Lancaster University Concordat Forward Action Plan 2017-19

Preface

Lancaster's Concordat Implementation Group (CIG) has formal oversight for implementation of Vitae's Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (the 'Concordat'). The CIG is chaired by the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development and membership comprises representatives from Human Resources (HR) and Organisational and Education Development (OED), Research and Enterprise Services (RES), the Careers Service, and the Research Staff Association (RSA) Steering Group.

Responsibility for reviewing, refreshing and implementing the institutional Action Plan rests with the CIG. The Group meets termly to review progress and reports to the University Research Committee. Individual members take responsibility for leading and driving actions within the Plan, with the active involvement of other stakeholders across the institution.

The Concordat Action Plan is updated continually, and provides an outline of actions undertaken and progress to date. Actions are initiated and reported against specific principles laid out in the Concordat. Lancaster's Concordat Forward Action Plan 2017-19 builds on the successes of previous Action Plans and is structured such that a response is made against each clause of the Concordat, to ensure completeness and eliminate gaps. Future actions are outlined, identifying evidence required, timescale and responsible lead. A summary of the institution's current compliance with the clauses of the Concordat is also provided. A crucial vehicle for implementing many of the actions within the Plan is the creation of a Code of Practice for the Development of Research Staff which seeks to embed the principle of the Concordat and is referenced throughout the plan.

Background to the Concordat

The UK Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is based on an agreement made in 1996 (updated in 2008) between funding bodies and universities, which aimed to improve the support for research staff on fixed-term contracts in their career development.

Since 1996, UK researchers' expectations regarding career development and working conditions have grown. The interests and responsibilities of research funders and institutions have also changed in response to new legislation, amendments to terms and conditions of grants and the publication of the European Charter for

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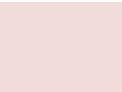
	Action to be undertaken	Evidenced by	Lead [Contact]	Timescale	Current level of compliance/Additional notes
					and selection training. During 2017/18 a programme of

	Action to be undertaken	Evidenced by	Lead [Contact]	Timescale	Current level of compliance/Additional notes
	[2017-19 Key Priority: KP6]				
1.4.0	No further specific action identified for 2017-19	n/a	n/a	n/a	University recruitment and progression panels are formed at departmental level and seek to reflect diversity in addition to the range of experience and expertise required to fairly assess candidate's suitability for a role, or for progression within a role, as outlined in the University's Recruitment Code of Practice.

	Action to be undertaken	Evidenced by	Lead [Contact]	Timescale	Current level of compliance/Additional notes
	development. [2015-17 Action: B1, B2] [2017-19 Key Priority: KP2]	Effectiveness evidenced by: 1) questions included as part of LU Staff Survey and CROS/PIRLS, 2) feedback provided by Faculty Research Committee meetings and Associate Deans (Research) meetings, 3) Research Staff Association (RSA) research staff focus group events.		of Practice by October 2017. Implement-ation and embedding by Septem-ber 2019.	Committee. The development of a Code of Practice for principal investigators [2015-17 Action: B2] as a separate document has been reviewed by Concordat Implementation Group (CIG). Roles and responsibilities for principal investigators will be incorporated into Code Of Practice for the Development of Research Staff.
2.1.2	Further embed the Concordat principles across all departments, ensuring pro-active support from senior research management (including PVR(R) and ADRs), reinforced and encouraged by continuation of a 'conversational tour' with Faculties. [2015-17 Action: B3]	Results from Staff Survey, CROS/PIRLS, and RSA focus groups benchmarked against previous years' responses. Reports by Associate Deans (Research) to PVC(Research) based on Faculty Research Committee feedback.	Dir.HR, Dir.RES [RSD]	Complete by September 2019	Initial 'conversational tour' with faculties, senior management, professional services (research support), research staff and principal investigators complete, informing Code of Practice and generating input for the institution-wide action plan. Further 'conversations' are planned thoughout 2017 and 2018.

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		[2015-17 Action: B4] [2017-19 Key Priority: KP7]				
2.2.1		Continue negotiation and reach agreement with campus trade unions on the policy relating to the use of fixed-term contracts and how transitional funding for fixed term researchers can be better used. Implement agreed policy – development of a communications policy to roll-out and embed the policy. [2015-17 Action: B5]	Agreement with campus trades unions. Analysis of CORE HR management system to indicate reduction in numbers of research staff employed on fixed-term contracts.	Dir.HR [OD]	Union	

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		group events.				
2.3.2		Rollout of new institution-wide PDR scheme scheduled for 2018 with mandatory training for all managers, including research managers.	100% of research managers participated in training. Effectiveness of PDR process reflected in LU Staff Survey 2018.	Dir.HR [OD]	Roll-out scheduled for March 2018	
2.3.3		The creation of new Group Lead roles within the Faculty of Science and Technology to support Heads of Department in the management of academic staff. This initiative is accompanied by a bespoke Group Lead Development Programme.	Evaluation of the bespoke Development Programme and the effectiveness to date of the Group Lead structure scheduled for November 2017.	Dir.HR [OD]	December 2017	
2.3.4		Implementation of new Code of Practice for the Development of Research Staff aims to embed the principles of the Concordat and reinforce research leaders, research staff and institutional responsibilities.	See 2.1.1	Dir.HR, Dir.RES [RSD]	See 2.1.1	
2.3.5		Develop future research leaders through raising awareness and promotion of Research Fellowships. [2017-19 Key Priority: KP3]	Increase the number of research fellowship applications by 10%.	Dir. HR [OD]	September 2019	
2.3.6		Evaluate the effectiveness of the 50th Anniversary Lectureship Scheme to explore wider opportunities for research talent development. [2017-19 Key Priority: KP3]	Evaluation complete and report to PVCR and senior management.	Dir. HR R		

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		contracts. Options outlined within, and accessible from, Code of Practice for the Development of Research Staff.			The University is actively seeking ways by which the challenges of fixed-term contracts may be mitigated. A number of options are under consideration following the 'conversational tour' aimed at supporting the development of a Code of Practice for the Development

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3.2.3	Retain 'career pathways' as a key ongoing theme for the Research Staff Association future activities. [2015-17 Action: C4] [2017-19 Key Priority: KP5]	A minimum of three Research Staff Association events scheduled which address different aspects of career pathway.	OD [RSD]	September 2019	'Careers pathways' remain a popular and productive RSA theme (see Research Staff Association annual report 2016). Theme continues for 2017/18.
3.2.5	Engagement with Faculties through new Faculty Concordat Leads to identify appropriate, discipline-specific career pathways. [2017-19 Key Priority: KP5]	Report to Dir.HR.	ADR [OD]	January 2018	Liaise with Faculty researcher groups, Research Staff Association, new Faculty Concordat Leads to identify and collate discipline-specific career pathways.
3.2.5	Develop a long-term sustainable operational plan for Lancaster University Research Staff Association.	Review terms of reference. Update strategic plan for 2017-19. Identify and appoint officers to key roles.	OD [RSD]	October 2017	Lancaster University Research Staff Association was established in 2012. The Association is supported by senior management and offers a range of activities aimed establishing a research staff community; sense of personal independence; career development and networking opportunities. The Association also provides a voice for research staff, and is key element in the implementation of the Concordat.
3.3.1	No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	The University provides a wide range of training and skills development opportunities to develop the communication and other professional skills that research staff need. These include writing, presentation, confidence-building skills.
3.4.1	Increase awareness amongst researchers of the independent advice offered by Lancaster Careers Service. Direct communication with research staff to raise awareness of Careers Service. Access to Careers Service information and resources facilitated via the Code of Practice for the Development of Research Staff.Careers	20% increase in take-up of Careers Service by research staff.	OD [CIG/ Careers]	September 2019	The University's Careers Service is promoted at RSA events, also within the Researcher Development Programme. A representative from the Careers Service is a member of the Concordat Implementation Group.

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	Service to be promoted at relevant RSA careers events.				

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3.7.0	No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	Research staff are encouraged, through the Personal Development Review process to discuss, with their manager and/or PI, the development of skills and engagement in activities that extend beyond their present role.

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3.11.0	No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	The University offers CPD processes and opportunities that are consistent and compatible with other HEIs. The University recognises CPD as an essential part of staff development and as such, ensures that its competency-based recruitment and selection processes recognise as far as possible the CPD schemes from other employing organisations.
3.12.1	Clarify expectations around opportunities for teaching, and the training and support available. Use Code of Practice to disseminate teaching opportunities open to, and expectations of, research staff. [2015-17 Action: C9]	Clarification and information provided to research staff and research leaders within new Code of Practice for the Development of Research Staff. Effectiveness evidenced by questions relating to teaching opportunities within LU Staff Survey and CROS/PIRLS.	Dir.RES [RSD]	October 2017	Opportunities for teaching are provided at local, departmental, level in response to the needs of department and Faculty. The University provides support for teaching and academic development through Organisation and Educational Development, specifically through its

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5.6.0		No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	In addition to the University's induction programme for all new staff, the Research Staff Development Programme ensures that research staff are aware of, and understand the value of PDRs in providing support and guidance for their personal and professional development.

Research staff are encouraged to take a pro-active attitude to the PDR process, preparing adequately and ensuring that their PI carry out the PDR in a timely fashion.

A revised policy for PDRs has been developed and will be implemented as soon as possible (see 3.8.0).

Mandatory training and resources will support the roll-out of Lancaster's new PDR scheme in 2018. |

E: DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY
Principle 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

		Action to be undertaken	Evidenced by	Lead [Contact]	Timescale	Current level of compliance/Additional notes
6.3.0		No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	See 6.1.0
6.4.0		No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	See 6.1.0
6.5.0		No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	The University supports requests for changed work patterns as part of its commitment to Athens SWAN and its staff. Five staff case studies (four of which are researchers) demonstrate this commitment on the University EDI website.
6.6.0		No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	HR information and policies (for example those addressing Fixed Term, Equal Opportunities and Redeployment) are available on the HR website and intranet and aims to improve accessibility to guidance for current and potential researchers and their line manager. This includes guidance, policies and support for researchers on parental leave (paternity and maternity) , and adoption leave.

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6.9.0	No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	The University has a institution-wide policy statement and guidelines in respect of bullying and harassment which applies to all staff and students alike which can be accessed here.
6.10.1	Identify and assess existing Diversity & Equality activity across the University, prior to developing specific actions within this Principle that specifically relate to research staff.	Development of complementary actions specific to the D&E needs of research staff.			The University holds Athena SWAN Award Bronze at institutional level awarded in 2008, and renewed in 2012 and 2015. At faculty and departmental level, the following have been achieved: Lancaster's Physics Department (Silver, 2017) Faculty of Health and Medicine (Bronze 2013; Silver, 2017) Lancaster Environment Centre (Bronze, 2013) Psychology Department (Bronze, 2015) Chemistry Department (Bronze, 2016) Maths Department (Bronze, 2017) LGBTQ+ Equality 2017-18 The University has recently become a member of the Stonewall Global Diversity Programme, for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) equality, and has been developing an action plan for 2017-18. The University is submitting for assessment against the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and will soon be inviting staff to complete the Stonewall Staff Feedback Survey. Membership of Stonewall gives the University access to expert advice on LGBT inclusive practices; objective assessment and feedback against a comprehensive equality assessment framework; direct access to best practice organisations within and outside of the sector. Stonewall also provide country briefings on LGBT equality in Stonewall Guidance – Malaysia (where Lancaster has entered into an academic partnership with Sunway University Kuala Lupur) and Stonewall Guidance – China (where Beijing Jiaotong University has established a new Lancaster University campus). In September 2017, information on Lancaster University policies and working practices were submitted for assessment against the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. Early in 2018, the University will receive feedback, benchmarked against other organisations within and outside of the sector, with

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	Action to be undertaken	Evidenced by	Lead [Contact]	Timescale	Current level of compliance/Additional notes
	[2015-17 Action: F1 [2017-19 Key Priority: KP1]	further development.			further an approach to implementing the Concordat within the framework of a Code of Practice for the Management of Research Staff. The CIG is chaired at senior management level, Director HR, and reports to PVC Research.
7.3.0	No further specific action identified for 2017-19.	n/a	n/a	n/a	