Introduction

The University of Hull confirms our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and we intend to uphold our obligations and responsibilities as a signatory.

The University of Hull views the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers as an integral part of the framework of principles and standards of good practice to ensure a high quality of research and research environment. The Principles of the Concordat underpin our vision to be an outstanding research university by supporting and empowering our researchers and their aspirations.

We agree to work collectively and engage with initiatives to address systemic challenges in progressing towards a UK research system where researchers work in healthy and supportive environments. We agree that researchers should be recognised and valued for their contributions in research and beyond, supported in their professional and career development, and equipped and empowered to succeed in their chosen careers.

The new University of Hull HR Excellence in Research Action Plan for the 2020-2024 reporting period has been developed with a view to transition to the revised Concordat[1] once processes have been agreed with the European Commission. Moreover, the University will be renewing its institutional strategy in 2020. We have therefore developed a plan to cover the first two years and will then revise this as appropriate. We have taken a thematic approach, focussing on key priorities arising from the 2018-20 report. This approach will improve engagement with the plan and facilitate reporting. The Concordats Steering Group will continue to work with key stakeholders to implement the 2020-22 Action Plan, in support of the HR Excellence in Research Award. Based on recent surveys and focus groups we have identified the following priorities for the Concordats Steering Group going forwards:

1. Researcher Development Programme				
Building on researcher development previously delivered through Learning and Development, we will establish a new researcher development programme through a collaboration between Learning and Development, HR, Faculties and Institutes, taking into consideration the requirement for a minimum of ten days professional development for researchers in the new Concordat. This programme will provide structured development opportunities for researchers at different stages in their careers. In particular, there will be specific guidance on induction and appraisal and the programme will be supported by a mentoring scheme. NC3				
Action	**Lead**	**Success measure**	**Timescale**	**Concordat Principle**
1.1 Draft Researcher Development Programme drawing on expertise from across the University	HR Partner: OD and EDI[2] With FRMs, DoRs, R&E	Draft programme available for consultation	June 2020	3&4.3, 3&4.7
1.2 Review Programme	Chair of CSG, ADRs	Programme reviewed, recommendations made	August 2020	3&4.3, 3&4.7

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[1] For cross-reference with the new Concordat, we have labelled the sections with the main principles using the following code: NC1, environment and culture; NC2, employment; NC3, professional and career development; NC4 implementation and review.

[2] Note: all acronyms are defined in the table of abbreviations on p10-11

1.3 Prepare programme for launch	HR Partner: OD and EDI FRMs	Programme launched via: • L&D SharePoint pages • Targeted emails to ECRs and PIs/RLs • Faculty newsletters • Information included in induction and appraisal materials	September 2020, 2021	3&4.3, 3&4.7
1.4 Monitor researcher take-up of development opportunities	HR Partner: OD and EDI HoDs/managers of researchers HR Partner: People Management	• Ensure that appropriate development opportunities are identified and agreed as part of appraisal process • Monitor records of training on iTrent	Annual review, January 2020, 2021 Annual review, January 2020, 2021	3&4.4
1.5 Provide opportunities to develop skills in post e.g. managing a budget, teaching	HR Partner: OD and EDI	• Continued availability of credit-bearing learning and teaching module, providing a route to Associate Fellowship of the HEA, available for PDRA staff. Take-up and value evaluated successfully, reported to CSG. • Prompts for discussion of in-post development opportunities included in appraisal e.g. managing a budget • Increased satisfaction (target 80% in CROS) with access to training and development opportunities	Annual review of programme/CROS September 2020 CROS 2022	3&4.7, 3&4.11, 3&4.12 3&4.11
1.6 Evaluate researcher development programme	HR Partner: OD and EDI	• Event feedback forms indicate satisfaction of 80% for relevance and effectiveness • Increased satisfaction (target 80% in CROS) with access to training and development opportunities • Focus group held with ECRs who have participated in programme)	Annual review: June 2021, 2022 CROS 2022	3&4.9
1.7 Revise researcher development programme based on feedback	HR Partner: OD and EDI	• Programme revised in response to feedback and launched September 2021 • Include responsive events as required	June 2021 for re-launch Sept 2021 As required	3&4.9

2. Induction

CROS 2019 results indicated that not all researchers were aware of induction opportunities at institution or local level. We will work with Faculty Directors of Research and Faculty Research Managers to improve the induction experience. This will increase productivity and add to a researcher's sense of integration into the departmental research and wider community and University research community, (with target figures of 75, 65 and 55% in the subsequent CROS survey). As part of this process we will create and trial a charter for PIs and their researchers.

