



Human Resources Division **University of Limerick**

Quality Manual **June 2024**

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Quality Manual Approval

Bobby O'Connor
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June 2024

1 Introduction and Business Context

1.1. Introduction and Business Context (ISO 9001 (2015): 4.1)

The HR Division provides the full spectrum of HR services throughout the employee lifecycle, from recruitment through to retirement / termination. Our ethos is one of strong customer focus and delivery of a quality HR service to our customers.

The Irish University sector works within a governance framework, including The Universities Act. Irish universities are accountable to the Department of Education and Higher Education Authority and work within the relevant regulations. This provides a strong governance framework and we work within the parameters of public sector employment regulations. The HR Division must comply with all such legislation and acts within the principles and ethos of such legislation and practices pertaining to the sector.

The HR Division's strategic plan, goals and objectives are aligned with the [University's Strategic Plan](#). There is a direct link between the work of HR and the strategic goal of developing an effective operating model. The Division also has a strong role to play in the achievement of other themes such as internationalisation and research excellence by creating the right organisational culture, structure and supports for all staff of the University.

The Director of HR reports to the President and has responsibility for implementation of the HR strategic plan. Our business context is reflected in our divisional goals and objectives document (HRD001), with explicit links to the goals of the strategic plan. Director, HR is a member of Executive Committee and as such regularly briefs the Executive on HR matters. An annual HR report is presented to Governing Authority.

The Division's Organisational Chart can be seen [here](#). The HR Division provides the following services to the staff of the university through the following key functions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HR Central Services (Recruitment, Compensation and Benefits, Research, Pensions, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service Engagement (Employee Relations, HR Business Partners, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talent Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and Safety

The Division is also supported by HR Information Systems (HRIS) and a Project Manager. The Division has a strong focus on quality and has been ISO accredited since 2008. The HR Quality Manual (this handbook) describes the Division's Quality Management System (QMS) and outlines how the Division strives to continually improve its performance on an ongoing basis.

1.2 Stakeholder Needs (ISO 9001 (2015): 4.2)

The primary function of the HR Division is to provide an effective HR service to its customers, who can be defined as all university staff, retired members of staff, and job

applicants. Customer needs and expectations are identified and reviewed through the mechanisms outlined in Figure 1 below, and include customer feedback surveys, focus groups, key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular everyday interaction with customers. All feedback is reviewed and prioritised for action. The division actively seeks to improve the service and on-line surveys, customer feedback, and the action register are used to ensure customers' needs are met.



Figure 1: Identifying and Reviewing Stakeholder Needs

The University’s Executive Committee and Governing Authority are also stakeholders. Furthermore, we have obligations as a public sector body to fulfil our legislative requirements. All of these interested parties are summarised in Table 1 below.

Interested Parties	Needs/Expectations	How we Communicate
University Staff	A timely and professional service on all aspects of HR.	Face to face; telephone; email; meetings, website, UL Connect, surveys.
Job Applicants	To be treated efficiently and fairly, in line with University policy.	Telephone, email, UL Connect
Retirees	Accurate information and payment of pension.	Face to face; telephone; email; meetings.
Executive Committee	Development and implementation of HR policies and practices to further the strategic goals of the University. Timely and accurate information.	Participation at EC Meetings, quarterly reports, other submissions.

Governing Authority	Development and implementation of HR policies and practices to further the strategic goals of the University. Timely and accurate information.	Meetings with sub-committee, reports, presentation.
Higher Education Authority, Department of Finance	Implementation of government directives. Timely and accurate reporting.	Meetings, government circulars, reports, audits.
Irish Universities Association	Proactively drive, and respond to, sectoral matters for the Higher Education sector.	Meetings, email, telephone.
Union	Work together to maintain positive industrial relations climate. Effective management of both group and individual matters.	Meetings.
External accrediting bodies (HR Excellence in Research; Athena Swan)	Communication and implementation of action plans. Reports on progress against these,	Project plans, progress reports.

1.3 Scope of Quality Management System (ISO 9001 (2015): 4.3)

The scope of ISO 9001 (2015) is defined as a standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system when an organization:

- a) Needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements, and
- b) Aims to enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system, including processes for improvement of the system and the assurance of conformity to customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

The adoption of a quality management system was a strategic decision of the HR Division at UL and is now in line with the requirements of ISO9001:2015. All members of HR were involved in the development and implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS), and continue to be involved in its ongoing improvement.

The HR Division’s QMS fulfils the Quality system requirements by demonstrating its ability to consistently provide a service that meets customer and statutory requirements. The system aims to enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system, and the assurance of conformity to customer requirements as well as statutory and University policy requirements.

All clauses of ISO 9001:2015 apply with the exception of clauses 7.1.5 and 8.5.1f. These clauses cannot apply in a service driven Division such as the HR Division of the University of Limerick. There is no mechanism to calibrate or verify, or to control production, in ways that are described in the standard to the particular services provided by this Division.

1.4 The QMS and its Processes (ISO 9001 (2015): 4.4)

The Division has adopted a process approach when developing, implementing and improving the effectiveness of a quality management system, to enhance customer satisfaction through meeting our customers' requirements. The Quality Management System consists of the Quality Manual, Quality Policy, HR values, customer charter, process maps (including quality processes), quality meetings, customer communication, KPI's and audits. The interaction between these elements is reflected in Figure 2 below.

The ISO technical questionnaire relates the clauses of ISO 9001 (2015) to the HR Division's Quality documentation.

The Division's process maps (see Appendix 1) outline how we implement the key processes for the business. These include process maps for each section of the Division (recruitment, compensation and benefits, etc.). These process maps are a key element of the quality system, enabling a consistent approach for our customers.

