

HR Excellence in Research

OTM-R Checklist

OTM-R Checklist

Case number

2025IT300593

Name Organisation under review

Università degli Studi di Ferrara

Organisation's contact details

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Date endorsement charter and code

30/01/2025

OTM-R checklist

A specific self-assessment checklist is provided for OTM-R. Please report on the status of achievement, and also detail on the indicators and the form of measurement used.

- The 'Open', 'Transparent' and 'Merit-based' checkboxes are indicative of the types of policies and practices the questions refer to, as detailed in the European Charter for Researchers. They are preset in the HR Excellence in Research e-tool and cannot be changed. Institutions do not need to act in this respect.
- The difference between '+/- Yes substantially' and '-/+ Yes partially' ratings is that, in the first case, the volume of the remaining work to be done until completion is small compared to the effort that has been put so far in that direction, whereas for '-/+ Yes partially', the remaining work is either the same in volume or more than what has been achieved.
- For the 'Suggested indicators' column, whenever the user hovers the mouse over the row dedicated to each question, a small text box will pop up, indicating options of potential indicators to use. However, each institution needs to define its own means of measuring the effectiveness of its OTM-R policy, which should be further reviewed and adapted as necessary.

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

OTM-R system

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?

x

x

x

+/- Yes substantially

Unife does not currently possess a single, comprehensive document organically defining its general policy on OTM-R. However, the University operates in compliance with Law no. 240/2010 and promotes the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment through its Statute and internal regulations. All University regulations are published in the "Statuto e Regolamenti" (Statute and Regulations) section of the institutional website. Several of these regulations explicitly reference the European Charter for Researchers, including, most notably: Article 1 of the Regulation for the recruitment of First and Second Tier Professors; Article 1 of the Regulation for the recruitment of fixed-term Researchers; and Article 1 of the Regulation for Visiting Professors, Visiting Researchers, and Visiting Fellows. The Statute and the Regulation concerning Visiting positions are also available in English. Furthermore, the University is continuing its efforts to translate the remaining internal regulations into English, in order to ensure broader international accessibility and transparency.

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?

x

x

x

+/- Yes substantially

Information regarding OTM-R procedures and practices is contained within the respective internal regulations governing the recruitment for each type of position. Information on staff recruitment and selection procedures can be consulted online on the Personnel Selection Office webpage: <https://ateneo.unife.it/ripartizione-risorse-umane/ufficio-selezione-personale> All regulations relating to recruitment procedures and practices are published, in Italian, in the "Statuto e Regolamenti" (Statute and Regulations) section of the University's institutional website: <https://www.unife.it/it/ateneo/statuto-regolamenti/regolamenti> The regulations available in English are published in the international section of the University website: <https://www.unife.it/en/unife-world/regulations> Information concerning the selection and admission to PhD programmes is available online, in both Italian and English, at the following links: <https://iuss.unife.it/it> https://iuss.unife.it/en?set_language=en

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	Administrative staff involved in OTM-R processes, with particular reference to the recruitment and selection procedures for professors, researchers, and research fellows, regularly participate in professional development and training activities. Training on transparency-related aspects is conducted periodically, generally on an annual basis. Furthermore, whenever updates to national legislation relevant to OTM-R procedures occur, the staff concerned receive specific and targeted training. Researchers are informed about the internal regulations governing recruitment procedures. These regulations are approved by the competent academic bodies, specifically the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors, and are published both on the institutional website and in the University's Official Registry (Albo Ufficiale d'Ateneo).
Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		++ Yes completely	All recruitment procedures are almost entirely digitized. Online procedures are active for the submission of applications concerning researcher positions and PhD programmes. In particular, all candidates are required to use the PICA platform to submit their applications: https://pica.cineca.it/unife/ Information regarding applications and selection procedures is managed through a single portal, available on the Personnel Selection Office webpage: https://ateneo.unife.it/ripartizione-risorse-umane/ufficio-selezione-personale

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?

x

x

x

++ Yes completely

Unife applies the current national legislation, which constitutes a fundamental instrument for quality control within OTM-R processes. Indeed, for public entities, national legislation mandates the appointment of a Head of Corruption Prevention and Transparency (RPCT) and the presence of an Internal Evaluation Board (NdV), in order to guarantee transparency, procedural correctness, and the prevention of corruption. The Unife Human Resources Office supervises the entire recruitment process, ensuring the application of national regulations and the University's internal regulations. Furthermore, for each procedure, a Sole Procedure Manager (RUP) is appointed, tasked with verifying compliance with the requirements and criteria established for eligible candidates, as well as monitoring the correctness and transparency of the entire procedural workflow. Finally, Unife has established a University Quality Assurance Board (Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo), tasked with ensuring the implementation of the University's general Quality Assurance policy. The Board promotes a culture of quality, defines tools and procedures to support continuous improvement and quality assurance throughout the University, verifies their application and effectiveness, and plans training and information activities on quality matters, as provided for by the relevant operational regulation available at the following link: <https://www.unife.it/it/aq/presidio>

