Summary results of a questionnaire survey at FA GAP analysis: HR Award

Basic overview

Number of respondents: 99

Gender

44 women
54 men
1 alternative gender

Women
Men
Alternative
No answer

Age:

9 people gave age of 30 and less
79 people gave age between 31 and 50
11 people gave age of 51 and more

30 years and less
31 to 50 years
51 years and more
No answer

Job classification:

17 people worked at an administrative position
10 people said to be doctoral students
4 people gave the position of postdocs
21 worked as research scientists
73 people worked as academic workers
3 people worked at other positions

Administrative worker
Doctoral postdoc
Academic worker
Doctoral student
Research scientist
Another position

Type of contract

50 respondents said they had a permanent contract, 49 respondents had a fixed-term contract.

Permanent contract
Fixed-term contract

Summary of the survey results

Do you feel that you have sufficient freedom in your research activities at UWB?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	55	56%
Rather yes	29	29%
Rather no	4	4%
No	2	2%
No answer	9	9%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

More than 80% of respondents think that research at UWB is free. Only few respondents think that the freedom of research is limited by funding and the research focus of the departments. According to these opinions, researchers are forced to do research for the purposes of performance or financial gain, instead of focusing on socially relevant topics. Similar opinion was expressed on the postgraduate level where the freedom of young researchers is moreover limited by the field specialisation of their supervisor or, already in the early stages of their careers, they are forced to do research selected by the given department on purpose. Some respondents described the scientific and research activities as purpose-based and dependent on the decisions of the head of department (whether they sign a project or grant application or not).

The knowledge of internal regulations and norms of the UWB (in absolute values)

	Yes	Rather yes	Rather no	No	No answer
Occupational safety and health	39	39	17	2	2
Research and development	33	52	10	2	2
Protection of intellectual rights, author's rights	33	35	24	5	2
Ethical code	42	34	17	4	2
Labour-law sphere	23	45	20	8	3
Project management	22	46	23	5	3

The availability of internal regulations and norms of the UWB (in absolute values)

	Yes	Rather yes	Rather no	No	No answer
Occupational safety and health	54	25	10	2	8
Research and development	42	35	11	2	9
Protection of intellectual rights, author's rights	36	35	13	7	8
Ethical code	46	27	10	8	8
Labour-law sphere	35	31	18	6	9
Project management	30	40	17	3	9

Do you think that the ethical norms of research and the relevant ethical codes are beneficial for your work (e.g. with respect to plagiarism, publishing in predatory periodicals, adding co-authors, citation cartels, etc.)?

	Absolute value	Percentage
Yes	50	51%
Rather yes	28	28%
Rather no	13	13%
No	6	6%
No answer	2	2%
Total	99	100%

Do you think that there is a problem at your faculty regarding the ethics of research and the publishing of results (e.g. plagiarism, publishing in predatory periodicals, adding co-authors, citation cartels, etc.)?

	Absolute value	Percentage
Yes	24	24%
No	66	67%
No answer	9	9%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

More than a half of respondents does not think this problem exists at the Faculty of Arts. However, there were many critical comments at the same time, which suggest the opposite opinion. The most criticism was raised regarding plagiarism and citation ethics. The most frequent reproach was aimed at the unethical conduct of academic workers who (usually from the supervisor's position) stole parts of the research results of their students and published those as their own. The principal misconduct emerging from the comments is

that academic workers do not acknowledge co-authorship of their colleagues, they take credit for other people's work or they act as members of a group of authors although they only edited a publication, and that they generally behave unethically and disrespect the code of UWB as far as the area of publishing and research is concerned. Some comments implied that omitting to cite original sources, publishing in predatory periodicals, plagiarism and auto-plagiarism, and negligence of proper formatting of texts are also frequent among some academic workers.

Furthermore, some respondents believe that the organising of citation cartels, publishing same texts in multiple places, and purpose-based orientation of research activities also take place at FA. "Non-transparent" publishing of a faculty magazine (not specified) was also criticised as being essentially based on the editor's intention.

Do you think that the UWB makes sufficient efforts to actually apply research results, either on a social or business level?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	17	17%
Rather yes	58	59%
Rather no	11	11%
No	3	3%
No answer	10	10%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

The respondents clearly expressed criticism of the fact that the UWB presents itself as a technical university and the interests of technically oriented sections and departments are given priority and highlighted at the expense of humanities, including the issue of raising funds.

In their opinion, another frequent issue is that the actual research has zero relevance with regard to contemporary society. According to some, there even is no way to verify the relevance of research results to the actual needs of the society. Many of the respondents consider the worse applicability of the results of social-scientific research in practice to be caused by the nature of the field itself – technical fields are much better applicable in practice, especially considering commercial research.

Do you think that the results of your research are sufficiently presented to the public?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	10	10%
Rather yes	45	45%
Rather no	29	29%
No	6	6%
No answer	9	9%
Total	99	100%

Have you ever experienced any form of discrimination in your workplace?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	23	23%
No	75	76%
No answer	1	1%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

Over 70% of the respondents never experienced discrimination in a workplace. However, almost than a quarter did. Approximately half of critical comments showed that discrimination at the FA is due to gender above all. At the biggest disadvantage are women, especially those who went on maternity leave or are thinking about it. According to the respondents, specific manifestations of discrimination are contracts made for a fixed period of time, usually a year, which prevents women from planning their personal life, no special rewards for publishing, the expectations of women playing rather an administrative instead of a research role in scientific-research projects, and the necessity for women to constantly defend their position and role in science and research.

Several respondents raised more or less similar complaints about the head of one of the departments at the FA, who they said allowed/allows access to grant and project applications only to his or her "favourite" employees, i.e. makes decisions based on personal preferences and thus discriminates the others in their development. The head of department applies a similar approach also when evaluating the results of science and research.

Some respondents felt also discriminated based on personal insults, slanders, lies, unfair evaluation, and indecorous conduct of colleagues in a workplace.

Some respondents also consider as discriminatory the way of "competing" of internal projects at the faculty.

Do you feel that the evaluation of work performance in your workplace is sufficiently transparent and clear?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	48	48%
Rather yes	29	29%
Rather no	13	13%
No	9	9%
No answer	0	0%
Total	99	100%

Do you think that the requirements described and demanded during the selection procedure at UWB, in which you participated as a candidate during the past two years, are fair and clearly and sufficiently described?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	22	22%
Rather yes	9	9%
Rather no	3	3%
No	1	1%
I have not participated in any selection procedure at UWB during the past two years.	54	55%
No answer	10	10%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

The respondents expressed the thought that selection procedures are "tailored" for already selected candidates.

Do you think that the selection procedure at UWB, in which you participated as a candidate during the past two years, was fair (for example the questions were relevant to your qualifications, experience, contribution, ideas you can offer, etc., and there was no ridicule, discrimination, etc.)?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	29	29%
Rather yes	9	9%
Rather no	2	2%
No	0	0%
I have not participated in any selection procedure at UWB during the past two years.	57	58%
No answer	2	2%
Total	99	100%

Do you think that the requirements for the position of a postdoc, for which you applied at UWB, were fair and adequate?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	5	36%
Rather yes	6	43%
Rather no	0	0%
No	2	14%
No answer	1	7%
Total	14	100%

Do you consider your working conditions (for example the working environment, equipment, possibilities of further education) adequate for your work?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	36	36%
Rather yes	44	44%
Rather no	14	14%
No	5	5%
No answer	0	0%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

Most of the respondents are more or less content with the equipment. However, there was also a number of critical points concerning mainly: the UWB library (insufficient, limited access to electronic sources and periodicals), the facilities on Sedláčkova 15 (building in a bad condition), representative space (which is basically non-existent or the current space is not representative enough), the equipment (no workplace was specified – outdated, non-functional, defective), crowded offices (it is impossible to keep focus on work).

Furthermore, it was mentioned repeatedly that the doctoral students in some departments do not have a work space. Some respondents do not consider their working environment sufficiently inspirational and motivational. In general, the respondents' comments point towards poor financial resources of the workplace, which leads to low motivation of the employees. Poor financial reward for a demanding work, which lowers the employees' motivation even further, was mentioned as well.

In your opinion, is it possible under the current working conditions to synchronise work and family life, for example with regard to taking care of children or family members and the development of one's research career?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	36	36%
Rather yes	40	40%
Rather no	18	18%
No	5	5%
No answer	0	0%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

Most respondents supported the statement that synchronising personal and work life is possible. However, several very critical points arose from the survey as well. Excessive administrative and bureaucratic load on academic workers was mentioned frequently, which requires them to work overtime, during the weekends and at nights, complicating personal or family life. This reproach was present in most comments. According to one of the respondents, the situation is made worse by the requirements of the rector's office which deals with things "at the last minute" and with tight deadlines. Related to this is also the excessive pedagogic load on the employees. Another point of criticism were high demands of the departments on the quantity of publications for evaluation purposes, which puts extraordinary load on employees at the expense of the quality of their work.

Female respondents mentioned repeatedly how complicated it is to go on maternity leave when their work contracts probably would not be renewed. Short-term contracts make it

impossible, for women above all, to combine personal and work life, especially at the beginning of their careers. The necessity to take care of children is not taken into account; academic workers with children feel at a disadvantage compared to those without children who have more time to work overtime and catch up on their publishing and research activities even outside their working hours. However, even men feel the insecurity issuing from short-term contracts and see it as an obstacle to start a family.

The most frequent points were the excessive load on academic workers, too many teaching classes, and little time for science and research which is, however, strictly demanded in a workplace. Performing both tasks adequately + the related bureaucratic load are a big complication in personal / family life, according to the respondents.

How do you perceive the fact that you have a fixed-term contract?

Absolute value		Percentage
I don't mind	13	27%
I don't like it	19	39%
I don't worry about it	16	33%
No answer	1	2%
Total	49	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

The respondents' answers to this question were more or less balanced: about 60% see this fact as already fixed and have come to terms with it or do not pay much attention to it. On the other hand, about 40% of the respondents have a problem with a fixed-term contract and consider it a permanent source of insecurity. They see the fact that their contract may not be renewed as demotivating for work and possibly making more effort (they fear that even in spite of maximum effort they would not get new contracts). Some consider a short-term contract a pragmatic obstacle in one's personal life: the impossibility to get a mortgage, insecurity for family life, lower social status, etc. Most employees who consider a fixed-term contract a complication express a constant feeling of insecurity in both personal and professional development.

Do you feel that your department supports mobility to foreign institutions sufficiently?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	51	52%
Rather yes	31	31%
Rather no	5	5%
No	3	3%
No answer	9	9%
Total	99	100%

Do you think you have sufficient resources (time, funding, capacity) while teaching students to develop your research activities at the same time?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	16	16%
Rather yes	38	38%
Rather no	28	28%
No	8	8%
No answer	9	9%
Total	99	100%

If you witnessed any unfair conduct in your workplace, do you think you have enough possibilities to report such conduct?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	44	44%
Rather yes	31	31%
Rather no	17	17%
No	6	6%
No answer	1	1%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

Most respondents think that they have appropriate ways to report misconduct. Almost one quarter of respondents was sceptical: the respondents have no idea where and to whom they can complain or they do not believe their complaints would be successful because the managers defend one another, breach the code of conduct of the UWB or they reject the complaints. The respondents are very sceptical about the willingness of managers to solve any issues. In their opinion, they do not want to get into disputes, solve problems openly, make uncomfortable personal changes. Some answers also blame the system of relationships in the faculty (without further details). There was a request for a formation of an HR department as seen at foreign universities.

Do you feel that you have sufficient influence in your workplace and in the broader context of an institution after that, for example through various advisory and decision-making bodies?

Absolute value		Percentage
Yes	24	24%
Rather yes	41	41%
Rather no	24	24%
No	9	9%
No answer	1	1%
Total	99	100%

The summary of comments on this question:

Criticism was aimed mostly at the management of UWB, which is, according to the answers, unable to deal with suggestions and feedback from the departments or it does not have sufficient staff and professional sources. Individual branches of UWB (mainly legal and economic) were criticised for bad communication and staff that is not helpful and flexible. Another reproach was aimed at the faculty level; communication with departments was described as insufficient and a respondent perceived the information distributed by the minutes of the Dean's Board as "saying nothing". As far as the faculty level is concerned, some respondents feel there is little space for discussion, they criticise the non-existence of advisory bodies and inaccessibility of the Dean's Board and academic senate which are the only bodies able to change anything. Some respondents do not like that there is little co-operation between individual departments.

Department level was criticised as well; the respondents do not like the frequency of department meetings and the selective nature of information discussed there. A number of them feel that their opinion does not have an impact and often is not heard at all (this is related also to job classification and age). Some even think that the "boss does what s/he wants".

Besides the critical opinions, however, over a half of the respondents expressed positive comments and a feeling that they can influence things in their workplace. They are more sceptical in a broader context of the institution, especially about the higher-level management above their departments.

The knowledge of internal rules and norms of the UWB (in absolute values)

	Yes	Rather yes	Rather no	No	No answer
Occupational safety and health	39	39	17	2	2
Research and development	33	52	10	2	2
Protection of intellectual rights, author's rights	33	35	24	5	2
Ethical code	42	34	17	4	2
Labour-law sphere	23	45	20	8	3
Project management	22	46	23	5	3

List the employee benefits that you know.

Knowledge of employee benefits (number of mentions in absolute values)

Meals benefit 64
Courses and activities for employees and family members   27
Flexi Pass   24
Longer holiday   14
University day care service 10
Flexible working hours   10
Concessionary mobile tariff 9
Mobility support   7
Did not know 6
University phone   5
University flat   5
University notebook 2
Sabbatical   2
University parking   1
University car   1
Scooter lending   1

Which of these benefits do you use?

Usage of employee benefits (number of mentions in absolute values)

Meals benefit 53
Flexi Pass   22
Courses and activities for employees and family members   14
Longer holiday   10
None   9
Flexible working hours   9
Mobility support   6
Concessionary mobile tariff 2
University phone   2
University flat   2
University parking   1
University notebook 1

What employee benefits do you miss at UWB?

Demand for employee benefits (number of mentions in absolute values)

Financial benefits and pension insurance   14
None   12
Better meals benefits   6
Support of sports and cultural activities   6
Language and specialised courses   4
Benefits are not important   4
Meals vouchers for lower than half-time contracts   2
University notebook 2
Sick days   2
Holiday benefits   2
Transport benefits   2
Home office   2
Wider access to academic databases   1
Better support for parents in the workplace   1
Higher value Flexi Pass cards   1
University phone   1
University flat   1
Sabbatical   1
Better funds allocation for employee Erasmus   1
Better accommodation options for foreign teachers   1

Would you welcome another opportunity at courses at UWB beyond the scope of your work description and classification (e.g. courses on starting your own spin-off companies, ethics of research and publishing, career development, etc.)? Please, describe what you would be interested in and elaborate on the idea if need be.

Demand for courses (number of mentions in absolute values)

Publishing ethics   6
Career development 6
Professional software   5
Languages   5
Publishing in foreign specialised journals 4
Project management 4
Pedagogics and didactics   3
Marketing   3
Research methodology   2
Manager courses   2
Information systems at UWB   2
Research ethics   2
Time management   1
Spin-off companies   1
Soft skills   1
Rhetoric   1
Psychology courses   1
Psychohygiene and burnout prevention   1
Crisis communication   1
Economic courses   1
Intellectual property 1

Would you like to add something that was not mentioned in the survey but that you find important?