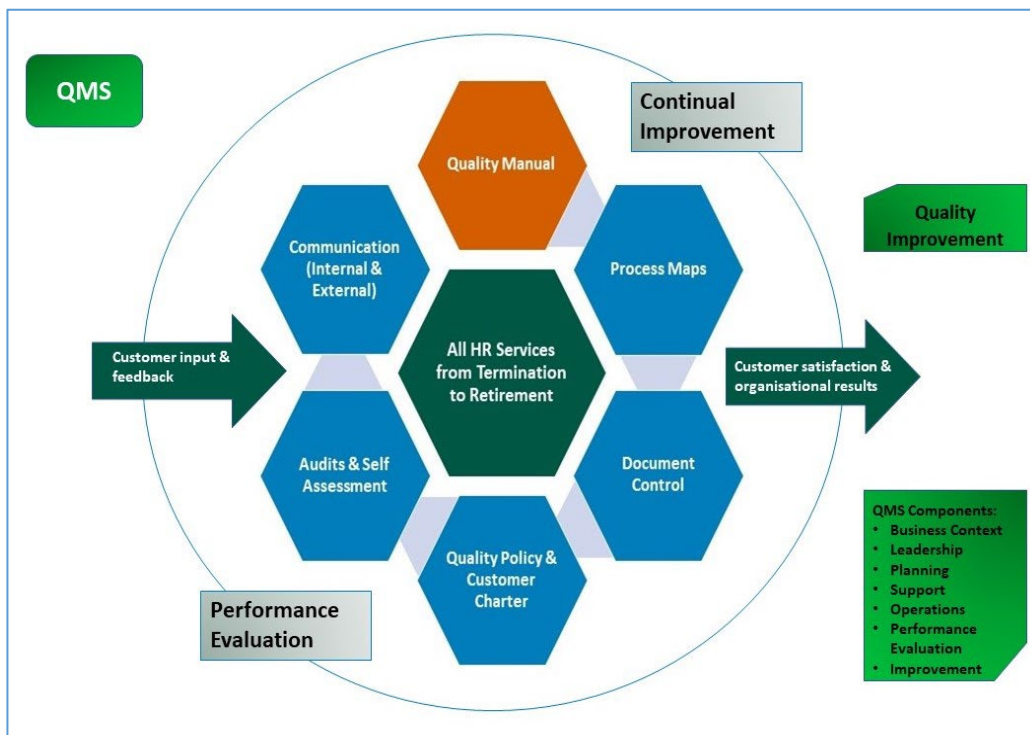


Figure 2. HR Division's QMS

Process Interaction

The HR Division at UL has both service processes (listed in Appendix 1 and available on SharePoint) and quality processes (which are available on SharePoint and the HR website). In broad terms, the service processes fit under three key headings of the employment lifecycle as outlined below.

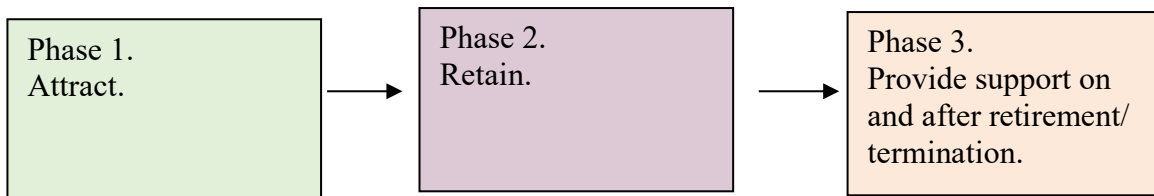


Figure 3. Phases of Employment Lifecycle

Appendix 1 outlines the processes and the phases of the employment lifecycle to which they relate.

The Division's service (or 'operational') processes are supported by 8 ISO-related, cross-divisional quality management processes, as follows. These can be found in the Quality SharePoint site and on the HR website.

- Customer Complaints (QMS01)
- Document Control (QMS02)
- Audit (QMS03)
- Corrective and Preventative Action (QMS04)
- Continual Improvement (QMS06)
- Non-conforming Service (QMS08)
- Record Control (QMS09)
- Planning (QMS10)

All forms and documentation pertaining to each service are referenced in the relevant process map. Each section is responsible for the process maps relating to that section and is responsible and accountable for all aspects of process performance. Process maps are updated on an ongoing basis. The maps are reviewed by section staff and at internal and external audits. Process amendments are made on foot of regulatory requirements, policy changes, audit findings, gap analysis recommendations, customer feedback and team discussions. New process maps are created following substantial changes to existing processes or the initiation of new processes.

The process maps reside in the Quality SharePoint site and are subject to stringent document control as described below. The process maps help to ensure that all processes will be carried out in the same way by different members of the HR team. In addition, the maps are a very useful training aid for new members of the Division.

2. Leadership

This section provides an overview of the following elements of Leadership Commitment and Customer Focus; HR Quality Policy and Values; and Roles and Responsibilities.

2.1 Leadership, Commitment and Customer Focus (ISO 9001 (2015): 5.1)

The HR Division's QMS was created to advance the Division's commitment to provide a quality service and to facilitate ongoing change within HR. The leaders of the Division are committed to the use and ongoing improvement of the QMS. This commitment includes:

- Ensuring synergy between the Division's strategic goals and the quality management system.
- Management review process (as outlined in this manual).
- Annual quality review meeting.
- Providing HR data and information to the University's Executive Committee in order to monitor progress and plan strategically.
- Reviewing Divisional risks and opportunities.
- Communicating to all staff the importance of meeting customer (both internal and external), regulatory and statutory requirements.
- Providing the context for planning Divisional priorities through the annual planning process. Goals and objectives are then reviewed at management level and amended as appropriate.
- Involving all members of the Division in creating and reviewing annual goals.
- Reviewing progress against these goals.
- Having quality meetings with an agenda to include the Action Register, KPIs, and improvements to the quality management system. Actively involving staff in the preparation and approval of the QMS.
- Agreeing objectives with staff through the PDR and review of these.
- Continually assessing the effectiveness of the QMS through the auditing process (QMS Process 03).
- Making available the necessary technical and financial resources for the provision of a quality service.
- Reviewing trends at University and Divisional level to inform decisions regarding priorities and resourcing.
- Ensuring that changes to the QMS are communicated by email/UL Connect to the whole Division and any major changes/proposals to the QMS are discussed at relevant meetings.
- Reviewing the QMS on an ongoing basis (see section 6 below).