NC2&3

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
2.1 Draft charter for researchers for use with induction materials	HR Partner: OD and EDI FRMs With ADRs/DoRs	• Charter drafted • Trialled with PIs and researchers	June 2020 September 2020	3&4.6
2.2 Review and revise induction materials	HR Partner: People Management, Faculty Research Managers Faculty DoRs	Materials ready for programme launch	August 2020	3&4.6
2.3 Materials launched as part of Researcher Development Programme	HR Partner: OD and EDI	• Materials available on SharePoint and included in Induction checklist • Researcher's sense of integration into the departmental research and wider community and University research community increases to 75, 65 and 55% in subsequent CROS	September 2020 CROS 2022	3&4.6
2.4 Materials reviewed with recently appointed researchers and revised as appropriate	HR Partner: OD and EDI FRMs	• Feedback on induction materials evaluated • Appropriate revisions incorporated into new programme	April 2021 September 2021	3&4.6, 3&4.13

3. Appraisal				
We will continue to work with HR and Faculties to develop greater awareness by both researchers and their managers of their rights and responsibilities with regard to appraisal/review and their own professional development. Success factors will include greater percentage take-up and satisfaction with appraisal (increase participation to 70% and overall satisfaction to 60%: monitor through CROS) and increased take-up of training and development opportunities. NC1&3				
Action	**Lead**	**Success measure**	**Timescale**	**Concordat Principle**

3.1 Improve awareness by both researchers and their managers of their rights and responsibilities with regard to appraisal/review and their own professional development.	HR Partner: OD and EDI
	
	FRMs
	
	HoDs, FAMs
		• Material on rights and responsibilities with regard to appraisal/review and professional development included in:
		  o the charter for researchers
		  o induction materials
		  o researcher development programme
		• Information on appraisal training for appraisers and appraisees also included in the materials above (see also 7.3)
		• Greater % take up of appraisal (increase participation to 70%; monitor through CROS)
			Sept 2020	2.3, 3&4.10, 5.5, 5.6

3.2 Ensure appraisal documentation contains prompts to facilitate discussions about professional development	HR Partner: OD & EDI HoDs/FAMs	• Greater satisfaction with appraisal (increase in overall satisfaction to 60%; monitor through CROS) • Increased take-up of training and development opportunities (monitor through i-Trent)	CROS 2022 Annual review, June 2020, 2021	3&4.9
4. Mentoring				
We will continue to promote and support the implementation of research mentoring programmes provided centrally and within faculties and monitor their use annually, to ensure that all researchers who wish to, have experience of mentoring. NC1&3				
Action	**Lead**	**Success measure**	**Timescale**	**Concordat Principle**
4.1 Raise awareness of mentoring opportunities	HR Partner: OD & EDI HoDs, DoRs, FRMs	Include information on mentoring offer: • L&D SharePoint pages • In researchers' charter • In induction materials	September 2020	3&4.9, 3&4.14

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
		• In researcher development programme		
4.2 Recruit mentors	HR Partner: OD & EDI HoDs, DoRs, FRMs	Register of mentors available within faculties and centrally	September 2020	3&4.9, 3&4.14
4.3 Monitor uptake of mentoring offer by researchers	HR Partner: OD & EDI HoDs, DoRs, FRMs	• Improved awareness of mentoring opportunities and the value of mentoring • Increased take-up of mentoring to 50% of eligible staff	CROS 2022 Annual review, June 2020, 2021 CROS 2022	3&4.9, 3&4.14
4.4 Evaluate impact of mentoring offer	HR Partner: OD & EDI ADRs, FRMs	• Feedback on mentoring process and outcomes evaluated and reported to CSG • Satisfaction levels with process and outcomes of mentoring: 60%, in first year, rising to 80% in subsequent years	Annual review, September 2021	3&4.9, 3&4.14

5. Career Development				
The CSG Working Group on career development for research-only staff, which involved early-career researchers as well as an Associate Dean for Research and representatives of HR and Learning and Development, recommended that the University develop a career pathway resource for this group of staff and review and standardise job titles for researchers in line with job roles. NC3				
Action	**Lead**	**Success measure**	**Timescale**	**Concordat Principle**
5.1 Develop a career pathway resource for this group of staff	HR Partner: OD and EDI ADRs, FAMs	• Resource created • Reviewed and updated annually	December 2020	3&4.1, 3&4.2, 3&4.10, 5.4
5.2 Review and standardise job titles for researchers in line with job roles	HR Partner: People Management	• Resource created with job titles clearly defined and aligned with job roles • Resource available via SharePoint	September 2020 September 2020	1.2, 1.5
5.3 Review promotion procedures for researchers and make them more transparent and available	HR Partner: People Management HR Partner: OD and EDI FAMs	• Promotion procedures reviewed and communicated to staff • Information on process available via SharePoint and	June 2020 September 2020	2.5, 2.6

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
		signposted from Career Pathway resource		
5.4 Assess availability of independent career advice for researchers	HR Partner: People Management Careers service	Sources of information identified and made available to researchers via researcher development framework and career pathway resource	December 2020	3&4.4

6. Mental Health and Wellbeing

There has been recent increased interest in the mental health and wellbeing of researchers nationally. CROS 2019 revealed that many researchers felt that the University could do more to promote better health and wellbeing at work.

NC1

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
6.1 We will monitor researcher wellbeing through CROS and Staff Surveys	HR Partner: OD and EDI HoDs	Target: 55% for 'The University promotes better mental health and wellbeing at work' in CROS.	CROS 2022	6.3, 6.8
6.2 Raise awareness among researchers of University initiative on wellbeing and mental health	HR Partner: OD and EDI HoDs, DoRs, FRMs	Links to University initiative included in Researcher Development Programme, shared via regular health and wellbeing updates	September 2020	6.3, 6.8
6.3 Integrate wellbeing and mental health support into researcher development	HR Partner: OD and EDI	• Researcher induction and development programme includes wellbeing and mental health • Target: 55% for 'The University promotes better mental health and wellbeing at work' in CROS.	September 2020 CROS 2022	6.3, 6.8

7. Training for managers of researchers

Managers of researchers should be aware of their responsibilities for the professional and career development of researchers.

NC1&2

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
7.1 Ensure managers of researchers are aware of their responsibilities	HR Partner: OD and EDI FRMs, HoDs	• Briefing session on researchers' charter delivered to managers of researchers	September 2020	2.3

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
through the researchers' charter		• Information included in Faculty newsletters		
7.2 Review relevance of leadership and management materials and events to managers of researchers	HR Partner: OD and EDI HoDs, FRMs	• Materials refreshed or new materials created and launched with L&D programme • Materials reviewed	September 2021 September 2022	3.9
7.3 Ensure that managers of researchers have undertaken appraisal training	HR Partner: People Management HoDs	Training recorded on i-Trent and available to managers through my-HR	Annual review, September	3.9

8. Research integrity

Uptake of the research integrity training has been good but we will continue to make everyone aware of their responsibilities. This will be included within the proposed researchers' charter. Completion will continue to be monitored regularly.

NC1

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
8.4 Make all research staff aware of their responsibilities for research integrity	HR Partner: OD and EDI, DoRs, FRMs HoDs, managers of researchers	• Information included in researcher induction • Checkbox for completion of research integrity training included in appraisal documentation • Monitor completions of research integrity training annually. Target 90% completion.	September 2020 June 2020 Annual review, June 2020, 2021	5.3
8.5 Introduce, implement and monitor updating sessions to be completed after 5 years	HR Partner: OD and EDI HoDs, managers of researchers	• Materials for updating sessions available (face-to-face or online as appropriate) • Monitor completions of research integrity update training annually	September 2021 June 2022	5.3

9. Employment				

We note that the proportion of researchers on fixed-term contracts (FTCs) had increased in the last reporting period. While this may be due to the University's success in bringing in new research funding, HR will monitor to make sure that FTCs are only used where there is a recorded and justifiable reason.

NC2

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
9.1 Ensure FTCs are only included where justified	Deans/ADRs/PIs/RFO/ HR Partner: Workforce Planning	All contract types justified at application for funding	Ongoing	1.3, 2.2
9.2 Monitor use of FTCs	HR Partner: People Management	Proportion of FTCs in line with sector – 65% by 2022	CROS survey 2022	1.3

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion				

The majority of CROS 2019 respondents (87%) felt that the University is committed to equality and diversity and 76% were satisfied with their work-life balance. However, we will continue to work to improve the research environment for all researchers: improved induction and appraisal procedures combined with the proposed researcher charter should improve perceptions of fair and equitable treatment. Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff with refreshers every 3 years.

NC1

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
10.1 Ensure all researchers and line managers of researchers undergo required equality and diversity training	HR Partner: OD and EDI	Equality and diversity training included in: - researcher charter - researcher development programme Communication strategy to include regular eBulletin communications Target is 85% compliance for all staff (HUMID reports)	June 2020 September 2021	6.7
10.2 Contribute to preparations for Athena SWAN award renewal in April 2022 Faculties submit Athena SWAN applications	HR Partner: OD and EDI Athena SWAN steering group (UASSG)	• Athena SWAN status retained • Faculties Athena SWAN applications submitted	April 2022 November 2021	6.10
10.3 Include information on bullying and harassment and relevant procedures in researcher charter	HR Partner: OD and EDI, FRMs	Information included in researcher charter with links to policy documents and key contacts	September 2020	6.9

11. Governance, Review and Implementation

The HR Excellence Action Plan is led and sponsored by the HR Directorate and the work within it is overseen by the Concordats Steering Group (CSG), which reports to the University Research Committee (UREC) chaired by the PVC-RE. Building on the partnership established between HR and L&D in administering the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan, we will establish a wider implementation group for this process including Faculty Research Managers. This will build faculty links and share good practice in researcher development across the University, leading to greater equity of treatment and opportunity between researchers. We will develop more efficient faculty reporting processes through Directors of Research within departments/schools.

NC4

Action	Lead	Success measure	Timescale	Concordat Principle
11.1 Establish members and terms for HR Excellence in Research implementation group which will report to CSG	HR Partner: OD and EDI FRMs	Group established and meeting quarterly to coincide with CSG meetings	March 2020	7.2
11.2 Establish reporting protocol for the action plan	HR Partner: OD and EDI Faculty Research Managers Faculty DoRs	• Protocol agreed and implemented • Progress against actions routinely monitored and reported	March 2020 Reported to CSG quarterly	7
11.3 Review newly-established role of ECR lead in FACE to represent, advise and support the personal and career development of early career academics (including researchers)	ADR of FACE	Role reviewed and recommendations reported to Dean of FACE	January 2021	3&4.5, 3&4.11, 7.1
11.4 Consider introducing similar ECR lead role into other faculties	Deans/ADRs	• Role introduced to other faculties where appropriate • CROS results indicate that researchers feel more integrated into wider departmental community (target 60%) and University Research culture (target 50%).	June 2021 CROS 2022	3&4.8, 3&4.9
11.5 Maintain external links and	HR Partner – OD & EDI	• Membership of Vitae retained and researchers made aware of resources	Annual review, July	7.4

sharing of good practice	Doctoral College	through a variety of media including SharePoint, newsletters and email.		
	Representatives as appropriate	• University represented at NERDS and Vitae meetings	As appropriate	7.4
11.6 We will continue to listen to the voice of researchers informed by internal surveys and focus groups and CROS/PIRLS	HR Partner – OD and EDI DoRs FRMs	• CROS/PIRLS results reported to CSG and HR & OD Director • Researchers continue to be represented at Faculty Research Committees and CSG	CROS/PIRLS 2022	7.5 3&4.13
11.7 We will follow up on expressions of interest in forming a Research Staff Association and work to establish a group if appropriate	HR Partner – OD and EDI FRMs	• If appropriate, group established with committee and terms of reference • Supporting materials and contacts in place	June 2021	

Abbreviations

ADR	Associate Dean for Research
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey
CSG	Concordats Steering Group
DC	Doctoral College (formerly Graduate School)
DoR	Director of Research
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
FACE	Faculty of Arts, Cultures and Education
FAM	Faculty Academic Manager
FBLP	Faculty of Business, Law and Politics
FHS	Faculty of Health Sciences
FRM	Faculty Research Manager, a group term to cover similar roles in different faculties: Faculty Research Manager, Faculty Research Office Manager, Faculty Head of Research Administration
FSE	Faculty of Science and Engineering
FTC	Fixed term contract
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
L&D	Learning and Development
NERDS	Network of Expert Researcher Developers
OD	Organisational Development
PI	Principal Investigator
PIRLS	Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey

PVC-RE	Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise
R&E	Research and Enterprise Team
TEA	Teaching Enhancement Academy (formerly Directorate for Learning and Teaching Enhancement)
UASSG	University Athena Swan Steering Group
UREC	University Research and Enterprise Committee