

SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY CONCORDAT ACTION PLAN - v3.0 (JANUARY 2017)

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Principle 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research				
Action		Lead	Timescale	Success Measure
1.1. Management Information				
1.1.1.	Receive an annual management information report on starters, leavers and career progression. To include all academic and research posts analysed by captured protected characteristics, and details of staff on re-deployment. RCSC will examine these data annually and devise actions as appropriate to RCSC's remit to ensure that our Concordat initiatives are meeting the needs of a changing staffing profile.	HR	January 2018 and annually thereafter.	Data are routinely used as an evidence base for planning and targeted development initiatives are put in place for researchers as necessary. The University has a better understanding of why staff are leaving and what development measures to put in place. Increased satisfaction is seen in staff surveys.
1.1.2.	Analyse exit questionnaire data to identify potential areas for development initiatives linked to reasons for leaving.			
1.1.3.	Monitor number of applications and success rate across Faculties for Academic Progression to Reader and Academic Appointment to Professor.	HR with Professoriate Committee		
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective recruitment and promotion practice underpinned by equality and diversity values. • Higher retention of staff through addressing issues raised by leavers. • Better targeted development initiatives as a result of having an evidence-base for planning. 				
1.2. Recruitment Practice				
1.2.1.	Review recruitment guidance and support to i) ensure appropriate prioritisation of research-active criteria during recruitment and selection of academic staff, dependent on the post and the	HR (with Chairs of panels)	Academic Year 2016-17 to	All new academic staff, in relevant disciplines, are

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	discipline, and ii) encourage research-active staff members on all academic recruitment panels.		update guidance. 2017-18 to promote guidance. 2018 onwards to review impact.	engaged in the mini-REF process. All recruitment panels to have research representation.
1.2.2.	The University will continue to ensure that the Recruitment & Selection training has a focus on Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias. All members of recruitment panels will be asked to complete the Unconscious Bias E-Learning module and a checkbox will be added to the chairs report to confirm this for all panel members. All new members of staff will be asked to complete the Unconscious Bias module and the Equality & Diversity module as part of induction.	HR (aligned to Athena SWAN SAT)	January 2018 and monitored annually thereafter.	All staff on academic recruitment panels to have completed Unconscious Bias training. All academic and research staff recruited since September 2016 to have completed Unconscious Bias training.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-active staff in the academic staff pool will increase, benefiting both the teaching and research agenda and enhancing research-informed teaching. • Unconscious bias awareness will increase within the academic staff, promoting improved E&D practice 				

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RECOGNITION AND VALUE

Principle 2: Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisations human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research				
Action		Lead	Timescale	Success measure
2.1. Communications and Feedback				
2.1.1.	Ensure guidance on the academic progression career pathways that are available to staff is readily accessible and promoted via HR webpages and delivered sessions, including progression to Reader, academic appointment to Professor and progression from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer.	HR	Review data January 2018 and annually thereafter.	Progression data as in 1.1.3. Attendance at sessions on academic progression.
2.1.2.	Develop a range of case studies for the web pages that reflect staff diversity and different routes for progression to give a sense of how this can be achieved. These will be collected by alerting people who are making progression decisions (e.g. Faculty Assistant Dean - Research) to identify good candidates for case studies.		Case studies ready for start of Academic Year 2018-19.	Availability of 2 case studies for each academic level. Increase in positive responses to CROS Q10d around opportunities for promotion and progression (>30%).
2.1.3.	Undertake the 2017 Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) to measure progress in enhancing the career satisfaction of the University's Research staff category and use the outcomes of the survey to identify new priorities for action. Explore the introduction of an additional survey question to help identify responses from academics who are research-active (but not necessarily based in a research centre or on a research-only contract).	HR	Survey Autumn 2017, then every 3 years. Report Summer 2018, then every 3 years.	EOS, CROS and PIRLS completed and analysed. Increase in satisfaction compared with the 2014/2015 results. EOS 2017 target: 60%

