
Researcher Concordat Sub-Committee Annual Report 2014/15

1 Operational Issues

1.1 The constitution of the Researcher Concordat Sub-Committee (RCSC) was set out in the University's Response to the Researcher Concordat and Action Plan, which was approved by the University Executive Group in July 2012. The membership for the 2014/15 academic session was confirmed at the final sub-committee meeting of 2013/14. The membership was significantly refreshed, as the RCSC works to a natural two-year cycle. Alison Adam replaced Doug Cleaver, Jacqueline Stevenson replaced Lisa Hopkins, Nicola Palmer replaced Helen Richardson, while Nicola Woodroffe replaced Doug Cleaver as chair. Jeanette Gittens has also left the sub-committee, and a new ECR rep will be advertised for and appointed ahead of the next meeting.

1.2 Attendance figures for the 2014/15 session are based on the total number of members expected/eligible to attend (12):

Date of Meeting	Number of Attendees	Percentage of Membership
12 Mar 2015	8	67%
8 Oct 2015	4 + 2 co-opted	100% (sub-group meeting)
Average Total	8	67%

2 Coverage of Remit and Substantive Business

2.1 The remit of the RCSC is to oversee:

- i. Implementation of the University's Action Plan for The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- ii. Ongoing commitment to the Concordat's principles
- iii. Monitoring and assessment for the HR Excellence in Research Award

2.2 The RCSC systematically reviewed progress against the institutional commitments made in the Concordat Action Plan and ensured all obligations for the 2014/15 session were met.

2.3 In terms of broader initiatives to support the Concordat's principles/the career development of researchers, the following have been completed or progressed:

CROS and PIRLS

The University participated in these two national surveys of researchers. 48 ECRs completed CROS and 38 research leaders completed PIRLS. Analysis of the results and benchmarking data against the sector will inform future activity by the RCSC.

Building Researcher Communities and Engagement

The RCSC is looking at the recruitment and selection process for PGR and ECR reps, for both subject areas and research committees, with the aim of creating more transparent, informed and empowered reps. The RCSC is also working with the Doctoral School to stimulate and support ECR/PGR-led initiatives, such as the repurposed Imagine Cafes.

Research CPD Pathways

The RCSC is mapping out development pathways, to help researchers at different career stages navigate through the range of development opportunities that are available to them, advising when would be most timely to access what. This will map RIO, HR, QESS, Library and Secretariat provision.

Induction

The RCSC is working to ensure newly-appointed research-active staff and speedily integrated into their local and the SHU-wide research communities.

2.4 HR Excellence in Research Award

The RCSC undertook a mandated biennial internal review in December 2014 (<http://www.shu.ac.uk/assets/pdf/hr-excellence-in-research-award-two-year-review.pdf>).

As a result, in March 2015 it was confirmed that the University had retained its European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award.

3 Performance Indicators and Annual Monitoring

A researcher development baseline report was produced in 2013, to measure future work against. Retaining the HR Excellence in Research Award in 2016 and 2018, and improving the relevant measures in CROS/PIRLS 2017 and REF 2020 (in comparison with the results for 2015 and 2014 respectively) will provide independent assessment of the performance of the University in this area.

4 Summary of Sub-Committee

The RCSC was delighted that the University was judged worthy of retaining its prestigious European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award, and felt this was the culmination of two years' hard work by its members. Work has begun to make sure preparations are as thorough for the December 2016 review. There have been more suggestions from the European Commission that holding this award will become a precondition for receiving Horizon 2020 funding.