules,..) still remain to be translated.

**Indicators/Targets:**
- Increase the number of legal documents that are available in English

**Addendums to statutes, contracts and labour regulations**

| Action 19 | Conduct an inventory of useful and necessary additions to the labour regulations and addendums to statutes, contracts or agreements. | Project leader: HR  
Status: closed after 2015 self-assessment |

**Objectives:**
- Ensure that the HR Strategy for researchers is endorsed by the researchers themselves
- Adopt a new system for disseminating regulations

This action requires permanent attention with regard to the development of internal rules and their translation into regulations and contracts, as well as into accessible information on Pintra. Action 19 was classified under Actions 30, 32 and 33 (cf. renewed version of the AAP and BAP statute).

### 3.3. Talent development

#### 3.3.1. Professional attitude

**Project financing – personnel flows**

| Action 20 | Specify procedures for appointments and renewals charged to externally funded projects. | Project leader: HR  
Status: closed after 2015 self-assessment |

**Objectives:**
- Develop a new procedure for project appointments - completed

The departments of Human Resources, Finance and Research have made agreements concerning the decision to appoint or renew contracts, the competence and responsibility for the budget and the central administration’s role in this process. They also established a clear procedure that guarantees the availability of funds before making an actual appointment or renewal of appointment.

The HR Department has established a working group that conducts monthly reviews of possibilities for improving procedures, forms and other matters for appointments charged to external funding.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Procedure exists
Project management

**Action 21**  
Clearly chart the roles and responsibilities for project management and reporting, and associate the necessary actions with them.  
*Update the procedure for project management.*

**Project leader:** Finance Department with support of the Departement of Research and Innovation (ADOC) and JOC (Legal Follow-up Centre)  
**Status:** ongoing

**Objectives:**
- Implement ContractSoft within the central administration units (2019)
- Connect ContractSoft to supervisors (2020)
- Implement new regulations for risk management, which have an impact on the management of externally funded projects (2020)
- Develop a new procedure for administrative entities concerning project application, contract signature and project management (2019)

**Past period 2012-2018:**
In 2015, the Department of Research and Innovation initiated work on developing a new procedure for ‘Projects and contracts for research and scientific services with external funding’, to replace the procedure PROC/ADOC/001. The procedure was designed to develop a coherent operational process, from the project application stage, to the contract signing stage and the administrative management phase in project research or scientific services. The procedure identifies the contacts and responsibilities of the various entities for every stage. It aims to clarify the tasks, services and responsibilities of the various entities relative to those of supervisors. The entities involved were ADOC, JOC and ADFIN.

In the course of 2016, an alternative direction was decided, whereby the renewal of the current procedure was put on hold in order to give priority to a number of initiatives that are also aimed at defining roles and responsibilities within the central administrative entities (i.e. institutional level) regarding project application, contract negotiation and project management (with regard to research and scientific service projects):
- The custom development of ContractSoft was introduced early in 2017. ContractSoft is an integrated contract-management system to be used (in Phase 1) by the central administration (involving four entities of the central administration: Legal Office, ADFIN, ADOC, ADUS).
- The reorganisation of the Department of Research and Innovation (ADOC) in mid-2016 resulted in the creation of a Grants Office and a Valorisation Office, each with distinct roles relating to the support to funding applicants and the valorisation of results. The Grants Office is promoted as the first point of contact within the central administration for supervisors regarding all aspects of the pre-award phase, connecting to the departments of Finance and HR, as well as to the legal office. A generic mail address research@UAntwerp.be was launched to capture questions of supervisors who are unaware of a dedicated contact point.

**Future period 2018-2021:**
In 2018, further development of ContractSoft is envisaged, connecting the central administration’s IT platform to individual supervisors, thereby enabling them to follow the parties who address the various steps in the process of contract signature and project opening and management (Phase 2).
In 2018, the internal website of the Department of Research and Innovation will be modified to provide a better overview of its roles and responsibilities relating to application support and contract management for research projects, possibly also indicating the roles of project-supporting partners at the faculty level.

Following the new Flemish Single Audit regulations relating to universities (implemented in 2016), the university is currently developing a new risk-management policy, which is being executed under the guidance of the Chief Financial Officer. This process will result in new university regulations, which are expected by the end of 2018. These regulations will provide new definitions for the roles and responsibilities of supervisors of externally funded projects, thus also having an impact on the tasks and responsibilities of the units of the central administration. The PROC/ADOC/001 procedure will be adapted accordingly (2019).

**Indicators/targets:**
- Implementation of ContractSoft
- Implementation of the new regulations for risk management
- Implementation of a new procedure for administrative entities concerning project application, contract signature and project management

**Co-authorship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 22</th>
<th>Evaluate practices concerning co-authorship in publications.</th>
<th>Project leader: Research Council (Departement of Research and Innovation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Correct recognition of co-authorship with a clear policy position - completed

**Past period 2013-2018**
On 30/05/2013, the Research Council discussed the aspects of the ‘HR strategy and action plan’, which relate to the researchConh policy, including the point of action on the evaluation of practices concerning co-authorship in publications. The discussion of the possibility of developing a policy on the co-authorship of publications was included in the 2013-1017 BOF Strategic Policy Plan (OD 4.3). The university will evaluate the relative advisability of a top-down institutional policy. The Research Council will also verify the risks associated with co-authorship in terms of scientific integrity (cf. OD 6.2. of the Strategic Plan). In this context, the Department of Research and Innovation has posted internationally accepted good practices about publishing on the intranet (Pintra).

The new PhD student charter includes an article stating that the supervisor must provide maximum support to the PhD student in valorising their research through publications. In the case of co-authorship, there must be respect for the actual contributions of the PhD student.

