

Action Plan

Case number: 2018SE341662

Name of organisation under review: Karlstad University

Organisation's contact details: Universitetsgatan 2, Karlstad, Värmland, 65188, Sweden

1. Organisational Information

Please provide a limited number of 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 *	489
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	200
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	147
Of whom are women *	213
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	156
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	218
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	91
Total number of students (if relevant) *	8,784
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1,068

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€ million*
Total annual organisational budget	112,5
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	23,2
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	8,1
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	3,8
<i>*exchange rate 31 December 2018, EUR 1= SEK 10,2548 (www.ecb.europa.eu)</i>	

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

Karlstad University combines research excellence with wider societal cooperation and impact: regionally, nationally and internationally. Granted university status in 1999, KAU hosts a comprehensive range of research programmes within the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering and technology, education and health care. The University has approximately 16,000 students (8784 Full-Time-Equivalents), 800 academic staff and 400 support staff. (1068 Full-Time-Equivalents)

KAU's research has broad scope, positioning it for engagement in successful collaborations with partners from both within the academy and beyond. This collaborative approach with public and private actors provides the university with significant expertise in, and opportunities for, the utilisation of research.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code to open the editor and provide your answer.

Ethical and professional aspects
KAU considers ethical and professional elements of research highly important: this is the foundation on which all research activities are built. Research is not an isolated activity; it provides value for society and therefore society must be able to trust research. Research conducted at KAU must comply with the highest

ethical standards, and this also ensures that the investment made in research by the government or other funders is used accountably and beneficially. Structures and procedures to support research are continually under development. Some activities are already underway, but are also included as activities in the action plan. One example is the continuous development of Open Publishing and Open Data routines and support. The support and structure for aspects related to research ethics had recently been reviewed and changes have been made to enhance the support offered to researchers. The pre-award structure within KAU functions well and is strengthened by good interoffice relations to support research. The focus for the next development is on the post-award structure.

Recruitment and selection *

The recruitment process is a well-functioning area. The University's Regulations for the Appointment and Promotion of Teaching Staff include clear qualification requirements and assessment criteria. These are supplemented with the Procedures for the Appointment and Promotion of Teaching Staff, which give clear instructions on the different parts of the process, including expert review and the other preparatory elements. In recent years, work has been done to further clarify and improve the recruitment process. A strategy and action plan for the recruitment of teachers and researchers was drawn up under the leadership of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, with three strategic goals: 1) Competence, 2) The Recruitment Process and 3) Attractiveness. The action plan includes activities that have gradually been addressed and led to the current well-functioning process. For example, training in the area of OTM-R recruitment, including interviews, is now offered on a regular basis with the aim to reach all staff engaged in the recruitment process. The Strategy and Action Plan is valid through 2019, and will need to be either updated or be adapted into a Recruitment Policy without a specific timeframe for implementation.

During the process of identifying and analysing gaps in the OTM-R checklist it, was discovered that some areas still need further attention, as discussed in the OTM-R section below.

Working conditions *

Swedish legislation ensures working conditions and social security of a high standard, and state employees enjoy additional benefits. Karlstad University understands that good conditions are vital to attract and retain competent staff. Therefore KAU has been implementing new recruitment procedures centred on employment stability. This has created a cultural shift in moving away from renewing multiple short-term contracts as a standard practice, towards a higher percentage of permanent contracts, resulting in the lowest percentage of non-permanent contracts for academic staff among Swedish universities. Doctoral students have good conditions with contracts and relatively high salaries, when compared internationally.

Karlstad University, like the other state higher education institutions in Sweden, was tasked by the government with gender mainstreaming its operations. The purpose of gender mainstreaming is to contribute to meeting the government's gender equality objectives. Research was considered one of the focus areas. The plan is now in its final stage and the evaluation to date suggests that the plan has had a positive impact throughout the organisation. The norm-critical recruitment improvements can for instance also be seen in the OTM-R context. The gender perspective is now also considered in applications for internal and external research funding. To continue the positive impact, a new plan will be developed to build upon these substantial benefits and the awareness that resulted from the current plan. This process has its own strategy and action plan and will not be included in the HRS4R actions.

