

HRS4R ACTION PLAN

FOCUS: OMT-R

ACTION 1: Development and publication of an OTM-R policy

Responsible Unit: HR Department & Research & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q4 2024 – Q4 2025

GAP Principles: Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R)

Description: UCLL has developed and published a formal OTM-R policy to ensure transparent and merit-based recruitment processes. We will finetune accordingly our current toolkit with guidelines to support managers and recruiters. The policy has been made publicly available on the UCLL website. The OTM-R policy aims to enhance the recruitment process for research by ensuring that all vacancies within R&E are advertised broadly, selection criteria are clear and transparent, and the selection process is based on merit. To give as much transparency as possible, the OTM-R policy has been published on the vacancy section of the main UCLL webpage. An updated toolkit will provide practical guidance on implementing the policy, including templates for job advertisements, interview questions, and evaluation forms.

Indicators:

- OTM-R policy validated and published Q3 2024
- Integration of guidelines in new onboarding program 2.0 for managers Q4 2025
- Updated toolkit available for management Q4 2025

ACTION 2: Defining and publishing guidelines for Selection Committee

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q1 2026 – Q4 2026

GAP Principles: OTM-R - No official process currently in line with the guidelines

Description: UCLL will formalize the process of appointing selection committees and publish clear guidelines, starting within R&E. This will ensure consistency and transparency in recruitment. The guidelines will outline the composition of selection committees, the roles and responsibilities of committee members, and the procedures for conducting interviews and evaluations. By standardizing the selection process, UCLL aims to reduce bias and improve the quality of hiring decisions. Training/information will be provided to selection committee members to ensure they understand and adhere to the guidelines, e.g. via e-learning.

Indicators:

- Guidelines updated developed and communicated Q1 2026
- Training/information sessions for selection committee members, e.g. via an e-learning Q3 2026

- Communication plan evaluated for toolkit usage Q4 2026
- A more diverse and representative by monitoring the composition of the selection committee Q4 2026

ACTION 3: Attracting more diverse and international profiles within research

Responsible Unit: HR Department, dedicated resource R&E Team & R&E Management

Timing: Q4 2025 - Q4 2026

GAP Principles: Diversity & Inclusion. The recruitment of diverse, and international, profiles is currently limited within Research and Expertise. There is no publication of vacancies yet in English. Additionally, UCLL is not internally yet organized to be able to attract and onboard a large number of international profiles.

Description:

To foster diversity, UCLL will publish all R&E vacancies in English (unless Dutch is crucial for the job), use international platforms as Euraxess, and launch a new employer branding campaign. The campaign will highlight UCLL's commitment to diversity and inclusion and promoting the benefits of working at UCLL. R&E management will be encouraged by using additional publication platforms and depending on the required specialty/expertise make use of more specific channels.

Additionally, partnerships as in the context of e.g. E³UDRES² (Ent-r-e-novators) will be established with international universities and research institutions to attract talent from abroad and exchange resources. Regular monitoring and reporting on diversity metrics will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of these initiatives and identify areas for improvement.

Indicators:

- Increased use of additional and international recruitment channels as Euraxess: all R&E vacancies published in English unless Dutch knowledge is an absolute requirement Q1 2026
- Leveraging on partnership with other universities, research institutions to encourage international collaboration and mobility (see project Ent-r-e-novators) Q4 2025
- Employer branding project with attention to diversity Q4 2025 – Q1 2026
 - New employee value proposition (EVP) Q4 2025
 - Launch of campaign Q1 2026
- Increased share of applicants from outside UCLL by monitoring internal/external and international candidate ratios Q4 2026
- The who-is-who completed by most of our staff to create a better and centralized database of the different competencies, skills and expertise amongst UCLL staff, which will result in better matchings towards open positions. As this is a personal responsibility, we will encourage this via e.g.
 - Via promotion via leaders Q4 2026
 - Integrating this as a to-do in the onboarding for newcomers will help in achieving this KPI Q4 2026

ACTION 4: Publishing recruitment complaints procedure online

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q4 2025 – Q4 2026

GAP Principles: OTM-R related gap

Description: A clear and accessible complaints procedure will be published on the recruitment page of the UCLL website. By providing a transparent and straightforward complaints procedure, UCLL aims to build trust and ensure that all candidates feel confident in the fairness of the recruitment process. We will mention in every vacancy explicitly the possibility to address complaints and the point of contact therefor. Regular reviews of the complaint procedure will be conducted to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the needs of candidates.

