

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT CONCORDAT ACTION PLAN 2020-2022 – REVISED SEPTEMBER 2021

Background

1. In September 2020 we submitted a two-year (2020-2022) action plan for the renewal of our 'HR Excellence in Research' award. It was submitted as a live document which we committed to updating in September 2021 to reflect the review planned for 2020-21. We also committed to aligning our future planning and reporting requirements for the *Concordat* with those of the *HR Excellence in Research* award. The panel approved our plan and the HR Excellence in Research award was renewed in March 2021.
2. Following our signing up to the revised *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* in November 2020 we conducted our Concordat gap analysis over the 2020-2021 academic year and **this revised version of our Researcher Development Concordat Action Plan (2021-2022) reflects gaps identified as part of this work.** It includes actions which are realistic and manageable within the remaining 12-month period of the action plan. Action required over the longer-term will be incorporated into the University's emergent Research Culture Strategy.
3. This work was led by the Researcher Pathways Group, chaired by Professor Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, Dean for Research Environment and Culture, on behalf of Professor Kim Graham, Pro Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Enterprise.

Actions

For 2020-2022 our **actions will be focused on the following interrelated thematic areas.**

1. **Raising awareness across the institution of our commitments and responsibilities under the Researcher Development Concordat** to support a positive research environment for our research staff.
2. **Extending and diversifying researcher personal and professional development opportunities** to ensure that all of our research staff are informed and equipped for their future careers.
3. **Amplifying the researcher voice and visibility in University policy-making and strategy,** empowering research staff to help shape our research cultures and environment.
4. **Improving researcher equality, diversity, and inclusion,** including support for well-being and mental health, to enable all our research staff to thrive.

Success measures will be evaluated against

1. Greater awareness of the Concordat commitments across the institution.
2. Improvement in researcher development opportunities.
3. Greater integration of researchers into the decision-making structures of the University.
4. Greater support for researchers, supporting equality, diversity and inclusion and recognising the full range of researcher contributions.

Researcher Development (RD) Concordat Action Plan 2020-2021

(*further actions to be added after the completion of the gap analysis in 2021/22)

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Success measure	Alignment with Concordat Commitments
1. Raising awareness across the institution of our commitments and responsibilities under the Researcher Development Concordat to support a positive research environment for our research staff.				
1. Ensure that Cardiff's researchers, research managers and senior research leaders are aware of their responsibilities under the RD Concordat, as well as the responsibilities of the institution and the support available to them.	OSD/RPWG/ internal communications team	September 2021	(i) <i>Researcher awareness</i> : Target: 18% increase (10 percentage points) of research-only staff surveyed indicating an awareness of the RD Concordat (from 55% in the CROS 2019 to 65% in a future survey); (ii) <i>Institutional awareness</i> (including research leaders and senior research managers) 20% increase in traffic to and engagement with intranet Concordat pages.	ECI1; EM2; ECM5; ECR5
2. Address the research community's call for more co-ordinated support and information by providing a fit-for-purpose web resource for research staff and their managers. As well as synthesising the different support/information available to them on RD Concordat related matters, we will provide regularly	OSD/ RPWG/ Internal communications team/Web team	May 2022: Proposal for reviewed structure/	(i) Satisfaction rates of 75% or above at 6 user testing workshops (3 engaging research managers, 3	ECI2; EI2; EM2; ER1

<p>2. Make available a system to allow researchers and their managers to record the breadth of professional development activity taking place and contributing towards researchers' minimum of 10 days' development pro rata per annum.</p>	HR	<p>March 2022-July 2022</p> <p>From Sept 2022</p>	<p>(i) User testing and consultation in 6 pilot schools (2 per College).</p> <p>(ii) Tailored reporting system in place for use.</p>	PCDI1; PCDR3; ER2; ER3
<p>3. Ensure that research staff are informed about the ways in which their work is rewarded and recognised through the pay and grading structure and promotions and benefits schemes, with particular attention being paid to transitions between career points (especially around r-only grades 6 and 7).</p> <p>A task and finish group will be set up for the 2021-22 academic year to review the information and processes in place to support career progression for research-only staff from grades 5-7. The group will</p> <p>(i) provide a clear schematic outlining the ways in which researchers can progress in their careers at Cardiff within existing structures;</p> <p>(ii) clarify the University's position on both the eligibility of researchers to apply for external funding as PI or Co-I, and on factoring in career progression to external grant applications (e.g. through costing in 'named researchers' at a higher grade);</p> <p>(iii) provide clear guidance to researchers on the grading review process and review the support available to research staff who apply for re-grading;</p> <p>(iv) review how independence is recognised and supported in the research-only staff population at Cardiff;</p> <p>(v) formulate recommendations on addressing any gaps in current opportunities for progression, as appropriate.</p>	OSD	<p>Sept 2021</p> <p>2020-2021</p> <p>2021-2022</p> <p>Sept 2022</p> <p>2021-22</p>	<p>(i) Availability of a web-resource on rewards, benefits and recognition for researchers. To include a clear schematic outlining the routes of progression for research staff at Cardiff and a statement of how the University will support research staff who wish to apply for external funding.</p> <p>(ii) Revised sessions on 'Reward, benefits and recognition for Research staff' in place 2020/2021.</p> <p>(iii) Having piloted the revised session in 2020/21 we will offer this session 4 times in 2021/22.</p> <p>(iv) Target: 70% participants indicating satisfaction with the event.</p> <p>(v) Target over 50% research staff surveyed</p>	E14; EM1; PCDI2; PCDM3; PCDR4

		2021-22	<p>indicate an awareness of reward and remuneration processes in place to support researchers.</p> <p>(vi) Increase in research staff applications to the Spring 2022 Outstanding Contribution Award Scheme to bring application rate in line with the rate for professional services staff.</p> <p>(vii) a published review of how independence is supported and rewarded at Cardiff.</p>	
4. Ensure that training and career development opportunities are factored into all grant applications which fund research only posts.	OSD/RIS/ Schools/ Research Institutes/ Colleges	<p>January 2022</p> <p>March 2022</p> <p>From Sept 2021</p>	<p>(i) 1 briefing/consultation session with Research Development Officers in all 3 Colleges.</p> <p>(ii) Co-created guidance for grant applicants, including reference to the expectation of 10 days CPD activity pro rata per annum.</p> <p>(iii) Training on CPD support for researchers to</p>	PCDM3

			be included in relevant grant funding workshops.	
5. Incorporate development opportunities for research only staff at all career stages in the 2021/22 'Cardiff Researcher' development programme.	OSD	2021-22	(i) Increase number of development sessions for mid-career researchers by 50%, with new sessions to be piloted in 2021/22 academic year. (ii) At least 50% of research staff respondents surveyed in 2022 indicate that they are satisfied with the range of development opportunities on offer for researchers at different career stages. (iii) We will make available a redesigned programme for Research Team Leaders programme during the 2021/22 academic session.	
3. Amplifying the researcher voice and visibility in University policy-making and strategy, empowering research staff to help shape our research cultures and environment.				
1. (i) Produce a needs-responsive plan for the implementation of the revised Researcher Development Concordat.	RPWG/OSD	May 2021	2 meetings of the RPWG to focus on this and ensure input from research staff reps and managers.	ALL

<p>(ii) Develop a clear vision for addressing the more systemic and structural issues that affect our research staff population, as identified in our institutional gap analysis against the <i>2019 Researcher Development Concordat</i>. This will form part of our medium-long term institutional Research Culture strategy and will inform subsequent shorter-term Concordat action planning.</p>		2021-22	<p>Consultation events with all stakeholder groups.</p> <p>A clear medium-term plan informing our implementation of the Concordat</p>	
<p>2. Increase awareness and understanding of the research staff group across the University. Production of an annual report on the research staff population at Cardiff, with clear and robust snapshot data on its composition and reporting on patterns across the Institution in terms of employment, progression and participation in development opportunities. The report will also include a digest of qualitative data gathered through various methods e.g. questionnaire, pulse survey, focus groups, consultation events.</p>	OSD/HR/RPWG/CURSA	<p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p>	<p>Annual report on the research staff population against an agreed set of data.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Staff Survey Group that their discussions regarding the future of the staff survey consider those areas where feedback on Concordat implementation required.</p>	ECI6; E17; EM5; PCDI6
<p>3. Improve understanding of how decisions are made within the University, Colleges and Schools in the research only staff group.</p>	Internal Comms/OSD	January 2022	<p>(i) 1 article or blog post on University decision making processes on relevant intranet pages.</p> <p>(ii) Target: a 21% increase (6 percentage points) to 35% (from 29% in 2019) of staff on the research only</p>	ECI5; ECI6; ECR1; ECR5; E17; ER4