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2.1.4.	Undertake CROS 2017 and PIRLS 2017 to measure progress in enhancing the career satisfaction of the University's researchers and identify new priorities for action.	RIO, RCSC	Surveys Spring 2017, then every 2 years.	response rate in the Research staff category (58% in 2014 = 82 returns), CROS 2017 target: >60 responses (48 in 2015), PIRLS 2017 target: >40 responses representing all 4 Faculties (38 in 2015).
2.1.5.	Encourage an increased number of responses in surveys, specifically CROS and PIRLS, to ensure data is representative via targeted promotion to relevant groups and individuals.		Report January 2018, then every 2 years. Newsletter February 2018, then every 2 years.	
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signposting of, and feedback on, routes to researcher career progression. • To generate comparative data that will give a strong indication of progress to date, and emerging areas to prioritise. • Indication of the quality and vitality of the research environment and identify areas for action/improvement. 				
<p>2.2. Management and appraisals</p>				
2.2.1.	Provide support and guidance to help managers understand their responsibilities for the management of researchers, as set out in the statement of expectations, through specific direct communication to the managers and training as appropriate.	HR (with RIO)	Newsletter June 2017 building on guidance.	High appraisal completion rates are maintained (>98%).
2.2.2.	Feed into a wider University project on enhancing the quality of academic appraisal by focussing on i) supplementary guidance for appraisers with research and impact prompts and advice on encouraging the use of the RDF/RDF Planner and ii) a requirement for research and CPD plans, with monitoring of progress against targets, specifically publication strategies.		For Summer 2018 appraisal round and then via annual reminders.	Increased satisfaction rates on appraisals measured by relevant EOS questions and CROS Q14 and PIRLS Q15 (target >60%). Researcher needs are reflected in any new

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				academic appraisal processes and guidance.
2.2.3.	Encourage managers and staff to utilise the appraisal guidance and toolkit. Specific communication will take place to managers and staff, and workshops will be available prior to appraisals taking place.			All appraisers trained in conducting appraisal.
Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced quality of appraisals to meet researcher needs, leading to targeted CPD activity of staff and increased uptake of CPD across SHU academics. Increased job satisfaction due to line manager support via appraisal. 				
2.3. Research Assessment and Recognition				
2.3.1.	Encourage all research-active staff to engage with the University's regular assessment of research (mini-REF) as a developmental exercise to get feedback on the quality of research outputs and future publication strategies.	RIO (with UoA Coordinators and Assistant Deans Research)	mini-REF 2017 and mini-REF 2019	<p>High numbers of research active staff (>500) submitting outputs for assessment to the mini-REF. In REF 2014 the University submitted 249 staff (226.2 FTE) from a considered pool of 413 academic staff. The University wishes to increase staff engagement above REF 2014 levels.</p> <p>Constructive feedback provided to all submitting staff on quality of outputs and publication strategy.</p>
2.3.2.	Monitor the delivery of the "people" aspects of REF 2014 UoA strategies, which cover training and development of researchers and succession planning through the submission of narratives and metrics to the University's mini-REF.			
2.3.3.	Monitor the introduction of new research policies and associated guidance aimed at raising research quality (Peer Support, 2016 and Publication Strategy Guidance, 2016) through grant success rates and mini-REF output quality.			

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<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the support and development needs of staff to maximise their potential through the publication of research outputs and the development of research impact. • Provides focus for researchers within a UoA including a single point of contact and advice via the UoA Coordinator. • An indication of the strength of the research environment, progress against REF strategies and defining areas that require support or improvement. 				
<p>2.4. Academic Work planning</p>				
2.4.1.	Review of time allocation for research for newly appointed research-active staff in priority areas, with the aim of enabling such staff to produce research outputs for the next REF.	PVC Research and Innovation (with research managers)	2016-17 Academic year to propose ECR policy	ECRs in REF priority areas have a formalised time allocation to undertake research. Increased satisfaction from ECRs (via CROS Q9).
2.4.2.	Closer working between department managers/ work planners and UoA coordinators/managers of research to ensure alignment to maximise research benefits.		2017-18 to implement policy	
2.4.3.	Consideration in the work-planning model of the balance of activities undertaken by teaching staff, such that ECR academic staff are given proportionately less teaching and related administration.		2018 onwards to review impact of policy	
2.4.4.	Prioritisation of support for ECRs who have demonstrated research potential for the next REF.			
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECRs to maximise research opportunities and outputs, develop their research profile and contribute to the REF submission. • Supports increased staff satisfaction. 				

