

Human Resources Strategy of Babeş-Bolyai University

FOREWORD

The University is, by its very nature, a place for freedom. It is a matter of responsible freedom, which underpins the activities of the academic community, founded on the commitment to provide competitive education, based on innovative scientific research, which generates complex services for society.

The aspirations of the academic community, driven by *people* and *values*, have earned Babeş-Bolyai University national and international recognition. Today, Babeş-Bolyai University is at the forefront of Romanian higher education, its record of achievement proving its guiding principle *Traditio Nostra Unacum Europae Virtutibus Splendet*.

As the oldest institution of higher education in Romania, the University is committed to honouring its history and establishing its excellence by promoting an institutional culture that aligns the university tradition with the dynamic expectations of the modern world. Recalling the provisions of the *Charter of Babeş-Bolyai University* in its mission statement, UBB considers:

- a) strategic management and an efficiency-driven planning process;
- b) comprehensive and balanced development of UBB;
- c) ensuring democracy, collective participation and transparency;
- d) efficient and informed decision making;

e) commitment to the principle of quality – both in UBB’s operation and in the process of evaluating these activities.

These commitments set the framework for all of the strategies of the University.

In terms of the professional activity of the academic community members, the guidelines are also outlined in the *UBB Human Resources Strategy*, which is based on the principles of professional expertise, scientific and teaching excellence, and compliance with ethical rules of conduct. These values ought to be pursued at the institutional level by exercising a *dual responsibility*: first, the responsibility of the academic community towards the University, and second, the responsibility of the University towards *people*.

The use of the word “people” in this preamble, at least, warrants a technical clarification. Strategic planning generally uses the term when referring to people employed in a structure, rather operational (and at the same time more impersonal) terms such as: “staff”, “personnel” or “human resources”. The university, however, provides an institutional framework for a culture of academic democracy and active participation. In other words, the University is a place where *people* and *values* come together.

For this reason, the *UBB Human Resources Strategy* grounds its objectives and actions in the belief that the University must be seen by the people that make up the *academic community* not only as an educator or employer, but as *Alma Mater Napocensis*.

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CONTEXT

In terms of its presence on the labour market, Babeş-Bolyai University is one of the region's largest employers. On 1 January 2017, the University employed 4,335 staff and collaborators. Of these, 46.64% were *teaching staff*, 10.12% *research staff*, 15.73% *support staff*, 17.07% *technical and administrative staff (non-teaching)*, while 10.42% were *collaborators*.

University staff have either **permanent** or **fixed-term contracts**, depending on the duration of their employment. In addition, the University is party to (**temporary**) service agreements, whereby persons falling into this category qualify as collaborators. Of the total number of employees and collaborators, 63.27% are employed on a permanent basis (of the total number of permanent employees, 51.36% are tenured teaching staff, 2.4% are researchers, 24.86% are support staff, and 21.36% are non-teaching staff). For fixed-term employment, staff hired under these agreements qualify as affiliates and account for 26.29% of the University's human resources. In terms of the specific nature of the positions and relative to the total number of fixed-term employees, this category is structured as follows: 53.77% teaching staff (the percentage covers the following types of employment: a) affiliated teaching staff and b) hourly-paid teaching staff), 32.71% researchers, and 13.5% non-teaching staff. The third category of staff - collaborators - accounts for 10.42% of the total human resources at Babeş-Bolyai University.

Given the size, diversity and distribution of human resources within institutional units (faculties and departments, branches, research units, administrative units), the mission of the *Human Resources Strategy of Babeş-Bolyai University* is to identify, articulate, and support best practices within a consistent personnel policy that reflects the vision and strategic goals in terms of *competitiveness* and *excellence* for all employees and collaborators of the University. Furthermore, given the dynamics of the labour market and, in particular, the prevalence of large private sector employers offering attractive conditions to employees, Babeş-Bolyai University aims, through its personnel policy, to position itself as an *employer of choice*, offering competitive employment conditions, with the aim of retaining the best performing students within its structures and selecting the most qualified specialists.

The *Human Resources Strategy of Babeş-Bolyai University* consists of four parts. The first three (**I. Attracting and recruiting high-quality human resources; II. Human resource assessment; III. Human resource motivation**) cover aspects mainly related to recruitment practices, while the fourth (**IV**) is focused on the **management of human resource performance**. For each of these, a series of objectives and actions are set out to contribute to the achievement of the objectives. The objectives and actions are relevant across all categories of staff and reflect the values and principles of Babeş-Bolyai University.

The present document builds on the *Babeş-Bolyai University Strategic Plan 2016-2020* and the *Babeş-Bolyai University Charter*.

I ATTRACTING AND RECRUITING HIGH-QUALITY HUMAN RESOURCES

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1. Positioning the University as an employer of choice and promoting it as such within the community

Actions:

- 1.1. Establishing optimal salary conditions subject to the financial resources of the recruiting institutional units, the statutory limits, and the position type.
- 1.2. Establishing a complementary package of non-financial benefits, based on the infrastructure and training resources available to the University, depending on the category and specific nature of the position.
- 1.3. Safeguarding and promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion in the recruitment process by adopting a set of criteria to be applied at all stages of the process and designed to support underrepresented groups within the University.
- 1.4. Transparency of employment conditions (financial and non-financial), subject to compliance with confidentiality requirements.

- 1.5. Promoting the image of the University as an *employer* by attending the most important national and international events with recruitment potential.

OBJECTIVE 2. Developing sustainable recruitment policies that encourage and recognise exceptional talent within the organisation, identifying / attracting high-quality external human resources and using effective recruitment methods and tools.

Actions:

- 2.1. At the beginning of each academic year, an annual estimate of the number of positions required for each category (teaching positions, research positions, support teaching positions, and non-teaching positions), using an algorithm to determine the number and type of positions (correlating the staffing needs for specific activities, the budget of the institutional units where the hiring is to be done, the optimal structural pyramid for academic operations, etc.).
- 2.2. Submitting to the UBB Administrative Council for approval proposals for teaching, research, ancillary teaching and research, and non-teaching positions listed in the staffing tables approved by the UBB Senate;
- 2.3. Time-based planning of staff selection for each category, in accordance with the deadlines set by national legislation and the specific needs of the institution.
- 2.4. Identifying high-performing in-house and external staff and encouraging them to apply for positions that match their expertise,

following the principle of fairness, openness, transparency, and professional achievement.

2.5. Prioritising the recruitment of teaching staff/researchers, under the conditions set out in the *Strategy for Research, Development Innovation at UBB*, promoting fixed-term positions in areas where this aligns with international best practices and implementing the provisions of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, which will be fully adopted and implemented by UBB.

2.6. The recognition of UBB students with outstanding abilities and guiding them towards career opportunities within the University (through the Career, Alumni, and Business Relations Centre, student associations, the Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning, etc.).

2.7. Supporting CCARMA activities and team development by maintaining an optimal number of career advisers in relation to the number of students enrolled at UBB; extending these activities to other categories of staff through relevant units.

2.8. Fostering the social inclusion of UBB graduates with special needs by promoting job opportunities, in collaboration with the UBB Office for Students with Disabilities.

2.9. Creating, implementing, and promoting a *recruitment platform for teaching support staff and non-teaching positions*.

2.10. Consistent promotion of all job openings at the University through multiple communication channels.

2.11. Ongoing optimisation and adjustment of the *Methodology for filling vacant teaching and research positions at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca* in line with the national regulatory framework and the priority objectives of the University.

2.12. Developing a *methodology for filling support and non-teaching positions* at Babeş-Bolyai University.

2.13. Upgrading and supplementing, for all categories of staff, the operational procedures for organising and conducting the selection process (through competition or other forms of assessment) in order to fill the positions offered by UBB.

2.14. Establishing an *integration plan* for newcomers and setting up training sessions to help them settle into their new roles at the institution.

2.15. Briefing newly hired staff on all rights, obligations, and benefits associated with being a staff member at UBB.

2.16. Providing support in relation to the tasks that new employees must perform for the duration of their integration period, by the person(s) designated for this purpose within the institutional unit.

2.17. Setting up an official framework to make sure the recruitment process is quality-checked by assessing all the steps involved.

OBJECTIVE 3. Developing a clear framework for assessing performance for each category of staff and incorporating it into the recruitment process.

Actions:

3.1. Holding consultations with the relevant University bodies to discuss the conditions for filling teaching and research positions within each field, and adopting a set of performance criteria by adapting national standards to the University's approach to excellence.

3.2. Setting and adopting a set of performance criteria specific to support staff and non-teaching staff, tailored to the specific nature of each type of position.

3.3. Setting and adopting equivalent performance criteria for categories of positions that are not subject to national legislation or university regulations regarding minimum eligibility requirements (teaching staff paid by the hour; fixed-term research staff recruited for projects, etc.).

3.4. Using a *performance scale* as a complementary tool in the human resource selection process for each category of staff, in order to enable the recruitment of top specialists for each type of position within the University structures.

OBJECTIVE 4. Developing *career paths* tailored to each job category

4.1. Establishing career path options (compatible with the *Flexible Academic Career Path System for 2016-2017*, currently in the pilot phase for teaching and research staff) tailored to different categories of staff, including for each type: levels, representative activities, standard skills, and abilities, which together define expectations in terms of staff

input for each level within each career path. Ongoing promotion of the career path system (starting with the early stages of the recruitment process).

4.2. Encouraging UBB staff to adopt career paths that are in line with their own skills, competences and aspirational goals

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II HUMAN RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1. Assessment of job satisfaction and motivation among UBB staff in each category of personnel

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Actions:

1.1. The University Development and Quality Management Centre shall organise and conduct a *psychosocial survey on the satisfaction and motivation of University staff on the job*, reflecting at least the following key aspects:

- a) job satisfaction/motivation towards the activities listed in the job description;
- b) job satisfaction/motivation towards working with people/the units they depend on to carry out their own activities and teamwork;
- c) satisfaction/motivation in terms of communication at work;
- d) satisfaction/motivation in terms of work efficiency;
- e) satisfaction/motivation in relation to remuneration;
- f)

satisfaction/motivation in relation to non-financial benefits; g) satisfaction with supervision and performance evaluation; h) satisfaction/motivation regarding training, education, and workplace guidance; i) job satisfaction with career advancement conditions, opportunities, and procedures; j) job satisfaction with work environment and stress; k) satisfaction with the care shown by the employer towards its staff; l) satisfaction with the University's personnel policies; m) overall satisfaction/motivation with the workplace.

1.2. Analysis of survey results and its use to improve personnel policies.

OBJECTIVE 2. Survey on student satisfaction with the quality of teaching at UBB

Actions:

2.1. The University Development and Quality Management Centre will design and conduct a sociological survey on *student satisfaction with the performance of UBB staff directly involved in their studies* (teaching, support and non-teaching staff), using annual evaluations of teaching activities by students and the *Babeş-Bolyai University Student Satisfaction Evaluation Questionnaire*, as revised to meet the above-mentioned objective.

2.2. Analysis of results and recommendation of measures to improve staff performance in relation to students.

OBJECTIVE 3. Objective and transparent assessment of individual professional activity and performance by the line manager

Actions:

3.1. Revision of the *Regulation governing the assessment of the individual professional performance of support and non-teaching staff at Babeş-Bolyai University*, with a focus on redefining assessment criteria, adapting them to the specifics of each type of position, and developing relevant assessment rubrics.

3.2. Developing a *methodology for the annual assessment of the activity and performance of teaching and research staff*.

3.3. Collecting, analysing and discussing the results of the assessments with each employee assessed.

3.4. The direct supervisor draws up a *performance improvement plan* for each of their subordinates, which must be agreed upon by both parties.

OBJECTIVE 4. Inter-evaluation (peer evaluation) and self-evaluation of UBB staff

Actions:

4.1. The planning and implementation, with the support of the University Development and Quality Management Centre, of peer assessments of teaching staff and researchers, as one of the performance indicators for the quality of the teaching and research staff established by the *Methodology for External Evaluation, Standards, Benchmark Standards, and List of Performance Indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education*.

4.2. Developing, planning, and implementing a *peer assessment system* for all other categories of staff.

4.3. Each UBB staff member shall prepare a *self-assessment report* on their *professional activity*, based on the criteria and assessment grid specifically applicable to their position, which shall constitute a support tool for assessment by their line manager and for peer assessment.

4.4. Collecting and analysing the results of each type of assessment.

OBJECTIVE 5. Assessment of the overall situation of human resources at Babeş-Bolyai University

Actions:

5.1. Drawing up a general report on the situation of UBB staff, based on the results of surveys on the satisfaction of members of the academic community and the results of the four types of evaluation.

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III HUMAN RESOURCE MOTIVATION

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1. Developing a *flexible, rational, and transparent framework for rewarding high-performing staff*

Actions:

1.1. Providing for the ongoing supervision and improvement, supported by the department responsible for financial management, of current practices pertaining to the overall system for the payment of salaries, bonuses, and other rewards for each category of personnel.

1.2. Convening consultations with the relevant University bodies on improving the *system for the payment of salaries, bonuses, and other rewards*, based on the performance scale applicable to each category of personnel.

1.3. Reviewing the performance-based pay system, in line with the achievement of strategic institutional goals and priorities and financial sustainability, so as to support the market positioning of UBB as an employer of choice that rewards performance.

OBJECTIVE 2. Providing support to UBB staff in improving their professional performance

Actions:

2.1. Keeping staff informed about the relevant know-how, skills, and actions needed to achieve the best results and for career development.

2.2. Encouraging staff involvement in relevant activities, giving feedback on successful completion of responsibilities, where appropriate, and acknowledging their contribution to meeting the strategic goals of the University.

2.3. Keeping the entire UBB staff informed about the performance-based reward system that covers the job-specific activities they do.

OBJECTIVE 3. Promoting / creating opportunities for career advancement

Actions:

3.1. Establishing a set of criteria for prioritising the training courses that will lead to career advancement.

3.2. Creating teaching / research / support / non-teaching positions that enable the career advancement of staff members who have demonstrated excellent results during the assessment phase.

3.3. Encouraging high-performing staff to apply for positions that promote seniority, in line with principles of transparency, openness, and impartiality.

OBJECTIVE 4. Salary and bonuses for UBB staff based on results

Actions:

4.1. Salary reclassification for human resources in each staffing category based on performance following the evaluation process.

4.2. Updating internal regulations on awarding merit pay at the University level.

4.3. Updating internal guidelines on staff loyalty for each staffing category.

4.4. Updating internal policies on rewarding excellence at UBB, focusing on

scientific research, teaching, and community service.

4.5. Establishing a framework for rewarding excellence for other categories of staff.

4.6. A review of all other methods of rewarding UBB staff.

4.7. Promoting performance-based awards, improving the transparency of reward procedures, and ensuring equal opportunities for all UBB staff.

OBJECTIVE 5. Non-financial rewards for highly skilled human resources

Actions:

5.1. Establishing categories of honorary awards specific to each staffing category and a system for granting them, in order to recognise professional performance.

5.2. Granting non-financial benefits packages to staff with excellent performance, tailored to personal needs and institutional resources.

OBJECTIVE 6. Supporting underperforming staff

Actions:

6.1. Identification, based on evaluations, of underperforming staff and specific areas of activity where results were unsatisfactory.

6.2. Establishing and adopting a set of measures to support the improvement of their output.

6.3. Arranging meetings between low-performing staff and representatives of the entities responsible for providing support to help them improve their performance, during which a performance improvement plan is established by mutual agreement.

OBJECTIVE 7. Leveraging human resources at retirement age

Actions:

7.1. Identifying and leveraging opportunities to harness the skills and potential of human resources approaching retirement age.

7.2. Initiating collaboration and assistance schemes that encourage staff of retirement age to adopt an active lifestyle (e.g., involvement in mentoring projects, invitations to join specialist committees and attend scientific events).

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IV HUMAN RESOURCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1. Safeguarding the rights of UBB staff to professional training

Actions:

1.1. Identifying the professional training needs of all categories of UBB staff based on the findings of the work performance evaluation, the performance improvement plan, and the feedback on training, education, and career development opportunities provided by staff in the job satisfaction survey.

1.2. Developing and adopting a coherent and consistent institutional framework for the training and continuous development of UBB staff.

1.3. Training sessions adapted to the specific needs of the staff.

1.4. Supporting UBB staff in terms of attending training activities on a regular basis.

OBJECTIVE 2. Fostering the exchange of experiences

Actions:

2.1. Working with the department responsible for internationalisation to establish an inclusive strategy for UBB staff members to participate in international mobility programmes, grounded in the principle of equal opportunity.

2.2. Submitting proposals and launching consultations with national partner universities within various consortia on the organisation of exchange programmes

between staff members performing the same types of activities.

2.3. Planning and arranging internal mobility sessions within the University to allow staff to familiarise themselves with the work of their peers.

2.4. Promoting various forms of mobility and encouraging staff to participate in annual exchange programmes.

OBJECTIVE 3. Encouraging initiatives for personal development

Actions:

3.1. Providing support to UBB staff members interested in participating in training or professional development opportunities that align with their career development needs within the institution and the strategic objectives of UBB.

3.2. Encouraging individual/team efforts to identify and implement solutions that contribute to optimising activities in order to achieve excellent results.

OBJECTIVE 4. Providing conditions that allow staff to perform their duties in the best possible way

Actions:

4.1. Working with the department responsible for infrastructure to analyse staff feedback on their level of job satisfaction and requests from senior staff.

4.2. Ensuring that UBB staff members can access the infrastructure required to carry out the activities set out in their job descriptions.

4.3. Ensuring safety, health, hygiene, and well-being conditions in the workplace.

OBJECTIVE 5. Monitoring the career path of UBB staff

Actions:

5.1. Creating and implementing an *integrated system for monitoring staff career paths*, which can be used to generate a concise *personal record for each employee*; this must include information on: the employee's education and training; positions held within the institution; evaluation results and performance achieved; rewards received; professional training courses completed and mobility opportunities undertaken.

OBJECTIVE 6. Developing and sustaining a focus on leadership-driven performance

Actions:

6.1. Defining and fostering a vision of *leadership* that develops the performance management skills of executives in all institutional units; establishing a clear framework for assessing competences and establishing institutional conduct for executives, based on the principles of fairness and transparency in decision-making.

6.2. Developing a *plan of transition* that will support staff members appointed to executive positions.

6.3. Organising leadership/human resources management courses and encouraging attendance of staff in senior management positions who are at the beginning of their term of office.

6.4. Periodic evaluation of the activity of leadership at all levels.

6.5. Adopting a reward system for executives who show top performance.

This Strategy will be further developed by the UBB units in accordance with the *Guidelines for drawing up human resources strategies for the Babeş-Bolyai University structures.*

OBJECTIVE 7. Streamlining the administrative activities of all types of staff

Actions:

7.1. Organising regular information and briefing sessions on internal operating procedures governing ongoing activities, by category of activity.

7.2. Creating and implementing, with the assistance of the department responsible for information technology, an *internal platform for communication and document management* between the decision-making bodies of UBB and faculties/ centres/ institutes, which aims to reduce bureaucracy and facilitate the timely and efficient transfer of documents.

7.3. Adopting a set of general measures aimed at reducing bureaucracy across the entire institution, by category of activity.

7.4. Developing and promoting forms and protocols that regulate the daily activities of UBB staff (in the human resources section of the UBB website).

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