

Report from UiB's Workshop IV on the OTM-R Checklist on 01.11.18

1. Summary

The University of Bergen (UiB) has started an affiliation process to the EU "Charter and Code" (C&C) according to the "strengthened" HRS4R implementation method. The affiliation process at UiB is monitored by the C&C Steering Committee. The gap analysis between C&C and UiB's practices has been previously conducted with a survey of all researchers at UiB, and in the form of workshops for three working groups.

Workshop IV on 01.11.18 dealt with the OTM-R checklist, which has been made a mandatory document in the affiliation process. The working group consisted of people responsible for recruitment to administrative positions at UiB's HR Department and the faculties. The working group was given an explanation of the OTM-R checklist, which was followed by discussions in the working group on UiB's recruitment practices in relation to the questions on the checklist.

The main points of the working group's discussions on the OTM-R checklist can be summarised as issues related to the three recruitment phases and to the achievement of UiB's recruitment strategies.

UiB has clear guidelines and templates for the announcement of scientific positions. Despite this, variations in announcement practices occur in the units. Important that the announcement texts refer to a greater extent to development and career opportunities in the positions. A better management of these issues can be achieved through a unified template for UiB, coupled with the training of personnel who work with announcements in the units. It will be useful to investigate more closely the total number of announcements on the e-recruitment tool "JobbNorge", compared with the number on EURAXESS, and other advertising channels such as newspapers, trade journals etc. There is a concrete assessment of what is the right intersection point between necessary quality assurance and the least possible burden on the applicants. UiB has clear rules for the composition of evaluation committees, and there is considerable emphasis on these being followed. UiB does not have an adequate system for feedback during or after interviews, but all applicants are informed at the end of the selection process.

UiB has several policy documents with focus areas for recruitment of scientists. There is a general trend that recruitment from outside the organisation is gradually on the rise and applies to both applicants and the hiring process. There are currently insufficient data for further analysis, but probably data from JobbNorge can be used to find more exact trends over time. UiB's Action Plan for Research Infrastructure 2018–2022 will help make research environments at UiB attractive for cooperation internationally, as well as to provide an advantage in the recruitment process and the competition for external research funding.

2. Background, purpose and composition of the workshop

UiB signed a declaration of intent on the implementation of C&C, on 05.03.09, and has been for many years a EURAXCESS Contact Point. The university management at UiB decided in the spring of 2016 to start the process of affiliation to C&C according to the "strengthened" HRS4R

implementation method. The University Board has been briefed on several occasions regarding the development of the relationship with C&C and the affiliation process.

The affiliation process at UiB is monitored by the C&C Steering Committee. The University Director heads the Steering Committee, and its members are academic/administrative leaders and researchers at various career levels. The Steering Committee has decided that UiB's gap analysis should be carried out in the form of a survey, and workshops for three working groups. After the OTM-R checklist was made a mandatory document in the affiliation process, the Steering Committee gave its approval on 09.10.18 for a draft checklist to be created by the HR Department in cooperation with representatives for the administration leadership in the faculties.

In accordance with this, the OTM-R checklist was discussed in Workshop IV on 01.11.18. The working group consisted of people in administrative positions at UiB's HR Department and the faculties with responsibility for scientist recruitment:

Nina Stenseth Akbas	HR/International Office
Gerd Johannessen	MOFA
Signe Knappskog	HR/International Office
Gunnar Larsen	MN/ C&C Project Team
Marianne Bø Larsen	MOFA
Vidar Lidthun	HR/Ministry of Local Government & Modernisation
Kari Lønøy	HR/ C&C Project Team
Britt-Karin Muri	HR
Kristin Miskov Nodland	University Museum of Bergen
Janne Marie Solheimslid	HR
Even Sørland	HR/ C&C Project Team (minutes-taker)

The meeting was led by Janne Marie Solheimslid, Head of Section at the HR Department.

The protocol from Workshop IV and PPP used for the review of the OTM-R Checklist is published on UiB's C&C website:

www.uib.no/charterandcode

3. Agenda: Does UiB have an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of scientists?

Senior Advisor at the University Director's Office Svein Åge Eilertsen presented the agenda. He started by presenting a brief overview of UiB's affiliation process to Charter & Code, and referred to UiB's C&C website.

He further explained OTM-R and how an OTM-R system should be prepared. Reference was made to the fact that OTM-R was discussed during Workshop II on recruitment, and that the purpose of Workshop IV was to obtain an overview of recruitment practices at UiB, based on the experience of administrative personnel responsible for recruitment procedures for scientists. In the workshop, views were requested on 10 of the questions in the OTM-R checklist related to the three recruitment phases, and 6 of the questions on the achievement of UiB's recruitment strategies. Based on

questions posed in the OTM-R checklist, the participants discussed the positive and negative aspects of UiB's recruitment practices. Specific descriptions were given of requested trends and conditions.