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SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

<p>Principle 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment</p> <p>Principle 4: The importance of researcher's' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career</p>				
Action		Lead	Timescale	Success measure
3.1. Mentoring and Wellbeing				
3.1.1.	Develop a University wide approach to mentoring - ensure mentoring is embedded with specific development programmes that are open to research staff, as well as ensuring that mentoring is available on an <i>ad-hoc</i> needs basis by pulling together a pool of mentors.	HR	April 2017	A range of mentoring opportunities is available to staff, e.g. Aspire, Aurora and subject-based schemes. Feedback shows the positive impact of Mentoring on an individual's development.
3.1.2.	Heads of Department or Research Centre to identify ECRs in their area and ensure they are appropriately supported - all new research-active staff to be offered a mentor.	Heads of Depts. and/or Research Centres	From academic year 2018-19	
3.1.3.	Ongoing communication to research staff of the Staff Wellbeing support that is available, including support available from the SHU Wellness team and Mental Health workshops and bespoke development sessions, where a need has been identified.	HR	Annual review of staff intranet information. Regular internal staff electronic communications.	Levels of engagement with the SHU Wellness service and hits on the wellbeing site. Improvements in responses to EOS Q4 (around wellbeing and work-life balance) and the staff stress survey.

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Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers realise the range and benefits of support available, not least in the development and advancement of careers, satisfaction and wellbeing. 				
3.2. Inductions				
3.2.1.	Monitor researcher satisfaction with induction via surveys of new staff that have joined the University and put actions in place to address any issues.	HR, RIO and line managers	December 2017	Feedback from new staff is positive about the induction they have received. This can be measured in CROS Q21 (in 2015, 57% rated the institutional-wide induction programmes useful/very useful).
3.2.2.	Improve awareness of researcher career pathways and the opportunities for development and progression at SHU, alongside enhanced induction for new researchers.			
Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular inductions take place and they effectively address the research focus. 				
3.3. Collaborative Doctoral Training				
3.3.1.	Explore opportunities with strategic partners to further enhance our collaborative doctoral training provision in areas of research strength and of priority to the University.	Director Doctoral School	Spring 2017 and annually thereafter	New collaborative training with our mission group with enhanced benefit to students and supervisors as identified in annual reports of programmes. Doctoral Training applications submitted to external funders.

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Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader professional community that facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing and extended reach for both doctoral students and academic supervisors. 				
4.1. Leadership and Management Development				
4.1.1.	Ensure senior research leaders can access leadership and management development such as the Academic Leadership Programme and the University development programme, providing support in key areas of leadership and management responsibilities. These will be communicated proactively on an ongoing basis.	HR (with RIO)	Ongoing Cohort 3 launch September 2017	Researchers have access to, and awareness of, a broad range of opportunities.
Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports succession planning, career development and effective leadership. 				
4.2. Researcher Development Programmes				
4.2.1.	Expand the Sheffield Hallam Researcher Development Programme (SHaRD) to include new targeted areas of development including public engagement, knowledge exchange, and impact (as identified in CROS 2015).	RIO	Review SHaRD June 2017, then annually.	Deliver a range of sessions under the thematic areas including new sessions focussed e.g. on collaborative R&D and research impact.
4.2.2.	Review attendance at SHaRD events in terms of spread of attendees across the University's four Faculties, to identify pockets for more targeted development.		August 2017	
4.2.3.	Develop the SHaRD blog to promote the researcher development offer; to encourage dialogue with the research community and better understand development needs (in line with EOS, CROS and PIRLS)			December 2018
4.2.4.	SHaRD provision to be expanded to include webinars and online learning materials to cater for part-time researchers.			

