HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)
Action Plan

Development of research careers and the position of researchers

Updated March 2014
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Tampere University of Technology
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TUT – At the Leading Edge

Tampere University of Technology (TUT) pursues research in the fields of engineering and architecture and provides education based on this research.

The University combines a strong tradition of scientific and technological research with an established track record of industrial research collaboration. A particular strength of the University is the active interaction between fundamental and applied research.

The research fields represented at the University play a key role in addressing global challenges, such as climate change and demographic ageing. The leading-edge fields of research at TUT are signal processing, optics and photonics, intelligent machines, biomodelling and the built environment.

TUT offers students a broad range of multidisciplinary educational opportunities. The University has consistently maintained excellent graduate employment rates. The overwhelming majority of graduates succeed in finding employment that corresponds to their qualifications soon after leaving the University.

Key data
- Established in 1965
- Started operating in the form of a foundation in 2010
- 10,400 students, of which 1,600 are postgraduates
- Degrees: Master of Science in Technology or Architecture, Doctor of Technology or Philosophy
- 2,000 employees, of which academic staff make up over 80%; almost 350 international employees
- Close to 1,400 exchange and visiting students
Strategy 2013-2016

TUT’s strategy was updated in 2012. The new strategy is entitled “Technology for the benefit of people and the environment” and extends to the year 2016.

Mission
TUT is at the leading edge of technology development and a sought-after collaboration partner among the scientific and business communities. The University produces competent graduates who enter careers in the different sectors of society.

Vision
TUT is Finland’s premier and most international technology-oriented community of students and scholars that is dedicated to promoting the well-being of humanity and sustainable development.

Values: courage, responsibility and community spirit
TUT courageously explores new avenues of research and education in the fields of engineering. The University acknowledges its responsibility for the future by maintaining high ethical standards in all its endeavours for the benefit of the environment, Finnish society and humanity as a whole. The University’s friendly and inclusive community spirit is conducive to academic and professional success.
Administration and decision-making

The Board of the TUT Foundation is the highest decision-making body at the University. It makes decisions that concern the University’s strategy, finances and other far-reaching plans.

The Academic Board is a multi-member body that represents the entire university community as stipulated in the Universities Act. The Academic Board makes decisions concerning academic matters, i.e. research and education, and appoints members to the Board of the TUT Foundation after consulting the founders of the foundation.

Three subordinate bodies, the Science Council, the Education Council and the Doctoral Education Council, operate under and prepare matters that come before the Academic Board.

The Faculty Councils are multi-member bodies established for each faculty.

Researchers are included in decision-making processes through their representation on the decision-making bodies.

TUT – a Foundation University
The foundation model promotes the development of education and research at TUT and gives the University good prerequisites to succeed amid growing international competition. It provides a greater degree of autonomy that ensures a competitive edge when competing for good researchers, inspiring teachers and talented students. The proceeds of the 137 million euro foundation capital enable further investment in new openings in research and education and in the development of quality and operations management.
The HRS4R process

TUT has now completed the first two steps of the HRS4R process. The University’s commitment and the actions taken are described on the following pages. Planned actions on the follow-up steps (3,4 and 5) are presented at the end of this action plan.

Step 1 – Internal analysis

Step 2 – Compilation and publication of the HR Strategy for Researchers

Step 3 – Acknowledgement by the European Commission

Step 4 – Implementing the HR Strategy for Researchers and conducting a self-assessment

Step 5 – External evaluation at least every four years

Identification of gaps and suggestions for improvements through a participative process led by the project working group.

The University’s Declaration of Commitment to the HRS4R and continuous commitment to make research careers more attractive and enhance the quality of research and innovation.
The launch of the HRS4R process at TUT

Declaration of Commitment and joining the 4th Cohort

- In September 2012, TUT issued its Declaration of Commitment to the Principles of the European Commission's European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In the Letter of Endorsement, signed by President Markku Kivikoski, an innovative and dynamic approach to technology, development and collaboration and a close-knit community spirit among faculty and students are listed as TUT’s distinguishing features. The document states that TUT’s policies and strategic goals are fully in line with the European Commission’s policy that aims to make research careers more attractive and enhance the quality of research and innovation.

- In October 2012, TUT was selected to join the 4th Cohort of the European Commission’s "Institutional HR Strategy Group".

- In October 2012, TUT’s President appointed a Management Group for the HRS4R process at TUT:
  - Vice President Matti Pentti (Chairman)
  - Director of Administration Tiina Äijälä
  - Research Development Manager Anu Juslin
  - Senior Research Fellow Marko Seppänen
  - HR Director Kirsi Schaumann (followed by HR Director Hanna Rinne in March 2013)
  - Director of Communications Katja Ayres
  - Research Liaison Officer Jörg Langwaldt (followed by Research Liaison Officer Tuukka Pöyry in June 2013)
  - HR Specialist Seija Vehmasaho (secretary)
The HRS4R process: Step 1

Step 1 – Internal Analysis

The internal analysis process started in May 2013 with a kick-off event that introduced researchers to the HRS4R project and TUT's tenure-track activities.

- A working group was established to implement the HRS4R process and carry out a gap analysis. The working group was made up of researchers at different stages in their careers (Postdoctoral Researcher, Senior Research Fellow, Associate Professor (tenure track)) and representatives of administrative staff (Research Development Manager, HR Specialist, HR Director). To involve all the relevant internal stakeholder groups in the analysis, the following steps were taken:
  - A survey was conducted in 2012 to gather input from early-stage researchers
  - Information on the HRS4R project was posted on the University’s intranet
  - An article about the HRS4R project appeared in the University’s staff magazine
  - The Science Council convened to discuss the HRS4R project
  - The HRS4R project was presented and feedback was gathered during a meeting of the Postgraduate Students' Forum
  - The HRS4R project was presented to the University management in several occasions
  - A question concerning the development of the working conditions of researchers was added to TUT’s human resources survey in autumn 2013 and the results were incorporated into the gap analysis

- As a result of the internal analysis, the University identified further areas for improvement, determined the measures that needed to be taken, assigned units to oversee the implementation of the measures, and launched the preparation of TUT's Action Plan.
The HRS4R process: Step 2

Step 2 – Compilation and publication of the HR Strategy for Researchers

- The main results of the internal analysis are summarized in the HRS4R Action Plan. In addition, the plan includes an introduction to Tampere University of Technology and its strategy and other relevant information concerning the careers and position of researchers at TUT.

- The HRS4R Action Plan is published on TUT’s website.
Current State

Competent personnel at the core of TUT’s strategy

Competent employees constitute one of TUT’s key success factors. TUT is a community of professionals that recognizes that competent, motivated and contented employees and students are its most valuable assets. Each recruitment process is carefully conducted, and TUT invests in international recruitment. TUT strives to be the best employer among Finnish universities.

TUT has always been committed to investments in research and the development of the working conditions of academic staff. Researchers commonly perform teaching duties and teachers are involved in research. This facilitates the effective integration of the latest research into teaching.

TUT underwent an international peer review-based Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2011. The results provided a wealth of valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses of TUT’s research and noteworthy suggestions for improvement. RAE demonstrated that the University has the potential to achieve excellence in multiple fields through long-term investments in research. The University’s young researchers and future potential received excellent ratings in RAE.
Recent Development Activities

Based on the results of RAE, the Board of the TUT Foundation decided on the preparation of a Roadmap for Research in October 2011. The actions included in the Roadmap for 2012-2013 fall into the following categories:

- Development of recruitment processes and the tenure track system
- Promotion of researcher mobility
- Rewards for high-quality research
- Support for pursuing a research career
- Promotion of research dialogue and the dissemination of good practices
- Enhanced visibility of research

In addition to the actions included in the Roadmap, TUT has implemented a range of development activities and established new practices in recent years, such as:

- Performance-based reward system for researchers.
- Incentive salary system for doctoral students on TUT’s payroll
- Monitoring of the supervision and progress of doctoral students (TUT’s Graduate School)
- Training and support for supervisors
- “You will succeed!” training for doctoral students
- Course titled “Orientation to Doctoral Studies” (obligatory, includes lectures on research philosophy and ethics)
- Sports opportunities available to all personnel
Key Outcomes of the Gap Analysis

The internal analysis process provided an opportunity to explore the strengths and weaknesses in TUT’s research environment. The HRS4R Action Plan focuses on the key areas for improvement that were identified during the internal analysis, but the process also enabled the University to discover particular strengths. The University will focus on addressing the weaknesses while continuing to build on its existing strengths.

TUT’s key strengths are:

- Solid basis for improving the areas identified in the analysis (ethical and professional aspects, recruitment, working conditions, social security, training)
- Good management and leadership training opportunities and a commitment to the continuous development of management
- Culture that encourages continuous improvement

A number of principles that guarantee equal treatment are set forth in Finnish legislation. Labour laws and collective agreements that regulate the labour market in Finland apply to all employees regardless of their nationality. Existing legislation provides an excellent foundation for building and maintaining an environment that is conducive to high-quality research and the well-being of employees.

The HRS4R process brought together a wide range of internal stakeholders to share their views and opinions of the areas that TUT should focus on within the HRS4R framework. Based on the discussions, meetings and collected data, the working group identified a set of gaps to be addressed in the Action Plan.

The main gaps identified were:

- **Career system**: development of TUT’s career system to establish clearly defined career paths that extend to the postdoctoral stage
- **Career guidance**: support in the different stages of a research career
- **Recruitment**: clear and transparent selection criteria and smooth and transparent recruitment processes
- **Mobility**: more support for mobility
- **Supervision**: continuous development of supervision
- **Cooperation**: active cooperation between research groups
- **Funding**: more support for seeking funding opportunities
- **Professional responsibility and attitude**: active dissemination of good practices
- **Research ethics**: kept under constant scrutiny
The results of the gap analysis and the main areas for improvement are summarized below under the Action Plan headings. The complete Action Plan is presented on the next pages.

**Ethical and professional aspects**

Related gap analysis results:
- Professional responsibility and attitude: the University must actively promote the dissemination of good practices
- Research ethics: must be kept under constant scrutiny

TUT will encourage the dissemination of good practices among researchers throughout the University, provide further training on research ethics, and highlight the role of supervisors in upholding ethical standards and principles. In addition, TUT will extend occupational healthcare services to employees who receive a scholarship and are granted a leave of absence.

**Working conditions and social security**

Related gap analysis results:
- Career system: development of the career system to establish clear career paths that extend to the postdoctoral stage
- Career guidance: support during different career stages

TUT will establish clear career paths, explore the possibility of offering more long-term employment contracts, and continue to provide professional development opportunities for supervisors. TUT will continue the development of management and leadership training, which is already counted among the University’s strengths.

**Recruitment**

Related gap analysis results:
- Recruitment: clear and transparent selection criteria and smooth and transparent recruitment processes
- Mobility: more support for mobility

TUT will develop recruitment-related communications and processes and ensure that selection criteria are clear and transparent. Gender balance and career gaps due to leaves will be taken into consideration. Researchers will be encouraged to seek international exposure throughout their careers.

**Training**

Related gap analysis results:
- Supervision: continuous development of supervision
- Cooperation: active cooperation between research groups
- Funding: more support for seeking funding opportunities
- Career system: development of the career system to establish clear career paths that extend to the postdoctoral stage
- Career guidance: support in the different stages of a research career

