

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Organisation of the site visits

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Outline



Introduction

Preparation of the visit

The HRS4R site visit

Follow up



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Introduction



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The 'HR Strategy for Researchers' supports research institutions and funding organisations in the implementation of the Charter & Code in their policies and practices. The concrete implementation of the Charter & Code by research institutions will render them more attractive to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their research project. Funding organisations implementing the Charter & Code principles will contribute to the attractiveness of their national research systems and to the attractiveness of the European Research Area more generally. The 'HR Excellence in Research' award, attained after a thorough analysis of an institutions HR policies is carried out, will identify the institutions and organisations as providers and supporters of a stimulating and favourable working environment for researchers.

BENEFITS FOR THE INSTITUTIONS

WHY

should institutions implement the C&C principles and continue the implementation of the HRS4R?

BECAUSE:

- it **leads to benefits** for researchers and the institution
- it **potentially impacts** the institution
- it **adds credibility** – internally and externally, national authorities, funders etc.
- it **adds to the institution's reputation**
- it **contributes to the institution's visibility**
- because of your **participation in H2020** projects and contracts (*article 32*)

Horizon 2020 Grant Agreement(s) *

RECRUITMENT & WORKING CONDITIONS for researchers

32.1 **OBLIGATION** to take measures to implement the 'European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers' *

- *working conditions*
- *transparent recruitment processes based on merit*
- *career development*

32.2 **CONSEQUENCES** of non-compliance
(*application of any of the measures described in Chapter 6*)


* Commission Recommendation 2005/251/EC of 11 March 2005 (OJ L75, 22.3.2005, p. 67)



http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/amga/h2020-amga_en.pdf



All beneficiaries of H2020
should sign and implement the Charter & Code

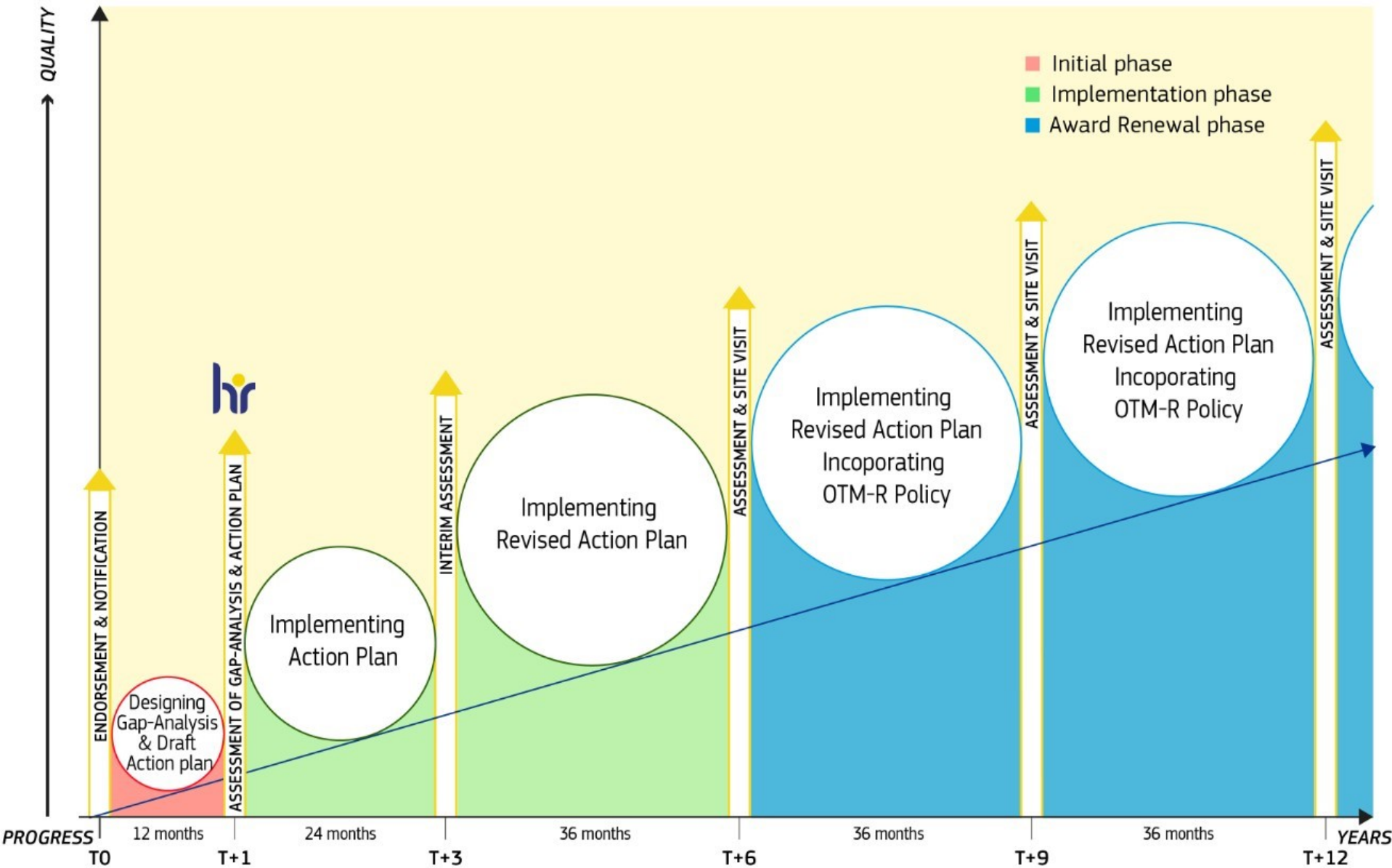
 For guidance, see the *'Human Resources Strategy for Researchers' tool developed by the Commission.*

EVIDENCED by:

- > **900 individual endorsements & commitments**
- > **40 countries** involved (*& various Inter-national / European organisations*)
- > **1200 individual institutions** represented (*including universities, research institutes, funding bodies, umbrella organisations and professional associations*)



