**Gap Analysis Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers**

**Introduction**

The gap analysis involved consultation with a range of affected stakeholders who make up members of the CDRS steering group, including; Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR&OD), Organisational and Professional Development (OPD), Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I), Careers Service (CS), Academic and Corporate Governance (ACG) and Research and Innovation Services (RIS)), and the Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact).

The gap analysis identified the extent to which we already meet the requirements and expectations of the Researcher Development Concordat and highlighted opportunities for improvement. Overall this activity supports the University in becoming an informed and committed signatory of the Concordat.

**Approach to gap analysis**

The first part of gap analysis was completed between November/December 2019 and is structured by evaluating progress against current University practice, and ongoing developments against the 3 Principles of the Concordat which are; Environment and Culture, Employment and Professional and Career Development. The categories used to evaluate progress were;

1. Achieving and maintaining: where many examples are provided and resources to support activity are long term or sustainable or the activity is embedded as university practice. This represents a low priority area but does not mean there is no need for improvement.

2. Achieving but limited: where some examples are provided but recognition that there is room for improvement or an acknowledgment that any example provided is a pilot or subject to resource. These examples link to activities which are not yet embedded into university practice.

3. Not currently achieving: where there are no firm examples but possible suggestions how this activity can be implemented have been provided.

The second part of the gap analysis took place between January and February with a request for CDRS colleagues to provide confirmation on: who is the responsible lead, provide any further examples of evidence where we are currently meeting the required action within the Concordat and or provide examples of how this could be attained in the future with achievable examples. Marta, Laura, Chris (all research staff representatives), Wendy, Gillian (HR) and Shona (Career Service) provided feedback on the gap analysis. These additions have been added to the master gap analysis within the [Teams folder](https://teams.microsoft.com/_#/school/files/General?threadId=19%3A249e814f0dda43a3a033f5de38fbb40f%40thread.skype&ctx=channel&context=Gap%2520Analysis&rootfolder=%252Fsites%252FCDRS%252FShared%2520Documents%252FGeneral%252FGap%2520Analysis)

Taking on board the feedback from CDRS, this narrative synthesises the information within the gap analysis spreadsheet outlining the current levels of performance against the Researcher Development Concordat, and provides some suggestions on how these might be improved upon. It also includes reference to the HR Excellence in Research Award 2019-2021, and the 2019 Staff Survey Data so to highlight where existing resource in the future might already be focused. The next steps for the gap analysis would be to; prioritise any actions, set out a time frame for achieving them, decide whether this action plan should be transparent / available for colleagues to see and provide recommendations on (via email to Researcher Enhancement Officer), and decide on how the work on these actions should be documented and reported on so it can also be harnessed within future HR EiR reviews and any potential support around the CROS-like questions in the Staff Survey. As an example, I have amended the Action Log file that was previously discussed for updating and reporting on HR EiR updates to include a section on Gap Analysis in the [Teams folder](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/file/5060E232-2954-4887-B62B-0F8C74624F60?tenantId=ae323139-093a-4d2a-81a6-5d334bcd9019&fileType=docx&objectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fdmail.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCDRS%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FHR%20EiR%208%20Year%20Review%2F2019-2021%20HR%20EiR%20Action%20Plan%20and%20Action%20Log.docx&baseUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fdmail.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FCDRS&serviceName=teams&threadId=19:249e814f0dda43a3a033f5de38fbb40f@thread.skype&groupId=5018bf35-277a-43d5-8ece-4f2eb81bfb4b).

**Findings in a nutshell:**

All actions are Achieving and Maintaining or Achieving but Limited with the exception of one Not currently Achieving area as seen in red below in Principle 3 which relates to: *Managers of researchers must: Allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata, per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development*. Other institutions (as discussed at ScotHERD and RDTC – Researcher Development network of Scottish Institutions) outlined that this is particularly challenging part of the revised Concordat. The University of Dundee already has the [Researcher Development policy](https://www.dundee.ac.uk/research/informationforresearchers/researcherdevelopment/researcherdevelopmentpolicy/) which was approved in 2014, and could be revised to change the current: *By endorsing the RCUK recommendations of the minimum number of hours put aside annually for development activities i.e. 80 hours. This can take various forms including, but not limited to: workshops, participation in mentoring*. To: *By endorsing the Research Development Concordat requirements of the minimum number of days put aside annually for development activities i.e. 10 days. This can take various forms including, but not limited to: workshops, participation in mentoring.*

The following outlines the three Principles of the Researcher Development Concordat against the gap analysis taking into account 2019 practice and future steps across the year ahead taking into account interventions, tools and policies which are underway or planned for the near future.