TUT will develop coaching and mentoring programmes, prepare a supervision agreement, promote cooperation by organizing events and increasing visibility, and provide further guidelines and training related to funding opportunities.
## Actions: Ethical and Professional Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional responsibility/attitude</td>
<td>TUT will encourage the dissemination of good practices among researchers, the Science Council will prepare a plan on action</td>
<td>Researchers, Science Council</td>
<td>2014 → plan by 3Q2014, continuous development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Training on research ethics, e.g. Ethics Day</td>
<td>Science Council, Doctoral Education Council</td>
<td>3-4Q2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TUT will systematically distribute information on the existing policies that concern research ethics and good scientific practice</td>
<td>Supervisors, Science Council</td>
<td>2014 → continuous development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good practices for health and safety</td>
<td>Occupational healthcare services will be extended to cover employees who are on leave due to a scholarship</td>
<td>HR Services</td>
<td>from 1Q2014 onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle</td>
<td>Actions</td>
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| Recruitment        | TUT will ensure the clarity and transparency of recruitment criteria, e.g. by organizing recruitment-related training and evaluating researchers’ portfolio requirements  
TUT will develop recruitment processes (by increasing the use of international recruitment channels and improving the instructions for seeking, e.g. tenure track positions)  
TUT will develop recruitment-related communications (letters, documentation of decisions, job advertisements)  
TUT will place emphasis on gender balance and address gaps in employment due to family leave | HR Services, supervisors  
HR Services  
HR Services, Tenure Track Committee, Communications and Media Relations  
Science Council, Tenure Track Committee, Equality Committee | 2014: Recruitment training in 3-4Q2014 and evaluation of portfolio requirements in 1-2Q2014  
2014: ready by the end of 2014  
2015: Gender balance is monitored annually by the Equality Committee. Survey on career advancement challenges from a gender balance perspective in 3Q2015. |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Recognition of mobility | TUT will encourage researchers to seek international exposure throughout their careers | Researchers, supervisors, International Office, Director (PR and Partnerships) | 2014 → several measures, e.g. systematization of funding models, development of communications, advancement of the partnership model with other universities |
## Actions: Working Conditions and Social Security

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<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
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<th>Who</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of TUT’s career systems</td>
<td>TUT will create clear descriptions and instructions that apply to different career stages and especially the postdoctoral stage</td>
<td>Vice President, HR Services, Science Council</td>
<td>2014-2015, ready in 3Q2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability and continuity of employment</td>
<td>TUT will identify ways to increase the duration of fixed-term employment contracts or the number of permanent contracts</td>
<td>HR Services, faculties</td>
<td>Begins in 3Q2013 by identifying permanent and fixed-term positions. Continuous development in 2014-2015. Analysis of the situation in 3-4Q2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working culture</td>
<td>TUT will continue to develop the training available to supervisors on how to lead a team and an organization</td>
<td>HR Services</td>
<td>2013-2015: Continuous development (pilot phase of new advanced training in 3-4Q2014, basic training updated for 1Q2015).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Actions: Training

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<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research identity</td>
<td>TUT will develop career coaching services and offer personal development training for researchers</td>
<td>HR Services, Planning Services</td>
<td>2014: Career coaching piloted in 3-4Q2014 and personal development training offered in 3-4Q2014.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>TUT will prepare a supervision agreement</td>
<td>HR Services, Planning Services, Doctoral Education Council Planning Services, HR Services</td>
<td>4Q2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TUT will launch a new coaching/training programme on supervisory skills</td>
<td>HR Services</td>
<td>3-4Q2015</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TUT will launch a mentoring programme for young researchers</td>
<td>HR Services</td>
<td>1Q2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal cooperation and communication</td>
<td>TUT will organize events that promote networking and the sharing of ideas among researchers</td>
<td>Faculties, Director (PR and Partnerships), HR Services</td>
<td>2014-2015 (regular events, e.g. Smart City events, project management events, internal training and workshops)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TUT will improve the visibility of research groups through internal and external webpages</td>
<td>Library, Communications and Media Relations, Departments</td>
<td>2015: e.g. TUTCris (centralized research information system) by 2Q2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for gaining funding and projects</td>
<td>TUT will improve the existing guidelines, training and working groups</td>
<td>Research and Innovation Services</td>
<td>2014 → continuous development e.g. project management workshop in 1Q2014 and further training modules in 2Q2014</td>
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Next steps of the HRS4R process

Step 3 – Acknowledgement by the European Commission

TUT’s Human Resources Strategy for Researchers will be published on the University’s website for the European Commission’s acknowledgement.

Step 4 – Implementation of the HR Strategy for Researchers and self-assessment

TUT will implement this HR Strategy and Action Plan and conduct the first self-assessment in 2015 at the latest. In the future, the University will undergo regular self-assessments at least every second year.

Step 5 - External evaluation

At least every 4 years, TUT will report on the progress made towards the objectives of the HR Strategy for Researchers and its compliance with the principles of the Charter & Code.