



Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

HR Excellence in Research 2 Year Review

Updated Implementation Action Plan: January 2014

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The actions below have been developed to enhance the skills and career development of research staff.

Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
1. Concordat Principles					
Concordat Principles: review	1.1 Conduct a gap-analysis between Concordat Principles and Queen's policies and processes	HR/Concordat Working Group	Work undertaken during 2010-11 academic year Actions also identified in recent consultations with staff on the content of the action plan	7	Completed
Concordat Principles: promotion	1.2 Produce Queen's Research Career Development booklet as an outcome of action 1.1. The guide sets out how Concordat principles are being implemented in Queen's University and provides guidance on how researchers might expect to develop their careers in the short and longer term	HR – Personnel and STDU	Work undertaken during 2010-11 academic year	1,7	Completed
Concordat Principles: promotion	1.3 Distribute guide booklet to all new research staff and academic staff as part of induction	HR – STDU and Schools	On-going – distributed in hardcopy 3 times per year and available online	1	On-going – compliance checked each August
1.3 Updated Action	A Concordat Communication Plan will be created to continue to raise the awareness of the Concordat and to promote career development for researchers (Deadline June 2014)				
Concordat Principles: promotion and engagement	1.4 Undertake CROS survey every two years. Use summary report to feed into this action plan and review process	HR – STDU and Schools	CROS 2009, 2011 and 2013 survey and report	1,2,7	2011 survey complete
1.4 Progress	Queen's has participated in the CROS 2009 and 2011, however was unable to participate in 2013 but will participate in CROS 2015. This will enable any changes in the opinions and views of research staff to be monitored in the future.				
1.4 Updated Action	Queens to participate in the CROS and PIRLS 2015. (Deadline: June 2015) During 2014 research staff and their managers will be asked for their perception of the management of researchers, via focus groups and surveys. (Deadline: September 2014)				Responsibility: HR – STDU and Schools

2. Researcher learning and development programme					
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Researcher learning and development programme: allocation of resources	2.1 University to review and clarify resources to sustain the professional and career development support for research staff following the withdrawal of "Roberts"/RCUK funding	HR/Finance/ PVC Research & Postgraduates	January 2012	2, 7	Currently HR meeting majority of these costs
2.1 Updated Action	Additional strategic resources from 2014 to be reviewed in light of developing university strategy (Deadline: May 2015)				Responsibility: HR/Finance/ PVC Research & Postgraduates
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: prioritisation	2.2 Align training and development provision with the Researcher Development Framework (RDF)	HR-STDU	March 2011	3 & 4	Completed 2011
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: promotion	2.3 Promote the recommendation of 5 days central personal and career development per year and regularly monitor actual engagement	HR-STDU/Faculties	On-going via range of communication and measurement methods	3 & 4	Completed and ongoing actions outlined below – annual T&D data monitoring point September each year
2.3 Progress	Research Staff attendance at central training programme workshops has continued to increase since the Researcher Development Programme was launched in 2005-06, when 297 course attendances were recorded, to 562 recorded attendances in 2012-13.				
2.3 Updated Action	Updates to the central HR database will enable better recording of local training activity, which will provide a better overview of the overall number of days development activity in which research staff are engaged. (Deadline: January 2015)				Responsibility: HR-STDU/Faculties
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: promotion	2.4 Briefing for PIs on Concordat-related issues: management of staff, recruitment, appraisal, progression, development and creating an effective research environment (REF). To include information on research staff related employment procedures, e.g. redeployment policy and bridging funds	HR-Personnel and STDU, Research & Enterprise, in conjunction with Schools	Sept 2012-June 2013	1,3,4	Outlined below
2.4 Progress	<p>Members of the Concordat Implementation Review Group (CIRG) briefed the Directors of Research on the concordat and its link to the research environment. As part of the support provided by STDU for the university preparation for REF, information on the implementation of the concordat was provided for UOAs. The University provides a range of training and development initiatives to support staff who manage researchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and leadership in a Research Role: for experienced post-docs and staff new to academic posts • Research Team leadership (LFHE course). <p>From March 2014, these classroom sessions will be supported by an online package, Professional skills for research leaders (Epigeum online programme)</p> <p>In order to ensure staff who are new to the role of people management are provided with and aware of their responsibilities and the support available to them, it is proposed that a new mandatory development event is designed. This would highlight the university HR procedures and</p>				

	processes but would also highlight best practice in the management of researchers, which will enable the University to raise awareness of the Concordat and encourage those managing researchers to understand the importance placed by the University on supporting the career development of researchers. The use of coaching as a people management and development process is key to these development initiatives.				
2.4 Updated Action	Introduction of a mandatory development activity for staff new to managing researchers. Initial focus to be on new PIs. This will include workshops and online materials (Deadline: designed by October 2014 and delivered to staff by July 2015)				Responsibility: HR-Personnel and STDU, Research & Enterprise, in conjunction with Schools
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: coaching and mentoring	2.5 Enhance and support mentoring and coaching for research staff at Queen's in general and specifically on applying for research fellowship grants. This will require the provision of information and training in the use of mentoring and coaching to research staff and Research Leaders/PIs.	HR-STDU and Schools	Jan 2012 – June 2012	4	Outlined below
2.5 Progress	Researcher peer mentoring scheme established in School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, for post-docs and PhD students. This scheme focuses on induction and assisting new staff to integrate into their new research environment.				
2.5 Updated Action	Establishment of researcher peer-mentoring schemes in other schools. (Deadline October 2014)				Responsibility: HR-STDU and Schools
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: review	2.6 Annual review of training and development provision to ensure it continues to meet needs of individuals, funders and university. These reviews should consider the variety of experience and discipline background within the research staff population and include a review of an annual profiling report.	HR-STDU	On-going – annually revisions June – August each year	7	Completed 2011-12 and 2012-13
2.6 progress	<p>A new ILM accredited leadership and management programme piloted in 2013-14. This comprises core workshops focusing on professional and career development planning alongside a number of pathways which participants select. Over three-quarters of Queen's respondents to 2011 CROS said that having accredited training would encourage them to engage in professional and career development</p> <p>Based on feedback from researchers and their managers STDU has also offered a number of new sessions, e.g. The Engaging Researcher and The Collaborative Researcher (May 2013)</p> <p>Other areas of development activity that have received very positive feedback are Researcher writing retreats and lunchtime networking events.</p>				
2.6 Updated Action	Review ILM pilot and consider potential expansion of the programme (deadline July 2014)				Responsibility: HR-STDU

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Researcher Learning and Development Programme: career development support	2.7 Increase awareness and uptake of career development support	HR-STDU, Careers Service, CRSDWG and Schools	On-going promotion Review uptake every 12 months	3, 4 & 5	Ongoing with annual monitoring point each September
2.7 Progress	Increased year-on-year engagement in the career development programme, which includes workshops and one-to-one careers coaching. Although the overall number of research staff in the university has decreased there has been an increase in the number of staff (20% between 2012-13 and 2010-11) actively engaging with the career development programmes.				
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: career development support	2.8 Increase employer input to the researcher development programme, e.g. employer based seminars and enterprise focused development activity.	HR-STDU, Careers Service, Research and Enterprise and Schools	2011-12	3, 4 & 5	Completed in 2011-12 and 2012-13 and further progress outlined below
2.8 Progress	Local employers have taken part in some lunchtime career seminars and courses offered, i.e. The Enterprising Researcher and Commercial Skills for Researchers. Staff Development is working with new University's services in the Business Alliance Office (BAO) and Employer Engagement Service (EES) to development contacts with employers.				
2.8 Updated Action	In collaboration with BAO and EES review and develop opportunities for researchers to engage with employers (Deadline: June 2014)			Responsibility: HR-STDU, Careers Service, Research and Enterprise and Schools	
Researcher Learning and Development Programme: individual responsibilities	2.9 Engage with school based research staff societies about professional and career development. Encourage collaboration between these societies in the planning and organising of school-based development activity.	HR-STDU, CRSDWG and Schools	On-going Report to each CRSDWG meeting	5	Completed and ongoing actions outlined below, agenda item at CIRG meetings
2.9 Progress	Over the past two years these groups have expanded across the University. There are now 7 groups. There are different types of groups; some are only for post-docs others are for PhDs, research and academic staff. The majority are school based but a faculty based Social Science Research Society has also been established. Staff Development regularly engages with these groups and supports their development and initiatives. This is a major source of feedback from researchers.				
2.9 Updated Action	Continue to support establishment of these groups and organises opportunities for the groups to engage with each other			Responsibility: HR-STDU, CIRG and Schools	

3. Researcher personal and career development processes					
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Researcher personal and career development processes: induction	3.1 Ensure effective dual approach (central events/school induction) to researcher inductions: Review school-based (research centre/cluster) induction for research staff, provide information to support schools and deliver central induction events and resources	Schools and HR-STDU	Jan 2012 – June 2012	1,2, 4	Outlined below
3.1 Progress	<p>STDU has worked with the School of Electronics, Electrical engineering and Computer Science to co-ordinate a local induction process to ensure central induction and school based complement each other. Also, this is one of the areas in which examples of best practice have been collected and will be circulated within the University. How effective induction impacts the integration of researchers into new research environments will be highlighted.</p> <p>Currently approximately a quarter of new researchers attending the central induction day. The University is currently reviewing the induction process for all staff which will highlight importance of local induction and provides further guidance on what should be covered to managers.</p>				
3.1 Updated action	<p>a. Review proposal to add criteria to probation report that research staff should have attended central induction (Deadline September 2014)</p> <p>b. Provide guidance to schools on best practice in the induction of researchers. (Deadline September 2014)</p> <p>c. Produce 'responsibilities' booklet for new researchers and their managers. (December 2014)</p>				Responsibility: Schools, HR-STDU and HR-Personnel
Researcher personal and career development processes: induction	3.2 New research staff to receive an information pack on professional and career development support and resources. This will include central and school based information.	Schools, HR STDU, HR Personnel, HR EOU	Jan 2012 – June 2012	1,2, 4	Deadline September 2014
3.2 Updated action	Induction booklet to be finalised (Deadline: September 2014)				Responsibility: Schools, HR STDU, HR Personnel, HR EOU
Researcher personal and career development processes: induction	3.3 Annual monitoring of attendance at central induction and completion of school-based induction	Schools	Annual report	1,2, 4	Completed
Researcher personal and career development processes: appraisal	3.4 Annual monitoring of appraisal for research staff – completion rates.	HR–Personnel and Schools	Annual appraisal report	2, 4, 5	Completed
3.4 Progress	Personnel department monitoring any trends in the appraisal returns. In 2012-2013 99% of Research Staff completed appraisal and 97% completed appraisal in 2011-12.				

Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Researcher personal and career development processes: appraisal	3.5 Provide additional appraisal guidance and support to ensure that alongside review of performance and setting objectives, sufficient time is taken to reflect on and plan the skills and career development needs of research staff. For all research staff but with a particular focus on research staff who have held more than one contract.	HR–Personnel and Schools	Tbc	2, 4, 5	Completed with additional actions ongoing. Monitoring point: January 2015
3.5 Progress	Appraisal form updated to include a section asking research staff to outline their short, medium and long term career development goals. This forms the basis of a discussion about their career development with their appraiser. Overall appraisal process under review, to simplify form and create an online version, which will enable greater analysis of associated development plans.				
3.5 Updated Action	Consult with Personnel on the information and support on conducting the appraisal process to be included in the new training programme for staff who manage researchers (Deadline: 2014-15)				Responsibility: HR–Personnel, HR - STDU and Schools
Researcher personal and career development processes: appraisal	3.6 Updated guidance notes on research staff appraisal to be added to download site for appraisal forms	HR–Personnel	September 2012	2, 4, 5	To be included in review of appraisal.
Researcher personal and career development processes: exit	3.7 Design and conduct exit interviews/surveys with research staff leaving Queen’s.	HR–Personnel and Schools	Tbc	3, 4	Outlined below
3.7 Progress	This issue is included in the actions undertaken by the Concordat Implementation Review Group on the generation and use of research staff related data. A number of schools have undertaken gathered data on the career destinations of their research staff. It has been proposed that this is the most effective way forward on building a picture of the destinations of research staff.				
3.7 Updated Action	This will be progressed as part of the data requirements aspect of the work of the Concordat Implementation Review Group.				Responsibility: CIRG, HR–Personnel and Schools

4. Supporting Research Leaders/Principle Investigators (PIs)					
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Supporting Research leaders/PIs	4.1 Review training available to Research Leaders/PIs to support their management of research staff		2012-13	3 & 4	Outlined below
4.1 Progress	This has been prioritised by the CIRG and is being informed by discussions with the University's Forum for Directors of Research and in discussion with senior managers. It is proposed that a mandatory session on people management will be designed for staff new to managing researchers and that this will be supported by further sessions on supporting career development of researchers. (Deadline 2014-15)				
4.2 Updated action	a. Survey and focus groups to inform the training needs of staff who manage researchers.(May 2014) b. Design of People Management session for staff who manage researchers (October 2014)				Responsibility: HR-STDU, CIRG and Schools
Supporting Research leaders/PIs	4.2 Work with Heads of School to ensure completion of appraisal for both Research Leaders/PIs and research staff	HR-Personnel and Schools	2012-13	2	Completed
4.2 Progress	See 3.5 above.				
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Supporting Research leaders/PIs	4.3 Conduct Principal Investigator/Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) to gather evidence of Research Leaders/PI views on development issues	HR-STDU	March 2012	2	Outlined below
4.3 Progress	This is an area of concern as it was proposed that PIRLS 2013 was conducted but it was not implemented at the request of HR Senior Management Team. Concern was expressed about the ability to edit the list of standard questions.				
4.3 Updated Action	PIRLs to be conducted and reported in 2015 (deadline September 2015)				Responsibility: CIRG and HR-STDU
Supporting Research leaders/PIs	4.4 Promotion and implementation of the Concordat will demonstrate links to the REF. Include information on Concordat in staff briefings on REF.	Schools, HR-STDU, PVC Research & Postgraduates , Research and Enterprise	On-going	2	Completed October 2013

5. Diversity and Equality					
Objective/Theme	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Concordat Principle	Progress
Diversity & Equality	5.1 Ensure Queen's overall SWAN and individual School SWAN action plans incorporate the needs of researchers	HR-EO Unit and Schools; Queen's Gender Initiative	On-going (see below)	6	Completed
5.1 progress	University SWAN champions are actively involved in the concordat implementation, a number are members of the Concordat Implementation Review Group (CIRG). Many of the examples of best practice examples gathered by the CIRG originate in SWAN based initiatives. The Athena Swan award is held by 11 Schools (1 Gold, 9 Silver and 1 Bronze). Schools in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences will be applying the SWAN principles, providing researchers with further support for their career development.				
5.1 Updated action	Continue engagement with SWAN champions (Ongoing) Monitoring point January 2015 for reported update				Responsibility: HR-EO Unit and Schools; Queen's Gender Initiative
Diversity & Equality	5.2 Review "Every Researcher Counts" project report from Vitae for relevance to Queen's	HR- EO Unit, STDU, CRSDWG	May 2012	6	Completed January 2013
5.2 Progress	Staff Training and Development Unit and the Equal Opportunities Unit have discussed the use of the Every Researcher Counts materials. These materials which will be used in the planned development activities for staff who manage researchers.				
5.2 Updated action	Every researcher counts materials to be used in training initiative for staff who manage researchers (2014-15)				Responsibility: HR- EO Unit, STDU, CIRG
6. Institutional internal quality assurance and review					
Institutional internal quality assurance and review	6.1 Contract Research Staff Development Working Group to act as an engagement and advisory group on Concordat implementation	CRSDWG, HR-STDU	October 2011 – on-going	2, 3, 4	Completed
6.1 Progress	Concordat Implementation Review Group established January 2013 to co-ordinate work.				
Institutional internal quality assurance and review	6.2 Concordat Working Group to conduct internal review of the implementation every two years	Concordat Working Group, HR, PVC Research & Postgraduates & Research and Enterprise	October 2013	7	Completed
6.2 Progress	Concordat Implementation Review Group co-ordinating internal review.				
6.2 Updated action	Concordat Implementation Review Group to co-ordinate external review before January 2016 (Deadline: December 2015).				Responsibility: CIRG, HR, PVC Research & Postgraduates & Research and Enterprise

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Institutional internal quality assurance and review	6.3 Incorporate CROS actions (above) into overall review process and monitor changes over time	HR–STDU and CRSDWG	2011-12 – on-going	7	Completed
6.3 Updated action	Concordat Implementation Review Group to review the use of CROS data in advance of CROS 2015 (Deadline November 2014)				Responsibility: CIRG and HR–STDU
Institutional internal quality assurance and review	6.4 Provide opportunities for research staff to meet and share experiences with researchers and others from across the University. School-based Post-doc/Research societies to support this activity.	HR-STDU, Research and Enterprise, Schools and CRSDWG	Annual research staff event	3,4, 5, 7	Completed 2011-12 and 2012-13, further events taking place in 2013-14
6.4 progress	STDU have organised Research Staff Forums, which bring together staff who chair and organise the school-based researcher societies.				
6.5 Updated action	Organise annual Research Staff Forum. Deliver The Collaborative Researcher course (Deadline May 2014).				Responsibility: HR-STDU, Research and Enterprise, Schools and CIRG
Institutional internal quality assurance and review	6.5 Continue to gather additional evidence of the impact of the researcher development initiative for individual researchers and the institution.	HR-STDU, Schools, CRSDWG	On-going	7	Completed and ongoing action outlined below.
6.5 Progress	Members of the CIRG are co-ordinating the collection and dissemination of good practice examples in relation to the management of research staff. These will continue to inform the development of actions and initiatives for research staff career development. Monitoring point – Jan 2015				

Abbreviations: HR-STDU: Staff Training and Development Unit; HR-EOU: Equal Opportunities Unit; CIRG: Concordat Implementation Review Group, CROS – Careers in Research Online Survey

Other issues highlighted during consultation:

1. Perceived inconsistency in access to teaching practice for researchers in different schools.
2. Need to raise awareness of Concordat Implementation Plan with specific staff groups who can support researcher career development, i.e. Directors of Education. This would enable a wider discussion on research staff access to teaching opportunities and the support provided to research staff have or wish to have teaching duties and experience.

These issues will be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Concordat implementation Review Group (Deadline: February 2014)