Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Universities and Research Institutes

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Statement on how the organisation creates, maintains and embeds a research culture that upholds a positive and inclusive environment for researchers at all stages of their careers

The University of Oxford's Strategic Plan 2018-24 articulates the University's vision for embedding a research culture that upholds an inclusive environment for researchers at all career stages. The Plan commits the University to "*work towards an increasingly diverse staffing profile*" (People Commitment Two) and to "*Enhance the opportunities and support for early-career researchers*" (Priority 8).   The University aims to realise these visions for staff at all levels through implementing action plans for the Technician Commitment, HREiR, Athena SWAN, the Race Equality Charter, the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, Mindful Employer, and the Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers ('the Concordat').

The University appointed an Advocate for Research Staff, Professor David Gavaghan, in January 2019, to act as the strategic academic lead on promoting and realising the University's vision to provide a world-leading environment for research staff.   In 2021/22, Research Staff Advocates for each of the four divisions, and one for the Colleges, were appointed. These six Advocates meet termly with the directors of professional services (Human Resources, Careers, Research Strategy Policy Unit) in the Research Staff Steering Committee, and liaise closely with divisional researcher representatives (within Research Staff Consultation Group) and researcher development leads (in Research Staff Working Group).

The Concordat was signed by the Vice-Chancellor in April 2021, and the Concordat Action Plan was approved by Research & Innovation Committee and Personnel Committee in April 2022. Commitments within our institutional action plan are co-owned by our four academic divisions, Human Resources (HR), the Careers Services, and Research Services. Responsibility for coordinating and reporting lies with the Researcher Hub (in HR) and the Research Strategy and Policy Unit (in Research Services).

The Researcher Hub was launched in April 2021. The mission of the Researcher Hub is to welcome and support the University's ~5000 researchers to meet their aspirations for their time at Oxford, and to facilitate their chosen next career chapter. The Research Hub team collaborate across Oxford to improve policy and practice, specifically the implementation of the Concordat Action Plan and matters raised through the research staff governance structure (comprising representatives in all departments and the three central committees).   The Research Strategy Policy Unit (RSPU) was formed in September 2021 to lead on institutional research strategy and policy and on research evaluation, insight and information. The Unit is developing a programme of work to advance research culture, promotes research

integrity, coordinates external research evaluation exercises (including REF), and manages internal funding schemes.

In February 2023 the University was awarded an institutional Athena Swan Silver award for the progress been made in addressing several gender inequities identified in the earlier Athena Swan Plan. Examples include: entitlement to paid family leave from the employee's first day at Oxford; free Work+Family Space; continuation of the annual £240,000 Returning Carers' Fund for staff to re-establish their research career pathways after a period of leave. The University's Award follows a large rise in the number of departments/faculties with Athena Swan awards. In 2022, Medical Sciences became the first all-Silver division, with 16 departmental Silver awards.

The Race Equality Task Force was convened in 2021 to build on the Race Equality Charter by reviewing and promoting activities intended to advance racial equality. Members of the Task Force are drawn from staff and students at all career levels. In September 2022, the Race Equality Strategy was approved by Council and, as recommended by the Task Force, the University appointed a senior leader, Professor Tim Soutphommasane, to progress the Strategy, the aims of Athena Swan, and equality and diversity more generally.

There are many local initiatives to progress this integrated approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion across the research space. For example, Oxford's largest division - Medical Sciences - hosted a half day workshop entitled *Building Inclusive Cultures* which was attended by 90 researchers, academics and professional support staff. Such local initiatives are core to strengthening culture within this large, highly-devolved institution.

The University is developing a <u>programme of work to advance research culture</u> that explicitly recognises the crucial role of inclusive, positive working cultures to individuals and to sustained high-quality research. With ~5000 research staff across 50+ departments occupying 213 buildings, Oxford's research culture is both diverse and united around three interconnected priorities: conducting research to the highest standards of rigour, recognising the different skills and roles that contribute to research, and supporting the career aspirations of our colleagues. These priorities integrate the University's commitments to national and international sector requirements and agreements, such as the Concordat, the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and the <u>Concordat to Support Research Integrity</u>.

