

University of South Wales Concordat Implementation: HR Excellence in Research Award Two Year Action Plan 2018 - 2020

The University of South Wales is a research-engaged higher education institution. Our research successes have been due to the hard work and talent of our academic staff, postgraduate research students and dedicated support staff. We understand the importance of scholarship and applied research which impacts on our students, local, regional, national and international business, charities, communities and governments. We see research and innovation as an integral part of our mission to help our region of South Wales play an increasingly important role in the global economy. Our commitment to the creation of knowledge and its transfer will help us recruit, develop and retain the best staff in order to generate that seamless scholarly community which encompasses all of our students and all of our staff: we are all learners together.

Following our four year review, the new action plan seeks to build upon the progress made over the last four years and as such, reflects an alignment of new and ongoing items from the 2013 - 2017 Action Plan. In some cases actions have been reworded to reflect the changing requirements of the institution and progress required moving forward.

Staff on teaching and research contracts at USW are predominantly at Lecturer and Senior Lecturer level, for the period 2014-2017 it was found that the majority of academic staff are at Senior Lecturer (SL) level, with a small number of staff who are either Academic Manager, Reader or Professor. In terms of numbers, the majority of academic staff are on permanent contracts, with the second largest contract type being that of perm/fixed. Overall numbers of staff on research-only contracts are low.

This action plan will be overseen by the University Research Committee, which will formally review progress at their meetings (held three times per year). Day to day implementation and progress monitoring will remain the responsibility of those assigned to specific actions, with support and advice from the HR Excellence in Research Steering Group.

1.	Recruitment and Selection	Responsibility and timelines	Deadline	Progress to date	
1.1	Research toolkit				
1.1.1	<p>Continued Action: From the 1st January 2017 to the 30th September 2017 a total of 2023 unique research website page views were recorded. We believe that the newly created website has caused a drop in the number of visits and as such we intend to review the current research website structure and content to establish whether it is fit for purpose.</p> <p>In addition to this the website toolkit use will be monitored and the number of unique and 'returning' users recorded.</p>	<p>Lead: Research Excellence Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: Through a measured incremental increase commencing in the academic year 2018/19 the revised research website will have on average 200 visits per month for the academic year 2018/19, and as we increase awareness over time we expect this number to steadily increase to receive 500+ visits per month from 2019/20 onwards.</p> <p>Where possible we will also examine the number of users that return to the</p>	<p>09/2018</p>	

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	<p>Following the review, work will be undertaken to improve the website provision to help ensure that the number of unique and returning users increases incrementally each month, with an aim to consistently reach 500 visits per month.</p> <p>Inform and encourage researchers to utilise the extensive resource available on the website.</p>		<p>website to help monitor researcher engagement.</p>		
1.2	HR policy for interview panels				
	<p>New Action: <i>People Plan Objective 1.1</i> Staff recruitment and selection processes will support the attraction and recruitment of excellent staff, able to develop and support our approach to learning and teaching and contribute to our focused research areas.</p> <p>All relevant HR policies and procedures to be reviewed and if necessary amended to ensure that where appropriate a research active member of staff is included on interview panels for all new academic appointments.</p> <p>Interview panels have historically placed more emphasis on Learning and Teaching (L&T) but given that within the National Framework Agreement our academics are categorised as Teaching & Research, it has been agreed that there should be some reference to research and/or to scholarly activity as appropriate.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of HR</p>	<p>Success measure: Where appropriate, all panels for academic appointments will feature an active researcher to ensure the interview contains sufficient testing of research capability and/or potential.</p> <p>The role of research as a key academic requirement will be promoted at the same level as learning and teaching.</p> <p>Sample monitoring to take place to ensure intentions are carried out.</p> <p>To have produced revised recruitment guidance that strengthens the rules for the interview process of academic appointments, which will include the advice that at the very least research and scholarly specific questions are included at each academic staff interview panel.</p>	<p>02/2018</p>	

