

“The first thing you have to know is yourself. A man who knows himself can step outside himself and watch his own reactions like an observer”

— Adam Smith



It is no wonder that the end-of-the-year issue of The HSE Look at a research university is about research. While it is about discovering the world around us, without understanding ourselves first we would not be able to see our progress and compare ourselves to others. For a university to do that it needs a tool which shows in a balanced way how different research fields develop at HSE in terms of publication activity. In the December issue we give an overview of this tool through an interview with Dmitriy Dagaev, Deputy Vice Rector who coordinates Research Productivity Assessment monitoring.

Other aspects that we wanted to focus on are the introduction of postdoctoral fellows who join the university’s laboratories and centres this academic year, and useful personal insights on a very specific daily matter shared by Tim Jaekel in the column “Discovering HSE and Russia”.

On behalf of the editorial team, we wish you a productive end of the year and a good holiday time!

**Yulia Grinkevich**

**Director of Internationalisation**

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## Research Productivity Assessment at HSE

The HSE Academic Council approved a new regulation on Research Productivity Assessment (RPA) at its November session. Dmitry Dagaev, Deputy Vice Rector and Associate Professor of the HSE Department of Higher Mathematics, who is responsible for coordinating evaluations of research activities, talked with The HSE Look about the role of RPA at our university and the changes that will be introduced in 2018.

### What is RPA and why has this procedure been launched at HSE?

The idea to create a tool for monitoring the publication activities of HSE researchers was conceived in 2013 at a seminar of the HSE programme for Young Academic Professionals. The participants, both researchers and faculty, noted that, while faculty members who hold teaching positions must regularly account for their publication activities when participating in competitions for positions, no similar requirements were in place for those holding purely research positions. This generated a certain imbalance in the university’s policies, which are aimed at attaining excellence in research and establishing the tools used towards these ends.

However, before changing our tools and policies, it was necessary to understand the situation. So, the first RPA

was launched in 2013 only as a monitoring. It was first tested on a small number of research units, and, in late 2013, it was implemented for all research staff at HSE. Effective as of 2014, evaluations of research productivity have been carried out regularly, and information about individual performance is delivered confidentially to persons undergoing evaluation. These results are also presented to their direct supervisors.

### What do evaluations entail?

RPA takes into account a researcher’s articles published in the two full years preceding the evaluation year. Everything published in the current year up until the date of the evaluation is also counted towards the final assessment result. It is not possible to guarantee equal research productivity every year in terms of total

publications, due to a variety of factors, including long peer-review processes at prestigious journals and the time needed to address complex problems in given research projects. Therefore, we definitely wanted to accommodate this. However, two years and several months are quite enough to have some of one's work published.

Generalized results are made public, and each year HSE researchers are performing better: at the start, only 33% met the established criteria, while last year we were at 86%. Since the tools for enhancing publication activity are proving to work well, the university keeps raising the bar for passing the RPA process, so as to encourage HSE's staff to develop publications in high quality journals.

### **What happens if you fail an evaluation?**

It is important to understand that failure to meet RPA criteria does not necessarily mean automatic dismissal from HSE. Nevertheless, this may serve as a signal for an employee and his or her supervisor that things need to change in order to continue working as a researcher. Each situation when colleagues do not meet the criteria shall be treated on an individual basis. Any formal decisions can only be taken by the head of the involved unit and the Vice-Rector responsible for coordinating said unit. With this in mind, an individual plan is usually drawn up by the researcher, so that their supervisor can assess the results after a certain time, and see if any positive change is feasible. One year is quite enough time to make progress in this respect and demonstrate it through one's publication performance.

### **HSE has many tools to support research activities that are run on a competitive basis. Which of them rely on the RPA process?**

We are pleased that the results of the RPA procedure are now being widely used at HSE by many units and programmes. Firstly, the HSE Academic Fund uses RPA results when considering applications. For example, for several years, positive evaluation results have been a prerequisite for applications. Secondly, the professional development programme for Young Academic Faculty also uses RPA for the purpose of admission to some of its tracks, as well as measuring the effectiveness of individual participation in the programme.

Thirdly, international laboratories at HSE rely on RPA procedures in quite a strict way. Since they are meant to be the drivers of groundbreaking research, we have set a higher bar than for other research units and require that

all of their academic staff meet the evaluation criteria. Furthermore, the HSE Centre for Fundamental Studies has their own criteria for measuring the performance of research groups and projects receiving its funding. Nonetheless, they integrate RPA as one of the criteria in applications. A certain percentage of research project members should have positive RPA results if a project is to be considered for funding.

