Cardiff University Concordat Implementation Action Plan 2018-2020 - HR Excellence in Research

A. Recruitment and Selection				
Concordat Principle 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.				
Context	**New/Carried Forward Action**	**Lead**	**Timescale**	**Success Measure**
A1. A University-level *Early Career Research Oversight* (ECRO) group was established in 2016. A suite of wide-ranging and practical recommendations, designed to help the institution support early career researchers (ECRs) more effectively, were identified, and agreed by UEB in 2017. Work has since focused on sharing best practice across Colleges in the University, boosting number and support for fellows, and developing a more strategic approach to career development for research staff and other early career academics.

Implementation of the full ECRO recommen-dations moving forward is designed to create a supportive research environment for research staff but also to increase their visibility and influence within the University. Together, these will raise the profile of Cardiff as an attractive place to work for | *A1.1 Submission of ECRO update and a review of College-based ECR activity to UEB, including recommendations for future work aligned to original report.* | PVCR/ECRO | Dec 2018 | Revised ECRO paper submitted to, and agreed by, UEB. |
| | *A1.2 Implement revised recommendations from ECRO update report, with a particular focus in the next HREIR period on visibility and influence of ECRs in the organisation.* | PVCR/ECRO | Sept 2020 | Increased ECR representation on key groups and university committees. |
| | *A1.3 Merger of the ECRO and Concordat Implementation working groups to ensure efficient and co-ordinated implementation of ECRO recommendations and Concordat actions. The group will be chaired by the PVCR (or Dean delegate) and will include research staff representation in the form of the Cardiff University Research Staff Association (CURSA).* | UEB/PVCR/ ECRO/OSD/ CURSA | Dec 2018 | The merged ECRO/Concordat Implementation working group will have held at least 4 meetings over the period of review and will agree a co-ordinated work plan. |

research staff, increasing both recruitment and the retention of existing staff.	*N.B. The designation of the merged group is still to be decided but, for the purposes of this action plan, will be referred to as ECRO.*			
A2. Cardiff University will sign up to the *San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment* (DORA) during the review period; this advocates for improved methods for the evaluation of research (moving away from journal impact factors) for recruitment, promotion, and other key areas of research assessment (e.g. grants/ fellowships).	*A2.1 Establish a DORA working group, with research staff representation, to implement research assessment processes aligned to DORA.*	PVCR/DORA Working Group	Sept 2019	A working group in place with an agreed action plan for implementing DORA in appropriate University processes, such as recruitment and promotion.
A3. Findings from CROS 2017 suggested some confusion in Research staff with regard to the types of employment contracts used by the University.	*A3.1 Provide clearer information on the different types of employment contract used at Cardiff University via the research staff intranet site and induction, ensuring that this is discussed in further detail with CURSA.*	HR/OSD/ CURSA	Sept 2019	Availability and communication of clear information regarding contract types used at Cardiff for research staff.
	A3.2 Raise awareness of the issues around contract types with line managers by ensuring its inclusion in line manager training.	College HRBPs	Sept 2019	Information on contract type included in line manager training content.

B. Recognition of the Value of Researchers

Concordat Principle 2: Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.

Context	New/Carried Forward Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
B1. From 1st August 2018, our revised Academic Promotions scheme now includes research staff on Grades 7 and above. The process will allow advancement within the Research career pathway to Senior Research Fellow, Principal Research Fellow and Professorial Research Fellow to those who are able to demonstrate a national reputation, emerging international reputation and established international reputation, respectively (in respect of their contribution to University benchmarks).	*B1.1 Raise awareness of the inclusion of Research career pathway in the revised Academic Promotions process.*	OSD/CURSA	July 2019	Revised Academic Promotion procedure communicated via a University *Blas* article and via CURSA.
	B1.2 Monitor application/success rate for the Research pathway on the academic promotions scheme, taking note of lessons learned from Cardiff University's new Academic Promotions Development Programme for Readers who aspire to promotion to Professor and who identify as female and/or BME (black and minority ethnic), who are underrepresented in senior posts. *B1.3 Monitor application/success rate for the regrading process for research staff on grades 5 and 6.*	OSD	Yr 1: Sept 2019 Yr 2: Sept 2020	Data gathered on application/success rate of research staff within the academic promotions/regrading processes for assessment.