HRS4R procedure



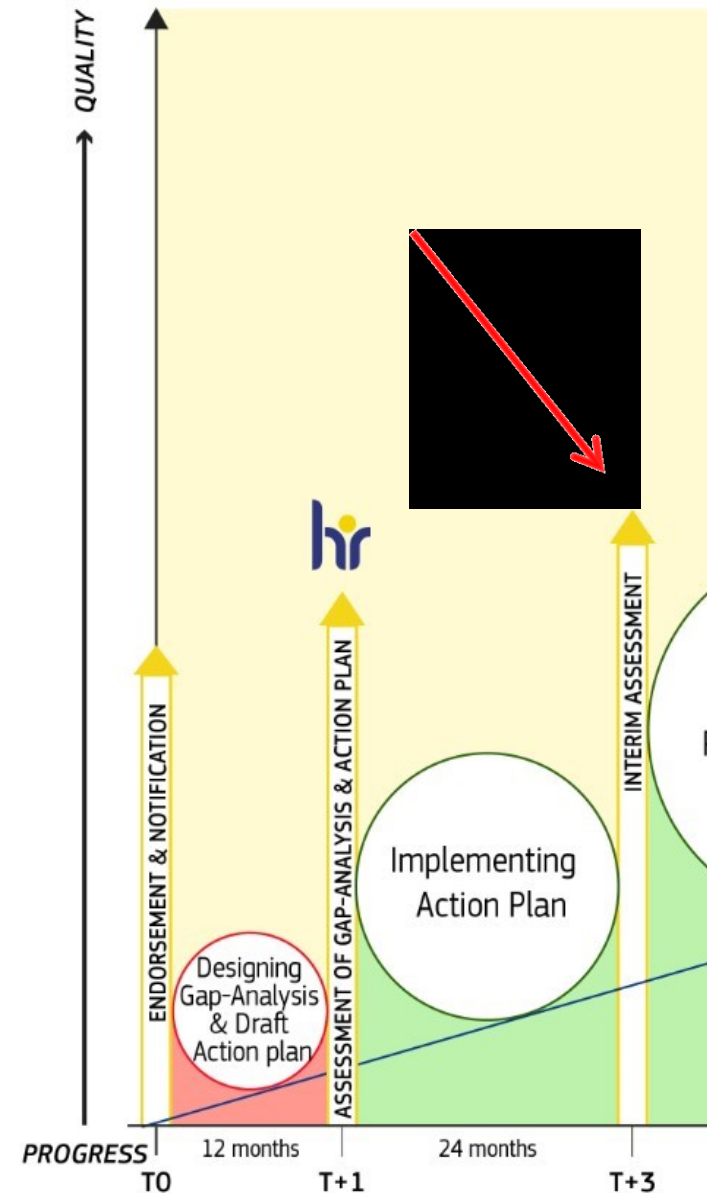
The Interim Assessment

The INTERIM assessment

As soon as having been granted the 'HR award', institutions start implementing the actions foreseen in their action plan according to the proposed timeline throughout the next 24 months at the end of which the interim assessment is coming up.

The interim assessment is based on an internal review conducted by the institution and assessed by external experts.

Justifications should be given for altered actions and revised timelines, taking into account external circumstances that were not known at the time of establishing the initial action plan.



The Interim Assessment

TEMPLATE 3: INTERNAL REVIEW

Name Organisation under review:

Organisation's contact details:

Web-link to published version of organisation's HR Strategy and Action Plan:

Web-link to organisational recruitment policy (DTM-R principles):¹⁶

SUBMISSION DATE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, honorary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research	*
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	*
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	*
Of whom are women	*
Of whom are stage A1 or A2 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor	*
Of whom are stage P2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	*
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	*
Total number of students (if relevant)	
Total number of staff (including management, administration, teaching and research staff)	*
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	
Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, and for teaching, research infrastructure...)	
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 300 words)	

¹⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/economy_finance_a_european_framework_for_research_evaluation_en.pdf

2. NARRATIVE (MAX. 2 PAGES)

Please consult the narrative on the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code as provided in the initial submission of your organisation's HR Strategy. Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium-term changed? Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

Please provide a brief commentary – not only looking back, but also looking forward.

3. ACTIONS

Please consult the list of actions you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview the **current status** of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been altered, omitted or added, please provide a commentary for each action.

Examples:

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target	Current status
e.g. Advertising all researcher vacancies on European European	Spring 2018	HR recruitment unit	70% increase in applications \$4000 applications from abroad	Completed
e.g. Drafting postdoctoral recruitment regulatory framework	December 2017	Finance Dept.	Board of Governance endorsement for new regulation	In preparation
e.g. Improve supervisor training for newly appointed research staff	Continuous	Student School	Int. 2 training courses an offer per term Continuous monitoring of effective increase of positive evaluations from PhD students Director for every PhD supervisor with less than 2 years' experience	Action initiated by introducing a new mentoring programme for PhD supervisors, based on the PhD students' feedback

As the establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRSAF strategy, please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation.

In case your organisation has entered the HRSAF process prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015), please fill out the OTM-R checklist¹⁷, attach it to this self-evaluation form, and provide a commentary on how you will (continue to) address these principles in the years to come.

Comment on the implementation of Open, Transparent, Merit-Based Recruitment principles:

.....

4. IMPLEMENTATION (MAX. 1 PAGE)

Please provide an overview of the expected implementation process. You can use the following questions as a guideline in your description:

- How have you prepared the internal review? How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?
- Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?
- Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRSAF? For example, is the HRSAF recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy?
- How do you involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?
- How is your organisation ensuring that the proposed actions are also being implemented?
- How are you monitoring progress?
- How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

Please note that the revised HR strategy and Action Plan must also be published upon completion of the internal assessment.

The Interim Assessment

TEMPLATE 3: INTERNAL REVIEW

Name Organisation under review:
Organisation's contact details:
Web-link to published version of organisation's HR Strategy and Action Plan:
Web-link to organisational recruitment policy (OTM-R principles): ⁴⁵

SUBMISSION DATE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	*
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	*
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	*
Of whom are women	*
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 ¹ = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy,	*

2. NARRATIVE (MAX. 2 PAGES)

Please consult the narrative on the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code as provided in the initial submission of your organisation's HR Strategy. Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed? Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

Please provide a brief commentary – not only looking back, but also looking forward.

3. ACTIONS

Please consult the list of all actions you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been altered, omitted or added, please provide a commentary for each action.

Examples:

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target	Current status
e.g. Advertising all researcher vacancies on Euroxess	Spring 2016	HR recruitment unit	75% increase in applications 50/850 applications from abroad	Completed
e.g. Granting postdoctoral researchers budgetary autonomy	December 2017	Finance Dept.	Board of Government endorsement for new regulation	In preparation
e.g. Improve supervisor training for newly appointed tenure track staff	Continuous	Doctoral Schools	Min. 2 training courses on offer per term Continuous monitoring of effect: increase of positive evaluations from PhD students Mentor for every PhD supervisor with less than 2 years' experience	Action extended by introducing a new mentoring programme for PhD supervisors, based on the PhD students' feedback.

4. IMPLEMENTATION (MAX. 1 PAGE)

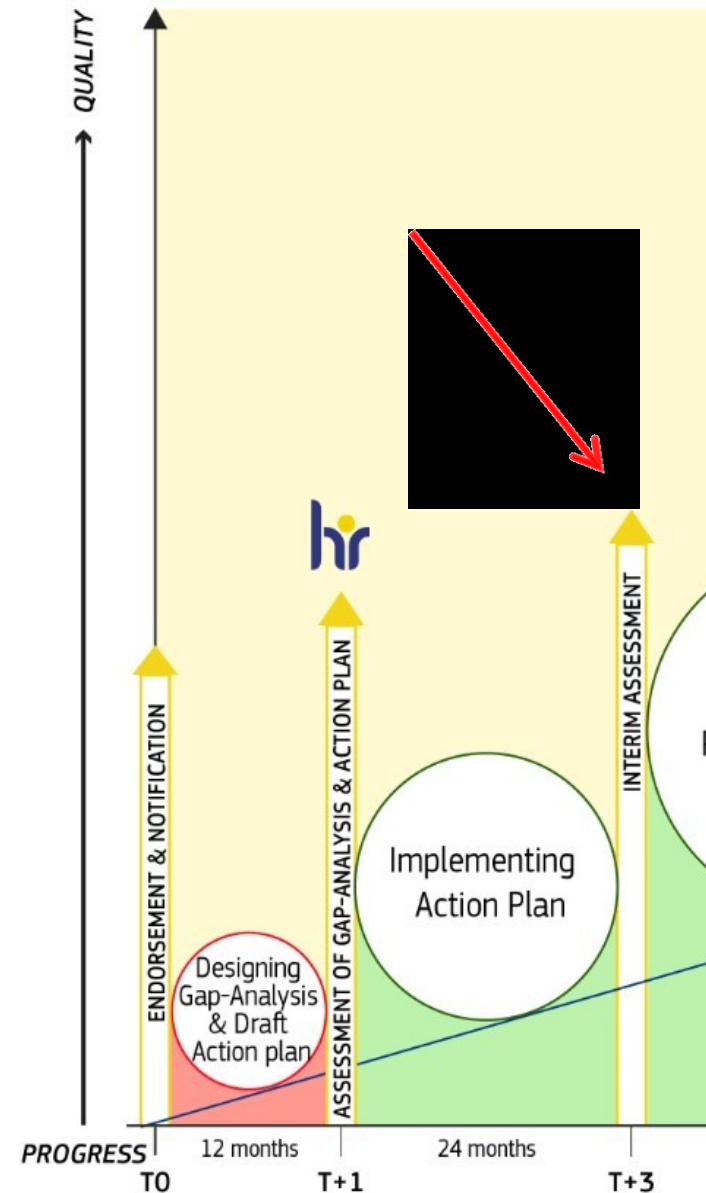
Please provide an overview of the expected implementation process. You can use the following questions as a guideline in your description:

- How have you prepared the internal review? How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?
- Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?
- Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy?
- How do you involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?
- How is your organisation ensuring that the proposed actions are also being implemented?