4. Discussions during Workshop IV on the OTM-R checklist

4.1 Questions in the OTM-R checklist related to the three recruitment phases

UiB has clear guidelines and templates for the announcement of scientific positions. Despite this, variations in announcement practices occur in the units. Academic environments that have short project deadlines often experience the announcement rules as "cumbersome", but perceptions have improved compared with how the announcement procedures were perceived earlier. Sometimes the academic communities argue for not preparing announcements in both Norwegian and English, others do not want announcements published in EURAXESS. The faculties' administrations are conscious of these issues and emphasise that announcements are made in both languages and through established channels. Special justification is required for exceptions. Occasionally, the administration suspects that the academic communities use the qualification requirements to narrow down the mass of applicants to more identifiable individuals. While in other cases, opposite challenges are experienced, because the announcements are made too open and to a greater extent should have been targeted at the qualifications desired for the advertised position. Important that the announcement texts refer to a greater degree on development and career opportunities in the positions. A better management of these issues can be achieved through a unified template for UiB, coupled with the training of personnel who work with announcements in the units.

In a subject area which has national norms/standards for qualification requirements for the positions, these are usually mentioned in the announcement texts, but often without a link to their content. However, not all disciplines have specific qualification descriptions. Questions may be posed as to the importance of national standards in the future, since regulations allow for each institution to set additional requirements for the positions. Sometimes authorisation requirements can be an obstacle to international recruitment, for example in relation to dentists from outside the EU/EEA – who experience major problems with taking authorisation in time.

As a general rule, public sector vacancies should be advertised on <http://www.nav.no/>, which takes place through the e-recruitment tool JobbNorge. According to UiB's announcement rules, all scientific positions should also be advertised on the European mobility portal for researchers "EURAXESS". Advertising of scientific positions at UiB is done from the faculties, and the proportion of scientific positions posted on EURAXESS is therefore difficult to track directly. For faculties with the greatest number of announcements of research positions almost all are advertised via EURAXESS, which leads to a high level of recruitment from abroad. Other faculties make less use of this advertising channel. It could be useful to investigate more closely the total number of announcements on JobbNorge, compared with the number on EURAXESS, and other advertising channels such as newspapers, trade journals etc.

The faculties are concerned with keeping the burden of creating an application as low as possible for applicants for research positions. At the same time, it is necessary to secure verifiable information about applicants. There is therefore a concrete assessment as to what is the right intersection point between necessary quality assurance and the least possible burden on the applicants. Applications through JobbNorge are submitted electronically with a link to documentation. No paper versions are required until later in the process. There may probably be room for a critical review for improvements, for example in relation to the CV form in the application solution and the self-made

CV. NOKUT assessments create work for both applicants and NOKUT, so one should perhaps only require this for the most relevant applicants.

UiB has clear rules for the composition of evaluation committees, and there is considerable emphasis on these being followed. There are no statistics regarding the composition, but the rules are followed in practice by the administrations' monitoring of the procedures. There are strict requirements for exceptions, such as occurs if there are no women available in a discipline.

UiB does not have an adequate system for feedback during or after interviews. Feedback is given sporadically when it is requested. There are no standards for feedback, so it is thus uncertain if it is of such a level that the applicants can benefit from it. Improvement of feedback practices has been addressed in the area of career counselling.

UiB informs all applicants at the end of the selection process, something which lies within the rules on offers of employment and occurs when the person has accepted the position. Notification is provided through a separate function in the recruitment system that notifies all applicants.

4.2 Issues related to the achievement of UiB's recruitment strategies

UiB has several policy documents with priority areas for the recruitment of scientists; an example of this is the communication strategy that deals with UiB's positioning as a research institution both nationally and internationally. There is a general trend that recruitment from outside the organisation is gradually on the rise and applies to both applicants and appointments. Today, UiB records figures that include all job categories, based on those who have indicated that they are internal applicants. There are currently insufficient data for further analysis, but probably data from JobbNorge can be used to find more exact trends over time. UiB has an action plan for internationalisation with subsidiary objectives for strengthening UiB in the international competition for the best scientists; this is aimed at ensuring a rapid and transparent employment procedure for applicants with a foreign background, among other things. There is also a lack of statistics on how many foreign applicants are being hired, but there are annual reports for certain job categories. The action plan for diversity and inclusion comprises priority areas and subsidiary objectives aimed at ensuring that no-one at UiB should experience discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion and beliefs, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age. UiB is also subject to new target requirements for applicants with "holes in their CV" and reduced working capacity. Other than gender equality statistics, there are limited statistics available in this area.

UiB's strategy plan for 2016–2022 emphasises three strategic focus areas – marine activities, global social challenges, climate and energy adjustment. This is followed up in UiB's Action Plan for Research Infrastructure 2018–2022. To achieve these objectives, UiB's joint research infrastructure (i.e. scientific equipment, e-infrastructure, databases, registers, archives and collections, as well as core facilities and major research facilities) must be established and developed systematically over the long term, so that all academic environments can access high-quality infrastructure adapted to the tasks. At the same time, a modern and unique research infrastructure will help make research environments at UiB attractive for cooperation and provide an advantage in recruitment processes and competitions for external research funding. In selected areas, UiB intends to develop a research infrastructure that is leading in Norway and Europe, while contributing to cooperation and work sharing within the organisation, both nationally and internationally.