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	Recruitment guidance will be reviewed to strengthen the profile of L&T and research in all parts of the selection process. This will include stronger references in recruitment literature and dedicated selection methods.				
2.	Recognition and Value	Responsibility and Timeline		Deadline	Progress to date
2.1	Career Pathways				
2.1.1	New Action: The current Development & Performance Review (DPR) pro forma does not have a specific section in which to record research objectives. HR to consider whether to adapt the form or strengthen guidance so that there are clear indicators for those who are undertaking research.	Lead: Director of HR	Success measure: Research becomes an integral part of the annual academic planning cycle, with measurable targets set against identifiable metrics such as outputs, income and citations. DPR guidance will contain specific reference to research issues and include examples of good research objectives.	03/2018	
2.1.2	Continued Action: Higher Academic Awards workshops and one to one sessions will be made available throughout the year to ensure that academic staff understand the opportunities available to them. At appraisal support is given to help academics to reach the next stage of their career.	Lead: Director of RBE	Success measure: 100% of applicants to attend a workshop or one to one session prior to application being submitted. In order to monitor this action we will record the attendees of workshops and compare with the applications.	12/2019	
2.2	Research Review				
2.2.1	New Action: A new University wide appraisal system has been developed; with the Research Review receiving positive feedback from Research Institute members and the good compliance rates with engagement	Lead: Director of RBE	Success measure: Every Research Institute member to be given the opportunity to discuss their research with the appropriate Research Institute Director prior to formal appraisal with their line manager. We	09/2019	

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	<p>in an annual review with their Research Institute Director, this process will continue to run alongside the new appraisal system.</p> <p>The Faculty of Life Sciences and Education have conducted a pilot scheme, which brings together the formal appraisal and research review with an aim to bring research activity to the forefront of the appraisal scheme, we intend to learn from and possibly adopt this as best practice for the remaining faculties.</p>		<p>will discover the percentage of members offered this opportunity through the Research Institute member survey, and if necessary we will work with the Research Institute Directors to increase the % each year.</p>		
2.3	Research Student Representatives				
2.3.1	<p>Continued Action: Research Student Representatives will continue to have a position at all research related committees at both faculty and University level, RBE will monitor the attendance of and contributions made to the research student community by these representatives; feedback will also be measured using PRES.</p> <p>The career progression of current PGR students into academic roles at USW, will be recorded and monitored to help identify trends.</p>	<p>Lead: Postgraduate Research Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: Postgraduate Research students become an integral part of our research teams.</p> <p>To continue to engage with PRES and receive high levels of student satisfaction in PRES 2017 over 70% of students thought that the University values and responds to feedback. By 2019 we aim to increase this percentage by another 10%.</p>	06/2019	
2.4	Researcher Forums				
2.4.1	<p>New Action: In response to feedback from Early Career Researchers, RBE will help establish and trial the creation of an Early Career Researcher Forum, which will run alongside the informal</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: Using the Research Excellence Framework definition of Early Career Researcher, we aim to establish the ECR forum during academic year 2018/19.</p>	01/2019	

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	researcher meetings that are already taking place across the University.		As a new action the attendance at forums will be monitored with an aim to achieve a noticeable increase year on year.		
2.5 Impact					
2.5.1	<p>Continued Action: Nurture and sustain research with impact that crosses disciplinary boundaries and addresses societal challenges.</p> <p>Stimulate multidisciplinary research by funding and supporting pan-university networks focussed on global societal challenges.</p> <p>Establish an Impact Leadership development programme that aims to highlight the importance of and how to develop impact from research.</p> <p>Building upon successful impact activities such as the Impact Investment Scheme (I2S) and Impact Awards to foster and reward research impact and leadership is in development and will be implemented in 2018/19.</p>	<p>Lead: Knowledge Exchange & Impact Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: 60% of our impact case studies scoring 3/4* in REF 2021</p> <p>New I2S scheme launched each year with researcher participation increasing 10-15% each year.</p> <p>Devise and launch the Impact Leadership development programme.</p>	12/2018	
2.6 Senior Management					
2.6.1	<p>New Action: To support this plan there should be a senior appointment at University level to co-ordinate all research matters.</p> <p>To ensure the management of academic research at the University is robust we will look at the lines of communication</p>	<p>Lead: DVC Academic</p>	<p>Success measure: Recruitment of a PVC Research, who will improve the lines of communication between the research community and Executive.</p> <p>Consistent Terms of Reference for Faculty Research Committees.</p>	12/2018	

