

## University of Worcester HR Excellence Action Plan 2018 - 20

| PRINCIPLE 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research |                     |   |                              |                               |                    |   |  |
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| Action No.   | Concordat Reference | Action  | Relationship to 2016-18 Plan | Lead                          | Deadline           | Success Measures  | Status   |
| 1  | 1.1                 | Review KPIs related to recruitment and progression of researchers as part of development of new Research & KE Strategy. | Updated from 16/18           | DPVC Research                 | Jun-18             | 1) New KPIs established and new Research & KE Strategy launched<br>2) Full reporting on KPIs to Research Committee<br>3) Data on KPIs shows they have been met  | The approval of a new RKE Strategy was delayed until June 2020 for launch in Autumn 2020. The Strategy has moved away from including detailed KPIs but fundamentally commits to the recruitment, development and retention of excellent researchers at all career stages. The actions here are reflected across a number of actions in the new plan. |
|  |                     | Develop new set of KPIs related to recruitment and progression and embed in new strategy.                               |                              | DPVC Research                 | Oct-18             |   |  |
|  |                     | Report against new KPIs to Research Committee   |                              | DPVC Research working with HR | Jun-19 and ongoing |   | The probation and promotion policies have been subject to review through the HR Committee but have not been subject to full evaluation.  |
|  |                     | Review and evaluate effectiveness of new policies on probation, appraisal and promotion for research staff              |                              | DPVC Research working with HR | Jun-20 and ongoing |   |  |
| 2  | 1.1, 4.1            | Finalise and implement new policy for appraisal   | c/f from 16/18               | Director of HR                | Jun-19             | 1) Changes to policy and approach identified and implemented to ensure effective representation of Research staff.<br>2) Set of key indicators for monitoring effectiveness agreed.<br>3) Review of data in June 2020 | The decision was taken to delay the development of the new policy to align with the launch of the Academic Career Pathways scheme (see below)  |

| 3  | 1.3                 | Review of effectiveness of recruitment processes for externally-funded research posts   | c/f from 16/18            | Research Support Officer                 | Sep-19             | 1) Review completed<br>2) Recommendations made and processes revised accordingly  | Following review in summer 2019, the process has been revised significantly such that it is now aligned with wider recruitment processes which are managed through a bespoke online recruitment and selection tool (Stonefish). The process ensures that the Deputy PVC Research is involved in signing off on requests to recruit for all research posts and College Directors of RKE are fully involved in selection. |
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| 4  | 1.5, 2.6, 3.5       | Launch and monitor new Academic and Research Career Pathways Scheme   | c/f from 16/18            | Deputy Vice Chancellor and DPVC Research | Dec-18             | 1) Scheme launched<br>2) Staff engage with the scheme   | The development and launch of the scheme has been delayed and this action has been carried over.  |
|  |                     | Review of scheme  |                           | DPVC Research                            | Dec-19             | 1) Review and evaluation of scheme completed and reported to relevant committees.   |   |
| PRINCIPLE 2: Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation’s HR and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research |                     |   |                           |  |                    |   |   |
| No.  | Concordat Reference | Action  | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead                                     | Deadline           | Success Measures  | Status  |
| 5  | 2.1                 | Enhance data collected on staff engagement with development opportunities including differentiating by job role (i.e. academic, research, professional support) | c/f from 16/18            | Head of Organisational Development       | Sep-18             | 1) Enhanced quality data being collected on staff engagement with development opportunities   | Data on engagement with staff development now distinguishes by job role and is reported to HR Committee.  |
| 6  | 2.1                 | Increase research staff engagement with staff development opportunities   | c/f from 16/18            | Head of Organisational Development       | Jun-20 and ongoing | 1) 20% year-on-year increase in proportion of research staff engaged in all staff development programmes<br>2) Target 100% engagement of research staff in the Researcher Development Programme by the end of 2019/20 | This has not been achieved in a meaningful way. Although the data shows that research staff have engaged with various elements of the programme, engagement has varied from year to year and there are still a number of staff who do not engage at all. This action is reflected in a number of actions in the new action plan.  |

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| 7  | 2.1      | Review and revise staff exit survey to ensure capture of fuller data (including specifics on staff development)          | Updated from 16/18 | Director of HR                 | Jan-19             | 1) Identify specific changes required in relation to staff exit survey.<br>2) Agree process of identifying research staff for monitoring purposes<br>3) Implement revised exit survey<br>4) Monitor outcomes in relation to research staff. | The exit survey has been updated but overall staff engagement with the survey remains low and research staff engagement very low. It has hoped that more valuable data on researcher experience can be collected through CEDARS going forward.   |
| 8  | 2.2, 2.4 | Review new policy and processes on fixed term contracts  | c/f from 16/18     | Director of HR                 | Jan-19             | 1) Review of policy and processes complete<br>2) Outcomes of review feed into revision of policy as appropriate<br>3) Evidence of retention and redeployment of fixed term researchers  | A new process was developed. This is enacted by new HR Business Partners who work closely with line managers to implement the policy. A very small number of researchers are on FTCs but within this small group there are clear examples of how these staff have been retained between funded projects. |
| 9  | 2.3      | Evaluate Research Leaders programme and revise programme in light of evaluation  | c/f from 16/18     | Researcher Development Officer | Jul-18             | 1) Evaluation complete<br>2) Revised programme delivered in 18/19<br>3) All places on the programme filled  | The programme has been evaluated. Feedback suggested that participants would have valued greater input from active researchers. The programme was redesigned accordingly and overall responsibility for the programme was transferred to two senior researchers. It was relaunched in 2020.              |
| 10 | 2.3      | Engage with PIRLS19 and compare University results with PIRLS17. Also compare both sets of results with national results | c/f from 16/18     | Researcher Development Officer | May-19             | 1) Staff engage with survey with response rate greater than 40%   | This was not completed. This has been carried over as an action.   |
| 11 | 2.5      | Continued monitoring of pay progression for research staff   | c/f from 16/18     | Director of HR                 | Aug-18 and ongoing | 1) Monitoring confirms that progression is in accordance with the JNCES National Pay Framework Agreement  | Data has been regularly reviewed by Equal Pay group and is in line with the National Pay Framework Agreement.  |

| PRINCIPLE 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment |                     |   |                           |                                |          |  |  |
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| No.  | Concordat Reference | Action  | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead                           | Deadline | Success Measures   | Status   |
| 12   | 3.1                 | Full evaluation of the Researcher Development Programme   | New                       | Researcher Development Officer | Aug-18   | 1) Evaluation complete and informs the programme going forward   | There was a delay in evaluating the programme and this was not completed until 19/20. In undertaking the review, the decision was taken to utilise existing data (i.e. feedback on sessions within the programme) rather than collecting new data. The programme was relaunched in 2020/21 following this evaluation   |
| 13   | 3,1                 | Engage with CROS19 and compare University results with CROS17. Also compare both sets of results with national results.                 | c/f from 16/18            | Researcher Development Officer | May-19   | 1) Staff engage with survey with response rate at least 50%  | This was not completed. This has been carried over as an action.   |
| 14   | 3.3, 4.2            | Review of researcher engagement with the "Worcester Scheme"   | c/f from 16/18            | Researcher Development Officer | Jul-19   | 1) Review complete<br>2) Minimum of 10 researchers have successfully completed the programme over 2017/18 and 2018/19  | 7 research staff engaged with the scheme and consequently achieved Associate or Full Fellowship. 2 of these staff were consequently recruited on to research and teaching contracts in their School.   |
| 15   | 3.3, 3.9            | Develop a multi-format strategy to improve communication of training and development opportunities in the RDP, to research staff        | New                       | Researcher Development Officer | Aug-18   | 1) Target 100% engagement of research staff in the Researcher Development Programme by the end of 2019/20, i.e. all research staff engage with at least 1 workshop | The researcher development team developed a strategy to engage researchers more broadly with the RDP via weekly comms updates, social media and via dedicated virtual learning spaces. Overall engagement with the programme has been positive but as noted above, the target for research staff has not been hit.   |
| 16   | 3.2, 3.4, 3.8       | Develop and implement a strategy to ensure research staff consider a broad range of employment outcomes, both academic and non-academic | New                       | Researcher Development Officer | Jul-19   | 1) More than 35% of research staff engage with events that focus on employment options for researchers   | The majority of research staff at the University are on permanent contracts. Feedback from this group suggested that they had consequently already made career decisions and welcomed support in developing their career in HE but not more broadly. Research staff engagement with career development training opportunities has thus fallen somewhat below 35%. This action has been carried over. |

| 17  | 3.4                 | Organise conference for researchers in Jan19 focused on career development and evaluate effectiveness      | c/f from 16/18            | Researcher Development Officer     | Jan-19   | 1) Conference takes place and is well attended with positive feedback from attendees  | The decision was taken to delay the conference to Spring 2020 due to staff absence. It was then again delayed by the Covid pandemic. This action is not specifically carried over but will be considered by a Task and Finish Group looking at Career Development for PGRS and Research Staff. |
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| 18  | 3.7, 3.8            | Evaluation of research mentoring scheme  | c/f from 16/18            | Head of Organisational Development | Jan-19   | 1) Evaluation complete<br>2) Minimum of 5 research staff engaged with scheme<br>3) Evaluation outcomes feed into development of the programme going forward | The scheme was subject to evaluation and development and was relaunched in 2019/20.  |
| <b>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> |                     |  |                           |                                    |          |   |  |
| No.   | Concordat Reference | Action   | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead                               | Deadline | Success Measures  | Status   |
| 19  | 4.1                 | Relaunch the Emerging Researcher Research Café with a clear vision of its audience and purpose.            | c/f from 16/18            | Researcher Development Officer     | Oct-18   | 1) Café relaunched; well-attended with positive feedback  | The Café was relaunched in 2018/19. Engagement with Café was limited over 18/19 and the decision was taken to look at new ways of engaging staff collectively at College level through research away days and focused research events.   |
| 20  | 4.4                 | Find new approach/ strategy to encourage research staff to attend the Research Staff Forum                 | c/f from 16/18            | Researcher Development Officer     | Jul-19   | 1) Significant increase in attendance and engagement for 18/19 compared to 17/18  | Feedback from staff was that they did not value this forum. So the decision was taken to discontinue it.   |
| <b>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> |                     |  |                           |                                    |          |   |  |
| No.   | Concordat Reference | Action   | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead                               | Deadline | Success Measures  | Status   |
| 21  | 5.2                 | Develop a full programme of development activity focused on Knowledge Exchange including commercialisation | Updated from 16/18        | Research & KE Facilitator          | Oct-18   | Cluster on Knowledge Exchange part of the Researcher Development Programme for 18/19  | Training and development on KE has been embedded in the wider programme rather than standing alone, in particular in the cluster focused on "Impact and Engagement" and "Funding and Delivering your Research and KE".   |

| 22   | 5.3                 | Review policy and practice against the Concordat to Support Research Integrity and other external frameworks                                      | c/f from 16/18            | DPVC Research                  | Oct-18 and ongoing | Policy and practice continues to be aligned to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity | The Research Integrity and Governance Committee oversees the Concordat to Support Research Integrity action plan as well as compliance and alignment with other ethical and good research practice frameworks. This ensures that policy and practice is aligned with the Integrity Concordat. The committee reports to the RKE Committee.  |
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| 23   | 5.6, 3.1            | Evaluate effectiveness of tools to support PDP for research staff   | New                       | Researcher Development Officer | Jul-19             | 1) Evaluation complete<br>2) 25% of research staff using the tool                          | This action was not taken forward due to staff absence. Given negative research student feedback on the PDP tools available to them, it was decided not to explore rolling this out with research staff but to utilise the mentoring programme as the space to explore and identify PDP through a new "Research Compact". This matter will also be explored by the proposed Task and Finish Group on Career Development for PGRs and Research Staff. |
| <b>PRINCIPLE 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers</b> |                     |   |                           |                                |                    |  |  |
| No.  | Concordat Reference | Action  | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead                           | Deadline           | Success Measures   | Status   |
| 24   | 6.1                 | New E&D Framework and Objectives established – the current framework is due for review and will need updating in line with the new strategic plan | New                       | Chair of E&D Strategic Group   | Sep-19             | 1) New E&D Framework and associated objectives formally approved                           | A new E&D framework is still in development with initial delays exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. This action is not directly carried over to the new action plan.   |

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| 25 | 6.2  | Continued monitoring of recruitment data for age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation and faith              | c/f from 16/18 | HR Committee                              | Jul-18 and ongoing | 1) Recruitment data meets with Equality Objectives                               | There was some delay in this action as a result in the academic restructure in 18/19. Data on recruitment by protected characteristic has been submitted to HR Committee since 19/20 and actions identified as appropriate. Data for research staff is too small to be statistically significant for most protected characteristics with the exception of gender which shows that data for research staff is in line with the University's overall gender balance.                        |
| 26 | 6.7  | Continued review of workforce composition for age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation and faith by job role | c/f from 16/18 | HR Committee                              | Jul-18 and ongoing | 1) Workforce composition is aligned with Equality Objectives                     | There was some delay in this action as a result of the academic restructure in 18/19. Data on workforce composition by protected characteristic and job role has been submitted to HR Committee since 19/20 and actions identified as appropriate. Data for research staff is too small to be statistically significant for most protected characteristics with the exception of gender which shows that data for research staff is in line with the University's overall gender balance. |
| 27 | 6.10 | Establish a timetable for submissions for further Athena SWAN and other relevant awards                               | New            | Chair of Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team | Dec-18             | 1) Timetable for further institutional and departmental applications established | The decision was taken in 18/19 to submit for departmental awards at College level with the College of Life, Health and Environmental Sciences being first in Nov 21 and College of Business, Psychology and Sport in Nov 22. This timetable has subsequently been pushed back 1 year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.   |
| 28 | 6.10 | Submit for Departmental Silver Award in a minimum of 2 departments  | New            | Chair of Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team | Nov-21             | 1) Applications submitted, likely in Nov 2020 and Nov 2021.                      |   |

| 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 |                     |   |                           |               |          |  |   |
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| No.  | Concordat Reference | Action  | Relationship to 2016 Plan | Lead          | Deadline | Success Measures   | Status  |
| 29   | 7.1                 | Review membership and effectiveness of Concordat Implementation Group | New                       | DPVC Research | Dec-18   | 1) Group continues to ensure the effective implementation of the Concordat Action Plan | Membership and ToRs were reviewed in 18/19 by RKE Committee. Membership was deemed appropriate and the group effective in its role. This was revisited in 20/21. It was decided that a manager of researchers should be added to the membership and that this should be a Head of Department. |