Delivering on the needs of the University and customers is always the Division's core priority, a point that is consistently conveyed by the Division's leaders. The focus on responding to customer needs is reflected in Section 1 above. Systems and policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are in line with University needs and

our service to individuals and groups is measured through mechanisms such as KPIs and the Action Register.

2.2 HR Quality Policy and Values (ISO 9001 (2015): 5.2)

The HR Quality Policy is displayed throughout the HR Division. The Master copy can be viewed in the HR Division and on the quality section of the HR website (<https://www.ul.ie/hr/about-hr-division/hr-quality>). HR's commitment to quality and continual improvement is embedded in the Division's values as follows:

- We will treat all persons with respect and dignity.
- We will aim to create a welcoming, caring and informative environment.
- We will take responsibility for the service that we provide.
- We will show loyalty and commitment, adopt a professional attitude and respect the confidentiality of personal information.
- We will evaluate and seek to improve our personal performance at work and take responsibility for our personal and professional development.
- We will be supportive, helpful and honest in all aspects of our work.
- We will take responsibility for the effective and efficient use of resources.
- We will adopt a positive approach and promote a positive image of the University of Limerick.

The HR Division also has a [Customer Charter](#) which is posted on the HR website.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities (ISO 9001 (2015): 5.3)

The Division's organisational chart is available on the [HR Website](#). Responsibilities for specific activities within the Division's processes are specified in the process maps.

Top management of the HR Division take responsibility for ensuring that responsibilities are defined and communicated within the Division. This happens through the management team meetings and Divisional meetings as outlined below.

All members of the HR Division play an active role in quality. Working with the Director HR is the HR Quality Team, consisting of the head of each HR function across the Division. Combined they have responsibility for developing, maintaining, reporting on, and improving the QMS. This ensures that it conforms to the standard and serves its purpose. The Quality Administrator, who is also part of the Quality Team, manages and maintains many aspects of the quality system including the document control system. This ensures that processes needed for the quality management system are established, implemented and maintained. The quality meetings provide an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the QMS and any needs for improvement. They also provide an opportunity to build awareness of the QMS as does the QMS overview which is delivered at least biannually to new and existing staff by the QMS Administrator.

Staff members are given the opportunity to express ideas on an ongoing basis and also through the strategic planning process, the Performance and Development Review

System (PDR), direct contact with line managers and other meetings (Division, section and quality team meetings). This also applies to quality.

The internal meetings structure of the HR Division, as outlined in the table below, ensures that communication between members of the team happens systematically and regularly at all levels of the Division.

Table 1. HR Division Internal Meetings Structure

Meeting	Attendees	Function	Frequency
Director, HR Team 1-1 Meetings	Director, HR and Direct Reports	Individual meetings	Weekly
Divisional*	Full HR team	Review of quality data and quality management system. Review of progress against annual goals and objectives.	Once per annum
Sectional	Section teams	To communicate issues discussed and agreed at weekly management meetings	Weekly
Bi-monthly Quality meeting	Quality Lead (i.e.) Head of HR Central Services Heads of each HR function	To review all aspects of the HR QMS (KPI's, Action Register, Customer feedback etc.)	Monthly
PDR One-to-One**	Line manager and individual employee	To agree individual's goals and objectives	Annually
Head of HR Central Services – Reporting team leads	1-1 meeting of Head of HR Central Services with respective team leader	Review Action log items	Weekly
Special Project Subcommittees	As appropriate These would be led by the Project Manager, under the direction of Deputy Director.	Specific to special project	As required

* Minutes/Action items are recorded for these meetings and circulated to attendees in a timely manner to allow action items to be dealt with in advance of the next meeting

**PDR documentation is finalised.

3. Quality Planning

3.1 Actions to Address Risks and Opportunities (ISO 9001 (2015): 6.1)

In line with the University's [Risk Management Policy](#), the HR Division has a Risk Register. The Risk Register is held on an on-line system, overseen by the office of the Corporate Secretary. The Register is reviewed quarterly and updated as necessary with the approvals being processed through an on-line workflow where updated risks

become live on the system when same are approved by the HR Director. The purpose of the Risk Management Policy is to provide a framework for management to identify, assess and rate risks, and to develop strategies to deal with risks so as to provide reasonable assurance that the University's strategic objectives will be achieved. In effect, this Policy will establish a framework to identify potential events that may expose the University to risk, to manage this risk to keep it within the University's risk appetite and to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the University's objectives.

The HR Division's Risk Register is reviewed and approved by the University's Audit and Risk Management Committee and is subject to independent audits and reviews. These are reviewed annually by HR Management and are also reviewed by the Executive Committee of the University.

The HR Division also undertakes an annual SWOT analysis in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each section.

3.2 Quality Objectives and Planning of Changes (ISO 9001 (2015):6.2)

Quality objectives are identified and agreed on foot of the annual division's planning meeting. These are measurable and consistent with the Quality policy, reflecting the Division's current priorities. The Division's quality management system plan would reflect any changes identified from the International Standard, customer feedback, external directives, results of KPIs, outcomes of audits, or changes identified through any other source.

Changes to the Quality Management System are also discussed at the Annual Quality meeting and at other quality review meetings as appropriate.

For projects, changes are controlled through the project plans and through project meetings. Projects with external accreditation (HR Excellence in Research) are also subject to audit with resulting recommendations incorporated into the project plan. Regular project meetings are held with various working groups and steering committees all of which are minuted with updated actions captured in the project log.

