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Palacký University Olomouc

HR Excellence in Research

Renewal Review

Innovation and development of research capacities for the future of Palacký University Olomouc
CZ.02.01.01/00/23_026/0011362

HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Case number: 2020CZ485683

Name Organisation under review: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci

Organisation's contact details: Křížkovského 8, Olomouc, 77147, Czech Republic

Web page: https://www.upol.cz/en/, https://pracuj.upol.cz/en/hr-award/

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

STAFF & STUDENTS	***FTE (2025)***
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	1967,4
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	366,1
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	4668
Of whom are women	822,0
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	441,2
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	104,5
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	1450,5
Total number of students (if relevant)	19925
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	3302,3
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	***€***
Total annual organisational budget	96 229 614
Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, used for teaching, research, infrastructure,…)	61420 870
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	33 035 760
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1 772 984

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

Palacký University in Olomouc (UP) is a research university with 23,478 students (2025), more than 2,900 academic staff and researchers, and nearly 1,600 non-academic staff. UP, which ranks among the leading Czech universities, comprises eight faculties, six university departments and the Rector's Office. Its research infrastructure includes the Czech Institute for Advanced Technologies and Research (CATRIN), which brings together teams from three major research centres focusing on medicine, advanced technologies, materials, biotechnology and agriculture. In addition, there are eleven research centres operating within the faculties.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE

Ethical and professional aspects

STRENGTHS
During the 2023–2026 period, the university successfully implemented the planned measures to strengthen the framework for research integrity and open science. The target related to the revision of the Code of Good Research Practice and Creative Activity was achieved. The Code was reviewed and updated to reflect current needs and emerging topics, with the revision discussed with representatives of the scientific community. A major achievement was the completion and implementation of the university's research data management (RDM) framework. Since August 2024, internal norm R-B-24/08 Research Data Management at Palacký University Olomouc has provided a binding framework for RDM, complemented by an annotated methodology available in Czech and English. The bilingual RDMP Navigator further supports researchers by clearly presenting RDM requirements according to their roles. The university has also strengthened its institutional capacity for open science and RDM through the establishment of the Open Science Community Olomouc (OSCO) and a network of institutional data stewards across seven faculties. These structures provide a basis for sharing good practice, coordinating support and further developing expertise across the university.
WEAKNESSES
The current Code of Good Research Practice and Creative Activity sets out the relevant principles; however, their practical interpretation – in particular, the provision of clearer guidance for researchers in specific and potentially complex research situations – may vary across the university. Education and training in research ethics, responsible and open science is not yet sufficiently systematic or differentiated according to the needs of different target groups, including researchers at different career stages and research support staff. The institutional structures supporting open science and research data management also require further consolidation. The Open Science Community and the data steward network provide an important basis for collaboration and support, but their activities and coordination are not yet fully established across the university. More generally, support and expertise remain distributed across several areas, which can make it difficult for researchers to identify and access the appropriate support. A new ethics committee has been established, within which the role of the research ombudsman in investigating complaints referred by the ethics committee has been clearly defined.

Recruitment and Selection

STRENGTHS
Training on OTM-R principles has been provided to senior staff involved in recruitment and selection, with further training planned for key personnel at faculties and research centres. A practical guide for selection committee members has been developed and integrated into the Moodle training course, providing clear guidance on selection interviews, legal requirements, non-discrimination, GDPR, online recruitment and cybersecurity. All job advertisements are published on the central UP website, which also provides applicants with information on the selection process. The results of selection procedures for academic and research positions are now published online, further strengthening transparency and openness. The electronic system for the administration of recruitment procedures is being modified and updated in line with the requirements of the HR Department, supporting more efficient and standardised management of recruitment processes. A university-wide onboarding methodology, including an adaptation form, checklist and evaluation rules, has been developed, formally adopted and implemented. The methodology has been disseminated across UP.
WEAKNESSES
A systematic framework for monitoring and quality assurance of recruitment processes, including automated data collection, selected quality indicators and applicant feedback, is a new activity and is currently being introduced. While initial training has been delivered, a comprehensive and systematic training framework for all relevant staff is still being developed.

