

HR Excellence in Research

Action Plan

Action Plan

Case number

2023PT143599

Name Organisation under review

ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

Organisation's contact details

Avenida das Forças Armadas, Edifício I, Reitoria, Lisbon, 1649-026, Portugal

Submission date to the European Commission

03/02/2025

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 *	562
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	162
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	239
Of whom are women *	323
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	89
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	67
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	406
Total number of students (if relevant) *	12087
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1036
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	82024845,00
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	2304748,00

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)

€

Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	12278022,00
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	365435,00

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

Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon is a public university established in 1972. Iscte focuses on offer training courses, including PhD programmes, develop research and provide community service activities in a close link with society. In Iscte, there is a strong commitment with internationalisation and the development of an innovative and entrepreneurial culture.

Iscte covers a wide range of areas such as business, economic, social sciences, public policy, technology and architecture and recognises the high potential of the combination of social sciences and digital technologies to support public policy. Iscte performs high impact research that is carried out by eight Research Units, which are internationally assessed and work collaboratively with a wide range of enterprises, public services and research institutions.

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*

**Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****Strengths**

Iscte follows principles of autonomy and intellectual freedom and respect for academic ethics, guaranteeing freedom of scientific, cultural and technological creation, in plurality and free expression of orientations and opinions. This framework is combined with a strong commitment to research integrity, innovation and social impact, paying attention to new problems and emerging challenges in the social, economic and public spheres.

Iscte promotes knowledge and social appropriation of science, aiming for a better public understanding of scientific activities, and for the valorization of science and the academic and non-academic impact of scientific research.

Iscte's research units and laboratories ensure the transfer of knowledge to the community. They include societal challenges in their scientific agenda and their action plans activities for the dissemination and diffusion of knowledge. They also provide services to the community and scientific training and education for different audiences. This vocation to disseminate scientific knowledge is reinforced by nine observatories in which Iscte participate or coordinate.

Each research unit has a scientific communication manager.

The scientific activity of Iscte is disseminated through the public research portal [ciencia_Iscte](https://ciencia.iscte-iul.pt/) [link (<https://ciencia.iscte-iul.pt/>)], as well as through the Repository [link] (<https://repositorio.iscte-iul.pt/>) (a research data catalog that gathers all the academic and scientific publications of the institution) and the research journal [Entrecampus](https://www.iscte-iul.pt/entrecampus) [link (<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/entrecampus>)].

Iscte Ethics Council is a consultative organ which oversees the ethical aspects of scientific research. This body ensures that research is conducted in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all parties involved, in accordance with the principles of intellectual freedom, autonomy, responsibility, integrity, transparency, and accountability. The Council of Ethics and the Ethics Committees of Iscte are an independent and multidisciplinary bodies that operate in accordance with the Regulations of the Iscte Council of Ethics and Ethics Committees [link (https://www.iscte-iul.pt/assets/files/2023/02/22/1677091152874_regulamento_do_conselho_de_etica.pdf)], in compliance with the Statutes, the Academic Conduct Code of Iscte and the Code of Conduct for Ethical Research at Iscte [link (https://www.iscte-iul.pt/assets/files/2022/01/24/1643046250963_Code_of_Ethical_Conduct_in_Research_ISCTE.pdf)].

In addition to the Ethics Council, Ethics Committees are also in operation at schools and research units. The objective of this decentralised structure is to provide a more efficient and accessible response, thus accelerating the assessment of research proposals and the production of reports. The activities of the commissions are monitored by the Ethics Council, which is responsible for proposing guidelines and best practices regarding the implementation of ethics policies, processes, and procedures.

It is important to note that researchers have access to guidance on the protection of personal data in scientific research activities [link (https://iscte-iul.pt/assets/files/2022/12/12/1670862287212_guidelines_for_researchers_on_personal_data_protection.pdf)].

Iscte has established an internal reporting channel [link (<https://canaldedenuncia.iscte-iul.pt/>)] for the confidential reporting of academic fraud (plagiarism, self-plagiarism, text or idea appropriation, etc.) and discrimination. Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion, social origin, nationality, gender, political, religious or ideological opinions is prohibited.

Researchers with permanent employment contracts are evaluated through a transparent, open, and equitable system to ensure that their performance is fairly and accurately assessed. The Evaluation Performance System is based on a collaborative assessment culture, built on trust and credibility, which fosters an environment conducive to research and collective work. The following dimensions are assessed: scientific production, applied research activities and knowledge dissemination, pedagogical activities, and the management of science, technology and innovation.


