

University of Plymouth

HR Excellence in Research: Action Plan 2019-2021

The University of Plymouth first achieved the HR Excellence in Research Award on 5th September 2011 which is successfully renewed every two years. This Award reflects our commitment to the principles of the **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers**.

Following the initial award in 2011, the HR Excellence in Research Steering Group was established to review, update and progress our ongoing commitments. This steering group currently comprises of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise, Researcher Development Manager, and current Research Staff members representing the Research and Innovation Committee, Senate, Doctoral College Board, REF Steering Group, the Researcher Forum and, the wider community of researchers at the University of Plymouth.

The Researcher Development Concordat has three defining principles covering *Environment and Culture*, *Employment*, and *Professional and Career Development*.

The following Action Plan details our work in supporting Researchers at the University of Plymouth for 2019-2021.

Environment and Culture

Excellent research requires a supportive and inclusive research culture

Healthy working environments attract and develop a more diverse workforce, impact positively on individual and institutional performance, and enhance staff engagement. This Principle recognises that a proactive and collaborative approach is required between all stakeholders, to create and develop positive environments and cultures in which all researchers can flourish and achieve their full potential.

Current status September 2019	Actions and Success Measures	Lead	Date
<p><u>Participation in decision-making bodies</u></p> <p>The number of University-level Research Staff representatives has increased from two to four including appointed members on: The Research and Innovation Committee; Senate; REF Steering Group, and the Doctoral College Board. Research Staff representatives were first appointed to the Doctoral College Board and the REF Steering Group in March 2018. All</p>	<p>1. Research Staff representatives to attend/report to R&I Committee, Senate, REF Steering group and, Doctoral College Board meetings in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Research Staff representatives to attend/report Researcher Forum meetings in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021; provide consultation and communications for the research staff community and; maintain an equal input into the HR Excellence in Research award.</p>		

	<p>3. Arts and Humanities ECR Forum to expand membership to include the Plymouth Institute of Education and, Plymouth Business School by December 2019. Membership of the Arts and Humanities ECR Forum to increase from two schools to four, including the Schools of Arts, Design and Architecture and, Humanities and Performing Arts; Plymouth Institute of Education; Plymouth Business School by December 2019.</p> <p>Success measure: Arts and Humanities ECR Forum to expand membership to include the Plymouth Institute of Education and, Plymouth Business School by December 2019.</p>	Arts and Humanities ECR Forum	December 2019
<p><u>Researcher Forum</u></p> <p>5 Researcher Forum meetings were held 2017-2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6th December 2017 - Careers in Research Online survey findings (led by the Doctoral College). • 8th March 2018 - Recognition and Value focus group (led by HR). • 20th June 2018 - Managing your career: for researchers (led by HR). • 21st November 2018 - PDR feedback and discussion on experiences (led by HR). • 10th May 2019 - REF update (led by DVC Research). <p>Researcher Forum meetings are attended by DVC Research, Research Staff representatives, research staff, PIs and, staff supporting researchers. Research Staff representatives provide updates from University committees at</p>	<p>1. CROS 2019 findings, the HR Excellence in Research award review and, consultation with the Research Staff representatives will guide the development of the Researcher Forum meetings for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. 3 Researcher Forum meetings will be delivered in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us/university-structure/service-areas/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/researcher-forum</p> <p>Success measure: 3 Researcher Forum meetings will be delivered in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. CEDARS 2020 will replace the previous CROS and PIRLS surveys. CEDARS is included as an agenda item for 2019-2021 with participation, response rates and feedback reviewed alongside impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19). CEDARS to be administered by 31 July 2020.</p>	Doctoral College, DVC Research and Enterprise, Research Staff representatives	July 2021

