
TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

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

Update November 2019

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I Preface

In December 2014, TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences was the first German university to be awarded the European Commission's "HR Excellence in Research" logo for its implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers within the framework of the university's own Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

TH Köln sees itself as a "University of Technology, Arts, Sciences" in which sustainable teaching and strong research are inextricably linked. With its international orientation and regional roots, it fulfills a societal mandate: Generating knowledge through research and making it effective for industry, civil society, culture and politics.

With its proven strengths in engineering and natural sciences, the humanities and social sciences as well as art and design, TH Köln is one of the most innovative and research-intensive universities of applied sciences. It is part of the European University Association (EUA) and the alliance UAS7¹. The diverse research activities of TH Köln are interdisciplinary, focus on application-oriented research and enjoy the university's long-term support. As a university with an international presence and regional roots, TH Köln cultivates close cooperation with universities and research institutions as well as partners from industry and culture in Germany and abroad. In this way, it promotes the transfer of ideas, knowledge and technology. At the same time, it is aware of its social responsibility as a place of education and as an employer.

In late 2018, TH Köln adopted a strategic development concept in the form of the University Development Plan 2030² with the aim of defining the guidelines and structural framework requirements for higher education development for the coming years. The strategic orientation of the University Development Plan 2030 is based on the legal mandate of the Higher Education Act NRW, the guiding principle formulated in the course of the change process from Fachhochschule Köln/Cologne University of Applied Sciences to TH Köln - University of Applied Sciences and the agreed core values, the goals and planning principles of TH Köln for its future development, as well as on external framework conditions.

Human resources development and the promotion of early-stage researchers are key components of TH Köln's University Development Plan 2030 and are firmly anchored in the document in form of mission statements and general provisions for the implementation of the institution's strategic goals. A targeted Human Resources strategy, including HR development, ensures that TH Köln offers a stimulative working environment for researchers. This supports the academic career of researchers and their research activities at all times.

In addition the implementation of the university's own HRS4R, TH Köln is actively involved in the nationwide HRS4R working group of the German Rectors' Conference and assists other universities as a point of contact and best practice example in initiating the HRS4R process.

¹ UAS7 is an association of seven research-oriented German universities of applied sciences with a strong international orientation, which combine their potentials in teaching, research, science transfer and organization and pursue jointly formulated strategic goals (www.uas7.de).

² <https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/hochschulentwicklungsplan2030.pdf>

II Background

The updated HRS4R of TH Köln is based on the continuous monitoring of measures to ensure fair recruitment processes and good working conditions for researchers at TH Köln since the publication of the first HRS4R in July 2014 and the award of the "HR Excellence in Research" seal of approval in December 2014.

In 2016, the implementation of the HRS4R at TH Köln was reviewed in an internal evaluation. The implementation of measures was documented and new as well as revised measures were added to the action plan.

In preparation for the external evaluation of the HRS4R at TH Köln, this updated HRS4R and the updated action plan document the current state of implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers at TH Köln.

The implementation and monitoring of the HRS4R at TH Köln is supervised by the Vice President for Research and Knowledge Transfer and carried out by an interdepartmental project group, which was founded at the start of the HRS4R process at the university. The HRS4R project management alternates between the team lead Human Resources Development and the Head of Graduate Center service desk.

The Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer, the HR Services Department, the Department of Communication and Marketing, the Department of International Affairs, the Center for Academic Qualifications and Advanced Training and the equal opportunities officer were involved in monitoring current measures and in developing new measures.

The new strategy and the updated action plan were discussed with established researchers as well as early-stage researchers and introduced in the Senate to the represented professors and academic staff, the technical and administrative staff, the student representatives as well as the deans, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Staff Councils, the Representative Body for Severely Disabled Persons, the General Students' Committee (AStA) and the heads of central scientific institutions, including the library.

On November 13, 2019, the Executive Board adopted the updated HRS4R of TH Köln as well as the updated catalog of measures. The Senate approved the updated HRS4R and the updated catalog of measures on November 27, 2019.

III HRS4R of TH Köln

The 40 principles of the Charter and Code³ are assigned to four fields of action at TH Köln. The status of implementation of the HRS4R at TH Köln is documented below for each field of action. In addition, successfully completed and new measures are described:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Ethical and Professional Aspects B Recruitment and Selection C Working Conditions D Training and Development |
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³ See Annex 1

A Ethical and Professional Aspects

A.1 Principles and Good Scientific Practice⁴

The **freedom of research** in the Federal Republic of Germany is embodied in Article 5 of the Basic Law and in the Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C 364/01) as well as in Article 1 of the Higher Education Act NRW § 4. It is carried out at TH Köln and therefore complies with the principles of the Charter and Code. In the detailed Appointment Guideline, the ethical competence of the professors is given special consideration and emphasized during the recruitment process.⁵ The "Guidelines on Good Scientific Practice and Handling Scientific Misconduct" issued by TH Köln in 2016 also refer to these **basic ethical principles** in research and to **professional responsibility** as researchers.⁶ The guidelines contain provisions on the standards set by the university for the quality of research, the publication of research results and **intellectual property rights**. In addition, they specify the way in which **co-authorship** and scientific misconduct are handled, for example in the form of plagiarism or honorary authorship. The Guidelines on Good Scientific Practice at TH Köln are currently being revised with regard to the new code "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice" published in July 2019 by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG). They are to be adopted shortly as a legally binding order in the Senate.

TH Köln has an official **research strategy**⁷ since 2007 and has defined development goals for the expansion of its research strength in the University Development Plan 2030. In order to successfully implement the strategy and achieve the development goals in the field of research, the Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer offers researchers from all faculties assistance in submitting applications as well as support in concluding cooperation agreements with external partners, e.g. from industry and culture. In addition, the department provides information on internal funding mechanisms and external funding options, offers the possibility of registering for a licensed research newsletter, advises researchers individually and organizes information events and workshops on research funding programs, peer review activities, etc. depending on the occasion (also in cooperation with external partners such as KoWi, the EU Office of the BMBF, DAAD, etc.) as well as information events for new employees or newly appointed professors. This ensures that the researchers are always well informed about the internal and external funding opportunities and are well acquainted with the formalities of carrying out research projects and the requirements of the funding bodies.

In order to bundle its research activities and to structure its research communication, TH Köln has identified the following scientific profile areas: "Integrative Society and Resilience", "Digital Work and Living Environments" as well as "Sustainable Management and Resources" and anchored these in the Higher Education Development Plan 2030. The research profile of TH Köln will be further refined and regularly updated in the future.

Researchers at TH Köln will receive information on their **accountability** and the **professional conduct** generally required at TH Köln during the interview and in the documents handed out when they first start their new job ("Info kit" for newly appointed staff or handouts as part of the introductory events for newly appointed professors and employees). The Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer and the Team for Third-Party Funding support the researchers in fulfilling their

⁴ Reference to the principles: 1. Freedom of research, 2. Ethical principles, 3. Professional responsibility, 4. Professional conduct, 5. Contractual and legal obligations, 6. Accountability, 7. Best practices in research as well as 23. Research environment, 31. Intellectual property rights and 32. Co-authorship and 34. Complaints/appeals

⁵ <https://intern.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/personal/berufungsleitfaden.pdf> (internal link)

⁶ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/forschung/richtlinien_zur_sicherung_guter_wissenschaftlicher_praxis.pdf

⁷ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/forschung/forschungsstrategie_2015_070921.pdf

contractual and legal obligations, also within the framework of third-party funded projects. The university administration of TH Köln cooperates closely with the researchers in the application and execution of their research projects (also in accordance with the EU Framework for State aid for research). This means that the university administration is informed if research projects are to be delayed, redesigned, supplemented, terminated earlier or suspended for various reasons. The university administration is then able to support researchers in a problem-oriented and targeted manner.

Furthermore, there is an ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice at TH Köln as well as a representative who is available to researchers from all faculties as a person of trust in case of suspicion of academic misconduct and in conflicts. Further opportunities to raise **complaints, opposition procedures or similar concerns** exist at meetings with the members of the Executive Board or in a feedback meeting with the Head of the HR Services Department one year after the appointment.

The **established good practice in research** mentioned in the Charter is also applied at TH Köln. TH Köln has appointed a data protection officer in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The data protection officer is available as a contact person for all data protection law queries.⁸ All employees of TH Köln are obliged to sign the privacy policy and declaration before commencing work. Furthermore, § 28 of the Data Protection Act NRW regulates data processing for scientific purposes.

A.2 Dissemination and Exploitation of Results⁹

An integral part of TH Köln's extended **understanding of transfer** is the exchange with and integration of external stakeholders from industry, civil society, culture and politics at all stages of the transfer process, in the region and beyond. The Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer offers researchers services related to transfer activities and start-ups. The "**Transfer Strategy 2025**" of TH Köln, which formulates new strategic goals for the extended understanding of transfer, was adopted by the Executive Board of TH Köln in 2017 in agreement with the Senate.¹⁰

In keeping with the **regulations for ensuring good scientific practice** and handling scientific misconduct at TH Köln, the researchers at TH Köln are encouraged to make the results of their research available to the public, to disseminate them and, at best, to utilize them, including making them available for commercial use or application.¹¹ TH Köln uses its own patent strategy¹² for the commercial exploitation of research results on industrial property rights. Since 2010, a PatentScout service has been offered to researchers to support patent applications. This ensures the implementation of the Employee Invention Act (ArbnErfG), which guarantees universities the rights to inventions of their researchers. Since 2015, the "Guidelines for Handling Inventions" have provided university inventors with a transparent framework for patent and exploitation proceedings.

TH Köln supports start-ups and offers innovative, creative and goal-oriented entrepreneurs individual support in the realization of their projects. TH Köln facilitates the acquisition of funds or the use of patents for the start-up project, starting with promoting such topics during studies and access to a

⁸ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/datenschutzhinweis_8279.php

⁹ Reference to the principles: 8. Dissemination and Exploitation of Results and 9. Social Commitment

¹⁰ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/transferstrategie_2025_der_th_koln.pdf

¹¹ The motivation to publish is further strengthened by the agreements within the framework of the W salary scale, which benefit most of the researchers at TH Köln.

¹² https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/forschung/patentstrategie_th_koln.pdf

large network. The "**Entrepreneurship Education and Business Start-ups**" Strategy was approved by the Senate and the University Council in 2018.¹³ It complements the Transfer Strategy 2025 and the Patent Strategy of TH Köln.

TH Köln offers its researchers the opportunity to publish quality-assured publication series in accordance with the Open Access principle through the DINI-certified university publication server "**Cologne Open Science**" (COS).¹⁴ In December 2012, TH Köln published an Open Access declaration as part of the implementation of COS.¹⁵ The doctoral researchers of TH Köln also have the opportunity to publish their dissertations here. TH Köln offers its (early-stage) researchers and students a further option of electronic publication through the E-Publications platform.¹⁶

The **Department of Communication and Marketing** focuses on presenting the research activities of the researchers of TH Köln within the university as well as to the public (web presence, social media, print media, placement of experts on radio and TV). Moreover, in cooperation with the Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer, the volume "Projekte & Publikationen" ["Projects & Publications"] is published annually and presents research and explorative learning activities of the previous year. Knowledge transfer and **social commitment** are promoted through participation in formats such as the regular "Night of Technology"¹⁷, as a member of the Cologne Science Forum¹⁸, or through the student laboratories¹⁹. The "1st Day of Research" will take place at TH Köln in February 2020. This provides a broad public audience with insight into the research activities of TH Köln and enables public discourse.

B Recruitment and Selection²⁰

The recruitment of (highly) qualified and motivated staff for teaching, research and administration from Germany and abroad is a crucial success factor for the performance and continuous development of TH Köln as a university of the future. The aim is to attract and recruit the most suitable employees for the university.

In November 2016, TH Köln adopted an **Appointment Guideline** for the selection process of professors at TH Köln. It is based on **Appointment Regulations** and guarantees a uniform procedure for all faculties.²¹ The guideline sets out the fundamental principles of respectful treatment of applicants, adequate information on the status of the proceedings, transparent procedures and comprehensive support for invited applicants and newly appointed staff.

¹³ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/forschung/strategie_entrepreneurship_education_und_existenzgruendungen_aktualisiert.pdf

¹⁴ <https://cos.bibl.th-koeln.de/home>

¹⁵ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/forschung/thk_open_access_erklarung.pdf

¹⁶ <https://epb.bibl.th-koeln.de/home>

¹⁷ Within the framework of the "Night of Technology" initiated by the VDI and VDE Cologne, scientists of TH Köln make science and technology accessible to a public audience of all ages by means of short lectures, experiments, laboratory tours and interactive activities.

¹⁸ <http://koelner-wissenschaftsrunde.de/>

¹⁹ https://www.th-koeln.de/studium/schuelerlabore_64586.php

²⁰ Reference to the principles: 12.-21. Recruitment and Selection

²¹ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/arbeitgeber/berufungsordnung-th_koeln.pdf and <https://intern.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/personal/berufungsleitfaden.pdf> (Appointment Guideline only as internal link)

In order to ensure a **transparent application process**, a profile of requirements is published with the job advertisement. Section 10 (2) of the Appointment Regulations of TH Köln ensures that an acknowledgment of receipt is sent and that there is regular communication on the status of the proceedings. Applicants may also request feedback on their application, selection interviews or demonstration lessons at any time. Pursuant to Section 36 Higher Education Act (Hochschulgesetz, HG) NRW, **variations in the résumés** of applicants are expressly required. This is explicitly mentioned in the new, revised version of the Appointment Guideline. Deviations from a linear-chronological résumé as well as stays abroad, research semesters and occupationally relevant positions outside the university are regarded as indicators of mobility. Family leave and any resulting interruptions or extensions to qualification phases, especially for female scientists, are also considered in a positive light.

Pursuant to Section 36 HG NRW, one of the prerequisites for recruitment is a **practical period** of at least three years outside the university. In addition, **stays abroad** should be evaluated positively in the **selection practice**. Qualifications acquired abroad are checked for their comparability using the anabin database, an information portal by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB)²² for the recognition of foreign educational qualifications. So-called **certificates of professional competence** are issued with the assistance of experts from the ZAB in order to recognize professional qualifications acquired abroad (the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany has formulated valid resolutions).

At the start of the **selection process**, an appointment committee is convened to define the selection criteria on the basis of the requirements profile and to establish a code of conduct for the selection process. The appointment committee, which is established by the respective faculty council of TH Köln, consists of three professors of TH Köln from the respective faculty, one external professor, one research associate with representation and one student with representation. It is chaired by a professor of TH Köln. Applicants who are invited to a personal interview must submit a teaching and research concept one week in advance. In addition to the evaluation of the application documents, the selection process includes a demonstration lesson, a lecture and a structured interview. The Appointment Guideline provides for an evaluation matrix for the evaluation of the basic competences, which also contains a weighting of the requirement criteria.

The applicants will then be assessed and selected according to their ranking. The result is presented to the Executive Board in an appointment report which documents the selection process and justifies the selection. External reviewers are used for **quality assurance purposes** and usually certify that the selection procedure is flawless.

Once the selected candidate has been confirmed, the **appointment** (recruitment) may take place without any age limit. The only exception to this is civil servant status after the age of 50, which is only possible under certain conditions. Maternity leave periods and actual periods of care and child-raising are taken into account, so that the age limit is shifted.

In addition to the appointment guidelines, measures for **open, transparent and merit-based and quality-based recruitment of academic and non-academic staff** have been established in the Human Resources Department and a corresponding guideline²³ has been drafted. It defines four basic principles for staff recruitment at TH Köln: Openness, transparency, performance and quality. These basic principles guide the entire acquisition process and the methods and tools used in staff selection and the appointment and recruitment process.

²² <http://anabin.kmk.org/>

²³ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/arbeitgeber/richtlinie_personalgewinnung.pdf

An e-recruitment tool introduced in 2019 facilitates the application and selection process for applicants and all those involved.

C Working Conditions

C.1 General Working Conditions²⁴

TH Köln attaches great importance to the **acknowledgement of the research profession** and appreciation of researchers at all career levels. In the case of professors, the appreciation of the research activity on the part of the university as an employer is also reflected in the particular salary scale (W-Besoldung) and the allowances negotiated at the time of appointment. Leading researchers at TH Köln can come together to form research focal points or research institutes, which may be provided with university funds. It is also possible to apply for an individual research sabbatical.

Early-stage researchers are highly appreciated at the university. The Graduate Center of TH Köln was founded on January 1, 2016 to support the needs and requirements of early-stage researchers.²⁵

TH Köln is constantly striving to further optimize the **good working conditions** for researchers at TH Köln. In 2018, the Executive Board adopted the draft for the implementation of the **Contract for Good Employment Conditions** of January 15, 2016, prepared by the HR Services Department.²⁶

Newly appointed professors participate in two introductory events (lasting a total of 2.5 days), which are held by the Executive Board and the administration at TH Köln. These aim to familiarize the new professors with the university organization and its structures, bodies and administration, to provide an overview of administrative processes and to promote the exchange between the professors on practically relevant topics. A one-day introductory event is also offered for new employees.

All newly appointed professors and new employees receive training and instruction in relevant areas of **occupational safety** on the basis of the current operational guidelines and are made aware of possible dangers and appropriate protective measures. Afterwards, this is done annually by the superiors. When women report their pregnancy to the HR Department, a so-called workplace risk assessment is carried out.²⁷ Further legal bases are the Occupational Health and Safety Act (Arbeitsschutzgesetz, ArbSchG) and the Statutory Accident Prevention Regulation (Gesetzliche Unfallverhütungsvorschrift, GUV) GUV-V A1.

The university governance has established a "Health Forum" working group, which offers all employees of TH Köln a comprehensive **health promotion scheme** with a wide range of services for maintaining health. It includes, for example, free use of a gym, various discounted fitness courses, mobile

²⁴ Reference to the principles: 11. Evaluation systems, 22. Professional recognition and 24. Working conditions, 25. Stability and permanence of employment, 26. Financing of salaries

²⁵ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/amtlichemittellungen/2015/gesch_ftsordnung_graduiertenzentrum.pdf

²⁶ https://www.mkw.nrw/sites/default/files/documents/2018-10/vertrag_ueber_gute_beschaefigungsbedingungen_0.pdf

²⁷ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/familienfreundlichkeit_3759.php und https://intern.th-koeln.de/personal/mutterschutz-und-elterzeit_253.php (internal link)

massage at the workplace and back gymnastics classes. Participation in the company run is also encouraged. The university sports provisions can be used at reduced prices.²⁸ Workplace health promotion aims to strengthen the health-promoting behavior of employees, reduce stressful working conditions, prevent illnesses, and increase motivation and satisfaction.

Since 2011, TH Köln has held the "family-friendly university audit" seal awarded by beruf und familie Service GmbH. The university was re-audited again on October 1, 2018 and has pledged to further expand and consolidate the range of services and measures that support the compatibility of life and work for the next three years. The Family Service Office serves as the central point of contact for all employees and students.²⁹ In its pilot function it bundles the university-wide provision of services for reconciling life and work and provides a central information and advice portal. The increased flexibility of working hours and places of work, more flexible childcare facilities, including the "Campus Erholung" vacation childcare, the offer of a "parent-child office" and the expansion of flexible study opportunities are central measures that will be further expanded.

The Family Service Office also provides counseling and support services for staff and students who look after relatives in need of care. Overall, consultancy and advanced training for managers on compatibility issues will play a central role in the coming years.

Research associates currently have fixed working hours; occasionally, trust-based working hours are also offered in consultation with the supervisor. Professors are not subject to compulsory attendance outside their teaching obligations. They are merely obliged to be reachable, together with an attendance obligation of 4 days per week.

With the adoption of the service agreement on the establishment of alternating teleworking and homeworking work places at TH Köln in 2014³⁰, meaningful local flexibilization of work organization was achieved both in the interests of the university and the employees. This takes particular account of family needs (e.g. childcare, caring for relatives, etc.), a severe disability or a condition that is equal to severe disability. The instrument of alternating teleworking and homeworking can also be used to make work more efficient through homeworking phases (e.g. for conceptual work) and thus also serves to increase employees' motivation and job satisfaction.

With regard to **long-term and stable employment**, lifetime civil servant status is usually granted after a probationary period of one year. Professors in private employment are generally employed indefinitely after a probationary period of one year.³¹ The changes are intended to increase family friendliness, provide better predictability for both employees and the university, and make a career in the scientific field more attractive.

With regard to the remuneration of professors, the salary scales for civil servants in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia apply to TH Köln. They are paid according to W2, and in employment under private law the remuneration is paid analogously to W2. In addition, the professors have the opportunity to receive additional benefits through additional performance.³² Research associates are remunerated within the framework of the Collective Agreement for the Public Sector (TV-L).

²⁸ https://intern.th-koeln.de/personal/forum-gesundheit_851.php and www.hochschulsport-koeln.de

²⁹ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/familienfreundlichkeit_3759.php

³⁰ https://www.verwaltung.th-koeln.de/imperia/md/content/verwaltung/dezernat2/sg22/service/dateien/dv_teleheimarbeit.pdf

³¹ The German Science Time Contract Act (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz, WissZeitVG) allows for a maximum fixed term employment period of six years for research associates unless there is a material reason for a longer fixed term (e.g. third-party funding). Cf. 2 WissZeitVG.

³² https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/arbeitgeber/prasidiumsrichtlinie_w-besoldung_th_koeln.pdf

C.2 Equal Opportunities³³

For TH Köln, the appreciation of diversity - the central principle of diversity management - is an essential part of its self-conception. It therefore specifically encourages diversity, variety of perspectives and **equal opportunities** and promotes an organizational culture in which individual, social and cultural diversity is understood as enrichment and as a sign of quality.

In accordance with the laws applicable in Germany³⁴, TH Köln guarantees a working environment in which researchers are not discriminated against in any respect on the grounds of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion or social or economic circumstances. In order to guarantee this, a representative body for severely disabled persons, the academic and non-academic staff council, the working group on addiction and harassment as well as an official complaints body in accordance with the General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz - AGG) have been set up at TH Köln.

Furthermore, within the framework of equal opportunities, all members of the university are entitled to participate in various **decision-making bodies**, which are to be composed as equally as possible.³⁵ With its diversity concept, TH Köln is one of the winners of the diversity competition launched by the Ministry of Science of North Rhine-Westphalia in 2014.³⁶

The university also has a full-time, central **equal opportunities officer**, two deputies and an Equal Opportunities Office with two employees, an Equal Opportunities Commission consisting of one woman and one man from each of the university's employee groups, and decentralized equal opportunities officers in the faculties. The long-term goal of the university is to achieve an equal proportion of women and men in all employee groups of TH Köln as well as a balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making structures in teaching, research and administration. The active implementation of **equal opportunities** for women and men is anchored both in the University Development Plan and in the new Equal Opportunities Plan adopted by TH Köln³⁷ in 2018. It is also part of the framework concept for human resources development and the target agreements between the university and the state of NRW.

The Mathilde-von-Mevissen program adopted in 2014 bundles measures to promote women at various academic levels (degree, doctorate, teaching). The Mathilde von Mevissen program will be continued in 2020-2025.

Gender-neutral language is ensured in internal and external publications of TH Köln.³⁸

In addition, joint guidelines in the field of equal opportunities were signed with the University of Cologne, the RWTH Aachen University, the Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH and the German Aerospace Center.³⁹

³³ Reference to the principles: 27. Working conditions, 10. Non-discrimination and 35. Participation in decision-making bodies

³⁴ Basic Law (Grundgesetz) Art. 3, General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichstellungsgesetz, AGG), Severely Disabled Persons Act (Schwerbehindertengesetz), Anti-Discrimination Act (Antidiskriminierungsgesetz), Social Security Code (Sozialgesetzbuch, SGB), Equal Treatment Act North Rhine-Westphalia (Gesetz zur Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern für das Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, LGG NRW)

³⁵ This also applies to doctoral researchers at TH Köln who are either research associates or are enrolled as doctoral students at TH Köln.

³⁶ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/diversity-audit_49778.php

³⁷ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/amtlichemitteilungen/2018/endaussage_09_2018.pdf

³⁸ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/profil/gleichstellung/20180503_leitfaden_geschlechtersensible_sprache.pdf

³⁹ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/aktuell/nachrichten/2018/chancengerechtigkeit_gemeinsame_leitlinien.pdf

C.3 Career Development and Advice as well as Mobility⁴⁰

With regard to the further development of the professors, TH Köln offers all newly appointed professors a **one-year coaching program on university teaching**.⁴¹ This provides the new professors with orientation and also imparts knowledge and skills in the field of teaching and learning. The coaching program for teaching staff was included on March 4, 2015 by the Accreditation Commission (akko) of the German association for educational and academic staff development in Higher Education (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Hochschuldidaktik e.V., dghd) into the list of dghd e.V.-certified programs that meet professional standards.

Individual **career development** advice for managers is offered by the Human Resources Development team as part of its internal training provision. The Family Services Office offers personal advisory services on the topic of life/work balance for researchers.

The network Hochschuldidaktische Weiterbildung (hdw nrw)⁴², a university cooperation in NRW, is a cooperation partner of TH Köln. The hdw nrw network provides staff with a comprehensive range of advanced training courses and, in addition to advanced training in teaching methods, also offers seminars on personality development, communication and the like. The registration is made through the Human Resources Development Team.

In general, applications for advanced training for employees are welcomed and supported, as long as there are no urgent operational concerns. The commitment to continuous advanced training can be established through target agreements.

TH Köln sees itself as a European university. It is located in the European education area and is actively involved in shaping the European higher education area both in the political area and in cooperation with numerous European partner universities. Furthermore, it also promotes the idea and values of the European community of states in non-European contexts. TH Köln considers it a matter of course to work together with universities in the European education area on the realization of an innovative Europe of knowledge, which places sustainable and integrative development in the foreground, and to contribute to the deepening of European integration.

In order to strengthen internationally oriented research, TH Köln aims to **increase the international mobility of its researchers** and to intensify the exchange with foreign guest researchers. For this purpose, the **International Scholar Services** were established in the Department of International Affairs in fall 2019. The ISS supports international guest researchers in organizing their stay and in their integration at TH Köln, provides advice to the faculties on attracting international guest researchers and assists TH researchers in preparing for a research-related stay abroad. TH Köln will develop and adopt an internationalization strategy by the end of 2020.

D Training and Development⁴³

The promotion of early-stage researchers is a central concern of TH Köln. The aim is to support early-stage researchers at TH Köln in their **academic career development** by providing them with high-quality doctoral training.

⁴⁰ Reference to the principles: 28. Career development, 29. Appreciation of mobility and 30. Opportunities for career guidance

⁴¹ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/lehrendencoaching_48233.php

⁴² <http://www.hdw-nrw.de/>

⁴³ Reference to the principles: 33. Teaching, 36. Working relationship with supervisors, 37. Supervision and management tasks, 38. Professional development, 39. Advanced training options in research and 40. supervision

The Graduate Center at TH Köln was founded on January 1, 2016 to support the needs and requirements of early-stage researchers.⁴⁴ The bodies of the Graduate Center are the management of the Graduate Center and the Commission for the Promotion of Early-Stage Researchers. The Doctoral Convention represents all doctoral researchers and postdoctoral researchers at TH Köln who are members of the Graduate Center. The bodies are supported by the Graduate Center service desk.

The Graduate Center service desk advises and supports doctoral researchers at TH Köln and provides counseling as well as networking and advanced training opportunities. In addition to information events on a wide variety of topics relevant to doctoral research, this currently includes a **free advanced training program** to support doctoral researchers in acquiring key qualifications. These are offered in cooperation with the university's own Center for Academic Qualifications and Advanced Training⁴⁵. The Center for Academic Qualifications and Advanced Training provides researchers with a wide range of seminars⁴⁶ for extracurricular qualifications that are specifically tailored to doctoral researchers. These extracurricular courses provide doctoral researchers with the opportunity to meet research-related and professional requirements and to strengthen their personal development. Furthermore, doctoral researchers can attend the courses of the Language Center free of charge and a separate German-as-a-Foreign-Language course has been established for international doctoral researchers. Once a year, workshops on "Good Scientific Practice" are offered in German and English for early-stage researchers.

Since 2016, the Graduate Center, in cooperation with the Center for Teaching Development and the central equal opportunities officer of TH Köln, has been offering a peer coaching program for female doctoral researchers. The doctoral coaching supports female doctoral researchers in handling the challenges of the doctoral process. The coaching program was also opened to male doctoral researchers in 2018.

In order to enable doctoral researchers to gain teaching experience, they can be employed as research associates in teaching. The Ordinance on the Compulsory Obligation to Teach and Learn (Lehrverpflichtungsverordnung, LVV NRW) allows a maximum of four semester hours per week for a full-time position. The dean, in consultation with the employee and the HR Services Department, decides on the deployment of doctoral candidates in teaching.

High-quality doctoral training also includes the best possible supervision of doctoral researchers. To this end, "**Guidelines for the Good Supervision of Doctorates**" were drawn up by the Standing Commission for the Promotion of Early-Stage Researchers at TH Köln and adopted by the Executive Board in March 2017. The aim of these guidelines - despite the different traditions of doctoral training in the various disciplines and the individual supervision styles of professors - is to ensure research and working conditions for doctoral researchers that are fair and promote performance.

TH Köln is a member of the Graduate Institute NRW (GI NRW) founded on January 1, 2016. The GI NRW has a legal mandate to sustainably strengthen and expand cooperative doctorates at universities of applied sciences and traditional universities. It offers a wide range of networking opportunities for professors and doctoral researchers. The current Higher Education Act provides for the GI NRW to be converted into a doctoral college and, following a positive assessment by the Science Council, to be granted the right to award doctoral degrees. TH Köln supports this process in order to further improve and facilitate the conditions for doctoral researchers at TH Köln in the future.

⁴⁴ https://www.th-koeln.de/mam/downloads/deutsch/hochschule/amtlichemittellungen/2015/gesch_ftsordnung_graduierenzentrum.pdf

⁴⁵ https://www.th-koeln.de/hochschule/akademie-fuer-wissenschaftliche-weiterbildung_35103.php

⁴⁶ E.g. Scientific writing and literature research

IV Communication

Measures within the framework of HRS4R at TH Köln are communicated through suitable internal and external media. The HRS4R of TH Köln is published on the website, current documents are linked.⁴⁷

The HRS4R as a whole and the individual activities are communicated to researchers and early-stage researchers at the university via the internal staff magazine "In", flyers, online surveys and events.

Additionally, stakeholders are involved in the corresponding committees, panels and working groups of the university as appropriate for the individual measures. In the Standing Commission for the Promotion of Early-Stage Researchers and the Standing Commission for Research and Knowledge Transfer, the HRS4R is put on the agenda at least once a year and the current status is discussed.

V Current Action Plan

An action plan for the implementation of the Charter and Code at TH Köln was drawn up with the first HRS4R at TH Köln in 2014. This was supplemented as part of the internal evaluation in 2016. The attached Table 1 lists all previous and new measures that serve to implement the standards of the Charter and Code.

The implementation of the measures is continuously monitored by the HRS4R project management on the basis of the defined indicators. For the period 2020-2023, new measures have been included to strengthen the implementation of the Charter and Code at TH Köln and to further promote fair recruitment procedures and good working conditions for researchers.

⁴⁷ <https://www.th-koeln.de/hrs4r>

Action plan HRS4R at TH Köln

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
A	Ethical and Professional Aspects as well as Good Practice in Research	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 23, 31, 32, 34					
1	Updating and revising our guidelines on GSP in accordance with the amendments of the German Research Foundation	2, 3, 6, 7, 31, 32, 34	Q3/2014	F&WT	Document	completed	The guidelines were adopted in 2016.
2	Providing THK guidelines on Good Scientific Practice in English	2, 3, 6, 7, 31, 32, 34	Q4/2016	F&WT	Engl. document	completed	Translation completed in 2016
3	Annual seminars on Good Scientific Practice for researchers at all career levels, also offered in English	2, 3, 6, 7, 31, 32, 34	ongoing since 2014	GZ / F&WT	Agenda, participant figures	completed	Seminars are held once a year in German and English.
4	Raising the prominence of the ombudsperson and his/her mediator role (through events, web presence, etc.)	2, 3, 6, 7, 31, 32, 34	ongoing since 2014	F & WT/ PE	Number of events, participant figures	completed	The ombudsperson is presented more prominently on the website. She/he is present at all seminars on good scientific practice and actively involved in the organization of the event. A representative has been appointed.
5	Establishing a Code of Conduct for national and international research co-operations at THK	4,5	Q4/2020	F&WT	Document	in progress	A draft Code of Conduct has been drawn up and is to be finalized and adopted in the near future.
6	Ensuring that research projects at THK may – if required – be revised and approved by an internal or external ethics commission	2	Q4/2016	F&WT	Minutes of the ethics commission	completed	TH Köln has the option of having its research projects reviewed by the ethics commission of the University of Cologne (if required).
7	Optimizing processes for externally funded projects	23	Q2/2017	University admin.	Tools and documents, number of participants in events	completed	Tools and provisions were developed which are available for improvements in the service area of third-party funding. In December 2018, the third-party funding navigator, the process portal and other project results were presented to the process participants.
8	Continuing to develop and complete the research strategy	23	Q4/2020	VP F & WT	Research profile document, University Development Plan 2030	in progress	The research profile of TH Köln was defined on the basis of three profile areas and the key points of the research strategy were defined in the University Development Plan 2030. A new research strategy should be completed by the end of 2020.

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
9	Revising guidelines on Good Scientific Practice in accordance with the DFG's new Good Scientific Practice Code and adopt them as an legally binding order in the Senate	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 23, 31, 32, 34	Q1/2020	F&WT	Order	new	A draft for legally binding guidelines on Good Scientific Practice has been drawn up and is to be adopted and implemented.
10	Development of consulting services for research data management	7, 23	Q3/2020	F&WT	Guideline	new	A website for research data management was created and a new employee is to be hired in the first quarter of 2020 in order to focus continuously on this topic. Preparation and adoption of a guideline by the 3rd quarter of 2020
11	Expanding the Research and Knowledge Transfer activities (support in terms of preparation and implementation of transfer measures and regarding exploitation of results of R&D projects)	8	ongoing since 2014	VP F & WT/ F & WT	Number of cooperation partners, document transfer strategy	extended	The Research and Knowledge Transfer activities are being continuously expanded, and the Transfer Strategy 2025 has been adopted.
12	Developing an entrepreneurship strategy	8	Q1/2017	VP F&WT / F&WT	Document	completed	The start-up strategy has been adopted in July 2018.
13	Analyzing and informing about the region's academic and institutional structure; presenting THK as a transfer partner	8	Q1/2015	VP F & WT/ F & WT	Number of cooperation partners, events	completed	Strategic activities have been combined in the Transfer Strategy 2025.
14	Conceptualization & implementation of a digital university bibliography; digital university bibliography (presentation of research achievements)	8	Q4/2020	VP F&WT / F&WT / Bib	Document	in progress	The conceptual design has been completed. Implementation according to schedule by the end of 2020.
15	Implementing a "Research Day" / a "Research Future Workshop"	8, 9	Q1/2020	F&WT	Participant figures	in progress	The 1st Research Day will take place in February 2020. The invitations have been sent.
16	Improving the presentation of research activities on the new website; possible launch of a research magazine	8, 9	Q4/2016	F & WT/ PR & Ö	Increase in the number of clicks	completed	Since the launch of the new website in 2015, research activities have been presented more prominently online.
17	Developing IP strategy as an extension stage of the patent strategy	8	Q2/2021	F&WT	Document	new	Development of a strategy planned.
B	Recruitment and Selection	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21					
18	Evaluating and editing the appointment guidelines to fulfill new requirements. Guaranteeing transparent and objectivized recruitment processes	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20	Q4/2014	P	Document	completed	Revision of the appointment guideline completed

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
19	Defining the requirements of competency for professorships in appointment processes in selected fields	15	Q4/2017	PE	Document	completed	The competence profile was defined in 2016 and coordinated with the Executive Board.
20	Improving the recruitment processes for research associates based on the appointment guideline	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20	Q4/2017	P / PE	Information on website	completed	Continued development of the diagnostic selection procedure for research associates, taking into account the requirements/standards defined in the OTM-R Report.
21	Publishing job vacancies via EURAXESS	12	ongoing since 2017	PE	Number of job vacancies on EURAXESS	completed	Selected job vacancies are advertised via EURAXESS.
22	Developing THK guidelines on the recruitment of researchers based on OTM-R criteria and presenting them to the university's committees and panels	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21	Q4/2018	PE	Document	completed	An OTM-R guideline has been drafted, discussed with the stakeholders and adopted.
23	Developing workshops on the high-quality implementation of the OTM-R standards and making them available to the groups involved in the selection process	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21	from Q4/2018	PE	Workshop program	completed	Training courses for managers and moderators "Aspects of professional personnel selection" have been held.
24	Regular implementation and ongoing evaluation of workshops on high-quality realization of the OTM-R standards	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21	from Q1/2020	PE	Participant figures, workshop program	new	Carry out workshops during ongoing operations, evaluate offers on an ongoing basis.
D	Working Conditions and Social Security	11, 22, 24,25,26					
25	Implementing the measures of the Family-Friendly University Audit	24	ongoing since 2017	P	Audit application, documentation of measures	extended	Measures are continuously implemented.
26	Successful re-auditing in the Family-Friendly University Audit and implementing corresponding family-friendly measures for researchers	24	ongoing since 2017	P / PE	Certificate, flyer, website	completed	Re-audit in 2018 was successfully completed.
27	Continuing to improve health-promoting measures	24	ongoing since 2017	P	Events, participants	completed	All members of TH Köln are offered a health promotion scheme. Seminars on stress prevention were included in the internal advanced training program.
28	Developing a health management concept	24	from Q1/2018	P / AS&GF	Document	in progress	University-wide project led by Team 10.3 Occupational safety with participation of HR 9. The pursuit of the project was postponed to the period 2020-2023 for capacity reasons

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
29	Implementing the already signed framework contract for good employment conditions of MIWF NRW: Creation of a guideline for research associates as component of the already signed framework contract for good employment conditions of MIWF NRW	24,25,26	Q4/2020	P	Document	in progress	The framework agreement has been signed. A draft guideline has been prepared and is currently under discussion. It should be adopted in the course of 2020.
30	Adoption of an order on dealing with sexualized discrimination and violence in the workplace, development of a catalog of measures	24	Q3/2020	GB	Document (order and catalog of measures)	new	An order and a catalog of measures are intended to create transparency and process security for all parties involved.
31	Implementing measures of the Equal Opportunities Concept (women promotion schemes by the faculties; "Diversity-Conducive in Speech and Writing" guideline, promotion programs, etc.)	10, 27, 35	ongoing since 2017	GB	Document	extended	The measures were implemented successfully and a new equal opportunities plan was developed and adopted in 2018.
32	Implementing career coaching for female doctoral candidates	27	ongoing since 2017	GZ / GB	List of events, participant figures	completed	The program is established and continues to be implemented successfully, network day, coaching workshops, individual coaching take place.
33	Mathilde-von-Mevissen doctorate promotion: Advertisement for applications 2017	27	Q1/2017	GZ	List of beneficiaries	completed	The advertisement for applications in 2017 was successfully carried out. So far, 8 doctoral researchers have been supported in the program.
34	Mathilde-von-Mevissen doctorate promotion: Implement new round of funding as of 2020	27	from Q1/2020	GZ / GB	List of beneficiaries	new	New funds have been raised with the Female Professors Program III, which means that a new call for applications is possible.
35	Establishing target-group-specific career advice, personal advice, mentoring programs and further education programs	28, 29, 30	Q4/2015	PE	Programs, participant figures and evaluation	completed	Individualized career advice for employees in management positions is offered by the human resources development team as part of the internal further education program. The Family Services Office offers personal advisory services on the topic of life/work balance for researchers.

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
36	Developing target-group oriented personal career counseling and networking programs & verifying the expansion of the female doctoral researchers' coaching to other target groups among the doctoral researchers	28, 29, 30	Q1/2019	PE / GZ	Programs and evaluations	completed	Coaching program has been expanded; doctoral researchers coaching for men was offered for the first time in the WiSe 2018/19
37	Expanding mobility & internal advanced training programs and making information on mobility programs available	29	ongoing since 2014	IA / F & WT	Brochure, mobility participant figures	completed	A scholarship brochure with information on mobility promotion for doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers has been created and made available for download on the university website. A travel grant for conference participation for doctoral students of TH Köln was established.
38	Updating brochure on mobility programs for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers and translating into English	29	Q1/2017	GZ	Document	completed	The brochure has been updated and translated into English.
39	Creating & implementing action concept for guest researchers	29	2016-2019	IA / F&WT	Concept	completed	The International Scholar Services were established in the Department of International Affairs. A member of staff acts as the central contact person for guest researchers.
40	Career family coaching program for early-stage researchers	28, 30	Q4/17	PE	Agreement	completed	Cooperation with the University of Cologne. Project completed.
41	Development of an internationalization strategy	29,3	Q4/2020	IA	Document	new	To implement the development goals in the field of mobility, an internationalization strategy will be drawn up and adopted by the end of 2020.
D	Training and Development	33,36,37,38,39,40					
42	Developing a concept for the establishment of a Graduate Center	36, 37, 38, 39, 40	Q3/2014	VP F & WT/ F & WT	Concept	completed	The Graduate Center was successfully established on January 1, 2016.
43	Developing internal qualification program and organizing networking activities for doctoral researchers	36, 37, 38, 39, 40	ongoing since 2014	F & WT/ AwW	Agenda, participant figures, program overview	completed	The program has been expanded and is constantly updated, there are at least 10 general workshops/networking events per year.
44	Developing Code of Conduct supervision (guideline for supervisors) and presenting it to the university's committees and panels	36, 37, 38, 39, 40	Q4/2017	SK WN / GZ	Document	completed	The "Guidelines for the Good Supervision of Doctorates" were successfully adopted
45	Developing a concept for the qualification of supervisors at TH Köln. Measures for a nationwide conclusion of supervision agreements.	36, 37, 40	Q4/2018	SK WN / GZ	Agenda, participant figures	completed	Networking meetings for supervisors are held once a year.

No.	Proposed actions	Gap principle	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicators/target	Current status	Remarks
46	Establishing doctoral positions for doctoral candidates and developing human resources concepts for this purpose (these positions are to dedicate two-thirds of their workload to activities related to their doctorate)	38	ongoing since 2017	Fak / P	Document	completed	The University Development Plan 2030 sets out the principles of staff planning.
47	Recording of the postdoctoral researchers & conceptualizing & implementing actions for this target group	38	ongoing since 2017	GZ / PE	List of postdoctoral researchers, concept paper	extended	Postdoctoral researchers are recorded and receive personal advice at the Graduate Center.
48	Regular information events for those interested in a doctorate	38	from Q1/2019	GZ	Agenda, participant figures	new	An event "Ways to Promotion" was held in summer 2019, regular events planned once a year
A-D	Communication	1 to 40					
49	Creating and implementing a target-group oriented internal communication strategy for the HRS4R	1 to 40	Q4/17	F & WT / PE	Document	completed	Communication media were collected, the HRS4R is communicated via TH Köln's internal magazine "In" and the website, the logo is included in publications.
50	Interacting with stakeholders, e.g. through surveys and events	1 to 40	ongoing since 2017	HRS4R Team	Documentation of the exchange	in progress	The HRS4R team is in personal contact with stakeholders and the strategy is discussed in the relevant committees and panels once a year.

Abbreviations:

AS&GF: Workplace safety and health promotion

AwW: Academy of Continuing Education

Bib: University Library

Fak: Faculties

F&WT: Department of Research and Knowledge Transfer

GB: Equal Opportunities Officer

GZ: Graduate Center

HS verw: University Administration

IA: Department of International Affairs

P: Department of Human Resources

PE: Human Resources Development Team

PR & Ö: Press and Public Relations Team

SK WN: Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Early-Stage Researchers

VP F & WT: Vice-President for Research and Knowledge Transfer

Annex 1: 40 Gap Principles

No.	Principle / Requirement
I. Ethical and Professional Aspects	
1	Research Freedom
2	Ethical Principles
3	Professional Responsibility
4	Professional Attitude
5	Contractual and Legal Obligations
6	Accountability
7	Good Practice in Research
8	Dissemination and Exploitation of Results
9	Public Engagement
10	Non-Discrimination (also addressed under III Working Conditions)
11	Evaluation/Appraisal Systems (also addressed under III Working Conditions)
II. Recruitment and Selection	
12	Recruitment
13	Recruitment
14	Selection
15	Transparency
16	Judging Merit
17	Variations in the chronological order of CVs
18	Recognition of Mobility Experience
19	Recognition of Qualifications
20	Seniority (Code of Conduct)
21	Postdoctoral Appointments
III. Working Conditions and Social Security	
22	Recognition of the Profession
23	Research Environment
24	Working Conditions
25	Stability and Permanence of Employment
26	Funding and Salaries
27	Gender Balance
28	Career Development
29	Value of Mobility
30	Access to Career Advice
31	Intellectual Property Rights (also addressed under I Ethical Aspects)
32	Co-Authorship (also addressed under I Ethical Aspects)
33	Teaching
34	Complaints/Appeals (also addressed under I Ethical Aspects)
35	Participation in Decision-Making Bodies
IV. Training and Development	
36	Relation with Supervisors
37	Supervision and Managerial Duties
38	Continuing Professional Development
39	Access to Research Training and Continuous Development
40	Supervision

Principles for researchers	
Principles for employers	