

**European Commission ‘HR excellence in research’: institutional self-evaluation of progress in implementing the UK Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers – updated action plan, December 2012-2014**

*Concordat principles 1 & 2: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research; 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.*

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| **2010 actions** | **2012 progress** |
| Revise and publish the University’s Employment and Career Management Scheme, with explicit reference to the Concordat. Publish shorter, practical implementation notes for research staff, principal investigators/supervisors of researchers, and for heads of department and departmental administrators, will be published online.  **Lead: PPD** | **Completed**.  The ECMS was approved and launched in 2011, with communications from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Affairs and by the Director of HR. The Scheme and shorter implementation notes were published online, on a set of web pages created specifically in order to bring together information for research staff, and for those who work with them, which was otherwise distributed across the University’s sizeable website (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/staffstudents/research-staff/ecm/>). |
| Continue to work to increase participation in the career management review process for research staff (appraisals). Seek to raise awareness of the value of career management reviews and to increase levels of confidence in reviewing, by disseminating guidance and through careers advice and staff development activities.  **Lead: HR, Careers Service, CPPD, heads of department** | **Ongoing**.  The ECMS highlights the importance of effective inductions and appraisals, in improving working experience and contributing to career planning. Comparison of responses to CROS 2009 and CROS 2011 indicate greater levels of induction and appraisal activity, though there is more work to be done, particularly in encouraging the offering and uptake of appraisal. |
| The HR teams based in the University’s Schools offer meetings to all staff at risk of redundancy, regardless of their contract type, to discuss future options and support available. Redeployment assistance includes provision of advice on CVs and application letters, seeking feedback from recruiters on the researcher’s application and referral to various sources of information, including the University’s Careers Service. The University is currently reviewing redeployment assistance with a view to strengthening what it offers to staff, including research staff, in future.  We will continue to work with research staff and grant holders as part of this process.  **Lead: HR School teams, Careers Service** | **Ongoing**  This is an important part of the process for supporting staff at risk of redundancy.  The Careers Advisers for Research Staff continue to provide both individual support and also to co-ordinate careers events specifically for research staff. We have seen a considerable increase in accessing Careers support; in 2011 50% of Cambridge respondents to CROS said that they had used the service, and 80% of those who had done so said that they had found this ‘helpful’ or ‘very helpful’. CROS responses also show an encouraging increase in percentages of respondents saying that they feel ‘encouraged to engage in personal and career development’ (rising from 60% in 2009 to 74% in 2011). |
| The University encourages research staff to play an active role in the lives of their departments, including getting involved in appropriate departmental decision-making processes such as committees and working groups. The University will, where appropriate, seek to involve research staff in University-level working groups and staff consultations.  **Lead: relevant bodies** | **Ongoing**.  The ECMS states that research staff are encouraged to attend appropriate departmental staff meetings, or become staff representatives on a range of committees, such as faculty or departmental boards and health and safety committees. Researchers are encouraged to support and contribute to departmental seminars and similar events, take up networking opportunities and forge links with departments operating in related areas.  The newly convened University Researcher Development Committee, as one example, includes two postdoctoral researcher representatives. |
| **Next steps, 2012-14**  We will continue to promote the importance of effective induction and appraisal processes. As well as promoting induction and appraisal, we will continue to monitor levels of induction and appraisal activity, and increases in perceptions of quality, via a variety of mechanisms including CROS 2013 and relevant internal staff surveys; we will expect preliminary analyses of CROS 2013 to be disseminated through relevant University and School bodies by December 2013. We will explore ways of improving uptake of induction, appraisal and existing mentoring schemes; work plans will be reviewed accordingly during May-August 2013 and May-August 2014.  **Lead: PPD, with Researcher Development Committee and HR Committee, as appropriate.**  We will continue to promote the University’s Employment and Career Management Scheme and good practice in selecting, recruiting and managing research staff. We expect to introduce online learning modules relating to recruitment and selection during 2012-13, and will monitor and communicate uptake accordingly (April 2014).  **Lead: PPD, with Researcher Development Committee and HR Committee, as appropriate**  The ‘North West Cambridge project’ is a major infrastructural investment in order to develop affordable housing for University and College employees; in effect, many of these will be members of research staff. Work will span many years: phase one is, however, expected to begin in early 2013 and to complete in 2015, with around 500 affordable houses available for University and College staff; many of these will to members of research staff. The North West Cambridge project is intended to contribute a major improvement in the experience of living and working in Cambridge.  **Lead: Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Institutional Affairs / HR Director** | |

*Concordat principles 3, 4 & 5: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment; The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career; Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.*

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| **2010 actions** | **2012 progress** |
| We have made substantial progress towards planning for research staff development and career support, once ring-fenced ‘Roberts’ funds come to an end. We will continue this process, within the constraints of the current economic climate. We will continue to offer appropriate training and career development support, including support which is targeted specifically at research staff, within the available funding  **Lead: Transferable Skills Steering Group, Careers Service, PPD** | **Completed and continuing.**  From 2012-13, a hypothecated fund of £1.1million per annum has been established within the University’s core funding. This now supports the delivery of initiatives within Departments, as well as central programmes of professional and career development; it is constructed on a model of partnership between centrally located professional and career development specialists and academic Schools. This activity is steered by the new Researcher Development Committee (reporting to the Research Policy Committee), replacing the Transferable Skills Steering Committee and with a revised remit to ‘advance the University’s researcher development strategy and to oversee the planning, delivery, evaluation and funding of researcher development activities [including] advancing “human capital” within the University’s research environment’. A new process has been piloted to review and plan researcher development programmes and initiatives, both at University level and also within Departments. The Committee is also sponsoring a project (2011-13) to enhance needs analysis and evaluation processes. A key element of the evaluation project concerns significantly increasing the input of research staff and research students in defining researcher development priorities, developing proposals and assessing outcomes. |
| We are engaging with national and international agendas relating to researcher support, including the European Commission HR Strategy Group, League of European Research Universities (LERU), and Vitae. We expect to adopt the Cambridge LERU model Code of Practice on Research Employment during 2010. We expect to participate in the national Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), during 2011, in order to use responses to help us understand the experiences of our research staff and the impact of our policies and support.  **Lead: PPD, Careers, Transferable Skills Steering Group, University Senior Management Team** | **Completed and continuing.**  We adopted LERU’s model Code of Practice on Research Employment in 2010. We have been active participants in the EC’s HR Strategy for Researchers. The University’s HR Director is also a member of the LERU Researcher Careers Committee and is in the process of taking up a non-executive appointment with CRAC, the parent company of Vitae. He is also the Russell Group representative on EU initiatives, including with work being carried forward on the European Pensions Scheme for Researchers, and related researcher career matters. It is likely that the University will apply to contribute to the peer evaluation process during 2013-14 for institutions participating in the EC’s HR Strategy for Researchers.  We participated in CROS 2011, with a slight increase in overall participation (rising to 27% in 2011). Analyses of responses were discussed at the Personal and Professional Development Committee and Transferable Skills Steering Committee during 2011, and in part stimulated the reforming of that Committee as the new Researcher Development Committee; analyses have also been received by the Research Policy Committee. School-level analyses were also prepared, where response levels permitted this without compromising the principle of confidentiality (i.e. in the case of four out of six academic Schools). Discussions are underway with these Schools to identify further actions and to prepare for engagement in CROS 2013. |
| We are looking at how we signpost support and guidance materials for research staff and for their managers. We aim to develop better web-based resources for research staff and their managers, within available funding. We will begin the first phase of this when we launch the new Employment and Career Management Scheme, during 2011.  **Lead: PPD, Careers Service, HR** | **Completed and continuing**  To help research staff, PIs, administrators and heads of department implement the Employment and Career Management Scheme, we created customised shorter, practical implementation notes. We published these online, on a set of web pages created specifically in order to bring together information for research staff, and for those who work with them, which was otherwise distributed across the University’s sizeable website (<http://www.cam.ac.uk/staffstudents/research-staff/ecm/>). |
| **Next steps, 2012-14**  The University’s new Researcher Development Committee will play an important part in steering researcher development strategy and initiatives within the University. It piloted an annual quality review and funding mechanism during 2011-12 which was designed to increase input by both research staff and research students into defining strategy and evaluation. Year on year, we will look for evidence that this is happening, both for central provision and for provision in Schools and Departments (including through the annual programme reviews, May 2013 and May 2014).  **Lead: RD Committee**  In addition, the Committee’s evaluation project will include active engagement by research staff in researching professional development priorities and formats. The project will conclude in September 2013, with a set of recommendations which will be considered by the RD Committee (by August 2013) for action during 2013-14 and beyond.  **Lead: RD Committee**  The RD Committee will look to engage with other bodies representing research staff interests, including existing networks (such as ‘Postdocs of Cambridge’ society and the postdoc forum of the University’s Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities), as well as the newly created ‘postdoctoral researcher co-ordinator’ (supporting the University’s ‘Postdocs of Cambridge’ senior society), to strengthen communications with Cambridge’s very large, diverse and mobile population of research staff. The Committee will actively monitor its engagement with other bodies (in particular through its annual programme reviews, May 2013 and May 2014) and will work with them to seek to advance further engagement and more effective communications, where appropriate.  **Lead: RD Committee, Postdoc co-ordinator, CRASSH Postdoc Forum**  During 2012-13, the Researcher Development Committee will offer to match fund College associations for a limited number research staff, as a means of contributing to initiatives to increase interactions between research staff and Cambridge College academic communities.  **Lead: RD Committee**  Linkages between professional development programmes and initiatives and the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) will continue to be explored (ongoing during annual programme review and planning, May 2013 and May 2014) and we will consider the use of the RDF planner tool (timelines in accordance with Vitae’s project timelines).  **Lead: RD Committee, PPD, Careers Service**  We will continue to develop programmes in ‘self-leadership’ for research staff, following promising feedback from pilot activities (annual programme review, May 2013 and May 2014). We will also continue to explore ways of researching factors contributing to leadership in research and self-leadership, in order to contribute to the evidence base for research leadership and personal development initiatives; PPD will develop an initial proposal by April 2013.  **Lead: PPD** | |

*Concordat Principle 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers;*

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| **2010 actions** | **2012 progress** |
| We have developed a Combined Equality Scheme that identifies how we work to progress equality in the University, in line with equalities legislation. Specific areas of work that are now underway are regular Equal Pay Reviews and the establishment of a Gender Equality Group at a senior level to address related issues. We have also adopted University Equality Champions for Race, Gender and Disability.  A wide range of E&D events and training opportunities are available to research staff to network and gain additional skills and specialist knowledge while at the University.  We are also part of national networks, including the Russell Group (of research-intensive universities) Equality Forum, enabling us to link with other organisations to broaden the range of support we offer all staff and students.  Specifically for Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) disciplines is the WiSETI (Women in SET Initiative) which focuses on the recruitment, retention and progression of women at all levels, including research staff, in these subjects. WiSETI runs a number of schemes to support the promotion of gender equality, including working with Departments (the Dept of Physics achieved an Athena SWAN Silver Award and Juno Champion in 2010). | **Completed and continuing.**  Since our 2010 application for the EC award, the University has formally adopted its Equality Objectives. Networks, training, and the work of Equality Champions for Race, Gender and Disability (all highlighted in our 2010 application) continue; we are currently developing a proactive network of senior academics and administrators to support University initiatives that aim to progress gender equality.  The University continues to engage actively in national networks, including the Russell Group Equality Forum and the Higher Education Equal Opportunities Network (HEEON), enabling us to link with other organisations to broaden the range of support we offer all staff and students.  WiSETI (Women in SET Initiative) focuses on the recruitment, retention and progression of women at all levels, including research staff, in SET subjects. WiSETI runs a number of schemes to support the promotion of gender equality, including coordinating a University-wide CV mentoring scheme to support academic women seeking promotion. WiSETI works to advance the University’s engagement in the Athena SWAN Charter, which recognises efforts to address gender equality issues; the University holds an Athena SWAN Bronze Award and is currently seeking renewal of this (November 2012) with aspirations to reach Athena SWAN Silver in due course. WiSETI also works with Departments to support their individual submissions.  While recognising that there is more work to be done, it is encouraging to note that Cambridge research staff responding to CROS 2011 recognised that the University is committed to equality and diversity (85% of female respondents and 81% of male respondents). |
| **Next steps 2012-14**  The University is actively contributing to a project of the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU), ‘Men and Women in Globalising Universities’ (a comparative study of the nature and shape of challenges to women working in academia). The WiSETI initiative will continue to promote female mentoring schemes and to work with institutions which are preparing applications for Athena SWAN awards. Two Departments and one academic School applied for Athena SWAN awards during 2012 and 8-11 are currently planning to apply for Athena SWAN awards by the end of 2014; the Department of Physics will seek to gain a Gold Award in the near future.  **Lead: HR Director, Equality and Diversity** | |

*Concordat 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.*

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| **2010 actions** | **2012 progress** |
| Further to the initial gap analysis, PPD will monitor progress on key strands of work and report to the relevant committees and stakeholder groups.  **Lead: PPD**  We intend to take part in the proposed 2011 instance of the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS).  **Lead: PPD, Transferable Skills Steering Group** | **Complete and continuing.**  PPD co-ordinated Concordat implementation progress reports to the following Committees between 2010-12: Personal and Professional Development; Transferable Skills / Researcher Development; Human Resources; Research Policy. Analyses of CROS 2011 responses were submitted to all of the above and also disseminated to the offices of the six academic Schools, to enable discussion and / or dissemination as appropriate. |
| **Next steps 2012-14**  The Researcher Development Committee will receive regular progress reports and will ensure communication with other appropriate University and School committees, notably the HR and Research Policy Committees. Particular emphasis will be given to increasing engagement by research staff in implementation and in review (assessed during programme reviews, May 2013 and May 2014).  **Lead: RD Committee, PPD**  We will also run CROS during 2013 and will continue to draw on CROS, and on relevant internal surveys, as an important means of monitoring progress in further improving the experience of research staff in Cambridge; we expect preliminary analyses to be disseminated within the University and Schools by December 2013.  **Lead: RD Committee, PPD**  The University will continue its engagement with UK and European researcher support and development initiatives and expects to engage in the EC HR Strategy for Researchers self-evaluation process during 2013-14 (timelines in accordance with EC HR S4R process).  **Lead: HR Director** | |