4. Support

4.1 Resources (ISO 9001 (2015): 7.1 with exception of 7.1.5)

HR receives an annual budget from the Executive Committee for pay and non-pay purposes including whole-university recruitment, legal costs/industrial relations, training and development and specific projects such as IT systems, professional development and quality initiatives. HR budgets are reviewed by HR management, in conjunction with the Finance Division. Requests for extra allocations during the year must get Budget Variance approval at Executive Management level. Specific targeted funding may be available from time-to-time from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), European Union (EU) or UL strategic fund.

In line with ISO 7.1.6, The Division works closely to ensure that any relevant organisational knowledge is made available to all staff in order to enable them to carry out their roles. The formal channels for this are currently under review. Both the formal and informal channels mean that there is a joined-up approach within the Division in order to best serve the staff of the University. Our systems (SharePoint, CORE system, and Docuware) all ensure that all staff of the Division have access to the required information. The Action Register includes a column on “Lessons Learned” & “Root Cause) as a means of capturing organisational knowledge.

Provisions are in place to ensure that the HR Division is a safe and comfortable place to work. All facilities of the HR Division are provided in line with the Health and Safety regulations for the University. The social and psychological environment is an important context for staff of the Division. Staff wellbeing is important and we expect that staff will be treated with dignity and respect. Staff of the Division all have access to the University’s Employee Assistance Programme as well as to other programmes such as mindfulness and stress management. All staff are provided with the tools required to conduct their work, including IT facilities and have access to rooms (as required) for interviews. A HR meeting room is available for meetings and is additionally used as an interview room.

Following the Covid19 pandemic, the UL Policy and Procedure for Blended Working was implemented on 16 January 2023. This allows staff members the opportunity to work remotely under a blended working arrangement, agreed with their manager. Applications were processed through the use of an on-line application form which then allowed for a workflow approval process. This in turn facilitated instant reporting on the status and number of applications.

Any issues relating to resources, infrastructure or work environment are referred to the line manager. These will be taken up with the Buildings and Estates Division. All other resource requirements are discussed with Heads of unit and the HR Director as appropriate for consideration.

In relation to staffing, many of the staff of the Division have been cross-trained in different functions of the Division. As a result, cover is available when circumstances necessitate this.

4.2 Competence, Awareness and Communication (ISO 9001 (2015): 7.2-7.4)

On commencement of work within the Division, each staff member attends the University induction. They are also provided with an overview of the quality policy and the process maps relevant to that area, and the importance of adhering to these. These form the basis of on-the-job training at individual level and a record of local induction is retained. Records of all UL courses attended are recorded for each individual. Courses attended by staff are evaluated for their effectiveness and, where required, corrective action is taken to improve the quality of courses. Training records are maintained for all delivered courses. Support is available for continued education and many members of the Division have availed of the opportunity for further study, including programmes at degree, Masters, and PhD levels. The focus on quality is reinforced at all Divisional meetings and at QMS training provided by the QMS administrator. The competency frameworks also provide a helpful guide to the level of skills required for roles within the Division as well as a tool for considering skill gaps for development. These competency frameworks are available on the HR website.

The demands of each area within the Division are kept under review, with staff deployed as appropriate in order to meet customer requirements. Staff of the Division develop and maintain their skills through further study, attendance at conferences, networking with other relevant organisations, and undertaking professional development programmes as appropriate.

The UL Performance and Development Review System (PDR) was designed to help translate the university's goals and objectives into team and individual objectives and to continually improve the performance of the university as a whole.

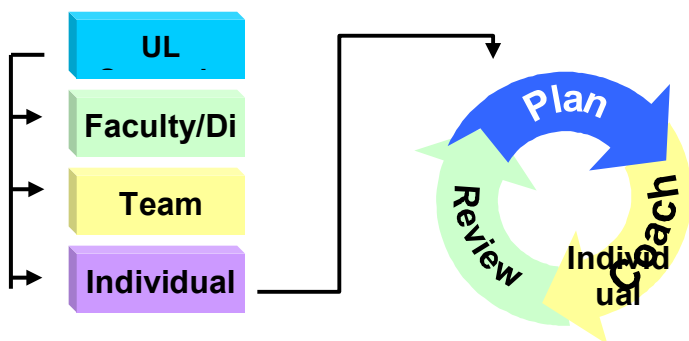


Figure 4. Performance Development and Review System (PDR)

The PDR facilitates and monitors staff performance and development on three levels: planning, feedback and coaching, and annual review.

- Planning: Staff members and line managers agree objectives and development needs for the year ahead.
- Feedback and Coaching. Happens informally between staff members and line managers on an ongoing basis.
- Annual Review: Objectives, achievements and challenges are reviewed in conjunction with the planning process.

4.3 Documented Information and Control of This (ISO 9001 (2015): 7.5)

This Quality manual, in conjunction with the quality policy and the processes outlined above, form a key part of the ISO documentation requirements and fulfil the quality requirements of each section of the HR Division.

As per the document control procedure (QMS02), all documents pertaining to the HR Division are version controlled and available to HR staff on the Quality SharePoint site. While all HR staff have read access to the documents, editing rights are restricted to the QMS administrator and one other administrator

The document control spreadsheet on the HR server comprises a master list of all QMS forms and processes (including the process maps – see Appendix 1). The spreadsheet lists documents by name, number, type and version and indicates whether the document is live, in draft format or retired. The sheet also captures all Document Change Request (DCR) numbers pertaining to each document revision on the QMS, thereby ensuring that a revision history of all documents exists.

HR documents are reviewed on an ongoing basis by the relevant HR sections and as part of the internal and external (ISO) audits. The audits test the effectiveness of the document control system. Requests for new documents to be added to the QMS or for changes to be made to existing documents are submitted by sending a pre-approved DCR template to the QMS administrator.