Provide a short summary of the institution's strategic objectives and implementation plans for delivering each of the three pillars of the Concordat (environment and culture, employment, and professional development of researchers) for your key stakeholder groups together with your measures for evaluating progress and success

Oxford's three-year Concordat Action Plan identifies three overarching goals, namely:

> 1. Creating a research environment that is supportive, inclusive, and equitable
> 2. Recognising and valuing the diverse contributions of researchers
> 3. Supporting researchers to achieve a range of career goals

Twelve actions were agreed in pursuit of the above three goals. These were complemented by indicative activities identified during the design process and agreement on the co-ownership of each action among central and divisional groups.

Environment & Culture

Actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.2, and 2.3 in the Action Plan will further the University's progress towards the Environment and Culture aims in the Concordat. They prioritise: welcoming new staff into the research community, explaining the University's structure and HR essentials, encouraging planning to support personal wellbeing, research excellence, and career development; supporting researcher representatives in their contribution to decision making and community-building; establishing safe confidential mechanisms through which researchers can raise concerns about equitable treatment; strengthening and integrating training, tools, and policies to support rigorous research and its evaluation; and embedding tools in institutional systems to highlight and document diverse contributions to excellent research and impact.

Employment

Actions 1.6 and 2.1 in the Action Plan will further the University's progress towards the Concordat's Employment aims by prioritising: greater contractual stability and security wherever possible; and the review of academic recognition, promotion, and reward criteria to include a broader range of research activities, such as open research practices and supporting researchers in their careers.

Professional Development of Researchers

Actions 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 in the Action Plan will further the University's progress towards the professional development aims in the Concordat. They prioritise: ensuring that all researchers benefit from at least ten days professional development per year; further equipping line managers to support the career development of researchers; supporting researchers in their pursuit of career destinations in all sectors and roles; tracking the destinations of those who move on from Oxford; and offering all researchers an annual review conversation that focuses on their career development.

Monitoring and Reporting

Activity across the University is recorded by the Concordat Action Plan Implementation team, whose members lead on different aspects of this Plan, and include leads on other plans (Athena Swan, REC, Concordat on Research Integrity, Technicians Commitment, etc.). Questions have been adapted within the University's bespoke biennial Staff Experience Survey to enable tracking over time of Concordat-related priorities. The University's HREiR Action Plan 2022-25 gives further detail on the targeted impact (success measures) of shared commitments included in the Concordat. The University's annual HR Audit enables university-level information-gathering on progress towards key Concordat aspirations where data capture currently occurs at the local, department, level. The University's Course Booking System (CoSY) records enrolment and attendance at internal training or community-building events, but is not currently used across (or inter-operable with) the full range of development opportunities available from internal and external providers.

Summary of actions taken, and evaluation of progress made, in the current reporting period to implement your plan to support the three pillars in respect of each of your key stakeholder groups [Institution; Academic Managers of Researchers (Deans, Heads of Schools/Departments/PIs); Researchers]

Environment and Culture	Researchers
	Commitment 1.1 (Yr 1): *Ensure consistent induction and improved welcome ("soft landing"), especially for arrivals from overseas and diverse backgrounds; Signpost and enrich the opportunities for personal, professional and career development available from arrival to post-contract*
	• A video to welcome researchers prior to their arrival at the University has been created. The messages are delivered by

members of the researcher community and prefaced by a bespoke welcome from the Vice-Chancellor.