<p>all Researcher Forum meetings. The meetings represent a University.</p>			
<p><u>Participation in feedback</u></p> <p>The response rate for CROS decreased from 33% (2017) to 20% (2019). The timings for CROS 2019 were concurrent to a University-wide restructure and voluntary leaving scheme. CROS will next be administered in 2021. A robust response rate is essential to provide CROS feedback that is both representative and appropriate to the needs of Research Staff.</p> <p>CROS 2019 lower response rate however, it has generated essential and important findings for 2019 – 2021 planning including: Doctoral College, Researcher Forum, HR, E&D, Faculties/Schools, Research and Innovation Committee.</p>	<p>1. Doctoral College to work with the University, Faculty and School Research Staff representatives to work towards a 10% increase in CROS survey response rates by June 2021. CEDARS 2020 will replace the previous CROS and PIRLS surveys. CEDARS is included as an agenda item for 2019-2021 with participation, response rates and feedback reviewed alongside impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <p>Success measures:</p> <p>i. CEDARS to be administered to Research Staff and Managers of Researchers by 31 July 2020.</p> <p>ii. We will work towards a 30% response rate for CEDARS by 31 July 2020.</p> <p>2. CROS 2019 findings and HR Excellence in Research Action Plan to be disseminated to Doctoral College, Researcher Forum, HR, E&D, Faculties/Schools, Research and Innovation Committee by December 2019. We will work towards a 5% increase in Research Staff awareness of the HR Excellence in Research award (HR EIR) by June 2021. CEDARS 2020 will replace the previous CROS and PIRLS surveys. CEDARS is included as an agenda item for 2019-2021 with participation, response rates and feedback reviewed alongside impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <p>Success measure: We will work towards a 5% increase in Research Staff awareness of the HR Excellence in Research award by 31 July 2020.</p>	<p>DVC Research and Enterprise, Research Staff representatives, Doctoral College</p> <p>Doctoral College</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2020</p>
<p><u>Women's network</u></p> <p>The Women's network have offered staff/PGRs a variety of social, networking, personal development and academic events over the last two years. Communications were improved with the inclusion of a website and Facebook page. Activities included: female only media training</p>	<p>1. The women's network lunchtime lecture series has identified the importance of support for parents and carers. A key action is to establish a 'Parents and Carers Staff Network' to launch in October 2019 and, appoint a second co-chair to ensure a gender-representation. The Network will act as a support space and will be the voice of parents and carers across the University to ensure that all policy and procedure reflects their needs.</p>		

<p><u>Research Development initiatives</u></p> <p>CROS 2019 indicates of the thirteen UK Research Development initiatives, University of Plymouth Research Staff had a greater knowledge or understanding of eight of these initiatives compared to the sector including: Athena Swan Gender Equality Charter mark (UoP 100%; sector 91.32%); Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (UoP 59.26%; sector 42.52%); Concordat to Support Research Integrity (UoP 44.44%; sector 37.32%); European HR Excellence In Research Award recognition (UoP 40.75%; sector 40.11); REF (UoP 96.30%; sector 91.37%); Vitae (UoP 77.78%; sector 51.03%); Vitae RDF (UoP 74.07%; sector 46.99%); UK Professional Standard Framework for teaching and supporting teaching (UoP 48.15%; sector 42.79%).</p>	<p>1. We will work towards maintaining 100% awareness of the Athena Swan Gender Equality Charter mark; a 2% increase in awareness of the REF, and a 5% increase in staff awareness of the other eleven initiatives by July 2021.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us/university-structure/service-areas/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/athena-swan</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us/university-structure/service-areas/equality-diversity-and-inclusion</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us/jobs/our-diverse-community</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/governance</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/support/development</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/environment/assessment</p> <p>https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/tef-outcomes/#/tefoutcomes/provider/10007801</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/doctoral-college/researcher-development-programme</p> <p>https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework</p> <p>Success measure: We will work towards maintaining 100% awareness of the Athena Swan Gender Equality Charter mark; a 2% increase in awareness of the REF, and a 5% increase in staff awareness of the other eleven initiatives by July 2021.</p>	<p>DVC Research and Enterprise, HR, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Research Staff representatives, Doctoral College</p>	<p>July 2021</p>
--	---	--	------------------

Employment

Researchers are recruited, employed and managed under conditions that recognise and value their contributions

Provision of good employment conditions for researchers has positive impacts on researcher wellbeing, the attractiveness of research careers, and research excellence. This Principle recognises the importance of fair, transparent and merit-based recruitment, progression and promotion, effective performance management, and a good work-life balance. All stakeholders need to address long-standing challenges around insecurity of employment and career progression, ensuring equality of experience and opportunity for all, irrespective of background, contract type and personal circumstances.