➢ Formally, the UWB offers very interesting possibilities and opportunities. Even internal rules are formally set more or less correctly. The problem is when these norms get into the hands of clerks who apply them mechanically and without human approach in situations that even the authors of the norm may not have anticipated. Arrogant communication of the rector's office, withholding important details until the last minute, and the so-called effect of the "falling excrement" complicate our work in a fundamental way (*male, 31 to 50 years, academic worker and a postdoctoral researcher*).

➢ I wish people working at a university in academic positions would not forget the rules of free academic work and the principles of good manners, which ARE two compatible areas. It's an idealistic goal but, hopefully, HR Award can contribute at least a little... (*female, 30 years and less, administrative worker and doctoral student)*

➢ Having an accessible code of conduct or being educated in that area is quite useless because people working in a university environment are, of course, aware of it. Creating an environment which would be supportive, where people wouldn't be forced into a "number of citations", "number of publications", etc. is a way to support ethical conduct (*female, 31 to 50 years, administrative and academic worker*).

➢ Participation in science and research has to be natural for each worker; it should be his or her own need, desire instead of some order… There have always been people in the academic sphere whose work consisted mainly of pedagogic work and, at the same time, people who focused more on science. Each department should use the potential of both groups for its goals, they should help each other out (*male, 31 to 50 years, academic worker*).

➢ I'm disgusted by the environment into which the department of archaeology, and thus the faculty of arts, got during the past 6 years. I am proud of the alma mater in general but it really tumbles about its internal operation, compared to western universities (*male, 31 to 50 years, administrative and science-research worker and a postdoctoral researcher*).

➢ Stricter punishment of the students by the UWB for plagiarism (typically in theses). If plagiarism is discovered and confirmed as such by the faculty, the student should be expelled as a rule (*male, 31 to 50 years, academic worker*).

➢ The principles of the Charter and the Code of Conduct can't be applied in a disorganised and over-complicated environment (at the level of systems, legislation, responsibilities, structure, communication), which is, unfortunately, the current reality at UWB. Besides, the nature of the environment depends to some extent on the behaviour of the key participants – in the case of a university the rector or department management. Just words are not enough… (*male, 31 to 50 years, academic worker*).

➢ I think it's important that the inflation of postgraduate students didn't lead to the departments trying to use them all as postdoctoral researchers with minimum work loads and without a vision of their future – why don't they just pick the best ones and treat them as the other, older employees? (*female, 31 to 50 years, postdoctoral researcher*).

➢ I'd welcome a children's day care at the premises of FA UWB, available verified nannies for little children, even for a fee (*female, 31 to 50 years, academic worker*).

➢ Co-operation between faculties is absolutely insufficient – dismissive to hostile relationship of the so called founding faculties to the other ones prevents departments from actual development and, even after decades of futile attempts, it's impossible to get rid of duplicities, form stronger departments, etc. (*male, 51 years and more, academic worker*).

➢ What annoys me the most is breaching the code of conduct – the academic environment pretends to be ethical but it has a long way to go. Anyway, that's the business of each worker and their conscience (*female, 31 to 50 years, science-research worker*).

➢ I'd like to point out that a big problem of the faculties is excessive administrative load coming from universities; there's a lack of bigger support of grant calls for postdoctoral researchers and starting academic workers, both from the university and the individual faculties. A big problem is the non-transparent decision-making of the internal grant competition about resources distribution; it should have been aimed primarily at students, not academic workers to "improve their family budget" (*male, 31 to 50 years, science-research and academic worker*).

➢ The number of questionnaire surveys grows exponentially but their impact on the given areas and topics doesn't seem to be noticeable (*male, 31 to 50 years, science-research and academic worker*).

➢ There's still a lot of inappropriateness within e-mail communication (excessive familiarity, unpleasant conduct, contradictory information), mainly by the department secretaries (*male, 31 to 50 years, academic worker*).

➢ I miss more co-operation between departments and the general feeling that we all pull together. The environment makes me feel more like the individual departments fight for funds from the budget and for students, the fields of study are becoming secretive, for example it is no longer common for students to be able to choose a final exam from another field (*female, 31 to 50 years, science-research and academic worker*).