			<p>pathway in the University's Staff Survey agreeing that they 'understand how decisions are made in my College Team or School'.</p> <p>(iii) Target: a 30% increase (7 percentage points) to 30% (from 23% in 2019) of staff on the research only pathway in the University's Staff Survey agreeing that they 'understand how decisions are made in the University'.</p>	
<p>4. Ensure opportunities for sustained representation of staff on the r-only pathway on School Research Committees and other strategic working groups which contribute to University research culture and environment.</p>	<p>Dean of Research Environment and Culture/ Research Culture Working Group</p> <p>OSD</p>	<p>January 2022</p>	<p>(i) Target: all School Research Committees to offer research staff representation. To be assessed annually.</p> <p>(ii) Target: all relevant University committees and groups e.g. research and EDI related to have research-only staff representation. To be assessed annually.</p>	<p>ECI6; ECR1; ECR5; EI7; ER4; PCDI4; PCDR5</p>

	OSD		(iii) 1 network event per annum for research staff representatives. (iv) 1 article or blog post on benefits of Committee membership to be published on research staff webpages.	
5. Showcase the work of Cardiff's research-only staff, highlighting the contribution they make to the University's research output, profile and environment.	OSD/RPWG/ CURSA	November 2020 November 2021	(i) One annual event (ii) Target 2021 -100 attendees (iii) Review satisfaction scores and feedback in post-event questionnaire to assess whether the event was a success.	ECI1; ECI6; ECM5; EI3
4. Improving researcher equality, diversity, and inclusion, including support for well-being and mental health, to enable all our research staff to thrive.				
1. Develop a clearer and broader understanding of how factors affecting research staff disproportionately affect some groups within our researcher community.	Dean of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion/RPWG and University EDI Committee/ OSD	October 2021	(i) Output: report. Disseminated to all research staff; through leadership and management training for PIs; through key university groups and committees.	ECI4; ECM1; ECM3; ECR2; EI1; EM3; ER1

		By end 2020/21	Report by October 2021 (ii) Cross-membership between key University EDI groups/committees and the Researcher Pathways Working Group.	
2. As part of our Strategic Equality Plan we will develop focused initiatives on gender and ethnicity leadership interventions and career development opportunities for staff with protected characteristics, including research staff.	University EDI Committee/OSD	2020-21	(i) Co-create 1 development programme with partner institutions for female BAME staff : 1 cohort to have completed by Sept 2021; Evaluation group to meet 3 times, with evaluation informing programme for 2 nd cohort 2021-2022. (ii) Run 1 internal career development programme for BAME staff in 2020-21. Target: 15 to have completed programme by Sept 2021. (iii) Run 1 career development programme for female academics (T&R; T&S and R only). Target: 15 to have completed programme by Sept 2021.	ECI2; EI5; PCDM5; PCDR5

			<p>(iv) Increased diversity of leadership in line with the University's emergent 'Diversity in Leadership Action Plan' – measures currently being agreed and will follow.</p> <p>(v) Annual reporting on balance of those who are regraded and promoted under the current schemes (along lines of gender and race).</p>	
<p>3. Ensure that staff employed within the research-only career pathway are engaging with the wellbeing initiatives developed for all staff and that these are meeting the needs of this group.</p>	<p>Staff Wellbeing/ OSD/ HR/ CURSA/ Schools/ University Research Entities</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>(i) Monitor via pulse survey and focus groups.</p> <p>(ii) Staff Survey targets:</p> <p>a. an 11% increase to 50% (5 percentage points from 45% in 2019) of staff on the research only pathway agreeing that 'the University demonstrates its commitment to supporting my wellbeing by providing effective support services and events'.</p>	<p>ECI3; ECI6; ECM2; ECR3</p>

			b. a 14% increase to 50% (6 percentage points from 44% in 2019) of staff on the research only pathway agreeing that 'there are effective policies and practices in place to support me if I experience stress or pressure'.	
4. Ensure that principal investigators/research managers are engaging with the initiatives developed to help all line managers support the wellbeing of their staff and themselves and that these are meeting the needs of this group.	HR/ Staff Wellbeing/ Schools/ University Research Entities/CURSA	2020-21	(i) Monitor via pulse survey and focus groups. (ii) Monitor web traffic to and engagement with line manager advice pages on the intranet. (ii) Pilot and evaluate holding a bespoke I-ACT session for principal investigators/line managers.	ECI4; ECI3; ECM3

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey
CURSA	Cardiff University Research Staff Association
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HR	Human Resources
HREIR	HR Excellence in Research
OSD	Organisational & Staff Development
PGR	Postgraduate Researchers
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RIES	Research Enterprise and Innovation Strategy Group
R-only Staff	Academic staff on the 'research only' career pathway
RPWG	Researcher Pathways Working Group
SEP	Strategic Equality Plan
T&R Staff	Academic staff on the 'teaching and research' career pathway
T&S Staff	Academic staff on the 'teaching and scholarship' career pathway

Researcher Pathways Working Group, September 2020

Revised: February 2021; September 2021.