

Revised Action Plan 2024-2028

HRS4R | Human Resources Strategy for Researcher

Human Resources | September 2026

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Foreword by Human Resources

With great pride, the Human Resources Unit of UAS Technikum Wien continues the university's decade-long commitment to fostering a strong, people-centered research culture. Assuming responsibility for the HRS4R process marks not only a transition in governance, but a renewed promise: to strengthen an environment where researchers can grow, connect, and excel.

As the HR Unit proudly takes on this role, we reaffirm what defines Technikum Wien — a research culture driven by people, purpose, and progress.

Grounded in collaboration, transparency, and integrity, we are dedicated to advancing Technikum Wien's mission: empowering researchers and sustaining excellence in applied science and innovation.

Together, we continue to shape a future in which research thrives, people are valued, and Technikum Wien remains a driving force of progress and inspiration.

Introduction

In 2012, the University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien (UASTW) committed to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, underscoring its dedication to a transparent, supportive and attractive research environment.

Building on this commitment, UASTW launched its Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) in 2014, accompanied by a two-year Action Plan. The European Commission awarded UASTW the "HR Excellence in Research" label in 2015 – the first and only Austrian University of Applied Sciences to receive it at that time.

Development and Review Phases

Following the initial implementation (2015–2017), a first review and updated Action Plan for 2017–2020 were completed.

Due to significant organisational restructuring (transition to a matrix organisation and curriculum standardisation), activities slowed temporarily between 2018–2019.

A renewed internal review and survey in 2020 led to a revised Action Plan for 2021–2023, integrating feedback from all research career stages (R1–R4) and administrative units.

The renewal assessment was successfully completed in 2022. Since May 2025, the HR Unit has assumed overall responsibility for the HRS4R process, ensuring systematic monitoring via a shared project management tool.

R&D and Institutional Context

Founded in 1994, UASTW became Vienna's first University of Applied Sciences in 2000. Around 4,700 students study in over 30 Bachelor's and Master's programs, supported by four interdisciplinary departments.

R&D at UASTW is application-driven, bridging academia, industry, and society. UASTW has consistently ranked among the leading Austrian UAS in R&D turnover (data up to 2017/18).

Strategic research focuses include:

- Embedded & Cyber-Physical Systems
- Renewable Energy Systems
- Data-Driven, Smart & Secure Systems
- Bioengineering & Molecular Life Science Technologies
- Automation & Robotics

Academic staff typically engage in both teaching and research. Dissertation collaborations with partner universities support the qualification of researchers, aiming to increase the proportion of PhD-level staff.

UASTW is an active member of the European Association for the Applied Sciences in Higher Education (EURASHE), Dual Career Service Network, and Euraxess Austria.

HRS4R Implementation, Governance and Outlook

Since its inception in 2013, the HRS4R process at UAS Technikum Wien has been characterised by broad internal participation and transparent governance.

Over the years, all actions completed under previous HRS4R cycles have been successfully integrated into regular institutional operations. Their effectiveness is periodically evaluated and adjusted as part of ongoing HR and quality management processes. This approach ensures continuity, sustainability, and a living culture of improvement across all HRS4R dimensions.

After the organisational restructuring in 2020, the Human Resources Unit assumed overall responsibility for HRS4R coordination in May 2025, embedding the process firmly within the university's strategic HR and quality management systems.

The HRS4R Working Group, re-established in 2020, includes representatives from all researcher career stages (R1–R4), is gender-balanced, and covers all departments and administrative units.

The Management Team (Managing Director, Rector, Heads of Faculties) acts as a steering committee in close coordination with the research advisory board and the HR Unit when strategic decisions are required, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities.

All actions and progress indicators are maintained in a shared project management tool, guaranteeing traceability, consistent updates, and visibility for all members of the working group.

The group meets regularly to review progress, propose new actions, and monitor implementation in line with the European Charter and Code.

In 2025, the OTM-R Policy – originally adopted in 2020 – was revised to further clarify procedures for recruiting and developing R&D staff.

The OTM-R process is understood as a continuous improvement mechanism, closely linked to the UASTW career path for researchers.

Through this structure, HRS4R has become an integral part of UASTW's strategic HR development and organisational governance, ensuring sustainability and institutional commitment.

Outlook 2024–2028

The next HRS4R cycle will continue to:

- Strengthen researcher career development pathways
- Enhance transparent and inclusive recruitment
- Foster cross-disciplinary and international collaboration
- Expand measures for research quality and integrity
- Further integrate HRS4R principles into institutional strategy and HR processes

Revised Action Plan 2024 – 2028 (updated September 2026)

For each theme cluster, the situation at the UASTW in September 2026 will first be presented and the strategic considerations and guidelines through 2028 discussed. Based on this, the action plan for 2024–2028 is presented.

Ethical and professional aspect

Situation at UASTW (September 2026)

UAS Technikum Wien maintains a strong foundation in research integrity, data protection, and open science. The university is a member of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity and the Alliance for Responsible Science. Institutional guidelines and checklists for ethics and data protection were updated in 2023 and 2024; an Ombuds Office for Students and Researchers was formally established via the university statute in 2023.

Open access and open innovation are firmly anchored, supported by the institutional repository ePub (2025) and continuous engagement in the Open Science Network Austria.

Strategic considerations and guidelines 2026–2028

UAS Technikum Wien will continue to strengthen a research culture based on integrity, responsibility, transparency and responsible innovation. The existing framework of research integrity, ethics, data protection and open science provides a solid foundation. In the coming years, the focus will therefore shift from the establishment of basic structures towards their further integration into everyday research practice and towards ensuring that researchers have clear guidance and accessible support when dealing with ethical and responsible research questions.

Particular attention will be given to the specific challenges arising from technology-oriented and application-driven research. This includes strengthening the institutional approach to research freedom and responsibility, addressing dual-use considerations and further developing guidance on open data and responsible research practices. The university will also continue to increase awareness of existing structures, such as the Ombuds Office and relevant ethics and research integrity guidance.

The overall objective is to ensure that ethical and professional standards are not only documented in institutional policies, but are actively embedded in research processes, training and communication. Where appropriate, the university will therefore combine policy development with targeted awareness-raising and researcher support.

Actions

The following actions build on the existing framework and focus on further strengthening research integrity, research freedom and responsible research practices:

- Action 1 further develops binding principles for R&D employees and research integrity
- Action 13 addresses research freedom and dual-use considerations
- Action 39 focuses on the development of an institutional IPR strategy

Recruitment and selection

Situation at UASTW (September 2026)

Recruitment processes have been fully centralized and digitalized through the Softgarden platform since 2024.

Uniform recruiting standards define responsibilities, timelines, and communication channels between HR and faculties. The revised OTM-R Policy (Sept. 2025) integrates these standards and ensures compliance with the European Charter & Code principles of open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment.

The HR Unit now leads onboarding, evaluation, and process control, with career path development linked to the implementation of the EU Pay Transparency Directive.

Strategic considerations and guidelines 2026–2028

UAS Technikum Wien aims to further consolidate recruitment as a transparent, consistent and evidence-based HR process for researchers. The centralisation and digitalisation of recruitment have established a common organisational framework and provide the basis for further professionalising recruitment across faculties. The next development step is to make the quality of recruitment processes more systematically measurable and to use the resulting evidence for continuous improvement.

A particular focus will be placed on the further implementation and monitoring of the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles. Recruitment standards, responsibilities and processes will be supported by a defined set of quantitative and qualitative indicators, allowing the university to identify strengths, potential bottlenecks and areas for improvement across faculties. The results of this monitoring will be reviewed regularly and used to further develop recruitment practices.

At the same time, recruitment will be increasingly connected with transparent career development. The development of a transparent job architecture and career path, together with corresponding appraisal and CV assessment guidelines, will contribute to greater consistency and transparency in decisions concerning recruitment, career development and recognition of relevant experience and qualifications. Particular attention will be paid to equal treatment, gender balance and non-discrimination throughout these processes.

Actions

The following actions focus on further strengthening transparent recruitment and career-related assessment:

- Action 15 develops transparent criteria and structures for career progression
- Action 17 establishes systematic monitoring of OTM-R quality
- Action 34 anchors international experience as a requirement for full professorship
- Action 38 develops guidelines for the assessment of CVs, with particular attention to gender balance, recognition of qualifications and non-discrimination

Working conditions

Situation at UASTW (September 2026)

Working conditions at UASTW have improved through new job structures, harmonized starting salaries, and the introduction of the “Junior Lecturer/Researcher Advanced” role.

The HR Unit now integrates Gender & Diversity and centralized continuing education management institutionally.

An ESG-Manager was established because the FHTW has committed to voluntarily ESG-reporting. FHTW regained certification as a family-friendly university and is the only Austrian HEI holding the national Ecolabel for educational institutions (as by April 2025).

Remaining challenges include contract harmonization for existing staff, improved communication on available support programs, and gender balance among academic personnel.

Strategic considerations and guidelines 2026–2028

UAS Technikum Wien aims to provide working conditions that enable researchers to develop professionally while combining teaching, research and other responsibilities in a sustainable way. The further development of job structures and career pathways is complemented by measures addressing the practical conditions under which research can be pursued, including access to time and resources, mobility, flexible working arrangements and family-related needs.

The university will continue to strengthen transparent and predictable frameworks for research-related activities. This includes the further development of career and salary structures, the availability of appropriate research time and resources, and clear models for sabbaticals and parental leave. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that these opportunities are accessible and transparent across researcher groups and that existing support mechanisms are effectively communicated.

Working conditions are also understood as an important element of researcher development and retention. Measures concerning postdoctoral support, mobility, international experience and career development will therefore be considered together rather than as isolated instruments. The aim is to create a coherent environment in which researchers can plan their professional development, maintain a sustainable work-life balance and access appropriate institutional support at different stages of their careers.

Actions

The following actions focus on creating transparent and supportive conditions for researchers:

- Action 9 addresses sabbatical and parental leave models
- Action 28 provides for the appropriate allocation and monitoring of resources for research activities
- Action 29 supports researcher mobility through improved planning and information

Training and development

Situation at UASTW (September 2026)

Training and career development for researchers are centrally coordinated by HR.

Programs for management and research skills were implemented in 2024, expanded into Master Classes in 2025 and will be continued in the future. Institutional cooperation agreements for doctoral studies exist with TU Wien and UTAD (Portugal). Next steps focus on developing postdoctoral support, mentoring programs, and expanding structured continuing education offerings.

Strategic considerations and guidelines 2026–2028

UAS Technikum Wien considers researcher development as a continuous process extending across the different stages of an academic and research career. Building on the centrally coordinated continuing education programme and the existing cooperation with partner universities, the university will further develop structured opportunities for professional, methodological and career-related development.

A particular priority for the coming years is to establish clearer pathways for researchers beyond initial training opportunities. This includes strengthening support for doctoral and postdoctoral development, connecting career development with the institutional job architecture, and establishing appropriate structures for mentoring and career advice. Career support should address the different needs of researchers at different career stages and, where appropriate, support both academic and alternative career perspectives.

The university will also continue to develop targeted training formats for researchers and managers. Existing programmes, including research skills training and Master Classes, will be further embedded into a coherent continuing professional development framework. Information about available opportunities will be communicated more systematically through the central researcher information platform and other internal communication channels.

The overall objective is to create a transparent and accessible development environment in which researchers can identify relevant development opportunities, understand possible career pathways and receive appropriate support for their next career steps.

Actions

The following actions strengthen researcher development across different career stages:

- Action 8 develops institutional support for dissertations
- Action 25 strengthens institutional cooperation for doctoral studies
- Action 30 addresses support for postdoctoral theses
- Action 32 connects staff appraisal with research career paths
- Action 33 addresses career counselling
- Action 36 promotes Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
- Action 37 improves communication and access to information, support services and career advice for researchers

Extended and Ongoing Actions

*(as of September 2026)

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
1	Elaboration of binding principles for R&D employees	1, 2, 3, 7	COMPLETED	Head of Research	Milestone I achieved by July 2022: New guideline on fake journals and fake conferences Milestone II achieved by December 2023: FHTW's research integrity guideline and the checklist on ethics and data protection have been updated.	Considering indicator/target "UAS TW is represented in the common ethics committee for technical research in Vienna": The initiative to establish a common ethics committee for technical research among higher education institutions in Vienna could not be realised. The original vision of creating a joint platform for reflection and exchange on research ethics and research integrity, where current issues could be discussed across institutions, did not gain sufficient support among the intended partners. As a result, the initiative will not be pursued further in its original form. Instead, UAS Technikum Wien will continue to strengthen its own institutional structures and activities related to research ethics and research integrity.
8	Internal support for dissertations	28	EXTENDED	Operator (HR)	Milestone I achieved by July 2026: Review and evaluation of existing schemes for supporting dissertations Milestone II to be achieved by February 2027: A unified approach for support of dissertations was approved by managing directors, rectorship and heads of faculties Milestone III to be achieved by September 2027:	Following the appointment of a new Managing Director for Finance and Administration in December 2025, strategic priorities and objectives were reviewed and aligned with the new management. This process required additional coordination and therefore led to an adjustment of the implementation timeline for this action. Key elements of the new policy: transparent criteria for awarding support, concrete progress planning and measurement,

