

Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers	
Name of Institution	Cardiff Metropolitan University
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Web address of annual report	Research Concordat (cardiffmet.ac.uk)
Web address of institutional Researcher Development Concordat webpage	Research Concordat (cardiffmet.ac.uk)
Contact for questions/concerns on researcher career development	Yvonne Morgan, Staff Development Officer Ymorgan@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Date statement sent to Researcher Development Concordat secretariat via CDRsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk	26 March 2024

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

We continue to make good progress in developing a strong and sustainable research environment. This is evidenced by a strong REF2021 result that increased our Quality Related (QR) funding by over 80%, and the continued annual investment in our R&I environment through our Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) allocation.

Underpinned by these investments, our research culture is growing, with structured support now being offered via a wide range of initiatives. These include:

- the 'Women to Prof' Action Learning Sets, available to all women academics at any career stage, which have pushed our percentage of women in the Professoriate from well below the HESA benchmark to significantly above it and resulted in a career pipeline of Readers where women outnumber men by more than 2:1.
- 'Everything you always wanted to know about REF but were too afraid to ask' sessions, open to all staff and with extended Q&A of 45 minutes +. The strict rule of these sessions is that there is no such thing as a stupid question.

- Our ‘How I Became...’ lecture series, open to all staff and research students, where research Professors from a range of backgrounds give a recorded 20-minute lunchtime talk followed by 40 minutes of Q&A.
- Our ‘Collaboration Kick-off’ series, open to all staff inside and outside of Cardiff Met with a research interest. Researchers in search of collaborators present their work at a breakfast meeting and then converse with interested parties regarding potential collaborations.
- Our ‘Reveal’ programme, a targeted, bespoke support package aimed at emerging researchers with the potential to capture significant funding from cherished sources and which includes financial support, training and mentorship elements.

We acknowledge however that our research culture is not perfect, and that we are on a journey of change. Culture is experienced through the everyday behaviours, expectations, and norms that signal “the way we do things round here”. We recognise that our research environment is not as diverse as we would like it to be, and that we need to do more to provide a safe and supportive environment that enables individuals or groups within our research community to tell us when things are going wrong, and to sometimes challenge ‘the way we do things round here’.

One step on this journey has involved speaking directly with our research community through a series of focus groups and interviews to gather views from across our research community on the challenges they face, what we are doing well as an institution, and what a better research culture might look like. These interactions form part of an ongoing project to further promote a positive research culture, and the discussions have helped us to propose solutions for change in our 2023/24 Action Plan.

Institutionally we remain committed to our Athena Swan status and application for an institutional Silver award. We are also undergoing our application to the Race Equality Charter, which itself has provided a platform to reflect on where we are currently in terms of supporting BAME staff, and areas for improvement. Both initiatives are an important vehicle in our aims of embedding a diverse research culture.

We recognise that building an inclusive and supportive Research Culture will be a dynamic process. We are committed to embedding good practice as it emerges, to embracing new opportunities, and to continually reviewing our progress.

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

Environment and culture

The institution’s Strategy 2030 sets out a clear ambition to enable a better Environment and Culture. In our Research & Innovation Thematic Strategy we have committed to investing in staff recruitment at all levels to develop a ‘stairway to excellence’ for research careers. We will intensify research engagement, income, outputs and impact across our entire academic portfolio, and develop an open data culture. In support of our new strategy, we have realigned our support structures within Research and Innovation Services to ensure we are better placed to enable these ambitions. A key change has been the establishment of ‘Support Teams’, each challenged with identifying how they can contribute to our strategic aims. This includes a new ‘R&I Environment Coordination’ team, specifically tasked with working with

internal and external stakeholders to co-develop a rich, supportive, challenging and impactful research environment. This new team will be tasked with measuring and evaluating progress and success against the three pillars of the Concordat.

Employment

As part of our Institutional People Strategy we have committed to using our values of creativity, innovation, inclusivity and trust, and our behaviours of leadership, courage, accountability and agility to provide the framework to attract, recruit, develop and retain our people in a way that reflects our diverse communities. We will invest in building the skills and attributes needed to work equitably with individuals and groups from all backgrounds in Wales, the UK and globally. Specifically in relation to Researchers, we aim to achieve this by ensuring:

- recruitment, selection and career progression at all levels aligned to our EDI values;
- significant investment in the R&I staff base to support our growth in income targets;
- recruitment of high-performing researchers at a range of levels including Research Assistants; and
- the targeting of incoming fellowships to help diversity our staff base.

Professional Development of Researchers

We will continue to support the Professional Development of Researchers pillars by:

- ensuring Researchers have access to appropriate professional progression routes;
- developing a high-performance research environment where time, space and support is given to research;
- provision of a comprehensive R&I staff development programme to supply the 10 days of Professional Development for our Target group;
- providing a schedule of funding calls to support R&I projects of all sizes, and academics at all career stages.

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

The duration of the original Implementation Plan published by the University in February 2022 has been extended from the calendar year to the academic year 2022/23 as this reflects operational practice. As a result, we will be reporting on the full academic year in December 2024 as agreed with Universities UK.

The focus of our 2022 Implementation Plan was to ensure that we were compliant with our institutional commitments to support the three pillars of the Concordat. Our Implementation Plan from 2023 onwards will capture our plans to support our academic managers and researchers under this pillar.

