

## University of Plymouth

### The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers: Implementation and action plan

#### Background

The University of Plymouth welcomes and strongly supports the Researchers' Concordat and has embedded its principles in University Strategy documents and continues to work with our Researchers to implement these principles in our everyday work and longer term goals. Research at the University of Plymouth is guided by our ***Research and Innovation Strategy 2009 – 2012***. We intend to build on our world-leading and international excellence in priority areas of research, developing, sharing and embedding innovations which will enhance these opportunities.

Support and guidance for Researchers at Plymouth is further complemented through the delivery of the ***Human Resource Strategy 2009 – 2012***; the ***Code of Good Practice in Research; University Research Centres Strategy and Procedures 2010 – 2013***; the ***Teaching and Learning Strategy 2009 - 2012*** and the ***Equality and Diversity Policy***.

#### Gap analysis

During the period 2008-2010 the University underwent an internal strategic restructuring and reviewed all of its major Strategy documents and research structures implementing its current Research Centres and Research Institutes. During 2010-2011 we have undertaken a gap analysis exercise of both the Concordat and the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers involving a working group comprising of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), Head of the Graduate School, Head of Organisational Development (HR), Postgraduate Skills Development Officer, Project Leader - People Development (HR) and the Research Excellence Framework Support Officer.

In February 2011 we hosted a Universities UK Concordat implementation visit to assist our internal analysis and benchmark against the sector. Assisting our analysis is data received from the Plymouth Staff Survey 2010, CROS 2009 and 2010 and PRES 2007, 2008 and 2009. CROS, PIRLS and PRES are being administered again in 2011.

This gap analysis considers our current work and good practice, our ongoing commitments and our action plan to fully embed and periodically review our commitment to the Researchers' Concordat.

## Outcomes of the Gap Analysis

Recruitment and Selection	Concordat Principle
<p><b><u>Selection and Transparency</u></b></p> <p>A review of our existing policy and procedure as a result of a Recruitment and Selection audit in 2009 (Mazars 2009) has resulted in us now having a robust and consistent approach to the the constitution of selection panels.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all chairs and panels members must be trained before participating in a Recruitment and Selection panel</li> <li>• panel constitution is covered in policy to ensure diversity</li> <li>• standardised procedures and processes to ensure transparency of selection</li> <li>• procedures and process checklists monitored by HR</li> <li>• records of each panel maintained and selection compliance checked</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>As part of the appraisal review we will clarify career development expectations/pathways/responsibilities within the future Performance Development Policy. Once clarified will link into the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy.</p> <p><b><u>Recruitment</u></b></p> <p>The Recruitment and Selection policy mandates that all chairs and panel members must be trained before participating in a Recruitment and Selection panel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and Selection policy – all chairs and panels members must be trained (online training package developed) before participating in a Recruitment and Selection panel (database of training compiled and interrogated for compliance all selection panels)</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>HR has committed to undertaking and prioritising a full review of its recruitment policy and procedure as part of its HR Strategy. This review will continue to benchmark against the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers to ensure future policy is fit for purpose in this aspect as well as meeting wider strategic HR needs of the University.</p>	<p>1, 6</p> <p>Lead: HR 2010 onwards</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p>