Indicators:

- Complaints procedure published online Q4 2025
- Complaints procedure and point of contact added in each vacancy Q4 2025
- Regular monitoring of complaints Q4 2026

ACTION 5: Updated/additional vacancy templates for the different functions

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q2 2026

GAP Principles: OTM-R related gap

Description: UCLL will develop and implement updated and function-specific vacancy templates tailored to the various roles within the research domain. These templates will reflect the diversity of research positions (e.g., junior researcher, project coordinator....) and will include clear and transparent information on job content, required competencies, career perspectives, and selection criteria. The aim is to improve the quality and consistency of job postings, enhance transparency in the recruitment process, and strengthen UCLL's employer branding, with a particular focus on inclusive and gender-neutral language.

Indicators:

- Increased uniformity and transparency by the development of additional vacancy templates based on new employer branding and EVP, with particular focus on inclusive and gender-neutral language for the different research functions Q2 2026

ACTION 6: Installing a comprehensive and integrated quality control system for OTM-R

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q4 2026

GAP Principles: OTM-R related gap

Description:

UCLL will design and implement a comprehensive, and integrated quality control system to monitor and continuously improve its OTM-R (Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment) practices. This system will ensure that recruitment processes are consistently aligned with OTM-R principles.

Indicators:

- Evaluating the use of CV- warehouse or an alternative tool by hiring managers and HR for a more optimal use Q4 2025
- Positive evaluation of the hiring process and onboarding by new hires. We aim to investigate the possibility of monitoring the employee experience, and more specifically the hiring process & onboarding, via a survey to recent hires (to check if this is possible in a more automated way via the new tool) Q2 2026

FOCUS: INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

ACTION 7: Diversity as one of the main priorities in the UCLL strategy (2025-2030)

Responsible Unit: Executive team

Timing: Q1 2025 - Q1 2030

GAP Principles: Diversity in teams

Description:

While UCLL invests overall in its working conditions (see initiatives earlier mentioned), it engaged to put additional efforts in actions related to diversity & inclusion. UCLL embedded diversity and inclusion as a central pillar of its institutional strategy for the period 2025–2030. This commitment reflects the institutions ambition to create a learning and working environment where all individuals—regardless of their background, identity, or abilities—feel welcomed, valued, and empowered to thrive.

The strategy will go beyond isolated initiatives and aim for a systemic, organization-wide approach

Indicators:

- A new strategy with focus in diversity and inclusion in place for the period 2025-2030; Q3 2024
- All staff informed on the new strategy and priorities around diversity and inclusion: by communicating to all UCLL staff via detailed information on the intranet (including KPI's and indicative progress markers) Q1 2025
- Translation towards concrete policy plans, actions and KPI's per department Q4 2025

- A learning and working environment where all individuals—regardless of their background, identity, or abilities—feel welcomed, valued, and empowered to thrive Q1 2030.

ACTION 8: UCLL has formulated the following goal: Students and staff will co-create an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment across all campuses, based on a shared conceptual framework.

Responsible Unit: Executive team, management & all staff

Timing: Q1 2025 - Q1 2030

GAP Principles: Diversity in teams

Description: We aim for students and staff to perceive UCLL as an organization where they are treated fairly, without bias, objectively, fairly, and equitably. We pursue this by offering equal opportunities to all our students, embracing diversity and inclusion, and striving for the well-being of both students and staff. Moreover, UCLL is committed to society by actively promoting sustainability and inclusion, and by encouraging our students and staff to contribute meaningfully to these goals. Our ambition is that by 2030, every Moving Mind becomes a changemaker for inclusive, sustainable, and fair living together. UCLL alumni will understand the meaning of sustainable development and inclusion and will be able to apply these principles in their professional lives. They will possess the key competencies, knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for sustainable development and inclusion. By applying these, they inherently become changemakers. UCLL can only shape changemakers for inclusive, sustainable, and fair living if its staff and teams embody and model these values themselves, both within and beyond the organization. Therefore, we continue to take steps to position UCLL as a role model of a sustainable and inclusive organization, for both our students and our staff.

In other words, the entire UCLL community, staff, students, and alumni, shares the responsibility to realize this priority by 2030, grounded in a shared conceptual and behavioral framework.

Within UCLL broad actions and goals haven been formulated using progress markers to keep a more integrated and overarching view and to focus on growth and learning instead of solely on numbers. Progress markers will be monitored using various methodologies and measurement sources (surveys, data sources, outcome harvesting, etc.).

Indicative progress markers

Indicators (expect to see'):

- The conceptual framework around fairness has been shaped Q4 2026
- The conceptual frameworks around inclusive, sustainable, and fair co-living have been communicated to all employees and students and are actively used in realizing all strategic priorities Q4 2026

- The professional development opportunities (internal or external) for shaping an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment have been announced Q4 2026
 - Each program, service, and expertise center has determined the starting position of its own team regarding shaping an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment Q4 2027
 - Each program, service, and expertise center has determined the goals and actions for its own team to shape an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment from the starting position and shared UCLL-framework Q1 2030
 - At least five UCLL-wide actions have been initiated that concretely translate the shared conceptual frameworks into practices aimed at inclusive, sustainable, and fair co-living Q4 2028
 - Together with students and employees, an adjusted framework has been developed on what is understood within UCLL as an inclusive and fair learning, working, and living environment Q4 2029
- **Like to see:**
 - Programs, services, and expertise centers inspire and consult each other to learn from each other about shaping an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment
 - 70% of students and employees perceive UCLL as an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment
- **Love to see:**
 - Every employee and student endorse the UCLL vision of an inclusive, sustainable, and fair learning, working, and living environment and actively contributes to it (2028 survey for employees on strategy, 2029 survey for lecturers on strategy, 2030 survey for pre-graduates on quality indicators and strategy).

ACTION 9: Translating UCLL's overall diversity plan into concrete HRM related actions

Responsible Unit: HR Department & inclusion experts of R&E Team

Timing: Q1 2025 – Q4 2026

GAP Principles: Diversity in teams

Description: UCLL will operationalize its general diversity and inclusion strategy by translating it into actionable steps within the domain of Human Resource Management (HRM). This means embedding diversity and inclusion principles into the core HR processes, e.g. recruitment. These actions will be developed in close collaboration with internal experts on inclusion and aligned with UCLL's broader strategic goals. The aim is to ensure that diversity and inclusion are not only values on paper but are actively practiced and experienced by candidates and all staff members.

Indicators:

- HR action plan related to inclusion in place and translated into HR policy plan (see also action 8) Q4 2025
- Positive evaluation of diversity and inclusion by measurement via existing wellbeing survey IDEWE (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with a minimum of 70% of employees evaluating the diversity and inclusion within UCLL positively – Q4 2026

ACTION 10: Onboarding more diverse and international profiles within R&E

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team, and R&E management

Timing: Q1 2026 – Q1 2028

GAP Principles: Diversity in teams

The recruitment of diverse, and international, profiles is currently limited within Research and Expertise. There is no publication of vacancies yet in English. Additionally, UCLL is not internally yet organized to be able to attract and onboard a large number of international profiles.

Description: Internally UCLL is not yet organized to be able to attract and onboard many international profiles. UCLL aims to strengthen its commitment to diversity and internationalization by improving its capacity to attract, welcome, and integrate a broader range of diverse and international profiles.

Indicators:

- Positive trend by monitoring the share of
 - internal and external candidates Q4 2026
 - international candidates, the gender balance and other diversity characteristics Q4 2026
- Positive evaluation by UCLL staff on diversity and inclusion via measurement via existing wellbeing survey IDEWE (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with a minimum of 70% of employees evaluating the diversity and inclusion within UCLL positively – Q4 2026
- Training and development track finished of HR employees to enable them to give adequate HR-support and advice (language, knowledge of international taxation and social security) Q4 2027
- Having a clear policy and legal framework in place to work from abroad Q4 2026
- Translation of all the Intranet and all HR related documents in English Q4 2027

FOCUS: TALENT DEVELOPMENT

ACTION 11: Implementing an open feedback culture (in new system)

Responsible Unit: HR Department, executive team & management

Timing: Q2 2025-Q1 2030

GAP Principles: Relation with supervisor and managerial duties. Not enough regular follow-up and feedback by management. No real culture yet of open feedback. Continuing professional development could be improved according to the R&E staff survey. The R&E staff survey conducted amongst researchers (end of 2023) showed that there are some aspects related to development and career guidance that could be improved. Especially the items "I believe that our institution has defined a specific career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, and provides a guidance and/or mentoring for the personal and professional development of researchers, as to contribute to the reduction of the insecurities in the professional future", "I believe that our institution offers career advice and job placement assistance to researchers at all stages of their careers, regardless of their contractual situation

Description: UCLL aims to foster a culture of open feedback as a core element of its performance and development approach. Rather than relying solely on annual evaluations, the new system will encourage ongoing, constructive dialogue, in a growth-oriented manner, between employees and their supervisors throughout the year. This supports professional growth, strengthens team dynamics, and enhances employee engagement and mental wellbeing.

Indicators:

- New performance review process in place Q2 2025
- Create a common understanding around 'open feedback culture' Q4 2025
- Measurement via existing wellbeing survey IDEWE (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with a minimum of 70% of employees evaluating the performance review process positively Q4 2026
- Positive trend by monitoring yearly leadership skills (and more specifically open feedback) via 'leadership mirrors' with a minimum of 15 leaders per year participating in this (kind of 360° test in which feedback is gathered on leaders via their team members, amongst others) Q4 2025 – Q1 2030 (and onwards)

- Professionalization via regular training and development, ambassadors, sharing best practices,... Q1 2026 – Q1 2030

Within UCLL broad actions and goals haven been formulated using progress markers to keep a more integrated and overarching view and to focus on growth and learning instead of solely on numbers. Progress markers will be monitored using various methodologies and measurement sources (surveys, data sources, outcome harvesting, etc.).

Indicative progress markers

- **Expect to see:**
 - There are clear guidelines and criteria for giving and receiving growth-oriented feedback, with the involvement of students and staff in the development process.
 - UCLL provides various ways to communicate these guidelines and criteria within the organization.
 - UCLL provides sufficient safe channels/opportunities in courses and services to give growth-oriented feedback.
- **Hope to see:**
 - Giving and receiving growth-oriented feedback becomes part of the performance policy for all colleagues (staff and supervisors) and is included in the competencies acquired in the various curricula.
- **Love to see:**
 - All UCLL's students and staff indicate that an open and growth-oriented feedback culture has been established.

ACTION 12: In this context, UCLL formulated the following goal: By 2030, staff and students will collaboratively shape a connected learning, working, and living environment. They will serve as an inspiration to others both within and outside the organization.

Responsible Unit: HR Department, executive team, management and all employees

GAP Principles: Continuing professional development could be improved according to the R&E staff survey.

Timing: Q4 2025- Q1 2030

Description: Based on our core values (collaboration, inspiration and lifelong learning, appreciation and trust), we strive to create a supportive learning, working, and living environment by 2030 where we can grow together. To this end, we are strongly committed to

creating an environment where students and staff feel connected to each other and to the organization. Hereunder an overview of the goals and indicators relevant in the context of HRS4R (focus staff).

Indicators:

- Positive evolution on this topic by monitoring via 'leadership mirrors' with a minimum of 15 leaders per year participating in this (kind of 360° test in which feedback is gathered on leaders via their team members, amongst others) Q4 2025 – Q1 2030 (and onwards)
- Vision for training & development by the HR department Q4 2026
- The renewed performance policy 'open feedback'; Q1 2025
- Leadership DNA for staff updated with new EVP Q2 2026
- Real open feedback culture Q1 2030

Within UCLL broad actions and goals haven been formulated using progress markers to keep a more integrated and overarching view and to focus on growth and learning instead of solely on numbers. Progress markers will be monitored using various methodologies and measurement sources (surveys, data sources, outcome harvesting, etc.).

Indicative progress markers

- **Expect to see:**
 - A shared vision has been developed based on research.
 - The vision has been communicated to all students and staff.
 - Each program, service, and expertise center has developed a plan to contribute to a connecting learning, working, and living environment together with other programs, services, and expertise centers.
- **Like to see:**
 - Programs, services, and expertise centers implement the planned actions.
 - Good practices regarding connecting initiatives are shared between programs, services, and expertise centers to inspire others.
- **Love to see:**
 - Every staff member and student values making connections with each other and the organization and actively contributes to it.
 - The shared vision around connection is embedded in UCLL's policies and processes.
 - There is ongoing attention to the implementation of the connection policy.

ACTION 13: Promotion of personal career coaching

Responsible Unit: HR Department, executive team & management

Timing: Q1 2026 – Q1 2027

GAP Principles: Continuing professional development could be improved according to the R&E staff survey.

Description: UCLL is committed to supporting the professional growth and career development of its staff by actively promoting the use of personal career coaching. Career coaching offers employees a confidential and structured space to reflect on their ambitions, strengths, challenges, and next steps in their professional journey.

Indicators:

- Measurement via existing wellbeing survey (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with a minimum of 70% of employees evaluating their professional development within the UCLL positively – Q4 2026
- Increased use of career coaching by 30% before the end of Q4 2026

ACTION 14: Improving professional development of researchers following the employee life cycle

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q2 2025 – Q1 2027

GAP Principles: Continuing professional development could be improved according to the R&E staff survey. The number of trainings, learnings followed could be increased

Description: To foster a culture of continuous learning and growth, UCLL aims to strategically align professional development initiatives with each phase of the employee life cycle. This approach ensures that employees receive the right support, training, and opportunities at every stage of their journey within UCLL. In the context of the new performance review process, UCLL is foreseeing a module in the system to be able to monitor development better and more proactively and to see if every employee is investing in training and development (reporting).

New competencies have been developed in line with the Moving Minds DNA. By identifying key competencies, assessing current skills, and creating personalized development plans, individuals can continuously improve and succeed in their roles.

In the context of Ent-r-e-Novators we are investigating the possibilities to offer shared training modules between the consortium partners to enlarge the training offer and the development opportunities.

Indicators:

- Creation of a new set of interdisciplinary competencies based on the Moving Minds DNA and new UCLL strategy Q2 2025
 - Knowledge and technical competencies

- Organizational Engagement
- Initiative and Entrepreneurship
- Communication
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Responsibility and Integrity
- Positive Work Climate
- Flexibility and Change Orientation
- New soft management tool in place with direct access for both employees (to all trainings) and management (for follow-up) Q4 2026
- Increased participation rate to internal training with 30% before the end of 2026 Q4 2026
- Onboarding program 2.0 in place Q4 2025
- Alignment of internal training offerings with demand by creating more involvement of management (tailored training offer) Q4 2026
- Positive evaluation of the training offer via measurement via existing wellbeing survey (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with a minimum of 70% of employees evaluating the training offer positively Q4 2026

ACTION 15: Implementation of a career roadmap for researchers as support for lifelong learning

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q4 2025

GAP Principles: Lack of a career development strategy/plan (continuing professional development)

Description: A career roadmap is a tool designed to guide researchers through various stages of their professional journey. By outlining potential career paths, required competencies, and development opportunities, it empowers researchers to take ownership of their growth while aligning with institutional goals. By developing this, it is important to bear in mind that academic careers are no longer linear or research exclusive.