B2. Introduction of the College system, which was designed to represent distinct disciplinary communities, has led to a degree of unevenness in support for researchers at College level within the University. Attention should be paid to improving the consistency of support across the three Colleges.	*B2.1 Merged ECRO/Concordat Implementation working group will monitor and consider discrepancies in Research-only support between Colleges which could impact on research staff and, share best practice for the support of research staff to ensure a more consistent approach at the University. CURSA will liaise with its members to ensure any perceived inequality is reported for discussion.*	PVCR/ECRO/ CURSA	Sept 2020	Evidence of sharing of best practice and extension of key activities across the University.
	B2.2 A new thematic structure for the delivery of research at the University will be implemented, covering REF, Income, Innovation and Enterprise, and Research Environment. Within this structure, ECR representation on Theme groups/committees will be encouraged, where possible. *B2.3 Representation on a Theme committee will be linked to research leadership training (C3.2), with appointed ECRs rotating across thematic areas to provide them with a broad range of experience in University governance.*	PVCR/ECRO	Sept 2020	Thematic structure for research delivery in place at the University, with ECRs serving as members/observers on University Research Theme groups and committees.

B3. Attention should be paid to the extent to which research staff feel integrated into the University's academic community so as to increase awareness of their status as key members of academic staff.	B3.1 'The Cardiff Academic' sets out role expectations across the three academic career pathways. Further develop 'The Cardiff Academic' in order to clarify role expectations specific to Research staff.	OSD	June 2019	An updated 'Cardiff Academic' containing clear role expectations for Research staff.
	B3.2 Establish 'Celebrating Excellence' award for research staff and for line manager support of ECRs.	OSD/CURSA/ PVCR	Nov 2019	New 'Celebrating Excellence' category of award focused on research staff and support for enhancing the careers of research staff.

C. Support and Career Development				
Concordat Principle 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.				
Concordat Principle 4: The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.				
Context	**New/Carried Forward Action**	**Lead**	**Timescale**	**Success Measure**
C1. Data from CROS 2017 suggest that only 76.0% of respondents had attended induction, despite all new staff (including research staff) being invited on commencement of employment. CROS also revealed some misunderstanding with regards to how the institutional induction programme operates and what it covers.	*C1.1 Improve communication about requirement for attendance induction programmes to research staff and their managers in a timely manner (including exploring the possibility of using social media to advertise availability of places). Also, look at ways to improve attendance reporting and increase follow-ups as necessary.* *C1.2 Add prompt regarding attendance at induction into the probation documentation for all new staff (ensuring that line managers highlight the importance of attendance).*	OSD	Sept 2019	Increased attendance of research staff at University induction by 10%.
	C1.3 Review induction programmes for research and academic staff, with a view to making elements of the academic induction programme available to research staff.	OSD	Jan 2019	Availability of a revised induction programme for research staff.

C2. Monitoring of PDR uptake has shown that research staff participation increased from 63.0% of staff deemed eligible for PDR by their school in its introductory year (2015/16) to 90.2% in 2017/18. Attention should be paid to continuing to improve the effectiveness of PDR for research staff.	*C2.1. Maintain participation of eligible research staff in PDR at over 90% for 2019 and 2020 PDR cycles.*	OSD	Sept 2020	At least 90% of eligible research staff participate in PDR.
	C2.2. Develop and run training on getting the most from PDR as part of 'The Cardiff Researcher' programme.	OSD	Dec 2018	3 PDR training sessions held during Autumn 2018 in preparation for 2019 PDR cycle.
C3. Feedback (from various sources, including CROS) regarding the '*Cardiff Researcher*' development programme hosted by Cardiff University for research staff continues to be positive. However, the programme, along with other sources of information for research staff regarding personal and career development, requires frequent monitoring and review to ensure the content remains relevant and effective.	*C3.1 Continue annual review of training provided as part of the 'Cardiff Researcher' programme, utilising feedback from multiple sources including CROS, staff survey, PDR, and CURSA.*	OSD	Sept 2019 Sept 2020	Annual review of The Cardiff Researcher programme completed, with amendments made as appropriate.
	C3.2 Develop and run new modules on 'Research Leadership' and 'Wellbeing and Resilience' as part of the Researcher Development programme for the 2018/19 academic year.	OSD	Sept 2019	Availability of 'Research Leadership' (2 sessions) and 'Well-being and Resilience' (3 sessions) training for research staff.
	C3.3 Develop 'Curricula of Development Activity', which cluster development opportunities relevant for research staff at a particular employment level or career stage.	OSD	Jan 2019	Availability of 'Curricula of Development Activity' for research staff on staff intranet.