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	<p>up to senior management teams at Faculty Executive and University level.</p> <p>Review the Terms of Reference for Faculty Research Committees to ensure that they are consistent across the institution.</p> <p>Better endorse all research committees so that staff and students are made aware of the role that these governing committees perform.</p>		<p>Staff and students are aware of the role that the research committees perform.</p> <p>We will measure the level of awareness through the following surveys; CROS, PIRLS and PRES, and expect an increase in the number of participants who understand the role that these committees perform.</p>		
2.6.2	<p>New Action: To create a job description for the Chair of Research Programmes Sub-Committee, which will include allocated time on the workload model.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: A job description that is clearly aligned with the proposed workload and requirements of the role created.</p>	08/2018	
3.	Support and Career Development	Responsibility and timelines		Deadline	Progress to date
3.1	Continuing Professional Development				
3.1.1	<p>Continued Action: The post CPD questionnaires for academic year 2015/16 showed that 44% of participants were extremely satisfied with the training provided, which increased to 74% in 2016/17. As a result of this positive feedback RBE will continue to operate, monitor and respond to the comprehensive series of CPD events, which take place across all campuses at USW to ensure fair access to training opportunities.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: In 2016/17 there were 20 workshops for 171 distinct attendees, it is our aim to increase this number incrementally over the next 2 years to 300 distinct attendees by 2020.</p>	09/2018	
3.1.2	<p>New Action: Launch a mandatory course for Heads of School and Academic Managers (or</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: 100% of Heads of School and Academic Managers to attend the course.</p>	09/2018	

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	equivalent) to help them to understand the benefits of research from a personal development perspective as well as being beneficial to the curriculum and being a tool for student recruitment.				
3.1.3	<p>Continued Action: In collaboration with CELT launch a mandatory course for early career researchers, research assistants and new academic staff. This course will focus on the basics including research governance, research funding and University research systems and support.</p> <p>Develop a process to identify the 'new starters' in order to direct relevant opportunities to them.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: The HR Business System iTrent being utilised in conjunction with PURE to capture research-focused new starters.</p> <p>At least 25 mentoring pairs to be established over the next two years.</p>	12/2019	
3.1.4	<p>Continued Action: RBE will continue to run lunchtime courses and bitesize development opportunities throughout the academic year.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: A continuous, high-tempo, research focussed CPD programme with monthly events for leaders, managers and academics spanning research and knowledge exchange as well as targeted support.</p>	09/2018	
3.1.5	<p>New Action: Utilise the Heads of Schools forum so that it will compliment the Head of School CPD and enable two-way communication on issues of research.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: Opening of communication channels resulting in shared good practice across the institution, we will monitor the attendance and aim to consistently achieve over 80% attendance rate at each meeting.</p>	09/2018	
3.1.6	<p>New Action: Look at the support offered to PGR students by schemes such as</p>	<p>Lead: Postgraduate</p>	<p>Success measure: Harmonisation of the training and mentoring provision for all PGR</p>	10/2018	

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	Knowledge Economy Skills Scholarships 2 (KESS2) and the Doctoral Training Alliances (DTA) to make improvements to the training and mentorship provision offered to all other PGR students at USW.	Research Manager	students. Resulting in the establishment of a Graduate School for all PGR.		
3.2	Mentoring				
3.2.1	<p>Continued Action: The Research Mentoring Scheme is being broadened to reflect our four routes to academic progression via Readership and Professorial title.</p> <p>In Autumn 2017 we will launch mentoring schemes for innovation and engagement and teaching and learning so that all academics have the opportunity for support whatever their chosen career pathway.</p> <p>In conjunction with CELT, workshops for mentoring will be developed to help mentees understand what they might gain out of the mentoring arrangement and for mentors to understand the role they will be play in their mentees development.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE / Director of CELT</p>	<p>Success measure: Introduction of online mentoring application system.</p> <p>Seamless collaboration with other USW mentoring schemes/opportunities.</p> <p>To successfully create at least 25 mentoring pairs.</p>	06/2018	
3.2.2	<p>Continued Action: Review the effectiveness of the Mentoring Scheme by surveying each mentor-mentee pair 12 months after their first meeting.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: To enhance the Mentoring Scheme the attendance and satisfaction figures will be monitored and actions identified/undertaken if there is a decrease in either. Feedback forms will show over 70% satisfaction with the scheme.</p>	12/2018	
3.3	Induction:				
3.3.1	New Action:	Lead:	Success measure:	07/2019	