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Does our current
OTM-R policy
encourage
external
candidates to
apply?

x

x

x

-/+ Yes partially

National legislation promotes the recruitment of external staff through specific, dedicated provisions and procedures, such as Law no. 240/2010 and Law no. 230/2005. At Unife, calls for applications for academic positions aimed at researchers, with reference to profiles R1–R4, are widely and transparently advertised through various institutional channels: the University website, the website of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR), the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic (Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana), and the Euraxess portal. All recruitment procedures are public, open, and merit-based. Furthermore, within the strategic planning documents—specifically the Integrated Activity and Organization Plan (PIAO)—a public value objective concerning the internationalization of research has been defined. Among the various impact indicators, this objective includes increasing the international mobility of researchers and administrative staff, also through initiatives such as Erasmus calls, which are regularly advertised by the University. In order to attract a larger number of international candidates, the HRS4R Action Plan also provides that future calls for applications will be accompanied by an information sheet in English (Action 12.1)..

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?

x

x

x

-/+ Yes partially

Calls for applications for academic positions aimed at researchers are advertised on the Unife website and on the Euraxess portal. The vacancy notices (avvisi di vacanza) are published in Italian, with the exception of the calls for PhD programmes, which are available in both Italian and English. Furthermore, Unife hosts several research groups that welcome Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowship holders. The relevant profiles can be consulted on the following webpage:
<https://www.unife.it/it/ricerca/visiting/curie/ospitalita/elenco-tematica> Finally, in order to attract a larger number of international candidates, the HRS4R Action Plan provides that future calls for applications will be accompanied by an information sheet in English (Actions 12.1 and 12.2).

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Is our current
OTM-R policy in
line with policies
to attract
underrepresented
groups?

x

x

x

+/- Yes substantially

The Unife Code of Ethics rejects all forms of discrimination and establishes that all members of the academic community have the right to be treated with equal respect and consideration, regardless of religion, gender, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, citizenship, or any other personal or social status. Within its Gender Equality Plan (GEP), Unife outlines various actions aimed at promoting gender balance in recruitment processes and strengthening equal opportunities in career progression. These measures are also integrated into the HRS4R Action Plan (Actions 6, 7, and 8). All documents relating to competitive selection procedures are published on the institutional website in compliance with accessibility standards. In order to ensure the widest possible participation of individuals with disabilities and specific learning disabilities (SLD), the University provides specific support measures pursuant to Presidential Decree (D.P.R.) no. 487/1994, where applicable to competitive selection procedures. Furthermore, Unife has established the role of Disability Employment Manager, as provided for by Article 39-ter of Legislative Decree (D.Lgs.) no. 165/2001. This figure is tasked with fostering and ensuring the effective integration of people with disabilities into the work environment.

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>The management of working hours for researchers at the University of Ferrara is based on principles of flexibility and autonomy, in compliance with national legislation and taking into account the different career levels defined by the European R1–R4 framework. Researchers, research contract holders, and professors at Unife—as is standard in Italian universities—can benefit from the leaves of absence and protections provided for by national legislation and applicable collective bargaining agreements, with certain differences related to the contract type and the role held. In particular: - R3 and R4 researchers can opt for either a full-time or part-time commitment regime (tempo definito) and may take sabbatical leave, pursuant to Article 6 of Law no. 240/2010; - researchers are not subject to working hour constraints or mandatory attendance registration; consequently, forms of flexible hours and remote working are permitted, provided they are compatible with the activities to be performed; - sick leave and parental leave are guaranteed for the R2, R3, and R4 categories, pursuant to Article 22 of Law no. 240/2010; - maternity leave is mandatory for all categories of researchers; - extraordinary leave for study purposes is provided for, pursuant to Article 10 of Law no. 311/1958; - paid leave is granted pursuant to Article 33, paragraph 3, of Law no. 104 of February 5, 1992, "Framework law for the assistance, social integration, and rights of disabled persons". In order to foster a better work-life balance for the university community, as well as for visitors and users, protected spaces called "Baby Pit Stops" have been set up within University buildings, designed to allow parents to care for their children in comfort and privacy. Currently,</p>

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

there are nine such spaces distributed across the various University campuses. Financial remuneration, the social security and welfare framework, as well as protection against accidents and occupational diseases, are guaranteed by the application of national legislation governing the various figures falling under the definition of "researcher". Unife also guarantees all researchers access to research funds, instruments, infrastructure, and support services necessary for carrying out scientific activities, promoting a stimulating research environment suitable for professional development. Furthermore, the University plans to implement a health insurance policy for all research staff.

Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?

+/- Yes substantially

Unife guarantees the participation of the most highly qualified researchers by widely advertising vacant positions, in order to reach the largest possible number of potential candidates, and through the adoption of selection criteria based on merit. The evaluation criteria are defined in advance by the Selection Committee in the first minutes of the procedure and subsequently published on the University's institutional website. This method ensures the transparency of the process, in compliance with Legislative Decree (D.Lgs.) no. 33/2013, as amended by Legislative Decree (D.Lgs.) no. 97/2016, and contributes to ensuring that the evaluation of candidates is as objective, consistent, and verifiable as possible.

Advertising and application phase

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?

x

x

++ Yes completely

National legislation and the University's internal regulations define clear guidelines for the advertising of vacant positions. In particular: - calls for applications for First and Second Tier Professors (Full and Associate Professors) and for tenure-track Assistant Professors (RTT) are published in the Official Gazette (Gazzetta Ufficiale), in the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website, on the website of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR), and on the Euraxess portal; - calls for applications for research fellowships, contracts, and assignments are published in the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website, on the website of the Ministry of University and Research, and on the Euraxess portal; - calls for applications for PhD positions and post-doc assignments are published, in both Italian and English, on the University's institutional website and on the Euraxess portal. The calls for applications are prepared and advertised according to the standard templates provided by the various publication portals, clearly indicating the mandatory fields and the information required from the candidates.

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		+/- Yes substantially	The calls for applications explicitly reference the applicable national legislation and University regulations; the relevant references and links are included within the selection notices. The selection notices report the main information regarding the procedure, including admission requirements, the duration and characteristics of the appointments, a description of the required knowledge and skills, the rights and duties of the researcher, as well as the provided financial remuneration. The specific selection criteria and the relative weight assigned to each evaluation element are defined by the Selection Committee during its first meeting and published promptly, in order to guarantee the transparency and traceability of the evaluation process. Currently, notices do not systematically include explicit links or detailed information regarding the equal opportunities policy, working conditions, and the workplace. To address this gap, the HRS4R Action Plan provides for specific improvement actions (Action 12).
Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		+/- Yes substantially	As required by Law no. 240/2010, Unife also publishes vacant research positions on the EURAXESS portal. Currently, a brief description of the position in English is made available on EURAXESS, accompanied by a link to the full call for applications. The complete call is published in Italian on the website of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR) and in the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website. The HRS4R Action Plan provides that future calls for applications will be accompanied by an information sheet in English (Action 12).

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we make use
of other job
advertising tools?

x

x

++ Yes completely

Unife is committed to ensuring the widest possible dissemination of calls for applications, in order to foster broad participation and ensure the transparency of recruitment procedures. All recruitment calls are advertised through the main institutional and dedicated channels, including: - the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website; - the website of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR); - the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic (Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana), where required by legislation; - the Euraxess portal; - the PICA platform

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?

x

-/+ Yes partially

The administrative burden on candidates has been partially reduced thanks to the use of e-recruitment procedures. Supporting documentation is managed entirely through digital tools and the website, significantly reducing the possibility of errors when completing the application. Candidates upload their CV, qualifications, documents, and scientific publications deemed relevant for the competitive selection procedure in electronic format, and self-certify that they meet the eligibility requirements. Regarding publications, the PICA platform allows candidates to import them directly from the database of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR), which collects the publications of Italian researchers through the Loginmiur system. Furthermore, during the initial application submission phase, candidates are not required to provide original certificates or official translations of the declared qualifications. Original documentation is requested only from the winning candidates at the end of the procedure. However, it is noted that support specifically aimed at international candidates, particularly regarding the understanding of procedures, required documentation, and any administrative formalities, is not yet fully structured. Unife therefore intends to strengthen the support measures dedicated to foreign candidates, with the aim of progressively reducing administrative, linguistic, and procedural obstacles during the application submission phase (Action 12.3).