Working conditions and social security

STRENGTHS
A new Job Catalogue has been developed, defining academic and research positions in line with the European Framework for Research Careers (R1–R4). UP has established a comprehensive *Family Friendly UP* information section and developed guidance on maternity and parental leave, flexible working arrangements and work–life balance. A more structured system of support, counselling and prevention has been established, improving employees' access to assistance and guidance. By appointing an ombudsman, the university is strengthening the development of an inclusive working environment and equal opportunities.
WEAKNESSES
The new framework for academic and research positions requires further implementation, particularly through the development of competency frameworks and related assessment tools. Some internal regulations still need to be aligned with the new framework for academic and research careers and working conditions. Systematic succession planning and further development of career and leadership support remain areas for future development. The systematic support provided to international staff throughout recruitment, arrival and integration requires further development.

Training and development

STRENGTHS
A training methodology for UP staff has been adopted, which sets out the conditions for staff professional development, particularly in the areas of induction and on-the-job training, further training and upskilling. A programme of training events for researchers has been drawn up, with particular attention paid to early-career and senior researchers in leadership positions. A large proportion of the courses has been moved online, with a series of online training modules created on Moodle, focusing on strengthening teaching skills. For senior staff, training is offered on the responsibilities of a manager, on recruitment and selection in accordance with OTM-R principles, and on appraisal and career development. The full range of training courses is available to all staff without restriction on the lifelong learning portal. Researchers and other staff continue to have access to international mobility opportunities through established programmes such as Erasmus+, CEEPUS and government scholarship schemes. Relevant information is available on the International Department's website and on the staff portal. The organisation and administration of staff mobility are centrally coordinated, providing institutional support throughout the process.
WEAKNESSES
Standardised career plan templates have been drawn up, but their widespread implementation has not yet been completed. There is also a lack of systematic training in career management, both for researchers themselves and for senior researchers, who are expected to assess the career plans of their employees. Furthermore, a succession plan has not yet been drawn up and is therefore not part of career planning. As training is not compulsory for researchers, the university is facing low attendance rates amongst its researchers. This weakness appears to be partially remediable by moving the courses online.

ACTION PLAN 2026-2029

Action	*Description*	*GAP Principle(s)*	*Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)*	*Responsible Unit*	*Indicator(s) / Target(s)*
ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS					
Code of Good Research Practice – Guidance and Training	Transformation of the Code of Good Research Practice into a practice-oriented handbook and its conversion into a self-paced e-learning course covering research integrity and good research practice throughout the research lifecycle. The revised Code and the course will provide practical guidance, checklists and examples addressing key ethical issues. The checklists will be validated by faculty ethics committees before publication.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 31, 32, 35	4Q/2027	Research Concepts and Support Office Library Legal Office Ombudsperson for Science Faculty ethics committees	• Revised Code with practical guidance and checklists published and disseminated. • Key ethical topics (responsibility for research data, artificial intelligence etc.) incorporated into the revised Code. • E-learning course developed and available in Moodle. • Number of participants completing the course.
Responsible and Open Science Trainings	Development and delivery of two tailored one-semester courses on responsible and open science: one for PhD students and early-career researchers (ECRs), focusing on the practical application of research data management (RDM) and open science principles, and one for research managers and administrators (RMAs), focusing on conceptual understanding and first-line advisory competence. Both courses address ethical, legal, security and AI considerations across the research data lifecycle.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 28, 30, 31, 32, 39	4Q/2028	Research Concepts and Support Office Library	• Course for PhD students and ECRs developed and delivered. • Course for RMAs developed and delivered. • Number of participants from the target groups, who completed the course.
Development of the Open Science Community and Data Steward Network	Strengthening the Open Science Community (OSCO) through stable coordination, a regular programme of educational and networking activities, and further professionalisation of the institutional data steward network. The activity will focus on completing data steward certification, regular methodological meetings and collaboration on practical research data management cases.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 38, 39	3Q/2029	Research Concepts and Support Office Library Faculties' Research Offices	• OSCO coordination established and regular activities delivered. • Data steward certification completed. • Regular methodological meetings of data stewards held. • Number of faculties represented in the Data Steward Network.