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	<p>The Faculty of Creative Industries will pilot a new comprehensive induction process, for all academic staff; we will review the outcome of this pilot to determine whether it is appropriate to be rolled out across the institution.</p> <p>Faculty Research Leads to be involved in the induction programme, to provide individualised induction and support.</p>	<p>Director of RBE</p>	<p>Adoption of the induction scheme across the institution.</p> <p>All new academic staff will have an experienced research-active mentor who is associated with a research centre or group.</p> <p>All academic staff will be able to request a mentor; internal peer-support for writing research outputs.</p>		
3.4 PGR Calendar of Events					
3.4.1	<p>New Action: As a result of feedback provided during Annual Monitoring, the Graduate Research Office (GRO) will develop and incorporate additional training events into the calendar of events.</p> <p>Research Innovation Services (RISe) and GRO to work together to highlight the CPD programme and Calendar of Events.</p>	<p>Lead: Postgraduate Research Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: Using the feedback obtained from the annual monitoring process we will continue to update the calendar of events to reflect the requirements of our PGR students and to create and introduce new student lead activities.</p>	09/2018	
3.5 External Engagement for PhD students					
3.5.1	<p>Continued Action: A pilot exercise in 2018 will offer all PhD programmes some degree of external engagement.</p> <p>There will also be an opportunity for some PhD students to gain experience in public engagement through a programme of activities.</p>	<p>Lead: Postgraduate Research Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: Currently we have 84 PhD students who are with an external partner; we aim to increase this to 120 PhD students with an external partner by academic year 2020/21.</p> <p>Currently we have 222 staff involved in PhD supervision by the academic year 2020/21 we aim to have at least 330 staff involved in PhD supervision.</p>	09/2020	
3.6 Professional development of research support staff					

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3.6.1	New Action: To encourage all Research Innovation Services staff to become members of ARMA, and to utilise the services on offer.	Lead: Head of RISE	Success measure: 100% of Research and Innovation support staff are members of ARMA.	10/2018	
3.6.2	New Action: Research Innovation Services staff to engage with appropriate training opportunities that are being offered by ARMA.	Lead: Head of RISE	Success measure: One new qualification for a Certificate in Research Management or Certificate in Research Administration every 2 years.	12/2019	
4.	Researchers' Responsibilities	Responsibility and timelines		Deadline	Progress to date
4.1	Research Governance				
4.1.1	Continued Action: Complete the new Research Governance Framework and Arrangements and formally adopt across the institution.	Lead: Head of RISE	Success measure: New governance framework implemented across the University in academic year 2018/19.	09/2018	
4.2	Research Information Systems				
4.2.1	Continued Action: Improve support for researchers by enhancing systems and infrastructure. The University has made significant investment in a new Comprehensive Research Information System (Pure) and PhD Manager. RISE will ensure that training for PURE and PhD Manager will be routinely available in workshop, online and one to one format to ensure that academics engage with the systems and have up to date profiles on the USW website. Develop a new online governance system which includes research funding applications and ethics.	Lead: Head of RISE	Success measure: PhD Manager to be operational in 2018 and a new online governance system which includes research funding applications and ethics to be implemented 2019. We aim for 100% of researchers to engage with Pure and 100% of supervisors to use PhD manager by 2019.	12/2019	

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4.2.2	Open Access				
	New Action: The Research Librarian to develop training and provide support to researchers to enable them to respond to the requirements of the Open Access and Research Data Management agendas.	Lead: Research Excellence Manager	Success measure: All outputs accepted for publication after 01/04/2016 to be Open Access compliant. To develop the RDM process and scope out the required support. The Research Librarian to implement the Research Data Management (RDM) plan within the Governance Framework.	12/2018	
5.	Diversity and Equality	Responsibility and timelines		Deadline	Progress to date
5.1	Athena Swan				
5.1.1	Continued Action: Appoint Athena SWAN departmental champions and submit the Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze renewal for consideration April 2018.	Lead: Director of RBE	Success measure: Athena Swan Champions appointed one per faculty and professional support department. Executive Athena Swan Champions trained and become active Self-Assessment Team members.	04/2018	
5.1.2	New Action: The School of Computing and Mathematics to submit an application for a departmental Athena SWAN in April 2018.	Lead: Athena Swan SATs	Success measure: Application submitted by the deadline.	04/2018	
5.1.3	New Action: In order to improve equality and diversity broadly across the institution a network of trained staff known as the Fair Play 30 will act as advocates for promoting equality and dealing with equality issues arising for staff and students in their	Lead: Director of HR	Success measure: Fair Play 30 initiative was launched in October 2017. By early 2018 we will have appointed and trained our volunteers to begin supporting the equality agenda. FP30 volunteers will	01/2018	

