



**HR Excellence in Research Award**  
**TUoS Action Plan for continued implementation of the Concordat to Support the**  
**Career Development of Researchers**

This action plan has been created based on the pulling together of recommendations to come out of the RSDC, the 2013 CROS & PIRLs reports recommendations, the Kroto Research Inspiration aims & objectives, the RPD action plan, HR strategy and on the basis of ongoing, in depth consultation with RS and PIs in faculties over the first two years of holding the award.

This is written from the perspective of building upon the progress made over the last two years and as such, previous actions are not re-iterated but are presumed to be maintained.

This action plan will be overseen by the Research Staff Development Committee, who will formally review progress at their meetings (held three times per year). Day to day implementation and progress monitoring will remain the responsibility of those assigned to specific actions.

**Concordat Principle 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research**

<u>Action required</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Who</u>
Continue to build on the positive developments in recruitment and selection processes: ~ continue clear advertising rather than reliance on ‘word of mouth’ ~ provision of a written job description and details of the qualifications & skills required of the post-holder <b>Success measures</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exploration and evidence gleaned through the ‘<i>conversational tour</i>’</li> <li>2. HR operations review of practice at operational meetings</li> </ol>	5.2015 6 monthly	PIs who are recruiting, supported by Faculty HR

Provide recruitment & selection training and ongoing support with the process. <b>Success measure</b> 1. Uptake levels at training events and ad hoc queries - to be reviewed by HR	Annually	HR Policy Development / Staff Development
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**Concordat Principle 2: 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**

<b>Action required</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Who</b>
Enhance the re-deployment system so it enables RS to match their transferable skills to appropriate, relevant vacancies right across TUoS: <b>Success measures</b> 1. Investigation in to the potential for researchers to be able to search vacancies to self-select 2. Provision of information and support to ensure RS complete their profiles to maximum impact	6.2015	HR Policy Development
Production of faculty tailored statements of expectations between RS, PI & the relevant faculty that are then communicated and implemented to support culture change: <b>Success measures</b> 1. Professional expectations between PI and RS are articulated and communicated from induction (reciprocal expectations need to be clarified upfront). 2. Professional expectations between academic department and research staff are articulated and communicated from induction (i.e. minimum standards governing provision for research staff in academic departments, including CPD).	8.2015 8.2015	All faculties led by Directors of Research & Innovation and supported by R&IS
Research staff should be thoroughly integrated as scholarly colleagues within academic departments at all levels (e.g. with PI, with fellow research staff, within research group or team or centre, within department): <b>Success measures</b> 1. Integration into appropriate groups/committees. 2. Building and sustaining research staff communities/associations through informal and/or formal practices/processes. Improved practice will be measured through staff consultation and departmental/faculty review of the implementation of faculty statements of expectation.	9.2016	All departments, led by Heads of those Departments  R&IS and HR as well as departmental review

<b>Action required</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Who</b>
<p>Support should be given to PIs to enable them to competently and confidently set expectations, performance manage and enable career development:</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tailored management development for PIs within the MANAGE programme (numbers engaged)</li> <li>2. Improved web resources available for PIs – launch of PI specific pages and leaflet</li> <li>3. SRDS training</li> <li>4. Awareness raising of Think Ahead – people know what it is when asked to explain</li> </ol>	<p>9.2015 1.2015 Annual offer 9.2014</p>	<p>HR Staff Development, RPD, Student Services</p>
<p>Develop mechanisms to broaden and communicate the recognition and value of researchers inside and outside of the institution and at peer and hierarchical levels:</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roll out of Kroto Research Inspiration – successful launch of the awards &amp; competitions</li> <li>2. Build on the 'Faculty of Science Researcher Awards' model – duplicated in at least one other faculty</li> </ol>	<p>8.2015 9.2016</p>	<p>KRI working group, Faculties</p>
<p>TUoS needs to be better at identifying talent at a very early stage of a fixed-term contract and then investing in and developing that talent: ~ having conversations early on ~ providing access to relevant professional development early on</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase in the volume of Fellowship development programmes across the faculties</li> </ol>	<p>12.2015</p>	<p>PIs in departments who line manage staff</p> <p>RPD</p>
<p>Improve the management of the exit process for those reaching the end of fixed term contracts, including provision of support and information.</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of a new questionnaire</li> <li>2. Increased exit data available from departing researchers</li> </ol>	<p>4.2015 2.2016</p>	<p>HR Policy Development / PIs whose staff are leaving</p>

**Concordat Principle 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment**

<b><u>Action required</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>	<b><u>Who</u></b>
<p>Continue to fully support schemes that enable FTCRS to increase their trajectory towards independence:</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of the Early Career Researcher Scheme</li> <li>2. Provision of Crucible</li> <li>3. Provision of TA:SURE</li> </ol>	<p>9.2014</p> <p>5.2016</p> <p>9.2016</p> <p>8.2016</p>	<p>PIs, R&amp;IS, RPD</p>
<p>Enable and support FTCRS who have demonstrated talent to apply in their own right for income (e.g. for small network grants and/or Fellowships). Utilising the above internal schemes and signposting to relevant external funding e.g. ESRC Future Leaders</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Details of sessions run 1-1 or in groups and translation in to applications</li> </ol>	<p>8.2016</p>	<p>PIs, R&amp;IS, RPD</p>
<p>Develop the 'v i s t a: carers beyond academia' strand to increase awareness of all employment opportunities</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Activity has occurred under the strand e.g. seminars, mentoring, careers expo</li> </ol>	<p>8.2015</p>	<p>RPD</p>
<p>Further embed Think Ahead</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comparative data analysis to show increase in uptake and consistent or improved anecdotal feedback from PGRs and ECRs year on year</li> <li>2. A consistent or improved engagement from partners e.g. mentors, speakers, facilitators with the delivery of the framework and its ambitions</li> </ol>	<p>8.2016</p> <p>8.2016</p>	<p>RPD</p>

<p>Roll out the new Kroto Research Inspiration (the focus of which is on promoting an ethos of creative research communication):</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision a suite of awards and recognition mechanisms that celebrate early career researchers' contribution to research</li> <li>2. Successful year two delivery of KRI, ideally with increased uptake / submissions to competitions</li> </ol>	<p>8.2015  8.2016</p>	<p>KRI working group</p>
<p>Provide all contract research staff and PGRs with access to mentors in the public, private and third not-for-profit sector (drawn from alumni) and to academic mentors within the University of Sheffield.</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Launch of the mentoring e-portal and collation of a baseline year of engagement data for progress measurement in 2017</li> </ol>	<p>4.2016</p>	<p>RPD</p>
<p>Utilise digital technology in CPD delivery to enable virtual engagement in learning</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evidence of online learning being created and made available to PGRs and ECRs that does not currently exist</li> </ol>	<p>8.2016</p>	<p>RPD and providers of DDP modules</p>
<p>Further develop induction practices at local, faculty and institutional level to promote the integration of all staff in to local and institutional communities (regardless of contract type or working pattern)</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New practices at faculty / department level</li> <li>2. Increased engagement with current provision</li> </ol>	<p>5.2015  9.2016</p>	<p>HR Staff Development, RPD, Departments, Faculties</p>

**Concordat Principle 4: The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career**

<b><u>Action required</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>	<b><u>Who</u></b>
<p>Continue the provision of mentors for researchers at all career stages:</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuation of the ECR mentoring programme</li> <li>2. Continuation of the Thesis mentoring scheme with increased mentor numbers</li> </ol>	8.2016	RPD, academics, research staff
<p>The SRDS process should be used to review the contribution of research staff in the round (i.e. to review core research project role and contributions outside of the project) and research staff should be able to undertake the review with someone other than their PI, should they prefer to.</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated SRDS guidelines to include a statement about the need for all managers to be reviewed against their performance in the role of manager, in addition to their functional role.</li> <li>2. Further investigation of departments where numbers of contract research staff participating in SRDS is lower than average in order to increase participation</li> <li>3. Further promote the SRDS process with a view to continually improving its effect on changing work practices</li> </ol>	6.2015 8.2015 9.2014	HR Organisational Development, PIs who manage staff
<p>Ensure that the benefits of a CPD opportunity are explicit, particularly in relation to research progress and impact:</p> <p><b>Success measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LMS advert makes clear the perceived outcomes understandable for PIs and RS to ensure appropriate CPD selection</li> </ol> <p>“It should be stressed that developmental activity can often have a direct impact on the success of the project, by distributing work, taking advantage of individual strengths and talents, and increasing the skill and effectiveness of researchers in key areas such as writing for publication or communicating with a wider audience” (CtStCDR)</p>	10.2014	RPD
<p>Get feedback from the VC Fellows and the EPSRC fellows to see their perspectives on the input they receive re. CPD to identify trends, good practices, cultures, values etc.</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anecdotal evidence gleaned during &amp; at exit point.</li> </ol>	8.2015	RDS

**Concordat Principle 5: Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning**

<b><u>Action required</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>	<b><u>Who</u></b>
Provide CPD on research ethics and integrity to all contract research staff. <b>Success measure</b> 1. The provision of learning and development opportunity in this area	8.2015	Q&GT
An academic should be named as the champion of research staff within each academic department (e.g. comparable to the PGR Tutor). <b>Success measure</b> 1. The existence of such a person in each department	7.2016	Departments, R&IS
Actively encourage and support RS to maintain a record of their CPD activity, the impact it has had and to link this to a career development plan <b>Success measure</b> 1. Ability to identify evidence of this practice happening in order to promote the benefits	9.2016	RPD, HR, Pls, champions
Good practice case studies with respect to research staff should be collected and used to further raise awareness about the benefits that accrue from investing in research staff and to further raise the profile and recognition of the research staff population. <b>Success measure</b> 1. Case studies created and made available online	5.2015	R&IS

**Concordat Principle 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers**

<b><u>Action required</u></b>	<b><u>Deadline</u></b>	<b><u>Who</u></b>
Retain institutional Athena Swan Charter award. <b>Success measure</b> 1. Retention of the award	8.2016	HR & departments

<p>Consider improvements that can be made to the employment experience and career development of part-time researchers (lower percentages were recorded for engagement in; budget management, supervision of PGRs, applying for funding independently, papers, induction, conferences, career planning) and implement them</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An internal recommendations paper published</li> </ol>	10.2015	RSDC
<p>Ensure a thorough support system for females preparing for maternity leave, through to their return to work, to enable an effective return and to ensure recognition of the value and impact of the employee's work and contribution</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Existence of a formal support system</li> </ol>	9.2014	HR Organisational Development & PIs who manage female returners

**Concordat Principle 7: 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**

<u>Action required</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Who</u>
<p>Oversee enhancements to the TUoS' provision for contract research staff by taking a strategic perspective, supported by regular review and consultation.</p> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minutes of meetings (3 per academic year) and recommendations in to actions</li> </ol>	Ongoing to 2016	RSDC
<p>Implement a project that is designed to collect data from academic departments on the different dimensions that together contribute to the research environment - the '<i>conversational tour</i>':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~ experience for ECRs in order to create a baseline from which to measure further improvements</li> <li>~ collect good practice examples</li> <li>~ identify support needs of PIs / the department to achieve environment enhancements</li> </ul> <p><b>Success measure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reports available for departments, for faculties and an overarching university 'good practice sharing' publication.</li> </ol>	5.2015	R&IS, supported by Director of Training and External Affairs, Faculty of Science

## **Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in the action plan**

CiCS	Corporate Information & Computing Systems
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey
CtStCDR	Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
ECRs	Early Career Researchers
EPSRC	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council
ESRC	Economic & Social Research Council
FTCRS	Fixed term contract research staff
HR	Human Resources
PGR	Postgraduate Research Student
PI	Principal Investigator
PIRLs	Principal Investigators & Research Leaders survey
Q&GT	Quality & Governance Team
RDS	Research Development Section
R&IS	Research & Innovation Services
RPD	Researcher Professional Development Team – university-wide based team of researcher developers
RS	Research Staff
RSDC	The Research Staff Development Committee ( <a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/committees/drcstandinggroup">http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ris/other/committees/drcstandinggroup</a> )
SRDS	Staff Development & Review Scheme
SS	Student Services
SURE	Sheffield Undergraduate Research Experience
TUoS	The University of Sheffield
VC	Vice Chancellor