### **What changes will be introduced in 2018?**

There are several aspects in which the RPA process shall be changed so that it can be more convenient and transparent for academic staff at HSE.

Firstly, we are diversifying the ways whereby academic staff can pass the evaluation process. Previously, we had 3-4 different tracks with their own rigid requirements. We often received suggestions regarding how to make them more flexible, so as to match publication conventions and the timeframes in different research. When looking at the alternative solutions, we realised that the HSE Academic Fund already uses a flexible approach in its calls for applications. And this can work for our purposes as well. Depending on your position, you need to acquire a specific number of points (for example, 14 points for associate and assistant professors, as well as research fellows). Points are assigned for different types of publications (a book, a book chapter, an article, a textbook, etc.) and the quality of the publisher or the journal (whether they are on the priority list and indexed by Web of Science and Scopus or not). All categories are outlined in the RPA regulations. This approach thereby allows each faculty member to employ different strategies in order to pass the evaluation process.

Secondly, we are moving from manual review of all publication lists submitted by faculty members to a more automated process. Currently, a number of committees are involved in reviewing applications for evaluation, and a heavy burden is placed on those colleagues who should submit their documents by a certain date, and those who should check them and report the results within quite a short timeframe. Instead, we will use software to collect all information about publications for the two previous years and up to the current date on personal pages. It then analyzes and organizes the publications according to the different categories outlined by the RPA regulations. This allows academic staff to check at any moment how they are performing in line with the evaluation criteria rather than anxiously wait for their results in December. Naturally, such a system requires that we do not neglect updating

our personal pages and that we duly add information about new publications as soon as they come out. After the information on the personal pages is verified, it is analyzed by the software, and if a publication is difficult to categorize, we can review it manually.

Thirdly, we are continuing to raise the quality bar, and this has been a major trend of 2017. For example, effective this year, publications in Russian journals only count towards your RPA score if the journal has been included on HSE's 'priority list'. We are aiming to foster an environment, which encourages colleagues to publish work in high-quality journals. In this respect, we are eager to continue fine-tuning the evaluation criteria, so as to help shape the expectations of faculty, while also letting them adapt their individual strategies.

### What are the exemptions from the evaluation process? Have there been any recent changes in this regard?

HSE employees may apply for opting out of the yearly evaluation on several grounds. For instance, if they are research assistants who are currently studying at a Bachelor's or Master's programme, or if they are on a maternity or parental leave, or have returned from it less within the last two years. Previously internationally hired faculty and researchers have also been exempt from the evaluation process. However, starting in 2018, we are also including them in the RPA process. This will be carried out only as a monitoring tool, with no changes in regards

to the terms of their contracts.

The reasoning for this is simple: HSE is eager to have a more well-rounded understanding of its research performance so that it can develop its policies and fine-tune those tools that help us be more globally competitive as a research university. In this respect, we must be able to observe the whole picture in order to do that.

### What is most important to remember for anyone taking part in the RPA process?

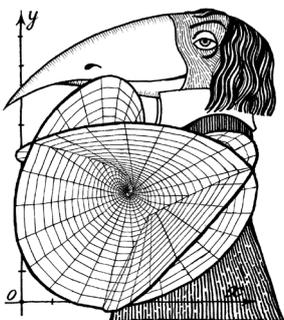
I think it is important to keep in mind that HSE wants us to choose the best venues for publishing our work so that it can have a strong impact in regards to our respective research areas. The crux of the issue is not in matching formal criteria, but in making our research known internationally. However, the academic market is currently set up in such a way that, the higher a given journal's impact factor and its quartile score, the more experts in the particular field read it. Thus, our formal requirements correspond to the goals of producing high-quality research. And this is an objective which both HSE and the faculty members share.

In summary, it is essential to find a journal that suits best one's article and is well-respected by researchers in your field.

I would also like to note that if there are any questions regarding the RPA process, they can be addressed to me via e-mail at [ddagaev@hse.ru](mailto:ddagaev@hse.ru).

## Welcome Aboard: Post-Doc Introductions

Every year, HSE hires post-doctoral researchers from all over the world. And in 2017-18, more than 30 of them started work at laboratories and research centres in a large range of fields and specializations. The HSE Look is pleased to introduce this year's international researchers, so that you can learn more about your colleagues and find out about opportunities for potential collaboration.



### Faculty of Mathematics

**Nicholas Howell** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Mathematics. He holds a PhD from the University of Oregon (USA).

**Khudoyor Mamayusupov** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Mathematics and holds a PhD from Jacobs University (Germany). His research interests include holomorphic dynamical systems, Newton's method as a root finder, and limit cycles of systems of ordinary differential equations.