Current status September 2019	Actions and Success Measures	Lead	Date
<p><u>Recruitment</u></p> <p>CROS 2019 indicated 74.07% of research staff were full-time compared with the sector (85.92%).</p> <p>CROS 2019 indicated 81.25% of research staff were on FTCs up to 24 months compared with the sector (50.08%).</p>	<p>1. HR to investigate why there appears to be more Research Staff on PT contracts and shorter FTCs compared with the sector. HR to provide an update to the HR Excellence in Research steering group by July 2020.</p> <p>HR to investigate UoP staff data including: type, length and source of funding of FTCs between 2018 – 2020. The findings will be used to enable a better understanding of FTCs at UoP with a particular focus on E&D and flexible working for researchers. The data will be used to guide planning in 2020 for researchers including: participating in decision-making bodies and, access to training for example, enabling more researchers working remotely and/or PT to join Committee meetings and training via Zoom/MS Teams.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/about-us/jobs/employee-benefits</p> <p>Success measure: FTC review to be completed by July 2020.</p>	HR	July 2020

Professional and Career Development

Professional and career development are integral to enabling researchers to develop their full potential

Researchers must be equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse global research environment and employment market. This Principle recognises the importance of continuous professional and career development, particularly as researchers pursue a wide range of careers.

Current status September 2019	Actions and Success Measures	Lead	Date
<p><u>Supervising research students</u></p> <p>Following the CROS 2017 and 'supervising postgraduate research students' surveys, the University had introduced mandatory training for all PGR supervisors. All research staff currently supervising or may in the future undertake supervision of PGRs are included within this mandatory training. Supervisory training is recognised by the University as a mandatory requirement for appointed members of supervisory teams. The training provides additional support for supervisors and, is considered as part of their ongoing staff development. Mandatory training for PGR supervisors was introduced on 1st September 2018. The training is delivered across the University by the Doctoral College, Faculties and Schools. A variety of training options are available including: in-class, webinars and online (Moodle), training for new supervisors and refresher training for experienced supervisors. During 2018-2019, 18 supervisory training sessions were delivered to 362 staff, representing 53% of all supervisors.</p>	<p>1. The Doctoral College, Faculties and Schools to work towards increasing the percentage of supervisors trained from 53% to 63% by July 2020.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/examiners-chairs-and-supervisors</p> <p>Success measure: 10% increase in supervisors training by July 2020.</p>	<p>Doctoral College, Deputy Directors Doctoral College, School PGR Research Coordinators</p>	<p>July 2020</p>
<p><u>Research Staff career development workshop</u></p> <p>CROS 2019 indicates an increase in the percentage of research staff who agreed they took ownership of their career development</p>	<p>1. A career development workshop for Research Staff will be delivered in April 2020. The workshop will include career management for researchers, research leadership and, E&D in a research environment.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/doctoral-college/researcher-development-programme</p>		

<p>(88.89% CROS 2019; 87.77% CROS 2017) compared with the sector (87.30%). The Researcher Forum hosted two events for research staff for career management and PDRS including: 20th June 2018 - Managing your career: for researchers and, 21st November 2018 - PDR feedback and discussion on experiences. Around 40 Research Staff attended each event.</p>	<p>Success measure: Career development workshop for Research Staff to be delivered by April 2020. To be rescheduled to 2021 due to coronavirus (COVID-19).</p>	<p>Doctoral College, DVC Research and Enterprise, HR, Equality Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>April 2020</p>
<p><u>Researcher Development Programme</u></p> <p>Researcher Development Programme 2017-2018: Key training statistics include:</p> <p>Number of sessions: 158 individual sessions were delivered including 87 sessions identified as suitable for both PGRs and Research Staff. 18 sessions were delivered as live webinars with recordings of webinars available on Moodle.</p> <p>Attendance: 656 individual PGRs/Research Staff attended sessions, filling a total of 2206 places. Of this 565 PGRs attended 2027 sessions and 91 Research Staff attended 179 sessions.</p> <p>Representation: Approximately 62% of all PGRs and 50% of all Research Staff attended RDP sessions in 2017-2018.</p> <p>E&D data: 389 female PGRs/Research Staff attended 1301 sessions (59%) and 267 males PGRs/Research Staff attended 905 sessions (41%). Of this 59 female Research staff attended 128 sessions and 32 male Research Staff attended 51 sessions. Data is additionally broken down according to Faculty/School representation and is made available for Athena Swan activities.</p>	<p>1. Researcher Development Programme data 2018-2019 for Faculty/School representation will be available by December 2019 for the Doctoral College Board for inclusion in the Doctoral College action plan 2020 and, Equality Diversity and Inclusion for Athena Swan activities, reporting and award applications in 2020.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/doctoral-college/researcher-development-programme</p> <p>Success measure: Researcher Development Programme data for 2018-2019 to be available for Doctoral College Board and, Equality Diversity and Inclusion by December 2019.</p> <p>2. We will work towards a 5% increase in Research Staff participating in Researcher Development Programme sessions from 50% to 55% by July 2020.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/doctoral-college/researcher-development-programme</p> <p>Success measure: We will work towards increasing Research Staff accessibility and attendance on the Researcher Development Programme by 5% by July 2020.</p>	<p>Doctoral College</p> <p>Doctoral College</p>	<p>December 2019</p> <p>July 2020</p>

<p>Researcher Development Programme 2018-2019: Key training statistics include:</p> <p>Number of sessions: 172 individual sessions were delivered including 103 sessions identified as suitable for both PGRs and Research Staff. 18 sessions were delivered as live webinars with recordings of webinars available on Moodle.</p> <p>Additional RDP data for 2018-2019 will be available by December 2019.</p> <p>Online training: The Doctoral College provides two online training platforms through Moodle including:</p> <p>Researcher Development Programme. Applicable to PGRs and Research Staff. 494 individual users as at August 2019.</p> <p>PGR Supervisors, Examiners and Chairs. Applicable to staff supervising/examining PGRs. 417 individual users as at August 2019.</p>			
<p><u>E&D training for researchers</u></p> <p>The Doctoral College and Equality Inclusion & Diversity developed the session “Every Researcher Counts: equality and diversity in researcher careers”. The session is based on sector and UoP developments and priorities and, some existing Vitae resources. The session is designed for postgraduate research students and research staff. Online materials are available on the Researcher Development Programme Moodle page for UoP students and staff to access. The first class-based session was delivered on 6th December 2019 and two people attended (1 PhD student and 1 Research</p>	<p>1. The Doctoral College and Equality Inclusion & Diversity will re-design the session materials for “Every Researcher Counts: equality and diversity in researcher careers” to incorporate within a career development workshop for Research Staff. The workshop will be available by April 2020 and will include career management, leadership and E&D for researchers.</p> <p>https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/research-degrees/doctoral-college/researcher-development-programme</p> <p>Success measure: Career development workshop for Research Staff to be delivered by April 2020. To be rescheduled to 2021 due to coronavirus (COVID-19).</p>	<p>Doctoral College, DVC Research and Enterprise, HR,</p>	<p>April 2020</p>

<p>Assistant). The second session was programmed for April 2019 however, we did not receive any bookings. The online Moodle materials have been accessed 9 times by 4 users. There is a low interest from our PGRs and Research staff to participate in this specific development session. We will continue to make the session materials available online through Moodle and, we will review how we can include E&D training and for it to feature within other future development sessions for our PGRs and Research Staff.</p> <p>The University's Diversity & Wellbeing calendar 2019-2020 features 14 entries from PGRs and Research Staff from the Images of Research competition. The calendar provides a creative and engaging approach to E&D and wellbeing and, highlights how well E&D can be incorporated within activities and support for researchers.</p>		Equality Diversity and Inclusion	
--	--	----------------------------------	--

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations	
CEDARS	Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey
E&D	Equality and Diversity
FTC	Fixed-term contract
HR EiR	HR Excellence in Research award
PDR	Performance development review
PIRLS	Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey
PRES	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
RDF	Researcher Development Framework
RDP	Researcher Development Programme
R&I Committee	Research and Innovation Committee
UoP	University of Plymouth