

HR Excellence in Research – University of Sussex Concordat Implementation Plan 2013-2015 – Updated

Concordat Reference	Actions identified in 2013 plan	Lead	Success Measure	Timescale identified in 2013 plan	Progress	Progress Comment
1.1, 2.6, 4.1	To create a dedicated web-page for research staff which will be accessible to all members of the Sussex research community and provide comprehensive guidance on all aspects of a research staff role at the University of Sussex.	Research Staff Office	Web pages launched and publicised to research staff and managers	1 st August 2013		Comprehensive set of web-pages for research staff have been developed and are now active and have been publicised http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/researchstaff Further work required to increase visibility of pages through links from other areas of the university website.
1.1	Communication of the revised University Strategic Plan, setting out both the standards expected of all staff and the principles for supporting researchers at all stages of their career.	PVC Research	University Strategic Plan launched, containing clear reference to strategy for supporting researchers careers	January 2014		Strategic plan published November 2013 with specific reference to the importance of research staff community and career development.
1.2	University of Sussex to explore becoming a EURAXESS local contact point , supporting the mobility of researchers around Europe.	Research Staff Office	Decision taken on becoming an Euraxess Local Contact Point	July 2013		Sussex established as Euraxess Local Contact Point. Communicated on news channels, Research Staff web-pages and at Research Staff Forum. EURAXESS promoted at new Research Staff Induction sessions, including provision of EURAXESS handbook for international researchers in induction pack.
1.2	HR to advertise Research Staff posts via EURAXESS website	HR	All research staff posts advertised through Euraxess site as standard	n/a		Directive from Research and Enterprise director sent to HR along with information about registering institution on the portal. Research posts are being advertised through EURAXESS from Jan 2015
1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2,	Monitoring the use of fixed-term research staff posts to be part of the terms and conditions of new joint	HR, PVC, Academic Schools,	Regular reviews of staff on fixed-term contracts	n/a		Data on fixed term contracts included in HR contextual information provided to RSWG April 2014. This data will continue to be monitored on an annual basis (as a minimum)

	working group of Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee and Human Resources Committee.	Research Staff Working Group				PVC, Heads of Schools and HR have reviewed of all staff on fixed term contracts in STEMM Schools. Arts, Humanities and Social Science Schools will conduct the same exercise in the Spring/Summer 2015. Where there is no longer objective justification for researchers to be on fixed term contracts they are moved to open ended contracts. At the time of writing 24 staff had transferred to open contracts and a further 32 were going through the transition process as a result of the review Contract review will take place on an annual basis at School level.
Applies to all concordat principles	Analysis and report on findings of 2013 CROS survey	Research Staff Office	Survey report communicated to relevant parties	November 2013		CROS report, summary and recommendations provided for the first RSWG April 2014 meeting. Outcomes Informed the generation of the 14/15 priorities for the RSWG. Summary of outcomes and recommendations also communicated to HR committee and Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee. Summary report published on the research staff webpages.
All concordat principles	Run and analyse CROS and PIRLS 2015 survey and refine support in light of findings.	Research Staff Office/HR	Surveys run and outcomes communicated to relevant parties	July 2015		CROS 2015 in progress at time of writing. Resource was not available to run PIRLS 2015 due to changes in HR personnel, but University decision to be taken as to running the Survey in subsequent years.
2.4	Feasibility/sustainability study – To instigate practice across the sector in relation to bridging funding.	Research Staff Office and Research Staff Working Group	Report to Research Staff Working Group and decision taken on University Bridging funding policy/guidance	Autumn 2013		University guidelines for use of Academic School funds for bridging research contracts have been agreed to enhance clarity and transparency for researchers and research managers.
2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5	Enhance workforce planning capability through implementation of a new HR management system.	HR	New HR management system in place	January 2014		New HR management system has been introduced August 2014. The new system will enhance workforce planning capability.
2.6	Review career guidance provided on HR	Research	Available	August		New research staff webpages have clear sections outlining relevant

	website and consider co-location with other materials.	Staff Office	guidance reviewed and location of research staff related materials agreed	2013		resources, policies and guidance, making these easier to locate. This includes a policy and resources library, Frequently Asked Questions and links to all policies relevant to research staff employment, research, development and wider organisational context. Some continuing updating of policies/guidance is required due to structural changes in the organisation of the University.
2.6, 4.4	Continue to support and engage with the Research Staff Association in relation to the careers and employability agenda.	Research Staff Office and Research Staff Working Group	Research Staff engaged and represented at university level meetings	n/a		The Sussex Research Staff Association has evolved into a group of Research Staff Representatives drawn from schools across the university. Currently there are 13 reps drawn from 7 (out of 12) Schools. The target is to recruit one rep for every school with 5 or more research staff. We have nearly reached this target with just 2 schools remaining in this category where reps still need to be recruited. Reps meet termly with the Research Staff Officer and a number of them sit on the University level Research Staff Working Group. Some of them also sit on their School Research Committee (or equivalent), although more work is required to ensure research staff representation at these committees in every school. In addition the termly Research Staff Forum, initiated in March 2014 enables the wider community of research staff to engage and raise issues, concerns, suggestions etc.
3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.4	Review with the Research Staff Association the provision of training for Research Staff.	Research Staff Office and Research Staff Working Group	Current training and development for research staff reviewed and reported to the Research Staff Working Group and other relevant committees.	Jan 2014		Full training and development review conducted and reports to RSWG in Oct 14. Review included survey and focus group of research staff, feedback from Heads of Schools, review of current provision and benchmarking provision against other institutions. In line with the outcomes of the review a new suite of training and development events and workshops tailored for research staff was launched for the 2014/15 academic year. Promoted through Research staff mailing list, website, newsletter and through Heads of School DRKEs etc. All new workshops will be mapped to the

			Actions and future strategies for research staff training identified.			<p>Researcher Development Framework</p> <p>Also promotion of provision offered through SDU and Researcher Development Programme (which is targeted at doctoral researchers but also open to research staff).</p>
3.2, 5.2	Explore the feasibility of placements for Research Staff (c/f Wilson Review recommendation 16)	Research Staff Office and Research Staff Working Group	Options for research staff placements identified and strategy in place	November 13		No action has been taken to date as it was not identified as a priority action for 2014/15 by the Research Staff Working Group.
3.6	Additional induction materials should be produced for research staff and contained within the new starter pack as well as being provided via the website and School offices. School (Research Staff Companion).	Research Staff Office	University level induction materials for research staff collated and provided to all new research staff upon joining Sussex	August 2013		<p>The Research Staff Office has initiated a quarterly induction/welcome event for new research staff from October 2014. The 2 hour event provides information about the support on offer across the University for research staff. In addition each new staff member in attendance receives a welcome pack of information. The information provided through the event is supported by a welcome email sent to all new research staff and through the information provided on the research staff webpages. Research Staff Reps from Psychology have developed a research staff induction handbook for the School. Roll out of a similar handbook will be encouraged for all academic schools as part of the 2015-17 implementation plan.</p> <p>The new research staff webpages have a specific area for new research staff. In addition, the policy and resources library, practical support and frequently asked questions pages all provide information useful to new research staff.</p>
3.6	Schools to review School specific induction materials provided to Research Staff	Academic Schools	All schools have a clear induction process and appropriate induction materials for new research staff.	August 2013		<p>There is currently inconsistency in induction processes at school level. Most schools have some form of induction for new research staff, but CROS 2013 indicates that not all new research staff receive this.</p> <p>Pockets of best practice exist – e.g. Psychology, where research staff reps have produced a handbook for research staff.</p>

						More work is required in best practice sharing and establishing greater consistency in school level induction.
4.1	Design processes and procedures for 3 years post contract careers support for research staff	Careers and Employability Centre	Post-contract careers support policy and procedures agreed and operational	July 2013		No action has been undertaken to date, there is not enough resource within the Careers and Employability Centre to undertake this additional workload.
4.5, 6.3	Identify best practice in research staff mentoring	Research Staff Office, HR, Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team	Report of research staff mentoring to relevant committees and mentoring actions and strategy for research staff identified	July 2014		<p>Research into mentoring schemes for research staff conducted and reported to the mentoring sub-group of the Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (June 2014).</p> <p>Research Staff Office coordinated pilot scheme of 'Mentoring Circles for Women in STEMM' taken forward in the first instance, for the 2014/15 academic year. If successful feasibility of extending the model of 'mentoring circles' to research staff (any gender) across the university will be explored.</p> <p>Some schools (e.g. Life Sciences and BSMS are also in the process of developing 1:1 mentoring schemes for researchers)</p>
5.2	Develop a plan to encourage research staff to engage with entrepreneurial and knowledge exchange activities.	Research and Enterprise Division, Sussex Innovation Centre	Opportunities for raising awareness and engaging with entrepreneurial and KE identified and promoted to research staff	January 2014		<p>The new Research Staff Development Series of workshops includes sessions for research staff on Impact, Forum on Impact, Workshops on public engagement, IP and commercialisation (the latter being in conjunction with the Sussex Innovation Centre that specialises in innovation and entrepreneurial activity).</p> <p>The Research and Enterprise Division's Sussex Research funding mechanism, provides funding to stimulate connections between Sussex academic with non-academic research uses (Higher Education Innovation Fund Kick Start Scheme)</p>
6.4	Introduce scheme to support those returning to research from a career break	Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team and Human	Scheme in place and advertised	31 st July 2015		The University is sponsoring 4 Daphne Jackson Fellowships for returning researchers from STEM disciplines to be hosted in each of the Science Schools. Positions were advertised in September 2014 and the first Fellows are expected to take up their positions in August 2015. The scheme is overseen by the Athena Swan Self-

		Resources				Assessment Team and coordinated by the research staff office. Consideration required about on-going support for the scheme and returners from other disciplines outside of the STEM subjects.
6.8	Introduce revised promotion procedures with explicit provision for personal circumstances	Human Resources	Revised promotion policy and procedures agreed and in place	July 2013		The new promotion procedure that factors in special personal circumstances have been approved came into effect for the 14/15 academic promotions rounds. The new procedures will be monitored and reported to the Research Staff Working Group following completion of the promotion round.
6.10	University to secure Athena SWAN bronze award. All Academic Schools in SET discipline areas to work towards the Athena SWAN silver award.	PVC, Athena Swan Self-Assessment Teams (University and School level)	University Bronze Award status. Academic Schools action plans identified and initial submissions placed	Various		Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze Award achieved in April 2013 Life Sciences and Physics achieved Athena Swan Bronze September 2014 and are working towards a November 2015 Silver submission. Engineering and Informatics and BSMS submitted Bronze Applications November 2014. Psychology and Maths submitting for Bronze in April 2015. Law and Political Sciences achieved Bronze GEM award April 2014 after participating in the Equality Challenge Unit's pilot of the Gender Equality Charter Mark.
7.1, 7.2	University Gap Analysis document posted on Research Staff website.	Research Staff Office	Gap analysis and action plan published on web	March 2013		All documents relating to the HR Excellence in Research award are published on the dedicated HR Excellence in Research webpage
7.1, 7.3, 7.4	Establish Research Staff Working Group (see 1.3) to monitor progress	Research Staff Office	Research Staff Working Group Convened and Terms of Reference and Membership Agreed	July 2013		Research Staff Working Group convened and first met in April 2014. The group at least termly to review research staff related matters, review the progress against the Concordat principles and receive recommendations. Research staff are represented on the group by 4 research staff reps from different schools.