	C3.4 Develop a CPD framework for academic and research staff, once a CPD manager has been appointed.	OSD	Sept 2020	The availability of a CPD framework for all members of academic staff.
	C3.5 Continue evaluation, maintenance and update of information on Research Staff intranet sites.	OSD/CURSA	Sept 2020	Continuous availability of clear, accessible and timely information for researchers on the staff intranet.
C4. The University should regularly review support available for research managers, and research managers need to be aware of what is expected of them in that role. Efforts should be focused on ensuring greater consistency between the Colleges with respect to training and support for research managers/PIs.	C4.1 Continue evaluation, maintenance and update of information for academic line managers held on staff intranet site to ensure it remains relevant, effective and timely.	OSD	Sept 2020	Continuous availability of clear, accessible and timely information for academic line managers on the staff intranet.
	C4.2 Explore the feasibility of making academic line manager training mandatory in the Colleges of Biomedical and Life Sciences (CBLS) and Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS), thus ensuring consistency with the College of Physical Sciences and Engineering (CPSE).	PVCR/OSD/ College HRBPs/ College Boards	Sept 2019	A decision made on making line manager training mandatory in CBLS and CAHSS.

C5. The University has a strong mentoring culture where informal mentorship plays an important role in the support and development of all staff. In 2017 a new mentoring scheme was piloted by CPSE which was extended across the three colleges. This utilised a new software system (SUMAC®) for matching mentors and mentees. The mentoring scheme will be run again in 2018/19, where there will be 3 calls for expressions of interest to maximise uptake.	*C5.1 Monitor uptake of mentoring scheme by Research staff during the 2018/19 academic year.*	College HRBPs	Dec 2019	20% Increase in number of research staff using mentoring scheme.
	C5.2 Assess the efficacy of the SUMAC® matching software and its suitability for use in the mentoring scheme.	College HRBPs	Dec 2019	Positive feedback from staff regarding the mentoring scheme, to include appropriate analysis of mentor/ mentee matching.
C6. Research staff at Cardiff are represented by the Cardiff University Research Staff Association (CURSA), which was launched in 2012 and officially recognised as one of the University's formal staff networks in 2014. All members of research staff are members of CURSA by default. Influence beyond CURSA has been limited, and there are differences in practice across the University in the level at which ECRs are engaged/ represented within Schools, especially with regard to research activities.	*C6.1 In light of new ECR activities, review and evaluate current operational structure of CURSA and ways in which it can be improved to ensure sustainability of the association.*	CURSA/OSD/ ECRO	Sept 2019	Report on the current and future operational structure of CURSA considered by ECRO.
	C6.2 Explore ways of increasing the visibility of CURSA and, thus, the engagement of research staff (e.g. College ECR networks, University Fellows Network, and annual ECR event).	CURSA/ PVCR/ECRO	Sept 2019	Appropriate networks to support research staff established, with annual event held by the University to showcase their work attended by senior staff.

	C6.3 Encourage researcher representation, via CURSA, on School and College Research Committees, ensuring appropriate equality & diversity considerations in appointments.	PVCR/ College Deans for Research	Sept 2020	All School Research Committees to have an ECR representative.
	C6.4 Each College to develop a short accessible delivery plan around research staff/ECR support in their College.	PVCR/ College Deans for Research/ ECRO	Sept 2019	College ECR development and support plans signed off by ECRO.
C7. Improving data held on the career trajectories of former Cardiff research staff will facilitate better career development support for research staff, particularly those seeking alternative careers outside academia.	C7.1 Explore options for improving the collection and monitoring of destination data for research staff leaving the institution. C7.2 Use CURSA to promote completion of exit survey by research staff.	HR/OSD/ CURSA	Nov 2019	Data collected and analysed by pathway and targets set for improvement as appropriate.

D. Researchers' Responsibilities				
Concordat Principle 5: Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.				
Context	**New/Carried Forward Action**	**Lead**	**Timescale**	**Success Measure**
D1. Researchers share the responsibility for their personal and career development. This includes proactively seeking out development opportunities and keeping comprehensive records of such activity. The introduction of the Core HR people management system, through which all central development provision is booked and recorded, facilitates this. From CROS 2017 data it was apparent that respondents' awareness of UK and European initiatives designed to facilitate career development (e.g. Concordat, RDF, HREIR etc.) was low. Knowledge of these initiatives should be increased to ensure researchers are aware of all the tools available to help them with their career development planning.	*D1.1 Ensure research staff are aware of being able to manually record wider CPD activities on their Core HR profile and provide appropriate training and/or guidance on how to do this.*	OSD	March 2019	Information disseminated to research staff via face-to-face training and/or written guidance on the staff intranet.
	D1.2 Investigate the option of augmenting the career planning section of the PDR form to encourage more thought in this area and to guide appropriate conversations between the researcher and their line manager.	OSD/PVCR	Jan 2019	Revised PDR form available ready for the 2019 PDR cycle.
	D1.3 Improve communication to research staff about initiatives that exist to help with their career planning and development using email, social media and an enhanced intranet site, reminding them of their responsibility to stay informed about such matters.	OSD/CURSA/ PVCR	Commence Jan 2019	Monthly email bulletins, social media/blog posts and revised intranet site for research staff containing information and links to career de-velopment initiatives.