**Future period 2018-2021**
The annual information sessions organised by the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation on ‘how to develop a publishing strategy’ devote considerable attention to authorship (and co-authorship), including references to important international guidelines. In early 2018, the Research Council adopted a Code of Conduct regarding scientific research for all researchers active at the University of Antwerp. One of the articles further specifies that the university fully supports the international guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. In short, it states that only researchers who have made substantial contributions to a publication can be listed as...
authors. In the spring of 2018, the Department of Research and Innovation will communicate broadly about this Code of Conduct, with the goal of incorporating its wide set of stipulations (e.g. regarding the importance of ethical clearing, proper research data management, research with potential for military or ‘dual use’) into the daily practice of all researchers.

Indicators/targets:
- Implement a Code of Conduct (written guidelines) with regard to co-authorship
- Communicate the Code of Conduct through e.g. newsletters and Pintra
- Incorporate the Code of Conduct into info sessions with regard to e.g. publishing and research practices

Open Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 22bis</th>
<th>Develop and implement Open Science policies.</th>
<th>Project leader: Research Board (ADOC) Status: ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives:
- Development of a clear policy concerning the different aspects of Open Science - 2018 Q2
- Stepwise implementation of policy and practical guidelines - ongoing

Past period 2013-2018
Different aspects of Open Science have been high on the research policy agenda for quite some time. Ethics and scientific integrity stand at the core of academia, even though in recent years revelations of sloppy science, misconduct and even fraud have cast some doubts on the reliability of academic research. As such, the renewed interest of Open Science in integrity is not uncalled for. At the University of Antwerp, all formal institutions to deal with both potential cases of scientific misconduct (Commission of Scientific Integrity) and ethical screening of research projects (four ethical committees) have been in place for a long time. In addition, on 24/04/2018 the Executive Board approved a comprehensive code of conduct for researchers, further clarifying the university’s position on a number of integrity-related topics.

Open access to publications similarly constitutes a policy ambition with a respectable pedigree, to the extent that in the past period, the University of Antwerp (as did many international peers) already implemented a clear policy on open access. Since 01/10/2014, researchers have been obliged to submit (preprint or postprint) PDF copies of their peer-reviewed publications to the Library for inclusion in the Institutional Repository. The aims of this policy are to maximize output archiving and online disclosure/findability of publications and to facilitate compliance with funder mandates. Research data management (RDM) is the third big pillar of Open Science, and here as well the University of Antwerp has taken important steps forward. On 24/11/2016, the Research Board approved the first version of the ‘Research Data Management Policy Plan’, which in line with international best practices clearly delineates responsibilities and obligations for all stakeholders (researchers, faculties, central administration, …). At the same time, the necessary technical and human infrastructure is under construction, both internally and on the Flemish level in close collaboration with the other Flemish universities and research centers and the government (i.e. the tool DMPonline.be, developed in a consortium of Belgian universities and research centers, that facilitates the creation and maintenance of so-called ‘data management plans’). In 2017-2018, the Department of Research Affairs & Innovation also toured all (research) policy makers of the faculties to inform them of the challenges associated with RDM and to solicit their input for the fledgling university RDM policy.
Finally, OS and RDM have been identified as topics of strategic relevance for the YERUN and Aurora university networks. In both networks, best practices are increasingly shared, which will improve policy making significantly. One example is the RDM training course (see below) that the VU Amsterdam made available for all Aurora members as a working example to build their own courses on. This has been of great value for developing our own training course.

Future period 2018-2021
Given the solid footing for the first two pillars of Open Science as discussed above, most attention in the future period will be devoted to research data management in the broad sense. This will include providing adequate policy answers to important legal obligations and challenges (GDPR, Protocol of Nagoya, ...) and to implement these in researcher-friendly ways, as well as developing the infrastructure to accommodate ‘open data’, either in-house or by providing targeted guidance to existing external data repositories (i.e. at the Zenodo UAntwerp Data Repository).

Perhaps even more importantly, more steps will be taken to inform and train our researchers in RDM. Early 2018 a first of a series of generic information sessions was organised, in the Spring/Summer of 2018 more practical training courses will be organised for junior researchers (to start with). Whether starting PhD students should be obliged to attend RDM training courses is currently under consideration. RDM is also a recurrent theme in the monthly newsletter of the Department of Research Affairs & Innovation.

Indicators/targets:
- Number and share of open access publications in the Institutional Repository
- Development of RDM policies and human and technical infrastructure following RDM maturity model
- Number of (open) datasets uploaded to Zenodo UAntwerp Data Repository
- Number of (open) datasets recorded in the Institutional Repository
- Solid participation to RDM info sessions and RDM training courses

3.3.2. Training and education

Training opportunities for academic personnel

| Action 23 | Evaluate the range of training courses for researchers (interdisciplinary breadth and transferable skills) and their orientation to target audiences. | Project leader: HR Status: ongoing, action was redefined relative to the initial action plan (2013) |

Objectives:
- Evaluate and align the range of courses within the university (offered by the Department of Research and Innovation, the Antwerp Doctoral School and the HR Department), with the aim of improving and expanding the opportunities for development for researchers - ongoing
- Further define the target groups (senior, postdoctoral researchers and PhDs) and develop custom training - ongoing

The university considers its vision and mission as an employer to include investing in sustainable employability for all of its employees, including those with only temporary appointments at the university. This responsibility emerges from the social role that the university would like to fulfil. It is important to invest in the training and education of all researchers, including those who will be leaving the university, as they are ambassadors of the university outside of academia. In the past five years, a range of training programmes has been elaborated for postdoctoral researchers (e.g. on project management, CV counselling, ‘Growing your personal leadership’ and ‘Growing your career’).
UAntwerp would like to continue along this path and increase its investment in the development of researchers. Various training initiatives for researchers (including postdoctoral researchers) are offered by various services, each based on its own expertise and approach.

Department of Research Affairs and Innovation
Most of the training programmes for postdoctoral researchers that are organised by the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation are aimed at research funding, grant writing and entrepreneurship. These initiatives aim to support postdoctoral researchers in the further expansion of their research careers. The research department will focus on the further development of the ‘Dive into Projects’ and ‘Dive into Business’ programmes, targeting both junior and senior researchers and intermediary support staff: proactive introduction of new courses, including on demand by the target audience. The Valorisation Office organises outreach activities for researchers and lecturers of the AUHA (Antwerp University Association) partners, in order to foster more entrepreneurship and valorisation activities within the Antwerp University Association. The ADOC department initiated structural and frequent platforms for coordination and knowledge transfer (Expert groups), thereby connecting the department to the research and valorisation managers who are active in the faculties and valorisation platforms. The goal is to coordinate initiatives and stimulate knowledge transfer, with the ultimate purpose of assisting and supporting researchers in their efforts relating to grant writing and valorisation.

HR Department
The HR Department provides training to anyone who would like to work on broad competence development to support the expansion of their further academic or post-academic careers. Support for further career expansion has priority on the agenda of the range of training that the HR Department would like to offer to postdoctoral researchers. A special centre will be developed within the HR Department, in which expertise concerning career development and career counselling will be bundled: the Talent Centre (see Action 38). The future range of training offered to postdoctoral researchers will be based on three pillars: career counselling, training on transferable skills and mentoring. With regard to the ‘career counselling’ dimension, we would like to support postdoctoral researchers in the area of active career self-direction by offering collective and individual career-counselling sessions (see Action 38). For ‘training’ dimension, we will expand the range of training with a focus on the development of transferable skills that are needed on the academic and non-academic labour markets. For the ‘mentoring’ dimension, we would like to match them with role models (see Action 38).

Antwerp Doctoral School
Each personalised doctoral programme must conform to a competence profile specified by the Antwerp Doctoral School, which provides PhD students with a clear overview of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed in order to complete the doctoral research successfully and to have a strong position in the expansion of their further careers. This competence profile will be evaluated in the coming three years (see Action 28). It consists of competences that are linked to a broad array of programmes, workshops, guest lectures and other activities, with the goal of adding depth to the knowledge and skills of PhD students (e.g. through activities within the discipline), in addition to broadening them (e.g. through activities outside the discipline aimed at the further development of ‘transferable skills’). The majority of these activities are also open to postdoctoral researchers. In addition, PhD students may also participate on their own initiative in programmes, study weeks, summer schools, conferences and other activities, both within and outside UAntwerp, in Belgium or abroad. To encourage and support such participation, PhD students are able to draw upon a programme credit (i.e. amounting to €1,500 for the entire period of the doctoral programme). In addition, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers can acquire supplementary financial resources through the annual ‘OJO-call’ for the purpose of participating in national and international activities focused on career development, foreign research residencies and/or domain-specific training.
For the coming period, the Antwerp Doctoral School is planning a thorough evaluation of the UAntwerp competence profile (see Action 28). In addition, the quality-assurance system (e.g. procedures, instruments) relating to the courses and programmes offered by the Antwerp Doctoral School will be subjected to a thorough review and revision (2018), thus allowing for quick and proper response to suggestions from participants.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Further development of the ‘Dive into Projects’ and ‘Dive into Business’ programmes, which target both junior and senior researchers, as well as intermediary support staff: introduction of new courses
- More outreach activities for researchers and lecturers at the university colleges, in order to foster more entrepreneurship and valorisation activities in the Antwerp University Association
- Structural and frequent platform for coordination and knowledge transfer
- Expansion of the range of training offered to postdoctoral researchers, with a focus on transferable skills
- Revision of the courses offered by the Antwerp Doctoral School

**Communication**

| Action 24 | Make the range of training opportunities better known to the researchers. | Project leader: HR  
 Status: ongoing |

**Objectives:**
- Raise awareness concerning training opportunities amongst the target audience - ongoing
- Improve communication concerning training opportunities: targeted communication; additional information about the content, training format and attractive invitations – ongoing

**Previous period 2013-2018**

The university has been working on its internal communication strategies. In addition to revising the internal and external websites, the university has made efforts to reduce email traffic by distributing a weekly newsletter and a bimonthly magazine for employees. Raising awareness about training initiatives is dependent in part upon this initiative.

In 2017, the Department of Research and Innovation (ADOC) developed a communication strategy directed towards the internal research community, as well as to external partners. Training opportunities (and other relevant information) are published on the intranet, in the in-house magazine for employees and on social media. In addition, a Research UAntwerp Facebook page and a LinkedIn page have been created. Both of these pages target enterprising researchers and external stakeholders and partners (e.g. companies). A new appealing look and was created for the new training programme, consisting of a component entitled ‘Dive into Projects’, which focuses on competitive research-project writing and a component entitled ‘Dive into Business’, which focuses on technology transfer and business collaboration. The use of the internal webpages of the ADOC department is constantly monitored.

**Future period 2018-2021**

Given that initiatives for postdoctoral researchers are the shared responsibility of the HR Department and the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation, it is important for both of these training
programmes to be communicated in a harmonised manner. Efforts will be devoted to developing bundled communication that can refer users to web pages and contacts for the relevant entities.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Adjustments in the communication mix directed towards postdoctoral researchers; bundling and streamlining information
- Monitoring the use of the internal webpages of the ADOC department
- Monitor the number of participants in programmes for postdoctoral researchers

### 3.3.3. Leadership development

#### Leadership culture

| Action 25 | Recognise and promote leadership roles and culture amongst senior researchers. | Project leader: HR  
| Status: open |

**Objectives:**
- Reflect on the actual and desired culture and structure of the organisation to encourage leadership - 2019
- Map the measures that are needed in order to facilitate leadership (linked to the core duties) – ongoing - 2020

**Previous period 2013-2018**
Preparations have begun for considering what we expect in terms of leadership roles and culture. However, we have not yet created widespread support for shaping a vision on leadership within the university. The revised safety and well-being policy (e.g. the supervisor as part of the responsible hierarchy) has already been implemented.

**Future period 2018-2021**
This action was a ‘long-term’ action, but its priority has been changed. The results of the job satisfaction study (Action 10) demonstrate the importance of the supervisor’s role. Within the university, efforts are being directed towards sustaining and building a culture of transparency, appreciation and trust, as described in the policy memorandum of the current rector team. These values will be translated into the university’s vision on leadership.