The following is a summary of the actions taken through our 2022 Implementation Plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In March 2022 we published and translated our 2022 Annual Report to the Board of Governors on the University website. • The institutional Concordat Implementation Group was established. Chaired by the Director of Research, it meets twice a year. • We continued to develop our 'one-stop-shop' web resource for our researchers. • We appointed a Staff Development Officer in July 2022, giving us the opportunity to engage in an ongoing conversation with our researchers and their line managers. • We contacted all relevant staff in 2022 to make them aware of our commitments as a signatory of the Concordat and invite them to meetings with the Director of Research and Staff Development Officer to discuss how we might further improve the quality of our research environment. • Conversations with our Researchers and their line managers took place in early 2023 to identify the support required. The responses formed part of our 2023/24 Implementation Plan. • We continue to raise awareness of our Research Integrity and Governance Commitments via training and resources on our web pages, and in 2022 we subscribed to the UK Research Integrity Offices' Services.
<p>Employment</p>	<p>In our 2022 Implementation Plan we committed to two key actions as part of our commitment to this pillar. The actions and progress made against them are detailed below:</p> <p>Commitment: Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.</p> <p>Progress We provide effective line management training opportunities for managers of all staff via the manage@met training programme and associated resources. Training includes modules on wellbeing, mental health, and equality and diversity. The 2022 Staff survey found that 63% of staff are satisfied with the policies and processes in place to help them manage their health and wellbeing and 84% agreed that their line manager is open and approachable.</p> <p>Commitment: Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.</p> <p>Progress Cardiff Met provides corporate induction for all new starters to ensure they have access to key information, understand how the University functions and our focus. There are six mandatory e-modules that must be completed within the first two weeks of employment and two mandatory face-to-face sessions that must be completed during the</p>

	<p>probation period. While Research and Innovation Services already participates in a digital online induction event called the 'All staff Benefits market' we recognise the need for a specific 'Researcher Induction' and the Staff Development Officer is committed to developing one.</p>
<p>Professional development</p>	<p>The 2022 All Staff Survey found that 68% of our staff reported receiving the training and development needed to do their job well, while 73% responded positively to the statement that their line manager supports their career development. In total, 57% responded positively that their career development aspirations are being met. While this is 16% above the external benchmark, it nevertheless suggests that there is a great deal of room for improvement.</p> <p>Our 2022/23 Implementation Plan committed us to developing the opportunities we provide to staff to ensure that the institution was supporting the implementation of this pillar in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In July 2022 we issued a training survey to all research active staff asking them to advise what type of training / support they are interested in receiving. We tailored our 2022/23 provision accordingly and will monitor and report on the engagement of our staff in our 2023 Annual Report. • This academic year we are providing training in bid development, research impact, REF, Intellectual Property, tender writing, networking, public engagement, and influencing policy makers. • Since joining University Policy Engagement Network (UPEN) in 2022, our Research and Innovation Policy Officer has promoted their services and training to our staff. They hosted an UPEN online Masterclass titled "Building and Sustaining Relationships with Policymakers". Prof David Lloyd reflected on his experience and provided key insights from his career advising on issues affecting the Welsh Food and Drink sector. Dr Chantelle Haughton provided an overview of the Welsh Government funded Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning (DARPL) project. Both speakers provided insights and reflections to UPEN members from across the UK. We have also been involved in regional and devolved sub committees, and been invited to take part in a panel in May '24 to discuss the opportunities and challenges of post-92 universities' engagement. • We continue to participate in the Welsh Crucible Programme and actively promote it our researchers. The Staff Development Officer has also taken over the Institutional Lead for the Welsh Crucible, ensuring that in addition to the generic marketing of the programme that staff are targeted individually. She also inputs into the design of the programme to ensure that it takes into account the needs of Cardiff Met's researchers. • The Welsh Network for the Concordat successfully delivered the "Made in Wales; Researcher Career Researcher Stories' series. These events were aimed at early-career researcher (post-graduate and post-doctoral researchers). Their purpose was to

	<p>give early career researchers an insight into the great variety of successful career options alongside the “traditional” academic route. The group are currently in discussion on how to continue similar initiatives on an All-Wales basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have also built on the success of our 2021/22 series of career talks entitled ‘How I Became...’ which involve members of our professoriate giving an overview of their career path to date, their experiences, the benefits of moving between, and across employment sectors, the role of mentors and training secondments and key career advice they would give researchers. Speakers to date have included the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research & Innovation and the Director of Research. All talks are recorded and are available to all staff through the Research & Innovation section of our website. • The Staff Development Officer organised focus groups and one-on-ones with our researchers and line managers to ensure that the 2023/24 Implementation Plan reflects the needs of our key target groups.
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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.

- i. The CIG and the work carried out to date has allowed us to gauge our progress to date and understand where we are situated. This has provided a benchmark from which to build.
- ii. We have re-aligned the planning and reporting phases so that reporting occurs on the anniversary of our membership as per requirements, while planning aligns with academic years. This better reflects operational practice.
- iii. The appointment of the Staff Development Officer has given us necessary additional resource through which to drive change.

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

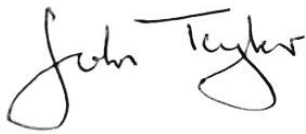
- i. We will expand the membership of our CIG to include researchers and their line managers.
- ii. The Staff Development Officer will take day-to-day operational responsibility for implementation of the Concordat.
- iii. The Staff Development Officer will prioritise the progression and promotion route for our target route as a priority. This is a reflection of the priorities identified in the focus groups.
- iv. RIS will further develop the Research and Innovation induction to ensure researchers are aware of the support and training available to them to aid their career development, including internal funding opportunities and staff development activities.

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

This report was reviewed and approved by:

- i. the institutional CIG on 12 December 2023;
- ii. the University Research & Innovation Committee on 13 December 2023; and
- iii. Academic Board on 7 February 2024 (to note).
- iv. The Strategic Planning and Performance Committee on 11 March 2024
(subcommittee of the Board of Governors)

Signature on behalf of governing body:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'T'.

Contact for queries: John Taylor, Chair of the Board of Governors

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