Action Plan for 2016-18 to implementation the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers at the University of Hull

The following Action Plan has been created following an extensive review of the progress achieved to date to meet the aspirations articulated in the seven principles of the 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researcher'. It presents a series of actions, categorised by principle, which have been agreed by the review team as important next steps in meeting these aspirations and aligning action to the strategic goals of the University at this time of unprecedented change in the Higher Education sector. The review team wished to emphasize the importance of recognising and valuing researchers as an essential part of the University's human resources and so has chosen to begin the plan with Principle Two.

Abbreviations:

ADR	Associate Dean for Research
ADE	Associate Dean for Engagement
AII	Academic Investment Initiative
CROS15	Careers in Research Online Survey 2015
CSG	Concordats Steering Group
ED&I	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team
FG	Focus Group (14/12/15)
FTC	Fixed term contract
GS	Graduate School
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
LEAP	Learning Enhancement and Academic Practice Directorate
MARCOMS	Marketing and Communication department
PSOD	Head of People Services and Organisational Development
PI	Principal Investigator
PIRLS15	Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey 2015
PVC-RE	Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise
RDF	Vitae Researcher Development Framework
REF	Research Excellence Framework
R&E	Research and Enterprise Team
RIS	Research Information System
R&S	Recruitment and selection
SD	Staff Development
UREC	University Research and Enterprise Committee
UASSG	University Athena Swan Steering Group

Principle 2: RECOGNITION AND VALUE
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.

Sub principle	Action	Lead	Supported by:	Success Criteria	Timescale
1. Employers are encouraged to value and afford equal treatment to all researchers, regardless of whether they are employed on a fixed term or similar contract. In particular, employers should ensure that the development of researchers is not undermined by instability of employment contracts. This approach should be embedded throughout all departmental structures and systems.	Faculties to continue to work towards ensuring equality of opportunity across the research employees' experience. HR Partners to conduct spot check audits of 10% of researchers' records to ensure that attendance on development courses is not undermined by stability in working contract. Ensure evidence from training records available for researchers on both Continuing and Fixed Term Contracts.	Deans HR Partners Head of SD	HoDs ADRs	- Employee Engagement survey will demonstrate improving scores. - CROS survey questions relating to feeling integrated into own department and feeling recognised for their contribution to increase to an average of 80%. Annual review will clearly identify research staff	Annual review points: Sept 2016; 2017 Dec 2017 Annual Review points
3. Research managers should be required to participate in active performance management, including career development guidance, and supervision of those who work in their teams. Employers should ensure that research managers are made aware of, and understand their responsibilities for the management of researchers and should provide training opportunities, including equality and diversity training, to support research managers in doing this. Institutions will wish to consider how research managers' performance in these areas is developed, assessed and rewarded, and how effectively this supports good research management.	To provide leadership and management skills training (including equality and diversity training) for research managers, acknowledging existing areas of good practice. Ensure research managers included in rollout of updated Performance Management process. Ensure all research managers attend leadership and management skills courses Review appraisals process to ensure that it helps manage performance and in particular how managers are assessed, developed and rewarded To review current induction programme and determine whether a specific research induction plan should be created for Researchers. (See also Principle 3&4:10)	Head of SD Deans HRD Head of SD	ADRs ADRs	Review of course provision Create and review attendance records. Completed review Implementation of any changes Review completed and changes implemented	Dec16 Sept 2017 Dec 2017 July 2016 Dec 2016 Sept 2016
4. Organisational systems must be capable of supporting continuity of employment for researchers, such as funding between grants, other schemes for supporting time between grant funding, or systems for redeploying researchers within organisations where resources allow. Funders are expected to make it a priority to consider how their policies, guidance and funding can be enhanced to help employers to achieve this objective.	Investigate possible role of Internship schemes in R&E, Faculties and SD to offer a bridge between research projects or to expand career experience Investigate the potential for University to set up a bridging fund(time limited) to support continuity	Head of Careers and Employability Service PVC R&E	HR Partner Team Deans; CSG CFO	- Feasibility and sustainability of the scheme has been assessed, reported to UREC via CSG. Fund established	Sept 2017 Dec 2017
6. Researchers need to be offered opportunities to develop their own careers as well as having access to additional pay progression. Promotion opportunities should be transparent, effectively communicated and open to all staff. It is helpful if clear career frameworks for early	University to explore ways to reward and recognise excellence in research without the financial limitations of research project funding. Ensure appropriate use of Employee Recognition Scheme once launched	HR Partner Team Head of PSOD	ADRs	- Reward mechanisms identified approved by UREC and implemented - CROS and PIRLS survey will demonstrate increase in satisfaction.	Dec 2017 Sept 2017

