

Royal Holloway, University of London

HR Excellence in Research Action Plan 2019 – 2021 Review

Action	Description	Success Measures	Link to Concordat Principle	Update
1 (Emp)*	Introduce a new Recruitment and Selection policy to strengthen policy and practice. This will include guidance to improve the provision of on for candidates on the specialist research and transferable skills required by the post holder.	10% increase of new starters reporting via CROS that they were informed of transferable/personal/management skills required by the post-holder by June 2021	Principle 1 – Recruitment and Selection Principle 5 – Equalities and Diversity	Policy was drafted and went to Executive Board for initial comments in 2020. However, the pandemic and Brexit have changed how we recruit. The draft is now being reworked to respond to these changes, particularly around interview format and global mobility. – CARRY FORWARD to E1.
2. (Emp)	Explore the development of a new process for anonymising recruitment applications and shortlisting, with the aim of further limiting the potential for unconscious bias in the shortlisting process.	Implementation issues fully explored with solutions proposed as appropriate for how academic/research applications can be effectively anonymised. Meaningful target identified for measuring improvement in balanced shortlisting.		Functionality is already available in the recruitment system and is used for some professional services posts. For academic positions, unless individuals anonymise for themselves, CVs will be identifiable and not possible to automate taking off all identifiable data and look at publications. Manual removal not a realistic option due to very significant resourcing that would be needed. However, in new recruitment code proposal that is used for all professional services posts. – CARRY FORWARD to E1.
3. (Emp)*	Recommend BAME representation on all interview panels where this is achievable alongside existing recommendation for gender balance.	7% increase of staff agreeing via CROS that staff at the College are treated fairly with regard to recruitment and selection.		This appears in the new recruitment policy draft. It will not be mandated at this time due to limited number of BAME staff. 82.4% of new starters responding to CEDARS say that the recruitment, selection and appointment process was fair (benchmark 86%). – CARRY FORWARD to E1.

4. (Emp)	Introduce generic role descriptions for researcher roles	6% increase of new starters reporting via CROS that they were informed of specialist research skills required for their post by June 2021		Generic role descriptions and person specifications are available for recruiting managers on the online recruitment system and via the HR webpages – COMPLETE.
5. (Emp)	Develop guidance and support for research managers and fixed term staff in seeking redeployment opportunities or suitable alternative career pathways.	Benchmark identified for the number of fixed term research staff successfully redeployed Meaningful target identified for successful internal redeployment of fixed term staff.	Principle 2 – Recognition and Value	Increased emphasis has taken place in ensuring process is being followed. Clearer process, guidance and managers being made aware of obligations to ensure meetings take place. Increasing emphasis on employees being offered option for redeployment and apparent take up. So far only 20.4% of research managers responding to CEDARS say that they are confident in giving guidance to researchers on redeployment processes. CARRY FORWARD to EI6. Benchmarking and targets have not been identified – CARRY FORWARD to EI6
6. (Emp)	Develop a clear career pathway for researchers prior to lecturer level	Pathway in place and actively in use. 10% increase in fixed term staff reporting via CROS that they have a career development plan.	Principle 3 and 4 – Support and Career Development	No process currently due to other work pressure... 44.4% of fixed term staff responding to CEDARS said that they have a clear career development plan (56% in 2019) – CARRY FORWARD to EI3
7. (PD)*	Review the time/workload pressures of Early Career Researchers to ensure that they are able to take up development opportunities.	Extent of time/workload pressures of Early Career Researchers identified, with an assessment of its impact on the take up of development opportunities		Discussed in ECR focus groups. Increased workload related to teaching and administration, particularly as a result of the pandemic, has meant that ECRs struggle to find time to develop research and research identity, as well as to participate in training. Mindful of the need to protect research time and ensure flexibility in the terms and conditions attached to probation. – CARRY FORWARD to EI5

<p>8. (PD)</p>	<p>Develop and implement the Advance Programme with the involvement of Early Career Researchers</p>	<p>New format and programmes implemented and in place.</p> <p>Benchmark identified for ECR take up of previous programme with meaningful improvement target agreed.</p>	<p>Advance Programme implemented as of September 2019, with workshops grouped into themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Skills - Developing your Research Proposal - Collaboration, Knowledge Exchange and Impact - Becoming a research leader. <p>Actively sought ways to extend programme: e.g. secured funding from VITAE for IP course that spanned PGR and ECR</p> <p>Research Training Forum which had been used to develop the Advance Programme put on hold due to changes in roles in School structure / COVID and difficulties with engagement.</p> <p>Moved programme online with the advent of COVID with newly created sessions around Collaboration and External Stakeholders for the purpose of better preparing colleagues for changing funding landscape.</p> <p>2020-21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme revamped and delivered online • New sessions included Funding, Grant Writing and IP • Liaison with ECR groups to inform content • Issue with attendance for some sessions <p>In 2019 - 2020, 35% of attendees on the Advance programme were Early Career Researchers. In 2020 – 2021, this increased to 51% of attendees.</p>
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				<p>Creating a benchmark for individual ECR engagement with programme has been difficult due to difficulties with defining the whole population.</p> <p>CARRY FORWARD to PCDI1 - action to improve this and monitor ECRs longer-term to check whether the Advanced Programme was effective in terms of career development and support.</p>
9. (Emp)*	Review the local induction process for new starters within academic departments	<p>New local induction arrangements negotiated and in place.</p> <p>10% improvement in department induction approval rating in CROS</p>		<p>Local induction processes reviewed in consultation with school managers, checklists have been simplified and more self-guided information has been put together. CEDARS score on approval for departmental induction has increased by 32 percentage points, from 27% to 61.1%. This improvement is also reflected in our internal review of induction, with the percentage of new starter researchers agreeing that they received a high quality induction increasing from 67% to 79%. COMPLETE</p>
10. (E&C)*	Introduce Research Integrity and Ethics training for all researchers	10% increase of CROS respondents reporting that they have participated in research integrity training	Principle 3 and 4 – Support and Career Development	<p>Advance Programme courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity and Ethics session now a standard part of the Core Session for Probationary Academic Staff • “Introduction to Ethics” course now a standard part of the programme • “Everyone needs Ethics” course with external speaker run twice (UKRIO) <p>Additional courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online slide deck prepared for Ethics available via Moodle • PGR Training session (face to face / virtual) now running for PGRs as a standard part of the Researcher Development Programme

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College commitment to Epigeum subscription (available to ECRs and PGRs) <p>8 delegates on Introduction to Ethics workshop since 2019 (1 workshop)</p> <p>19 delegates on Everyone needs Ethics workshop since 2019 (2 workshops)</p> <p>59 ECRs attended the Introduction to Ethics presentation, delivered as part of the Core Probationary Session, between September 2019 and May 2021.</p> <p>41% of research managers and 50% of research staff responding the CEDARS survey said that they have undertaken training in research integrity. This compares with 28% overall in 2019 who said via CROS that they had undertaken training in “ethical research conduct.”</p> <p>Action COMPLETE - Take up will continue to be monitored.</p>
11. (E&C)*	Investigate and, if necessary, develop early career researcher representation within the committee structure, to ensure that their views are heard.	Current involvement assessed and developments agreed.	Early career researcher representation in School Committees has been introduced. - COMPLETE

12. (PD)	Develop the College's provision of mentoring and career advice for early career researchers.	Access to mentoring and career advice clearly available, with 6% increase in staff with less than 5 years' experience reporting that they have received mentoring via CROS.		The College has an internal mentoring network run by Organisational Development. Since 2019 it has been difficult to encourage researchers to participate. – CARRY FORWARD to PCDI2.
13. (PD)	Develop further opportunities to teach and train for early career researchers on fixed term contracts, working within funding agreement rules where this is required.	ECRs enlisting on CPD for teaching.		<p>In June 2021, a good variety of early career researchers were enlisted on Advance HE accredited development programmes in teaching and learning at RHUL that lead to professional recognition with HEA Fellowships or Associate Fellowships.</p> <p>3 Leverhulme Fellows; a Dorothy Hodgkin Research Fellow; 3 PDRAs; a Royal Society Research Fellow, a Senior Research Officer, a Research Associate, a Design Technician; a Media Arts Technician; an Audience Insight Researcher.</p> <p>COMPLETE – continue to monitor</p>
14. (E&C)*	Improve the governance, training and profile of Research Integrity (including updating the Code of Good Research Practice in line with the new Concordat to Support Research Integrity)	<p>10% increase of CROS respondents reporting that they have participated in research integrity training</p> <p>10% increase in CROS respondents reporting that they have some understanding of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.</p>	Principle 5 – Researchers' Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing item on R&KE agenda • Improved web resources and Comms including use of Newsletter, promotion at School meetings, Integrity mailbox • UKRIO membership to provide guidance and resources • Inclusion of Integrity in core training • Updated Code of Good Practice for Research published in December 2020 • Enabling Success: Research Expectations updated in line with the Code and published in December 2020 (Developed as part of the Research Strategy and closely linked)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DORA commitment renewed • Bullying and Harassment Task and Finish Group to provide principles and process for raising awareness of and dealing with issues of bullying & harassment. • Research Misconduct Policy – updated version now going through the College approval process. <p>41% of research managers and 50% of research staff responding the CEDARS survey said that they have undertaken training in research integrity. This compares with 28% overall in 2019 who said via CROS that they had undertaken training in “ethical research conduct.”</p> <p>Awareness of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity grew from 7% to 14% in the CEDARS survey. CARRY FORWARD to EC1.</p>
15. (PD)*	Develop the Research Leadership pathway as part of the Advance Programme	Pathway programmes developed and implemented with 75% occupancy rate.	Principle 5 – Researchers’ Responsibilities Principle 3 and 4 – Support and Career Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a research leader now a section on the Advance Programme – a suite of courses. At around 50%, attendance has not met occupancy rate – CARRY FORWARD to PCD1 as issue related to training comms. • New courses developed for this e.g. Large Grants: a survivors guide • Support programme discussed as part of Research Strategy • Advancing Change model developed as part of the Catalyst discussions – has yet to be adopted or implemented • Sessions held on what research leadership means. R&I session involved ECRs. Key messages include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the need for Mentoring ○ Enabling rather than formal training

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ bridging the gap between leading an internal research group and leading across multiple partners ○ time
16. (PD)	Ensure effective communication of all training opportunities	<p>Benchmark identified for researcher take-up of training opportunities.</p> <p>Meaningful improvement target for take-up agreed and met.</p>		<p>Advance programme workshops are regularly communicated via the staff newsletter and intranet. Direct email has also been used for communication with ECRs, and meetings held with ECR representatives.</p> <p>85% occupancy rate achieved on ADVANCE programme in 2019-2020 and 75% in 2020-2021. Target for 2021/22 set at 80%.</p> <p>Communication and engagement with training opportunities has been challenging – CARRY FORWARD to PCD1</p>
17. (Emp)*	Update and regularly review the College's family friendly policies	<p>Currently review completed.</p> <p>Timetable of when to review identified policies is created</p>	Principle 6 – Equalities and Diversity	<p>We have recently published new policies for adoption/surrogacy, parental bereavement leave and shared parental leave. In addition new remote working policy was published early last year. Other policies are under review with two currently out with the unions – parental leave and paternity leave.</p> <p>COMPLETE</p>
18. (E&C)	Provide guidance and support for research managers in having effective career and workload allocation discussions with staff returning from maternity/family leave or with other caring responsibilities.	Guidance in place and provided through training to research managers		<p>A draft of this has been produced and is currently under review. CARRY FORWARD to PCD1</p>

19. (E&C)	Investigate the reasons why the CROS reported lower results in relation to Equality and Diversity than the 2018 staff survey.	Reasons identified through engagement with staff and actions identified to address any issues.		The specific reasons for the difference in results is unclear, but a new governance structure for EDI is now being implemented and a renewed EDI strategy is being developed. This will also focus in particular on the impact of the pandemic on research and careers. COMPLETE
20. (E&C)	Engage with research colleagues more specifically on the College's work on equality issues.	10% increase in positive response in CROS, in relation to E&D questions on recruitment and reward.		Each Academic School now has an EDI Director, whose role is to ensure that EDI runs throughout the work of the school, for example through data which shows current position and challenges, which can then be used to produce benchmarks or KPIs. COMPLETE. 62.8% of respondents to CEDARS said that the institution treats them fairly in relation to "salary and benefits", compared to 38% who reported that staff were treated fairly in relation to "reward" in the 2019 CROS survey.