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
					A new approach is implemented, including transparent criteria, progress planning, supervision, time resources and a financial framework.	structured supervision by appropriate senior staff, time resources, a financial framework, and special support measures for women Additional GAP Principles: 15. Transparency (Code), 27. Gender balance, 10. Non-discrimination, 40. Supervision
9	Definition of sabbatical and parental leave models	28, 29	IN PROGRESS	Head of HR	Milestone I to be achieved by August 2027: A dedicated parental leave section is established in the HR-Newsletter to regularly provide information on existing options, relevant regulations, support services and role models. Milestone II to be achieved by December 2027: Regulation of sabbaticals is implemented	Following the appointment of a new Managing Director for Finance and Administration in December 2025, strategic priorities and objectives were reviewed and aligned with the new management. This process required additional coordination and therefore led to an adjustment of the implementation timeline for this action. The regulation of sabbaticals is part of the catalog of measures for certification as a family-friendly university. Existing statutory and institutional provisions for parental leave provide a comprehensive framework. The focus at UAS Technikum Wien is therefore on ensuring that researchers are well informed about available options and on strengthening visibility of role models. Additional GAP Principles: 15. Transparency (Code), 27. Gender balance, 10. Non-discrimination
13	Definition and implementation of policy on research freedom and dual use	1–4, 7	IN PROGRESS (re-evaluation)	Head of Research	Milestone I to be achieved by December 2027: Preliminary draft of a directive has been prepared Milestone II to be achieved by May 2028:	Preliminary draft will take into account the upcoming Austrian federal government's Security Export Act, which is currently being drafted, as well as the dual use policy for the next Horizon Europe programme (2028 - 2034)

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
					Final version approved by managing directors Milestone III to be achieved by September 2028: Policy on research freedom and dual use implemented	
15	Definition of criteria for development along the career path	11	EXTENDED	Head of Research	Milestone I achieved by March 2026: First draft of a transparent job architecture for the FHTW established and presented to managing directors Milestone II to be achieved by November 2026: Feedback of all stakeholders (heads of faculties, rectorship and workers council) implemented Milestone III to be achieved by August 2027: Final concept, specific guidelines and implementation processes have been defined and communicated throughout the organisation	Following the appointment of a new Managing Director for Finance and Administration in December 2025, strategic priorities and objectives were reviewed and aligned with the new management. This process required additional coordination and therefore led to an adjustment of the implementation timeline for this action. The existing career path for academic staff was evaluated in the 2025/2026 academic year and further developed as part of another project to introduce a salary system in line with the EU Pay Transparency Directive. The project is being supported by renowned Austrian experts and is firmly anchored in all areas of strategic and operational HR work and finalized by August 2027. Additional GAP Principles: 15. Transparency (Code), 27. Gender balance, 10. Non-discrimination, 28. Career development, 38. Continuing professional development, 24. Working conditions, 12. Recruitment (Code), 5. Contractual and legal obligations, 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)
17	Monitoring of quality OTM-R	12–16	EXTENDED	Head of Quality	Milestone I achieved by April 2025: Uniform recruiting standards implemented with responsibilities, timelines, and	The implementation of the new recruiting tool and the associated centralisation of the recruitment process required more time than initially anticipated. As a result, the

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
					communication channels between HR and faculties. Milestone II achieved by September 2025: Leadership has been trained on the recruiting process and the proper use of the recruiting tool. Job postings, applications, and communication are handled exclusively through the recruiting tool. Milestone III to be achieved by December 2026: OTM-R Set with at least four quantitative and qualitative KPIs defined and documented Milestone IV to be achieved by January 2027: Annual review of OTM-R report for each faculty for the past academic year	completion of this action has been extended. The centralised process now provides a solid basis for establishing a comprehensive OTM-R quality monitoring system with reliable and consistent data, which will be further developed through the definition of meaningful quantitative and qualitative indicators.
25	Development of institutional dissertation cooperation in at least two research areas	38	COMPLETED	Rectorate & Head of Research Organisation	Milestone achieved before September 2025: Two institutional cooperations with Technical University of Vienna and one institutional cooperation with Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro have been established.	
28	Review current solutions and new possibilities to provide resources (e.g. work hours) for research related activities	22, 23	COMPLETED	Head of Research Organization and Head of HR	Milestone I achieved by September 2022: Time tracking tool includes the option to record research activities as a separate activity. Milestone II achieved by March 2025: Research activities institutionalized in personnel resource planning and scheduled by managers. Milestone III achieved by March 2026: Standard reporting is implemented	

