

# HRS4R CERTIFICATION

**The recruitment policy, based on the guiding principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, is a major challenge for the Université Clermont Auvergne. By drawing on the proven skills of its researchers, it guarantees the excellence of its research and the attractiveness of the institution.**

**This strategy is coupled with a determination to provide the most efficient working environment for researchers, lecturers and all staff.**

**In 2017, Université Clermont Auvergne embarked on the HRS4R (Human Resources Strategy for Researchers) initiative, which culminated in the submission of the application in 2018 and the award of the label in March 2019.**

A quality approach at the heart of our human resources strategy

As part of the accreditation process, the Université Clermont Auvergne adopted a plan of 20 actions, divided into four themes, aimed at improving recruitment practices and the working environment for teacher-researchers and researchers.

Five new actions were then added to the initial action plan.

## UCA HRS4R action plan

(mettre doc « HRS4R certification file »)

HRS4R, a European label to improve working conditions for teacher-researchers and researchers



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Awarded by the European Commission, the 'HR Excellence in Research' label is based on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers published in 2005.

The label brings together 40 principles based on four main themes :

- Professional aspects and ethics
- Recruitment
- Working conditions
- Training and development

The objective is to improve the quality of HR practices, as well as the working conditions of lecturers and researchers, while at the same time enhancing the attractiveness of these professions.

It is an important asset in the context of calls for European projects.

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

(mettre doc «The European Charter for Researchers »)

## An interim review after five years of implementing the HRS4R action plan

The internal evaluation should have been carried out at the end of the first two years of the label, in 2021.

However, a new institutional structure has been put in place from 1 January 2021. The University of Clermont Auvergne has become an experimental public establishment (EPE), with expanded powers and perimeters, made up of 6 institutes, including the Clermont Auvergne INP (national polytechnic institute). Work has therefore begun on stabilising HR practices and systems that are harmonised across the EPE.

For this reason, the European Commission has granted a postponement of the internal evaluation until 2024 in order to include an updated action plan for the whole EPE, thus integrating Clermont Auvergne INP, and specifying the process implemented to integrate this component establishment into the institution's HRS4R strategy.

This interim report provides an opportunity to review the progress of the action plan. A large part of it has already been implemented. Some actions have been completed, others will be continued and extended, while new measures will soon be deployed (revised action plan 2024-2026) thanks to the impetus given by the University's governance.

## Progress of the action plan : main measures implemented

### Professional aspects and ethics :

- Expansion of the remit of the commission, which will become the Ethics and Professional Conduct Council in 2021: implementation of policy in terms of research ethics, scientific integrity and professional conduct.
- Mandatory training in scientific integrity (including open science) for doctoral students and HDR candidates.
- Raising awareness of the value of research: from 2021, the college of doctoral schools has proposed a module on the value of research. A dedicated vademecum was produced in 2021 and updated in 2024, presenting in particular the research transfer ecosystem, including the missions of the UCA subsidiary, Clermont Auvergne Innovation (CAI).

### Recruitment :

- Preparation of various HR documents relating to recruitment and presentation of the institution, which will also be available in English in June 2024.

In particular, they cover the missions, rights and duties of lecturer-researchers, the promotion of lecturer-researchers, the procedures and methods for recruiting teaching staff, and the constitution and operation of selection committees.

- A DRIF/DRH working group has been set up to simplify and harmonise recruitment procedures for international researchers and to ensure that they are disseminated.

### Working conditions :

- Parity and professional equality: creation in 2017 of the equality committee responsible for developing actions to raise community awareness; structuring and legitimising actions through the adoption of the professional equality plan (2021-2023).
- Prevention, health and safety: formalisation of the policy for preventing occupational risks and psychosocial risks (RPS) in 2018 and strengthening of the RPS monitoring unit in 2023; creation of a sexist and sexual violence (VSS)-discrimination helpline in 2021.
- Quality of life and working conditions: implementation and roll-out of a QWL policy via working groups in 2023 and 2024 (work-life balance, recognition at work and meaning of work, QWL of managers); actions in favour of staff (voice workshops, prevention of musculoskeletal disorders, well-being activities) ; carrying out a biennial survey on 'working conditions and health at work' in 2023 and a barometer of the social climate at the UCA in 2024; harmonising the pay policy for all staff across the UCA and its internal schools in 2023; new charter for contract staff, also available in English, in 2023.
- Disability policy: signing of a multi-year UCA-FIPHPF agreement (2020-2023, renewed for the period 2024-2027) to expand the deployment of a policy in favour of disabled staff; adoption of a new

disability master plan 2024-2027; dedicated staff and budget (period 2023-2025) for disability awareness.

- Specific support, particularly for international staff: access to an English-language version of the employment contract since 2024; personalised monitoring of researchers by the EURAXESS centre in conjunction with the local authorities; integration activities and French lessons for researchers, extended to their families since 2022; mentoring of foreign researchers to supervise or co-supervise theses since 2020; opening up of international recruitment through the tenure-track system.

## Training and development :

- Introduction of an induction day for all staff (permanent and contract teaching-researchers/BIATSS). This includes an introduction to human resources, risk prevention and digital risks.

- Since 2023, a training programme has been in place for new teacher-researchers, focusing in particular on careers, training and mentoring.

In addition, since 2020, new lecturers have been supported by a mentor.

- Since 2020, HDR candidates have been supported by a mentor and have attended compulsory training on supervising doctoral students, as part of the module on research ethics, scientific integrity (including open science and the institution's associated commitments) and professional conduct.

- For doctoral students, a mentor will be in place from the start of the 2020 academic year, and the individual training pathway will be finalised in the first quarter of 2021, enabling us to better identify the expectations of the public.

- With regard to international researchers, the Euraxess centre has been offering training in English for young researchers since 2023, and jointly finances this with the HR Department.

- **HRS4R interim report** ((mettre doc « Declaration of commitment INP European Charter for Researchers » + doc « HRS4R interim review (2019-2024) » + doc « new actions 2019-2024 added to the initial plan » + doc « revised action plan 2024-2026 »))

## The chosen approach

The UCA set up a steering committee as soon as the institution committed to the HRS4R approach in 2017.

Chaired by a Vice-President of the UCA, the steering committee is made up of representatives of the institution's governance, representatives of the operational departments and representatives of the research community.

The steering committee is called upon to validate the strategic axes, essentially at key moments in the labeling process: submission of the application, internal assessment and revised plan, label renewal phases.

During the intermediate phases, the committee meets at least twice a year to check the progress of the action plan and the timetable, or to make any adjustments or strategic shifts. Each action is managed and monitored by a referent person or department.

## Key dates

- July 2017: letter of commitment from the Université Clermont Auvergne to the HRS4R approach
- November 2018: submission of the label application
- March 2019: award of the HRS4R label
- March 2019 - March 2021: implementation of the action plan
- March 2021: postponement of the interim internal evaluation
- June 2024: interim internal assessment
- June 2024: Implementation of revised action plan (2024-2026)
- 2026: External evaluation (visit by experts from the European Commission)