Comparative Analysis of international practice in the field of habilitation, HR audit and intellectual capital. HR process audit in top universities of EU space

1st – 3rd of November 2012, Mutual Learning Workshop
Case study inclusion criteria: top 50 EU universities of diverse cultural backgrounds

QS World University Rankings considers over 2000 universities, of which 700 are assessed. Six target criteria are thus distributed:
Academic reputation (scored by a global survey) – 40%
Perceived reputation, as assessed by employers (calculated by global survey) – 10%
Quotations per faculty in scientific databases – 20%
Academic staff, compared to the students’ headcount – 20%
Ratio of international / expatriate students – 5%
Ratio of expatriates / visiting professors of total academic staff – 5%
Global and specific assessments concern five main academic areas: arts & humanities, bio-medicinal sciences, engineering & technology, natural sciences, social & economic sciences
13 Universities selected as case studies:

- Cambridge University
- Copenhague University
- Freie Universität Berlin
- Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)
- Amsterdam University
- Uppsala University (Sweden)
- Karolinska Institutet Stockholm
- Utrecht University
- Ludwig-Maximilians Universität München
- Oxford University
- Zurich University
- Heidelberg University
- Helsinki University
Comparison factors

- Defining organizational HRM identity, philosophy & strategy
- Employer Branding
- HR planning
- Recruitment & selection
- Compensation & benefits
- HR Administration
- Performance Management
- Ethics and deontology
- Anti-discrimination policies
- Labor relations (including trade union negotiations)
- Organisational development & change
- Mobility policy
- Work-life balance
- Training & development (including e-training resources)
- Employees’ opinion survey (involvement, trust, work satisfaction)
Online vacancies pool

I.1. Recruitment & selection (sourcing) process

• **First phase:**
  - Applications assessment by consultative panels at college level
  - Interviews and / or seminars / assessment centres organised for selected candidates, based on research reports

• **Second phase:**
  - Deans and vice-rectors evaluate the panel reports and applicants’ files
  - Employment decisions drafted inside meetings

• **Third phase:**
  - Applicants are announced in writing about the result / conclusions of decisions and HR Dept. launches the on-boarding procedure
External communication about vacancies. Employer Branding

• KU Leuven (Belgium) focuses on employer branding, starting with the motto: “Discover yourself! Start with your job”
• KU Leuven takes action to enhance its employer of choice reputation – designated by Corporate Research Foundation (CRF).

• Electronic applications database / system applications – coordinates:  
  • Vacant jobs description implies the faculty / affiliated research institute presentation (strategy, mission, vision, values), including the validity of recruitment adds
  • Concrete activities, cooperation with other departments / cross-function teams, necessary competencies, contact data, contract duration
  • Documents to be included in the application file for different positions: PhD students, post-doc researchers, assistants, professors, specialists in support-departments
  • The need for preliminary information – spontaneous applications need to be directed towards a reference department and a contact person, otherwise they are not processed
Payroll, Compensation & Benefits Policies

• Flexibility regarding the options concerning benefits, employment terms & conditions, provision of decent work conditions
• Throughout the employment duration, employees can opt for a portfolio of facilities, e.g.:
  • Increased quantum of retirement fund subscription
  • Several holidays (deductible from the salary package)
  • Reimbursement of transport costs
  • Preferential conditions for life or medical insurance delivered by University partners
  • Maximum of five days annually for volunteering or extra-curricular assistance
  • Discounts or promotional offers for software & hardware procurement
  • Access to digital library
  • Museum subscription, subsidies for participation to (inter)national events, conferences budget, museum & cultural events subscription
Education, corporate culture, organisation principles

• Organisational climate featuring intercultural openness, creativity, innovation, equality of opportunities, civic involvement.
• Focus on work-life balance
• Engagement for confidential data protection, anti-corruption & ethical conduct standards
• Standardised selection process – transparency, “zero paper” policy, temporary assignments (instead of permanent employment) & mobility policy. Researchers & academic staff are involved in public debates, conferences, various seminars inside cultural academic centres that function as open meeting forums for scientists, journalists and other trend-setters (open gates, alumni events)
• Organisational charts: centralised vs. de-centralised models for HR Dept.
Immigration Support

A substantial staff ratio is composed of visiting teachers, temporary detached personnel and expatriates – the Immigration Office handles issues such as:

- Processing authorisation requests for temporary / permanent residency and work permits
- Offers counselling regarding:
  - Immigration procedure, housing, financial information
  - Family issues, permit extension
  - Useful contacts to institutions such as: Public Health services, local administration, police, education system
Cambridge University

HR division is responsible for the elaboration & implementation of HR-related policies, procedures & programs
• Recruitment & selection (Professional opportunities)
• Training, counselling & personal, professional development (including e-learning centre with comprehensive resources)
• Payroll (Compensation & benefits)
• Immigration
• Internal mediation service, Resource Centre for Persons with disabilities
• Workplace safety & occupational health service
• Reporting, HR policies & procedures
• Internal mediation service
• Corporate ethics & compliance (equality of treatment, diversity, preventing discrimination)
• Childcare service centre
Relocation package

The package includes:

• Reimbursement scheme for relocation costs

• Insertion package – counseling services for all students & visiting professors looking for housing (e.g. partner real estate agencies)

• Information about schools, medical services, banks & finance, service providers etc.

• Volunteers’ group (Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Group) has the mission to organise partners’ welcome, events for accompanying spouse/family and introduction to the scholar community
Social partnership & decent work conditions

• HR policies encourage ‘Whistleblowing’ – the disclosure of information of public interest
• Stimulate civic involvement for denunciation of diverse fraudulent acts (abuse of power, corruption, conflict of interest)
• Internal mediation for support in amiable resolution on work litigation and the re-establishment of a productive professional relationship
• Mediation attempts adhere to an impartiality-based code of conduct, with a facilitation function (they offer recommendations, not resolutions)
• Committees for the promotion of diversity and equality of chances – discussions on gender, race, disabilities, inside trainings, conferences
• Online resources for documentation, reporting, audit
Job Analysis & Evaluation

- Online HR platforms provide users with standardised job descriptions for:
  - Academic positions (researcher, research assistant, professor, reader)
  - Support-functions (IT specialist, laboratory technician, administrative clerk, receptionist). Reference for job description creation and function catalogue
- Job evaluation supposes a hierarchy according to the comparative position impact
- Professional role evaluation system tailor-made for universities - HERA (Higher Education Role Analysis).
  - HERA – designed by the partnership between 100 leading universities
- Evaluation chart – recognized as non-discriminatory, ensuring equity, transparency, consistency & parity at University level – equal pay for work of equal value
Academic Job evaluation system HERA – 16 criteria (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written, electronic, visual, oral, formal &amp; informal communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rendering information clearly, coherently, rigorously, regarding both shape &amp; content, by explaining complex, detailed or specialised data</td>
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<td>Teamwork &amp; motivating others</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal &amp; external teams coordination, by active contributions and integration of individual roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship &amp; networking</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating networks of potentially useful networks for partnership inside &amp; outside the University. Indicators: prompt information of colleagues, facilitating constructive ideas exchange, building external reputation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer-centric service delivery</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing top-standard assistance directed towards all beneficiary groups (students, visitors, colleagues, partners, subordinates, managers etc.). Quick reaction to demands, pro-active offer of support or promoting the University as employer brand, setting</td>
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## Decisional processes & outcome
Decision impact inside & outside the institution, at diverse levels or time slots (short-, mid- & long-term decisions)
7%

## Resource planning & organisation
Human, operational & financial resource coordination & priority setting; operational & strategic planning
7%

## Initiative & problem-solving
Identifying options & selecting solutions when an immediate solution is inapparent. Anticipating problems with major potential repercussions
8%

## Analysis & research
Reality investigation by standard procedures, building new methods or fine-tuning existing ones; collecting data from different sources
7%

## Physical & sensory load
Physical effort, coordination, precision & accuracy competencies
5%

## Work environment
The job holder’s ability to control the environment in conditions of safety, exposure to toxic substances, extreme temperatures, outside work
6.5%
### Academic Job evaluation system HERA – 16 criteria

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<tr>
<th>Support, mentorship &amp; collaboration</th>
<th>Supplying support, guidance &amp; supervision, across both formal &amp; informal contexts</th>
<th>6%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Team development</td>
<td>Developing the other team members’ skills: new colleagues, induction, coaching, assessment for supervised colleagues, feedback giving &amp; receiving</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td>Pedagogical training &amp; educational support</td>
<td>Delivery of teaching sessions, training, student evaluation</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
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<td>Knowledge, know-how &amp; experience</td>
<td>Knowledge, competencies, needed attitudes for role performing, required experience level, the need to act as authority in a discipline</td>
<td>8%</td>
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eTraining Platform – “Oxbridge” case study