External documentation is also necessary to ensure that the HR Division conducts its business effectively. This includes legislation (www.irishstatutebook.ie), government circulars, and wider University policies.

Control of Records.

The HR Division holds highly confidential information, which is maintained in line with the University's [Data Protection Compliance Regulations](#) (GDPR). These regulations have been developed in accordance with The Data Protection Acts. This applies to information held within the HR Division as does the University's Records Management and Retention Policy available to view on the UL Policy Hub.

All PCs within the Division are password protected. Printer devices require members of the division to authenticate for releasing print jobs via the ID card reader or AD Login button on screen. HR information is held on a SharePoint site, which is backed up by the IT Division. Only members of the HR Division are provided with access to this shared file and certain folders within this file are password protected. While all staff have access to CORE self-service for their own purposes, the actual HR Systems (CORE, Docuware) are password protected with access provided only to HR staff. These systems quickly time out if not in use, as a further precautionary measure. HR office doors are locked on leaving the office. Any paper files (of which there are a limited number) are held securely in the relevant office. Certain information on personnel files is restricted for access only by the HR Director or other named HR staff.

A Records Matrix is maintained (Appendix 2) and is controlled in line with QMS 09.

5. Operation

5.1 Operational Planning and Control (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.1)

The Division holds an annual meeting in order to formulate the annual goals and objectives to support the UL Strategic Plan. Each HR section drafts their annual goals and objectives in a consultative manner in line with this, and presents these to the Director HR for review and any amendments. These goals are reviewed during the year at review meetings. These planning and review meetings provide input to determine how the service is to be altered, implemented, and monitored, and what changes are required to processes to ensure that this happens. The goals and objectives also provide the context for each individual's PDR. The goals and objectives document is available to all on the HR server.

Key service delivery processes and documents are reviewed and revised as required in line with changes to the service provided. Each of these processes is underpinned by a process map as described above. Processes are continually reviewed by each section to ensure that they continue to reflect requirements. Reviews are informed by customer feedback, audit reports, etc. (see internal audit process QMS03). Any non-conformance is dealt with in line with QMS04 (Corrective and Preventative Action Register) and QMS08 (Non Conforming Service), as described in section 1 above.

5.2 Requirements for Products and Services including Customer Communication (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.2)

Communication with customers takes place through the mechanisms as outlined in Figure 1 above. Interactions with customers occur on a regular basis through meetings, telephone, surveys, UL Connect, email and letters. All in HR operate an open-door policy: staff meet with customers face-to-face and arrange for them to meet with the Director HR or Head of Unit, as required. The feedback from these customer interactions is captured and reviewed in a number of ways including the HR Action Register and informs the service provided.

Customer feedback and organisational needs provide the input for design and development of the HR service. The nature of this varies for each section of the Division and each section has its own means of identifying requirements and responding to these. Feedback is also gathered from those within the team through process improvement workshops. For recruitment, for example, this is determined from recruitment plans and other emergent recruitment needs throughout the year. The input and output in the Compensation and Benefits office stems from this. Activities include issuing of accurate contracts; amendments to leave entitlements; adding new employees to the system; and any other changes to pay and conditions on an individual basis.

The [Contacts](#) page of the HR website lists contact details for all HR personnel.

UL has started using UL Connect powered by Workvivo, which is a dedicated information and communications platform for all staff. It is through UL Connect that HR communicate information and updates relating to recruitment, promotion, talent and development opportunities and other HR matters. Notices of this type are also

posted on the HR website. The website is also used to provide staff with access to the most up-to-date versions of HR procedures, policies, forms and documents through its A to Z.

The design, development and review of service provision is undertaken through the meetings at Divisional, sectional, and individual level (see Table 1). The services to be provided are agreed by management, and management endeavor to ensure that resources are assigned accordingly. Responsibilities for service provision are clarified through these meeting structures. Changes to the services provided are informed by shifts in organisational priorities and the implication of such shifts are reflected by the HR Division.

5.3 Design and Development of Products and Services (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.3)

Design and development of products and services are applicable in two key deliverable areas of the HR Division.

New Learning and Development programmes are designed and developed carefully in order to meet customer needs. This includes consultation with key stakeholders in order to determine their requirements. Inputs can include changes to legislation, changes to policies, addition of new policies, or improvements identified through customer feedback mechanisms (see section 1).

The HR Division also look to improve the tools to develop the services provided. Opportunities to improve are identified through channels such as customer feedback or internal workshops. (i.e. Online Recruitment Tool/Topdesk query management system).

For substantial projects, a project plan will be completed and the new service or product will be developed in line with this. Reviews are held in order to ensure that the design/development of the service is on track. For programmes of smaller magnitude, records of design are held in TF010 (Training Needs Identified – PDR and other sources) or in the Action Register, depending on how the need was identified.

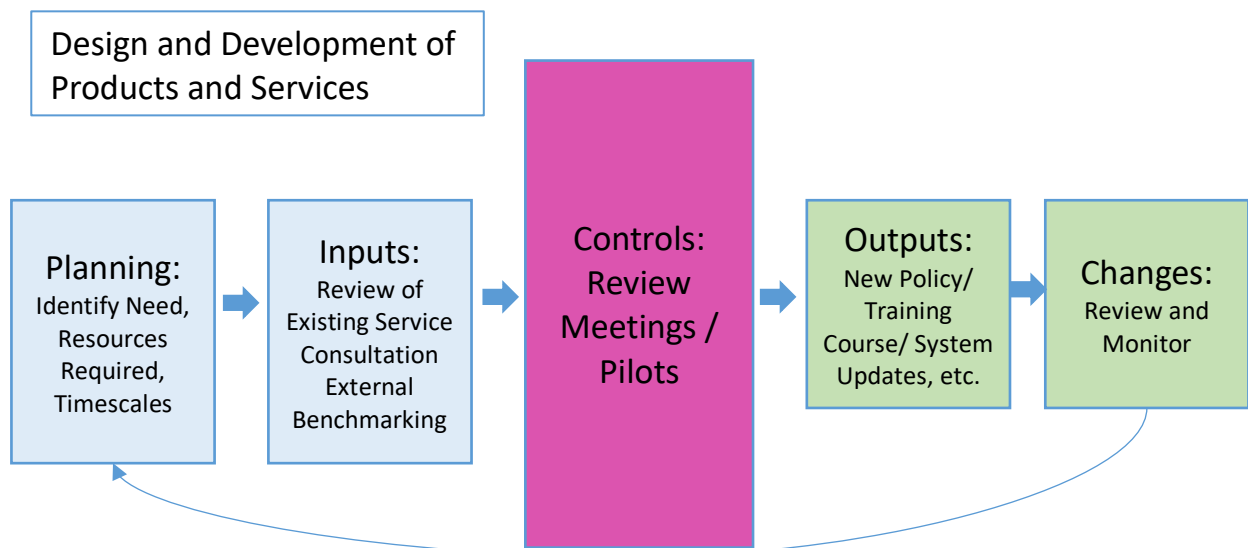


Figure 5. Design and Development of Products and Services

5.4 Control of Externally Provided Products and Services (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.4)

The Procurement and Supply Chain Office at UL implements procurement procedures and systems and develops and manages suppliers. The office applies a stringent procurement selection process to qualify suppliers for inclusion on the university's approved supplier list. The HR Division complies with these regulations.

When the HR Division requires the services or products of an external supplier, it selects a suitable supplier from the approved supplier list. When the list does not satisfy the Division's needs, it sources its own suppliers using appropriate procurement mechanisms (in line with advice) or draws on the Framework of the OGP. This selection process varies depending on the nature of the requirement. Information regarding the service that is sought is provided to potential suppliers. A framework for training and development is at an advanced stage.

The HR Division regularly reviews the performance of suppliers and contractors and, where necessary, selects alternative suppliers on the basis of improved quotes or quality of service. This is all in line with the requirements set down by the Procurement and Supply Chain Office. A supplier review is also undertaken annually.

If an issue of concern arises with a supplier, the HR staff member who is dealing with the order tries to resolve the issue with the supplier. If the issue remains unresolved, it is escalated as appropriate.

In the case of an issue of concern arising with a supplier on the UL approved supplier list, the relevant person in HR can inform the Procurement and Supply Chain Office of the issue by filling in a complaints form on that office's website. The Procurement and Supply Chain Office will then take action to address the issue.

Services are also provided to the HR Division by other departments within the University. These include ITD, the Corporate Secretary's Office, and the Print room,

amongst others. The HR Division accesses these services in line with that Division's processes (e.g., logging a call with ITD or following Freedom of Information procedures). Any required changes to this are logged in the Action Register.

5.5 Service Provision and Control (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.5-8.6)

The HR Division provides services that are controlled by legislation, processes, and other controlled documents. This includes process maps outlining the activities to be performed. The services are provided in line with these process maps and are consistent with the University's policies and procedures. These are available on the HR website and provide a useful guide to University staff on how to initiate and complete certain procedures, including recruitment; applications for leave; promotions etc.

Services are controlled by monitoring KPIs and other measures, as outlined in Section 6 below. Those appointed are suitably qualified and have the relevant experience required in order to carry out their roles. The HR Division also takes steps to minimise the risk of human error, through process maps, checklists, robust IT systems, and double approval processes.

Changes to policies and updates are communicated through the website and through a staff email circulation list. Changes are also communicated at Executive for further dissemination through the local management structures. Changes are recorded in archived policies, and on the Action Register.

Property of Customers and External Providers

The University's HR Division holds sensitive information regarding staff members. This information includes dates of birth, sick leave records, salary records, and so on. These records are held primarily on the HR CORE system and on Docuware (for personnel files).

Measures are taken both within the Division and through work with the IT Division to ensure that this property is protected. Access to the various elements of Core and Docuware is limited; access rights are controlled by the HRIS officer. The systems are password protected, and they time out quickly when not in use. The data from Docuware is held on a secure server and is kept in accordance with data protection guidelines.

Documentation is held on SharePoint and is subject to the same security measures as those outlined above. This again is in line with GDPR and with the Records Management Policy. This means that all written documents are both securely held and backed up on a regular basis. The amount of customer-related information held in paper format is limited. This information is held securely in filing cabinets in offices that are locked when unoccupied or in off-site storage facilities.

Staff of the HR Division recognise and understand the importance of complete confidentiality. It is made clear to all staff of the Division that no information can be shared inappropriately, either internally or externally.

Property of external providers is maintained securely, with electronic equipment and notes locked in rooms when not in use.

Any data breaches are dealt with under the University's Data Protection Policy.

Release of Products / Services

The following table summarises what constitutes release of product/service in each area. Evidence of conformity is in line with the process maps, KPIs, and Action Register. Each of these actions is traceable to the relevant section through the appropriate systems and records.