A key area for development is the agreed process of implementing a structure for internal peer review and for encouraging a cultural move towards greater constructive collegial criticism of research ideas and research in general. This issue will also be addressed as part of the ongoing Research and Education QA process.

There are many opportunities for career development within KAU, and good support is provided for external development opportunities also. However, it has been discovered that the information on professional development is not easily accessible to researchers. A website will be developed to enhance accessibility.

Career advice service for students has been available at Karlstad University for many years. However, for doctoral students as well as other researchers this service should be more embedded in the traditional research environments through collegial support and supervision. This might not be the experience of all researchers, depending on both different subject traditions as well as individual situations. The current programme to provide collegial support to newly employed academic staff will therefore be extended to include all academic staff. The programme must also consider openness and transparency.

Co-authorship is considered important, but KAU does not provide clear guidance on this issue. The traditions vary between different subject areas and at the moment co-authorship is only reflected in bibliometric scores and is not considered in a wider perspective. The University Library will, in cooperation with the faculties, develop guidelines on co-authorship.

Training and development *

The area of Training and Development is in need of further attention, since 4 out of 5 principles are considered not completely fulfilled. During doctoral education, there is a clear supervision structure. However, after obtaining a PhD, the structure disappears and early stage researchers are expected to develop into independent researchers all by themselves. Depending on the research environment in which a researcher is involved, opportunities for guidance and access to research training may not be clear to individual researchers and are therefore not used to a desirable extent. Some managers may not have efficient tools for following up on performed activities in appraisal talks.

There is a wide variety of research training and professional development opportunities available. However, the information about these opportunities is neither easily accessed by researchers, nor recorded to facilitate follow-up.

KAU has a number of actions that will not only be helpful to early career researchers, but to all researchers employed by KAU.

4. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

kau.se/jobba-hos-oss/karlstads-universitet-som-arbetsgivare/human-resources-strategi-forskare-hrs4r

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their implementation ratings.

Proposed ACTIONS		
Action 1	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
<p>Formalise the Post-award Structure and Procedures and embed them within the Research support structure</p> <p>The post-award structure and procedures need to be formalised and embedded into the overall research award support structure. This will engage several support offices at the University. The Research Administration Group (Sw: <i>FAG group</i>), which has just completed a review of the pre-award support structure, will continue the development of the post-award structure.</p> <p>The Post-award Structure with support notes and outlining rules and regulations for the management of projects will be incorporated within the Research Handbook.</p>	4. Professional attitude	1.1 Q2 2020 1.2 Q4 2020 1.3 Q2 2021
	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	External relations in cooperation the Research Administration Group (Sw: <i>Forskningsadministrativa gruppen/FAG</i>)	1.1 Development and decision of new post-award structure 1.2 Implementation of new structure 1.3 Incorporation of the Post-award Structure within the research Handbook
Action 2	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
<p>Create a Quality Assurance Model for Education and Research</p> <p>Researchers at Karlstad University follow good practice concerning accountability (6) towards the University as an employer, as well as to the interests of funders and taxpayers in using their money well. Methods of data collection and analysis are open to internal and external scrutiny. Research is evaluated through designating strong or excellent research groups and appraisal talks on an individual level (11). Researchers have access to a research environment (23) with specialised equipment, labs, databases, internal and external professional opportunities, language training, office spaces, up-to-date IT facilities, etc. The multifaceted roles of senior researchers (37) are demonstrated within the research collegiate and the doctoral supervision collegiate.</p> <p>However, the gaps in all four of these principles show that although there is research collegiality in relation to internal peer review, seminars, research discussion groups, and idea reflecting forums that function very well in some research areas, this is not standard practice throughout the University. Currently, the University is working on its Research Quality Assurance Process, as required by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (Sw: <i>Universitetskanslerämbetet, UKÄ</i>). Broadening and structuring the peer-review process will be an important component of these efforts. A proposal has been distributed for a round of internal consultations, which will end on the 30th of September 2019. The QA model for education and research is to be decided, and academic</p>	6. Accountability 11. Evaluation/appraisal systems 23. Research environment 37. Supervision and managerial duties	2.1 Q2 2020 2.2 Q2 2020 2.3 Q2 2021
	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	Vice-Chancellor for decision, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for information about decision, Deans for implementation	2.1 Decision 2.2 Information about decision 2.3 First evaluation of research unit/group using the QA model completed

departments need to be informed and implement the Quality Assurance model. Implementation is considered fulfilled when the first evaluation using the QA model is completed.		
Action 3	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Update the Recruitment Strategy	12. Recruitment	3.1 Q1 2020 3.2 Q3 2020 3.3 Q4 2020 3.4 Q1 2021
The Strategy and Action Plan for the Recruitment of Academic Staff needs to be updated with actions in line with the HR Excellence in Research Charter & Code.	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	HR Office	3.1 Review of current Strategy completed 3.2 Proposal of updated Strategy 3.3 Decision of the updated Strategy 3.4 Implementation of the updated Strategy
Action 4	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Consolidate information about training and professional development opportunities through a web page	28. Career development 38. Continuing professional development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	4.1 Q1 2021 4.2 Q3 2021
There is a wide variety of research training and professional development opportunities available. However, the information about these opportunities is neither easily accessed by researchers, nor recorded to facilitate follow-up.	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
An external website with information on opportunities for professional development is under construction. The Research Handbook needs to be updated with the relevant information.	HR Office responsible for external website. Each unit responsible for relevant information through links. FAG Group responsible for updating the Research handbook	4.1 Website completed and launched 4.2 Updated Research Handbook
Action 5	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Register of participation in research training activities	28. Career development 38. Continuing professional development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	5.1 Q4 2020 5.2 Q3 2021
There is a wide variety of career development opportunities available. However, the information about these opportunities is neither easily accessed by researchers, nor recorded to facilitate follow-up.	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
Development activities as well as qualifications can be recorded in the employee system, of which some already are. Research training activities that need to be recorded must be identified and recorded continually. This action will focus on External Relations' research training activities.	HR Office and External Relations	5.1 Platform/Structure in HR system completed 5.2 First research training session recorded
Action 6	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Implementation of collegial support for researchers	30. Access to career advice 40. Supervision	6.1 Q2 2020 6.2 Q2 2021 6.3 Q4 2021
Increase the awareness of and implement the programme for collegial support for newly employed researchers (dnr C2017/650) at all Departments and evaluate impact on the researchers.	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	HR Office is responsible for communicating the programme to Heads of Departments at the faculties.	6.1 Ensure increased awareness through information about decision through compulsory

	Heads of Departments at the faculties are responsible for communicating and implementing the programme among senior and early stage researchers.	information at Department level 6.2 Implement the programme so that all new recruitments are engaged at all Departments 6.3 Evaluate the success of programme impact on the researchers
Action 7	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
<p>Embed aspects of career advice/professional development for researchers in the appraisal talk</p> <p>Gaps that have been identified include the lack of structured career advice and how professional development opportunities are utilised, recorded and evaluated. Other actions have focused on the accessibility and registration of completed research training activities. Aspects of career advice and professional development opportunities for researchers must also be naturally embedded in the appraisal talks and followed up. The support, in terms of the guidelines and template for documentation in preparing and conducting the appraisals, does not include career advice and is not customised for specific staff categories, such as researchers. Therefore the guidelines on employee performance appraisal interviews as well as the template for documentation will be updated to include these issues.</p>	28. Career development 30. Access to career advice 38. Continuing professional development 40. Supervision	7.1 Q2 2020 7.2 Q3 2020 7.3 Q4 2021
	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	HR Office	7.1 Guidelines and template updated 7.2 Information to Heads of Departments 7.3 Evidence of implementation of the new appraisal system
Action 8	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
<p>Embed the career advice and information structures within the HR Office and External Relations Office to reflect career advancement and wider employability</p> <p>Evaluate the transnational skills programme to enhance the employability of researchers (Transpeer). Transpeer promotes the wider employability of researchers and research supervisors alongside their skills development. This ensures that researchers receive career advice to allow their advancement within the research structures at Karlstad University. Relevant elements of this project will be embedded in KAU to address wider employability through career advice. Relevant information on Career advice is also available on our New Staff webpage.</p>	30. Access to career advice	8.1 Q1 2021 8.2 Q2 2021 8.3 Q3 2021 8.4 Q1 2022 8.5 Q1 2022
	Responsible unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
	External Relations, HR Office, Faculty	8.1 Review impact of Transpeer 8.2 Identify good practices 8.3 Bring together the good practices from Transpeer with the current documents for Career advancement and development 8.4 Implement the good practices within the appropriate structures 8.5 Develop the Career support content on the Work with us-page with outcomes of the project ensuring that all new recruits are guided.
Action 9	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
<p>Develop guidelines for co-authorship</p> <p>There is a variation in praxis between different disciplines across Karlstad University. Clear guidelines for co-</p>	32. Co-authorship	9.1 Q4 2020 9.2 Q2 2021 9.3 Q4 2021 9.4 Q1 2022

<p>authorship will be developed in liaison with the faculty boards and the ethics committee, taking national and international praxis into consideration. Implementation will include imbedding co-authorship guidelines into the doctoral student course, the doctoral student supervision course and the Research Handbook.</p>	<p>Responsible unit University Library</p>	<p>Indicator(s)/Target(s) 9.1 Internal analysis and national and international comparisons presented to faculty boards and the ethics committee 9.2 Internal consultation on co-authorship guidelines 9.3 Decision on guideline for co-authorship 9.4 Information and implementation of new guidelines</p>
<p>Action 10</p>	<p>GAP Principle(s)</p>	<p>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</p>
<p>Implement continual development opportunities for doctoral student supervisors</p> <p>Attendance of the doctoral supervision course is mandatory to become a <i>docent</i> (reader or associate professor). However, the gap analysis shows that researchers who supervise doctoral students experience a need for continuous development opportunities so that they can share and take part of other's experiences and learn from them.</p> <p>Formalise a structure where doctoral supervision is an ongoing process where practice and skills can be shared.</p>	<p>37. Supervision and managerial duties</p> <p>Responsible unit Faculty boards, Centre for Teaching and Learning (Sw: <i>Universitetspedagogiska enheten</i>, UPE)</p>	<p>10.1 Q1 2021 10.2 Q2 2021 10.3 Q3 2021 10.4 Q1 2022</p> <p>Indicator(s)/Target(s) 10.1 Proposal developed in Centre for Teaching and Learning 10.2 Proposal presented to the Faculty boards 10.3 Decision on implementation 10.4 Implemented</p>
<p>Action 11</p>	<p>GAP Principle(s)</p>	<p>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</p>
<p>Establish the impact of the doctoral supervision course on doctoral students</p> <p>The Graduate Student Association (GSA) has pointed out that the impact of the doctoral supervision course on doctoral students has not been established. The Centre for Teaching and Learning that is responsible for the course needs to connect with the Graduate Student Association and discuss how the impact should be assessed. Once the impact has been assessed, it also needs to be communicated to participants in the course, those currently supervising doctoral students, and the GSA.</p>	<p>37. Supervision and managerial duties</p> <p>Responsible unit The Centre for Teaching and Learning (Sw: <i>Universitetspedagogiska enheten</i>, UPE)</p>	<p>11.1 Q3 2020 11.2 Q1 2021</p> <p>Indicator(s)/Target(s) 11.1 Impact established 11.2 Established impact communicated to involved parties</p>
<p>Action 12</p>	<p>GAP Principle(s)</p>	<p>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</p>
<p>Ensure that KAUs Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming is implemented and meet HRS4R requirements</p> <p>The university has a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan that complements the gender actions in the HRS4R process. We will ensure that the requirements within the HRS4R process are met, if not exceeded. Find the Action plan at our HRS4R page: kau.se/en/work-us/karlstad-university-employer/human-resources-strategy-researchers-hrs4r</p> <p>The Action plan itself is between the years 2017-2019 but is during 2020 to be reviewed and incorporated with the University Strategic plan. There is a formal decision by the vice-chancellor that it will continue to be in use until the updated Strategic plan is completed.</p>	<p>10. Non discrimination 11. Selection (Code) 27. Gender balance</p> <p>Responsible unit Vice-Chancellors Office</p>	<p>12.1 Q1 2020 12.2 Q4 2021</p> <p>Indicator(s)/Target(s) 12.1 Ensure that the KAU Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming meets the requirements of HRS4R 12.2 Ensure implementation and incorporate with the University strategic plan</p>

Action 13	OTM-R action(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop a doctoral student steering document A working group has been appointed to include the doctoral students in the strategies and develop a doctoral student steering document to ensure that R1-R4 are given equal information.	OTM-R Questions no 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	13.1 Q2 2020 13.2 Q3 2020
	Responsible unit HR Office, External Relations, Faculty office	Indicator(s)/Target(s) 13.1 Proposal completed 13.2 Decision and information
Action 14	OTM-R action(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop templates for advertising doctoral studentships Templates for advertising doctoral studentships will be developed and implemented.	OTM-R Questions no 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11	14.1 Q3 2020 14.2 Q1 2021
	Responsible unit HR Office	Indicator(s)/Target(s) 14.1 Developed templates 14.2 Templates fully implemented in all recruitments
Action 15	OTM-R action(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop regulations regarding appointment and composition of recruitment groups Clear regulations regarding the appointment and the composition of recruitment groups will be developed.	OTM-R Question no 16, 17	15.1 Q4 2020 15.2 Q1 2021 15.3 Q1 2022
	Responsible unit HR Office	Indicator(s)/Target(s) 15.1 Developed regulations 15.2 Decision on regulations 15.3 Implemented

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) *

Karlstad University has for the last couple of years continuously been working with the recruitment procedures to be efficient as well as open, transparent and merit-based. All the principles of the Charter and Code in the area of recruitment are found to be fully implemented. However, in the OTM-R checklist there are some areas that needs further attention.

GAP: Doctoral students (question no 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11)

Karlstad University has a well-implemented OTM-based strategy for recruitments, however doctoral students are not included as a category. In addition, templates for advertising are not used when recruiting doctoral students.

Action 1 OTM-R: A working group has been appointed to include the doctoral students in the strategy and in relevant steering documents. A proposal will be finished by Q4 of 2019, decision and implementation finished by Q3 of 2020.

Action 2 OTM-R: Templates for advertising doctoral studentships will be developed and implemented by Q1 of 2020.

GAP: Regulations regarding recruitment groups (question no 16, 17)

It has been noted that KAU does not have clear regulations regarding either the appointment or the composition of recruitment groups.

Action 3 OTM-R: Clear regulations regarding the appointment and the composition of recruitment groups will be developed and implemented by Q4 2020.

