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| **Researcher Development Action Plan 2019 (Updated)** |  |  |

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| **Institution name:** | | Ulster University | | **The institutional audience\* for this action plan**  (Complete or delete, as appropriate): | | |  | | | |
| **Cohort number:** | | 10 | | **Audience (beneficiaries of the action plan)** | | | **Number of** | | **Comments** | |
| **Date of submission:** | | 7th July 2022 | | Research-only staff | | | 180 | | 174 research only staff are Contract Research Staff | |
| **Institutional context:** | | Since the submission of our 2019 action plan, Ulster University has become a signatory to the Researcher Development Concordat. UU fully supports the Principles of this revised Concordat and  has co-created with colleagues from across the institution a series of value statements which directly align with the implementation of the key principles in the Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers particularly in terms of our supportive and inclusive research environment. | | Postgraduate researchers | | | 650 | |  | |
| Research and teaching staff | | | 579 | |  | |
| Teaching-only staff | | |  | |  | |
| Technicians | | |  | |  | |
| Clinicians | | |  | |  | |
| Professional support staff | | |  | |  | |
| Other (please provide numbers and details): | | |  | |  | |
| Previous Concordat Clause | Action Description | | Success Measure | | Deadline | Responsibility | | Progress Update/ Outcome | | Carried forward to new action plan? |
| 1.1-1.4, 2.4 | * Develop and   Implement Ulster University’s  Researcher Pool. | | Numbers of CRS in Researcher Pool to be  monitored and recorded at end of the academic year  2019/20 and 2020/21. | | End of academic year 2021 | Deputy Director of  People & Culture -  Partnerships and  Services | | The Researcher Pool remains open to CRS and PhD Researchers. It has proven popular with those PHD Researchers who have either completed their PHD and are awaiting results or have completed within the last 6 months. CRS uptake has been negligible due to the popularity of our Researcher Redeployment Process. | | Action closed |
| 2.1, 5.4, 5.5 | * Increase participation in the Doctoral College RDP across fewer more focused events. * Run a Festival of PhD Research and 3MT competition annually in 2019/20 and 2020/21. * Develop an action plan based on responses to the PRES by September 2019. | | The success of this action was to be measured by increased participation in RDP events from 1789 places filled in 2018-19 to 1800+ places filled between 2019-2020 and 1800+ places filled between 2020-2021.  Adjustments were made to this action as a result of COVID-19.  Success measure demonstrated in the outcome of actions in the PRES 2021 survey. | | End of academic year 2021  Virtual 3MT Final and online festival delivered in 2020 and 2021  PRES 2021 | Doctoral College  led by Dean of  Postgraduate Research  and Doctoral  Development Manager | | The full Researcher Development Programme moved online in April 2019 enhancing access and enabling participation and maintaining connections with PhD Researchers.  All targets were met and exceeded. Figures for Researcher Development Programme:  Academic year 2020-21:  200 workshops with 5,028 attendees  Academic year 2021-22:  169 workshops with 3,531 attendees  Target met but with some adjustments due to Covid restrictions: The 2020 and 2021 3MT Final was virtual with around 350-400 people watching online. The Festival was replaced with an online Writing Festival, ‘FortWRITE’, delivered in collaboration with University of Limerick. Planning and delivery of the 2022 Festival is complete.  PRES 2021 results ranked us 2nd overall in the UK for PhD researcher satisfaction. | | Action closed  The focus of our new HREiR action plan is to improve the employment experience and research environment for research staff. |
| 2.3 | * Develop a programme on leading an effective team. * All CRS to complete   a local induction.   * All CRS to complete Annual 1-1 Development, Appraisal and Review (DAR) Meeting | | A programme on leading an effective team was to be developed and communicated to all staff by the end of the reporting period.  The 2019 target was 100% participation in local induction training for CRS staff during the reporting period.  The 2019 target was 100% participation in DAR for CRS staff during the reporting period. | | End of academic year 2021  End of academic year 2021  End of academic year 2021 | Deputy Director People and Culture – Employee Experience | | During the period 2019-21, a new ENGAGE programme was developed and has now been launched. This programme will be strongly recommended to all PIs and line managers. ENGAGE is a foundational people management development programme providing learning in the essentials of people management.  All new research staff are invited to attend welcome events which inform colleagues of UU’s Research Support Services and our suite of researcher training and development programmes. We have also introduced ‘Induction Colleagues’ to support new members of staff in settling into their role. The March 2022 Research Survey showed that 50.4% found their local induction to be “very useful”. A decision has since been made to refresh the induction process.  In the March 2022 survey, 51.4% stated that they had participated in a DAR meeting and 53.9% stated that they regularly participate in one-to-one meetings. UU’s Development and Appraisal Review (DAR) process will be re-energised in the 2022/23 academic year. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see EI4; PCDI2; PCDI6; PCDM1; PCDR4  This action has been carried forward. Please see ECR1.  This action has been carried forward. Please see EM4. |
| 2.6 & 3.5 | * Development and delivery of a suite of researcher training and development programmes | | Engagement targets for 2020 and 2021: At least 25% of CRS to participate in researcher training and development programmes. | | End of academic years 2020 & 2021 | Director of Research and Impact | | Due to COVID-19, fewer programmes ran. However, the target was met with an average of 26% CRS participation across the suite of researcher training programmes. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see PCDI1, PCDI6, PCDM3 & PCDR1. |
| 3.8 & 4.5 | * UU to continue to develop the new Research Mentoring Scheme launched in May 2019. | | The new scheme was launched in May 2019 with 114 mentees participating. The target for May 2020 was to maintain this level of participation. | | May 2020 | Director of Research and Impact | | The Research Mentoring Programme was promoted at Faculty level and all research staff were invited to become a mentor and/or mentee. Between May 2019 and September 2021 over 190 mentees participated in the research mentoring scheme. Due to its popularity, the mentoring scheme will be updated to increase uptake and widen access to this resource. A new mentoring system is being procured to help with the management and data collection related to mentoring activity. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see PCDM2. |
| Principle 4 | * Following a review of applications in 2018/19, the Head of Research Performance will work with Faculties to increase awareness of sabbatical policy. | | In 2018/19 there were 25 sabbatical applications. The  target for 2019/20 and 2021/22 was to increase the number of applications to above 25 per academic year. | | End of academic years 2020 & 2021 | Head of Research Performance | | The 2019/20 target was met with 30 applicants. In 2021, COVID-19 had an impact on sabbatical applications and the number of applicants fell to 18. During both years 47% of applicants were female. | | Action closed  The Sabbatical Policy is now embedded in our BAU activities. |
| Principle 6 | * Continue roll out of Athena Swan applications and begin dialogue with BAME CRS. | | • All STEM schools to have applied for an Athena Swan award by November 2019.  • 75% of AHSSBL schools apply for an award by April 2021 | | November 2019 and April 2021. | Deputy Director People and Culture – Employee Experience | | All STEM schools now hold Athena Swan awards. This is 11 in total. In addition, 3 schools achieved Silver Athena Swan awards and 2 schools renewed their bronze awards evidencing our ongoing commitment to gender equality. Applications from AHSSBL schools were paused while awaiting release of the Transformed Athena Swan Charter. A BAME Network was established in November 2020. | | Our commitment to achieve Athena Swan awards across our schools is an ongoing integral element of our EDI BAU activities. |
| 2.6 | * CROS Survey to be launched in May 2019. | | CROS Survey to be run in June 2019. Researcher feedback to be used to inform future staff training and workshops. | | June 2019 | Director of R&I | | The CROS survey (CRS only) ran in June 2019 with 65 CRS respondents. The University now runs an annual ‘Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey’ based on the new Cedars format. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see ECI6 |
| Principles 4 and 7 | * Research Governance Triangle | | 2 x workshops were due to take place by October 2019. | | October 2019 | Director of Research and Impact | | A series of workshops took place prior to lockdown. A new Researcher Roundtable Forum is now being established to widen representation and participation from all tiers of research staff. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see EI7 |
| Principle 4,  5.5 | * Develop a dedicated CRS webpage | | Webpage was to be launched in June 2019. | | June 2019 | Research Engagement Officer | | Action completed in June 2019. A new, more expansive website called the Research Staff Hub is currently under development. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see ECI1, ER1, PCDI1 |
| 2.5-2.6 | * Academic Promotions Workshops to be provided for researchers | | This action was to be delivered for all researcher promotion schemes operating post April 2019 | | From late 2019 onwards | Deputy Director Partnerships and Services | | The current Academic Promotion Scheme was introduced in late 2019. The scheme includes three assessment areas, one of which is Research and Impact. Guidance documents are available, and workshops are run for potential applicants.  The Academic Promotions Scheme and the CRS Promotions Scheme are now being reviewed. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see EI3 |
| 3.9 | * Implement the Connected Programme to Promote Research Collaboration Across the Education Sector | | This four-year programme was originally planned to span the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2022. | | This action has been extended due to COVID-19. | Head of Research and Impact | | This programme funded by the DfE will be used for education projects with multiple cross-sector stakeholders. Funds totalling £925,852 will be used to support academics and research staff in undertaking collaborative projects and CPD opportunities. | | This action has been carried forward. Please see PCDM4. |
| Principle 7 | * People & Culture and Research & Impact to allocate staff resources to ensure the effective delivery of this action plan. | | Recruitment of Research Staff Experience Officer during the reporting period. | | As soon as possible | Deputy Director P&C and Director R&I | | Action completed. A Research Staff Experience Officer was appointed in October 2021. | | Action closed. |

\* The Concordat defines researchers as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose by a higher education institution or research institute. The primary audience is research staff, e.g. postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, research assistants. The Concordat encourages institutions to include other groups who actively engage in research as beneficiaries of their Concordat action plan. These could be postgraduate researchers; staff on teaching and research, or teaching contracts; clinicians; professional support staff; technicians.