D2. Researchers are responsible for the integrity of their research and for ensuring it is conducted in an honest and ethical manner. An online training module for 'Research Integrity' was introduced at Cardiff in October 2017. This is currently mandatory for new research staff, and highly recommended for all existing staff involved in research.	D2.1 Consideration will be given to making the online Research Integrity training module mandatory for all research staff.	PVCR/RIS/ OSD	Sept 2019	Online Research Integrity training mandatory for all staff.

E. Equality and Diversity

Concordat Principle 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

Context	New/Carried Forward Action	Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
E1. The University's mandatory "*Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity*" (ED&I) online training has been redeveloped and was relaunched in March 2018. Online "*Unconscious Bias*" training is also available to staff which, while not currently mandatory at a University-level, is 'highly recommended' for staff involved in recruitment or decision-making processes. At a college level, unconscious bias training is mandatory for CPSE staff, with the other colleges likely to follow suit.	*E1.1 90% of research staff will have undertaken the revised ED&I training module by September 2019.*	OSD	Sept 2019	At least 90% of staff have undertaken the revised ED&I training.
	E1.2 Give consideration to making Unconscious Bias training mandatory across CBLS and CAHSS.	OSD/Dean for ED&I	Sept 2020	Unconscious bias module made mandatory across all three colleges.
E2. Cardiff University has held an Athena SWAN Bronze award since 2009 in recognition of its commitment to supporting and advancing women's careers in higher education and research. A Dean for ED&I was appointed in July 2018 and will coordinate resubmission for the Athena SWAN Bronze award in Nov 2018.	*E2.1 Resubmission for institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award in November 2018.*	UEB/Dean for ED&I/ OSD	Nov 2018	Retention of institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award.
	E2.2 Resubmissions for Athena SWAN award from the Schools of Healthcare Sciences (Bronze), Welsh (Bronze), and Computer Science and Informatics (Silver) in November 2018.	College ED&I/ Dean for ED&I	Nov 2018	Retention of the departmental Athena SWAN awards.

	E2.3 Application for Juno Champion from the School of Physics and Astronomy in November 2018.	College ED&I/ Dean for ED&I	Nov 2018	Juno Champion awarded to the School of Physics and Astronomy.
E3. The University submitted for the Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM) in July 2017 but was unsuccessful. However, work against the objectives of the RECM action plan continues.	*E3.1 Agree timeline for resubmission for Race Equality Charter Mark following re-evaluation of application.*	Dean for ED&I/OSD	March 2019	Timeline for resubmission for Race Equality Charter Mark developed and agreed.
E4. Research leadership in Cardiff is not as diverse as it could be; for example, in terms of Directors of Research/major research entities. This limits visible role models for research staff, as well as career development opportunities.	*E4.1 Better understand the complex causes of ED&I discrepancies in research (via a piece of work to be led by the Dean for Research responsible for ED&I and the Dean for ED&I).*	College ED&I/Dean for ED&I/ PVCR/ECRO (supported by OSD)	Sept 2019	ECRO considers recommendations and actions related to report on ED&I in research at Cardiff.
E5. Data from CROS 2017 showed that only 51% of respondents believe that Cardiff University promotes better mental health and wellbeing. A new Wellbeing strategy was developed and implemented in 2017. As a result, Wellbeing is now integrated into the University Safety, Health and Environment policy statement, and a Staff Wellbeing Steering Group has been established to coordinate and monitor the delivery of the Staff Wellbeing agenda.	*E5.1 Establish a network of wellbeing champions, including research staff representation where possible, who will assist the newly established steering group in the promotion of the wellbeing agenda.*	Staff Wellbeing Steering Group (with input from OSD and CURSA where appropriate)	Sept 2019	Network of Wellbeing Champions established, with research staff representation where possible.

F. Implementation and Review				
Concordat Principle 7: The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.				
Next Step/Aim	**New/Carried Forward Action**	**Lead**	**Timescale**	**Success Measure**
F1. Implementation and Review	*F1.1 Strengthen current implementation monitoring strategies by reconvening the merged ECRO/Concordat Implementation working group biannually in order to review progress and set priorities.*	ECRO	Sept 2020	Concordat Implementation working group will have held at least 4 meetings over the period of review and have agreed a co-ordinated work plan.
	F1.2 Run CROS and Staff Survey in 2019.	OSD	Sept 2019	CROS will have been run in 2019 with a 40% participation rate.
	F1.3 Ongoing review of progress against this action plan; aligned to September 2020 10-year interim HREIR review.	ECRO	Sept 2020	10-year HREIR Review submitted.