The Interim Assessment

At this point of the interim assessment, the participating institution does not jeopardise maintaining the 'HR award', but receives detailed feed-back such as:

1. The institution receives an **encouragement** to continue along the path it has undertaken.
2. The institution is encouraged to undertake some '**corrective actions**' to improve an already sufficient performance.
3. The institution is **warned** that, unless it takes strong corrective actions, it seriously risks not progressing through the subsequent assessment and losing the right to use the 'HR award'.



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Preparation of the visit



The ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS

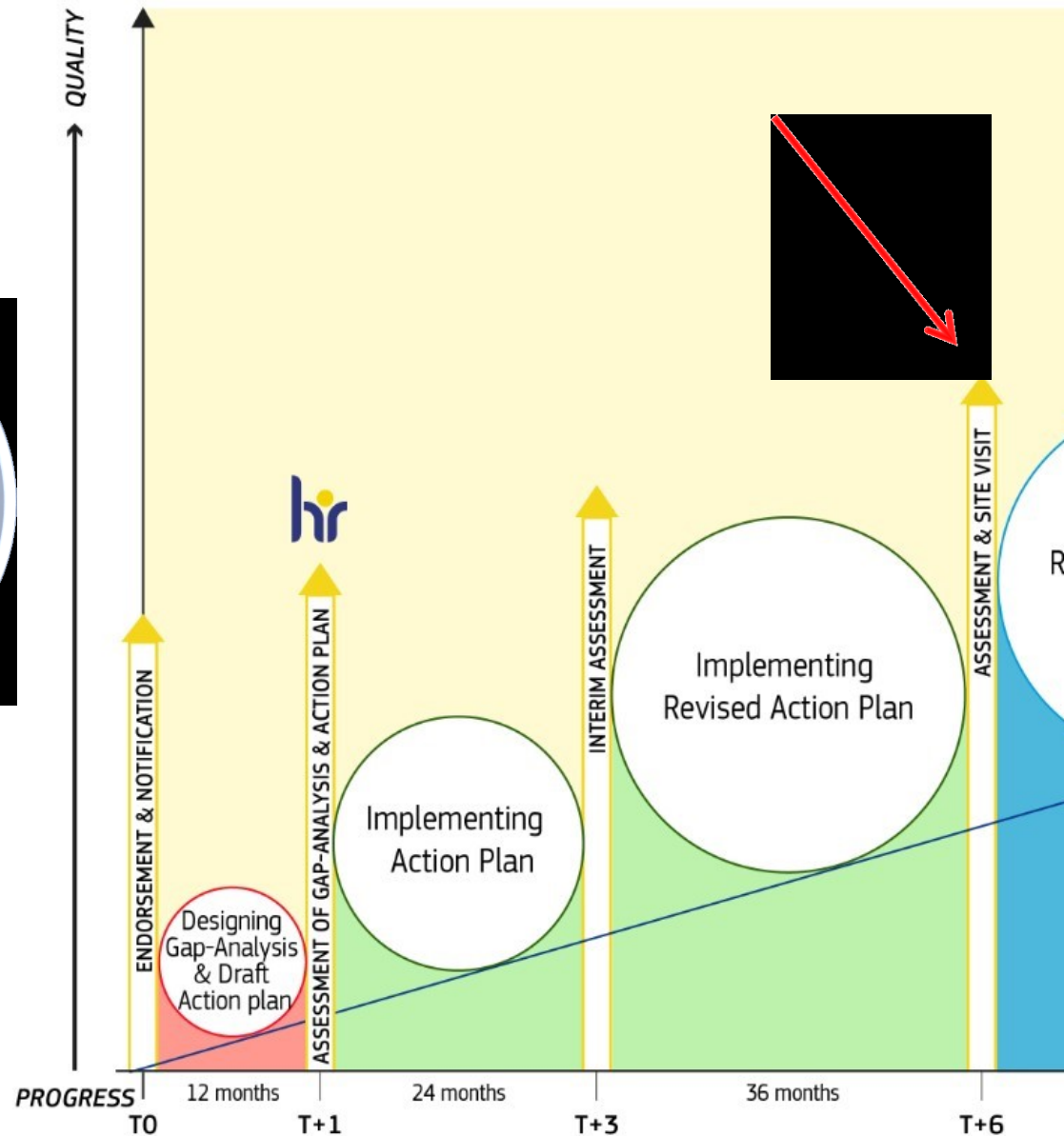
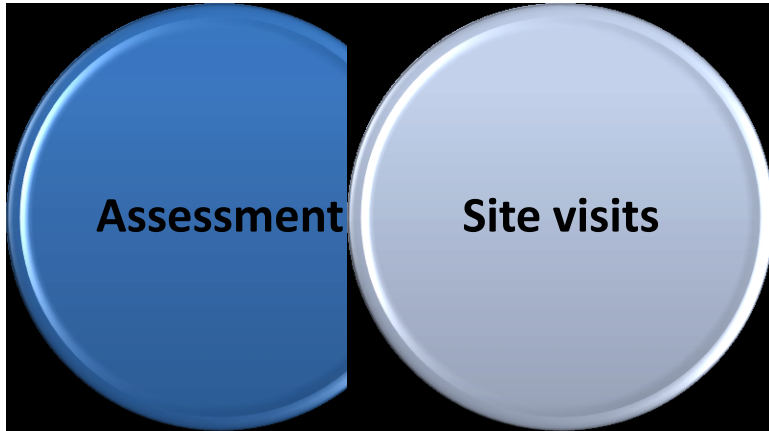
Within the next 3 years after the interim assessment, institutions implement and monitor their proposed actions according to the revised action plan incorporating feedback from the interim assessment.

After 3 years, the upcoming assessment then is conducted in 2 subsequent stages which are closely linked and timed:

- an **internal review** conducted by the institution and **assessed by external experts**, followed by
- **a site visit to the institution.**

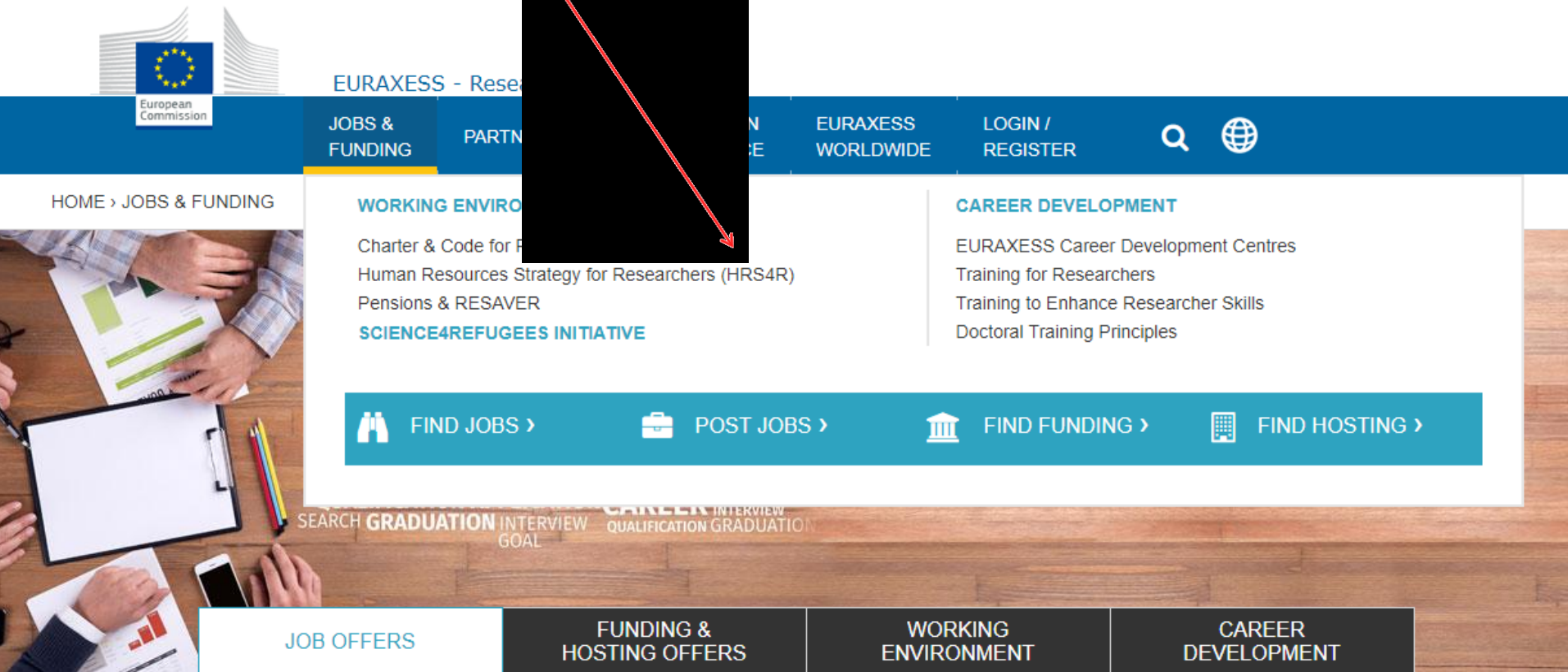


ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS



Read the documents!

HRS4R



The screenshot shows the EURAXESS website interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the European Commission logo on the left and navigation links: JOBS & FUNDING, PARTNERS, EURAXESS WORLDWIDE, and LOGIN / REGISTER. A red arrow points from the top left towards the 'HRS4R' link in the 'WORKING ENVIRONMENT' section. Below the header, the main content area is divided into sections: 'WORKING ENVIRONMENT' (containing links to Charter & Code for Researchers, Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), and Pensions & RESAVER), 'SCIENCE4REFUGEES INITIATIVE', and 'CAREER DEVELOPMENT' (containing links to EURAXESS Career Development Centres, Training for Researchers, Training to Enhance Researcher Skills, and Doctoral Training Principles). A teal navigation bar at the bottom of the main content area contains icons and links for FIND JOBS, POST JOBS, FIND FUNDING, and FIND HOSTING. Below this, a dark grey footer bar contains four categories: JOB OFFERS, FUNDING & HOSTING OFFERS, WORKING ENVIRONMENT, and CAREER DEVELOPMENT. The background of the website features a wooden desk with papers, a clipboard, and a smartphone.

HOME > JOBS & FUNDING

EURAXESS - Researcher Career Development

JOBS & FUNDING

PARTNERS

EURAXESS WORLDWIDE

LOGIN / REGISTER

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Charter & Code for Researchers

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Pensions & RESAVER

SCIENCE4REFUGEES INITIATIVE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

EURAXESS Career Development Centres

Training for Researchers

Training to Enhance Researcher Skills

Doctoral Training Principles

FIND JOBS >

POST JOBS >

FIND FUNDING >

FIND HOSTING >

JOB OFFERS

FUNDING & HOSTING OFFERS

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

CAREER DEVELOPMENT




HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

- + Research Careers
- + ERAC Mutual Learning Workshop on Human Resources and Mobility, 26 March 2014

- + Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R)

— Strengthened HRS4R process

Expert report on the 'strengthened' HRS4R ec report  (914.82 KB)

Process guidelines for the 'strengthened' HRS4R ec report  (277.56 KB)

Template 1 - Gap Analysis ec report  (124 KB)

Template 2 - Action Plan ec report  (64 KB)

Template 3 - Internal Review ec report  (66.5 KB)


Template A1 (only for experts) -initial assessment ec individual report  (263.5 KB)

Template A2 (only for experts)-initial assessment ec consensus report  (127.5 KB)

Template B1 (only for experts) –interim assessment ec individual report  (256 KB)

Template B2 (only for experts)- interim assessment ec consensus report  (255 KB)

Template C1 (only for experts) –renewal with site visit assessment ec individual report  (269.5 KB)

Template C2 (only for experts)- renewal with site visit assessment ec consensus report  (268.5 KB)

Template D1 (only for experts) –renewal without site visit assessment ec individual report  (258.5 KB)

Template D2 (only for experts)- renewal without site visit assessment ec consensus report  (256 KB)

**TEMPLATES
for institutions**

**TEMPLATES
for assessors**



Read the documents!

Draft GUIDELINES

to the implementation
of the
'strengthened' Human Resources Strategy for
Researchers
(HRS4R)

February 2016



PART 1

(draft) GUIDELINES for submission of applications

Version 1.0
16.2.2016

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Read the documents!






TEMPLATES



The use of the templates is **MANDATORY!**

All templates are available in 'word format' for easy use
and can be downloaded from the EURAXESS website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/>

-  hrs4rguide-process16-2-2016
-  otm-r-checklist
-  hrs4r-template-3-internal-review
-  template_c1_renewal_with_sv_individual_report
-  template_c2_renewal_with_sv_consensus_report

PART 2

(draft) **GUIDELINES** for assessment of applications

Individual assessment / report



"Sharing experience to better implement
the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers"

Individual assessment form

(to be filled by the assessor)



RENEWAL PHASE¹ – assessment with a SITE VISIT

Name of the Organisation under assessment:

This assessment is composed individually by (name; first name): _____

DETAILED ASSESSMENT

1. QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended and obtained by the organisation.

1A. DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT²

	YES	NO
Has the <u>organisational information</u> been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?		
Does the <u>narrative</u> provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers?		
Has the organisation published an <u>updated HR Strategy and Action Plan</u> been updated with the actions' <u>current status</u> , additions and/or alterations?		
Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan <u>sufficiently embedded</u> within the organisation's management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) <u>going to guarantee a solid implementation</u> ?		
Is the OTM-R policy ³ in place and publicly available?		

¹ Last update 2.2.2020

² During the transition period partial conditions apply:
Institutions having started the AMS4R implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2021) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be assessed but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

Look ahead at the questions to be addressed during the site visit, listed in part 2B:

Does the internal assessment of the institution give rise to any issues you wish to explore in more detail during the site visit?

Which elements of the HR Strategy and Action Plan would you like to focus on during the site visit?

1B. SITE-VISIT BASED ASSESSMENT (to be completed jointly by the assessors after the site visit)

Please provide a brief answer to the following questions:

1. Does the <u>site visit</u> confirm the impression made by the written self-evaluation report?
2. What have been the <u>benefits</u> of implementing an HR Strategy in the organisation under review? How do you judge its overall impact and achievements?
3. How do you judge the organisation's <u>level of ambition</u> <u>with regard to</u> its HR strategy for researchers, taking into account the initial state of play?
4. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the <u>Ethical and Professional Aspects of Researchers</u> ?
5. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the <u>Recruitment of Researchers</u> ? Is an OTM-R policy in place?
6. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the <u>Researchers' Working conditions and Social Security</u> ?
7. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding <u>Researchers' Development and Training</u> ?

Please list one or more elements of good practice that you would recommend to other organisations – either in terms of action or in terms of coordination/process.

The ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS

The purpose of this two-stage assessment is double:

1. It allows the participating institution to **reflect and document progress** and **alter actions or timing of actions if necessary** and it allows the institution the **opportunity to create new actions** for the upcoming time horizon.
2. It gives the **opportunity to the institution and the experts to engage on aspects of their work.**



The ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS

When preparing for the two-stage assessment, **initially proposed actions can be altered and the timeline be revised** in the light of the **feasibility of implementation** and taking into account external circumstances that were not known at the time of revising the action plan.

Such alterations are to be included together with their **justification** when establishing the necessary documentation to be submitted for the institution's internal review which will be assessed by external experts as a preparation for the site visits.



The ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS

At this stage, **progress and quality of the actions and accompanying measures** (such as embedding the HRS4R process for example) **are assessed by the experts.**

In preparation for this assessment, the institution must submit to the relevant authority **an internal review of how its action plan has been implemented**; this review must include **a revised action plan** including proposed actions for the next 3 years.



The ASSESSMENT and SITE VISITS

A successful internal review and experts' assessment during the site visits allow the participating institution to retain the 'HR award'.

Once the institution receives positive feed-back, it enters immediately into the award renewal phase occurring 36 months later (i.e. five years after the granting of the initial 'HR award').



The internal review (after 36 months)

At this stage, **progress and quality of the actions and accompanying measures** (such as embedding the HRS4R process for example) **are assessed by the experts.**

Experts undertake **a quality assessment, assessing the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended and obtained by the institution.**

This assessment leads to 3 individual **preliminary assessment reports** which will be shared among the experts at least one month in advance of the site visit.



The internal review (after 36 months)

ANNEX 3 - THE INTERNAL REVIEW

1. How to conduct the internal review

The purpose of an internal review, be it during the implementation phase or the reward renewal phase, is to allow the participating institutions to reflect and document progress and alter actions or timing of actions if necessary and to offer the opportunity to create new actions for the upcoming years.

The internal review is conducted by the institutions at the following stages:

- 24 months after the granting of the 'HR award' (interim assessment)
- every 3 years when having reached the award renewal phase(s) (1st part of the award renewal phase(s))

1.1. the internal review in view of the interim assessment

When preparing the internal review in view of the interim assessment, the institutions should indicate how its Action Plan has been implemented. The institution must include a revised Action Plan including proposed actions for the next 3 years.

The interim assessment reflects the quality of the institution's implementation of the C&C and associated developments and progress, such as fully integrating the HRS4R process within the institution.

Recommendations from the interim assessment fall under one of the 3 categories:

- a) The institution is progressing with appropriate and improved quality actions as described in its Action Plan. There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution receives an encouragement to continue along the path it has undertaken.
- b) The institution is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution is encouraged to undertake some 'corrective actions' to improve an already sufficient performance.
- c) The institution is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution is warned that, unless it takes strong corrective actions, it seriously risks not progressing through the subsequent assessment and losing the right to use the 'HR award'.

At the Interim Assessment, the participating institution does not jeopardise maintaining the 'HR award', but a sound feed-back from the assessment will be issued with recommendations for the next future.

1.2. the internal review in view of the award renewal

When preparing the internal review documents in view of the award renewal phase(s), the institutions should elaborate on how their revised action plan(s) were implemented and propose new actions which are to fill the still existing gaps as well as the timing of such actions.

Progress and quality of the actions and accompanying measures (such as embedding the HRS4R process for example) should be highlighted since these will be explicitly assessed.

The underlying quality processes must be supported by evidence of better quality outcomes. The assessment (2nd part of the award renewal phase) is intended to provide an appraisal of this quality improvement.

2. How to fill the template for the internal review

The use of template 3 (internal review) is mandatory for the submission of the institution's documentation for either the interim assessment (during implementation phase) or the internal review every 3 years when having reached the award renewal phase(s).

This template is structured in a similar way as the action plan initially requested/proposed and consists of 4 parts:

1. organisation information

Institutions should then provide an update of the key figures for their institution.

Particular attention should be paid to issues related to OTM-R by institutions already advanced in the HRS4R implementation process. These institutions may not yet have prioritised actions implementing the principles of OTM-R yet, but should take immediate action to comply with the new requirements.

2. a narrative

Based on the initial narrative on the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of C&C, an updated version covering the following questions should be delivered:

- Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?
- Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy?
- Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

A brief comment should be provided – not only looking back, but also looking forward.

3. action list

In the institutions' previously provided list of strategic HR actions' overview part, the current status of the initially proposed actions as well as the status of the indicators should be introduced.

If actions have been altered, omitted or added, a comment for each of these actions is needed.

As the establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy, institutions should also indicate how the organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy.

Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, a short commentary demonstrating this implementation should be provided.

In case the institution has already entered the HRS4R process prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015), please fill out the OTM-R checklist⁸, attach it to this self-evaluation form, and provide a commentary on how you will (continue to) address these principles in the years to come.

4. implementation

Institutions should provide an overview of the expected implementation process along the following lines:

- How has your institution prepared the internal review?
- Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?
- Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy?
- How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?
- How is your organisation ensuring that the proposed actions are also being implemented?
- How are you monitoring progress?
- How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

⁸ The OTM-R checklist can be downloaded from the EURAXESS website: <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/>

Assessing the internal review (after 36 months)

changes. When these are implemented and positively assessed under a new assessment the HR award is granted.

Applicant institutions will receive these comments from the experts as a structured feed-back together with the recommendation whether they should/should not receive the 'HR award' or be given the opportunity to undertake minor changes and be encouraged for re-submission. Institutions should seriously take into account the comments of the experts for all future steps and actions.

The group of experts will decide to recommend to the Commission services whether an 'HR award' is conferred or not. The Commission services will react upon the recommendation as to grant the 'HR award' by sending out the 'HR award' icon to be used officially on the institution's website.

3.2. Assessing the IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

a) The interim assessment after 24 months

The interim assessment of the implementation phase is based on the internal review of the applicant institution, 24 months after the granting of the HR award.

At this stage, progress and quality of the actions and accompanying measures (such as embedding the HRS4R process for example) are assessed by the experts.

Assessment criteria for this phase are similar to those of the initial phase:

1. Sufficient and clear overview of the institution
2. Clear, detailed and comprehensive explanatory text (i.e. narrative) on the state of play of the four thematic areas of the Charter and Code at the institution
3. Actions for the implementation of the principles of the Charter and Code within the next three years (i.e. in view of the site visits)
4. Examples of how the implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan and the Charter and Code are being further integrated into the institution's policies.

The assessment at this stage consists of a detailed assessment followed by recommendations.

The detailed assessment is subdivided as follows:

1. **Quality (of progress)**
Here the experts assess the level of ambition and the **quality of progress** intended and obtained by the institution.
2. **strengths and weaknesses of the HR strategy**
On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the institution's national research context experts will weigh/judge the HR strategy's strengths and weaknesses.

Recommendations will be issued by the experts referring to the state of the art of institution's OTM-R policy, with regard to progress and quality of actions and their evidence etc.

At this stage they might also issue a warning in case the institution is not deemed to sufficiently progress or if there is a lack of evidence.

The outcome of this assessment will fall under 1 of 3 headings:

1. The institution is progressing with appropriate and improved quality actions as described in its Action Plan.
There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution receives an encouragement to continue along the path it has undertaken.
2. The institution is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process.
There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution is encouraged to undertake some 'corrective actions' to improve an already sufficient performance.
3. The institution is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code.
There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, routines and organisational structures. Therefore, the institution is warned that, unless it takes strong corrective actions, it seriously risks not progressing through the subsequent assessment and losing the right to use the 'HR award'.

At this point, the participating institution does not jeopardise maintaining the 'HR award'.

b) The internal review (after 36 months)

Another internal review is to be undertaken and assessed as described above (see point a)).

The assessment of the internal review will be followed in a timely manner by the organisation of a site visit to the applicant institution. Experts undertake a quality assessment, assessing the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended and obtained by the institution.

This assessment leads to 3 individual preliminary assessment reports which will be shared among the experts at least one month in advance of the site visit. Experts meet to discuss and plan the approach to and target of the discussions during the site visit the day before the visit (if practicable) or by conference call/ Skype a few days before the 1 day-site visit.

c) The site visit

During the site visit, the group of experts must meet key stakeholders including researchers, management and practitioners to discuss confidentially the issues and questions they might have after analysis of the internal review documents submitted by the institution.

The site visit

During the site visit, the **group of experts must meet key stakeholders** including:



to discuss confidentially the issues and questions they might have after analysis of the internal review documents submitted by the institution.



Preparation of the visit

- **Communication with the European Commission**
- **Communication with the assessors' team for establishing:**
 - ❖ The **agenda**, including:
 - ✓ meeting with the **management**
 - ✓ meeting with the **administrative staff members** involved in the process (HR department, Research Office etc. ...)
 - ✓ separate face to face meetings with **selected staff from different faculties/disciplines, with different level of experience and different responsibilities** (please consider **gender balance**:
 - ☐ academic staff
 - ☐ researchers
 - ☐ PhD researchers
 - ☐ young post-docs
 - ✓ meetings with the **steering group/working group/HRS4R manager**
- ❖ **Documents** to be prepared
- ❖ **Organisational** issues



Checklist for Institutions

1. As soon as the internal review documentation is submitted using Template 3:

- The European Commission will initiate contact between the lead expert and the Institution and will ask the Institution to **identify a staff member who will serve as liaison** with the lead expert.
- **The date** of the site visit will be finalised between the experts and the institution liaison usually 3 months but not later than 4 months following the institution's submission of the internal review documents for the **award renewal phase** to the European Commission.
- **Once the date is set** and agreed between the institution and the experts it is officially communicated to the European Commission **by the lead expert**.
- **Block out time on your senior leaders' schedules** and of the people involved in the management of the HRS4R process within the institution. Typically, the senior leaders will need to be available for up to a one-hour opening meeting (inclusive of 1/2 hour presentation) on the day of the site visit and a one-hour wind-up discussion at the end of the site visit.



Checklist for Institutions

2. As soon as your site visit date is set:

- Make sure your senior leaders are present and aware of what you and your colleagues did throughout the last years and what the HR strategy is about, tell them about the difference it made to the institution and the impact it has as well as the need to continue to guarantee their full support. Your leaders should be present in the opening and closing meetings.
- Communicate to your employees what they can expect during the site visit.
- ***Plan how and when you will communicate to your organization*** about the site visit. Typical topics include site visit dates, why the HRS4R International External Experts are coming to the organization, what your organization expects to get out of the experience, and what individual researchers and groups can expect during the site visit. Specific communication (and training), activities should be planned to address different target groups: the whole community, the institutional leaders, the researchers and staff that will participate in face-to-face interviews.
- Start ***assembling the information*** you will need to bring to the meeting (see section 3 below).
- ***The site visit will be held in English. If a translator to local language is required then this must be provided and financed by the institution.*** The need to use a translator will in no case be considered negatively, being a tool to allow better communication and wider involvement.



Checklist for Institutions

- Start designing your **half-hour presentation** to the Expert team for the opening meeting of the site visit. This should address who you are and what you do as an organization, why you are participating in the HRS4R process, progress so far under Ethical and Professional Aspects, OTM-R, Working Conditions and Training and Development and how your organization hopes to improve and evolve its service to researchers from continuing with the HRS4R process. Include in your **half-hour presentation** information related to **indicators for progress/quality**. Elements of quality such as quality of progress and quality of achievements should be highlighted. Indicate the breath, depth and integration of HRS4R within your organisation/institution. This will be evidenced through such indicators as the level of ambition, embedding and the quality of progress. Please take care to give an interesting and short presentation and please do not repeat every detail from your revised HRS4R action plan.
- Start identifying the members of the institution for **face-to-face interviews** with the Expert team (e.g. people involved in the management of the HRS4R process, staff responsible for implementing actions, researchers representing the different research positions at different level -R1 to R4-)
- invite external stakeholders (if needed and/or involved/consulted in the process)



Checklist for Institutions

3. Provide the following information to the HRS4R site visit Expert team 2 months before the site visit:

A. *Organizational information*, including:

- The current Institutional Strategic Plan (if one exists, in English if that exists).
- A current detailed organization chart.
- A list of key stakeholders - people, leaders, committee members, and others - who have been involved with and have contributed to the HRS4R process of self-assessment submitted to the European Commission.

B. *Facilities information*, including:

- Map(s) showing the location(s) of meetings and a point of contact email address and mobile phone number.

C. *Logistical information*, including:

- Detailed **draft** agenda for the day which will be agreed between the institution and the lead expert
- Demographics of research employees within the organization (numbers, role title etc.)

D. *Other logistical information* you feel is important for the External experts to know.



Checklist for Institutions

4. Before the start of the site visit, you will need to make the following preparations and prepare the following information:

- Reserve a private meeting room for the exclusive use of the assessment team during the site visit. If the Experts will be visiting more than one site, a meeting room at each site is desirable, depending on how much time the Experts spend there.
- Arrange to have on hand all documents and reports mentioned in the self-assessment narrative at the start of the site visit (**one copy only**). It is most helpful to the Experts if this is in one central location (e.g., their meeting room). If Experts will be visiting more than one site, duplicate copies are not necessary at each site.
- Arrange for beverages/snacks and meals for the assessment team while they're on site.
- Arrange for the assessment team to have access to internet, wifi, copiers, printers, and telephones.
- Reserve a conference/meeting room at your site for the opening and closing meetings. It is helpful to have a projector and screen available.
- Reserve additional meeting spaces for interviews as needed. (For example, interview space might be needed for individual or group interviews.)



Checklist for Institutions

- If your facilities require visitors to be escorted or are difficult to navigate, arrange for escorts to take Experts to their interviews.
- Make final preparations for your one-half hour presentation to the assessment team during the opening meeting.
- Before the team arrives on site, review the site visit schedule with the Expert team leader.
- Update any information submitted in your internal review report (if applicable). The documentation will need to be ready when the team arrives on site. (One copy only)



Preparation of the visit

❖ **Financial** issues:

*Regarding the costs, the **European Commission** will **take care of travel and accommodation of the external experts.***

Institutions are required to organise and cover the costs of beverages/snacks and meals for the expert team while they're on site.

Checklist for Institutions

For Note – The Agenda

- The agenda will be finalised between the institution and the external experts through the lead expert **3 weeks** prior to the visit.
- Following each meeting the experts will require ***15 minutes for private/reserved discussion.***
- The final meeting will be a half hour and the experts will then relay their findings verbally to the institution (on the day of the site visit) with the consensus report to follow.



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

The HRS4R site visit



The site visit

During the site visits experts need to:

- be able to **confirm the impression** they gained during their desk based assessment;
- evidence **benefits of implementing the HR strategy** in the institution;
- judge the **level of ambition** with regard to the HR strategy for researchers, taking into account the initial state of play;
- judge the institution's efforts to ensure the C&C principles regarding **ethical & professional aspects**;



The site visit

During the site visits experts need to:

- evidence the institution's effort to put an **OTM-R policy** in place;
- check if the C&C principles regarding researcher's **working conditions and social security** are implemented
- judge the efforts regarding the C&C principles on **researcher's development and training**.



HRS4R Site Visit - Example of agenda

HRS4R – Site Visit Example of agenda

Venue : (address of the meeting)

Assessors:

- N1, Organisation, Country (team leader)
- N2, Organisation, Country
- N3, Organisation, Country

8:45	Welcome	Welcome of the participants
9:00	Opening meeting	Meeting with at the bord + Steering committee <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presentation of the assessors and the scope of the site visit- Presentation of the University (keyfigures, strategic plan, embedment of the HRS4R, institutional changes) <i>(list of participants)</i>
9:30	Meeting of the Institutional Actors Responsible for the HRS4R process	Meeting with the Steering Committee/Working group in charge of the implementation : <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presentation the HRS4R achievements, indicators, benefits, success stories, difficulties ...- Free discussion on issues from the 4 Charter and Code groups of principles <i>(list of participants)</i>



HRS4R Site Visit - Example of agenda

11:00	Meeting with the academic staff	<p>45' Face to face meeting with selected researchers and academic staff (R3-R4) From different faculties/disciplines, different level of experience, different responsibilities (please consider gender balance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Free Discussion on the HRS4R process, the involvement of the researchers, the gaps and action plan, implementation, communication <p><i>(list of participants)</i></p> <p>15' Assessors private discussion</p>
12:00	Meeting with young researchers	<p>45' Face to face meeting with selected PhD researchers and young post-docs (R1-R2) from different faculties/disciplines, different levels of experience, nationals/internationals (please consider gender balance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Free Discussion on the HRS4R process, the involvement of the researchers, the gaps and action plan, implementation, communication <p><i>(list of participants)</i></p> <p>15' Assessors private discussion</p>
13:00	Lunch	<p>Assessors team + HRS4R manager and any other pertinent guest</p> <p><i>(list of participants)</i></p>



HRS4R Site Visit - Example of agenda

14:00	Meeting with the administrative staff	45' Face to face meeting with Administrative staff members involved in the process (HR department, Research Office, TTO, ...): <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Free Discussion on the HRS4R process implementation, benefits, their contribution to the process,... <i>(list of participants)</i> 15' Assessors private discussion
(...)	Additional meeting	A one-hour additional meeting with other users or stakeholders can be organised; this will postpone the following meetings
15:00	Assessors private meeting	Summary of the discussions Identification of clarification questions and recommendations
15:30	Clarification meeting	Meeting with the steering group/working group/HRS4R manager for clarification of some points
16:15	Closure meeting	Restitution and feedback to the steering committee/working group/participants to the meetings/ other invited stakeholders



The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

Follow up



Follow up

After the discussions on the site, the panel organises its debriefing session either in person (if practicable) or by conference call/ Skype to reflect on and to discuss the site visit in order to come up with a commonly agreed consensus report.

This report will also contain:

- **elements of good practice** the experts would recommend to other institutions and
- **examples of difficulties** the institution had to deal with during set-up or implementation.



Follow up

Finally, on the basis of the information submitted and the site visit, and taking into account the institution's national research context, the experts will assess the **HR strategy's strengths and weaknesses.**

If relevant, they will provide suggestions for alteration or revisions to the (updated) strategy.



Follow up

Feed-back to the institution is given via the commonly agreed consensus report wherein one of the **3 possible options** is recommended:

1. ACCEPTED

The institution is progressing with appropriate and appropriate and improved good quality actions as described in its Action Plan. There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, practices and organisational structures.

2. ACCEPTED pending minor alterations

The institution is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the assessment process. There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, practices and organisational structures.

3. NO FURTHER USE PERMITTED pending (major) revisions

The institution is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded into the institution's policies, practices and organisational structures.

Maintaining or not the 'HR award' relies on the judgement of the experts who inform the Commission services on their decision.

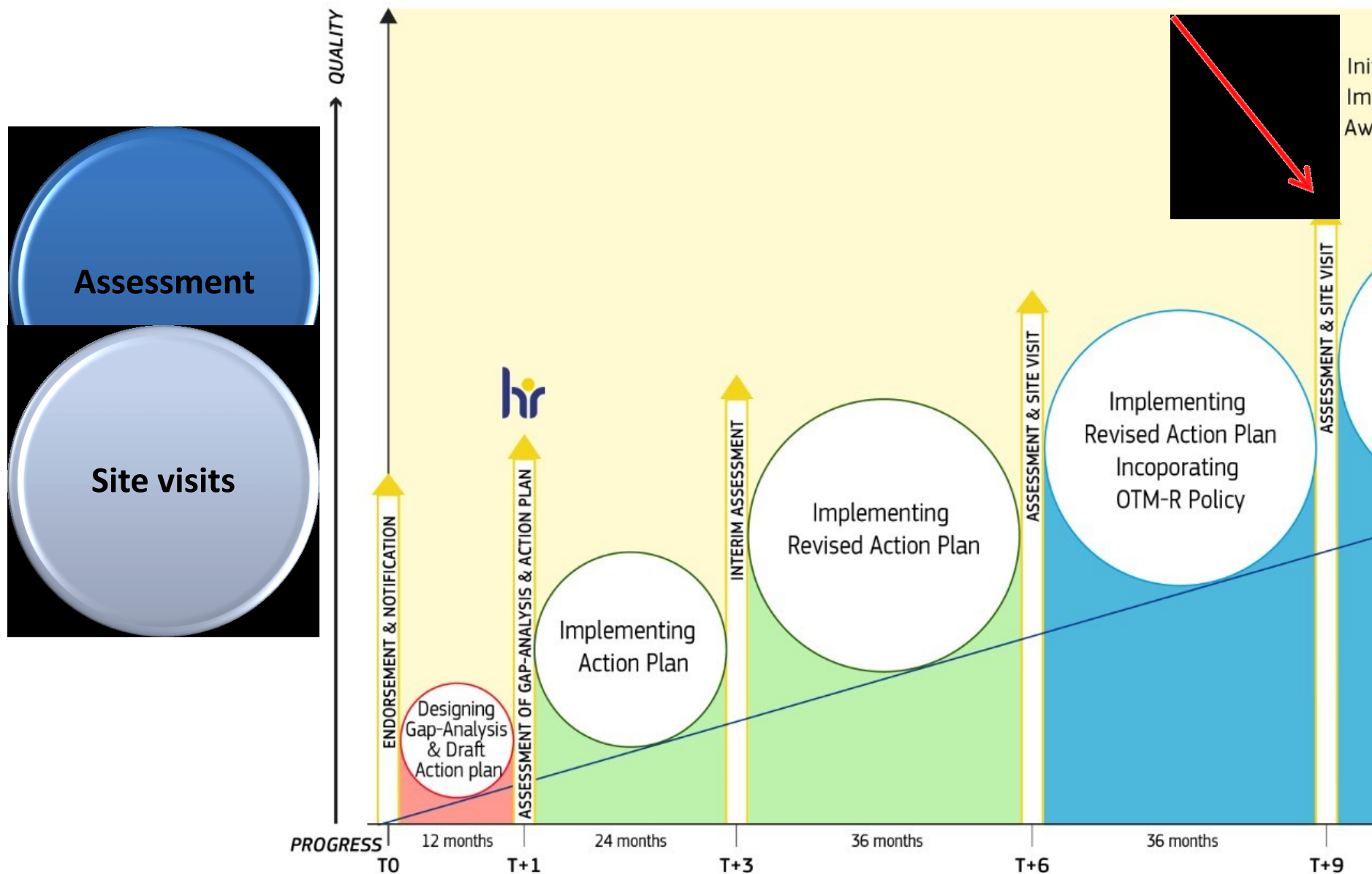


The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

AWARD RENEWAL PHASE(S)



AWARD RENEWAL PHASE(S) – desk based assessment and site visits



AWARD RENEWAL PHASE

Three years after the successful assessment and site visits by the external experts, institutions must submit to the relevant authority an **internal review** of how their Action Plan has progressed and gained in quality.

At this stage **the internal review must be comprehensive** in its scope and **must show that a broad range of stakeholders within the institution, including researchers, has participated in its preparation.**



AWARD RENEWAL PHASE

This review must address:

- progress against and quality of proposed **actions**, **indicators** and **targets** for success;
- an overview of progress against the Charter & Code Themes, evidence of how the HRS4R process has been embedded into the institutional policy.



AWARD RENEWAL PHASE

The **publication of this review in form of an updated HR strategy on the institution's website** must include a dedicated section on the **evolution of the institution's recruitment policy (OTM-R 'open, transparent and merit-based recruitment')**.

A toolkit for the implementation is available on the EURAXESS website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/>.

This **internal review documentation is assessed** by a panel of independent external experts through a desk based assessment, followed again by a **site visit to the institution**.



AWARD RENEWAL PHASE

1. A successful internal review and experts' assessment allows the participating institution to retain the 'HR award'.

2. In cases where the quality and appropriateness of the actions are deemed to be less than satisfactory, and/or where the implementation of the HRS4R is deemed not to be broad, deep and well integrated into in the institution, continued **use of the 'HR award' will not be permitted**. As such, the use of the 'HR award' icon will In this case no longer be activated on the EURAXESS job portal, *the institution can re-apply for a desk-based assessment and site visit after a minimum of 3 years based on a revised Gap Analysis and Action Plan.*



AWARD RENEWAL PHASES

Institutions having successfully undergone the HR award renewal phase now enter into **3-year cycles of monitoring continuous improvement and assessment** wherein the move from progress to quality needs to be evidenced.

At the end of each cycle, the HR award can be renewed or not, subject to a process of **internal organisational review accompanied by experts' assessment and site visit.**


Once the award is renewed, institutions update their website and implement and monitor proposed actions. This **cyclic HR award renewal** should bring out continued progress in the actions as well as a move towards enhanced quality of the actions.



AWARD RENEWAL PHASES

At this stage, the institutions should have a **well-running and fully compliant OTM-R policy in place and make full use of it.**

- **Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R)**

Study on the open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment of researchers  (3.14 MB)

OTM-R Checklist for Institutions  (516.41 KB)

Report of the ERA-SGHRM Working Group on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R)  (211.72 KB)



HRS4R Process

EVERY 3 YEARS

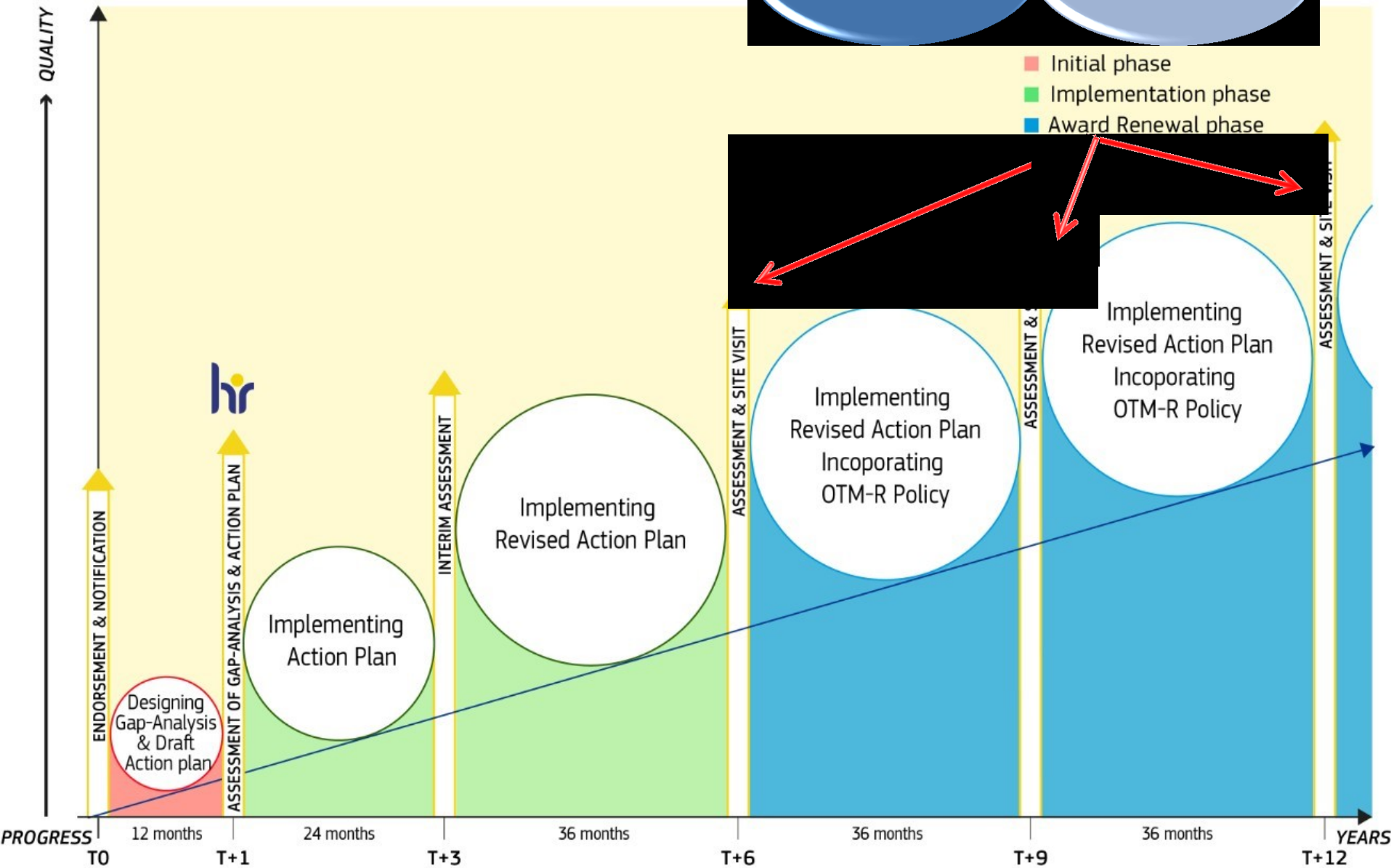
Assessment

Site visits

Initial phase

Implementation phase

Award Renewal phase



Success!



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH