

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS

HRS4R

Implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers
and of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers



Internal review

Ecole Centrale de Lyon

20/07/2020



ÉCOLE
CENTRALE LYON

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1. Presentation of Ecole Centrale de Lyon

The Ecole Centrale de Lyon (ECL) is a French public institution of higher education and research, created in 1857. About 3,640 students are trained each year, 25% of them are international students.

Research is a major activity of ECL, thanks to its 6 laboratories and 256 researchers, active in engineering sciences: acoustics, systems dynamics, electrical engineering, computer science, mathematics, fluid mechanics, nanotechnologies, tribology, etc. ECL is also involved in 8 international laboratories, with Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Korea, Spain and Japan and leads a close collaboration with the industrial research community.

Indicators

STAFF & STUDENTS	<i>Full Equivalent (2021)</i>	<i>Time FTE</i>
<i>Total researchers</i>	256	
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	61	
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	88	
<i>Of whom are women</i>	62	
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	1392	
<i>Of whom are stage R2 = ATER, Research Engineers, Post-docs</i>	42	
<i>Of whom are stage R1 = PhD students</i>	76	
<i>Total number of students (if relevant)</i>	3 640	
<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	547	
RESEARCH FUNDING	<i>M€ (2021)</i>	
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	57 M€	
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)</i>	11 M€	
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	6 M€	
<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	3 M€	

2. Implementation of the HRS4R action plan

The HRS4R policy

In 2007, Centrale Lyon committed itself to a process of progress concerning the recruitment, career and mobility of researchers, by signing the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The Charter and the Code advocate 40 principles to promote the mobility and career of researchers in Europe according to 4 main axes:

- Ethical and professional principles (freedom of research, non-discrimination, evaluation...)
- Recruitment (transparency of procedures, judgement on merit, valuing mobility, etc.)
- Working conditions and safety (research environment, career development, gender equality, representation, etc.)
- Training (supervision/mentoring, access to training, continuing professional development, etc.)

The European Commission urges each education and research institution to go further in this process, and to this end, launched under the French EU Presidency in 2008, the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) which encourages to

- Deploy its human resources management strategy in research,
- Develop its practices and get as close as possible to the recommendations set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Recruitment Code.

Centrale Lyon wished to pursue its approach on this subject by submitting an application for HRS4R labelling in 2019, including an analysis of the existing situation, the identification of progress margins and an action plan over 24 months.

Centrale Lyon obtained the HRS4R label in 2020, thus enabling it to extend its visibility at the European and international levels, to increase its attractiveness and to continue its activity in the European research framework programme.

Follow-up arrangements for the action plan

In order to ensure the follow-up of the HRS4R action plan defined in 2019, a steering committee of 3 people has been set up involving the General Director of Services, the Director of Human Resources and the European Affairs Manager. These people were appointed by the ECL Director and are directly involved in the HRS4R process within the school. The Steering Committee reports twice a year to the Supervisory Committee, which is composed of the Director of the organisation (President) and the Director of Research and Innovation.

This steering committee is led by the project manager, who is also responsible for European affairs within the partnership, research and development department, under the aegis of the research department. She has met several times a year with each of the people responsible for the 30 actions initially planned, in order to ensure the continuity of the action plan and possibly the pooling of certain ideas related to several actions.

Context

Three major events have impacted the institution over the last two years:

The covid-19 crisis and the successive reorganisations required by the lockdowns have slowed down the implementation of the HRS4R action plan which had been defined in 2019. Indeed, the main priorities in 2020 were to maintain student training and research activities on a remotely base, and to develop dematerialisation. This explains why some of the objectives set out in the HRS4R action plan could not be completed within the two-year timeframe.

In addition, the Saint-Etienne National Engineering School (ENISE) became an internal school of Centrale Lyon, which generated several months of organisational and human changes, and also had an impact on the implementation of the HRS4R action plan.

Finally, a change in the ECL's management has occurred in recent months, with three key people in the steering of the action plan retiring and being replaced between December 2020 and April 2022, namely the President, the director of research and the general director of services. These new people have quickly taken on board this HRS4R approach.

The 2030 strategy currently being defined within the institution should have a positive impact on the action plan, as this strategy takes into account the quality of work life, corporate social responsibility, and the attractiveness of the institution for researchers.

The implementation of this strategy will be taken into account by the steering committee and by the supervisory committee, which will allow practices to evolve in the spirit of a continuous improvement approach.

3. Action plan assessment

Evolution of the institution's strengths and weaknesses

The implementation of the HRS4R action plan over the last two years has enabled the institution's strengths and weaknesses identified during the initial analysis phase to evolve. The main progress is detailed below for each of the 4 axes of the European Charter for Researchers.

Ethical and professional aspects

A major project was carried out on open science, which led to the following in 2020:

- The definition of an institutional policy,
- The development of a guide for researchers,
- The setting up of information workshops to support researchers in their open access publication process and in the opening of research data.

This action will continue in the coming years with the implementation of recommendations and tools for data backup.

The institution has also evolved on complementary subjects, with the constitution of an inter-institutional ethics committee at the University of Lyon, the implementation of the incentive for patent filing and the procedure concerning cumulative authorisations.

Recruitment and selection

In this area, the ECL's greatest weakness was the OTM (open, transparent and merit-based) recruitment: while this practice has been in place for many years for the recruitment of civil servant researchers, it had not been implemented for contract researchers. This particularly concerned doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows recruited on research contracts subsidised by France or the European Commission, but also by industrial partners.

In 2021, ECL has defined an OTM-R recruitment policy for contract researchers, which will be applied in the coming months, thanks to the deployment of a dedicated tool.

In addition, insofar as the ECL's subsidiary, Centrale Innovation, manages part of the organisation's research projects, it regularly recruits researchers. Consequently, the subsidiary has also defined an OTM-R policy and is currently in the process of deploying recruitment assistance software.

Working conditions

The main action carried out in this area concerns the development of an action plan for the quality of work life, co-designed with the staff and the organisation's management. On the basis of a diagnosis carried out

in 2022, 99 actions were identified and then prioritised, leading to the definition of an annual plan of 10 actions in 2022 which will be continued in the following years.

Training and development

In terms of training and development of researchers, the ECL's strength lies in the lifelong training of researchers, from R1 to R4 level. The organisation has a varied catalogue of training courses in science and technology, languages and soft skills.

In this area, the organisation has completed its training offer with the implementation of a training programme for thesis supervisors/directors for the supervision of doctoral students.

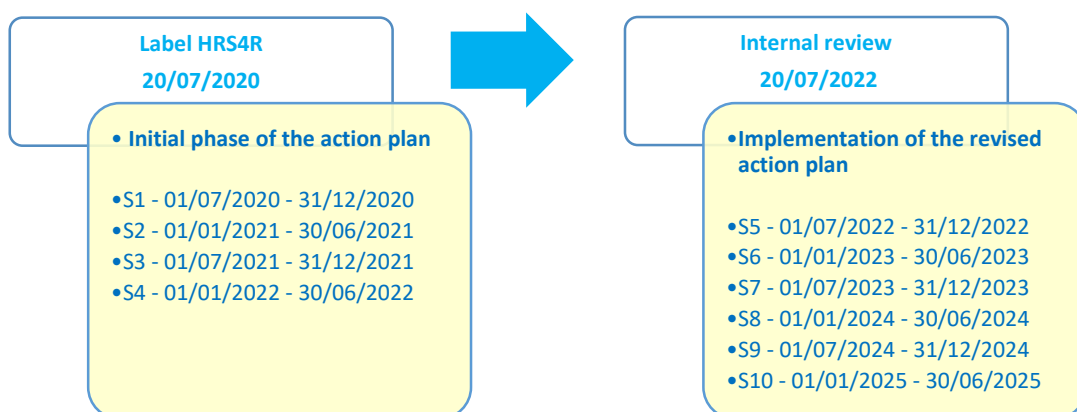
Follow-up of actions

The action plan drawn up in 2019 identified 30 objectives to be achieved between 2020 and 2022.

The analysis of this plan, carried out in July 2022, shows that 26 actions have been partially or totally achieved (i.e. 87% of the planned actions), and that 3 actions falling within the scope of the HRS4R strategy, not initially planned, have also been achieved.

Table 1 summarises the state of play of all actions foreseen in the initial plan. Ongoing actions have been rescheduled for the period 2022-2025, with their new end date indicated next to their status. For completed actions, their completion date is indicated. Finally, two actions have been completed but are of a long-term nature and are marked with the status "extended".

In some cases, the Responsible Unit has changed, and these changes have been taken into account in this table.



<i>Proposed actions</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</i>	<i>Current state / timing</i>
1. Newcomers' guide to be completed with fundamental principles of research freedom and ethics	S1	Communication Department	Dedicated intranet page / Researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S5
2. Establishment of a charter informing researchers of their rights and duties	S1	Research and Innovation Department	Existence of the charter / Researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S7
3. Written procedure for the mobility of researchers	S1	HR Department	Written procedure, validated and published on the ECL intranet / civil servant researchers R3 and R4	Achieved / S2
4. Deontology committee and ethics charter for research professions to be made known	S2	Services Department	Dedicated intranet page / Researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S5
5. Anti-plagiarism procedure to be generalised	S1	Research and Innovation Department	Written procedure, validated and published on the ECL intranet / All researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S6
6. Establishment of an ethics committee or appointment of a scientific integrity referent	S1	Management Board	Establishment of an ethics committee or appointment of a referent / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
7. Large Communication on HRS4R policy	S1	Communication Department	Visibility on the internet and intranet websites/ All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
8. Training for department Heads	S4	HR Department	Training Program / Department Heads (R3 and R4)	Achieved / S3
9. Engagement letter for department heads	S2	HR Department	Engagement Letter / Department Heads (R3 and R4)	In progress / S5
10. Verification of requests for cumulating activities	S4	HR Department	Written procedure, validated and published on the ECL intranet / civil servant researchers R3 and R4	Achieved / S1
11. Application of the Decree on Patent registration Incentive	S2	Research and Innovation Department	Written procedure, validated and published on the ECL intranet / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S2
12. Generalize internal meetings with researchers and administrative staff to launch research projects	S1	Research and Innovation Department	% project start meeting in relation to the number of projects / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
13. Communicate on the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	S1	Communication Department	Dedicated intranet page / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
14. Backup, encryption and archiving of research data	S4	Research and Innovation Department	Written procedure, validated and published on the ECL intranet / All researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S8
15. Appoint missing security referents in research laboratories	S1	Services Department	Actual appointments and information / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S4
16. Open Science Institution Policy	S2	Research and Innovation Department	Written and published Open Science policy / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1

17. Publication of an open access / open data guide	S2	Research and Innovation Department	Written and published guide / All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
18. Communicate on the gender equality and non-discrimination charters	S1	Communication Department	Visibility on the internet and intranet websites/ All researchers R1 to R4	Achieved / S1
19. Definition of the OTM-R recruitment policy for contract researchers	S3	HR Department	Written and validated OTM-R procedure / contract researchers (R1 and R2)	Achieved / S3
20. Publication of the OTM-R policy	S3	HR Department Communication Department	Publication of the ECL OTM-R policy on the websites (FR and EN) / All researchers R1 to R4	In progress / S7
21. Initiate the psychosocial risk prevention plan	S4	Management Board	Prevention plan under development / all researchers R1 to R4	Extended / S6
22. Quality of Work Life Action Plan	S4	Management Board	Action plan under development / All researchers R1 to R4	Extended / S10
23. Generalize professional interviews to contract researchers, and to teacher-researchers on request	S2	HR Department	% of interviews conducted / contract researchers (R1 and R2) and teacher-researchers (R3 and R4)	In progress / S7
24. Record provisional vs. actual service declarations	S4	Studies Department	Procedure for determining the provisional vs. actual services / Teacher-researchers (R3 and R4)	In progress / S6
25. Reminder to doctoral students of the need to complete teaching hours to obtain a qualification	S1	Research and Innovation Department	Integration in the doctoral students' charter / PhD students(R1)	In progress / S5
26. Promote the European doctoral label and information on the diploma supplement during mobility during the doctorate	S1	Research and Innovation Department	Integration in the doctoral students' charter / PhD students(R1)	In progress / S5
27. Setting up an interview 3 months before the end of the contract for ending contract researchers	S3	HR Department	% of interviews conducted vs. end of contract departures / Contract researchers (R1 and R2)	In progress / S8
28. Return to work training for ending contract researchers	S3	HR Department	% of trainings conducted vs. end of contract departures / Contract researchers (R1 and R2)	In progress / S8
29. Appointment of a mediator to receive complaints	S2	Management Board	Appointment of a mediator / All researchers (R1 to R4)	In progress / S6
30. Management training for supervisors / directors of thesis	S3	HR Department	Training implemented and offered / supervisors, thesis directors (R3 and R4)	Achieved / S3

Table 1: Status of actions in the initial action plan

Table 2 presents the 3 actions carried out but not initially foreseen in the action plan.

<i>Actions carried out</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</i>	<i>Current state / timing</i>
Deployment of telework	S3	HR Department	Procedure disseminated and implemented / All researchers	Achieved / S3
Action plan for professional equality between women and men	S3	Management Board	Directorate Action plan drafted, validated and published on the website / All researchers	Achieved / S3

Charter against sexual and gender-based violence	S4	Management Boar	Charter drafted, validated and published on the website/ All researchers	Achieved / S4
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Table 2 - List of unplanned and completed actions

Finally, this internal evaluation process led to the emergence of new actions, planned for the next three years, from 2022 to 2025, which are presented in Table 3.

<i>New actions</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</i>
31. Translation of emails and important administrative documents in English for foreign researchers (employment contract, charters...)	S10	HR Department	% documents translated / documents identified / All researchers
32. Management training for supervisors of contract researchers	S8	HR Department	Training implemented and offered to supervisors / Supervisors
33. Implementation of a tool to help recruit contract researchers	S7	Research and Innovation Department	Software in use / contract researchers (R1 and R2)
34. Application of the OTM-R procedure for contract researchers	S8	HR Department	% of contract researchers recruited who have followed the OTM-R procedure / All contract researchers
35. Publication of names of referents and procedures for contacting them (complaints)	S6	Management board	Names and procedures published on the intranet / All researchers

Table 3: New actions planned

4. Continuation of the revised action plan

This revised action plan, including ongoing, extended and new actions, will be followed up over the next three years by the Steering and Supervisory Committees.

Two surveys will be conducted among researchers during this period, in order to collect their perception of the achievements made through the implementation of this action plan, to identify issues for improvement and to bring out new needs. The results of these surveys will contribute to the construction of the next action plan in 2025, and to the preparation of the audit for the renewal of the HRS4R label in three years.

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