If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website:

KAU has several documents that together constitute the implementation of OTM based recruitment:
Regulations for the Appointment and Promotion of Teaching Staff (*Teaching Staff in The Higher Education Ordinance refers to all Academic staff at an University in Sweden*)
Procedures for the Recruitment and Promotion of Teaching Staff
Strategy and Action Plan for Recruiting Academic Staff
These policies can all be downloaded at <https://www.kau.se/en/work-us/work/vacancies>

5. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The implementation phase led by the HR Office will engage the management and the Deans of the faculties. This will build upon the work undertaken in the gap analyses and action planning phase that was led by HR and External Relations. The next phase has well-defined targets, indicators, and the responsible units are identified within the actions. This will be the focus for improvement as well as ensuring that the elements of all other principles meet the standards required for retaining and promoting the 'HR Excellence in Research Award'. The implementation of the action phase has three key elements: 1) ensuring that the gap and action phases are known, the details permeate all levels of the university, and the units designated to implement identified actions fully understand the context of their work; 2) developing a plan for each identified gap to implement the action in the timeframe identified; and 3) monitoring the specific actions in the action plan but also the wider aspects of the charter and code, and working with policymakers to ensure that policies are aligned with the aims of the charter and code.

Once the application has been submitted and approved, work will begin on initiating a new process with a new Vice-Chancellor's decision appointing a working group to engage with the implementation partners, the linking persons within the units responsible for each action.

To ensure stakeholder involvement, there will be direct communication through open events as well as visits to research environments across the university. This will allow access to a diversity of opinions and guarantee that knowledge is utilised throughout the implementation of the action plan. Together, this will ensure that the knowledge and perspectives of the 'HR Excellence in Research Award' are embedded in all necessary processes.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The structure for implementing the actions will consist of three levels. A working group consisting of HR, External Relations and Faculty representatives (R1-R4 and administrative representatives) will oversee the process, reporting directly to the steering group, comprising executive management. The working group will liaise with responsible units on a quarterly basis to ensure the implementation of the actions and to support the process.

How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The main stakeholders, the research community, will be involved both through the dissemination of information about the process on the designated internal HRS4R website, but also directly through open events. The Heads of Departments will also be used as a conduit for engaging the research community within their departments and it is envisaged that the working group will visit each department twice over the 24 months to provide information, answer questions and gather opinions.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Within the framework of the HRS4R Action Plan, Karlstad University will be in line with all principles and the OTM recruitment process. The process of undertaking the gap analysis and then developing the action plan indicated that some policies need attention. These will be followed up and addressed in the implementation process. In addition, all offices responsible for research related policies have been engaged in the process to date and will continue to be engaged, thus ensuring that all policy developments in relation to research are aligned with HRS4R. An important factor is that the process is led by the HR Office which has direct oversight and knowledge of all HR policies.

How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

As described above, the structure for implementing the actions will consist of three levels. A working group consisting of HR, External Relations and Faculty representatives where R1-R4 researchers are included will oversee the process, reporting directly to the steering group, comprising executive management. The working group will liaise with responsible units on a quarterly basis to ensure the implementation of the actions and to support the process. The implementation of the actions will also be embedded into the organisation's operational plan, which is developed and reviewed annually at departmental and university levels. This will ensure that the implementation is reviewed and reported throughout the 24 months' timeframe.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The working group will document progress reported on the quarterly meetings with the responsible units, based on the indicators/targets of each action. Progress will also be reported in the organisation's operational plan, which is developed and reviewed annually at departmental and university levels. This will feed into the preparation for the next assessment.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

In preparing for the next assessment, the indicators/targets will be reviewed, not only in the context of each action, but also in relation to the overall principle and whether the gap has been fully addressed or not. The important aspects of monitoring involve identifying the impact of the award, and ensuring that the new actions taken are being implemented and embedded into the culture and practice of the organisation. This will be done by continuously monitoring and adjusting when required in order to ensure that the indicators achieve the desired outcomes. In preparation of the next assessment a plan will be developed to ensure that the main stakeholders as well as the line management are involved in the assessment. It is important to remember that the core reason for this journey is to optimise our inward and outward perspectives on recruiting, retaining researchers and providing them with a healthy and stable environment to work in.