- All new researchers are invited to centrally-coordinated welcome meetings. Since April 2022, just over 20% of the 942 new researchers attended an in-person or virtual welcome event hosted by the Researcher Hub. Avenues for promoting welcome events have been refined to increase participation over the next reporting period. These gatherings complement divisional and department induction events.
- A digital Trailmap has been created to signal the support available to researchers in developing their personal wellbeing, their research and their careers, from day one to their next career step. Feedback has been extremely positive and will inform annual updates.
- The Oxford University Newcomers Club (which welcomes partners of new researchers) now has dedicated administrative support.
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Commitment 1.2 (Yr 1): *Consolidate and grow the existing comprehensive representation framework for researchers to participate in decision-making; Communicate internal policy on key areas affecting researchers and learn from sector-wide best practice.*

- Consistently, ~ 90% departments/faculties have one or more researcher representative(s). The Research Staff Consultation Group leads on developments for the representational structure and has agreed the '*Role, Values and Commitments*' for all researcher representatives to guide onward work.
- Divisional Research Staff Fora have been established in the Humanities (Hums), Social Sciences (SSD), Medical Sciences (MSD) and Gardens, Libraries, and Museums (GLAM) divisions. Maths, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) has an established Research Staff Forum.
- The researcher representational structure has now extended to the colleges. 18 of the 39 colleges have selected their representative.
- University-level committees are increasingly taking the lead from Council by inviting researcher representative as co-opted members, most notably the Nomination Committee for the Vice-Chancellorship.
- The Researcher Hub has coordinated two development days for all researcher representatives, and MSD has held further

development days for representatives on their divisional forum, plus guests from other fora.

Commitment 1.5 (Yr 1): *Establish clearer routes for researchers to raise concerns relating to equitable treatment and research practice outside their management structure and in confidence, ensuring transparency in follow-up activity*

- The Equality and Diversity Unit has recruited a Harassment Prevention Advisor and a Harassment Prevention Coordinator. These new posts are responsible for developing the institutional strategy on harassment prevention, implementing interventions to prevent and respond effectively to bullying and harassment; providing support and training for the University's network of 437 Harassment Advisors (currently the first point of contact for people wishing to discuss their experience) and delivering the Responsible Bystander training.
- Investigation into the online report and support tools is nearly complete and the software will be purchase in July with a provisional launch date of September 2023.

Academic Managers of Researchers

Commitment 1.2 (Yr 1): *Consolidate and grow the existing comprehensive representation framework for researchers to participate in decision-making; Communicate internal policy on key areas affecting researchers and learn from sector-wide best practice.*

- Six Academic Advocates for Research Staff (one University Advocate, one college Advocate, and four divisional Advocates) have consolidated their remit through a new role descriptor.
- The Humanities Division has appointed an Academic Advocate in each of its ten faculties. MSD has appointed Academic Advocates in 13 (of 16) departments.
- All divisional Advocates have toured their departments / faculties to raise the profile of the Concordat Action Plan, facilitate researcher voice, and explore related local priorities and barriers.

Institution

Commitment 2.2 (Yr 2*): Further strengthen and integrate training, tools, and policies to support rigorous research and its equitable and inclusive evaluation, aligned to our commitment to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)*

- The University has formally joined the UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN) and is now participating in the five-year UKRN Open Research Programme.
- Two Institutional Academic Leads have been appointed to co-lead a new Research Practice Programme: Professor Laura Fortunato as the Lead for UKRN and Professor Susanna-Assunta Sansone as the Lead for Research Practice. The Leads are supported by a new team within Research Services to deliver a three-year work plan.
- An institutional-level Research Practice Group (including expertise from relevant subject areas and domains) has been established and is co-chaired by the Institutional Academic Leads, to oversee the Research Practice programme.
- A scoping review to inform the development of a coordinated Research Practice Training framework has been completed. This entailed extensive mapping (including structured interviews of 35 colleagues) of existing related training provision available within the University and a survey of research staff to identify baseline attitudes and knowledge.
- Project teams to develop research practice training modules have been assembled.
- To support the recruitment and reward of outstanding researchers, we have developed guidance that lists practices to avoid and suggests positive alternatives to promote the adoption of responsible evaluation practices.

Commitment 2.3 (Yr 2): *Embed tools in institutional systems (e.g. in our publications repository) to highlight and document diverse contributions to excellent research and impact*

- CRediT (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) has been configured in Oxford's current research information system, Sympletic Elements, and made available to researchers since November 2022. Authors can now set their CRediT descriptor against each manuscript deposited or claimed in the system. To date, just over 2% of *new* publication records in Sympletic Elements has at least one author with a CRediT value. Next steps will

	involve further information dissemination about this functionality.
Employment	**Researchers** Commitment 2.1 (Yr 3): *Review academic recognition, promotion, and reward criteria to include a broader range of research activities, including research integrity, open research practices, supporting researchers and their careers, and societal impact; Develop mechanisms to celebrate and share good practice.* • The Research Staff Consultation Group (RSCG) has been updated on progress on the current project to review academic career pathways and promotions (further details are given under 'Institution' below). This review will complement an initiative instigated by the RSCG on the nomenclature of job titles for researchers. This ongoing work seeks to establish job titles that convey the career progression of individuals within and beyond Oxford or the HE sector. A second RSCG initiative has resulted an amendment to the eligibility criteria for an internal research fund (John Fell Fund) to enable researchers with a degree of research independence to apply for their salary as a Co-Investigator. **Academic Managers of Researchers** Commitment 1.4 (Yr 2): *Further equip principal investigators, academic line managers, and others with responsibilities for researchers, with guidance and skills development to support the career development of researchers; Co-design provision with senior leaders; Evaluate the impact of these interventions.* • A new development programme titled '*The Confident Manager*' has been created and implemented via two streams; for new and experienced managers respectively. It seeks to equip people-managers with core skills to succeed in leading a strong, collaborative and mutually-supportive research team. The programme comprises masterclasses, social learning spaces and supplementary materials. To date, 65 managers of researchers have participated in the programmes (42 new and

23 experienced). Learning from this programme and consultation within divisions are informing the design of a suite of development opportunities to support academics as mentors, managers and leaders. It is planned to design a shorter core module specifically for academic managers to run at least monthly.

- New induction materials for all staff are currently under development by People & Organisational Development and will include checklists and signposting to induction material for new researchers as well as academic managers of researchers.

Institution

Commitment 1.6 (Yr 3*): Progress mechanisms to create greater contractual stability and security for fixed-term researchers, liaising with external funders as appropriate*

- Early work has focused on data gathering on successive fixed-term contracts and continuity of employment.
- At the request of the MSD Research Staff Forum, a simple (plain speaking) guide on the difference between fixed-term and open-ended externally-funded contracts of employment is in preparation. The guide seeks to provide additional clarity on the practical implications of each contact type, including the stability and security offered.

Commitment 2.1 (Yr 3): *Review academic recognition, promotion, and reward criteria to include a broader range of research activities, including research integrity, open research practices, supporting researchers and their careers, and societal impact; Develop mechanisms to celebrate and share good practice.*

- A project is underway to review academic career pathways and promotions. Activities include a review of recognition criteria to include a broader range of contributions to research and innovation, with the aim to: increase clarity of expectation, and articulate the level of ambition expected at each career stage; broaden the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that we value in contributions to excellence in research, education, and impact; improved processes for accommodating variation of duties and the role of specialist career pathways.
- The University Advocate and College Advocate for Research Staff have been working with the Conference of Colleges to

	increase the number of college affiliations offered to University researchers. In principle agreement has been secured and promising engagement with colleges resulting.
Professional development	Researchers

Commitment 3.2 (Yr 2): *Enhance provision of career development expertise, including from sectors beyond academia*
- Two Careers Advisers (new posts) dedicated to supporting researchers on fixed-term contracts, were recruited during the reporting period. Between September 2022 and March 2023, the advisers held 337 one-to-one meetings with researchers, 155 of whom had initiated their first meeting, and 182 their second or third meetings. Advice on CVs and career planning for leaving academia were the most popular discussion topics.
- Researcher-orientated Careers Advisors have undertaken department visits and given over 20 bespoke training sessions for research staff at the invitation of departments and research staff associations. These sessions complement numerous careers and development-focused events organised by divisions and departments. The Research Staff Consultation Group has recently initiated a vehicle for gathering information on such locally convened events.

Commitment 3.3 (Yr 3): *Provide opportunities for all researchers to have review conversations focusing on their career at least annually, supported by institutional systems which capture professional development activity*

- The training sessions on Career Development Reviews (CDRs) (described below) will seek to guide the reviewee and the reviewer in preparing for and steering constructive career conversations.
- A template Career Conversation planner and three guides have been created, each with a different audience in mind: reviewees, reviewers, HR professionals. These templates will be augmented with local guidance to reflect department / faculty practices.
- The Humanities Division has an existing Career Conversation model for all academic staff. It has been offered to researchers in seven Humanities faculties, while three faculties are in process of introducing their own CDR scheme.
- MPLS have continued to follow their well-established scheme of hybrid Professional Development Reviews (PDRs) and CDRs. |

- All 16 MSD departments have embedded PDRs that include some career-related questions. Four departments have elected to move towards hybrid PDR / CDRs. Two will roll out hybrids at scale; one will pilot the hybrid model in some research groups; and one will pilot offering two annual reviews to researchers – one PDR with their line manager and one CDR with a senior academic who is not the line manager.   MSD will monitor feedback from researchers and reviewers gathered via coordinated questionnaires.
- A majority of departments in SSD offer an annual review conversation to researchers. Departments are now working to ensure that all researchers are offered an opportunity for an annual career development conversation – to support career planning and personal career aspirations in any sector or in any role.

Academic Managers of Researchers

Commitment 1.4 (Yr 2):   *Further equip principal investigators, academic line managers, and others with responsibilities for researchers, with guidance and skills development to support the career development of researchers; Co-design provision with senior leaders; Evaluate the impact of these interventions*

- Training on CDRs has been designed with divisions and feedback from several departments. These pilot sessions will introduce reviewers and reviewees to CDRs and enable them to practice effective approaches for holding productive and mutually rewarding career conversations.
- Considerable activity towards this commitment is driven by divisions. By way of illustration: 27 researchers from across the University participated in the MPLS Leadership in Action course, a modified version of the highly-rated Vitae programme.   The new Inclusive Leadership Programme in MSD is designed to support Oxford Principal Investigators (PIs) in becoming more inclusive, transparent, and supportive leaders and has attracted 15 PIs over the past year. The MPLS Innovation Leadership Programme (10 participants) is a 5-module course for new lecturers, associate professors and senior research fellows, that includes skills in managing stakeholders and teams.

Institution

Commitment 1.3 (Yr 2): *Ensure that all researchers are able to benefit from the availability of at least ten days professional development (pro rata) per year; Illustrate effective use of professional development time, and identify mechanisms for tracking and reporting on engagement*

- Two divisions, MPLS and SSD, have approved new Researcher Development Strategies to progress this aim, and underpinned by additional resource in MPLS.
- The Researcher Hub has appointed a Researcher Development Consultant to support in this Commitment. A Planning Aid to guide researchers in their thinking and planning on how they will use their 10 days for professional and career development is currently under development in collaboration with divisional Researcher Developers, and exemplars of effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in a range of research settings are being collated.
- Divisional activity includes: mapping the training and development offer and consultation on implementation in MSD; new researcher-focused newsletters in SSD and in Humanities that highlight development opportunities.
- We are yet to identify a University-wide mechanism to collate data on engagement with development opportunities.

Commitment 3.1 (Yr 2): *Support career destinations across a wide variety of sectors and roles; Track and analyse career destinations over time, and adjust resources as appropriate.*

- The theme of the 2023 Career Conference was '*Careers Beyond Academia'.* Held over five days, research staff accounted for 455 places at the 18 sessions convened (35% of total places). 152 individual staff attended the Conference. Sessions on '*Consulting: Using your research and critical thinking skills'* and a keynote talk entitled '*It's OK to leave'* were most the popular sessions for our researcher community.
- Early work on career destination tracking includes scoping the benefits and operational hurdles of awarding full alumni status to researchers who move on from Oxford (above the associate status they already hold).

Comment on any lessons learned from the activities undertaken over this period and any modifications you propose to make to your action plan and measures of success as a result.

The University of Oxford has a devolved structure which leads to rich and diverse array of activity in pursuit of the Commitments listed above. Key aims of the Concordat, such as the introduction of CDRs and promotion and implementation of ten days development time, will be rolled out incrementally across four academic divisions and 50+ departments. Piloting varied routes to achieve the overarching aims is key to our progress and success. Learning from initiatives in other Universities also informs our planning, and is increasingly captured through participation in sector networks and in our collective progress reporting systems. Data gathering for key commitments is particularly challenging, again most notably for Commitments 1.3 (10 day professional development) and 3.3 (CDRs). There is no University-wide software for monitoring the engagement with development and training, nor for the monitoring of uptake of annual reviews. New systems and/or the roll out of software used in some departments are two routes to be explored (including Simitive, People XD).

The researcher representational structure was revitalised in the year before the Concordat Action Plan was signed. The proactive and engaged response from researchers has led to policy-related initiatives emerging from the Research Staff Consultation Group and divisional research staff fora. The level of engagement has enabled committees at the University to consider policy changes not envisaged in preparing the Plan, yet consistent with the Concordat's overall aims.

There are potentially some delays which may lead to modified timelines, most notably on Commitment 1.6. It was anticipated that software to enable confidential reporting on harassment would be rolled out in the 2022/23 reporting period. Since signature of the Concordat, the University has raised prevention of harassment to an immediate and high priority action and has provided additional resource to the Equality and Diversity Unit to create and implement a new strategy across the Collegiate University and for all staff and students. Implementation of the strategy will exceed the aspirations of the Concordat commitment.

There is a lack of clarity from some research funders on whether time spent on CPD which is not directly linked to a specific fellowship or research project can be charged to the funder. A transparent statement from key funders would avert any potential for reluctance to promote the uptake of ten days development.

Implementation of the Concordat Action Plan sits with several central departments, working in collaboration with all four academic divisions who, in turn, work on delivery in partnership with their departments. All of these units invest

significant time in the consultative processes to ensure that plans fit into local environments and are configured to achieve reach and impact. The progress reporting mechanisms for all stakeholders is organised to satisfy several important needs: sharing best practice between divisions and departments; communication and consultation on policy progress implementation; reporting requirements under the Concordat. Current practice on consultation and information-sharing will be revisited to improve or retain good practice and to streamline those aspects that have proven to be time-consuming or of limited benefit.

Joint coordination between the Researcher Hub and Research Strategy Policy Unit is central to the future delivery of the research culture work programme, of which the Concordat is one of three pillars (alongside research practice and valuing contributions). It is recognised that integrating the work of the Researcher Hub into this broader agenda, and dovetailing with initiatives led by the Careers Service, Equality and Diversity Unit, and People & Organisational Development, will rely on such collaborative working practices in Years 2 and 3.

Outline your key objectives in delivering your plan in the coming reporting period

The University's Concordat Action Plan is one of several strategic components in our broader programme to strengthen research culture and raise the profile of researcher career development. Our central objective is to work within and across Oxford's four academic divisions (and GLAM) to progress complementary activity in each of three pillars of our wider research culture programme; high-quality research practice; valuing the contributions of all who undertake or support our research endeavours; and fulfilling commitments to researcher career development specified in our Concordat Action Plan.

Our approach is to make the necessary improvements in systems, policy and communication to support everyone in the research environment to play their part in activity that meets targets across several plans (as illustrated below). We see these as critical in enabling the institution as a whole, over time, to match the quality of support to those who conduct research at Oxford with the quality of research conducted.

For example, the progress made in MSD following the appointment of a research culture facilitator has motivated similar planned appointments in the three other academic divisions; Humanities, MPLS, and SSD.

Like the process for developing the Concordat Action Plan, the mechanisms for its implementation are being created through rigorous institution-wide consultation and consensus-building. These processes allow us to build on existing related plans (such as the Concordat on Research Integrity) and flex towards new plans and

strategies. For example, commitments in the Concordat Action Plan were mirrored in our Athena Swan Action Plan to reflect jointly held aspirations. We envisage applying a similar approach to the forthcoming Race Equality Charter Action Plan, development of the Prevention of Harassment & Bullying Strategy, and Technicians Commitment.

Many of the Concordat Action Plan commitments are on track for delivery within the forecasted timeframe.   Consolidation and enhancing impact from activity towards certain priorities will be important in the next reporting period. Examples include progress towards supporting high-quality research practice, extending tailored careers advice, and maximising the effectiveness of the researcher representational structure for both individuals and the institution.   Within these 'on track' commitments, work is in progress to create an institution-wide strategy to guide the ways we support researcher career development, to introduce a Charter for Researchers to set clear expectations, and to enhance support for community-building, including the experience of being welcomed and orientated at Oxford. As key milestones are met, we will take a moment to learn, share and celebrate our collectively-achieved progress.

The University has identified and is beginning to address the challenges in meeting other commitments. Achieving scale in engagement and effective learning will be critical to meeting the aspiration to further equip line managers of researchers to support the career development of researchers.   Feedback from the modest number of 'new' and 'experienced' academic manager participants in the respective streams of *The Confident Manager* development programme are positive. We will invest time in learning what works and why to inform tailored promotion, and to design a shorter core module specifically for academic managers to run at least monthly. We will continue to reserve at least 50% of places for managers of researchers in the longer module.   It is anticipated that progress will continue steadily towards introducing annual Career Conversations (CDRs) and efforts to improve reviewee and reviewer experience. Maximising uptake and effectiveness across very different research environments will rely on enabling local stakeholders to drive the pace of roll out, assessing results of the pilots underway, and adjusting practice accordingly.
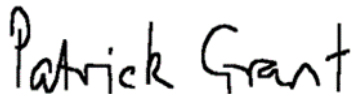
It is likely that the uptake of ten days professional training will be encouraged through several routes, including its incorporation within annual CDRs. At the same time, external factors may prove pivotal in achieving the department-level buy-in and engagement needed to fulfil this commitment. The Researcher Hub and RSPU would welcome a sector-wide conversation with funders about their role in achieving this aspiration.

A significant unresolved challenge in our highly devolved structure is the absence of a central and comprehensive data collection system that would enable us to monitor the uptake of CDRs or the ten days for professional development. Several avenues for data collation (People XD, HR Self-Service, Simitive) beyond the (voluntary) Staff Experience Survey and HR Audit will be explored in order to enable the University to assess progress towards Concordat commitments.   The Researcher Hub is corresponding with the University's Digital Transformation programme of investment and enquiry to consider the viability of existing and new avenues for such data collection.

Please provide a brief statement describing your institution's approval process of this report prior to sign off by the governing body

This report has been collated from input by the Research Staff Working Group and supported by the Group at their meeting on 20 April 2023. The report has been shared with the Research Staff Consultation Group and the Co-chairs have given feedback on the content. The report was approved by the Research Staff Steering Committee by email circulation on 27 April 2023, prior to University approval by Research & Innovation Committee and Personnel Committee on 4 May 2023.

Signature on behalf of governing body:

Patrick Grant

Professor P S Grant FREng
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Contact for queries: Rachel Bray, Researcher Hub Lead, (Rachel.Bray@admin.ox.ac.uk)

This annual report will be analysed by Universities UK, secretariat for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, to identify good practices, themes for development and information to improve national research culture policy and practice.

If you have any questions, or suggestions on how the reporting process could be improved, please contact the secretariat at CDRsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk

www.researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk