



West Pomeranian
University of Technology,
Szczecin

**HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY OF THE WEST POMERANIAN
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SZCZECIN**
IN THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER
FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1/ Information on the ‘HR Excellence in Research’ award and on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers	2
2/ ZUT actions towards receiving the ‘HR Excellence in Research’ award	3
3/ Timetable of actions	4
4/ Background information on the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin	5
5/ Methodology	8
6/ Implementation	9
7/ ZUT weaknesses identified	12
8/ The Human Resources Strategy of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (ZUT HRS4R) based on the weaknesses identified	14
9/ Summary	28

1/ INFORMATION ON THE 'HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH' AWARD AND ON THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS

The European Commission is moving steadily towards implementation of the principles underlying the establishment of the European Research Area. One of the principles involves attending to researchers' welfare as a foundation of European development, and ensuring that researchers are treated as professionals and as an integral part of the institutions in which they work. The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers were adopted in 2005 as a set of general principles and requirements to be followed by research and development institutions and research funders throughout Europe.

The European Charter for Researchers describes roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers, their employers, and research funders. The responsibilities and entitlements described pertain to working conditions, career development, mobility, mentoring of young researchers, and balancing family life with career in research.

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers describes principles of recruitment to be followed by employers and funders in order to ensure equal treatment of researchers throughout Europe. The key principles endorsed by the Code are:

- ▶ **Transparency of recruitment,**
- ▶ **Ensuring professional growth at each career stage,**
- ▶ **Clear promotion criteria,**
- ▶ **Non-discrimination,**
- ▶ **Evaluation and appraisal based on the assessment of full spectrum of professional obligations.**



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

To honour the employers adhering to and implementing the Charter and Code principles, the European Commission awards a distinction called the 'HR Excellence in Research'. It is granted to research institutions and funders which have reached a significant progress in implementing the two documents and in creating a professional research environment.

The relevant strategy of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (Polish: Zachodniopomorski Uniwersytet Technologiczny w Szczecinie, hereafter referred to as ZUT) involves building the highest-quality cadre of scientists and enhancing innovativeness. The array of objectives and goals pursued by ZUT includes freedom of research and teaching as well as appropriate R&D policies. To achieve excellence, the ZUT authorities have decided to progressively implement the Charter and Code principles, and thus to become eligible to the prestigious distinction of 'HR Excellence in Research'. Implementation of all the Charter and Code principles is a tenuous and time-consuming process which will take a few years, but efforts will be made to achieve this goal.

The implementation is to proceed in 6 successive steps outlined below.



2/ ZUT ACTIONS TOWARDS RECEIVING THE 'HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH' AWARD

1

30 June 2015: Declaration of support to the European Charter of Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers signed.

2

Internal gap analysis regarding legal regulations in force at ZUT pertinent to all areas covered by the Charter and Code; an anonymous survey poll among researchers and doctoral candidates to receive feedback on the perception of the principles of the Charter and Code and their actual implementation at ZUT.

3

Development of the ZUT Strategy on Human Resources (ZUT HRS4R) in the context of implementation of the Charter and Code; publication of the ZUT HRS4R in a publicly accessible location (on the Polish and English language ZUT websites) and forwarding it, along with the necessary documentation, to the European Commission; the documents will summarise major results of the internal survey; the plan of actions presented in this report contains clearly defined implementation tasks and identifies individuals responsible for the implementation.

4

Acknowledgment and acceptance of the plan for the ZUT HRS4R implementation in the context of the Charter and Code by the European Commission, which will grant ZUT the right to use the 'HR Excellence in Research' award.

5

Implementation of the ZUT HRS4R and self-evaluation on the tasks covered by the action plan; the self-evaluation exercise will be carried out two years after the 'HR Excellence in Research' badge will have been awarded.

6

Preparation of a short report on progress in achieving the objectives and goals set out by the ZUT HRS4R in relation to the principles of the Charter and Code; external evaluation by independent experts, to be carried out at least once within a four-year period after the 'HR Excellence in Research' badge was awarded.



3/ TIMETABLE OF ACTIONS

DECLARATION OF ENDORSEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER OF RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESEARCHER RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES.



30 JUNE 2015

**1 NOVEMBER 2015 –
13 DECEMBER 2015**



IN-HOUSE ANONYMOUS SURVEY POLL FOR RESEARCHERS AND DOCTORAL CANDIDATES SO THAT FEEDBACK AND A CLEAR VIEW ON HOW ZUT IS PERCEIVED IN THE CONTEXT OF REGULATIONS BROUGHT FORTH BY THE CHARTER AND CODE.

A MEETING, CALLED BY THE ZUT AUTHORITIES, REGARDING DIVISION OF TASKS RELATED TO REPORT PREPARATION; SETTING UP A RELEVANT WORKING GROUP.



18 JANUARY 2016

JANUARY 2016



ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES IN FORCE IN ZUT TO DETECT AND ELIMINATE THEIR DEFICIENCIES AND SHORTCOMINGS.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF THE SURVEY POLL FOR RESEARCHERS TO IDENTIFY DEVIATIONS FROM PROVISIONS AND PREMISES OF THE CHARTER AND CODE.



FEBRUARY 2016

MARCH 2016



DEVELOPMENT OF REMEDIAL AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT AT ZUT.

PREPARATION OF A REPORT ON THE TASKS LISTED ABOVE.



APRIL 2016

13 MAY 2016



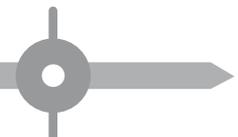
PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT WITH ACTION PLAN.

**UNTIL
SEPTEMBER
2018**

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN FOR REMEDIAL CORRECTIVE ACTIONS AT ZUT AND SELF-EVALUATION REGARDING THE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.



EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF PROGRESS IN ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHARTER AND CODE REGULATIONS AT ZUT.



SEPTEMBER 2020

4/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE WEST POMERANIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SZCZECIN

The West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (ZUT) was founded on 1 January 2009 by merging two former universities: the Szczecin Technical University and the Agricultural University of Szczecin.

Consolidation of research and teaching potential of the two universities was a desired and obvious step in the face of the progressing demographic low, competition on the higher education market, and expectations regarding the role of universities in developing new technologies. In addition to broadening the range of curricula offered by study programmes, the emergence of ZUT underpinned further, fast progress in development of new technological concepts in both technical and natural sciences. The pooled research and educational heritage of the two merging universities brought a new quality to the higher education system in West Pomerania.

ZUT is attended by about 13,000 students, employs a staff exceeding 2000 (including 341 titular professors and D.Sc. holders). The work force consists of 1164 women and 911 men. ZUT has 10 faculties offering a total of 48 study programmes.



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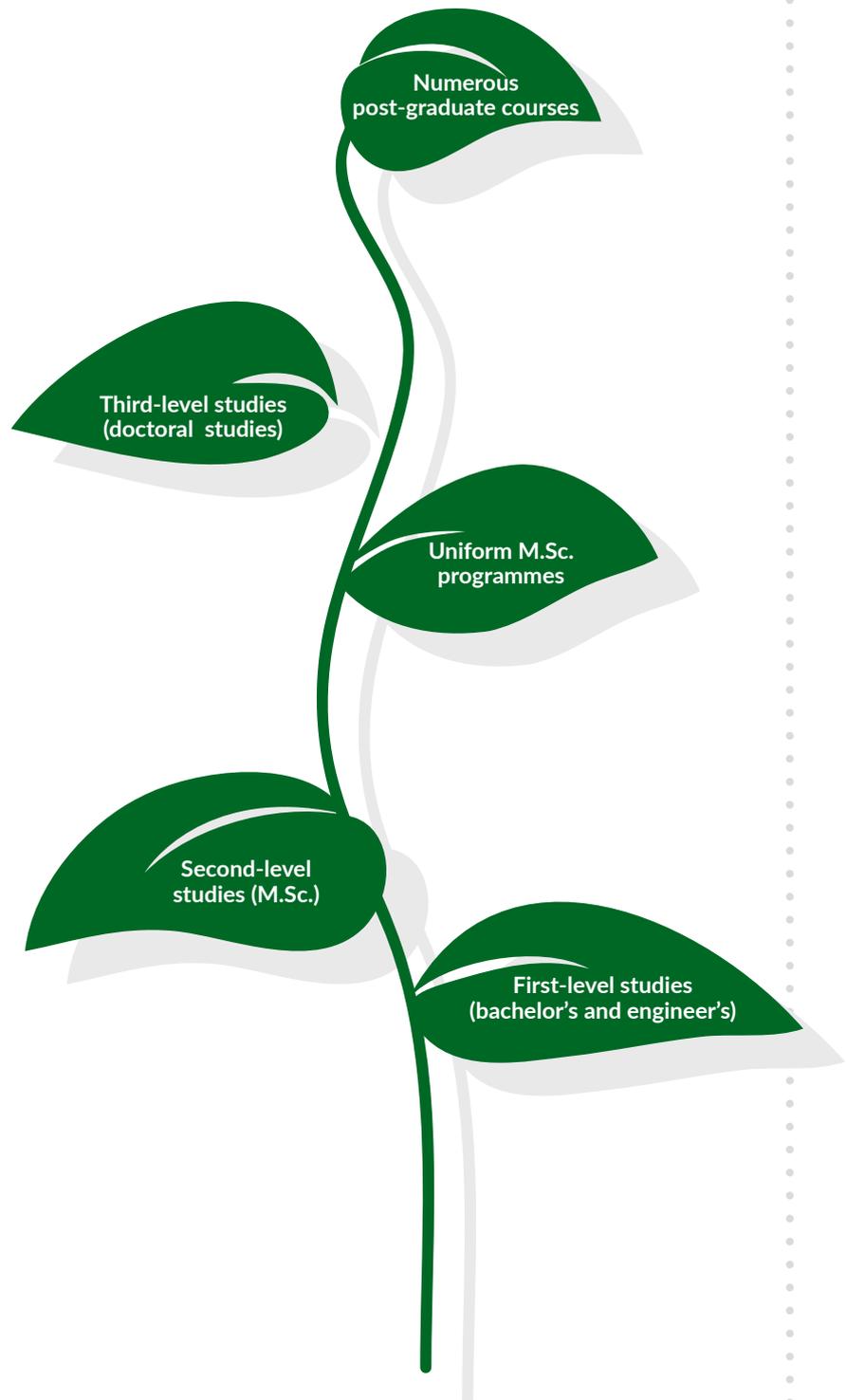
ZUT has created an educational system making it possible for students to avail themselves of the entire scope of higher education:

- ▶ **First-level studies (bachelor's and engineer's),**
- ▶ **Second-level studies (M.Sc.),**
- ▶ **Uniform M.Sc. programmes,**
- ▶ **Third-level studies (doctoral studies),**
- ▶ **Numerous post-graduate courses.**

ZUT emphasises development of international collaboration, both in education and in research.

ZUT employs highly specialised research teams working with, i.a., environmental engineering and management; ICT technologies; robotics; mechatronics; renewable energy sources; industrial and agricultural production technologies, including bio- and nanotechnologies; and economics. ZUT has rights to grant PhD in 20 fields and possesses 13 full academic licences (awarding PhD and D.Sc. degrees).

ZUT is involved in numerous projects funded by various sources, including the support from the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, National Research and Development Centre, National Science Centre, and European Union programmes. ZUT supports scientific collaboration with more than 30 foreign universities, and participates in numerous international programmes, e.g., Erasmus+, COST, Polish-Norwegian Research Collaboration, EU framework programmes, programmes of the European Territorial Collaboration, and Regional Operational Programmes. Laboratories from almost all the ZUT faculties have participated, and are involved in more than 50 projects funded by the EU FPs 5, 6, 7, and the Horizon 2020.





The Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer, hereafter referred to as RCIITT, is one of unique units developed by ZUT; it provides advice and training for researchers, graduates, and businesses in seeking research support, partnership brokerage, and knowledge commercialisation. The RCIITT's objective is to foster the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, to initiate and support collaboration between business and academia, and to assist with implementation of new technologies developed by ZUT.

ZUT constitutes a great and invaluable force which furnishes its students with appropriate resources to function on the labour market. The R&D potential of ZUT meets the current challenges and reaches forward into the future.

5/ METHODOLOGY

In June 2015, the ZUT Rector signed a declaration of endorsement of the European Charter of Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The ZUT authorities' position is that implementation of the Charter and Code will assist in building the top quality academic environment stimulating innovative research, and will translate into the sense of professional stability among the researchers. It is hoped that the end result of the actions brought about by implementation of the Charter and Code will be the formation of a university of the highest quality.

The objective of generating the highest-quality university is tightly linked with efforts towards earning the 'HR Excellence in Research' badge. Coordination of actions aimed at attaining the badge was entrusted with RCIITT as a ZUT unit responsible for stimulating the research community towards highly innovative research.

It was decided to begin with adapting the in-house documents and procedures to provisions of the Charter and Code.

The work aimed at checking the current status of internal procedures and practices at ZUT relative to provisions of the Charter and Code was divided into two stages.

I STAGE

ZUT researchers were surveyed with respect to their perception of how the Charter and Code provisions are applied at ZUT. The researchers were given an opportunity to express their opinions via an anonymous questionnaire. The information thus obtained provided a general feedback on how the Charter and Code principles are observed by and at ZUT.

II STAGE

Involved analysis of in-house legal regulations at ZUT as well as an internal gap analysis of the principles and practices observed. The analysis was carried out by a Working Group consisting of representatives of research and administrative groups at ZUT. The internal gap analysis was based on the 'Example of standard template for the internal analysis' made available by the EURAXESS web page. The results obtained made it possible to propose remedial and corrective actions aimed at bringing ZUT to the level envisaged by the Charter and Code.

At the same time, implementation of the European Charter of Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is being promoted region-wide. The promotion involves numerous talks during courses arranged by RCIITT, newsletters distributed by RCIITT, information published on the ZUT web page and at the RCIITT web site. Moreover, each ZUT employee involved in research received a personalised e-mail message with information about provisions of the Charter and Code.

6/ IMPLEMENTATION

Efforts to obtain the 'HR Excellence in Research' badge at ZUT involve four major areas of actions:



THE SURVEY POLL

The questionnaire used in the survey poll contained 31 questions concerning the four major areas dealt with by the Charter and Code:

- 1** Ethical and professional aspects (10 questions)
- 2** Recruitment (5 questions)
- 3** Employment conditions and social security (11 questions)
- 4** Training and dissemination (5 questions)

The questionnaire was distributed among all the ZUT researchers. Each researcher received a personalised e-mail message containing information on the purpose of the poll and the deadline for questionnaire submission. The poll was anonymous. The opinions were analysed using the Liker scale, a 5-score scale making it possible to assess the degree of acceptance of a phenomenon or situation by a respondent. The scale involves responses arranged from total acceptance to total rejection. The ZUT researchers were asked to select from the following responses:



There were 1514 eligible respondents (1032 researchers and 482 doctoral candidates) 939 (62%) of whom returned the questionnaire. Such a high turnout makes it possible to regard the feedback received as highly reliable. The feedback provided the Working Group with a basis on which to build a corrective and remedial programme.

THE WORKING GROUP

The Working Group was set up to enhance the reliability and adequacy of the report covering all aspects of actions. The Working Group consisted of ZUT employees representing both the research and administration communities. Thus, a wide spectrum of knowledge and competences was ensured, as were different viewpoints on corrective and remedial actions. To ensure gender balance, each group of researchers was represented by a male and a female member.

The Working Group members:

- ▶ Vice-Rector for Students - **Jacek Wróbel, Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc., Associate Professor**
- ▶ Dean - **Professor Stefan Domek, Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc.**
- ▶ Professor (male) - **Professor Ryszard Pałka, Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc.**
- ▶ Professor (female) - **Professor Urszula Narkiewicz Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc.**
- ▶ D.Sc. (male) - **Arkadiusz Terman, Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc.**
- ▶ D.Sc. (female) - **Małgorzata Ożgo, Ph.D. Eng., D.Sc.**
- ▶ PhD (male) - **Sławomir Jaszczak, Ph.D. Eng.**
- ▶ PhD (female) - **Klára Czyńska, Ph.D. Eng. Arch.**
- ▶ Doctoral candidat (male) - **Paweł Michalski, M.Sc.**
- ▶ Doctoral candidat (female) - **Małgorzata Nachman, M.Sc.**
- ▶ Member for ZUT strategy - **Ewa Witoń-Morgiewicz, Ph.D.**
- ▶ Member for mobility - **Edyta Pazura, M.Sc.**

- ▶ Representative of Legal and Organisation Department - **Monika Sadowska, M.Sc.**
- ▶ Representative of Human Resources Department - **Elżbieta Kozłowska, M.Sc.**
- ▶ Representative of trade unions - **Ewelina Kandyba, M.Sc.**
- ▶ Academic Ombudsman - **Professor Tadeusz Spychaj, PhD. Eng., D.Sc.**

To render the report as reliable, accurate and correct as well as to include all the aspects of actions and activities undertaken, a Working Group was set up. The Working Group consisted of ZUT employees representing all the scientific and administrative units. This way, the group could benefit from input and feedback from various corners of knowledge and competences, and the remedial and corrective actions could be looked at from various viewpoints. To ensure gender equitability, each group of professionals was represented by a male and a female member.

The poll made it possible to identify areas in ZUT operations that required changes and/or improvement. The Working Group met on 12 February 2016 to agree on a method of classifying ZUT weaknesses. The entire Group unanimously adopted a principle whereby more than 50% of answers to a poll question would signify that the issue concerned required a corrective action. In addition, further stages of activities were agreed upon, and the relevant tasks were divided between the Group members. A decision was taken to carry out the subsequent 3 analyses by 29 February 2016.

The division of tasks was as follows:

1

The Legal and Organisation Department as well as the Human Resources Department in consultation with RCIiT were responsible for the internal gap analysis of legal regulations (ZUT Statutes, ZUT strategy, ZUT rules and procedures).

2

The Working Group, in consultation with the researchers, carried out the analysis of principles and practices observed at ZUT.

3

RCiITT was in charge of analysing the relevant national legislation.

The Working Group met again on 15 March 2016 to review and discuss results of the analyses. The discussion made it possible to identify ZUT's deficiencies vis a vis the Charter and Codes. Weakness occurring in 4 areas were identified. The Group members proposed a number of corrective and remedial actions to be taken and implemented according to the plan developed.

Drafting the report was assigned to RCIiT. The draft report was ready by 25 April 2016 and sent to all the Working Group members for comments. The final version of the report was completed on 29 April 2016.

The gap analysis made it possible to define limitations and barriers in ZUT vis-à-vis the Charter and Code principles and served as a basis for the formulation of a plan of remedial and corrective actions.

7/ ZUT WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED

Within 1 November 2015 – 13 December 2015, the ZUT researchers and doctoral candidates were polled, anonymously, with regard to a set of questions in a survey aimed at identifying ZUT weaknesses in the HR policies and practices as well as their perception of the policies and practices in place at ZUT vis-à-vis the Charter and Code principles. As already indicated, the questionnaire consisted of 31 statements concerning 29 principles of the Charter and Code. The respondents were asked to grade their responses using a 5-score scale, from score 1 corresponding to 'strongly disagree' to score 5 equivalent to 'strongly agree'.

The survey results are presented below (Fig. 1). For a better perception of the results, some scores were pooled: 'Agree' comprises 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. By analogy, 'Disagree' entails 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. 'Neither agree nor disagree' is a separate category. A detailed analysis of the survey is available on the website, along with the Report.

The four major areas in need of corrective and remedial action by ZUT are:



THE SURVEY POLL RESULTS OF WEST POMERANIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SZCZECIN

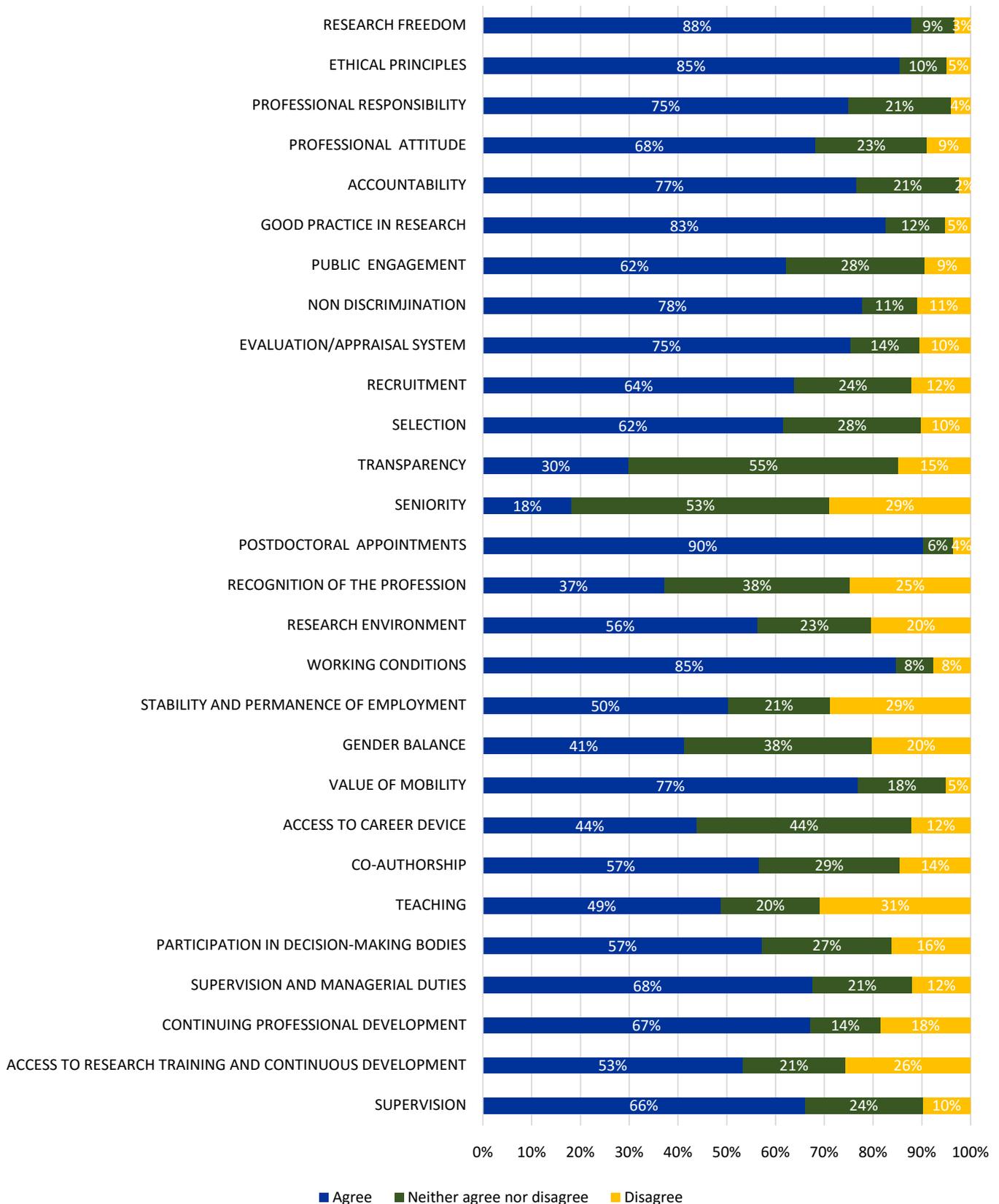


Fig. 1 Graph illustrating the SURVEY results (%)

8/ THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY OF THE WEST POMERANIAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SZCZECIN (ZUT HRS4R) BASED ON THE WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers entail a total of 40 principles. They constitute a solid basis of guidelines and requirements which specify the scope of the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers, their employers and/or research funders. The analysis of the current legal status and procedures in place at ZUT vis-à-vis the Charter and Code principles was based on the template prepared by the European Commission. The template is divided into four major areas:



Entries in the template fields were used to evaluate the status of implementation of the Charter and Code principles in ZUT. Each area is divided into parts corresponding to several principles.

1. ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

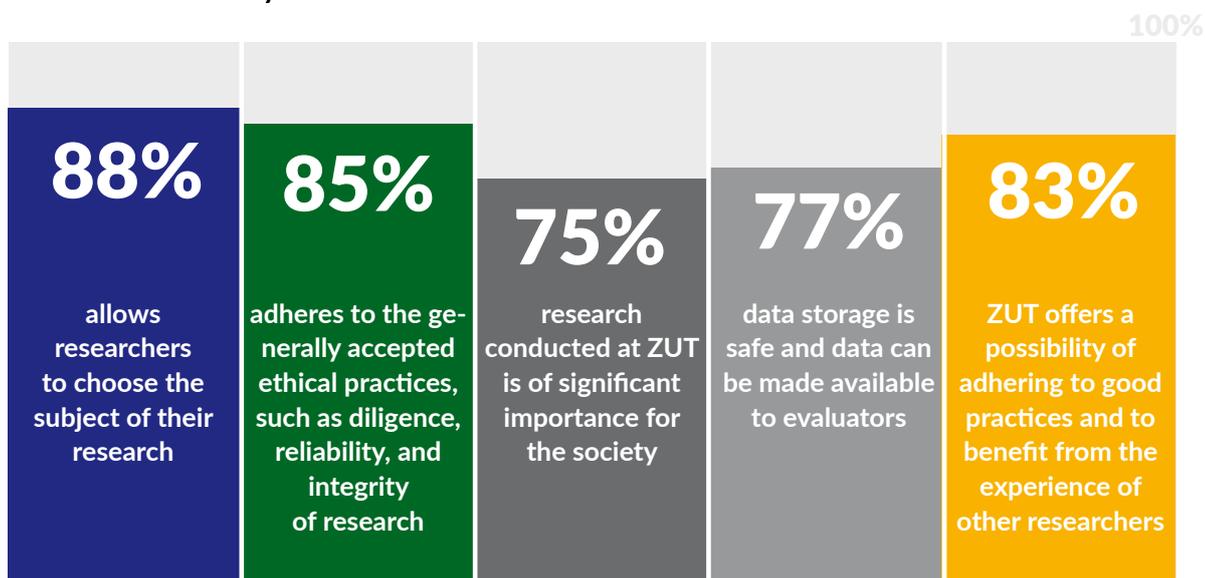
- PRINCIPLE 1 – Research freedom
- PRINCIPLE 2 – Ethical principles
- PRINCIPLE 3 – Professional responsibility
- PRINCIPLE 4 – Professional attitude
- PRINCIPLE 5 – Contractual and legal obligations
- PRINCIPLE 6 – Accountability
- PRINCIPLE 7 – Good practice in research
- PRINCIPLE 8 – Dissemination, exploitation of results
- PRINCIPLE 9 – Public engagement
- PRINCIPLE 10 – Non discrimination
- PRINCIPLE 11 – Evaluation/appraisal systems



Principles and practices in place at ZUT

ZUT is a public institution of higher education and research, operating based on the Higher Education Act of 27 July 2005 (with later amendments) and the ZUT Statutes. The Act contains provisions regarding the institution's obligation to observe the principle of freedom of education, research, and artistic creation, the principle fully endorsed by ZUT (PRINCIPLE 1). The Higher Education Act contains also provisions binding the institutions to support research carried out by young researchers. The Act discourages behaviours related to infringements of intellectual property rights (appropriation of authorship, misleading regarding authorship, dissemination of information without giving credit and stating its source, infringement of authorship and related rights, research data fabrication and other research fraud).

Results of the survey referred to above confirmed that ZUT:



The ZUT Statutes contain provisions on basic responsibilities of the institution, including conduct of R&D activities, research services, and technology transfer to the industry as well as dissemination of information on scientific achievements, national culture and technology by, i.a., collection and dissemination of library and information resources. Consequently, dissemination and exploitation of results (PRINCIPLE 8) is a very important component of the ZUT mission. In addition, ZUT obliges its employees to place their work in the publicly accessible ZUT information repository.

The ZUT Senate has passed a resolution on the adoption of a document titled “Good practices in higher education institutions” containing provisions on the ethos and good practices in research.

The document calls for responsible and accountable quest for truth. The document underscores the 9 priorities (principles) of ZUT operation:

- ① Principle of public service ethics
- ② Principle of neutrality in public affairs
- ③ Principle of legalism
- ④ Principle of autonomy and accountability
- ⑤ Principle of division and balance of power
- ⑥ Principle of creativity
- ⑦ Principle of transparency
- ⑧ Principle of respect for dignity and tolerance
- ⑨ Principle of universalism in research and education

ZUT has adopted a Code of ZUT doctoral candidates (PRINCIPLE 1, 2, 3, 8, 9) which obliges young researchers to work responsibly and diligently, to be ready for continuous enhancement of their knowledge and to obtain new skills and competences. A doctoral candidate may not submit fraudulent reports on his/her research progress and achievements, including publications. A doctoral candidate does not present false data, does not assume authorship or co-authorship of achievements in which he/she did not participate. A doctoral candidate cannot remain passive when witnessing negative and unethical behaviours of researchers and other doctoral candidates. A doctoral candidate is obliged to respect opinions of scientific authorities, but should favour well-founded arguments over authorities. A doctoral candidate is obliged to share his/her achievements and knowledge via, e.g., publications.

ZUT has regulations in place which deal with the intellectual property rights and common property. The ZUT Statutes contains provisions regarding the respect for and adherence to the copyright and related rights as well as to the industrial property rights by the researchers. This attitude is taken into account during periodical staff evaluation.

However, while the obligations and rights of young researchers have been described in detail, there is no uniform regulation in the form of Researcher’s Ethical Code.

It is worth mentioning that ZUT has implemented a Circular on fair competition which states that fair competition is a foundation of the society’s market economy and contributed to protection of the public interest.

The Charter and Code contain a provision on the professional attitude (PRINCIPLE 4) which stresses primarily the necessity of obtaining relevant permissions prior to commencement of the research, and describes the procedures to be applied when conducting research. The internal ZUT regulations include a regulation on procedures when applying for research support, project implementation and reporting. Consequently, each ZUT researcher involved in a project is overseen by a supervisory unit. Such a researcher is obliged to provide the supervisory unit with all information regarding difficulties and changes in project implementation. In addition, a good practice adhered to at ZUT is that a superior is informed on all the planned and commenced projects or project applications.

With regard to the principle of contractual and legal obligations (PRINCIPLE 5) it has to be emphasised that each ZUT employee has an unlimited access to all institutional legal regulations, provided by the in-house legal repository. All changes in the internal regulations are announced to the researchers on a routine basis. In addition, national legal regulations are available at the Main Library of ZUT. Each employee has an access to national, sectoral, and institutional legislation on working conditions and other research spheres as well as on intellectual property rights.

With regard to the principle of accountability (PRINCIPLE 6) which concerns, i.a., effective management of public funds, it has to be mentioned that the ZUT administrative structure contains the Bursary Division controlling rational and accountable utilisation of public funds.

ZUT makes efforts to facilitate storage and dissemination of research data. The general servers are made available to researchers to store and archive research data. Copies of the data are saved on a daily basis. Thus, should the data on a personal computer be lost, they can be retrieved from the saved files. The use of the servers is left to a researcher's discretion.

Regarding the principle on good practice in research (PRINCIPLE 7), and particularly regarding labour safety, it should be mentioned that ZUT adheres to all the relevant legal regulations. ZUT has worked out detailed guidelines related to:

- ➔ **Labour safety associated with the use of computer screens**
- ➔ **Crisis management**
- ➔ **Measurements of harmful and health-affecting agents in the work place**
- ➔ **Individual safety and protection measures**
- ➔ **Provision of working clothes and shoes as well as personal hygiene items**

In addition, the ZUT Commission on Labour Safety is available for the staff when and if needed. ZUT has also implemented a regulation on personal and sensitive data processing policy.

Very important for ethical and professional aspects is the principle of non-discrimination (PRINCIPLE 10). The ZUT Labour Rules contain provisions on counteracting discrimination in hiring based on, i.a., gender, age or disability. Moreover, the universal right to equal treatment of men and women is endorsed and accentuated. The researchers responding to the poll have hardly found any symptoms of discrimination in practice (78% of the respondents found no discrimination).

ZUT has implemented a standardised evaluation/appraisal system (PRINCIPLE 11) applied to researchers at every career level. The majority of the respondents (75%) regard this evaluation as appropriate and necessary. Researchers, including titular professors are evaluated according to provisions and timetables set forth in the Higher Education Act. The evaluation is conducted by impartial commissions at the faculty and institution levels. Evaluation concerns primarily scientific achievements, including publications, grant support, patents, and presentations at scientific conferences and congresses. Important are also outcomes of teaching, involvement in training of young researchers, contribution to ZUT's organisational activities, raising the researcher's own qualifications level, adherence to copyright and related rights. When evaluating the teaching staff, opinions of students and doctoral candidates, collected by polling at termination of each series of courses and programmes, are taken into account as well.

Corrective and remedial actions needed

Despite a strong emphasis on ethical and professional aspects, the need for a number of corrective and remedial actions has been identified.

Those actions are:

1

Collecting information on ethical aspects adhered to at ZUT and generation of a ZUT Researcher's Ethical Code which would, i.a., contain:

- ▶ a provision on an obligation of securing ZUT interests by ZUT employees,
- ▶ provisions guaranteeing freedom of research and requiring adherence to fundamental ethical concepts and professionalism in fulfilling researcher's obligations,
- ▶ obligation to store research results on the ZUT server.

2

Emphasis on wide dissemination of results of research carried out at ZUT via, i.a., application to participation in the European Researchers' Night and promoting the necessity to publish in open-access journals.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

National:

- ▶ **The Higher Education Act,**
- ▶ **Minister of Science and Higher Education's Decree regarding provisions of remuneration and granting of other benefits,**
- ▶ **Act of 26 June 1974 (with subsequent amendments): the so-called Labour Code.**

Institutional:

- » **Resolution 47 of 2011 - Statutes of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (ZUT Statutes),**
- » **Resolution 49 of 2010 - Adoption and implementation of 'The Code of Good Practices in Institutions of Higher Education',**
- » **Circular 7 of 2012 - Circular on fair competition,**
- » **The ZUT doctoral candidate's Ethical Code of 25 April 2012,**
- » **Regulation 3 of 2016 - Regulation on evaluation of researchers,**

- » Regulation 34 of 2015 - Rules of intellectual property rights management and principles of commercialisation at the West Pomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin,
- » Regulation 3 of 2015 - Regulation regarding procedures related to application for funding, project implementation and reporting,
- » Regulation 29 of 2015 - Appointment of Labour Safety Commission,
- » Regulation 16 of 2016 - Procedures of crisis management,
- » Regulation 9 of 2013 - Regulation on the measurement and assessment of health-impairing agents in the workplace,
- » Regulation 86 of 2010 - Regulation on means of individual protection, protective clothes and shoes, and personal hygiene items,
- » Regulation 48 of 2009 - Regulation on labour safety at workplaces equipped with computer screens,
- » Regulation 18 of 2010 - Appointment of the ZUT Commission for Labour Safety,
- » Regulation 17 of 2011 - Safety policies regarding personal data processing at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,
- » Regulation 36 of 2012 - Regulation on documentation of scientific publication of ZUT researchers and doctoral candidates and PUBLIC database availability in the ZUT Main Library,
- » Regulation 117 of 2009 - Labour Rules at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin.

2. RECRUITMENT

- PRINCIPLE 12 – Recruitment (Charter)
- PRINCIPLE 13 – Recruitment (Code)
- PRINCIPLE 14 – Selection
- PRINCIPLE 15 – Transparency
- PRINCIPLE 16 – Judging merit
- PRINCIPLE 17 – Variations in the chronological order of CVs
- PRINCIPLE 18 – Recognition of mobility experience
- PRINCIPLE 19 – Recognition of qualifications
- PRINCIPLE 20 – Seniority
- PRINCIPLE 21 – Postdoctoral appointments



Principles and practices in place at ZUT

Recruitment of researchers at ZUT is based on provisions of the Higher Education Act, which are binding for all institutions of higher education in Poland. The Act contains provisions related to recruitment of a researcher who can be appointed or hired based on employment contract. The Act regulates also the process of recruitment which is open and call-based. Call announcements should be made public on web sites of the relevant institution, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, and European Commission's EURAXESS portal for researchers' mobility (PRINCIPLES 12, 13). ZUT has implemented the recruitment

principles set forth by the Act; 64% of the respondents considered those principles as clearly defined. The recruitment call's conditions at ZUT are defined by the ZUT Statutes which have adopted numerous important elements of the Charter and Code. The call announcement provides information on the position, requirements as defined by the Act, and additional requirements and professional qualifications, a list of supporting documents, the place and deadline of application submission, and the date of decision (PRINCIPLE 15). The candidates responding to the call are evaluated according to call criteria:

- ▶ **Professional qualifications, defined for individual positions (PRINCIPLE 20),**
- ▶ **Applicability of the candidate's scientific merit and educational experience to the position's requirements; ZUT recognises intermissions in the researcher's career for e.g., maternity or paternity leave, employment in non-academic sector, multidimensionality of career path, and mobility experience (PRINCIPLE 16, 17, 18),**
- ▶ **Compatibility between candidate's plans regarding the position with employer's needs,**
- ▶ **Fulfilment of employment criteria set forth by the Act.**

ZUT is aware of the necessity for continuous improvement of standards of researcher recruitment, the awareness being explicitly expressed in the Strategy of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin for 2011-2020. The recruitment commission is impartial, non-prejudiced and consists of at least three persons. It is appointed by the relevant Dean in consultation with the Faculty Council and experts in the relevant scientific field and discipline (PRINCIPLE 14). The recruitment call commission analyses all the applications and, following secret voting, takes a decision and writes a report explaining its choice. The recruitment call commission convener forwards the call outcome to the Dean. The survey asked researchers whether, in their opinion, recruitment to fill vacancies is conducted by an unprejudiced recruitment commission; 62% of the opinions were in the affirmative, 28% of the respondents being unable to answer this question.

ZUT makes every effort to counteract nepotism. To ensure recruitment transparency and avoid conflict of interest, direct subordination between family members employed by ZUT is prohibited.

The researcher evaluation system adopted by ZUT awards those employees who improve their qualifications, attain exceptional achievements in research, and take advantage of visits abroad, thus promoting international mobility (PRINCIPLE 19).

With regard to the principle regulating a sequence of positions for PhD holders (PRINCIPLE 21), it should be mentioned that the timeframe of employment at individual positions is defined by the Higher Education Act. Additionally, the ZUT Statutes contain provisions regarding principles and requirements for individuals applying for different positions. Requirements regarding scientific degrees, titles and positions are strictly defined. The doctoral studies regulations contain provisions on the doctoral procedure. The legal regulations in force at ZUT are reflected in survey results with regard to clarity and transparency of promotion procedures, 90% of the respondents providing the answer in the affirmative. In their opinion, the recruitment, promotion, and periodic evaluation procedures at ZUT are well and clearly defined.

Corrective and remedial actions needed

Results of the survey demonstrated that it is necessary to amend the ZUT Statutes in the part related to recruitment; more emphasis should be placed on raising the employees' awareness regarding the recruitment process.

Consequently, three corrective and remedial actions seem to be justified:

1

Amendment of the ZUT Statutes by inclusion of ethical aspects in recruitment.

2

Periodic training sessions on the recruitment procedures, to be carried out at individual faculties.

3

Publication of Rector's Communique regarding the necessity of adherence to important elements of recruitment process, including information to candidates on strengths and weaknesses of their applications, and presentation of perspectives for professional growth at ZUT.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

National:

- ▶ The Higher Education Act.

Institutional:

- » Resolution 47 of 2011 - Statutes of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (ZUT Statutes),
- » Resolution 15 of 2015 - Rules of doctoral studies at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,
- » Resolution 68 of 2009 - Resolution on periodic evaluation of researchers at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,
- » Regulation 60 of 2013 - Regulation on prohibition of direct subordination between ZUT employees who are family members,
- » Regulation 117 of 2009 - Labour regulations at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,
- » Resolution 30 of 2011 - Strategy of West Pomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin for 2011-2020.

3. WORKING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY

- PRINCIPLE 22 – Recognition of the profession
- PRINCIPLE 23 – Research environment
- PRINCIPLE 24 – Working conditions
- PRINCIPLE 25 – Stability and permanence of employment
- PRINCIPLE 26 – Funding and salaries
- PRINCIPLE 27 – Gender balance
- PRINCIPLE 28 – Career development
- PRINCIPLE 29 – Value of mobility
- PRINCIPLE 30 – Access to career advice
- PRINCIPLE 31 – Intellectual Property Rights
- PRINCIPLE 32 – Co-authorship
- PRINCIPLE 33 – Teaching
- PRINCIPLE 34 – Complaints/ appeals
- PRINCIPLE 35 – Participation in decision-making bodies



Principles and practices in place at ZUT

When hiring a researcher, ZUT assumes that the individual hired is an expert in his/her discipline. However, as shown by the poll results, it is the doctoral candidates who have the greatest problem with perceiving themselves as professionals (PRINCIPLE 22). To remedy this, ZUT decided that a particular emphasis should be placed at sensitising the scientific supervisors and mentors to the need of increasing their charges' involvement in the scientific life and activities. The involvement will be assessed during the doctoral candidate's evaluation.

ZUT strives to ensure that its researchers work in a stimulating environment. A set of Rules for Using Research Infrastructure has been issued and a System for Quality Management in Research Laboratories has been developed. To ensure the efficiency of laboratory management, ZUT has a Rector's Plenipotentiary for Quality in Laboratories. ZUT has also a Commission for Labour Safety (PRINCIPLE 23).

Regarding the principle on working conditions (PRINCIPLE 24), the ZUT Statutes order that the university provides comfortable working conditions, the researchers are familiarised with in-house regulations, materials and equipment necessary to carry out work are provided, as are appropriate sanitary facilities. The researchers are entitled to personalised work time schedules or, should the situation justify it, to task-based work time schedule. Following 15 years of employment, a researcher is entitled to a time off for health reparation for maximally 1 year. There are also regulations in place to counteract mobbing in work place.

ZUT creates conditions making it possible for disabled individuals to fully participate in teaching and research. Disabled persons' employment conditions are subject to regulations contained in the Act on Employment and Social Rehabilitation and Disabled Individuals' Employment.

ZUT adheres to the practice of hiring researchers based on employment contract, which ensures employment permanence and stability (PRINCIPLE 25). This is in agreement with the Council Directive 1999/70/EC of 28 June 1999 concerning the framework agreement on fixed-term work. A half of the respondents confirmed that employment at ZUT ensures professional stability, 21% having no opinion. Salaries of ZUT researchers are set in accordance to the Higher Education Act, Labour Code, and the Minister of Science and Higher Education's Decree on remuneration for work rendered and other benefits. In addition, ZUT has adopted a set of Rules on the Social Benefits Fund.

Regarding the gender balance (PRINCIPLE 27), the ZUT Labour Rules contain premises on counteracting discrimination based on gender and on equal treatment of men and women in the work place. This principle is confirmed by the current gender ratio at ZUT: 1164 women and 911 men, i.e., 56% of women and 44% of men. Gender balance is promoted by various campaigns, such as the 'Girls to Technical Universities' action encouraging young women to studying at technical universities.

ZUT places heavy emphasis on scientific development of young scientists. The University applies the practice that the career development of each young scientist is provided by two persons.

One of them is mentor (unit head) whose task is to:

- ▶ **Enabling the use of scientific networks,**
- ▶ **Determining new ways of personal development,**
- ▶ **Help in finding sources of research funding,**
- ▶ **Motivation for international and intersectoral mobility.**

The second person is a supervisor which is primarily responsible for providing advice and support in particular research and scientific development.

ZUT has built a motivation system in the form of Rector's awards for achievements in science, teaching and organisation as well as for the entirety of the track record.

Emphasising the quality of teaching, ZUT has developed its education internationalisation strategy aimed at, i.a., increasing researchers' mobility (PRINCIPLE 29). Consequently, ZUT has developed a number of regulations making it possible for researchers, and encouraging them, to participate in international mobility actions. During periodical evaluation, scores are assigned for, i.a., research visits abroad. Among the poll respondents, 77% confirmed that ZUT recognises researchers' mobility as an important asset and rewards it.

ZUT organisational structure contains units concerned with providing professional advice (PRINCIPLE 30): the Academic Career Office and the EURAXESS Regional Centre of Information for Researchers. However, only 44% of poll respondents were aware of the open access to career advice.

Intellectual property rights (PRINCIPLE 31) are governed by national Acts on: Industrial Property Rights, Copyright and Related Rights, and Higher Education. At the ZUT level, questions related to intellectual property rights are regulated by Rules on Intellectual Property Rights Management and Commercialisation Principles at the West Pomeranian University of Technology in Szczecin. The Rules aid in supporting authors in their efforts to secure legal protection and commercialisation of intellectual output. In addition, ZUT grants the authors partial or full copyright, which enables researchers to benefit from commercial utilisation of their products. Researchers who contribute to industrial implementation of their technologies are additionally rewarded during periodical evaluation. The organisational structure of ZUT contains a Discovery and Patent Protection Unit which, together with RCIiT conducts regular training sessions on patent protection and relevant rights.

As shown by the poll results, co-authorship (PRINCIPLE 32) is regarded as honoured by ZUT (57% of the respondents agreed to this statement). ZUT is aware that co-authorship evidences a constructive attitude to collaboration and conducting research. Publication authors are rewarded during periodical evaluation; authors of multi-authored publications are evaluated according to special procedures which honour their actual contributions.

In addition, 49% of respondents found ZUT not to put an overly heavy teaching load on the teaching staff, in compliance with the internal regulation which set the annual teaching load and defined principles of calculating the teaching effort. Teaching (PRINCIPLE 33) is taken into account during the periodic staff evaluation. ZUT complies to all regulations counteracting unduly heavy teaching load. Scientists involved in research projects or active in various additional activities (e.g. supervision of students' scientific societies) are eligible to reduction of their teaching load. In addition, all the overtime hours are remunerated and the decision whether to engage in teaching overtime rests with the researcher. Nevertheless, half of the respondents were of the opinion that they were overburdened with teaching obligations. In the Working Group's view the reason of that opinion was the lack of knowledge on relevant regulations, in force at ZUT, which make a researcher eligible for the teaching load reduction in favour of other research activities. It was thus decided to issue annual reminders to the Deans of all faculties that they should disseminate information on the eligibility to reduction among the teaching staff.

The Charter and Code emphasise a possibility of lodging complaints and appeals (PRINCIPLE 34). The procedures for appeals and complaints are set forth in the Higher Education Act. In addition, the ZUT Labour Rules contain provisions on submission of complaints and appeals to the Rector, Vice-rectors, Chancellor, and Deans. Researchers can use the services of appropriate support organs, the Academic Ombudsman being the foremost among them. The Academic Ombudsman promotes high ethical standards and assists individuals (students, doctoral candidates, and researchers) in resolving disputes and conflicts. The Ombudsman promotes mediation as a method of conflict resolving and proposes actions aimed at improved functioning of ZUT. The Ombudsman is independent of the ZUT administration. There is also a ZUT Appeals Commission which hears appeals to results of periodic evaluation, and a Mediation Commission interceding in conflicts related to employment matters.

Adherence to democratic principles is ensured by researchers' access to and participation in decision-making organs (PRINCIPLE 35). There are two collegial decision-making bodies at ZUT: the Senate and the Faculty Councils. The Senate consists of representatives of researchers, students, doctoral candidates, and non-academic staff. Faculty Councils are similarly structured. The Senate and Faculty Council meetings can be attended by trade union representatives, but they have no voting power. Young scientists have their own organisation (the doctoral candidates' self-government). Results of the poll show 57% of the respondents to agree that they are adequately represented in ZUT decision-making bodies.

Corrective and remedial actions needed

The poll indicated the necessity of raising the researchers' awareness regarding the open access to career advice, and of more emphasis to be put on career development. Only 37% of the respondents found doctoral candidates to be perceived as professionals (PRINCIPLE 22). Consequently, efforts to increase doctoral candidates' participation in and contribution to scientific activities of ZUT are to be made.

It is planned to implement 6 corrective and remedial actions:

- 1** Information campaign informing on the Academic Career Centre and the EURAXESS Regional Centre of Information for Researchers.
- 2** Rector's Communique obliging doctoral candidates' supervisors to involve the candidates in science conducted at ZUT.
- 3** Promotion of scientific visits abroad by continuously updating the choice of options and supplying them electronically (the ZUT web site, a newsletter) to those interested.
- 4** Strengthening of administrative support for researchers applying for scientific visits abroad.
- 5** Conducting a cycle of training sessions on strategic career planning available to researchers at each career stage.
- 6** Dissemination of information on the relevant regulations in force at ZUT with regard to the research and teaching balance.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

National:

- ▶ **The Labour Code,**
- ▶ **The Higher Education Act,**
- ▶ **The Minister of Science and Higher Education's Decree on remuneration for work rendered and other benefits,**
- ▶ **The Industrial Property Rights Act,**
- ▶ **The Act on Copyright and Related Rights**

Institutional:

- » **Resolution 33 of 2015 - Rules on the use of research infrastructure,**
- » **Regulation 8 of 2010 - Regulation on documentation of the quality management system in ZUT research laboratories,**
- » **Regulation 25 of 2012 - Rules on the Social Benefits Funds at ZUT,**
- » **Regulation 19 of 2010 - Appointment of the Commission for Labour Safety,**
- » **Resolution 91 of 2015 - Rules on Rector's Awards to researchers for scientific, teaching or organisational achievements or for the entirety of the tract record,**
- » **Resolution 29 of 2009 - Resolution on conditions and procedures for seconding ZUT researchers, doctoral candidates and students abroad to pursue scientific, teaching and training endeavours,**
- » **Regulation 35 of 2012 - Regulation on implementation of principles of remuneration of individuals active in carrying out activities related to projects supported from external sources and conducting other activities supported from non-ZUT budget sources**
- » **Regulation 38 of 2012 - Regulation on students' and doctoral candidates' visits abroad to pursue partial studies at foreign institutions of higher education,**
- » **Resolution 17 of 2013 - Strategy of internationalisation of teaching at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin for 2013-2020,**
- » **Resolution 68 of 2009 - Resolution on periodic evaluation of researchers at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Resolution 34 of 2015 - Rules of intellectual property rights management and principles of commercialisation at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Resolution 80 of 2009 - Resolution on contribution of remuneration for outputs generated while in ZUT employment and subject to copyright, in researchers' and other employees' salaries,**
- » **Resolution 48 of 2010 - Resolution on principles and procedures of establishing researchers' teaching obligations and types of teaching duties covered by those obligations,**
- » **Resolution 47 of 2009 - Resolution on researchers' annual teaching duties and principles of teaching load calculation,**
- » **Regulation 117 of 2009 - Rules of Work of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Regulation 65 of 2014 - The appointment of the Academic Ombudsman at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Resolution 47 of 2011 - The Statutes of the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin (ZUT Statutes),**
- » **Regulation 56 of 2012 - Regulation on the appointment of the Mediation Commission at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Resolution 15 of 2015 - Rules of the doctoral studies at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin.**

4. TRAINING

- PRINCIPLE 36 – Relations with supervisors
- PRINCIPLE 37 – Supervision and managerial duties
- PRINCIPLE 38 – Continuing professional development
- PRINCIPLE 39 – Access to research training and continuous development
- PRINCIPLE 40 – Supervision



Principles and practices in place at ZUT

One of the ZUT objectives is to educate the highest-quality professionals. The ZUT Strategy contains provisions on the necessity to fund training courses improving employees' qualifications and implementation of procedures aimed at self-improvement, including mentoring. Those procedures describe the framework of providing employees with appropriate training. In addition, the periodic evaluation rewards researchers seeking ways to improve their competences and qualifications. Professional development is enhanced also via the free access to resources of the ZUT Main Library, including up-to-date access to prestigious international scientific journals (PRINCIPLE 38, 39).

ZUT's actions aimed at researchers' professional development are reflected in the poll results. Most of the respondents confirmed:



With regard to training of young scientists it should be mentioned that doctoral candidates schedule and maintain regular contacts with their supervisors (PRINCIPLES 36, 40). Rules of the doctoral studies identify scientific supervisor's obligations. The doctoral thesis supervisor oversees the research carried out by the doctoral candidate and thesis preparation, assesses the candidate's research progress, evaluates reports, and is obliged to inform the Head of the doctoral studies about the progress. The doctoral candidate prepares a schedule of his/her research aimed at completing the dissertation and reports to the doctoral supervisor (PRINCIPLE 36, 37). Among the researchers participating in the poll, 68% answered in the affirmative when asked whether experienced researchers devote enough time to young scientists and whether they strive to build positive relations with them.

Corrective and remedial actions needed

Although no shortcomings were found at ZUT in access to training and in introducing young scientists to research, it was decided to undertake actions aimed at strengthening the supervisor's and mentor's role in shaping the professional career path of doctoral candidates by:

1

Introducing, to the ZUT Researcher's Ethical Code, a provision related to shaping the doctoral candidates' professional development by research supervisors and mentors.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

National:

- ▶ **The Labour Code,**
- ▶ **The Higher Education Act.**

Institutional:

- » **Resolution 15 of 2015 - Rules of the doctoral studies at the West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin,**
- » **Resolution 30 of 2011 - Strategy of West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin for 2011-2020.**

9/ SUMMARY

The poll analysis and identification of weaknesses at ZUT resulted in proposing a number of corrective and remedial actions. These should be carried forth to implement the principles of the European Charter for Researcher and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The actions are summarised in the table below:

Task No.	Action	Responsible unit	Date of implementation
Area I: Ethical and professional aspects			
1.1	Preparation and implementation of the ZUT Researcher's Ethical Code	Department of Research	February 2018
1.2	Supporting researchers in responding to calls associated with knowledge dissemination at the European level, e.g., the European Researchers' Night	Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer ZUT	Continuous action, as of June 2016
Area II: Recruitment			
2.1	Preparation and implementation of an amendment to ZUT Statutes	Rector	November 2017
2.2	Training sessions for Deans, heads of organisational units and employees to familiarise them with ZUT procedures	HR Department	Training sessions (two sessions a year) to begin in March 2017
2.3	Rector's Communique to employees, to draw attention to specific aspects of recruitment	HR Department	February 2017

Area III: Working conditions and social security

3.1	Information campaign on ZUT Academic Career Office and EURAXESS Regional Centre of Information for Researchers	Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer ZUT and Academic Career Office ZUT	March 2017, March 2018
3.2	Rector's Communique to promote doctoral candidates' involvement in research at ZUT	Education Department	May 2017
3.3	Promotion of study visits abroad, fellowships and award; updating the list of opportunities every half-year at the ZUT web site and via a newsletter	Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer ZUT	as of June 2016 (twice a year)
3.4	Strengthening of support to researchers applying for research visits abroad	Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer ZUT	continuous action, as of November 2016
3.5	Training on strategic research career planning	Regional Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer ZUT	April 2017
3.6	Information at the Senate meeting on the necessity to observe the research-teaching balance	Rector	as of January 2017 (once a year)

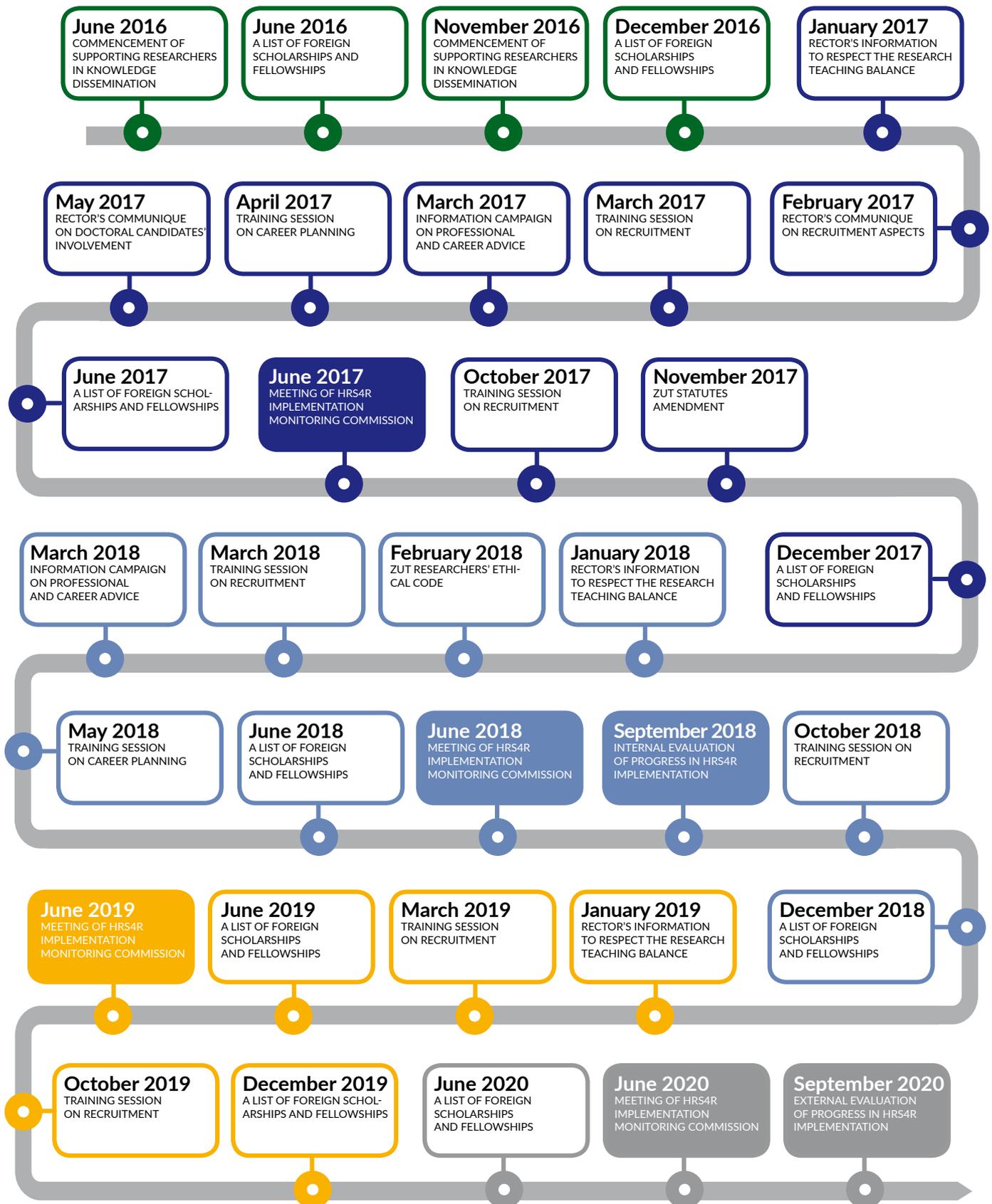
Area IV: Training

4.1	Amending the ZUT Researcher's Ethical Code with premises on a special role of the doctoral thesis supervisor in introducing young researchers to science	Research Department	February 2018
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The changes in ZUT will be monitored by a 3-strong commission (the HRS4R Implementation Monitoring Commission) consisting of:

- ▶ Vice-rector for Organisation and Development,
- ▶ A representative of the RCIITT,
- ▶ A representative of the HR Department.

It is planned for the commission to meet once a year to review the progress in implementation of the actions planned.





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