**Indicators/targets:**
- Shaping a vision on leadership within the university

#### Personal leadership

| Action 26 | Develop and assess the leadership and people-management skills of senior researchers. | Project leader: HR  
| Status: ongoing |

**Objectives:**
- Assess the leadership and people-management skills of senior researchers during their evaluation and promotion - completed
- Support deans in developing leadership skills through training 2018
- Offer support for the development of leadership skills of academic personnel 2020
Previous period 2015-2018
The leadership qualities and people-management skills of senior researchers are now assessed more explicitly during their evaluation and promotion (based on the job criteria for organisation and leadership) and by providing assessors with a report template that specifically allows space for evaluating these aspects.

In order to help senior researchers develop their leadership skills, the university will revise its training programme. More intensive coaching programmes will be offered to them on a relatively small scale. The leadership-skill trainings must be redeveloped and promoted in an appropriate manner.

Future period 2018-2021
The prioritisation of this action has changed in the past three years. According to the results of the job satisfaction study (Action 10), PhD students (and postdoctoral researchers) who receive sufficient support from their supervisors have a positive perception of stress, and those who do not receive sufficient support from their supervisors have a negative perception of stress. In addition to the important role that they play in the area of following up on functioning, members of the senior academic staff (ZAP) who direct PhD students and postdoctoral researchers play a part in contributing to (career) development. For example, supervisors must pay attention to the following: creating realistic expectations, encouraging the development of (transferable) skills and refining self-insight by providing targeted feedback. In addition, there is a need for clarification with regard to the supervisor’s role in various phases of the HR cycle (e.g. recruitment and selection, reception, retention, training and development). We are searching for ways of reinforcing supervisors in their role (e.g. by designing new trainings on leadership).

Indicators/targets:
- Shape new leadership courses for deans within the university
- Shape new leadership courses for academic personnel
- Number of participants in the new leadership courses

3.4. Career Development

3.4.1. Career policy for PhD students

Code of conduct

| Action 27 | Expand the Code of Conduct for PhD students to include proposals on working hours and leave, and improve the distribution of the document amongst the target audience. | Project leader: Antwerp Doctoral School | Status: closed |

Objectives:
- Extend the Code of Conduct for PhD students to include labour conditions - completed

The action for evaluating and rewriting the existing code of conduct for PhD students became more urgent as a result of CLA IV. This CAO obliges universities to develop a charter for PhD students, which specifies the general expectations that PhD students, the heads of research units and supervisors can have with regard to each other. This charter does not create any new rights or duties for researchers. It is intended merely to inform them about their rights, duties and perspectives. The charter was rewritten based on input from the relevant stakeholders (e.g. HR Strategy Steering Committee, VABAP, ADS office). As a result, it now contains a specific provision about the supervisor and PhD student making agreements about working hours and leave.
The code of conduct was approved by the Board of Governors on 15/12/2015. It must be disseminated in the short term amongst PhD students and supervisors, so that it becomes a general, widely implemented reference framework. To this end, the charter is appended to the general PhD rules.

**Indicators/targets: /**

**Competency profile**

| Action 28 | Evaluate and expand the competency profile for PhD students. | Project leader: Antwerp Doctoral School Status: open |

**Objectives:**
- Evaluation of the competency profile after an initial period of application - 2020

**Previous period 2013-2018**
In 2011, the Antwerp Doctoral School created a new competence profile for the university’s PhD students. The entire doctoral study programme is based on this profile, including the programme’s content, the types of training and courses available and the diploma supplement issued after the PhD defence.

Each personalised doctoral programme must conform to a competence profile specified by the Antwerp Doctoral School, which provides PhD students with a clear overview of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are needed in order to complete the doctoral research successfully and to have a strong position in the expansion of their further careers. These seven competence categories are as follows: research skills and techniques; adjustment to the research environment; research management; personal effectiveness; communication skills; networking and teamwork; and career management.

**Future period 2018-2021**
For the coming period, the Antwerp Doctoral School is planning a thorough evaluation of the UAntwerp competence profile for PhD students based on extensive benchmarking with the competence profiles that are being used by other domestic and foreign institutions (2018). The alumni of the UAntwerp doctoral programme will also be involved in this process. This is intended to allow the competence profile to be refined even further, with the range of courses offered being even better coordinated to it (2019, see Action 23).

**Indicators/targets:**
- Undertake a national and international benchmark of the UAntwerp competence profile for PhD students
- Request input from alumni of the UAntwerp doctoral programme
- Revise the competence profile for PhD students

**3.4.2. Career policy for academic personnel**

**Job Profile**

| Action 29 | Evaluate the job profile for senior academic staff. | Project leader: HR Status: closed after 2015 self-assessment |


Objectives:

- Specify expectations in terms of performance and competences for all categories of academic staff in generic job profiles - completed

The generic job profile for senior academic staff was implemented in 2011. Since then, it has been actively used for evaluations and promotions.

In 2014, the career policy for senior academic staff was evaluated. A feedback round was organised within the Council of Deans, in consultation with the rector, in order to gather the required input. The results of this evaluation round indicated that the job profile for senior academic staff was adequate. The senior academic staff profile also served as a starting point for the profiles that were elaborated for the teaching staff (OP categories 1 and 3) and they will provide a source of inspiration for the academic assistant staff (AAP) and contract research staff (BAP) profiles, which have yet to be elaborated.