## Principle 1. Environment and culture: Excellent research requires a supportive and inclusive research culture

**Currently: Future Steps 2020-:**

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****Institutions Must:

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Managers of Researchers Must:

Researchers Must:

**Principle 2. Employment: Researchers are recruited, employed and managed under conditions that recognise and value their contributions**

**Currently: Future Steps 2020-:**

Institutions Must:

Managers of Researchers Must:

Researchers Must:

**Principle 3. Professional and career development are integral to enabling researchers to develop their full potential**

**Currently: Future Steps 2020-:**

Institutions Must:

Managers of Researchers Must:

Researchers Must:

The existing tools, policies, interventions which could be revised or adjusted to support progress in the Action Plan include for example:

* The Researcher Development Policy
* Welcome Card
* ToR and Membership of CDRS
* Research Newsletter
* Revised probationary criteria
* Revised OSaR guidance for researchers and managers of researchers
* Increased feedback opportunities for researchers and managers of researchers via REO email on HR webpage
* Staff Welcome
* Person Specification
* Research Staff Breakfasts
* Research Staff Forum
* Relaunch of the revised Research Integrity training
* Launch and inclusion of you said we did feature in RS newsletter
* Revised and newly implemented induction package
* Implementation of a reviewed Probationary Procedure for Research staff
* Reviewed focus on the management of sickness absence through the development of streamlined absence policies and procedures, improved sickness absence data, health promotion and timely intervention by managers and Occupational Health

New tools, policies, interventions which will be introduced to support progress in the Action Plan include for example:

* Launch of the Concordat
* OSaR Training to managers of researchers
* Implementation of BT systems will support tracking of some of the actions
* Statement of Expectation

The gap analysis highlights that a lot of the resource will come from the newly appointed Officer within OPD and colleagues within HR. It also highlighted that Managers of Researchers will require the most support as a previously non targeted group, however these actions are nested and interrelated where one activity (i.e. tool, event, policy, intervention etc.) could serve multiple actors (e.g. Statement of expectation provides guidance to Manager of Researchers and Researchers). In this respect, it would be beneficial to have a School Dean / ADR in attendance at CDRS to gain a perspective on some of the areas relating to Managers of Researchers, and to also support with the cascading of information to peers (and perhaps even co-chair CDRS). In which case the ToR and membership list for CDRS will need to be revised.

# The Concordat Principles

## Principle 1. Environment and culture:

**Excellent research requires a supportive and inclusive research culture**

### Institutions must:

1. Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.
2. Ensure that institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.
3. Promote good mental health and wellbeing through, for example, the effective management of workloads and people, and effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.
4. Ensure that managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and mental health.
5. Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity.
6. Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and use the outcomes to improve institutional practices.

Currently: Future Steps 2020-:

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Based on achievable suggestions (many already underway) in the spreadsheet e.g.

* Launch of the Revised Concordat
* Relaunch of the revised Research Integrity training
* Launch and inclusion of you said we did feature in RS newsletter
* Revised and newly implemented induction package
* Implementation of a reviewed Probationary Procedure for Research staff
* Reviewed focus on the management of sickness absence through the development of streamlined absence policies and procedures, improved sickness absence data, health promotion and timely intervention by managers and Occupational Health
* Inclusion of information on the Concordat at recruitment stage as part of the Person Specification

### Managers of researchers must:

1. Undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.
2. Ensure that they and their researchers act in accordance with the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.
3. Promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers’ wellbeing and mental health, including reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment, and poor research integrity.
4. Consider fully, in accordance with statutory rights and institutional policies, flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.
5. Engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.

Currently Future Steps 2020-:



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### Researchers must:

1. Actively contribute to the development and maintenance of a supportive, fair and inclusive research culture and be a supportive colleague, particularly to newer researchers and students.
2. Ensure they act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity, and equality, diversity and inclusion.
3. Take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.
4. Use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour, particularly in relation to discrimination, harassment, bullying, and research misconduct.
5. Consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-





**Principle 2. Employment**

**Researchers are recruited, employed and managed under conditions that recognise and value their contributions**

### Institutions must:

1. Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.
2. Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.
3. Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers’ contributions, and the diversity of personal circumstances.
4. Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.
5. Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.
6. Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.
7. Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-



### Managers of researchers must:

1. Undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.
2. Familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.
3. Commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion, and reward of researchers.
4. Actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.
5. Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-



### Researchers must:

1. Ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.
2. Understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.
3. Positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.
4. Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-

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## Principle 3. Professional and career development

**Professional and career development are integral to enabling researchers to develop their full potential**

### Institutions must:

1. Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.
2. Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.
3. Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.
4. Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.
5. Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.
6. Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities, and researcher career development reviews.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-



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### Managers of researchers must:

1. Engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.
2. Support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.
3. Allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata, per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.
4. Identify opportunities, and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills, and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.
5. Engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-



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### Researchers must:

1. Take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.
2. Explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.
3. Maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.
4. Positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.
5. Seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.
6. Consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation.

Currently Future Steps 2020:-



Some Staff Survey 2019 points to raise which tie in with the work on the gap analysis / improvements around research culture all of which can be promoted via newsletter, RSF and Research Staff Breakfasts:

* Researchers feel higher levels of recognition and value compared to last year in relation to supervising and managing staff
* There is a greater need to improve on the knowledge and understanding of research staff relevant initiatives (Concordats)
* The levels of researchers that stated that they maintain a formal record of continuing professional development activities has increased (would be worthwhile asking what methods they use in the Newsletter)
* Researchers undertaking, or would like to undertake training and other continuing professional development activities has increased (links to the 10 days allocation), YET
* During the past 12 months 29% of researchers stated that they spent no days participating in professional development activities (largely the results are similar to 2017) (ties in with the revision to the 10 day allocation and work around Statement of Expectation)