Process	Process Name	Release of Product
CP001	Increment Process	Awarding of increment
CP002	New Employee Personal Details	Employee set-up on Core
CP003	Contract Renewal Process	Core updated to confirm new contract or termination of employment
CP004	Termination of Employment Process	HR issue notice of termination and update Core
CP005	Change in Employee Personal Details	Details changed/updated on Core
CP008	Process for hire/rehire hourly paid staff – casual	Person added to Core system
CP011	Sick Leave Management & Payment Process	Salary amended where necessary
CP012	Work Pattern Set-up & Change Management	Work pattern recorded on Core system
CP013	Parental Leave Process	HR run Parental Leave letter to employee CT029 from Core Letter module to confirm approval.
CP014	Maternity Paid/Unpaid Leave Process	Maternity leave recorded on Core System
CP015	Part Time Working Process	Part time working pattern recorded on Core system
CP017	Adjunct Appointments process	Record details of Adjuncts on Core System and issue letter to Dean's Office for signature.
HRP001	Recruitment processes	Details of new recruit are submitted through "Selection to Commencement" field on CORE.
TP005	Training Process	Date of training delivery
EP004 EP009	Employee relations: all processes	Date that case is closed.
SP008	Garda Vetting Process	Applicant satisfies vetting requirements for post/activity.
SP001	Safety Representatives Committee Meetings	Forum dealing with health & safety concerns/issues being highlighted across campus.
SP002	First Aid Box and Defibrillator Checks	First Aid Stock and AED status tracker
SP003	Risk Assessment Process	Assess and minimise risk
SP004	H&S Policies Legal Compliance	Legal Compliance to H&S legislation and guidance documentation
SP005	Safety Statement Revision	Revision of University Safety Statement
SP006	Safety Training Process	Provision of Health & Safety Training
SP007	Safety Inspection	Guidance and support in ensuring best Health & Safety practices.
RSP001	Contract Renewal Process Research	Core HR Updated with contract details
RSP004	CID Management Process	Continue with contract review or advise of need for recruitment process
RSP003	Work Authorisation Process	Work Authorisation Issued
RSP007	Increment Process for Research Staff	Award of increment

Post Delivery Activity

Following training and development programmes, evaluation forms are completed and feedback is reviewed. This is to identify possible changes that are required in the future or any follow up required. Details of this are held as part of Learning and Development's KPIs.

Customers of HR are invited to provide feedback on their experience through an anonymous survey, the link to which is at the end of every HR email.

5.6 Control of Non-Conforming Outputs (ISO 9001 (2015): 8.7)

Non-conforming outputs (see QMS08) are identified through our KPIs, customer feedback, audits, or internal Divisional reviews of best practice in line with strategic imperatives.

Where a non-conforming output is identified, it is included in the Action Register for follow up. This process is reflected in QMS 04 (Continual Improvement Process).

Measures are taken to prevent release of non-conforming products. These include the use of checklists in recruitment and the salary approval mechanism in compensation and benefits.

The Action Register is a standing agenda item for discussion between managers and their teams. Updates on progress for each logged issue are provided. Completed items remain on the Action Register, and are marked as 'closed' with an explanation. The Action Register is stored on the Quality SharePoint site and accessible to all members of staff.

The HR Division's risk register also helps to identify risks and associated actions required to manage these.

6. Performance Evaluation and Improvement (ISO 9001 (2015): 9 and 10)

6.1 Continual Improvement

The HR Division is strongly committed to providing the best possible service to its customers, and the pursuit of quality assurance (QA) and quality improvement (QI) is ongoing. The Division's commitment to continually improving its activities and services is embodied in its quality policy statement (Section 2 above). Continual improvement is documented as one of the division's QMS processes (see QMS Process 06). The annual quality meeting provides an opportunity to collate and review customer feedback and feed this into future planning, while also reviewing the effectiveness of the QMS.

The Division takes its lead on quality improvement activities from audit findings, HR staff suggestions and customer feedback (see figure 1 above for sources).

Audit findings and issues reported by staff members are logged in the Action Register, which is reviewed by management. Continual improvement initiatives that arise on foot of specific customer feedback mechanisms (e.g. surveys and focus groups) are logged in action plans specific to those feedback mechanisms.

The HR Division measures achievements and analyses facts and data trends in its efforts to continually improve the performance of the Division. This happens in the following ways:

6.2 Audits

The Division is subject to external and internal audits (see QMS03 Audit Process). Areas for improvement are identified through these audits and updated to the Action Register (QMS Process 04). The Action Register is reviewed on an ongoing basis by management. HR staff also participate in the inter-department QMS audit process, whereby they audit processes for other support units within the University.

An audit schedule is developed each year, taking into consideration the status and importance of the processes and areas to be audited, as well as the results of previous audits. This audit schedule, along with audit reports are maintained on SharePoint. The Division's audit tracker is used as a log of activity within the audit process.

Findings from audits are included in the Action Register and followed up accordingly. See below for further details.

6.3 KPIs

The HR Division's KPIs are captured through a number of sources. The main sources include PowerBI and the KPI Excel spreadsheet (HRT001). Other metrics of performance also help to inform future directions for HR services, including surveys and evaluation sheets. KPIs are discussed at quality meetings and are to be reviewed by each section.

6.4 CORE BI

CORE provides management information through the Business Intelligence module of CORE (CORE BI). This provides the Division with accurate real-time information from CORE, such as contract renewal reports and benefit statements for individual staff members. Sick leave records are available on Core.

This system provides the Division with valuable information on which to base decisions at both Divisional and University level.

Together, the feedback mechanisms from customers, data available from IT systems, audit findings, and KPIs help to ensure that the work of the Division is measured and analysed.

6.5 Analysis of Data, Non-Conformity and Corrective Action

Customer feedback, KPIs, the Action Register and any other quality related information are all reviewed at the monthly quality meetings and the Divisional Quality Meeting.

This allows for evaluation and continual improvement of the quality management system. Trends in the data are also discussed and built into quality plans for the coming year.

All non-conformities and corrective actions are dealt with in line with process number QMS 04 and QMS 08 and included in the Action Register. This register is described above, and the entries in this are reviewed as below.

6.6 Management Review – Inputs and Outputs

The following aspects of Quality are reviewed at quality meetings:

- KPIs
- Action Register
- Customer Feedback

The QMS is reviewed at the annual Divisional meetings. An annual Divisional Quality Management System meeting is held to determine the adequacy, suitability and effectiveness of the QMS itself. These meetings include a review of the following quality-related topics:

- customer satisfaction and feedback from relevant interested parties
- the extent to which quality objectives have been met
- process performance and conformity of products and services
- nonconformities and corrective actions
- monitoring and measurement results;
- audit results;
- the performance of external providers;
- the adequacy of resources;
- the effectiveness of actions taken to address risks and opportunities for improvement.
- improvements to the QMS

The HR Division continually improves the effectiveness of its quality management system through the use of the quality policy, quality objectives, audit results, analysis of data, HR action register, and management review. This occurs particularly at monthly quality meetings and at annual Divisional meetings.

Quality related improvements are included in the Action Register, which is available to all staff of the Division on SharePoint and is reviewed at monthly quality meetings.

The annual quality meeting is also a forum for discussion on improvements to the quality system. Internal audits provide a mechanism for identifying further changes and actions are recorded in the Action Register.

Appendix 1 Service Processes

Doc Number	Document Name	Document Type	Phase of Employment Lifecycle Link
Compensation & Benefits			
CP001	Increment Process	Process	2
CP002	New Employee Personal Details	Process	1
CP003	Contract Renewal Process	Process	2
CP004	Termination of Employment Process	Process	3
CP005	Change in Employee Personal Details	Process	2
CP008	Process for hire/rehire hourly paid staff – casual	Process	1
CP011	Sick Leave Management & Payment Process	Process	2
CP012	Work Pattern Set-up & Change Management	Process	2
CP013	Parental Leave Process	Process	2
CP014	Maternity Paid/Unpaid Leave Process	Process	2
CP015	Part Time Working Process	Process	2
CP016	Post Management & Selection to Commencement high level process	Process	1
CP017	Adjunct Appointments process	Process	1
CP018	Paternity Leave process	Process	2
CP019	Public Holiday Pay for Part-time Staff	Process	2
Employee Relations			
EP005	Monthly Union Meeting	Process	2
EP006	FOI Process	Process	2
EP007	Managing Attendance Process	Process	2
EP008	Employee Relations Tracker Process	Process	2
EP009	Workplace Relations Commission Process	Process	2
Health & Safety			
SP001	Safety Representatives Committee Meetings.	Process	2
SP002	First Aid Box and Defibrillator Checks.	Process	2
SP003	UL Risk Assessment Process	Process	2
SP004	UL H&S Policies Legal Compliance	Process	2
SP005	Safety Statement Revision Process	Process	2
SP006	Safety Training Process	Process	2
SP007	Safety Inspection Process	Process	2
SP008	Garda Vetting Process	Process	2
SP009	Return to Work (post Covid 19)	Process	2
SP010	Unit/Department Manager Return to Work Process	Process	2
SP011	COVID-19 Visitor Management to UL Buildings	Process	2

SP012	Control of Service Providers in University Academic and Service Department/Units	Process	2
SP013	Display Screen Assessments	Process	2
Pensions			
PP001	AVC - Additional Voluntary Contributions	Process	2
PP003	Death-In-Service Benefit	Process	3
PP004	Income Continuance Plan	Process	2
PP005	Individual Profiling (All Employees)	Process	2
PP006	Pensioner Status Administration	Process	3
PP008	PRSA (Personal Retirement Savings Account Scheme)	Process	2
PP009	Scheme for Purchase of Notional Service	Process	2
PP010	Purchase of Temporary Service	Process	2
PP011	Process for the Refund of Pension Contributions	Process	3
PP014	Supplementary Life Cover Plan	Process	2
PP015	Transfer of Pensionable Service	Process	2
PP022	Retirement Processes	Process	3
PP023	Payroll Process	Process	3
PP024	New Joiner Declaration Process	Process	1
PP025	Family Law Process	Process	
PP026	GDPR Data Destruction Process	Process	3
PP027	Purchase of benefits under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme	Process	2
PP028	Transfer of benefits under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme	Process	2
PP029	Professional Added Years (PAY)	Process	
Recruitment			
RP002	Workforce Planning Process Map	Process	1
RX002	Video Conference Interview Procedures	Procedures	1
RX003	Procedures for the Recruitment of University of Limerick Staff (PRUL)	Procedures	1
HR Research			
RSP001	Contract Renewal Process (Research)	Process	2
RSP003	Work Authorisation Process	Process	1
RSP007	Increment Process – Research	Process	2
Talent Development Unit			
TP005	Learning & Development Process	Process	2
TP006	Further Study Process	Process	2
TP007	Staff Family Remission of Fees	Process	2
TX001	HR Training Procedure	Procedure	2

Human Resources (General)			
HRP001	Recruitment Process Flow	Process	1
HRP002	Off Site File Storage	Process	2
HRP003	Employee File Creation and Maintenance/Control of Access to HR Files	Process	2
HRP004	Administration - Director's Office	Process	2
HRP007	Job Evaluation Process Map	Process	2
HRP013	HR Purchasing Process	Process	2
HRP017	GDPR Data Destruction Process	Process	3

Appendix 2

Records Matrix

Record	Where Held	Held for Minimum Duration of...	Who is Responsible
Quality Manual	SharePoint	Ongoing	HR Director
Management Meeting Action log	SharePoint	1 year	PA to HR Director
Applications for Job	Docuware	2 years following final decision	Recruitment Manager
Personnel Files	Docuware	For duration of employment and for 7 years after last pension payment	HR Director
Action Register	SharePoint	2 years	All
Audit Reports	SharePoint	4 years	QMS Auditors
Document Control Spreadsheet	SharePoint	Ongoing	QMS Administrators
Planning and Review Meeting Minutes	SharePoint	3 years	QMS Administrators
Training Records	CORE	For duration of employment and for 7 years after last pension payment	Head, Talent Development Unit
Customer Property	This includes customer information on: CORE Docuware SharePoint	For duration of employment and for 7 years after last pension payment	HR Management Team
Purchasing Records	Agresso		Cost code owner