Weaknesses

The low awareness about the importance of public engagement to increase Iscte social commitment and how that can be done must be overcome. The communication strategy needs to be adjusted, both internally and externally. To this end, Iscte plans to develop an e-toolkit to support the dissemination and communication of research results (Action 20), as well as training actions on this topic (Action 5).

Despite the existence of a Data Management and Sharing Policy, the development and implementation of internal routines is still a challenge. Iscte has to reinforce dissemination strategies and provide training on open science and open data (Action 9). This is necessary in order to contribute to the responsible and effective management of research data in line with the guiding principles of the European Commission's Open Science and the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).

Similarly, it is crucial to disseminate Iscte policy on incentives for excellence in research activities more widely (Action 19) and Iscte tools supporting research. Considering the latter dimension, a strategic campaign will be developed to increase awareness on the tool enabling the measurement of research social impact (Action 10).

Furthermore, Iscte is lacking implement mechanisms to ensure compliance with the procedures set out in Iscte Code of Conduct for Research Ethics (Actions 1, 2 and 3).

Recruitment and selection* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****Strengths**

Iscte recruitment and selection process is based on public rules, such as Iscte Regulation of Research, Science and Technology Staff (Regulation 872/2024, of 8th August), the regime of PhD contracting (Decree-Law 57/2016, of 29th August) and the Research Fellowship Holder Statute (Law 40/2004, of 18th August).

Iscte recruitment processes provide information on: legislation applicable to the recruitment process; type of contract; organisation and scientific area or unit/department; work location(s); remuneration position; job title specifications; requirements to evaluate the candidate in accordance with an absolute merit; assessment and selection criteria; participation of the interest parties and decision; composition of the selection committee; submission and processing of the applicants; publication of the tender public notice; and non-discrimination and equal opportunity policy.

Iscte uses a recruitment platform that covers all stages of the process, where candidates can submit their applications. The results of the selection process are published in this platform.

The selection committee makes the minutes with the results of each selection method which can be consulted in person for candidates when they asked for it. Therefore, each candidate can take note of strengths and weaknesses of her/his application.

For each recruitment process there's a complaint mechanism. For instance, a process based on Regulation 872/2024, of 8th August, when the candidates are notified by e-mail about the results published on Iscte platform recruitment and website, the Human Resources Unit (HRU) inform that they have a period to present complaints. When the HRU received the complaints, they are forward to the selection committee who responds and HRU forward the message to the complainant.


Weaknesses

Although the recruitment and selection procedures described above are in place, a more integrated and explicit human resources policy needs to be develop based on Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles (Action 17).

To promote greater transparency, candidates will be informed about the recruitment process, in particular the stage the process is at. This will be accomplished by creating a new tab on the Iscte's recruitment platform, where candidates can follow the process (Action 14).

The researchers' onboarding process is not comprehensive or sufficiently engaging; information is available but scattered. A welcome manual for new researchers will be drawn up (Action 13).

Furthermore, a Booklet will be developed for selection panel members in carrying out their duties, including good recruitment practices aimed at equality, diversity and inclusion and recognising diverse career paths (Action 16).

Working conditions* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****Strengths**

Iscte is a university that pursues its distinction and institutional affirmation by diversifying its training and research areas. Recent examples are the School of Applied Technologies and Iscte- Knowledge and Innovation Centre for Value Creation and Technology Transfer. Both are based on the combination of two of Iscte's benchmark research areas – social and human sciences and digital technologies – with the aim of providing integrated knowledge transfer solutions for society, organisations, companies and public administration.

Physical proximity is a critical factor to create innovation, and the social process is fundamental to the generation of disruptive creative connections that promotes knowledge transfer between distinct fields, idea-sharing, challenging theories, and creating new concepts. Knowledge and Innovation Centre for Value Creation and Technology Transfer is a sustainable research infrastructure from an environmental, economic and social point of view. It brings Iscte's eight research units, technological resources, laboratories, observatories and other partnerships, together under a single roof, in a renovated and modernised building.

This new space is functionally suited to the establishment of sharing relationships between researchers; it is also inclusive, flexible and concerned with the reconciliation of personal and family life with professional life, in accordance with labour safety standards. Iscte researchers, regardless of their contractual relationship, have been considered for occupational health purposes since 2022.

Iscte researchers have at their disposal a wide range of support services, such as software, reference databases, research support tools, research data management, etc. [link (<https://siic.iscte-iul.pt/en/services/research-support/>)]

Iscte is creating the conditions to progressively and sustainably expand and strengthen its permanent research staff. In 2022, the research career was established with the approval of the Regulation for Research, Science and Technology Staff under Individual Employment Contracts, revised in 2024. This statute defines the rules for recruitment and hiring, the rights and duties of researchers, and the career development levels (assistant, principal, and coordinating researcher). And related with the later aspect, criteria on performance evaluation.

Iscte has a performance evaluation system (i-Meritus) for teachers and researchers [link] (<https://i-meritus.iscte-iul.pt/>)

Iscte is strongly committed to promoting the values of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and has an EDI Plan 2022-2025.

Weaknesses

Despite the progress that has been made in the last years, namely the program of incentives to hire doctoral graduates for research careers at national level that Iscte has benefited from, the instability of employment contracts is still an issue. Iscte is committed to improving the stability of employment conditions for career researchers and increase the number of researchers with permanent contracts, by opening vacancies (Action 18).

Iscte has a Guide to Good Practices in Supporting Research and Innovation, which provides relevant information on good practices in preparing international applications for funding, managing projects, setting up partnerships and participating in consortia, etc. However, it is recognised that its use is still deficient and should be expanded; advisory services on research funding strategies and international mobility opportunities need to be provided (Action 4).

In the context of the career path of researchers, especially at R1 and R2 levels, it is necessary to strengthen counselling services on aspects related to career development, planning and strategy, from an integrated perspective of the objectives/interests of the researcher and the institution. To this end, mentoring/coaching training sessions are planned for more senior lecturers/researchers, also aiming for network development with a pool of mentors trained for the job (Action 8).

The level of awareness of researchers on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan is low. To address this theme, training and awareness-raising activities are planned, as well as on the recently created Internal Reporting Channel, for reporting infringements, namely practices of harassment (moral and/or sexual) and discrimination (Action 15).

Another area that needs to be improved is the promotion of practices to increase the exposure of scientific results by researchers and research units, as well as the exposure of Iscte research beyond the exclusively scientific environment (Action 20).

Although Iscte has a new facility with suitable spaces and equipment for researchers, it is important to continually monitor researchers' perceptions of the organisational climate and to meet their expectations in terms of working conditions, training and career development, as well as well-being and the prevention of psychosocial risks, in a broad and comprehensive way (Action 12).

Training and development*

**Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****Strengths**

Iscte provides researchers with conditions for professional success at all career stages. International experience of researchers is highly valued, and Iscte has cooperation agreements and protocols with universities all over the world.

The doctoral programmes (N=24), currently attended by around 900 students, provide curricular units aimed at research training and the preparation of an original thesis or the compilation of a coherent and relevant body of research work. Iscte teaching staff is skilled with the scientific, theoretical and methodological resources to ensure the supervision of doctoral theses.

Over the last years, Iscte has invested in actively transmitting content to support research work at all stages - gathering information, preparing scientific work, scientific publishing and dissemination.

It is within this framework that the Lab for Innovation in Academy was created in 2023, a decentralised organic unit responsible for: identifying teachers and researchers training and skills needs; planning, organising and disseminating training opportunities; stimulating innovation in teaching and learning and encouraging the participation of teachers and researchers in initiatives that strengthen their teaching and research skills.

Thus, in order to create opportunities that enhance and encourage researchers to update and broaden their skills, Lab for Innovation in Academy, together with the Library, the Soft Skills Lab, the Research Support Office and the Research Units themselves, have played a fundamental role in counselling. They have been fundamental for the researchers' continuous professional development, proposing different training strategies and modalities, particularly in areas such as social sciences and technologies. All this effort has resulted in an increase in Iscte's international profile and an improvement in its position in the main world university rankings.

Both the Lab for Innovation in Academy and the Library have adopted a strategy that favors the use of participatory methodologies to define and assess researchers' needs in terms of training areas. To this end, these bodies have carried out regular consultations, applying surveys that are used for the proposition of new training programmes and updates.

Within this framework, the Library has provided training in academic integrity and plagiarism, an introduction to open access and research support tools. Since 2020 the library publishes online user support guides on several areas, such as transformative agreements, research impact assessment, research data management, open access to scientific production, etc. There are also guides on information resources, citations and bibliographic references and information literacy.

Working together, the Research Support Office has provided support to Research Units regarding funding applying processes. It has developed a 'guide for good practice in supporting research and innovation', including guidelines for each stage of the project application cycle, from seeking funding to hiring human resources. In this way, it has been responsible for providing information on funding opportunities; putting together proposals for the scheduling of activities to prepare research projects; supporting researchers with legal issues, conflicts of interest, intellectual property, etc. and preparing and systematising data for the dissemination of scientific results.

Weaknesses

The process for choosing a supervisor is not properly defined and there is no systematised information on the research topics that can be worked on in doctoral theses. It is necessary to provide means of disseminating information and increase efficiency in the process of assigning a supervisor to early-stage researchers, as well as clarifying the function and role/duties they should assume in this capacity (Actions 6 and 7).

In order to provide support for the professional development of researchers, especially focused on R1 and R2 researchers, a dedicated mentoring strategy must be draw up, offering training for mentors, as well as organising meetings to exchange knowledge and experiences about the process, as well as developing an internal guide with good practices (Action 8).

Iscte's initiatives for the continuous development of researchers' knowledge and skills needs to be improved in the areas of teaching, management and guidance/supervision, open science and open data and research support tools (Actions 5, 9 and 10).

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HR Excellence in Research 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). Multiple links must be comma separated.

<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/contents/research/2621/hr-excellence-in-research>,<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/conteudos/795/research> (<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/contents/research/2621/hr-excellence-in-research>,<https://www.iscte-iul.pt/conteudos/795/research>)

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HR Excellence in Research 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 ratings.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1

Create a digital checklist to ensure compliance with the Code of Research Ethics when registering the topic of theses and dissertations and/or research projects

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(-/+) 7. Good practice in research

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Ethics
Council
Ethics
Committees
Development
of
Information
Systems
Services

1. Checklist available on Fénix+ (thesis topic registration area) and on Ciência_Iscte (research projects). 2. Proportion of registration of thesis and research project with checklist submission (100%). 3. Increase rate of the ethical clearance requests of MSc and PhD thesis in the ethical committees (Year 1: +5 percentage points compared to the baseline; Year 2: +10 percentage points compared to the baseline).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

Create the institutional figure of the Research Ombudsperson to guarantee rights and duties in the practice of research activity

GAP Principle(s)		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 2. Ethical principles		
(+/-) 7. Good practice in research		2026, S2
(+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals		
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
Vice-Rector for Research and Technological Modernisation	1. Number of initiatives taken to make his/her role known in the community (4 per year). 2. Number of monitoring initiatives of the Research Ombudsperson's activities by the General Council (1 per year). 3. Percentage of researchers that are aware of Ombudsperson role in what regards safeguarding researchers' rights and duties (survey; at least 60% at the highest points of the scale).	

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

Carry out training and awareness-raising activities for researchers on issues of ethics and conduct in research

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(-/+) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 32. Co-authorship

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Ethics

Council

Ethics

Committees

Research

Support

Office

Curricular

Management

and

Accreditation

Services

1. Percentage of researchers (R1 to R4) in online/in person trainings (20% per year). 2. Percentage of Curricular Units related to Research Methods that integrate specific didactic content on ethics and good practice (at least 40%).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

Provide advisory services on research funding, mobility opportunities and internationalisation strategies

GAP Principle(s)

(-/+) 4. Professional attitude

(-/+) 28. Career development

(+/-) 29. Value of mobility

(--) 30. Access to career advice

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S1

Responsible Unit Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Vice-Rector for
Internationalisation
Relations Service

1. Percentage of researchers (R1 and R2) in online/in person information sessions (20% per year). 2. Increase rate of international funding for research projects (Year 1: +10% compared to baseline. Year 2: +12,5% compared to baseline). 3. Increase rate of the Erasmus programme execution (Year 1: +5% compared to baseline; Year 2: +10% compared to baseline).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

Create and offer training programme in teaching and complementary and transversal skills, such as team and project management, communication and leadership, as part of researchers' professional development

GAP Principle(s)

(-/+) 4. Professional attitude

(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(-/+) 9. Public engagement

(++) 33. Teaching

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Lab for
Innovation in
Academy
Library
Research
Support Office
Communication
Office

1. Percentage of researchers (R1 to R4) in online/in person trainings (20% per year).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

Provide and update a digital catalogue with a list of potential supervisors (teachers and researchers) (R1) and research topics for researchers (R1 and R2)

GAP Principle(s)		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors		
(+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties		2026, S2
(+/-) 40. Supervision		
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
Schools and Departments	1. Percentage of researchers R1 and R2 that consulted the digital catalogue (50%). 2. Increase rate of the number of thesis supervision per researcher (Year 1: +10% compared to baseline. Year 2: +20% compared to baseline).	

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

Organise at least one matchmaking workshop per year between supervisors and trainees regarding the research topics to be developed and the conditions of supervision (availability, experience, commitment, etc.)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Schools and
Departments
Research
Units
Research
Support
Office

1. Satisfaction rate (short questionnaire; % of people satisfied or very satisfied; >50% of participants).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

Set up a mentoring programme including voluntary training (senior researchers) and exchange meetings for mentors and mentees, and set out an internal guide with good practices

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

(-/+) 28. Career development

(--) 30. Access to career advice

(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors

(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

(+/-) 40. Supervision

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Lab for Innovation in Academy Research Support Office	1. Percentage of senior researchers (R3 and R4) in online/in person trainings (20% per year). 2. Percentage of researchers (R1 to R4) that participate in the meetings (20%). 3. Percentage of researchers that evaluate positively the usefulness of the internal guide (short questionnaire; >50% of participants).
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Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

Carry out training and awareness-raising activities for researchers on Iscte's Research Data Management and Sharing Policy (Open Science)

GAP Principle(s)

- (++) 6. Accountability
- (-/+) 7. Good practice in research
- (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development
- (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Library
Research
Support
Office

1. Percentage of researchers that participate in the online/in person trainings (10% per year). 2. Percentage of researchers that are aware of the Iscte's Research Data Management and Sharing Policy (Open Science) (survey; 60% at the highest points of the scale).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10

Increase visibility and awareness about Iscte's research support tools, namely those that measure the social impact of research activities, by creating a strategic campaign

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(-/+) 9. Public engagement

(-/+) 28. Career development

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Research Support Office
Library Lab for Innovation in Academy
COMInvestigar

1. Percentage of researchers (R3 and R4) that have access to MOOC (10% 1st year, 30% 2nd year). 2. Increase rate of R3 and R4 researchers that use Overton (+25%). 3. Number of campaign events (at least 4).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

Design a new website and inform about the flexibilization tools regarding research conditions

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 23. Research environment

(++) 24. Working conditions

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Research
Support
Office

1. Percentage of users of the flexibilization tools, such as Research Connect and Clear Rooms (40%), available at the new website of Centre for Knowledge Development and Technology Transfer.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 12

Create an annual survey on the organisational climate/working conditions applied to Iscte researchers

GAP Principle(s)		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(++) 23. Research environment		
(++) 24. Working conditions		2025, S2
(+/-) 27. Gender balance		
Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
Human Resources Unit Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office	1. Number of communications of the organisational climate/working conditions (at least through 3 different communication channels). 2. Satisfaction rate related to the organisational climate/working conditions (at least 60% at the highest points of the scale).	

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

Draw up a welcome manual, in digital format, for new researchers, that will be available in Portuguese and English

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S1

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Lab for
Innovation in
Academy
Human
Resources
Unit
Research
Support
Office

1. Percentage of new researchers who have access to the digital manual (80%). 2. Percentage of researchers that are aware of the Iscte's welcome manual for new researchers (survey; 60% at the highest points of the scale).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14

Increase the information available throughout the recruitment process by creating a new tab on the recruitment platform stating the stage the process is at

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Development
of
Information
Systems
Services
Human
Resources
Unit

1. Percentage of recruitment processes that have the tab available including, at least, 2 stages (100%).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 15

Offer online/in person training and awareness-raising activities on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including the issue of harassment (duration: between 2 and 6 hours)

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 10. Non discrimination

(++) 24. Working conditions

(+/-) 27. Gender balance

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Human Resources Unit Lab for Innovation in Academy	1. Percentage of researchers that participate in the online/in person trainings and awareness-raising activities (10% per year). 2. Percentage of researchers that are aware of the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (survey; 60% at the highest points of the scale).
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Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

Elaboration of a Booklet for selection panel members in carrying out their duties, including good recruitment practices aimed at equality, diversity and inclusion and recognising diverse career paths

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 10. Non discrimination

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 14. Selection (Code)

(+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2026, S1

Responsible

Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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Human Resources Unit Research Support Office

1. Percentage of selection panel members that receive the booklet (100%). 2. Satisfaction rate from selection panel members, regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the booklet (short questionnaire; at least 60% at the highest points of the scale).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 17

Develop and publish the Iscte Recruitment Policy based on the principles of the OTM-R

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

(++) 10. Non discrimination

(+/-) 12. Recruitment

(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(+/-) 14. Selection (Code)

(+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)

(++) 16. Judging merit (Code)

(+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

2025, S1

(++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

(++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

(+/-) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

(+/-) 27. Gender balance

(+/-) 29. Value of mobility

Proposed ACTIONS

	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
	Human Resources Unit Research Units	1. Percentage of job offers with OTM-R (100%, after publishing the OTM-R Policy).
Action 18		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Increase the number of researchers with permanent contracts, by opening vacancies	GAP Principle(s)	
	(-/+) 25. Stability and permanence of employment	2026, S2
	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
	Rector Vice-Rector for Research and Technological Modernisation	1. Duplicate the actual number of researchers with permanent contract (Year 1: +50% compared to baseline. Year 2: +100% compared to baseline).

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 19

Recognition of awards and prizes: Promote wider dissemination of the policy of incentives for excellence in Iscte's research activities, including the publication of regulations and a nominal list containing the award winners.

GAP Principle(s)		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results		2025, S2
Responsible		
Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
Research Support Office Research Units	1. Number of news regarding award winners published on Iscte's website and on social networks of Iscte (2 per Research Unit per year).	

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 20

Develop an e-toolkit to support the dissemination and internal/external communication of research results

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(-/+) 9. Public engagement

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

2025, S2

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Research
Support Office
Research Units
Communication
Office

1. Satisfaction rate regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the e-toolkit (short questionnaire; at least 60% at the highest points of the scale). 2. Number of qualitative responses about the e-toolkit (at least 2 interviews per researcher profile (R1-R4)). 3. Percentage of researchers that are aware of the e-toolkit (survey; at least 60% at the highest points of the scale).

Unselected principles:

(++) 1. Research freedom (++) 3. Professional responsibility (++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

(++) 20. Seniority (Code) (++) 22. Recognition of the profession (++) 26. Funding and salaries (++) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

(++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HR Excellence in Research 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) *

Iscte recruitment and selection procedures comply with the requirements of the law and follow the basic principles of the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy (OTM-R), ensuring equal treatment for all applications. In this sense, and with the aim of adopting human resource best practices that contribute to making research careers more attractive, Iscte has developed the following guidelines, with the goal of conducting recruitment and selection processes for researchers.

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment

The focus of the OTM-R policy is to guarantee that institutions select the candidate whose profile best matches to the open position, and that the corresponding procedures are grounded in principles of equality for all applicants.

Iscte advocates for a policy of equality, diversity, and inclusion. Regarding recruitment and selection, in compliance with subparagraph h) of article 9 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, Iscte promotes a policy of equal opportunities in access to employment and career progression, acting diligently to prevent all and any form of discrimination. In this sense, Iscte adopts an inclusive language with the aim of promoting equal participation and valuing individual diversity. Thus, no applicant can be privileged to, benefited from, prejudiced, or deprived of any right or exempt from any duty based on, in particular due to ancestry, age, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, origin or social condition, genetic assets, reduced work capacity, disability, chronic disease, nationality, ethnic origin or race, territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological beliefs, or trade union membership.

In order to guarantee a recruitment procedure that complies with the OTM-R principles, a Booklet for selection panel members in carrying out their duties will be elaborated.

1. Open

Iscte publishes job advertisements across a variety of platforms and communication channels depending on the profiles it seeks to recruit. Opportunities are posted in Iscte website, in a national newspaper, in the Official Journal (Republic Diary), in the Public Employment Platform and the Euraxess platform. Advertisements can also be shared on LinkedIn, Google Ads and Iscte's social media, to reach a broader and more diverse pool of candidates. A broad recruitment base ensures that anyone interested is aware of the contest and can apply.

In accordance with the Labor Code, job advertisements must not contain, directly or indirectly, any restrictions, specifications, or preferences based on gender. In this regard, gender-neutral language is adopted.

2. Transparent

The recruitment and selection procedure at Iscte is, primarily, based on national legislation and the institute's regulations, which are public. Advertisements are published online and include: a description of the legal framework applicable to the recruitment process; the indication of the type of the employment contract; the organization and scientific area or unit/department; the application deadline; the workplace; the category (position) to be filled; the number of vacancies; the reference to the salary range; the admission requirements and absolute merit criteria; the methods and criteria for evaluation and selection; the composition of the selection committee, which should, whenever possible, be gender-balanced; information on how to submit and complete applications; and a reference to the non-discrimination and equal access policy.

Regarding this principle, candidates will be informed about the evolution of the recruitment process, in particular the stage the process is at, by creating a new tab on the recruitment platform.

3. Merit

Applications are evaluated according to the requirements, methods, and evaluation and selection criteria, clearly described in the advertisement, to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the assessment of candidates.

The selection committees are composed of impartial and qualified members who evaluate candidates based on the previously defined criteria. The composition of the selection committee is made public, and members must declare any conflicts of interest that could affect their impartiality.

All phases of the procedure must be documented in the selection committee's minutes, and candidates are notified of the results, which are published on the recruitment platform and the institutional website. In this way, all candidates and the public can review the rankings and the corresponding order of the applications. This transparency helps to ensure trust in the process.

Candidates have the right to make complaints, in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Code, regarding decisions made during the recruitment and selection process, and they may consult the process.

These guarantees and mechanisms aim to ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are conducted in a fair, transparent, and impartial way, promoting trust in the recruitment and selection system. As a result, they ensure that Iscte has the best resources to achieve its purposes.

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. Multiple links must be comma separated:

URL:**4. Implementation****General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)**

Iscte has an Internal Quality Assurance System as a set of interrelated processes, and is based on the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) cycle. These processes include the identification, definition and management of a set of related activities, and the determination of the resources needed to properly execute these activities. These actions are monitored and evaluated with various metrics that measure their achievement. The HRS4R Action Plan implementation will be monitored as part of the Internal Quality Assurance System, with the active participation of governing and management bodies and other relevant stakeholders.

Iscte is committed to fostering the involvement and active participation of internal and external stakeholders. The frequency and forms of stakeholders' involvement vary, depending on the level of analysis needed in each case. In the implementation process, the Action Plan will be presented at Commission for Quality and Sustainability Assurance and at Advisory Council for Quality and Sustainability regular meetings. This body is chaired by the Rector and ensures that quality policies include the contributions of all stakeholders, the research community being one of them (research unit directors, president of the Ethics Council and, once appointed, the Researcher Ombudsperson).

Whenever justified, the Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office and/or the Working Group may consult researchers (or representatives) from all the research units and all levels, either in a more formal way or informal, organizing workshops and meetings using participatory, dynamic and creative methodologies, such as World Cafe Method or focus groups.

One of the Iscte's key strategic goals is to become a research university with an increasingly higher and internationalized scientific performance, within an international reference framework. It is aimed at the advancement of knowledge and its application to institutions (private and public), economy and society and contributing to the public understanding of science and technology through actions to support the dissemination of scientific and technological culture.

This means that Iscte's research activity is aligned with the institutional policies in force and with the quadrennial strategic plan (2022-2025). The annual activity plans specify the actions that operationalise the research strategy and its articulation with Iscte's various mission areas. The research units have their own regulations and draw up a plan of activities in line with the institution's planning, always aligned with the strategy.

Once approved, the Annual Plan 2025 will be consistent with HRS4R Action Plan and considered when the new strategic long-term plan (2026-2029) is approved. The Human Resources Department Head as a member of the Steering Committee will ensure that the HR policy is aligned with the HRS4R and its measures.

Iscte assumes commitment to build an institutional culture of quality and responsibility based in regular self-evaluation, self-regulation, and the controlled implementation of improvements involving relevant stakeholders and promoting a clear and active participation.

To ensure that the proposed actions are effectively implemented, the usual control mechanisms and procedures defined within the scope of Internal Quality Assurance System will be used.

Establishing clear and measurable performance indicators, defining responsibilities and deadlines for data collection. The Quality Platform will be used to register the information. The monitor progress will be conducted regularly, allowing for the early detection of problems and the implementation of corrective actions.

In the initial phase of HRS4R implementation, the Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office, which is responsible for monitoring progress, organizes a meeting of the Commission for Quality and Sustainability Assurance, where the action plan and a detailed timetable detailing the various stages of the monitoring process are presented, guaranteeing transparency and accountability at all stages of the process. Since the Action Plan is planned on a semester basis, progress will be monitored quarterly.