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	<p>areas. This network will complement the University's current resources and structures for promoting equality and diversity by providing a network of local equality contacts across the organisation.</p> <p>Launch the Fairplay 30 initiative, train 30 Fair Play Champions who will be visible by special lanyards, badges and door signs.</p>		<p>work closely (as appropriate) with our appointed Athena SWAN champions.</p> <p>In July 2018 evaluation of this initiative will determine how successful it has been and we will attempt to measure its impact.</p>		
5.1.4	<p>Continued Action: Launch cohort 3 of the Women Development Programme and collect feedback at start, middle and end of programme.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: Programme launched with a cohort of 20. Feedback from the 20 will be monitored and tracked for 24 months after the programme is completed. The feedback will be used to inform future programmes.</p>	01/2019	
5.1.5	<p>New Action: Run a series of focus groups on each campus to consider academic career experiences of staff with a focus on protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Lead: Director of HR</p>	<p>Success measure: Focus Group dates have been secured for November/December 2017. We will analyse the feedback for Athena SWAN purposes but also for other equality strands we are working on.</p> <p>Attendance target is 50 staff and the outcomes will be published on the Hub (internal communication channel).</p>	02/2018	
5.1.6	<p>New Action: Stonewall Equality Index The USW Group were proud to join Stonewall Cymru's Diversity Champions Scheme in June 2016. Continue to promote a series of workplace and education resources on the Stonewall</p>	<p>Lead: Director of HR</p>	<p>Success measure: Move up the equality index, to at least 260.</p> <p>The 2017 return was submitted in September, results awaited. Improving our place within the index (from 301) is a</p>	01/2018	

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	website and to engage in the Equality Index.		key objective and one that will be retained year-on-year.		
5.1.7	<p>New Action: Establish a USW LGBT+ Role Model network, by engaging volunteers who are passionate about promoting LGBT+ equality within the University and committed to being visible role models, thus conveying the important message that people can be themselves in the workplace and can be accepted without exception.</p> <p>The Group (SPECTRUM) has been established. Its early work has attracted much publicity and plaudits, and the Group has already been nominated for a TEAM Recognition Award (internal).</p>	<p>Lead: Director of HR</p>	<p>Success measure: The success of this group will be monitored and membership will be targeted to grow year-on-year.</p>	09/2018	
6.	Implementation and Review	Responsibility and timelines		Deadline	Progress to date
6.1	Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), Principle Investigators Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) and Postgraduate Research Environment Survey (PRES)				
	<p>Continued Action: Continue to use surveys as a means of collating views of researchers, and to monitor participation in each survey to be comparable to previous internal and external surveys.</p>	<p>Lead: Research Excellence Manager and Postgraduate Research Manager</p>	<p>Success measure: Future CROS, PIRLS and PRES surveys will see an increase in the number of respondents by at least 10% each year.</p>	06/2019	
6.2	Researcher Engagement				
6.2.1	<p>New Action: We will work to ensure that senior management is engaged with the action plan, therefore the HR Excellence in Research Award is a standing item on</p>	<p>Lead: Director of RBE</p>	<p>Success measure: 75% of CROS respondents claimed to not be aware of the Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research. By improving the lines of communication</p>	06/2019	

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	the Research Committee and Faculty Research Committee agenda.		between the centre and faculties we aim to show a marked increase in the number of respondents who understand the Concordat in future CROS surveys.		
6.3 HR Excellence in Research Steering Group					
	Continued Action: The HR Excellence in Research Steering Group will meet regularly to review this action plan. All relevant University committees will have sight of this action plan regularly and receive updates on progress.	Lead: Director of RBE	Success measure: HR Excellence has become a standing item on the agendas of the University and Faculty Research Committees. The HR Excellence in Research Steering Group will meet once a term to implement and monitor the action plan.	12/2020	