



University of  
**Portsmouth**

HR Excellence in Research Award  
Two-Year Internal Review  
May 2015

**Background Information:** In 2012 the University of Portsmouth conducted a gap analysis against the Principles of The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and developed an action plan towards fully implementing the Concordat Principles. As a result of the gap analysis and action plan the University received the HR Excellence in Research Award on May 22, 2013. In early 2015, as part of the Award process we have documented our progress and updated our action plan. The updated plan is available in the accompanying document **progress (2013-2015) and action plan (2015-2017)**. This report highlights the main achievements to date and provides a focus for the next two years.

**Process of self-audit:** The self-audit process has been led by the Concordat Implementation Group (CIG). This group is chaired by the Staff Development Coordinator (Research) and key members on this committee include the Deputy Director HR, the Research Staff Forum Representative, the Researcher Development Coordinator for the Graduate School, an Athena Swan representative and a senior member of each faculty. The chair of the CIG is a member of the University Research Committee (URC). The URC is led the PVC Research and Innovation, who is also a member of the University Executive Board. The Research Staff Forum Representative and the Staff Development Coordinator (Research) (SDCR) have liaised with members of Research Staff during the audit process and the views of Research Staff gathered in CROS 2013 and 2015 have been taken into account. For the self-audit process actions from 2013 were reviewed, evidence collected and progress towards achieving the actions updated. Further actions have been developed to address arising issues.

### **Key achievements and progress against the strategy, indicators and original actions:**

#### Principle 1: Recruitment and selection

- Monitoring across all protected characteristics during the recruitment process is in place and reports are discussed at least annually at UEB, HR committee and in faculties.
- Staff who are coming to the end of a fixed term contract have access to improved and more detailed information on obtaining a new role.
- Training for interviewers has been updated and is now modular.
- The criteria for promotion to Reader and Professor have been updated and include research, teaching and innovation routes to promotion.

#### Principle 2: Recognition and value

- Significant improvements have been made in communicating expectations for researchers at different career stages and in the provision of career guidance. Workshops explaining the criteria and application process for Reader and Professor are part of the Researcher Development Programme. The Vitae Research Staff Futures workshops 'Managing Your Career' and 'Advancing in Academic' now run in the University as part of the Researcher Development Programme.

- We are running the LFHE Research Team Leadership programme to support PIs in managing their research teams.
- The position that Research Staff have the same entitlement to staff development and funding for development has been clarified and recommendations have been made that PIs are responsible for conducting appraisals of their research staff. CROS 2015 data indicates that research staff strongly agree (50%) or agree (38%) that they have equal access to training and development opportunities as other staff members. This is an improvement on CROS 2013 where 23% strongly agreed and 61% agreed they had equal access.

#### Principle 3 & 4: Support and Career Development

- In September 2014 we achieved a major goal of our original action plan by establishing a Researcher Development Programme for Research and Academic Staff in the University. The Researcher Development Programme has strong visibility across target groups with 88% of Research Staff and 82% of PIs indicating they are aware of the Programme and of those 80% of Research Staff and 48.6% of PIs indicating they had booked or attended a session during 2014/15 (CROS/PIRLS 2015 data).
- In addition to Researcher Development Programme workshops Research Staff can book a career coaching session with an external, independent coach.
- To increase the representation and voice of researchers we have developed our Research Staff Forum into a Researchers' Network. This Network includes Researchers working in a number of jobs roles including Research Staff and early career researchers in academic roles. The Researchers' Network is now running in parallel with our established Professors' Forum and Readers' Forum. Forum conveners attend University Research Committee and collectively these groups enable representation and input from researchers working across all job roles at UoP.

#### Principle 5: Researchers' Aware of Their Responsibilities

- Research and Innovation Services are now receiving regular updates on current Research Staff from HR. This has enabled improved targeting and highlighting of opportunities to this group of staff.
- The Researcher Development Programme and opportunities including the Researchers' Network have been incorporated into the staff induction programme.
- Online ethics resources and ethics review documents have been modified to ensure awareness of the Concordat for Research Integrity and the UKRIO Code.
- In April 2015 a letter was sent to all research active staff from the PVC R&I emphasising researcher responsibilities, the Concordat for Research Integrity and UKRIO Checklist. The letter also included signposting to Researcher Development workshops.

#### Principle 6: Diversity & Equality

- The University continues to progress towards its Equality and Diversity targets and in April 2014 gained the Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award. Each STEM

department has an Athena SWAN champion and several departments are moving towards applying for bronze and silver awards.

#### Principle 7: Implementation & Review

- The Concordat Implementation group is in place and meets 4 times a year to review progress and actions.

#### **Next steps and focus of the strategy for the next two years**

- Going forward we plan to focus on promoting opportunities for early and mid career researchers to accelerate their personal development, experience and influence. This includes expanding development opportunities for PIs and further utilizing the Networks and Forums to bring researchers' together and enhance opportunities.
- Opportunities for Research Staff to access effective mentoring will be increased by including support for mentoring and signposting to resources in the Researcher Development Programme. UoP specific questions on the CROS survey that ask if research staff have been offered a mentor will be used to monitor progress and consultations with researchers involved in mentoring and numbers attending RDP mentoring workshops will be used to assess effectiveness. CROS 2015 indicates that 52% of research staff have been offered a mentor but that 58% are very interested and 29% possibly interested in mentoring.
- Within the context of a broad review of recruitment and selection procedures and performance managed across the university the PDR process will be reviewed. In the interim a working group involving HR/SDCR/HoDs is being established. This group will identify and support PIs to ensure all eligible Research Staff have an annual appraisal. Data from the CROS surveys conducted in 2011, 2013 and 2015 indicate that approximately 45% of research staff had not had a PDR in the last two years, with around half of these citing they hadn't participated because they hadn't been invited, rather than because they had only recently been appointed. These numbers will continue to be monitored via CROS.
- In the context of a review and redesign of the websites for Research and Innovation Services information for researchers on the Researcher Development Programme, Researchers' Networks, Forums will be redesigned with the view of making these opportunities more visible and assessable to the University Community.
- To continue to include and respond to researchers views a Researchers' Network champions from each faculty will be part of the Concordat Implementation Group.