

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

Action Plan to fulfil the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, 2013-15 - Summary of Progress

A: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Principle 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.

| A | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|---|---|---|--|
| 1.1 | Researchers are chosen primarily for their ability to advance research at Lancaster. | Continue to implement the principle of 'recruiting the best' as outlined in the University Strategy. | Completed - Has become culturally established. | |
| 1.2 | Employers should strive to attract excellent researchers & respect diversity. Employers are encouraged to recruit & retain researchers from the widest pool of available talent. | Monitor annually the diversity profile of researchers recruited to the University as a KPI to support the Equality and Diversity Plan. | Completed - Has become culturally established (see equality and diversity annual report 2014-15). | |
| 1.2 | Recruitment & selection procedures should be transparent & open to all qualified applicants (regardless of background). | Continue to observe the good practice described in the HR 'Named Appointments' policy and continue to monitor named appointment activity. | Completed - Has become culturally established. Of the total researcher appointments made between 2013-2015, 20% went through the named appointment process. | |
| | | Implement the new 'CORE' HR information system and evaluate its e-recruitment function as possible replacement of the 'Stonefish' system. | Ongoing - CORE went live from 1 st June 2015. Stonefish e-recruitment system is still currently in place. Evaluation continues to happen. | |
| | | Continue annual monitoring of the percentage of research posts not advertised. | Completed - Has become culturally established. Of all the researcher vacancies in the period, 21% in 2013/14 and 19% in 2014/15 were not advertised. | |

Key: Green: Completed / Culturally embeddedAmber: Ongoing and carried forward to 2015-17 Action Plan

Lancaster University Concordat Action Plan 2013-2015 – Summary of Progress

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|-----|---|---|--|--|
| 1.3 | Research posts should only be advertised as a fixed-term post where there is a recorded & justifiable reason. | Continue practice of Faculty Deans' authorisation of such posts. | Completed - Has become culturally established. Vacancies need to be authorized by Heads of Departments and Faculty Deans. | |
| 1.4 | Members of recruitment panels should have received relevant & recent training. | Continue to require that all recruitment members have received up to date E&D training and that panel chairs have attended specialist 'Recruiting the Best' training. | Completed - Has become culturally established. | |
| 1.5 | The level of pay or grade for researchers should be determined according to the requirements of the post. | Continue practice of submitting all researcher posts to HERA evaluation. | Completed - Has become culturally established. Generic research roles grade matrix available for guidance so that not ALL roles need full evaluation (matrix available on Lancaster's HR webpages). | |

B: RECOGNITION AND VALUE

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.

| B | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|---|---|---|--|
| 2.1 | Researchers should be given equal treatment, regardless of whether they are on a fixed term or indefinite contract. | Embed the provisions of the Model Charter in individual departments, implementation to be monitored by Faculty Associate Deans for Research | Ongoing – all staff are given equal treatment but the provisions of the Charter are not yet fully embedded in all departments. Lead: Heads of Department | |

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|-----|---|---|--|--|
| 2.1 | Their development should not be hindered by the nature of their contract, and this approach should be embedded throughout all departmental structures & systems | Ensure that departmental operational plans relating to the University Strategy include action to implement Concordat requirements | Ongoing. Lead: Heads of Department | |
| 2.2 | Employers should seek to improve the stability of employment conditions for researchers and abide by the principles laid down in the "Prevention of less favourable treatment of fixed-term employees" regulations (2002). | Conclude agreement with campus trade unions on the use of fixed-term contracts | Ongoing – discussions are underway with trade unions but agreement not yet concluded. Lead: HR Director | |
| 2.3 | Research Managers should be required to participate in active performance management - including managing probation, arranging local induction, undertaking PDR discussions - supervision of research activities, offering informal career guidance and allowing/encouraging their staff to attend appropriate training events/pursue development opportunities within the project (so far as is possible). | Review the operation of the current PDR system with the aim of improving the quality of individual experiences | Ongoing. Full review of the PDR process to be undertaken in 2015/16. Staff survey results show that 89% of research staff had a PDR in the previous 12 months. Lead: HR (Organisation and Educational Development) | |
| | Employers should ensure that Research Managers are aware of, and understand their responsibilities toward Researchers. | Continue to disseminate information on Concordat within faculties. | Completed – Established as a standing item on Faculty Research Committees. | |
| | Employers should provide equality & diversity training to support Research Managers. | Continue to require that all staff receive E&D training, take up to be monitored by HR (Equality and Diversity) | Completed - Has become culturally established. There has been a 28% increase in new researchers completing Equality and Diversity training over the period. | |

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|-----|---|--|---|--|
| 2.6 | It is helpful if career frameworks for early stage researchers are articulated in organisational HR strategies. | Continue to promote the importance of the Researcher Development Framework to researchers and research managers. | Completed - Has become culturally established | |

C: SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Principle 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.

