1. Process – Evaluation and Governance

The University of Huddersfield applied successfully for the HR Excellence in Research Award in 2011 and achieved renewal following re-assessment in 2013 by the UK panel for the HR Excellence in Research Award. In 2015 a submission for the four year external review was successful and a new action plan 2015-2019 developed.

A full review of progress against the action plan covering the period 2015-2019 has taken place under the auspices of the University Research Careers and Engagement Oversight Group (URCEOG), which oversees the implementation of the Concordat. URCEOG is a new group which incorporates the Concordat Management and Overview Group (established in 2015 to oversee the implementation of the Concordat).

The internal review was led by HR working closely with the Research and Enterprise Service, Schools and other Services over the period September – December 2017. The first stage was a review of progress across the two years measured against the principles of the Concordat. The second stage took account of survey data using the results of the University’s biannual Quality of Working Life Surveys 2015 and 2017; and the results from the CROS and PIRLS 2015 and 2017 surveys. Thirdly, the URCEOG reviewed the progress to date and was engaged in developing the future plans.

2. Key Achievements and Progress 2015-2017

Principle One: Recruitment and Selection

- Renewals of fixed term contracts are restricted to cases where there is genuine objective evidence of the temporary nature of work. Renewals based solely on time-limited funding are made on open-ended contracts.
- Redeployment opportunities are offered to all research staff before the end of a fixed term contract, including opportunities to transfer to academic vacancies of lecturer and senior lecturer.
- Bridging funding is used in some Schools to support postdoctoral research fellows on external contracts to cover time delays between securing additional external funding or locating suitable redeployment opportunities.
- All staff are required to complete assessed recruitment and selection e-learning training prior to serving on recruitment and selection panels which covers aspects of good practice in equalities and diversity in recruitment and selection practice, including unconscious bias.
- All grades are set by Hay job evaluation and all terms and conditions are harmonised and equivalent to those offered to academic staff to aid transferability between contract types and maintain equal pay between different “job families”.
- All recruitment is against a published job description and person specification. All unsuccessful candidates (at shortlisting and appointment) are provided with a named contact to provide feedback as to why they were not the preferred candidate.
- Respondents to CROS 2017 indicated higher satisfaction with recruitment information than the sector benchmark.
- In 2016/17 the majority of researchers in the University were employed on open-ended contracts (54%), but this is a decrease of 7% compared to 2014/15.

Principle Two: Recognition and Value

- The overall Quality of Working Life score for research staff has reduced from 70% of researchers in 2015 rating this as good or very good to 64% in 2017. The research staff score is higher than the University benchmark at 57% for this category. CROS 2017 University responses to reward and recognition were higher than the sector benchmark of 60% with 66% of research staff who responded to the CROS agreeing or strongly agreeing that their contribution was valued through their terms and conditions. 63% of research staff in the CROS 2017 agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their work-life balance.
• Respondents rated highly their access to training and flexible working with 77% and 74% responses (CROS 2017) indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed that they were treated equally with other staff, both above benchmark. Above benchmark scores were also recorded for terms and conditions and visibility.
• A suite of management development programmes operates, covering a full spectrum of management skills from first line management level through to middle and senior management, including the opportunity to achieve Chartered Manager status. All research leaders have access to the programmes.
• A new programme of mandatory training for PGR supervisors has been introduced in 2017 to complement the Higher Education Practice (Research Supervision) PgCert which gives formal recognition to supervisory training and practice undertaken by research staff.

**Principle Three and Four: Support and Career Development**
• All research staff have access to departmental research budgets to support attendance at conferences, visits and networks.
• The Research Assistants and Research Fellows forum has had 9 training sessions since 2015.
• An ECR mentor scheme is operational and scheduled for review in 2018/19.
• The Careers Service specialist support for researchers, including guidance appointments, career management workshops, on-line resources and weekly drop in sessions.
• All research staff are able to develop skills through the internal examiner training and supervisory skills through specific training as co- and main PGR supervisors, which increases skill base and career options. In addition, mandatory refresher sessions for experienced supervisors have been introduced in 2017.
• A policy regarding training standards and support for PGRs and ECRs who teach is currently being developed with the aim of improving the current Teaching Assistant Preparation Programme (TAPP).
• All PGRs, RAs, RFs and academic staff at an early stage of their research career are supported through joint publication of research outputs to develop their profiles.
• Respondents to CROS 2017 rated the usefulness of appraisal for leading to training or other continuing professional development higher than the sector benchmark.

**Principle Five: Researchers’ Responsibilities**
• The “Researcher Voice” is represented through contract research staff representation on the School Research Committees and URCEOG.
• Research staff with engagement in teaching attend course assessment boards, pathway committees etc., so they are fully integrated in this side of academic work and can develop their career profile.

**Principle Six: Equality and Diversity**
• The University’s flexible working policy applies to all research staff with 73% (CROS 17) valuing opportunities for flexible working, a slight reduction on 2015 (78%), but above the sector benchmark (68%).
• Equality and Diversity training is available for all staff through e-learning programmes.
• Equality and Diversity in Recruitment and Selection training is required from all staff who participate in any selection process.
• The University was successful in securing an Athena Bronze Award in November 2015. Renewal of the award under the new expanded Athena SWAN Charter is in preparation for submission during 2018.
• A Departmental bid for the School of Applied Sciences was successful and awarded Bronze in April 2016. Plans are in place for all remaining Schools to submit in the next two years.
• Athena SWAN conferences have been held on an annual basis since 2015 with representation from research staff and PGRs, and opportunities to network with external speakers and attendees.
• A higher proportion of respondents to CROS 2017 have undertaken training in equality and diversity than those in the sector benchmark group.

**Principle Seven: Implementation and Review**
• URCEOG reports to the University Research Committee and with co-ordinating accountability in HR.
• The QoWL survey analysis was changed in 2013 to identify contract research staff opinion on key aspects of work-life balance and this analysis has been continued, building trend data/comparisons.
• As in 2015, the approach to CROS 2017 was to target responses from contract researchers, as opposed to research active academics. Similarly the PIRLS 2017 was targeted at staff who had a direct research leadership responsibility.
3.  Future Priorities 2017-2019

**Principle One: Recruitment and Selection**
The two main issues to consider are: first, the contract basis on which we employ researchers; and secondly ensuring our research staff have an integrated induction to the University, their School and their team and continue to receive support throughout their first year.

**Principle Two: Recognition and Value**
The University needs to ensure we attain high satisfaction levels from researchers regarding quality of working life and reward and recognition. The University’s policy of ensuring that all academic staff are research active and are of Professorial standing for positions of Dean and Head of Department, means that researchers work in a cultural context where research-based issues are understood. Further work will be undertaken to ensure the researcher experience is integrated into, and given explicit recognition within management development programmes.

**Principle Three and Four: Support and Career Development**
Development opportunities are extensive, but awareness of those opportunities and how they impact on career progression could be improved. Work will be undertaken to ensure the link between development opportunities and researchers’ current role and career aspirations is made more explicit.

**Principle Five: Researchers’ Responsibilities**
Role-related fora will continue to be developed including the annual conference programmes.

**Principle Six: Equality and Diversity**
The main priority of the University is to pursue good practice through the Athena SWAN initiative, under the new Charter. Whilst the focus of this initiative is gender it is recognised by the University, and external commentators, that the improvement in practice in this area is to the benefit of all staff. The University intends to improve work-life balance for all staff by publicising its comprehensive support package for carers and to review the impact of the new mental health related initiatives.

**Principle Seven: Implementation and Review**
An internal survey based on CROS but tailored for the institution is planned for 2018 to support the engagement of ECRs in consultation activities, and to accelerate the development of new actions ahead of the formal surveys in 2019.

4.  Broad Success Indicators 2017-2019

Our success will be measured against the outcomes in the revised 2015-19 action plan. Overall we seek to:

- Secure a contractual base where the majority of research staff are employed on contracts of indefinite duration and continuity of service is supported through redeployment and bridge funding.
- Develop a comprehensive induction framework and programme of support for new staff and those progressing their careers.
- Embed management development within PI training.
- Improve the take up and scores in both internal and external researcher surveys, particularly for CROS.
- Improve the capacity to engage with the researcher community through improved networks and events.
- Use survey and feedback data to evaluate current policy and make ongoing improvements to our employment practice.
- Increase participation of researchers in development opportunities.
- Increase participation in the CROS and PIRLS surveys 2019.
- Secure Athena SWAN institutional Bronze award renewal and support Schools with departmental submissions.
- Consult with researchers and research leaders about the implementation and development of the Action Plan.
University of Huddersfield  
The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers  
HR Excellence in Research Award

https://staff.hud.ac.uk/hr/hr-excellence-in-research/

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<th>Issue</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
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| **Contracts:**  
The majority of researchers are employed on open-ended contracts but security of employment still remains a problem for a large minority. The University’s need to increase security of employment to enhance recruitment and retention will need to be balanced with funding constraints and maintaining “honest” expectations of employment opportunities. | A1 Promote redeployment procedures to line managers of researchers. | Greater awareness of redeployment process leading to the earlier identification of potential vacancies and/or bridge funding increasing continuity of service for 50% of all research posts. | ADRE HoD | July 2018 |
| **Progression:**  
No clear progression routes may undermine security of employment for permanent staff as promotional opportunities may only be offered on a temporary basis. | A2 Promote awareness of processes available for progression from RA to RF to line managers of RAs. | Greater awareness of progression routes from RA to RF measured by a 30% increase of RAs enrolling onto PhDs and 10% of RAs securing RF roles. | ADRE HoHR HoD | July 2018 |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Induction:</th>
<th>A3 Framework to be made available on website and disseminated via line managers.</th>
<th>CROS May 2019 to be 80% for role induction (54% in 2017).</th>
<th>ADRE HoD HoRE</th>
<th>July 2019</th>
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<td>CROS 2015 reports that local induction was rated below benchmark and respondents reported that local induction failed to connect with wider issues within departmental, School or institutional induction programmes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A3.1 Induction information to be made available on website and disseminated via line managers.</td>
<td>Increased awareness of issues specific to researchers coming from outside the UK amongst line managers. CROS May 2019 to be 80% for role induction (54% in 2017).</td>
<td>ADRE HoD HoRE</td>
<td>July 2019</td>
<td></td>
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<td>A3.2 Implementation of local and institutional aspects of the induction framework specifically tailored to research staff.</td>
<td>Institutional induction to aim for 60% in CROS 2019 (47% in 2017). Local induction to aim for 50% in CROS 2019 (39% in 2017).</td>
<td>DoRC HoD HoRE</td>
<td>May 2019</td>
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**Principle 2:** Recognition and Value

*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*

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<th>Timescale</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Working Life:</strong> Researchers report high satisfaction levels in University staff surveys.</td>
<td>A4 Research Committee to review biannual Quality of Working Life Survey to review scores from researchers across the University with the aim of maintaining high satisfaction ratings and informing future policy development.</td>
<td>Satisfaction levels remain at or above University benchmarks.</td>
<td>PVC (R+E)</td>
<td>Summer 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A4 Dissemination of information on flexible working options and guidance for carers to raise awareness amongst line managers and researchers.</td>
<td>CROS 2019 responses to Q10.5 “requests for flexible working” increase to 80% (from 74% in 2017).</td>
<td>HoHR</td>
<td>Dec 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Leader Development:</strong> The researcher experience is heavily influenced by the quality of management. The University needs to ensure that the qualities of good research leadership are identified and appropriate interventions are designed to promote, develop and encourage those qualities.</td>
<td>A5 Building on the results of PIRLS 2015, working with the University’s Professoriate, identify key qualities of research leadership-knowledge, skills and behaviours.</td>
<td>A skills and behavioural framework of research leadership is produced. The University’s new Strategy Map 2018-25 will further provide the strategic lead.</td>
<td>HoSD</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A6 The framework is adopted within the institutional management development programmes.</td>
<td>Management development interventions and programmes incorporate specific issues relevant to the management of research staff.</td>
<td>HoSD</td>
<td>May 2021</td>
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<td>Principle 3 and 4: Support and Career Development</td>
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*Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.*

*The importance of researchers’ personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.*

**Researcher Development:**

The University has a growing employment base of contract research staff but also a wider research community within its academic body at varying levels of research experience and standing. Research skill and career development may not be meeting the varied needs of individuals at different stages of their research/academic career.

| A7 Using the framework to identify development pathways in research leadership. | Management development interventions and programmes are linked to career pathways to be further developed following introduction of Strategy Map 2018-25 | HoSD | Sept 2019 |

| A8 Identify clear expectations of skills and performance outcomes for identified stages in research career development: |

  - New to Research (target audience academic staff and RAs undertaking doctoral study) | Defined role expectations established. This work is not complete. Research and Enterprise and HR will be prioritising this activity in 2018 having been unable to make progress due to staff changes in both areas. Development programmes aligned to career roles. Research and Enterprise organised for the Common Purpose programme to run, focused on leadership development and external | PVC (R+E) | Mar 2019 |

  - Deans |

  - DoHR |

  - HoSD | | | Sept 2019 |

  - 2021 | | | |
- Researcher in Progress (target audience academic staff and RAs in final years of doctoral study)
- Post-doc researcher (target audience research post-docs and academic staff who have completed doctoral study)
- ECR (target audience, researchers becoming independent PIs, employed as RAs, RFs and SLs)
- New Research Leader (target audience, PIs contemplating leading teams, SRF and SLs)
- Established Research Leader (target audience, Readers and PRFs)

Engagement for a group of early career researchers in 2015.

Impact measured in QoWL survey 2019 through maintained high satisfaction scores and by CROS 2019 scoring 90%+ on “encouragement for engagement in personal and career development”. CROS scores for “encouragement for engagement in personal and career development” have dropped from 79% in 2015 to 71% in 2017.

Careers Advice aligned to career roles.

Impact measured in QoWL survey 2019 through maintained high satisfaction scores and by CROS 2019 scoring 70% (+) on “I have a clear development plan”

Sept 2019

HoCS
HoD
DoRC

May 2019
- **Senior Research Leaders**  
  (target audience, Professoriate)

| A9 | Evaluation of programme design and outputs. | Programmes amended. CROS scores for “...have a clear development plan” have dropped from 59% in 2015 to 26% in 2017, reemphasising the need for action. CROS 2019 2021 scoring 70% (+) on “I have a clear development plan”. | HoSD HoCS | Sep 2019 May 2021 |

| A10 | Mapping to RDF information to be publicised in staff development offering aimed at researchers. | Increased awareness and use of the RDF. | HoSD | July 2018 |

### Principle 5: Researchers Responsibilities

*Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to proactively engage in their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.*

**Researcher Engagement:**
Researchers may become isolated from the wider research community and miss networking opportunities.

| A11 | Increase awareness further through identifying local networks to facilitate engagement. | More active engagement in the wider research community evidenced by increased awareness of initiatives in Q15, CROS 2019. | HoSD HoRE | May 2019 |

| A12 | Review and consult with researchers on establishment of new fora. | Number of researchers actively engaged increases. | HoSD HoRE | Sept 2018 |

### Principle 6: Diversity and Equality

*Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.*
**Equality and Diversity:**
Researchers report a lack of knowledge of Athena SWAN and respondents report a perception of commitment by the University to equality and diversity below benchmark.

| A13 | Develop a programme of AS engagement activities. | Greater awareness of Athena SWAN demonstrated by increased engagement of researchers in departmental bids and action plans. Greater general awareness of initiative demonstrated in the CROS 2019 survey. | Chair AS HoHR | May 2018
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<tr>
<td>A14</td>
<td>Athena Swan Silver Institutional Award submission</td>
<td>Successful award</td>
<td>Chair AS</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A15</td>
<td>Evaluate impact of Silvercloud and Mental Health First Aid provision.</td>
<td>CROS 2019 evidences a perception of health and well-being being promoted with increased scores and maintaining the above benchmark position. QoWL survey to maintain or increase satisfaction levels.</td>
<td>HoOH</td>
<td>May 2019</td>
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**Principle 7: Implementation and Review**
*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. Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to proactively engage in their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.*

**Researcher Integration:**
The CROS 2015 demonstrated that research staff felt they were recognised and valued by the University, above benchmark, but scored lower than benchmark on issues of integration into University processes of decision making.

| A16 | Research staff are included in School ‘away-day’ events. | Scores above benchmark in CROS 2019. All research staff to be included in ‘away-day’ events. | Dean | May 2019 |
| A17 | Further activity to improve participation in decision making | Scores above benchmark in CROS 2019. | ADRE | May 2019 |
and integration in local research communities are required.

|   | **A18** Action Plan monitoring through Concordat Management Group and annual reporting against action plan to Research Committee | Progress reviewed regularly and actions taken to address drift. Realignment of action plan to be considered following Strategy Map 2018-25 introduction | URCEOG PVC (R+E) | 2019 (annually) |
KEY:

ADRE  Associate Deans for Research and Enterprise
CMOG  Concordat Management and Overview Group, now replaced by University Research Careers and Engagement Oversight Group (URCEOG).
CROS  Career Researcher On-Line Survey (Biannual)
Chair AS  Chair of Athena SWAN committee
Deans  Dean of Academic Schools
DoHR  Director of Human Resources
DoM+C  Director of Marketing and Communications
DoRC  Directors of Research Centres/Institutes
ECR  Early Career Researchers
HoCS  Head of Careers Service
HoD  Heads of Academic Departments
HoHR  Head of HR
HoOH  Head of Occupational Health
HoRE  Head of Researcher Environment
HoSD  Head of Staff Development
QoWL  Quality of Working Life Survey (University Biannual Survey administered externally)
PI  Principal Investigator
PIRLS  Principal Investigator and Research Leader On-Line Survey (Biannual)
PGR  Postgraduate Researcher (includes Doctoral and Masters by Research)
PRF  Principal Research Fellow
PVC (R+E)  Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
RA  Research Assistant
RC  Research Committee
RDF  Researcher Development Framework
RF  Research Fellow
SL  Senior Lecturer
SRF  Senior Research Fellow
URCEOG  University Research Careers and Engagement Oversight Group (was CMOG)