

Action Plan (Concordat Implementation Strategy) 2019-21

The Action Plan 2019-21 builds on previous action plans and our review of progress against actions 2017-19. These and related documents can be found at: <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/research/Our-research/EU-HR-Excellence-in-Research-Award>

PROPOSED ACTIONS	LEAD	PROGRESS / TIMESCALE
<p>A: Recruitment and Selection</p> <p>Principle 1: <i>Recognition and the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.</i></p>		
<p>I.2 & I.5</p> <p>We will review job descriptions, titles and grades of research staff and make recommendations to minimise inconsistencies in new roles within grants and projects. These will include the creation of template Job descriptions.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Review framework identified and approved by key stakeholders. (b) University-wide analysis completed with recommendations for role descriptions and job descriptions for staff on grants and projects. (c) Sign off recommendation of job templates. 	<p>HR / RSDO / GS</p>	<p>Review activity to begin Feb 2020; recommendations drafted May 2020 with required sign-off arranged in time for new academic year.</p>
<p>I.3</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the use of fixed-term contracts and the transfer of researchers to open-ended contracts as required.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <p>6-monthly review of open-ended versus fixed-term contracts provided to Concordat Implementation Group. Annual report on data provided to relevant committees.</p>	<p>HR / CIG</p>	<p>October 2019 – regular monitoring of data and presentation to CIG, annual report of data to EO&HR Committee</p>

<p>I.4</p>	<p>As part of the introduction of the next round of promotions criteria, the framework for feedback to researchers will be enhanced to provide unsuccessful applicants with mentorship and 1-2-1 career development support in preparation for re-application.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Outcomes of promotions interviews monitored. (b) Process changes such that unsuccessful applicants are offered coaching / mentorship. (c) Mentorship scheme in place. 	<p>GS / Colleges / HR</p>	<p>From next formal round of promotions – January 2020</p>
<p>I.5</p>	<p>A review of researchers’ job titles and pay grades suggest inconsistencies in determining pay and grade across different projects.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Systematic review of how pay and grade is determined for researchers recruited to project grants completed in order to ensure consistency. (b) In consultation with stakeholders, ‘Guide on the use of Named Researchers’ drafted to assist decisions related to this. 	<p>RSDO (post-awards team), CIG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Pay and grades for researchers on project grants reviewed against role requirements. (b) ‘Guide on the use of Named Researchers’ drafted and circulated for comment. Guide circulated to grant applicants.
<p>I.5</p>	<p>In collaboration with current researchers, develop and produce a single template for a researchers’ handbook, taking account of recent changes and developments. Departments will be encouraged to re-write local handbooks around the template.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Central template produced. (b) Researchers handbook will be included in packs for new researchers. 	<p>HR, GS, CIG, RSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Central template will be produced. (b) Researchers handbook will be included in packs for all new researchers.

B: Recognition and Value

Principle 2: *Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation’s human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.*

2.3	<p>A review of Staff Development will be undertaken, with a view to transferring it to an Organisational Development (OD) model. This will assist with better overall needs assessment and signposting of development opportunities for managers.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Review of staff development completed. (b) Feedback on needs assessment and the availability of development opportunities, with actionable findings for improvement where necessary. 	HR / Staff Dev	Nov 2019 – Jul 2020
2.3	<p>We will build on our successful ‘Research Supervisor of the Year’ Award, to create a parallel nomination and recognition scheme for research managers / PIs. We will work with the RSA to explore options for a central award that identifies and celebrates exemplary research leadership.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Continuation of RSOY award maintaining at least current rates of participation. (b) Concept developed of an extension to the scheme for research managers / PIs in conjunction with Vice-Provost (Research) and RSA. 	GS, CIG, RSA, RSDO (post-awards team)	Apr 2021 (first scheme introduced and completed)
2.3	<p>Working in conjunction with new post-award team, consult research staff, managers, and PIs on scope and content of research charter. Develop and launch Charter, as required.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Consultation completed. (b) Charter drafted and circulated. 	GS, RSIG	Oct 2020
2.5	(see A1.4)	HR, CIG, EO&HR	
2.6	<p>We will review the impact of the new dedicated researcher careers advisor and consider options for better data capture, monitoring and reporting on career outcomes for our researchers. PDC and GS to review and report on the first year of this provision.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p>	PDC / GS / HR	Jan – Dec 2020