Indicators:

- Development and use of a career roadmap for researchers Q4 2025
- Incorporating a new set of interdisciplinary competences (see above) Q4 2025
- Vision text on employability Q4 2025

ACTION 16: Leadership development

Responsible Unit: HR Department & dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q1 2026 – Q4 2026

GAP Principles: Lack of a career development strategy/plan (continuing professional development)

Description: Leadership is more than managing team, it's about inspiring people, driving change & innovation, and building a culture of trust and collaboration. Therefore UCLL is developing its Leadership 2.0 program. By investing in the growth of our current and future leaders, we aim to strengthen our strategic capabilities, increase employee engagement and retention, foster a culture of continuous feedback and growth, prepare for future challenges and opportunities.

Indicators:

- Leadership 2.0 implemented Q1 2026
- Dissemination of the vision on leadership Q1 2026
- Regular update and evaluation of training for supervisors Q1 2026 – Q4 2026
- Positive evolution on this topic by monitoring via 'leadership mirrors' with a minimum of 15 leaders per year participating in this (kind of 360° test in which feedback is gathered on leaders via their team members, amongst others) Q4 2025 – Q1 2030 (and onwards)

ACTION 17: Development of guidelines around 'extracurricular activities'

Responsible Unit: HR Department, legal experts, dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q2 2026

GAP Principles: Guidelines applying to the different forms of collaboration between UCLL and research staff are missing

Description: As we encourage continuous professionalization, also outside UCLL, quite a few employees are combining a job at UCLL with a job outside UCLL. UCLL aims to clarify rules and create a framework which could benefit both management as employees

Indicators:

- Increased awareness and knowledge amongst researchers and supervisors by creating and publishing guidelines and legal framework around 'side/extracurricular activities' for both managers as employees.

ACTION 18: Improvement of support and guidance at the end of the career of employees

Responsible Unit: HR Department and dedicated resource R&E Team

Timing: Q1 2026 – Q1 2027

GAP Principles: Lack of a career development strategy/plan (continuing professional development), specifically at the end of the careers

Description: An end-of-career policy is essential to recognize the value of experienced staff, facilitate knowledge transfer, and ensure a respectful, well-prepared transition into retirement or alternative roles. This policy is key for engaging employees, maintaining organizational continuity, appreciating long-term contributions, and promoting well-being.

Indicators:

- Gathering new ideas via UCLL's last year bachelor HRM student to build a policy Q3 2026
- End of career policy in place and applied Q4 2026
- Positive evaluation of the end of career policy via existing wellbeing survey (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with minimum 70% of employees evaluating the end of career policy within UCLL positively Q4 2026

ACTION 19: Review and update of the onboarding process for improved employee experience (Onboarding 2.0)

Responsible Unit: HR Department

Timing: Q1 2027

GAP Principles: Continuing professional development, starting with the onboarding of the employees, could be improved according to the survey.

Description: This action involves conducting an evaluation and redesign of the current onboarding process with the goal of significantly improving the overall experience for new employees. A well-structured onboarding journey is the first step in the employee life cycle and is critical for early engagement and long-term retention.

Objectives:

- Ensuring new hires feel welcomed, informed, and supported from day one
- Streamlining administrative and operational onboarding steps
- Alignment of the onboarding process with UCLL's values and strategic goals
- Fostering early connection with teams, managers,...

Indicators:

- Reviewed onboarding in place: Onboarding 2.0, a 6-month program, with a strong focus on soft skills, more integration with peer coaching, and greater emphasis on effective work processes through additional workshops and intervention sessions. Q4 2025
- Positive evaluation of the onboarding process by measurement via existing wellbeing survey (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with minimum 70% of employees evaluating the onboarding process within UCLL positively Q4 2026

FOCUS: COMMUNICATION

ACTION 20: Clarification of the role of the supervisor, buddy and core experts

Responsible Unit: HR and dedicated resource R&E Team and R&E management

Timing: Q4 2025

GAP Principles: See gap on information, consultation and taking part of decision-making bodies. The survey shows that there is a margin for improvement on this point. See the item "I am/have been a part of relevant information, consultation and decision-making bodies in our institution" out of the survey conducted amongst researchers. The role division between VEC, buddy and core experts is not always clear.

Description: Transparent and consistent communication is essential to ensure alignment, collaboration, and innovation. When information flows effectively to all employees—regardless of role or seniority—it enhances a productive and cohesive research environment. It's key for: alignment to strategic goals, collaboration and knowledge sharing, operational efficiency, employee engagement and inclusion,...

Indicators:

- Increased awareness on the different roles amongst researchers by developing role descriptions for supervisor, buddy, core experts, made available on the intranet Q4 2025

ACTION 21: Personalization of the communication flow by organizing the research teams into the 3N model (nucleus, nexus, novus)

Responsible Unit: HR and dedicated resource R&E Team and R&E management

Timing: Q4 2025

GAP Principles: See gap on information, consultation and taking part of decision-making bodies

Description: Communication, information sharing and trust is key in the fast changing reality of today. The 3n model is an underlying model we use to prioritize our research practices and to enhance collaboration with our education programs. Research topics and activities therefore are clustered around different focus points, and communications are tailored accordingly.

- Nucleus: This represents the core or central focus. The aim is to create a concentrated area of expertise and knowledge at UCLL, facilitating deeper research and collaboration
- Nexus: Is concerned as less 'core' than nucleus research projects, but these are often projects/activities related to policy decisions taken within R&E
- Novus: This represents finally research topics with focus on innovation and new approaches. It involves integrating new ideas and methodologies

The result of using this model is that the research themes are clearer, direction is given with regards to continuous development of the R&E- staff, interdisciplinary work is promoted within

the entire institution and best practices are getting easier disseminated within the institution, while balancing between academic freedom and strategic alignment.

It also enables us break down silos between the different R&E teams but as well between R&E and education.

Indicators:

- 3N model communicated and accordingly applied Q4 2025
- Positive evaluation of communication within R&E via existing wellbeing survey (every two years) amongst all UCLL employees with minimum 70% of employees evaluating communication within R&E positively Q4 2026

ACTION 22: Integrating the responsible use of AI within HR to improve support and communication towards employees

Responsible Unit: HR department with support of AI experts of team 'Smart Organizations'

Timing: Q4 2026

GAP Principles: See gap in working conditions.

Description: A more innovative functioning of the HR service will optimize and positively impact on internal communication within the HR department, free up time, which will indirectly serve employees and managers as well.

The use of AI I is indispensable in the current context and therefore also within HR activities. UCLL adheres much importance to the correct and responsible use of AI by sensibilizing and informing all employees through a specific and elaborate information section on the intranet and through regular information sessions and webinars.

Indicators:

- A tool to summarize live reports (internally) Q4 2026
- Improved employee experience by piloting with a chatbot to search through internal HR protocols Q4 2026

ACTION 23: Further integrating the principles of open science practices and FAIR principles into research

Responsible Unit: R&E department, in close collaboration with the HR department

Timing: Q4 2025 – Q4 2026

GAP Principles: See gap in open science practices and FAIR principles

Description: Researchers are increasingly faced with requirements from funders (Horizon Europe, NWO). Good data management is part of high-quality research. HR can act as a link in cultivating an Open Science mentality. This action will foster transparency and collaboration.

Indicators:

- Involvement and awareness of all the members of the HR-team by organising a brief info session for HR: What are FAIR principles, open access, and why are they important? Q4 2025
- Every newcomer within R&E is informed on the principles of open science practices by integrate open science principles into the onboarding process for researchers e.g. in the form of an e-learning module in the welcome package Q4 2026
- Increased awareness amongst all researchers by dissemination of the principles by publishing an inspiration guide or one-pager on the R&E intranet (optionally also integrated in the onboarding package for researchers) Q4 2026