Selection and evaluation phase

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>The procedure for appointing Selection Committees is transparent and is governed by the University's internal regulations, which are adopted in compliance with national legislation. These regulations can be consulted online in the "Statuto e Regolamenti" (Statute and Regulations) section of the Unife institutional website: https://www.unife.it/it/ateneo/statuto-regolamenti/regolamenti The composition of the Selection Committees, once appointed in accordance with the provisions of the recruitment calls and applicable legislation, is always published online, thereby ensuring transparency and accessibility of information regarding the procedure.</p>	
Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>Selection Committees are appointed in compliance with national legislation and the University's internal regulations, which can be consulted online in the "Statuto e Regolamenti" (Statute and Regulations) section of the Unife institutional website: https://www.unife.it/it/ateneo/statuto-regolamenti/regolamenti The composition of the Selection Committee varies according to the type of position advertised. Committee members must meet specific requirements and fulfill merit-based criteria defined for each category of researchers. Each committee is composed of at least three members and, once appointed, its composition is always published online, thereby ensuring transparency and accessibility of information regarding the procedure.</p>	

	Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?	x	x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>In the composition of Selection Committees, Unife is committed to ensuring compliance with gender balance, in accordance with applicable national legislation and the principles referenced in the University's Code of Ethics. However, in some cases, an imbalance in the composition of the committees may persist, due to the limited presence of women in specific scientific-disciplinary sectors. The University is aware of this critical issue and intends to continue monitoring the matter, promoting, whenever possible, an increasingly balanced and representative composition of the committees (Action 13).</p>	
Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?		x	+/- Yes substantially	<p>Selection Committees evaluate candidates based on merit criteria, including qualifications, curriculum vitae, teaching activity, scientific production, and additional relevant elements, as provided for by the recruitment call for each type of academic position and in compliance with applicable national legislation. During its first meeting, the committee defines the specific evaluation criteria concerning qualifications, curricula, teaching activities, scientific production, and other elements subject to assessment, in compliance with the criteria and parameters identified by Ministerial Decree (D.M.) no. 243 of May 25, 2011. The selection procedures also indicate the criteria adopted for the evaluation of publications, ensuring transparency, consistency, and traceability throughout the entire evaluation process.</p>	
Appointment phase					

Open	Transparent	Meritbased	Answer:	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?	x		+/- Yes substantially	<p>All candidates can follow the different phases of the selection process by consulting the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website. Throughout the procedure, the main documents relating to the selection are published, including the evaluation criteria defined by the committee, the ranking list, the final report, and the rectoral decree naming the winner. The committee's records consist of the minutes of each meeting, to which the individual candidate evaluations are attached. These records are approved by the Rector through a dedicated decree and communicated to the candidates in accordance with the procedures provided for by applicable legislation and regulations. Candidates can therefore consult the status of their application and the progress of the procedure online, through constantly updated information.</p>
Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?	x		+/- Yes substantially	<p>All documents relating to the selection procedure are published in the "Concorsi" (Competitions) section of the University's institutional website. However, full consultation of the competition records by the candidates is possible only upon specific request for access, in compliance with the provisions of the legislation on the right of access to administrative documents, pursuant to Article 22 of Law no. 241/1990. In order to improve this aspect and further strengthen the principles of transparency, openness, and accessibility of procedures, the HRS4R Action Plan provides for a specific intervention measure (Action 14).</p>

Open Transparent Meritbased Answer:

Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)

Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?

x

+/- Yes substantially

In compliance with national legislation, it is possible to lodge an appeal against the acts of the competitive selection procedure within the deadlines prescribed by law, by appealing to the Regional Administrative Court (Tribunale Amministrativo Regionale - TAR) or, alternatively, through an extraordinary appeal to the President of the Republic. Furthermore, it is possible to contact the Person Responsible for the Procedure (Responsabile Unico del Procedimento - RUP) for notifications or requests for clarification regarding the procedure. Finally, Unife's whistleblowing system allows for the reporting of any unlawful conduct through a dedicated platform, ensuring that reports are managed in accordance with current legislation.

Overall assessment

Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?

+/- Yes substantially

Each recruitment procedure is monitored by a Person Responsible for the Procedure (Responsabile Unico del Procedimento - RUP), tasked with verifying that the selection process is carried out in compliance with the principles of openness, transparency, and merit. Information regarding the procedures is regularly published in the "Amministrazione Trasparente" (Transparent Administration) section of the institutional website, helping to ensure traceability, accessibility, and public oversight of the Administration's actions.