Indicators/targets:

- Evaluation round in 2014

Job profile, job criteria, career cycle and statute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 30</th>
<th>Draft job profiles for each category of academic assistant staff (AAP) and contract research staff (BAP).</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 32</th>
<th>Realise the further elaboration of a structured career cycle for academic assistant staff (AAP) and contract research staff (BAP).</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: open (Action 30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 33</th>
<th>Revise the statutes for academic assistant staff (AAP) and contract research staff (BAP) in accordance with the new job profiles and career cycles.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Objectives:

- Specify expectations in terms of performance and competences in generic job profiles for all categories of academic staff:
  - AAP - Q1 2019
  - BAP - Q4 2020
- Develop a structured career cycle to establish transparency and coordination between the performance of individual employees and their assignment within the organisation as a whole
  - AAP - Q1 2019
  - BAP - Q4 2020
- Use the statute as the foundation for a professional career policy for academic assistant staff (AAP) and contract research staff (BAP)
  - AAP - Q1 2019
  - BAP - Q4 2020
Previous period 2013-2018
In order to develop a consistent career policy for all statutes at the University of Antwerp, we must develop job profiles for all academic staff. Initially, the profiles for contract research staff (BAP) and academic assistant staff (AAP) were scheduled to be written out in the medium to long term. Due to the integration of lecturers from the university colleges in 2013, however, it was decided to assign priority to the development of the job profiles for teaching staff (Dutch: onderwijzend personeel, OP). Investing in a career policy for Categories 1 and 3 of the teaching staff that is customised to the university is one of the provisions of the decree on the integration of academic university college programmes in the university. The generic job profiles for OP1 and OP3 were implemented in 2016.

Future period 2018-2021
The ‘AAP/OP2 career policy’ was launched in the fourth quarter of 2017. The project is phased and approached with the creation of job profiles in the first phase, followed by the expansion of a career cycle and the revision of the AAP statute. Plans call for completing the project by the end of 2018. The ‘BAP career policy’ will then be started. The BAP contains highly diverse and fewer legally regulated statutes. Given that the job profiles to be created might not correspond exactly to the existing profiles, at least one year has been planned for this initial phase of the broader BAP career project. Only after this phase has been completed will it be possible to map out this career cycle and revise its statute.

Once the AAP and BAP career cycles have been designed, the goal-setting interview system for these target groups will be examined. This will make it possible for all researchers to discuss expectations concerning performance and professional development within the diverse individual career paths.

Indicators/targets:
- Generic job profiles for all ranks of the AAP/OP2
- Result-area glossaries for AAP
- Generic job profiles for all ranks of the BAP
- Result-area glossaries for BAP
- New version of the AAP statute
- New version of the BAP statute

Job criteria, statute for senior academic staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 31</th>
<th>Draft an evaluation grid with functional criteria for senior academic staff.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Status: closed after 2015 self-assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives:
- Adopt a transparent and objective evaluation and promotion process for senior academic staff, including an evaluation grid

The generic job profile of senior academic staff is supplemented with an evaluation grid, as provided for in their statute. This grid is a set of criteria that are used as support for the assessment of members of senior academic staff by the competent committees for purposes of evaluation or promotion. By providing these criteria, we ensure the required transparency for tenure-track appointments. The university also strives to implement a general, objective HR policy for all ranks of senior academic staff.

The evaluation grid was approved by the Board of Governors on 20 November 2013.
The job criteria were applied for the first time during the 2014 promotion round for senior academic staff. After this, it was necessary to evaluate the criteria and their application so that they could be formally established at a later point.

The criteria were therefore reviewed and evaluated. Based on this discussion, it was established that there was no need to adapt the general evaluation grid. The only change involved aligning it further with the key result areas in the generic job profile for senior academic staff, in order to facilitate the discussion in the competent committees. The new language law requirements were also elaborated in greater detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 34</th>
<th>Conduct the initial evaluation and modification of the new statute for senior academic staff.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR  Status: closed after self-assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Statute as the foundation for a professional career policy for senior academic staff

Since the previous senior academic staff statute became effective on 28 June 2011, various comments, questions, suggestions and adaptations have been gathered and discussed with the faculties, the Council of Deans and the core duty departments. The requested changes were incorporated into the new proposal for a statute, which was approved by the Board of Governors on 27 January 2015. Within the framework of the revision of the promotion policy for the senior academic staff (ZAP), the ZAP statute and the accompanying explanatory memorandum was revised again, effective 1 January 2017.

**Career Tracks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 35</th>
<th>Ensure the proper assessment of career paths for selection, evaluation and promotion.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR  Status: ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Objectives:**
- Operate evaluation and promotion systems, with recognition of flexible careers and equal opportunities - ongoing

Ensure that the goal-setting interviews with senior academic staff have become a custom within the organisation. The university provides the required guidelines, templates for reports and a special module in PeopleSoft to manage and store these reports (linked to the e-curriculum). The cycle of goal-setting interviews makes it possible to discuss career developments within a two-way dialogue. At the same time, the necessary agreements are made with regard to the expected developments and performance and the agreements are reflected in future assessments within the framework of evaluation and promotion.

On the occasion of the 2015 promotion round, a decision was made to review the method for promoting senior academic staff. A study was conducted on the feasibility and desirability of (semi-)automatic promotions for senior academic staff once they have fulfilled the criteria for the next rank. This resulted in the revision of the promotion policy for ZAP. In addition to the competitive/in-budget contingent promotions to the ranks of professor and full professor, the policy provides seniority-based progression to the ranks of professor and full professor. The revised promotion policy was followed for the first time in 2017. An evaluation of the system has been planned for 2018,
before the start of the new round in 2019. The Central Evaluation Committee has already provided for reviewing the following policy choices with regard to the career of ZAP members during this evaluation: the application of the criteria to part-time ZAP members; whether research funding generated at other institutions can be counted towards achieving the basic criterion for fund-raising; whether the five-year reference period can be released and whether elements of the candidate’s career as a whole can be considered for purposes of promotion; and whether relevant, equivalent experience in the current rank outside the institution can be counted towards a candidate’s promotion. The evaluation and promotion protocols for the teaching staff (integration) were negotiated at the level of the Integration and Staff Negotiations Committee (IPOC). Simultaneous with the promotion round for senior academic staff, a process was developed for integrating members of the teaching staff into the regular senior academic staff framework.

Indicators/targets:
- New policy on promotion for senior academic staff was determined and operated for the first time in 2017
- Policy on promotion for teaching staff has been determined and operated for the first time in 2017

### Action 36
**Consolidate, facilitate and improve communication on flexibility in career steps.**

**Project leader:** HR  
**Status:** closed after 2015 self-assessment

**Objectives:**
- Provide for career flexibility in the assignment of employees (time distribution across the various core duties) - completed
- Provide for career flexibility throughout the employee’s career (e.g. time off for reflection and reorientation, social reasons) - completed
- Provide for career mobility (inter-university or inter-sectoral) - completed

The evaluation grid for the various ranks of senior academic staff was prepared based on a full-time appointment with a standard time distribution across the three core duties: education, research and services (40/40/20). For employees who do not have full-time appointments or who allocate their time differently, the FEC or CAP uses criteria that take into account a pro-rata based on the time that these members of the senior academic staff have available for each of these core duties. These agreements are also discussed during the goal-setting interview with the faculty’s management. Evaluation periods for senior academic staff are suspended in case of long-term absence of the staff member due to illness or pregnancy. In case of pregnancy, the faculty will be granted financial resources by the central substitution fund in order to replace the statutory member of senior academic staff during her maternity leave. In this way, the University of Antwerp aims to facilitate substitution for senior academic staff members, in addition to encouraging them to make use of their maternity leave. Career mobility is being encouraged even more than it has been in the past (see Action 15). The manner in which such flexibility in career steps is taken into account in the evaluation grid remains a topic of discussion within the framework of the promotion and evaluation policy (see Action 35).

### Action 37
**Investigate the possibility of a permanent middle-management rank for post-doctoral researchers**

**Project leader:** HR  
**Status:** open

**Objectives:**
- Permanent middle-management for researchers (ongoing)
- Creation of job descriptions for one or more ATP research profiles (2019 Q1)
Previous period 2013-2018
In order to meet the demand for (more) permanent statutory appointments for teaching assistants, the positions of educational supervisor and educational coordinator have been created within the administrative staff. These two positions are statutory appointments. At the same time, the university has adopted internal rules specifying that teaching-assistant appointments of 80% or higher can no longer be extended after five years.

With regard to the permanent middle-management rank for post-doctoral researchers, the lack of appropriate statutes and sufficient financial resources continues to be a problem. The faculties receive a limited stimulus through FAKIR (see Action 10) to appoint a more permanent middle rank for research. Most faculties, however, opt to use these FAKIR resources for additional educational support. In line with the educational supervisor and educational coordinator, the university will be exploring the possibility of an administrative and technical personnel (ATP) middle-management rank for research.

Future period 2018-2021
We will be searching for research profiles that could be created within the framework of administrative and technical personnel (ATP), anaawardus to the job profiles for educational supervisor and educational coordinator within the ATP. Although the profile of research manager is already in use within the university, this profile has not yet been embedded within the usual position structure. The creation of these research profiles allows faculties to invest in permanent research positions and highlights the need for such profiles.

Indicators/Targets:
- Creation of job descriptions for one or more ATP research profiles
- Investigate the possibilities for financing aimed at supporting and facilitating the continuity of research groups

3.4.3. Outplacement Policy

Career advice and guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 38</th>
<th>Elaborate a strategy for providing career advice and guidance for researchers in all stages of their careers.</th>
<th>Project leader: HR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Status: ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives:
- Elaborate a strategy for providing career advice and guidance for researchers at every stage of their careers, regardless of their contractual situation - 2018 Q3 and ongoing
- Provide a realistic idea of the career opportunities in academia - 2018 Q4 and ongoing
- Provide support and guidance for the personal and professional development of researchers - 2018 Q4 and ongoing
- Provide temporary researchers with guidance towards other careers - 2018 Q4 and ongoing

Previous period 2013-2018
At the university level, a think tank has been established to develop a strategy for career advice and guidance. The aim of this think tank is to provide more support and guidance to all target audiences (students, PhD students, researchers, administrative and technical personnel) for their personal and professional development. This will increase the motivation of staff members, in addition to providing them with a realistic overview of their academic (or other) career opportunities.
At the start of the PhD programme, the Antwerp Doctoral School already aims to broaden the professional profiles of our young researchers with a specific competence profile. In addition to raising awareness amongst young researchers concerning the competences that they will need for a professional, non-academic career, the competence profile serves as an important guideline that can help them to develop these competences. The OJO subsidies have allowed the Antwerp Doctoral School to offer a rich and varied training programme for transferable skills for these young researchers. The programme enables these researchers to take control of their careers and develop broad professional profiles.

Initiatives have been launched within the context of providing career advice and guidance to postdoctoral researchers. These initiatives include a mentoring programme and interview training (Selor), amongst other activities (see Action 23). The project management training (for participants from the internal and external labour market) is a good example of an initiative that capitalises on transferable skills.

Future period 2018-2021
Beginning in 2018, career development and career management for young (early-career) researchers will occupy a prominent place on the agenda of the HR Department. In 2016, the university conducted a job satisfaction study amongst early-career researchers (AAP, BAP) and members of the OP and ATP. One of the most prominent recommendations emerging from this study was to provide career counselling for young researchers, in order to support them in the choice and further expansion of their academic or post-academic careers. In order to develop a thorough career policy and career counselling for this target group, a Talent Centre will be established within the HR Department. More specifically, as an employer, UAntwerp aims to fulfil a social role, in addition to making a sustainable contribution to the careers of its staff members, independent of the amount of time that they spend at the institution. Proceeding from the vision that career counselling should be directed primarily towards maximising the development of talent, this will be done under the umbrella of a Talent Centre. Within the Talent Centre, training and actions will eventually be developed for the various staff ranks, and career counselling will be provided with a view to mobility towards the internal (academic) or external (non-academic) labour market. Although the Talent Centre will function as an autonomous entity within the organisation, it will also interact with other services, with the goal of sharing expertise in an efficient manner. Initial efforts will be directed towards the elaboration and implementation of a career policy for young researchers (PhDs and postdoctoral researchers). The activities of the Talent Centre will be developed according to three pillars: career coaching, training and mentoring. The Antwerp Doctoral School will make an active contribution to the development and expansion of the Talent Centre, with a focus on counselling for young researchers.

Indicators/targets:
- Development of career coaching for postdoctoral researchers
- Development of career coaching for PhD students
- Creation of a mentoring programme involving mentors outside academia
Increasing awareness of the labour market

| Action 39 | Raise awareness within the labour market regarding the value of research experience and the employability of candidates holding doctoral degrees. | Project leader: Antwerp Doctoral School & HR Department Status: ongoing |

Objectives:
- Raise awareness within the labour market – 2018 Q4 and ongoing

Previous period 2013-2018
The Antwerp Doctoral School has a unique Advisory Board, which bridges the gap between young researchers and the non-academic labour market. The ADS Advisory Board currently includes members from the business community, non-profit associations and the government, who are interested in employing PhD graduates.

In addition, the University of Antwerp organises an annual Talent Forum. This is a job and information fair for graduate students, alumni, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. The Talent Forum includes an information session on the topic of ‘What to do after your PhD?’, with speakers from the government and private sectors. These speakers inform PhD students and postdoctoral researchers about career opportunities in the non-academic labour market, in addition to offering practical suggestions for finding employment after completing a PhD. Each year, the Antwerp Doctoral School participates in the annual inter-university career event entitled ‘From PhD to job market’. During the above initiatives, stakeholders from companies and government institutions met with PhD students, thereby increasing their own awareness of the broad competences of PhD students and the benefits that individuals with PhD degrees bring to the non-academic labour market.

Future period 2018-2021
Under the umbrella of the Talent Centre, a mentoring programme for postdoctoral researchers will be started, using mentors from the non-academic working field. In addition to contributing to the career development of postdoctoral researchers, this will further persuade the non-academic mentors of the value of a doctoral degree on the non-academic job market. Additional attention will also be devoted to the organisation of networking events in which employers are brought into contact with PhD students and postdoctoral researchers.

PhD students develop competences (e.g. analytic skills, written and oral communication skills, project management) that could be of considerable value on the non-academic labour market. They are simply developed within a different context. This is not recognised as such by many non-academic employers (or even by many PhD students). As a result, some doctoral graduates face a long search for suitable jobs within this sector. In addition to perpetuating (Talent Forum UAntwerp, inter-university collaboration concerning the ‘From PhD to job market’ event) and creating a fresh start (ADS Advisory Board) for the aforementioned initiatives, the Antwerp Doctoral School would like to go even further, by involving the labour market even more in the doctoral programme. To this end, a list is being compiled of contacts from the non-academic labour market/employee and employer federations who can be approached to contribute to the ADS Advisory Board (2018-2019), events for PhD students and similar purposes. The intent is to intensify the dialogue between PhD students and the labour market, as well as to incorporate the results of this consultation (e.g. in the form of highly regarded skills, suggestions for seeking and applying for suitable positions, success stories) into the communications directed towards all PhD students (e.g. through the Talent Centre, workshops, Doctoral Days). In addition, in the short term, doctoral alumni will be surveyed periodically on 1) the obstacles and success factors that they have encountered in their search for employments and 2) how they evaluated the doctoral programmes that
they followed, in light of their work experience after completing their PhD’s, including any adjustments they may consider necessary (2018-2019). This will generate an overview (including concrete job descriptions) of the sectors which PhD students go on to work in and opportunities for bringing PhD students into active contact with doctoral alumni who are working outside the university (e.g. through references, Doctoral Days and the range of courses offered by the ADS) (2019).

Indicators/targets:

- Organisation of networking events
- Compilation of a list of contacts from the non-academic labour market/employee and employer federation that could contribute to the ADS Advisory Board
- Knowledge exchange concerning careers through interaction with the working field
- Start of the doctoral alumni survey

Exit procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action 40</th>
<th>Elaborate an exit procedure, including an alumni function for former personnel</th>
<th>Project leader: HR Status: ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Objectives:

- Design an exit survey for researchers – medium term

Previous period 2013-2018

No formal exit procedures are available for the time being. The ‘end of career policy’ has since been approved. This stipulates that employees can continue to work at the university under certain conditions once they have reached retirement age.

Future period 2018-2021

The prioritisation of this action point has been changed, and it is now planned for the medium term. The results of the job satisfaction study (Action Point 10) indicate that an exit survey could be beneficial for charting/discussing recurring topics objectively with particular entities. An electronic exit survey is being considered.

Indicators/targets:

- Substantive design of an exit survey
- Implementation of the exit survey within the existing procedures
Comment on the implementation of Open, Transparent, Merit-Based Recruitment principles:

The University of Antwerp earned the HR Excellence award (2013) before the stricter procedure for Open, Transparent, Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) took effect (2015). The initial action plan and the self-assessment report contained several action points that corresponded to the principles of OTM-R. UAntwerp expanded the action points concerning recruitment and selection to include all OTM-R aspects from the OTM-R checklist and the report of the Human Resources Management working group under the European Research area. The updated actions points are accompanied by a reference to the relevant point from the OTM-R checklist. The OTM-R checklist is included in Appendix 1.
4. Implementation

The 2018-2021 HR Action Plan contains action points that cover the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers. The action plan is having broad support within the University of Antwerp. This is evidenced by the various stakeholders (e.g. HR, Department of Research Affairs and Innovation, the Health and Safety Committee) whose efforts are directed towards a broad array of topics within the four key areas: resourcing, working conditions, talent development and career development.

Steering committee

To support this internal monitoring, a Steering Committee was established shortly after receiving the award, for the prioritisation and follow-up of the general action plan. The Steering Committee includes a range of members representing the Education Council, the Research Council as well as the departments of Research and Innovation, Education, Human Resources and the Antwerp Doctoral School. The steering committee was extended to include a representative of the Association of Assistant and Contract Research Staff (VABAP). One inherent feature of this composition is the involvement of researchers at all levels of a research career (R1 to R4). Since the acknowledgement, they have met three to four times a year. All of the actions and work in progress have thus been regularly reported, evaluated and adapted as needed by the top management of the university.