<p><b><u>Recognition of mobility experience</u></b></p> <p>Our evolving HR Strategy advocates adopting a less traditional approach to professional development and more recognition in the power of experiential, informal and self-led development. Our Annual Appraisal System has been reframed into a Performance Development Framework to be launched in September 2011 will support all staff in this respect.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Complete current project and inform revised Recruitment and Selection Policy accordingly.</p> <p><b><u>Value of mobility</u></b></p> <p>Research and Innovation Strategy 2009 - 2012, key theme 6 – we will identify mechanisms to encourage and promote greater engagement by leading researchers from other countries within the university and the region.</p> <p><b><u>Co-authorship</u></b></p> <p><b>R&amp;I Strategy 2009 - 2012</b>  <b>Key theme 2</b> – to nurture, recognise and reward research talent and to ensure a dynamic and supportive environment to unlock the creativity and enterprise of staff and students.  <b>University Code of Good Practice in Research</b> – Statement on the publication and authorship.</p> <p><b>Intellectual Property Policy</b> – recognition of joint recognition and ownership for the exploitation of intellectual policy. Section 4 Disclosure and third party IP – In cases where multiple innovators are identified an <b>Originator’s Form</b> is available for the relevant persons to fill in. This then forms a useful starting point to establish an agreement for the sharing between those multiple innovators of the innovators’ share of Net Revenue.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>To be reviewed through the Research Staff Forum April 2011. Recommendations for review of Code of Practice to be made through the Research and Innovation Committee.</p>	<p>1, 2</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>Lead: Graduate School, HR, PVC</p> <p>Date 2011?</p>
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<p><b><u>Participation in decision-making bodies</u></b></p> <p>The University recognises the contributions made by its research community to the ongoing operationalisation of its Research and Innovation Strategy and Research Staff and Research Students are involved in decision-making bodies through representation on the following Committees:</p> <p><b>Research and Innovation Committee</b> (sub-committee of Academic Board) Full representation of the research community (including Early Career Researchers and Post-Graduates)</p> <p><b>Graduate Committee</b> (sub-committee of Academic Board) Staff and student representation</p> <p><b>Board of Governors</b> Researcher and postgraduate student representation</p> <p><b>Faculty and School Research Committees</b></p> <p><b>Researcher Forums</b> Researchers have Forums for discussion – Research Staff Forum (instigated in 2008), Early Career Academics Forum (instigated 2010), Postgraduate Research Students Forum (instigated 2005) and report to Research and Innovation Committee and Graduate Committee through their representatives.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Graduate Committee membership, Research and Innovation Committee membership Revised 2010 and kept under review.</p>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5, 6</p> <p>Lead: PVC, Graduate School</p>
<p><b>Support and Career Development</b></p>	<p><b>Concordat Principle</b></p>
<p><b><u>Research freedom</u></b></p> <p><b>Research and Innovation Committee</b> Terms Of Reference (TOR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advance the achievement of world-leading, international excellence in research through scholarly peer publication and through dissemination to the mass media and the local and national community.</li> <li>• To encourage an enterprise-based approach in research through identifying and fostering the means by which the University can respond to emerging research opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage and facilitate the identification of opportunities to secure income and support for research through the pursuit of competitive funding, with the aim of increasing research income.</li> <li>• To promote research with high impact and engagement among diverse communities of users, beneficiaries, and audiences, including the indirect contribution of research through reputation building and synergies with teaching.</li> <li>• To ensure an open, friendly, caring and inclusive research community and culture which promotes equality and values diversity.</li> <li>• To sustain effective support for post-doctoral and early career researchers through identifying and promoting good practice in Faculties, Schools, Research Institutes, and Research Centres.</li> <li>• To work with the Graduate Committee to foster and develop a vibrant and growing community of research students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Revised by PVC and endorsed by CEG in 2010. Review TOR by 2012</p> <p><b><u>Good practice in research</u></b></p> <p><b>University Code of Good Practice in Research (2003)</b> Sets out the principles of Good Practice in Research at the University.</p> <p><b>University Health and Safety Policy</b> University <b>Codes of Practice</b> are available in the following areas: Fire Prevention; Lone Working; Display Screen Equipment; Diving Part I and II; Manual Handling; Radiation; First Aid; Boat; Management of Hazardous Substances; Risk Management; working at Height (Estates &amp; Facilities Management); Water Hygiene (Estates &amp; Facilities Management) Faculty/School Codes of Practice are available applicable to discipline e.g. Laboratory Practices; Field work;</p> <p>Faculty Safety Policies and Safety Committees are reviewed through annual safety reports.</p> <p><b>Data Protection and Freedom of Information Guidance</b> is available from HR and updated May 2009.</p>	<p>Lead: PVC and Research Support Unit 2012</p> <p>3, 4, 5</p>
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<p><b>Research Ethics Committee</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p><b>Health and Safety Policy</b> - Revised October 2010</p> <p><b>Code of Good Practice in Research</b> - to be reviewed 2011</p> <p><b>Records management policy</b> – to be reviewed 2011</p> <p><b><u>Evaluation/ appraisal systems</u></b></p> <p>UoP appraisal and development process.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>A University wide project is currently progressing and a new Performance Development Framework is due for launch in September 2011 as part of the HR Strategy evolution. Results from our 2010 Staff Survey indicated that our Researchers would value being more involved and that at times they had concerns in relation to workloads. This valuable feedback has underpinned our thinking in relation to the requirements of our revised approach to appraisal. Therefore our intended Performance Development Framework is a tool that will enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A core people process that promotes dialogue between managers and staff and creates clarity of purpose and focused development plans.</li> <li>• A core system that supports and feeds emerging talent management processes such as succession planning.</li> <li>• A tool that promotes focused development discussions drawing on relevant professional standards and frameworks including the VITAE Researcher Development Framework.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Research environment</u></b></p> <p><b>UoP Staff Survey, CROS and PRES</b> feedback has enabled us to establish the Research Staff Forum to ensure it meets the needs of this specific staff group. This has also lead to the development of the Early Career Researchers’ forum.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Implement CROS, PRES, PIRLS and produce Action Plans in response to outcomes.</p>	<p>Lead: OH&amp;S Annual review</p> <p>PVC 2011</p> <p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p> <p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p> <p>Lead: Graduate School 2010/11</p>
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<p><b><u>Working conditions</u></b></p> <p>UoP Staff Survey – Biennial</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Future surveys to break down by staff category in order to understand Research staff perceptions.</p> <p>Enterprise Enabling Leadership Development Programme focuses on the role of leaders at UoP to ensure they create an environment in which their staff can excel.</p> <p>Current dialogue across the Heads of Research Centres is determining the specific leadership requirements of researchers in order to enable a consistent experience for staff.</p>	<p>2, 3, 4,</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p>
<p><b><u>Stability and permanence of employment</u></b></p> <p>Fixed term contract policy.</p> <p>Developing the communication and feedback culture of the University so that people understand clearly where they stand. Our evolving HR Strategy is developing enhanced management information services to enable managers to make informed, timely and appropriate decisions.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Future Plymouth Staff surveys to break down by staff category in order to understand Research staff perceptions.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p>
<p><b><u>Career development</u></b></p> <p>The Research Staff Forum was established following the 2008 Researchers’ Concordat. This Forum meets three times throughout the academic year to discuss development opportunities and activities relating to the Concordat Principles. Staff Development policy including the right to request time for training procedure.</p> <p><b>University Research Centres Strategy and Procedures 2010-2013</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• URCs must ensure effective career support for staff at all grades, contributing to the University HR policies and national Codes of Practice.</li> </ul>	<p>3, 4</p>

<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Reviewed URC's annually and Staff Forum outcomes throughout academic year.</p> <p>Under review as part of the wider HR Strategy: Performance Development Framework to include the Researcher Development Framework.</p>	<p>Lead: HR, Graduate School, Research Support Team</p> <p>Date needed</p>
<p><b><u>Teaching</u></b></p> <p><b>Teaching and Learning strategy 2009-2012</b> accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA)</p> <p><b>PGCertificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP)</b> accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) – compulsory course for all new academic staff</p> <p><b>General Teaching Associate course (GTA)</b> – prerequisite for PGR students teaching within the University</p> <p><b>Guidelines on maximum teaching duties for PGR students</b> – Studentship procedures and regulations</p>	<p>3, 4</p>
<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>PGCAP developed in 2010 following programme review of LTHE (Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) in 2009/10. Includes Good Practice in supervising research projects. Further updates 2012.</p>	<p>Lead: Teaching and Learning Directorate and Graduate School 2012</p>
<p><b><u>Relation with supervisors</u></b></p> <p><b>Research Degrees Handbook (date?)</b> – regulations and guidance manual for the supervision and examination of research degrees</p>	<p>3, 4, 5</p>
<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Revised annually</p>	<p>Lead: Graduate Committee</p>
<p><b>Good Supervisory Workshop</b> (date started?)– compulsory for new supervisors of research students</p>	<p>Lead: Graduate School</p>









<p>It is a responsibility of Departmental/School heads and Associate Deans Research to convey clearly the standards for research in their departments and relevant areas, and to ensure that adherence to those standards is a matter of course.</p> <p>The CoGPiR applies to all employees, research students and visiting researchers of the University, including persons holding honorary University appointments, conducting research within, or on behalf of, the University.</p> <p>The CoGPiR is monitored by the Research and Innovation Committee which is responsible to the Academic Board for the governance and strategic enhancement of research within the University, in accordance with the Research and Innovation Strategy. It is to promote the activities of staff as innovators and entrepreneurs in a culture of discovery</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>CoGPiR last reviewed in 2004. Revisit CoGPiR by R&amp;I committee/sub-committee by 2012</p> <p><b><u>Ethical principles</u></b></p> <p>The University has a published policy on ethics:</p> <p><b>Research Ethics: a policy for staff and research students</b> which includes an Annex on <b>Ethical Principles for research involving human participants</b> approved by Academic Board Dec 2005. The policy is revisited by the UHREC on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>This establishes that there is an overarching <u>University Human Research Ethics Committee</u> and <u>Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs)</u>.</p> <p>Attention to the ethical implications of research for research subjects, researchers and research sponsors is an intrinsic part of good research practice. Research involving human participants is undertaken in many different disciplines and conducted in a wide range of settings. The University has an established set of fundamental principles to ensure the protection of human participants and a Code of Good Scientific Practice. The University seeks to ensure that all research for which it has responsibility satisfies these principles and the Code of Practice. The University will undertake the ethical review of pure and applied research irrespective of funding source except that which falls under the remit of Department of Health approved ethics committees in which case it shall be referred to the appropriate committee.</p>	<p>Lead: Research and Innovation Committee 2012</p> <p>2, 3, 4</p> <p>Lead: Faculty Research Ethics</p>
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<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Terms Of Reference revised 2010. Revisit 2012. FRECs TOR revised 2010. Revisit 2012.</p> <p><b><u>Professional responsibility</u></b></p> <p>University of Plymouth <b>Plagiarism Staff Guidance</b> and Support. Workshops for PGR students.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Revised 2004 under review in 2011. Self monitoring available to PGR students through Pebblepad (online PDP) from 2011.</p> <p><b>Intellectual Property Policy.</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Revised March 2010 and reviewed continuously.</p> <p><b><u>Professional attitude</u></b></p> <p><b>Externally Funded Project Application and Monitoring procedures</b> – Section A - Application and approval</p> <p>Costing and Pricing Policy for Commercially Funded Work</p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Revised February 2006</p> <p><b><u>Complaints/ appeals</u></b></p> <p><b>Grievance policy &amp; procedure (staff), Complaints and Appeals Policy (students)</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b> Updated 2010</p> <p><b>Research Ethics: a policy for staff and research students</b> Section 18 – appeals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Researchers can appeal against the decisions taken by a FREC either to reject or require significant modifications to research. Initially the appeal should be to the FREC taking the decision. If this is not successful the researcher can request the appeal be considered by the UHREC.</li> </ol>	<p>Committees 2012</p> <p>Lead: Teaching and Learning Directorate 2011</p> <p>Lead: Research and Innovation Directorate</p> <p>Lead: UHREC</p> <p>Lead: HR</p>
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<p><b>Complaints Section 19</b></p> <p>2. Complaints about the conduct of research should be made through the University’s complaints policy. If issues of research ethics are involved the University’s ‘Procedure in the case of suspected research misconduct’ (Annex 4) will generally apply.</p> <p><b>3. Research Degree Appeals</b> Appeals procedure against outcomes of research degrees</p> <p><b>Intellectual Property Policy</b> - IP disputes dealt with by UOPEL (section 10) – In the first instance, IP disputes will be dealt with by UoPEL. If the matter remains unresolved it will be passed to the Enterprise Advisory Group. Ultimately, if the matter cannot be resolved by the institution the issue will be subject to independent and binding external arbitration.</p>	<p>Lead: Graduate School</p> <p>Lead: University of Plymouth Enterprise Ltd</p>
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<b>Diversity and Equality</b>	<b>Concordat Principle</b>
<p><b><u>Non discrimination</u></b></p> <p><b>Equality &amp; Diversity Policy</b> and associated codes or practice. E&amp;D responsibilities are mainstreamed into all job descriptions. E&amp;D training is a mandatory requirement via a bespoke e-learning package for all staff. Promoting a positive work environment code of practice is an underpinning part of the mandatory “Leading Fairly” session for all managers. Equal Pay Review is undertaken regularly and all posts are scrutinised via a transparent matching and grading process. E &amp; D committees and sub committees meet termly with representation from across all parts of the University.</p> <p>Generic role profiles for Researchers of all grades are maintained and published.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p>Review with reference to Concordat and Researcher Development Framework.</p> <p><b><u>Judging merit</u></b></p> <p>Current policy and Interview Chair and panel member training alerts staff to procedures for checking quality of applicants. Recruitment panels must develop appropriate interview structures and questions that enable the diverse range of applicants to have a fair platform. We particularly emphasise the need to guard against assuming several years experience necessarily equates to quality output/delivery. Where appropriate, tests of competence may be applied at</p>	<p>6, 1, 3, 4</p> <p>Lead: HR 2011</p>



<p>The Leadership Development Programme has now been rolled out to all Senior Managers of the University and the next target group are Research Leads particularly the Heads of Research Centres. It is envisaged that through this group the full implementation of the Concordat and the Researcher Development Framework will be effected.</p> <p>The University will continue to monitor feedback from its Researcher constituencies through online surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CROS – research staff</li> <li>• PRES – postgraduate researchers</li> <li>• PIRLS – senior researchers</li> <li>• Staff Survey – all academic staff</li> </ul> <p>through feedback from its researcher forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Staff Forum</li> <li>• Early career academics Forum</li> <li>• Postgraduate student Forum</li> <li>• Research Centre Leads Forum</li> </ul> <p>and through its appraisal and feedback systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Development Framework</li> <li>• Annual Monitoring of PGR students</li> <li>• Annual review of Research Groups against KPIs</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity annual reports</li> </ul> <p>This information and feedback will be used to review and revise operational guidelines and policies and strategies to ensure the vibrancy, quality, fairness and career development of the University’s research community.</p>	<p>Lead: PVC, HR, Graduate School, Research and Innovation Committee, and Equality and Diversity Committee 2011 onwards</p>
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