Principle 4: The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.

| C | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|--|---|--|--|
| 3.2 | Employers should help create a culture that gives researchers the ability to move between different career paths (a broad-minded approach should be adopted by those recruiting researchers to take into account varied career paths). | Continue to emphasise in training provision for researchers the need to be aware of, and consider, the full range career options both within and outside academia. | Completed - Has become culturally established | |
| | | Continue to advocate giving due weight to the varied employment paths of candidates via 'Recruiting the Best'. | Completed - Has become culturally established | |
| 3.3 | <p>Researchers need to be enabled to develop transferable skills in order to stay competitive in both internal and external job markets.</p> <p>In addition to the skills & competencies required to</p> | Implement the new researchers' development programme with the aims of providing a wider variety of learning experiences and greater levels of researcher participation. | Completed – has become culturally established. | |

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|-----|--|--|--|--|
| | undertake research, researchers also need support to develop communication and other professional skills that will give them transferability. | Provide an annual Researcher Development Day of keynote presentations and taster workshops, aimed at the broader researcher community. | New Research Development Programme introduced in 2014-15 which was mapped against the Vitae RDF. This approach was taken instead of a SEDA accredited model. The Research Development Programme has replaced the one-off annual event to provide a year-long development opportunity. | |
| 3.4 | Research staff should be able to access professional, independent advice on career management - particularly the prospect of employment beyond their immediate discipline base. Or should be given training & placements to broaden awareness of other fields & sectors. | Maintain training provision for career development and access to dedicated 1:1 independent careers guidance support. | Completed – has become culturally established. | |
| 3.6 | Employers should provide a planned induction for research staff on appointment. | Review and improve induction processes to ensure that relevant and timely induction is delivered at local levels | Completed – has become culturally established. | |
| | | Continue to monitor researcher attendance at central induction events. | Completed – has become culturally established. Review of the induction process scheduled for 2015/16 | |
| 3.7 | Employers should recognise the CPD schemes from other employing organisations to ensure researchers are not disadvantaged when moving between employers. | Maintain current practice of recognising equivalent schemes from other employers in accreditation of CPD in academic practice. | Completed – has become culturally established. | |

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|-----|---|---|---|--|
| 3.8 | Where researchers are provided with teaching and demonstrating opportunities, they should be provided with suitable training & support. | Continue to monitor and report annually on number of Researchers participating on teacher development events. | Completed – has become culturally established | |

D: RESEARCHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Principle 5: Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.

| D | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|---|--|---|--|
| 5.1 | Researchers should develop increased capacity for independent thought throughout their career | Establish and resource a research staff HR (OED) Association to provide a range of social and other events and explore how it can be developed as an independent voice for researchers | Completed – has become culturally established | |
| | | Continue to support the independent faculty-based Researcher career Groups in their developmental activity | Ongoing – but not yet culturally established Lead: HR (OED) | |
| 5.3 | Researchers should disseminate research results in an honest and ethical manner | Provide a development programme on research ethics. | Ongoing - further changes scheduled to fully embed good practice. Lead: HR (OED) | |

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E: DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

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

| E | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|---|---|--|--|
| 6.3 | Address actively the disincentives and indirect obstacles that may impact disproportionately on some groups | Utilise the HR equality policy analysis process to identify possible areas of discrimination and identify the actions required to eliminate such discrimination | Completed – has become culturally established. | |
| 6.4 | Employers should participate in schemes such as Athena SWAN and JUNO initiatives aimed at promoting diversity | Continue Lancaster’s participation in Athena SWAN and JUNO initiatives | Completed – has become culturally established. | |

F: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

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.

| F | CONCORDAT REQUIREMENT | ACTION TO ACHIEVE/ MAINTAIN COMPLIANCE | SUMMARY OF PROGRESS (OUTCOME) | |
|-----|--|--|---|--|
| 7.3 | Institutions are encouraged to use appropriate tools (such as Careers in Research online survey – CROS) to help monitor progress | Undertake CROS in 2015 | Completed | |
| 7.4 | Institutions agree to share practice. | Host Vitae development events for the NW region and work with the Vitae NW Hub to share practice and develop new provision to support researchers’ professional and career development | Ongoing – not yet established as regular practice. NW Hub event Feb 2014. Lead: HR (OED) | |

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