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
29	Supporting mobility for researchers	18, 24	COMPLETED	HR & International Office	Milestone I achieved before September 2024: The topic of internationalization has been included in the guidelines for employee appraisals to enable early planning of mobility. Milestone II achieved before September 2025: A position for business trip administration has been created in the International Office to provide support in planning trips. Milestone III achieved by January 2026: The existing Moodle course containing all information on business trips was incorporated into an annual evaluation cycle, is easily accessible and actively communicated in the onboarding-process.	
30	Review framework conditions and start a pilot project for support of postdoctoral theses	21, 38	IN PROGRESS	HR & Management	Milestone I to be achieved December 2026: Initial draft of a concept agreed upon with the managing directors and head of faculties Milestone II to be achieved by September 2027: Pilot for support of postdoctoral theses has started	Following the appointment of a new Managing Director for Finance and Administration in December 2025, strategic priorities and objectives were reviewed and aligned with the new management. This process required additional coordination and therefore led to an adjustment of the implementation timeline for this action.
32	Adaptation of the guidelines for staff appraisal interviews with regard to research career paths	28	EXTENDED	HR & Research Organisation	Milestone I to be achieved by August 2027: The guidelines for employee appraisals are adapted accordingly based on the defined criteria for development along the career path (see also action 15) Milestone II to be achieved by December 2027:	The timeline was extended because the existing career path was evaluated in 2025/2026 and is being further developed as part of the project to introduce a salary system in line with the EU Pay Transparency Directive (see also action 15).

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
					Managers have received training through HR on how to conduct employee reviews, including the application of the new criteria	
33	Analyse feasibility of career counselling for researchers	30	COMPLETED	Head of Research	Milestone achieved by June 2026: Analysis completed, the establishment of appropriate positions is considered necessary	The analysis concluded that a dedicated point of contact for career advice is needed; implementation is addressed under Action 37.
34	Anchor international experience as a requirement for a full professorship in UAS TW's Statutes	21, 28, 29	COMPLETED	Head of Quality Assurance	Milestone I achieved before September 2025: International experience as a requirement for a full professorship in UAS TW's Statutes implemented	
36	Promoting Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions	28, 29, 38	COMPLETED	Head of Research Organisation	Milestone achieved before September 2025: Marie Curie Offerings are advertised centrally by the HR department as part of the recruitment process, and the application process is supported. The positions are taken into account accordingly in personnel budget planning.	
37	New set up of dedicated communication/awareness actions for researchers	15. Transparency, 28. Career development, 23. Research environment, 30. Access to career advice,	NEW	HR	Milestone I achieved March 2026: Implementation of a monthly HR-Newsletter for improved internal communication Milestone II achieved August 2026: Centralized consolidation of existing policies and information for researchers at UAS TW and implementation of an internal knowledge management platform (Moodle) for researchers, providing access to relevant guidelines, information, processes, procedures, support services and designated contacts. Milestone III to be achieved by December 2026: Information about specific Moodle platform communicated in each	As of August 2026 initial set up and implementation of the Moodle platform is finalized Content: Information provided on topics of designated contacts, processes and procedures for R&D, guidelines on fake journals and fake conferences and research integrity, checklist on ethics and data protection, publications, IPR, PR, Gender & Diversity, specific information about different founding agencies

Action No.	Title	GAP Principle(s)	Current status	Responsible Unit	Indicators / Target(s)	Remarks
					welcome day of the standardised onboarding process • Implementation of a R&D-specific section in the HR-Newsletter • Information about specific internal training programs for researchers provided in Moodle-Platform Milestone IV to be achieved by August 2027: A designated point of contact for career advice is established and communicated to researchers (see also action 33).	
38	Development and implementation of HR Guidelines for CV Assessment	20. Seniority (Code), 27. Gender Balance, 19. Recognition of qualifications, 10. Non discrimination	NEW	HR	Milestone I to be achieved by December 2026: Initial framework focusing on eligible work experience for evaluating resumes finalized and leadership trained accordingly Milestone II to be achieved by August 2027: Based on the career development criteria defined under Action 15, a comprehensive guideline for the assessment of CVs has been developed and implemented.	See also: action 15
39	Development of IPR Strategy	31 IPR	NEW	General Management	Milestone I to be achieved by September 2028: First draft of IPR strategy developed	