A distinction is made between the ‘high-level coordination and management’ of the scope of the HR Strategy action plan (programme management, the responsibilities of the steering committee) and the ‘day-to-day planning’ (project management, the responsibilities of the project leader).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>What?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR Strategy action plan (programme)</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Project leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monitoring progress
In order to keep close track of our progress, the action plan has been translated into a more detailed overview of projects (Appendix 2 Status overview). This overview describes the specified objectives and the proposed timing. It constitutes the guidelines for follow-up on the project. The steering committee’s agenda is determined according to the proposed timing. It is also determined by the necessity of discussing particular policy issues with various stakeholders.

Consultation of the research community
Wherever possible, the projects have been grafted onto the existing policy plans and initiatives of the departments involved, in order to decentralise the continuous monitoring process. Each action is designed from within the context of strong interaction with the research community through conversations, electronic surveys or embeddedness within existing policy bodies. The following is an overview of the most important policy bodies in which members of the ultimate target group also serve, broken down by stakeholder:

- **The HR Department** is in close contact with its target groups on a daily basis. In the elaboration of projects, HR always proceeds from a targeted approach involving extensive consultation with the target groups to which projects are directed. In addition, HR actions are submitted to the Staff Negotiation Committee, which includes representatives from all staff ranks. The HR Department built upon a strong relationship with the Association of Assistant and Contract Research Staff (VABAP).

- **The Department of Research Affairs and Innovation** reports to the Research Council, which is composed of members from the various scientific domains: sciences, biomedical sciences, social sciences and humanities.

- **The Antwerp Doctoral School** is directed through the Department of Research Affairs and Innovation, as well as by three ZAP coordinators from the various scientific domains. The Antwerp Doctoral School reports to the Board of the Antwerp Doctoral School and the Bureau of the Antwerp Doctoral School. The ADS Board includes representatives of the ZAP and the PhD students of each faculty. In addition to the three ZAP coordinators from the three major scientific domains, the ADS Bureau includes three PhD students from these three scientific domains. As voting members, the PhD students are thus actively involved in developing the policy of the ADS.

- **Health and Safety**: Campus working groups prepare the meetings of the Health and Safety Committee. These working groups also address more specific campus-focused topics of the well-being policy. The Health and Safety Committee is composed of employer and employee representatives, with members of the research community being involved as well.

Alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R
Given that the action plan has developed out of a comprehensive gap analysis and systemic consultation of the target group, the HR Strategy action plan is embedded within the organisation. Many other policy plans refer to this HR action plan, including the new rector team’s policy statement entitled ‘Outline of an innovative policy 2016-2020’. cf. In its policy, the University of Antwerp explicitly corresponds to the European Union’s HR Framework Strategy for Researchers. The HR Excellence in Research award that the university received in 2013 will be further supported in this manner.

Preparation for the review
The renewed action plan for 2018-2021, along with the associated priorities took shape as a result of the interaction between project leaders and the final target group, the steering committee and the
policy bodies. After an extensive round of consultation, the renewed action plan for 2018-2021 was submitted to the VABAP, the boards of the three core tasks (the Education Council, the Research Council and the Service Council) and Council of Deans. The initial and renewed version of the HR Strategy action plan are approved by the highest administrative body (the Executive Board).
### Terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ZAP)BOF</td>
<td>Research professor, supported by the resources of the Special Research Fund (BOF) and member of the Senior Academic Staff (ZAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Assistant Academic Staff (Dutch: Assisterend Academisch Personeel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADFIN</td>
<td>Finance Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADOC</td>
<td>Department of Research and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADP&amp;O</td>
<td>Human Resources Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADS</td>
<td>Antwerp Doctoral School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATP</td>
<td>Administrative and Technical Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUHA</td>
<td>Antwerp University Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurora</td>
<td>Aurora Universities Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>Contract Research Staff (Dutch: Bijzonder Academisch Personeel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard</td>
<td>Electronic learning environment of the University of Antwerp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOF</td>
<td>University Research Fund (Dutch: Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAO</td>
<td>Collective Labour Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Academic Personnel Committee, committee established by the faculty to perform the faculty-level assessment of applications for promotion from members of the Tenured Academic Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA IV</td>
<td>Collective Labour Agreement IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ContractSoft</td>
<td>An integrated contract management system to be used by the University of Antwerp's central administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV</td>
<td>Curriculum vitae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.g.</td>
<td>For example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAKIR</td>
<td>The FAKIR plan is a tool that has been developed as a follow-up to the stress policy for Senior Academic Staff and makes additional HR resources available to the faculties (Dutch: facultaire investeringsruimte)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEC</td>
<td>Faculty Evaluation Committee, committee to be assembled by the faculty and charged with the evaluation of members of the Tenured Academic Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDPR</td>
<td>General Data Protection Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPOC</td>
<td>Integration and Staff Negotiations Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOC</td>
<td>Legal Follow-up Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job matrix</td>
<td>A policy document that provides an overview of the standard range of recruitment channels used within the University of Antwerp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondo</td>
<td>Network for international students and staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OJO</td>
<td>Budget provided by the Flemish Government for the Flemish universities for the support of Young Researchers (Dutch: Omkadering Jonge Onderzoekers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Teaching staff (Dutch: Onderwijzend Personeel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OP2</td>
<td>Teaching staff, group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORCID</td>
<td>ORCID helps all who participate in research, scholarship and innovation to be uniquely identified and connected to their contributions and affiliations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS</td>
<td>Open Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoplesoft</td>
<td>University of Antwerp's staff administration system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pintra</td>
<td>University of Antwerp's intranet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROC</td>
<td>Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDM</td>
<td>Research data management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIE</td>
<td>Risk inventory and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent Centre</td>
<td>Centre devoted to career counselling (for young researchers) within the University of Antwerp's Human Resources Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent Forum</td>
<td>Annual job fair for masters, phd students and alumni of the University of Antwerp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VABAP</td>
<td>Association of Assistant and Contract Research Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YERUN</td>
<td>Young European Research Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAP</td>
<td>Senior Academic Staff (Dutch: Zelfstandig Academisch Personeel)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>