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4.2.5.	Relaunch the suite of online Epigeum courses including a more personalised on-line training offer with increased signposting. Continue to embed Epigeum into researcher development to provide blended development. Improve monitoring of engagement.		December 2017	online resources. Target of 1000 users in Academic Year 2017-18.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded training and development offer that fits identified researcher need e.g. impact. Effective communications and uptake of courses offered by SHaRD, meeting the needs of researchers. 				
<p>4.3. Building Capacity for the Career Progression of Researchers</p>				
4.3.1.	To provide differentiated routes to professional recognition as Associate Fellows of the HEA for doctoral students with contracted teaching hours	LEAD	February 2018. Workshops in November 2017 and March 2018.	Recruitment in 2017-18 to the new HEA accredited University Advanced Professional Certificate: <i>Introduction to Learning and Teaching in Higher Education</i> . Target 10 doctoral students for 2017-18, growing to a maximum of 20 in subsequent years. Two workshops provided for eligible students to support application through the University's recognition scheme
4.3.2.	Development of research-informed teaching case studies on the recognition scheme exemplars site (all academic staff).		September 2017.	One exemplar for each category of fellowship (Associate, Fellow, Senior and Principal).

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Benefits

- As fellowship is embedded within person specifications and progression criteria at this institution, and many others, career prospects for doctoral students and research/academic staff progression will be enhanced
- As Associate Fellows of the HEA, demonstrated against the UK Professional Standards Framework, Doctoral students and research staff will become part of an academic community of practice, which will develop their confidence and identity as academics. It will give them further access to ongoing CPD and development opportunities (such as peer review and mentoring).

4.4. Integrated Researcher and Teaching Staff Development

4.4.1.	Re-invigorate the Academic CPD Group for integrated researcher and teaching staff development to identify and develop resources/opportunities in the light of changes in the strategy introduced by a new senior management team. Promote the use of the Academic CPD portal which brings together information on opportunities available to staff and students involved in teaching and research.	Academic CPD Group (reporting to PVC Research and Innovation and PVC Student Experience).	Re-convene ACPD Group by end of Academic Year 2016-17. Identify priorities for Academic Year 2017-18.	Attendance at University-wide Academic CPD Conference (>120). Academic ACP portal page views. Target 1500 total views in Academic Year 2016-17 increasing to 2000 by 2019.
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Benefits

- Helps bridge the frequently perceived division between teachers and researchers and to facilitate the delivery of research informed teaching as required in the Teaching Excellence Framework.

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RESEARCHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Principle 5: Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning				
Action		Lead	Timescale	Success measure
5.1. Representation				
5.1.1.	Enhancement of the research community through the establishment of a University- wide ECR Forum.	ECR representatives (with Chairs of Research Committees)	2016-17 academic year and reviewed annually	All Faculty and University research committees to have ECR representation. ECR Forum launched and forward plan in place for activities.
5.1.2.	Identified ECR representatives in each Faculty to be actively involved in Faculty, as well as University-level, research governance structures.			
5.1.3.	Actively encourage transparent selection processes of appointing ECRs and PGRs to internal University and Faculty committees.			
5.1.4.	Explore opportunities to link ECR reps to the induction process.			
Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances networking, peer support and acts as a conduit to assess development needs and deliver targeted training. • Greater visibility of ECR representatives and better communication to build communities and empower the representatives in feeding up into their communities. • Facilitates research links and collaboration. • Support and integration for new researchers. 				

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5.2. Raising the Quality of Research				
5.2.1.	Communicate University requirements and guidance around the regular University research assessment process (mini-REF), Peer Support Policy for research grant applications, individual 5-year research plans and publication strategies, to ensure researchers understand their responsibilities and are supported to achieve them.	UoA Coordinators and line-managers.	mini-REF January 2017 and August 2018.	High level of engagement of ECRs in mini-REF.
Benefits				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium and long-term research and publication plans to enhance research activity, contribution to the discipline and career progression. Increased external grant application success rates, improved ability of ECRs to prepare strong external bids. 				

DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

Principle 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers				
Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measure	
6.1. Research Assessment				
6.1.1.	Continue to undertake an equality impact assessment on the University's regular research assessment exercise (mini-REF) against protected characteristics.	RIO (reporting to E&D board) Raise issues with the PVC with responsibility for Equality and Diversity, where appropriate.	Jan 2017	A year-on-year reduction in any significant gaps between under-represented groups, so that by REF 2021 there is no imbalance in protected characteristics between staff submitted to REF and the eligible academic pool at SHU. The REF 2014 EIA is available at: http://bit.ly/2k6DbwZ

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6.1.2.	Ensure communications are appropriately worded to encourage all staff undertaking research to engage with the University's research assessment exercise regardless of contract type, occupancy or working pattern.		August 2018	All staff producing research outputs engage with the assessment process.
6.1.3.	All research reviewers to take the Unconscious Bias and Equality and Diversity online modules to minimise potential gender bias of the review process.		January-March 2017 August-November 2018	All identified reviewers take the Unconscious Bias and Equality and Diversity training modules.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To embed the principles of equality and diversity in the assessment of research. • To highlight any equality and diversity issues and to make any recommendations with a view to improving staff participation in assessment exercises. • To remove potential gender or other bias in the review process. 				
<p>6.2. Grant applications and internal investment opportunities</p>				
6.2.1.	Monitor protected characteristics (specifically gender) for external research grant applications and other internal funding schemes.	RIO	Annually (August)	Equal participation and engagement of males and females compared with the academic population.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight any Equality and Diversity issues. • To make any recommendations with a view to promoting engagement in under-represented groups. 				

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6.3. Wider University Reporting				
6.3.1.	Link more strongly with equality and diversity processes, management information and recommendations in Athena SWAN – notably the renewal of the University Bronze award.	Chair RCSC / Chair Athena SWAN SAT	November 2017 and annually thereafter	Complementary action plans in place.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater efficiencies with streamlined reporting. • Direct link between Athena SWAN and the Concordat for added value and joined up approach and strategy. 				
6.4. New Routes to Career Progression (Reader)				
6.4.1.	Review the progression to Reader for the first 2 years of operation to assess any gender imbalance.	HR reporting to RCSC	August 2017 and repeated in August 2018	No imbalance in protected characteristics identified compared with the academic population.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To highlight any equality and diversity issues and implement actions with support/input from E&D Board to address this if any imbalance is identified. 				

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IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

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			
Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measure
7.1. Monitor Progress and Review Implementation			
7.1.1.	RCSC to review progress against action plan and to report as needed to University Research and Innovation Committee.	RCSC	May 2017. 3 meetings per year (typically September, January and May) with an annual full review of the action plan at the May meeting.
7.1.2.	Annual report to University Research and Innovation Committee.		November 2017 and annually thereafter.
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability and progress made against the strategy and action plan. • Endorsement and ownership by senior management leading to improvements in identified areas. 			
7.2. Communication and Consultation with Research Community			
7.2.1.	Publish annual reports of progress against the strategy and action plan on the University's external website.	RCSC	July 2017, then annually.
7.2.2.	Regular feature in the Research and Innovation Newsletter to the research community on developments.		June 2017, then quarterly.

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7.2.3.	Engagement and communication via surveys, newsletters, Faculty Research Conferences, relevant blogs and the University-wide ECR Forum.		Annually from academic year 2016-17.	
7.2.4.	Produce an updated summary of Concordat governance and key points of contact for stakeholders.		May 2017	
<p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture the achievements of the RCSC and raise the profile of the Concordat. • Inform stakeholders on development, opportunity and progress. • Raise the profile of the ECR reps to allow more effective stakeholders feedback. 				

Abbreviations used:

CPD	Continuing Professional Development	Q	Question (followed by number)
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey	RCSC	Researcher Concordat Sub-Committee
DSE	Display Screen Equipment	RDF	(Vitae) Researcher Development Framework
E&D	Equality and Diversity	REF	Research Excellence Framework
ECR	Early Career Researcher	RIO	Research and Innovation Office
EOS	Employee Opinion Survey	SAT	Self-Assessment Team (Athena SWAN)
HEA	Higher Education Academy	SHaRD	Sheffield Hallam Researcher Development (programme)
HR	Human Resources	SHU	Sheffield Hallam University
PIRLS	Principal investigator and Research Leader Survey	UoA	(REF) Unit of Assessment
PVC	Pro-Vice-Chancellor	UoAC	(REF) Unit of Assessment Coordinator