**Mikhail Alfimov** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Mathematics and holds a Candidate of Sciences degree in Physics and Mathematical Sciences from the Lebedev Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences. This will be his second year at HSE.

**Ash Lightfoot** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Mathematics and holds a PhD in Mathematics from Indiana University (USA). This will be his second year at HSE.

### Laboratory for Stochastic Analysis

**Harold Andrés Moreno Franco** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory for Stochastic Analysis. He did his Bachelor's degree in Mathematics at the National University of Colombia, and his Master's degree and PhD at the Mathematics Research Center (CIMAT), Mexico. His research interests are focused on partial differential equations and integro-differential equations, which are closely related to problems of stochastic control. This will be his second year at HSE.

### Faculty of Computer Science

**Guilhem Gamard** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory of Theoretical Computer Science. He holds a PhD in Theoretical Computer Science from University of Montpellier (France). Guilhem's current work focuses on subjects intersecting between computer science and discrete mathematics, such as tiling theory and combinatorics on words.

**Thang Pham Cong** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at International Laboratory of Deep Learning and Bayesian Methods and holds a Candidate of Sciences degree in Mathematical Modeling, Numerical Methods and Program Complexes from Tula State University. His particular interests include Bayesian methods, and he plans to focus on text and image processing, and computer vision.

**Denis Derkach** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory for Methods of Big Data Analysis and holds a PhD from Université Paris-Sud XI (France) in Particle Physics. His research interests currently focus on Applied Machine Learning for Natural Sciences. This will be his third year working at HSE.

### Faculty of Physics

**Natalia Lyskova** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Physics and holds a PhD from the Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich, as well as a Candidate of Sciences degree from the Space Research Institute (IKI) of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Her research focuses on the properties of galaxies and galaxy clusters, from both a theoretical and observational perspective.



### Centre for Cognition & Decision Making

**Beatriz Martin Luengo** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Cognition and Decision Making. She holds a PhD in Psychology from the University of Basque Country (Spain). This will be her third year at HSE.

**Tiziana Pedale** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Cognition and Decision Making and holds a PhD in Psychology and Cognitive Science from "Sapienza" University of Rome (Italy). Her research interests are focused on the behavioural and neural correlations involved in interactions between emotion and other high-level cognitive functions, such as attention and memory. This will be her second year at HSE.

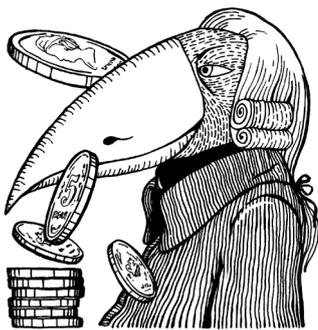
## Laboratory for Neurolinguistics

**Ekaterina Tomas** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory for Neurolinguistics and received her PhD from Macquarie University (Sydney, Australia) in Psycholinguistics: Child Language Acquisition. After that, she worked as a Senior Lecturer at Novosibirsk State University, teaching courses in Psycholinguistics and Applied Linguistics. At HSE, she will be carrying out research with a particular focus on the linguistic development of young typically developing children and those with language difficulties, relying on cutting-edge behavioural and neurophysiological methods. This will be her second year at HSE.

## Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Empirical Studies (Perm)

**Sofia Kulikova** is joining HSE as a Senior Research Fellow at the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Empirical Studies and holds a PhD in Neuroscience from ED3C, Université Paris-Descartes (France). She is currently working on a way to detect emotions and identify their role in decision-making, normal and pathological brain development, as well as the factors affecting the outcomes of non-invasive brain stimulation. This year, she is also giving lectures on consumer behaviour and psychology for HSE's new Master's programme: "SMART-Marketing: Data, Analysis, Insight."

**Aleksey Buzmakov** is joining HSE as a Senior Research Fellow the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Empirical Studies and holds a PhD from Université de Lorraine (France). His research focuses on data mining and machine learning (see our May 2016 issue for more details). This will be his third year at HSE.



## Centre for Market Studies and Spatial Economics

### Centre for Institutional Studies

**Svetlana Inkina** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory for Applied Analysis of Institutions and Social Capital and holds a PhD from University of Toronto (Canada). This will be her third year at HSE.

**François Guillemin** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Institutional Studies and holds a PhD from l'Université de Franche-Comté (France).

**David Gomtsyan** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Market Studies and Spatial Economics and holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Turin. His research interests primarily include international economics, ranging from global capital flows, trade in goods and services and migration. David is also interested in development and economic history.

## Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs

**Aaron Sander** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Comprehensive European and International Studies (CCEIS) and holds a PhD in International Studies from Old Dominion University (USA). He is currently researching Central Europe's integration within the European Union and the difficulties it currently faces: socially, economically, and in regards to its security. Furthermore, Aaron will be teaching a course on international security.

## Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology

**Anna Kruglova** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology and holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Toronto (Canada). This will be her second year at HSE.

## School of Economics and Management (St. Petersburg)

**Anna Zseleva** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the International Laboratory of Game Theory and Decision Making. She holds a PhD in Game Theory from Maastricht University (Netherlands), Department of Quantitative Economics.

## Centre for Interdisciplinary Basic Research (St. Petersburg)

**Florian Stache** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow and holds a PhD from Freie Universität Berlin (Germany). His research focuses on how innovation develops in correlation to inter-organizational cooperation, especially within emerging markets.



## Faculty of Law

**Maria Sole Continiello Neri** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre of Comparative Law and holds a PhD in International Human Rights Law from Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa (Italy). Her thesis looked into the interplay between IHL and IHRL during military occupations. In 2012 – 2013, she was a Visiting PhD student at the Irish Centre for Human Rights (ICHR) and at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law.

## Faculty of Social Sciences

**Morteza Charkhabi** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the School of Psychology. He holds a joint PhD from KU Leuven, Belgium, and University of Verona, Italy.

**Arnab Roy Chowdhury** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at Public Policy Department and holds a PhD in Sociology from National University of Singapore (NUS). Prior to this, he was an Assistant Professor in the Public Policy and Management Group at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta (IIMC). His research and teaching interests include environmental policy, development studies, migration policy and postcolonial studies.

## School of Social Sciences and Humanities (St. Petersburg)

**Dominic Martin** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Historical Research and holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from Cambridge University (UK). His PhD was based on more than a year's worth of ethnographic and archival research on Old Believers in Russia's Far East. Dominic is now focused on two new research projects: firstly, on the current descendants of Old Believers, who lived in Manchukuo in the 1930s and 1940s; and, secondly, on the post-Soviet revival of Cossackdom.

## Faculty of Humanities

**Matthew Mangold** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the School of Philology. He holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Rutgers University (USA).

**Vera Pozzi** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the School of Philosophy and holds a PhD in Philosophy from State University of Milan (Italy). Her thesis – “The Role of the Ecclesiastical Academies in Reception of Kantianism in the Russian Empire. The cases of I. Y. Vetrinskiy and P. D.

Yurkevich” – was awarded the Sangalli Institute Award for the Religious History, and is slated for publication in January 2018. Her general area of research is Russian Intellectual History, and her current work focuses on contemporary Russian Orthodox thought.

**Sean Patrick Winkler** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the School of Philosophy. He did his PhD on Spinoza at KU Leuven (Belgium). At HSE, he is conducting the research project “The Hessen-Grossmann Thesis and the Mechanical Affects in Early Modernity”, which investigates the socio-economic roots of the concept of “affect” in early modern mechanical philosophy. His area of expertise also includes continental philosophy, Daoism, Marxism and philosophy of science.

**Pavel Rudnev** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the School of Linguistics and holds a PhD from the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). His research focuses on how the meanings of sentences arise out of the connotations of their respective parts and the manner in how these parts are put together. He is also interested in the relationship between natural language, logic and thought. The data for his analysis comes from Northeast Caucasian, and more recently, Slavic languages.

### International Centre for the History and Sociology of World War II and Its Consequences

**Riccardo Mario Cucciola** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the International Centre for the History and Sociology of World War II and Its Consequences. He holds PhD in Political History from IMT Institute for Advanced Studies Lucca (Italy). His academic interests include Soviet History, Central Asian Studies, Colonial and Post-Colonial Studies, the Political History of the CPSU, Cold War Studies and Agricultural History. He is currently working on the project “The Peripheral ‘Home Front.’ The Impact of WWII and its Legacies on Uzbekistani society (1941–1966).”

**Jessica Werneke** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the International Centre for the History and Sociology of World War II and its Consequences and holds a PhD from the University of Texas, Department of History (USA). Her previous research on the history of Soviet visual culture evaluated the role of photography and photojournalism in illustrated journals of the 1950s and 1960s. Her current research interests include sexuality and gender in Soviet visual culture, nudity and eroticism in Soviet amateur photography, and the history of the Russian and Soviet avant-garde. This will be her second year at HSE.

