

Research Staff Working Group

Key role

The Research Staff working group shall oversee the delivery of provision for research staff, including their career development, within the context of delivery to the University's Strategic Plan. A definition of the term 'Research Staff' is provided in [Annex 1](#).

Terms of Reference

- a) To monitor the University's policy and practice to ensure delivery of the Strategic Plan goals to 'continue to develop a sustainable and thriving postdoctoral research staff community' and 'perform well against our peers in aiding the career development of our postdoctoral staff'. In doing so, seek to ensure that the University of Sussex is an employer of choice for research staff.
- b) to monitor and review the University's on-going application of the Concordat to support the career development of researchers;
- c) to receive reports on the action plan projects identified in the University's HR Badge of Excellence in Research submission and oversee the renewal process;
- d) to receive recommendations from Research Staff Representatives and the Research Staff Forum;
- e) to benchmark the University's performance against other institutions (e.g. through tools such as CROS, PIRLS), and where necessary instigating amendments to the University's HR Badge of Excellence in Research action plan;
- f) to monitor the number and typology of research staff on an annual basis, by reviewing reports produced by HR (e.g. those required for the University's HESA return);
- g) to ensure data records and contact details are maintained and the University has suitable communication channels to engage with Research Staff;
- h) to oversee the professional services support for research staff, including recruitment, induction, appraisal, retention, training and career development activities to ensure an institutional coherence;
- i) to improve the employability of research staff (both within and out-with the academy);
- j) to represent the University and engage with national and international consultations relating to research staff;
- k) to oversee the University's relationship with external bodies focused on supporting research staff;

Composition

Membership

- Director of Research Staff Development (Chair)
- one Head of School
- two Directors of Research and Knowledge Exchange
- School Early Career Researcher Leads (or equivalent, where appointed)
- one School Administration Manager
- the Director of Human Resources (or nominee)
- Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Equality and Diversity (or nominee)
- Director of Research & Enterprise (or nominee)
- minimum of two research staff representatives
- Research Staff Officer (secretary).

Reports to

Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee and Human Resources Committee

ANNEX 1: Research Staff Definition

Our definition of research staff is drawn from the [Concordat to support the career development of researchers](#), and defines researchers as:

- ‘Individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed for this purpose.’

This includes all staff on Research Faculty Contracts (AR70-90), Marie Curie Fellows (AR98), and Research Assistants (AX60). Job titles may include postdoctoral research fellow, research fellows, senior research fellows, and research assistants.

We recognise that ‘research staff’ refers to a wide range of staff including those with

- different disciplinary backgrounds
- varying levels of training
- a wide variety of different experiences and responsibility types
- different types of contract (fixed or open ended, full or part time)
- diverse career expectations