• Training, mentoring, eCoaching for employees (Intranet, access to forums, professional wellbeing & personal development)
  • Cambridge handles online, offline (one-to-one / team or mixed Training & coaching sessions
  • Departments acting as internal training suppliers:
    • Oxford Learning Institute
    • Foreign language centre
    • Information system centre
    • Administration careers
    • CareerStart service
    • Continuous education Dept.
Social equality & counter-discriminatory measures

• Family support centre promoting work-life balance
• Action Plan for equal treatment & equalizing the ratio between genders at managerial level (target: 40%-60% distribution). Risk of positive discrimination (political correctness)
• Guiding principles for handling harassment, encouraging freedom of gender equality expression
  • Departmental support for preventing & limiting mobbing & discrimination
  • Support for projects that fulfill identified needs & local initiatives
  • Induction training guide covering equal treatment legislation
  • Freedom to associate in trade unions
• Candidates with special needs are not required to specify their medical condition (e.g. impairing disabilities, chronic disease) in their application / throughout the selection process, unless their condition does not interfere with performing job tasks
Internal communication initiatives

Uppsala University’s periodical internal magazine – *New Horizons*. Employees can read about future research directions, success stories about mobility, intercultural diversity, ground-breaking innovation & development, new educational curricula, cross-function cooperation

The HR section involves: organisational chart, strategy, objectives, mission, vision, values & guiding principles (e.g. sustainability, success through excellence, family-friendly – work-life balance, mature interaction)
Workplace safety & occupational health

- **Purpose:** illness & invalidity prevention, supporting employees with special needs
- **Mental & physical health, ergonomics, workplace risks, mobility/relocation risks, morbidity / illness incidence per family of positions**
- **Assistance for mental healthcare:** drug & alcohol abuse (addiction), stress, depression, harassment, sleep deprivation, smoking cessation
- **Confidential online support,** including cognitive-behavioural therapy (anxiety, depression). Subsidies access for wellbeing promotion (health centers)
- **Employees are encouraged to report to the Equality & Diversity Unit any misconduct (offensive, humiliating, aggressive behaviour)**
Talent retention & development by succession planning

• Succession planning – talent & high potential spotting – gifted employees with the capacity to take over organisational key- or critical positions in the future Planning ensures the employees’ availability & talent pool tracking once managerial or niche positions become vacant

• Roles:
  • Accelerate the professionals’ transition from individual contributors, to managers & leaders
  • Prepare & support employees for long-term, sustainable evolution
  • Enhance employees’ global capabilities & performance
  • Streamline organisational intelligence by minimising risks & highlighting opportunities
  • Optimise involvement, trust & engagement for valuable employees, consequently facilitating their retention
  • Fulfill existing employees’ requirements & expectations for career building
  • Maintaining a healthy level of staff fluctuation
Ethical principles & organisational identity (@ Helsinki Univ.)

- University mission: “UHe is the most versatile scientific, education & intellectual capital institution in Finland, a pioneer in future building

- 2020 Vision: defined by strategic plan: “To the Top and Out to Society”

- “UHe will consolidate in the future its position inside the world elite universities focused on multi-disciplinary research. It will be actively involved for the humanity wellbeing & for contributing to a fair, just society”

- Fundamental values: critical analysis, creativity, the pursuit of truth
Objectives & development axis

• Empowerment & leadership through growth – stimulating participation, influence, democratic decision-making
• Skill enhancement esp. in the following fields: international activities, project management, applying for grants, network communication, leadership, entrepreneurship, financial management, work community interaction
• Enhancing students’ employability & making them attractive, competitive on the labor market by career guidance services
• Cross-field exchange, developing multi-disciplinary teams to design & implement ground-breaking research
Conclusions

- These HR programs & practices can serve as inspirational models to migrate / be adapted in Romanian academic contexts where there are precious little such initiatives.

- Action plans & best practice models incorporate many elements from the functioning of corporations.

- Focus on providing a full-option set of solutions targeting all stakeholders: employees, professional associations, potential job candidates, trade unions, employers, other partners, state authorities etc.