	<p>(a) DR data reported to UEC.</p> <p>(b) ECR data reported to RKT.</p> <p>(c) Actions and processes developed to maintain or improve performance in this area.</p>		
<p>C: Support and Career Development</p> <p>Principle 3: <i>Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.</i></p> <p>Principle 4: <i>The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.</i></p>			
3.1	<p>Develop existing university practice in careers fairs and employer engagement to specifically target doctoral researchers and increase engagement in available resources for this group.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <p>(a) Promotional material created inviting researchers to careers fairs.</p> <p>(b) GS to work with PDC and other stakeholders to expand understanding of development needs in this area.</p>	PDC (Careers) / GS / Industrial collaborators and partners	To match calendar of event for PDC Careers Fairs Jan 2020 – Oct 2021
3.2	<p>We will continue to coordinate and provide support for YERUN (researcher mobility awards) and support staff to build and maintain active awareness of opportunities within a changing political environment. Fund additional training and conference attendance where appropriate</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <p>(a) Annual promotion and events run in a timely manner to support YERUN application deadlines.</p> <p>(b) Staff supported to attend relevant conferences and meetings.</p>	Vice-Provost (International)/ GS / RSDO	YERUN application deadlines
3.2	<p>We will build support and create opportunities for greater synergy and shared learning between industry and research. We will increase understanding of the issues arising between industry and academia. We will conduct desk research and interviews to understand specific requirements for support and recommend actionable findings for the development of university support in the area.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <p>Actionable findings for integration into researcher development strategy and policy.</p>	Vice-Provost (Research) / College Vice-Deans Research / GS	Work to begin Mar 2020, findings reported to RKT committee in Spring term 2021
3.3	<p>We will build on strengths amongst researchers in enterprise and innovation and work with the Innovation hub to increase the engagement of researchers with available opportunities. Run an innovation and</p>	PDC / GS	Event to run in Autumn 2020

	<p>enterprise event to showcase our successes in this area (our national competition winners). Broaden awareness and enhance opportunities through peer mentoring.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Innovation and enterprise event completed. (b) Increased engagement and awareness of Innovation Hub amongst researchers. 		Report on engagement Jan 2021
3.3	<p>The Graduate School will expand its competitive travel prizes to include post-doctoral researchers, providing up to £750 of travel and conference cost reimbursement to ECRs.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Travel prizes are available and promoted to ECRs. (b) Support and training to encourage application to the scheme is provided. (c) Implementation and impact of scheme reviewed annually. 	GS	From Apr 2020, impact and implementation reviewed after six months initially, review and report annually.
3.4	<p>Increase internship opportunities for researchers (capitalising on successful partnerships and building on internships secured last year).</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Develop a standard process to offer and manage internships as part of doctoral provision. (b) Capture, measure and report on internship opportunities and take-up amongst doctoral researchers. 	PDC / PGR Forum / GS	(a) Jun 2020 (b) Sept 2021
3.5	<p>Review the current PDR process to understand how it meets the needs of ‘career progression’ for research staff, and enhance the reviewer training to provide better signposting to researcher careers resources and expertise.</p> <p>Working with stakeholders, consider the feasibility of bespoke requirements for research staff within the PDR process.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Current PDR process reviewed for research staff with a focus on career progression. (b) Reviewer resources enhanced and promoted. (c) Feasibility of bespoke requirements for RS within PDR considered and reported. 	HR / GS / CIG / College Research Managers / RSA	(a) In alignment with PDR schedule 2020. (b) Mar – Jun 2020 (c) Nov 2020 – Jun 2021

3.8	<p>Increase opportunities for peer-led activities, e.g. post-doctoral researchers engaging in and providing mentorship opportunities.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) All researchers receive clear communication and opportunity for sign-up to opportunities. (b) Outcomes monitored. (c) Increased engagement reported. 	GS / PDC / RSA / Department leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Apr 2020 (b) Monitored termly (c) Report Oct 2020, Oct 2021
4.13	<p>We will audit where ECRs are represented within management committees, and encourage stronger representation where lacking.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Audit conducted (b) Vacant positions filled by new academic year 	E&D, GS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Jan 2020 audit (b) Work with Departments and staff to position staff for new academic year 2020/21
<p>D: Researchers' Responsibilities</p> <p>Principle 5: <i>Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.</i></p>			
5	<p>We will make InkPath app available to all researchers (DRs and ECRs), integrating the Brunel 3-D Development Tool and the Researcher Development Programme.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) App integrated into current systems and available to all researchers. (b) Usage data extracted and reviewed. 	GS, DTP leads, RDAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Jan 2020 – Oct 2020 make InkPath available. (b) Data review – Oct 2020.
<p><i>Also see actions C.3.1 – 3.8</i></p>			
<p>E: Diversity and Equality</p> <p>Principle 6: <i>Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.</i></p>			
6	<p>A new institutional E&D policy will be launched, underpinned by wide consultation, including researchers, via focus groups to inform a comprehensive revision of current policy</p>	Vice-Provost (Students, Staff and Civic Engagement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Jan 2020 (b) Apr 2020