Action	*Description*	*GAP Principle(s)*	*Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)*	*Responsible Unit*	*Indicator(s) / Target(s)*
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION					
OTM-R policy training vol. 2	Systematic training for senior staff involved in the recruitment and selection of researchers in accordance with OTM-R principles, delivered through regular face-to-face courses and an online Moodle course integrated into the adaptation process for newly appointed heads of departments and research groups.	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 37, 38, 39	3Q/2029	HR Office (Rector's Office) Continuing Education and Teaching Innovations Office	• At least 1 in-person OTM-R training session delivered annually. • Moodle OTM-R course available and included in the induction process. • At least of 50 senior staff completing OTM-R training (in-person or online).
Monitoring and quality assurance of recruitment process	Establishing a system to monitor recruitment processes at UP through automated data collection and selected quality indicators. The system will also include applicant feedback to support continuous improvement of recruitment procedures.	12, 13, 15	1Q/2027	HR Office (Rector's Office) HR Offices (all Faculties and CATRIN) Computer Centre	• Recruitment monitoring system established and operational. • Applicant feedback questionnaire implemented and regularly used. • Regular evaluation of recruitment processes conducted based on monitoring data and applicant feedback.

Action	*Description*	*GAP Principle(s)*	*Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)*	*Responsible Unit*	*Indicator(s) / Target(s)*
WORKING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY					
Development of Competency Frameworks for Researchers	Completion of the competency framework for academic staff by linking teaching competencies to the R1–R4 career stages and incorporating research competencies aligned with the ResearchComp competence areas. Development of an evaluation tool to support the assessment of researchers' competencies and career development.	28, 29, 30, 33, 35, 37, 39	4Q/2028	HR Office (Rector's Office) Continuing Education and Teaching Innovations Office	• Competency framework covering teaching and research competencies developed. • Evaluation tool for researchers' competencies and career development developed.
Welcome Office development	Strengthening systematic support for international staff throughout recruitment, arrival and integration. This includes improving information on the UP website and Portal, facilitating networking, developing practical support materials for faculty representatives, and continuing to provide administrative support regarding visas, residence permits and work permits.	24, 25, 38	3Q/2029	HR Office (Rector's Office) HR Offices (all Faculties and CATRIN) Communications Office International Office	• UP website and Portal information for international staff updated and maintained. • Informal networking meetings for international staff organised regularly. • Practical support materials for faculty representatives developed and implemented. • Systematic HR support for the recruitment of foreign nationals established, covering visa, residence and work permit procedures.
Strengthening the Ombudsperson's Office and Rights Protection System	Following the development of the Strategy for the Protection of Rights at UP, the capacity of the Ombudsperson's Office will be strengthened and the university-wide system for the protection of rights will be further developed. The activity will include the implementation of the Strategy, professional training of the ombudsperson, and methodological and educational support for relevant target groups. Workshops and training sessions will also be provided for faculty ombudspersons and other staff in similar roles.	10, 24, 25, 27	4Q/2028	HR Office (Rector's Office) Ombudspersons	• Strategy for the Protection of Rights at UP developed and implemented. • Ombudsperson professionally trained in two introductory training courses. • At least four workshops and training sessions for faculty ombudspersons and staff in similar roles delivered. • Methodological and educational support provided to relevant target groups (8 faculty ombudspersons etc.).

Action	*Description*	*GAP Principle(s)*	*Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)*	*Responsible Unit*	*Indicator(s) / Target(s)*
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT					
Career Planning and Support for Researchers on Career Breaks	A career-planning framework and tools will be developed for employees returning from career breaks, including maternity or parental leave and academic staff returning to research and teaching after university management positions or public office. Individual career plans will support their return to academic and research activities. A support scheme will also be established, including workshops, networking and individual counselling focused on career development, work–life balance and reintegration into the academic environment.	21, 28, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40	4Q/2028	HR Office (Rector's Office) HR Departments (all Faculties and CATRIN)	• Career-planning framework and tools developed. • Individual career plans developed for employees returning from maternity or former university leaders and public office holders. Support scheme implemented, including workshops, networking and individual counselling.
Training and Development for Senior Researchers	Improving the quality of training provision for senior researchers, particularly regarding strengthening managerial skills. A strong emphasis on training in the areas of recruitment and selection, induction, appraisal and career management for less experienced researchers.	28, 30, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40	3Q/2029	HR Office (Rector's Office) Continuing Education and Teaching Innovations Office	• At least four courses per academic year focusing on key managerial responsibilities, recruitment and selection of staff in accordance with OTM-R principles, and staff appraisal and career development. • At least two courses focusing on teaching skills as part of the lifelong learning programme.
Training and Development for Early-Career Researchers	Strengthening the support system for early-career researchers through further development of the Doctoral Space, Doctoral School and Postdoctoral Academy. The activity will focus on expanding the training offer, including English-language courses covering the ResearchComp competence framework, strengthening networking opportunities and piloting a university-wide mentoring programme for early-career researchers.	21, 28, 29, 30, 33, 36, 38, 39, 40	3Q/2029	Division of the Vice-Rector for Doctoral Studies and Junior Science HR Office (Rector's Office)	• Networking activities for doctoral and early-career researchers implemented. • University-wide mentoring programme piloted. • At least four courses in English for early-career researchers every year. • At least one course focusing on one of the seven 'Research Comp' competence areas each year.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

General overview of the implementation process

The implementation of the HR Award Action Plan at Palacký University Olomouc (UP) has continued within a changing organisational and leadership context. In May 2025, a new Rector and a new team of Vice-Rectors were appointed. The new leadership reaffirmed human resources as a strategic priority and provided renewed impetus for the implementation of the HR Award Action Plan. This has created favourable conditions for accelerating several key HR-related measures and for further embedding the principles of the European Charter for Researchers in the university's policies and practices.

The implementation process has been closely linked to the university's broader strategic development. The Action Plan is aligned with the Strategic Plan for Educational and Creative Activities for the Period 2021+, Implementation plans for the Strategic Plan for Educational and Creative Activities for each year, the Sustainable Development Strategy of Palacký University Olomouc and the Gender Equality Plan. At the same time, the implementation takes account of strategic documents under preparation, including the Strategy for the Evaluation of Creative Activities, the Strategy for Commercialisation and Knowledge and Technology Transfer, the Open Science Strategy and the Institutional Resilience Strategy. This ensures that HR Award measures are developed as part of a coherent institutional framework rather than as isolated activities.

During the reporting period, substantial progress was made in establishing and implementing key institutional frameworks. A new Job Catalogue was finalised in 2026, defining academic and research positions in line with the European Framework for Research Careers (R1–R4). The preparation of the catalogue involved extensive consultation with faculties and subsequent consideration by the UP Academic Senate. The new Job Catalogue, together with the Internal Wage Regulation and related internal regulations, provides an important basis for further development of researchers' career paths, job descriptions and working conditions.

Implementation has also focused strongly on improving recruitment, onboarding and career development. Training on recruitment and selection in accordance with OTM-R principles has been provided to senior staff, while a practical guide for selection committee members has been incorporated into Moodle training. An official methodology for employee adaptation, supported by an adaptation form and checklist, has been adopted and implemented across the university. A career plan form has also been incorporated into the IS HAP evaluation system, with the related methodology prepared for further implementation through training for senior staff and faculty HR officers.

The university has simultaneously strengthened the information and support environment for researchers. Relevant websites and the dedicated HR Award section have been updated, personnel methodologies have been centralised, and a dedicated information point for foreign researchers has been established. Support for international researchers has also been reinforced through assistance with residence and work permits. In parallel, support for early-career researchers has expanded through the introduction of a dedicated postdoctoral researcher position, a broader training portfolio and strengthened guidance for PhD students, including bilingual doctoral information and a renewed PhD newsletter.

Considerable attention has been given to creating a supportive, inclusive and sustainable working environment. Support for employees with caring responsibilities has been strengthened through the Family Friendly UP initiative, practical guidance on maternity and parental leave and work–life balance, and improved information on family-friendly facilities. A network of contact persons and an overview of counselling and support services have been established, together with methodological materials addressing inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. These measures complement the appointment of an Ombudsperson and the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Committee, reflecting the stronger institutional emphasis on employee well-being, inclusion and equal opportunities.

The implementation process has been informed by systematic feedback from employees. Between 2023 and 2026, four questionnaire surveys addressed working conditions, job satisfaction, mental health and experiences of unethical behaviour. The results have contributed to shaping the university's HR strategy and identifying areas requiring further attention. Professional development has also been supported through an adopted training methodology covering induction, on-the-job training, further training and upskilling, supported by model training plans and career plans. A programme of training for researchers has been developed, with particular attention to early-career researchers and senior researchers in leadership positions.

The implementation has nevertheless involved some delays and sequencing challenges. The finalisation of the new Job Catalogue required extensive preparation and consultation and consequently postponed the development of competency frameworks and the alignment of several related internal regulations. The Career Code, the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Academic and Scientific Researchers therefore remain to be aligned with the new Job Catalogue. Similarly, the mentoring handbook for early-career researchers has been developed but has not yet been fully implemented. These outstanding measures have been carried forward into the next implementation period.

Overall, the implementation process can be characterised by substantial progress in establishing the institutional foundations for sustainable HR development, while the transition from centrally developed frameworks and methodologies to their consistent implementation across individual faculties and research units remains gradual. One of

the main challenges is the relatively slow uptake and implementation of some measures and methodologies at faculty level. In some areas, there is also a degree of institutional resistance to introducing new approaches and practices. A further challenge is the participation of researchers themselves in professional development activities. As training is not mandatory at the university, participation may be limited, particularly among researchers who face high workloads and competing academic, research and managerial responsibilities. These factors can slow down the practical implementation and embedding of new measures, despite the availability of institutional frameworks and support. The next implementation period will therefore focus not only on completing the remaining measures, but also on strengthening their practical uptake, communication and integration into everyday practice across the university.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles

The implementation of the OTM-R system at Palacký University Olomouc has made substantial progress and the key elements of an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment system are now in place.

OTM-R system of Palacký University Olomouc is aligned with the Code of Conduct and is publicly available in both Czech and English on the HR Award website and on the recruitment platform. A supporting methodology for managers has been developed to guide them through recruitment procedures in line with OTM-R principles. The university job portal has been continuously updated and reorganised according to the positions advertised, including improvements to the English version. Applicants have access to a dedicated guide explaining the recruitment and selection process at UP.

The implementation has also been supported by training and practical guidance for those involved in recruitment and selection. Several training sessions on recruitment and selection, with a focus on OTM-R principles, have been provided for senior staff. A practical guide for selection committee members has been developed and incorporated into the Moodle training course. It covers key aspects of selection interviews, including applicable legal requirements such as GDPR and anti-discrimination legislation, as well as recommendations for conducting online selection procedures in accordance with UP cybersecurity principles.

In addition, the university has established a standardised onboarding methodology, including an adaptation form and checklist. The methodology has been formally adopted and implemented across UP, with guidance and consultation provided to relevant staff. It is available to employees through UPShare, the university's internal repository of regulations and methodologies.

Further implementation will focus particularly on strengthening the consistent application of OTM-R principles across faculties and research centres through additional training and support for key personnel. The second priority is to establish a systematic

framework for monitoring and ensuring the quality of recruitment processes, including automated data collection, selected quality indicators and feedback from candidates.

Members of Steering Committee

doc. JUDr. Michael Kohajda, Ph.D. (Rector)

doc. JUDr. Klára Hamuľáková Ph.D. (Vice-Rector for Legislation, Organisation and Digitalisation)

doc. Mgr. Miroslav Dopita, Ph.D. (Vice-Rector for Doctoral Studies and Junior Science)

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