Progress will be measured considering the deadline and the indicator target defined in each action (deliverable document, number of initiatives, number of attendees, etc.) and as the activities take place the information (quantitative and qualitative, documents and evidence) is registered in the Quality Platform.

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

Note: Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Iscte has an Internal Quality Assurance System as a set of interrelated processes, and is based on the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) cycle. These processes include the identification, definition and management of a set of related activities, and the determination of the resources needed to properly execute these activities. These actions are monitored and evaluated with various metrics that measure their achievement.

The HRS4R Action Plan implementation will be monitored as part of the Internal Quality Assurance System, with the active participation of governing and management bodies and other relevant stakeholders. The Commission for Quality and Sustainability Assurance will integrate several of the HRS4R Steering Committee members, from the moment Iscte is awarded.

Twice a year, a progress report will be produced.

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




Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Iscte is committed to fostering the involvement and active participation of internal and external stakeholders. The frequency and forms of stakeholders' involvement vary, depending on the level of analysis needed in each case.

In the implementation process, the Action Plan will be presented at Commission for Quality and Sustainability Assurance and at Advisory Council for Quality and Sustainability regular meetings. This body is chaired by the Rector and ensures that quality policies include the contributions of all stakeholders, the research community being one of them (research unit directors, president of the Ethics Council and, once appointed, the Researcher Ombudsperson).

Whenever justified, the Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office and/or the Working Group may consult researchers (or representatives) from all the research units and all levels, either in a more formal or informal way, organizing workshops and meetings using participatory, dynamic and creative methodologies, such as World Cafe Method or focus groups.

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)

One of the Iscte's key strategic goals is to become a research university with an increasingly higher and internationalised scientific performance, within an international reference framework. It is aimed at the advancement of knowledge and its application to institutions (private and public), economy and society and contributing to the public understanding of science and technology through actions to support the dissemination of scientific and technological culture.

This means that Iscte's research activity is aligned with the institutional policies in force and with the quadrennial strategic plan (2022-2025). The annual activity plans specify the actions that operationalise the research strategy and its articulation with Iscte's various mission areas. The research units have their own regulations and draw up a plan of activities in line with the institution's planning, always aligned with the strategy.

Once approved, the Annual Plan 2025 will be consistent with HRS4R Action Plan and considered when the new strategic long-term plan (2026-2029) is approved. The Head of Human Resources and Spaces Department as a member of the Steering Committee will ensure that the HR policy is aligned with the HRS4R and its measures.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Iscte assumes commitment to build an institutional culture of quality and responsibility based in regular self-evaluation, self-regulation, and the controlled implementation of improvements involving relevant stakeholders and promoting a clear and active participation.

To ensure that the proposed actions are effectively implemented, the usual control mechanisms and procedures defined within the scope of Internal Quality Assurance System will be used, such as:

1. **Follow up and monitoring** the Action Plan by the Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office, to assess the progress and identify gaps that may arise during implementation and provide support and guidance for defining and implementing improvement actions.
2. **Regular meetings** with the responsible for each action and with the Working Group to discuss progress and propose adjustments if necessary. The results of these meetings must be communicated to the Quality Assurance and Sustainability Commission, which is composed by several members of Iscte's governance and management bodies, including the Steering Committee, guaranteeing that the proposed actions are implemented.
3. Integration of the dimension of HR Excellence in Research in the **institution annual report** that is evaluated and voted by the General Council.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Establishing clear and measurable performance indicators, defining responsibilities and deadlines for data collection. The Quality Platform will be used to register the information. The monitor progress will be conducted regularly, allowing for the early detection of problems and the implementation of corrective actions.

In the initial phase of HRS4R implementation, the Studies, Quality and Sustainability Office will present a timetable detailing the various stages of the monitoring process to the Steering Committee and the Working Group and the results of the monitoring will be communicated to the Commission for Quality and Sustainability Assurance and the Steering Committee, guaranteeing transparency and accountability at every stage of the process.

Since the Action Plan is planned on a semester basis, progress will be monitored quarterly.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress will be measured considering the deadline and the indicator target defined in each action (deliverable document, number of initiatives, number of attendees, etc.) and as the activities take place the information (quantitative and qualitative, documents and evidence) is registered in the Quality Platform.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)