	<p>A task and finish group to revise and co-create a new E&D University Strategy. This will be informed by specific focus groups of DRs and ECRs to ensure that their particular perspectives are captured.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Focus groups completed (b) Policy updated and launched 	E&D Manager	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) EDI in the curriculum project – the University, as part of an Advance HE initiative – will develop a toolkit for staff. (b) An online harassment policy will be developed including review of current social media guidelines for students, and a new policy for carers to be developed in 2020. <p>Success criteria / outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Toolkit developed and made available to staff. (b) Updated / new policies accessible online. 	Academic and Student Services	Academic year 2020
	<p>Combine and review data from CROS and PIRLS across the last 8 years, identify and report on local trends and outcomes. Revisit marketing and communication of next iteration of surveys with a view to increasing participation to at least 30%.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Data combined and trends reported to relevant committees (RKT, EO&HR). (b) Participation in concordat-related sector surveys increased to at least 30%. 	Planning, GS, CIG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mar 2020 (b) May - Jun 2021 (anticipated survey date)
<p>F: Implementation and Review</p> <p>Principle 7: <i>The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.</i></p>			
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) We will sign the new researcher development concordat (2019). (b) We will name a senior Champion for our Concordat activity. (c) We will set out an aligned plan of action, with the aim of meeting sector requirements and maintaining continuity at BUL in provision and enhancements as identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) & (b) Provost & Executive (b) & (d) DoGS, CIG, RSIG 	Jan to Dec 2020

	<p>(d) Activity will be integrated into the business of the Research Implementation Group, chaired by the Provost</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes:</p> <p>(a) New research development concordat signed. (b) Senior Champion named and information widely communicated. (c) Aligned plan of action created, with required reporting. (d) Activity included in RSIG action planning.</p>		
	<p>We will determine a strategy of communication and engagement around the new concordat, inclusive of stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Success criteria / outcomes: A series of communication events and presentations delivered.</p>	<p>GS, CMSR, RSIG, ECR Champions</p>	<p>Launch early 2020, followed by regular throughout 2020 and 2021</p>

The Concordat Implementation Group comprises [Director of Graduate School](#) (Chair), [three ECR representatives](#), two [academic staff representatives](#), [Planning Manager](#) (Research Strategy), [Associate Director HR Business Partnering](#), [Equality and Diversity Manager](#), [Equality, Diversity, Diversity & Engagement Analyst](#). It reports to the [Vice-Provost \(Education\)](#) and [Vice-Provost \(Research\)](#) and to the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Committee. Reports and actions are referred to other University committees as necessary. Membership of CIG is reviewed annually and updated as required.

The University is committed, through its action plan and related activity, to creating a positive, supportive and career-enhancing environment for all its researchers. Comments, suggestions and queries are encouraged and actively invited. These can be sent to the [Researcher Concordat Implementation Group](#) (FAO: Dr Tina Ramkalawan).

GLOSSARY

APEX – Academic Practice and Professional Excellence Framework

AS – Athena SWAN

BEEC – Brunel Educational Excellence Centre

BRAMNET – Brunel Research Administrators and Managers Network

BUL – Brunel University London

CIG – Concordat Implementation Group

CMSR – Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment

CROS – Careers in Research Online Survey

DoGS – Director of Graduate School

DR – Doctoral researcher

DVC (AA&CE) – Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs & Civic Engagement)

DVC (R&I) – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)

E&D – Equality and Diversity team

ECR – Early Career Researcher

GS – Graduate School

HR – Human Resources

LTT – Learning Technology Team **PDC** – Professional Development Centre

PDP – Professional Development Plan

PDR – Performance and Development Review

PIRLS – Principal Investigators and Research leaders Survey

RCIG – (Researcher) Concordat Implementation Group

RIs – Research Institutes

RDP – Researcher Development Programme

RSA – Research Staff Association

RSDO – Research Support and Development Office

RSIG – Research Strategy Implementation Group

SD – Staff Development

ULRSD – University Lead for Research Staff Development

VC – Vice-Chancellor

VLE – Virtual Learning Environment