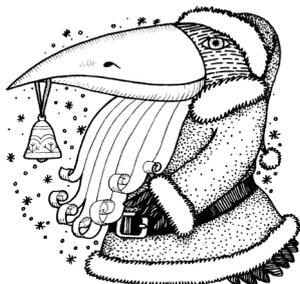
### Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities

**Rossen Djagalov** comes to HSE as a Research Fellow at the Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities and holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Yale University (USA). At HSE, he will be collaborating with his colleagues on research and plans to complete the manuscript “Premature Post-colonialists: Soviet Third-World Literary and Cinematic Encounters in the Age of Three Worlds.”

**Jan Jakub Surman** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in Humanities. He received his PhD in History from the University of Vienna in 2012 and was working most recently as a research assistant at the Herder-Institute Marburg. He has also held scholarships at Max-Weber Center, Erfurt and IFK Vienna. In his research, Jan concentrates on scientific transfer and internationalism. He is currently working on a book on the history of Ukrainian science in the interwar period.

### Institute of Education

**Zumrad Kataeva** is joining HSE as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Education and received her PhD degree from the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation of the University of Kentucky (USA). Her research interests include the transformation of higher education in Post-Soviet countries. This will be her second year at HSE.



## Discovering HSE and Russia

In addition to interviews with international faculty, The HSE Look is launching a new feature – a column about their life in Russia, what they discover in different cities, and interesting venues at HSE and beyond. If you have an interesting experience to share, please contact us at [ifaculty.support@hse.ru](mailto:ifaculty.support@hse.ru). In this issue, we present a column by **Tim Jaekel**.

### Winter is Coming!

The simple truth is the following: Moscow is one of the northernmost megacities in the world. This can lead to a lot of excitement if you stick to some basic rules, or exasperating depression, if you don't follow these rules.

#### My Three Rules of Thumb:

##### 1. Invest in a Fur Coat and a Cap

The thermometer was at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  over several days last February. And this was a clear signal to invest a significant amount of money in some high-quality winter clothes so as to beat the cold temperatures. A good Canadian style winter jacket or a furred coat would possibly do the job. Also, don't forget to order a wool cap! Alternatively, you may get a typical Russian fur cap at one of the local markets in the city. Old women also sell knitted gloves there for little money.

##### 2. How to Ride the Moscow Metro in Winter

Underground transportation is perhaps to the greatest achievement of modernity since the invention of the printing press (at least in my view). Most of my students and colleagues note that I am always praising Moscow's fabulous metro for its beauty (its vestibule architecture), cheapness (in terms of ticket prices), and, which is maybe most important for any German, its schedules (90-second train intervals at peak hours).

Therefore, I am generally for commuting to work on the metro during the winter as well. However, while temperatures can easily reach negative double digits on Moscow's streets, it can actually get hot inside the metro's wagons, especially during peak hours. Your newly bought winter jacket will serve you well on the streets, but what should be done underneath all those layers?

My ultimate answer is: ignore the "onion" principle! The onion principle presumes that you should wear several layers of

clothes in cold and damp weather. This is clearly wrong for commuters in Moscow (except for those who travel on the circle, light blue, and yellow lines of the metro, where the trains are equipped with air conditioning). Instead, I recommend only wearing a light sweatshirt under your jacket when heading to work. So, you can always unzip your jacket and avoid sweating too much before you reach the office.

##### 3. "Dubbin" on the Streets – Pullovers in the Office

This leads to my next rule of thumb. Put one or two warm wool pullovers in the upper shelf of your office's locker, so you do not need to take them with you every day. And, on the lower shelf, you should keep at second pair of shoes.

About the "dubbin": Moscow's city government uses way too much chemical agents to clear the streets from snow and ice. I remember those times in my life in Moscow when I waded through dirty icy mud every morning to reach my back-then "home" metro station. And it doesn't get any better in the city centre! So, firstly, I always wear appropriate shoe gear, such as leather boots. Secondly, I recommend nourishing your leather boots with "dubbin" (rather than polishing wax) at least once a week, as the dubbin also adds a protective layer. Once in your office, you may change your heavy winter boots for a lighter pair of shoes.

Nonetheless, on a bright Sunday morning, you can always put on your sweater, wool jersey and winter coat altogether, and enjoy a lengthy walk in one of Moscow's extraordinary parks.

After all, the final truth is life in Moscow is exhausting at times, but it can always be marvellous and rewarding.

*Tim Jaekel is an Assistant Professor at the School of Public Administration. In addition to publishing peer-reviewed articles on public management and behavioural public administration, he also posts his opinions on his personal blog at [www.publicsector-research.net](http://www.publicsector-research.net). Tim was awarded a Best Teacher Award at HSE in 2017.*