stage researchers are outlined in organisational HR strategies.					

Principles 3 & 4: SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Principle 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.
Principle 4: The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.

Sub principle	Action	Lead	Supported by:	Success Criteria	Timescale
2. A wide variety of career paths is open to researchers, and the ability to move between different paths is key to a successful career. It is recognised that this mobility brings great benefit to the UK economy and organisations will, therefore, wish to be confident that their culture supports a broad-minded approach to researcher careers and that all career paths are valued equally.	To evaluate the current trial of offering PDRA posts in specialised areas across the institution where clusters of researchers work together on emerging research themes identified as important to the University, with the aim to better balance research groups.	Director of Research	R&E Deans ADRs	- Trial evaluated - PDRA numbers increase - Research outputs increased	Dec 2017
3. Employers, funders and researchers recognise that researchers need to develop transferable skills, delivered through embedded training, in order to stay competitive in both internal and external job markets. Therefore, as well as the necessary training and appropriate skills, competencies and understanding to carry out a funded project, researchers also need support to develop the communication and other professional skills that they will need to be both effective researchers and highly-skilled professionals in whatever field they choose to enter.	Continue to enhance the portfolio of researcher development opportunities.	Head of SD		- Year on year increase in range of activity - Data available to analyse impact - Content of portfolio influenced by researchers	Annual review Sept by SD to CSG
	Develop/enhance existing profession skills programme for researchers (not research skills) to allow professional development.	Head of SD		Professions skills programmed developed and implemented	Dec 2017
	Launch revised programme	Head of SD	R&E		Sept 2016
	Evaluate revised programme using interim review and survey.	Head of PSOD	Head of SD		Dec 2016
6. Employers should provide a planned induction programme for researchers, on appointment to a research post, to ensure early effectiveness through the understanding of the organisation and its policies and procedures. They should also ensure that research managers provide effective research environments for the training and development of researchers and encourage them to maintain or start their continuous professional development	Please see Principle 2:3				
	Explore barriers to participation in development events and opportunities	CSG to commission		- Evidence collected and reported to CSG via ADRs	Sept 2016
	Assess research environment and develop improvement plans	Deans	ADRs	- Greater take up of development opportunities	Dec 2017
	Include professional development in appraisal system – see action 2.3	HRD		Revise appraisal process	Jul 2016
7. Employers and funders will wish to consider articulating the skills that should be developed at each stage of their staff development frameworks and should encourage researchers to acquire and practice those skills. For example, researchers may be given the opportunity to manage part of the budget for a project, or to act as a mentor or advisor to other researchers and students.	Continue to promote RDF to researchers and their research leaders as a useful tool to plan and action development as a researcher. Integrate with new "on-boarding" processes. Include appropriate content within updated performance management training.	Head of SD	ADRs	- RDF used to identify skills sets required by individual researchers and consideration given to the opportunities that can be made available to support acquisition of those skills - Take up and renewal of RDF licenses	Annual review Dec 2016. Annual review of RDF licences in Jan
	Include in the annual appraisal process	HODs		Feedback from annual appraisal process	Dec 2016, 2017

8. Employers also should provide a specific research career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, which should include the availability of mentors involved in providing support and guidance for the personal and professional development of researchers. All researchers should be familiar with such provisions and arrangements.	As part of the revised training programme for researchers, review the current mentoring arrangements to ensure research specific requirements are catered for. To work with the Director of Research to identify career pathways for Researchers and actions to implement. Creation of career development frameworks for researchers	CSG Director of Research Head of SD	SD HR Partner Team ADRs Deans	Researchers have access to a flexible and appropriate mentoring scheme that enables with career development. Potential career pathways are clearly articulated Career development frameworks created and made available	Dec 2016 Dec 2016 Dec 2016
9. Research managers should actively encourage researchers to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity, so far as is possible within the project. 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. Funding bodies acknowledge that the training of researchers is a significant contribution to research output and they encourage employers and mentors to adopt these practices.	Researchers are able to access support to discuss CPD activity and have access to formal development as required. (See also Principle 3&4:6) Revised training programme for researchers to have clearly articulated learning pathways and to clarify training that is: • Must have/do • Optional • Enhanced	Deans Head of SD	ADRs;PIs, HoDs	- Improved responses in both CROS and PIRLS surveys, e.g. number of days used for CPD activity - Scope of content demonstrably increased by 50% - Evaluation of relevance 75% positive on feedback forms	Sept 2017 Sept 2017
10. Researchers should be empowered by having realistic understanding of, and information about, their own career development and career direction options as well as taking personal responsibility for their choices at the appropriate times. Employers should introduce appraisal systems for all researchers for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner. It is important that researchers have access to honest and transparent advice on their prospects for success in their preferred career.	Enhance performance management and appraisal process so that it will be flexible enough to accommodate specific needs of researchers to enable a meaningful process (see also action 2.3)	HRD	Deans,ADRs, HoDs, PIs and SD	Increased satisfaction with the value of appraisal in results of CROS and PIRLS survey e.g. to 70% as useful overall for both groups	Sept 2017
12. Employers will ensure that where researchers are provided with teaching and demonstrating opportunities as part of their career development, suitable training and support is provided.	New learning and teaching provision to be evaluated and extended as required.	Director of LEAP	SD	Take up and value evaluated successfully, reported to CSG	Dec 2016
14. Mentoring arrangements should be supported by employers as a key mechanism for career development and enhancement.	(See Principle 3&4:8)				

Principle 5: RESEARCHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES
Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.

Sub principle	Action	Lead	Supported by:	Success Criteria	Timescale
1. Researchers are employed to advance knowledge and should exercise and develop increased capacity for independent, honest and critical thought throughout their careers.	Continue to implement the action plan for the Concordat to Support Research Integrity	CSG	Deans; R&E; GS; ADRs to communicate action plan to faculties	- Local areas report on progress to UREC via CSG - University able to evidence compliance to HEFCE	September 2016 On going
	Researchers output to be monitored on an annual basis to ensure that output does not diminish over time	Deans	ADR	Individuals research outputs are maintained over sustained periods	Start 2016 and then ongoing
2. Researchers should develop their ability to transfer and exploit knowledge where appropriate and facilitate its use in policy making and the commercialisation of research for the benefit of their employing organisation, as well as the wider society and economy as a whole	Promote and communicate opportunities for developing awareness of commercialising research and knowledge transfer	Director of Commercial Research	ADRs, SD, HR to promote through their existing processes and programmes	- Increased awareness and opportunities to take part as measured in CROS survey to achieve 75% for awareness and 65% for taking part.	Sept 2017
	Researchers encouraged to consider impact when preparing grant applications	ADR	HoD	- No of applications including effective reference to impact	Dec 2016
	Training on making grant applications included as part of revised training programme for researchers	Head of SD	R&E		Sept 2016
3. Researchers should recognise their responsibility to conduct and disseminate research results in an honest and ethical manner and to contribute to the wider body of knowledge	CSG to identify clear measures to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of Concordat to Support Research Integrity	CSG	ADRs	- Measures and training required under Concordat are delivered	Annual Review 2016
	Clear dissemination of good practice policies on website	CSG	Marcomms	- University website contains up to date and relevant material	
5. Researchers should recognise that the primary responsibility for managing and pursuing their career is theirs. Accordingly, they should identify training needs and actively seek out opportunities for learning and development in order to further that career and take personal responsibility for their choices. Research managers and employers also have a responsibility	Communicate the expectations of the University that researchers should be proactive in engaging with their career development through message on webpage by PVC-RE and clear links to information on sources of support	PVC-RE	CSG; ADRs, Marcomms	- Effectiveness of message evaluated using data analytics and results of the Employee Engagement Survey	June 2016
6. Researchers should ensure that their career development requirements and activities are regularly discussed, monitored and evaluated throughout the year in discussion with their research manager and mentor, and that they commit themselves fully to all such activities. Researchers are encouraged to record their Personal Development Planning (PDP) and CPD activities, a log of which may be presented to current and future employers as appropriate.	Use of RDF as a method of recording CPD is promoted as part of revised performance management process.	CSG	ADRs/SD	- Take up RDF licences. CSG to support this programme and review uptake data with data from SD as administrators of the RDF	Annual Review of RDF licences Jan 2017; 2018.
	Enhance the appraisal system to act as a trigger for career development discussion and recording of the conversations using the RDF.	HRD		- Higher take up of RDF licenses (as reported to CSG twice annually)	May and Dec 2016; 2017; 2018

	Principle 6: DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers					
Sub principle	**Action**	**Lead**	**Supported by:**	**Success Criteria**		**Timescale**
3. It should be emphasised that the demanding nature of research careers has a disproportionate effect on certain groups. We strongly recommend that all members of the UK research community actively address the disincentives and indirect obstacles to retention and progression in research careers which may disproportionately impact on some groups more than others.	Impact assess university wide initiatives and incentives for identifying, retaining and developing researchers for report to UREC via CSG. Ensure synergy with Athena Swan to complement the work being done across the University.	Head of ED&I Head of ED&I	Deans HR; ADRs,Faculty AS champions	Review completed, evaluation made and actioned Measure as part of relevant surveys e.g. CROS and PIRLS		To meet Athena Swan review timescales Annual review
4. Employers should ensure that the working conditions for researchers provide the flexibility necessary for successful research performance in line with legal requirements. Employers should recognise that for parents and others who have taken career breaks, including parental leave, have worked part-time, or have taken atypical routes into research, the "early career" period may be prolonged, and this may be a time where the risk of attrition from the research path is most acute. Working conditions should allow both female and male researchers to combine family and work, children and career.	Continued development of positive research environments where flexibility is encouraged and awareness of individual challenges can be accommodated. Ensure alignment with Athena Swan action plan	Deans Head of ED&I	ADRs	- Positive data from Employee Engagement Survey suggesting more flexible responses are made (e.g. fewer individuals identify problems >10% of sample). Research staff clearly identified in survey responses. - data from CROS and PIRLS 2017 suggest increasingly positive and increasingly similar attitudes to their employment experience - actively promote externally funded returning-to-work fellowship programmes Aligned delivery programmes		Sept 2016 Sept 2017 Sept 2016 July 2016
10. Employers should also consider participation in schemes such as the Athena SWAN Charter, the Juno Project and other initiatives aimed at promoting diversity in research careers.	The University has been awarded the Athena Swan Bronze Award. The University signed up to University wide applications for departments or schools	HoDs		- Number and success of departmental or school applications		Ongoing annual review beginning Sept 2016

	Principle 7: MONITORING AND EVALUATION The sector and stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.					
Sub principle	**Action**	**Lead**	**Supported by**	**Success Criteria**		**Timescale**
1. The implementation of the Concordat's principles will lead to greater integration of researchers into the mainstream management and career development structures of their employing organisations. The aim of this section is to promote implementation through a collective commitment to reviewing its progress.	Develop an explicit communication strategy to ensure greater awareness of the Concordat Agenda	CSG	Concordat lead; Marcomms to advise	- Website populated with information that is relevant, accessible and up-to-date - Use data analytics to evaluate access and use of site		June 2017
4. The signatories recognise the value of innovation in practices and of sharing practice between institutions and aim to promote these throughout the implementation and review process.	The University to maintain its membership of the Vitae organisation. To maintain a regional and national presence at Vitae events and networks	PVC-R&E Head of SD	CSG GS	- Membership retained and use of Vitae website promoted during Induction and the revised training programme - Events and networks attended and learning is shared.		Annual review Sept 2016

The funding signatories will consider aligning their support for transferable and career development skills. It is expected that Vitae, the national programme dedicated to realising the potential of researchers, funded by the Research Councils, will play a major role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing the capability of the sector to implement aspects of the Concordat, as well as establishing strategic partnerships between funders.	To maintain good practice sharing opportunities through the Network of Expert Researcher Developers (NERDS) To continue to promote and support the use of the RDF to research students and staff and include in on boarding material for both staff and students.	Head of SD SD	GS HR ADR CSG GS	 - On boarding material for staff and students include information on the RDF and its use in career planning/development.	Annual Review Dec 2016; 2017
5. Under public sector equality schemes, employers are required to monitor equality and diversity indicators for their researchers. This section focuses on the co-ordination and enhancement of existing information collection and not on the creation of additional data. There is a strong presumption that in implementing the Concordat, significant emphasis will be placed on the use of existing data and information sources and on the sharing of good practice between institutions and to provide evidence of its impact.	Continue to take part in the national CROS and PIRLS surveys Develop the use of focus groups to add additional insights to survey data across the University and through networks with other HEIs Equality and Diversity data presented to UREC for profiling of researchers and impact/risk assessment. Integration of activities with Athena Swan	CSG to commission DoR Head of ED&I Head of ED&I	 ADRs UREC HR Services Team	- Surveys conducted and outcomes presented to UREC and used to inform future planning. - Researchers are consulted on pertinent and relevant issues relating to research across the University and beyond. - Where ED&I data highlights trends which require further investigation, action is then taken to address the relevant issues. Limited additional datasets	Review Sept 2017 As required for specific purposes Annual review Annual review

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

Sub principle	Action	Lead	Supported by:	Success Criteria	Timescale
2. Employers should strive to attract excellence and respect diversity (see Principle 6). Recruitment and selection procedures should be informative, transparent and open to all qualified applicants regardless of background. Person and vacancy specifications must clearly identify the skills required for the post and these requirements should be relevant to the role.	Recruitment processes must reflect the University's standard on diversity and inclusion and appropriate to research recruitment (clear specification, etc) Advice to PIs on naming researchers at the point of application for funding is consistently applied in line with University Recruitment and Selection policies.	HRD Deans	HR Resourcing ADR, DOR	- Recruitment and selection in line with funding council requirements and University commitment to E&D. E&D reports to evidence delivery of action.	Sept 2016 Annual Review: Dec 16/ Dec 2017
4. To assure fairness, consistency and the best assessment of the candidates' potential, recruitment and progression panels should reflect diversity as well as a range of experience and expertise. In order to promote these values, individuals who are members of recruitment and promotion panels should have received relevant recent training. Unsuccessful applicants should be given appropriate feedback if requested as this may be of assistance to the researcher in considering their further career development.	University recruitment processes to be fully applied to all roles All recruitment panel members receive training before taking part in recruitment Review the need for further training on providing tailored feedback to unsuccessful candidates	HRD HRD	HR Resourcing HR Resourcing	All Chairs of panels to have had appropriate training. Online training registers maintained by SD When requested, unsuccessful candidates are provided with appropriate constructive feedback tailored to the role and aligned to the RDF.	Sept 16 Ongoing Sept 16