UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE HREIR 6-YEAR REVIEW REPORT

PROCESS: At the University of Hertfordshire, we interpret our researcher community to mean all staff and students who do research. This includes staff who have research as part of their role responsibility or are research active, including staff returned to the REF, staff represented on our Research Information System, academic staff with research and scholarship in their contracts, of which there are c. 800, and staff on research contracts, of which there are 200+. It also includes what are termed 'hidden researchers', who combine research with other roles within the University, for example as librarians or technicians.

Our Researcher Development Working Group (RDWG) exists to promote researcher development in response to feedback from the Career Researchers Online Survey (CROS), the Principal Investigator and Research Leader Survey (PIRLS) and the HR Excellence in Research (HREiR) process to ensure quality and compliance with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The RDWG represents and informs researchers across the University through its structure, membership, quarterly meetings and activities. The RDWG Chair (an academic) and Project Coordinator (People Development Manager) share responsibility for running the group. An Early Career Researcher from each of our ten academic Schools sits on the RDWG to communicate from and to researchers at all levels. Additional RDWG members represent central departments: The Research Office; Careers, Employment & Enterprise (CEE); the Researcher Development Programme; the Equality Office, and Health and Safety. RDWG agendas and minutes are circulated to the Director of the Doctoral College, the Head of Research Grants, the Associate Deans Research in the ten Schools, and the six Research Theme Champions.

Hertfordshire achieved the HREiR award in December 2010. Our 4-year Action Plan of 2014 focussed on the period from January 2015 to December 2016 because we wanted to set actions for the second half of the four-year block which responded to the mid-term 2-year review integral to Vitae's HREiR process. In March 2016, our Project Coordinator undertook a gap analysis of our 4-year Action Plan noting that most actions were completed, while continuous actions were carried into our 6-year action plan. In June 2016, our Research Office delivered a detailed analysis of the University's CROS and PIRLS results, for which response rates were 26.5% and 23.7% respectively (slightly lower than the national averages of 28% and 25%). The results were discussed by a focus group with representatives from RDWG (Chair), the Research Office (Head of Research Grants), and Planning, Development and Change (Head of Leadership and Organisational Development) and then examined by the RDWG in October 2016. Actions arising from CROS and PIRLS were integrated into the 6-year Action Plan. This and the updated 4-year plan were discussed at the University's Research Committee in October 2016. Our 6-year report, the updated 4-year Action Plan, and 6-year Action Plan were discussed at the PVC Research and Enterprise Management Group (PRMG) in November 2016, then sent to Vitae for external assessment in December 2016. We successfully retained the HREiR award and in response the assessment feedback we added a prefatory statement about our research community and further emphasised SMART targets, for publication in May 2017.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS BY CONCORDAT PRINCIPLE

Principle 1 Recruitment, Selection and Retention: Human Resources harmonised its use of role titles in recruitment materials and the Research Committee reviewed the University's Policies and Regulations for approved titles HR01 (formerly PER/B/1) which were then published on the intranet. Following an audit of the effectiveness of local induction in 2014/15, HR analysed the data to highlight and disseminate via our intranet evidence of good local induction practices and flag areas for enhancement. HR and RDWG have worked with research managers, inclusively defined, to understand the barriers that prevent researchers taking up training opportunities and identify ameliorating actions, including scheduling shorter, ½ day, research training sessions. HR continues to monitor the numbers of staff on fixed term contracts and provides mentoring when staff near the end of their contracts, in accordance with an Athena SWAN action.

Principle 2 Recognition and Value; Principle 3 Support; Principle 4 Personal and Career Development; Principle 5 Researchers' Responsibility and Engagement: ResDev16, the University's Second Biennial Researcher Development Conference, hosted with our Doctoral College services several Concordat Principles. Like our first conference, in September 2014, ResDev16 sought to promote understanding of the value of researcher development and the development opportunities for researchers available within the University and externally, through organizations such as Vitae. Dr Helen Barefoot, Deputy Director for the Learning & Teaching Innovation Centre (LTIC) talked about the importance of Research-Informed Teaching and Research-Rich Teaching: 90% of respondents rated this 'good' or 'excellent'. LTIC hosts a relevant toolkit on our intranet. This topic was further examined in one of four parallel workshops; the others addressed 'Setting Up a Mentoring Scheme', 'Career Progression' and 'Ways to Raise Your Research Profile'. A 3-Minute Thesis® session showcased 8 doctoral projects competing for a £1000 prize. This format was also applied to introduce staff research in our ten Schools, and six research theme 'champions' spoke about the potential for interdisciplinary research. A lunchtime poster session enabled more coverage of the University's diverse research.

150+ delegates participated in ResDev16, nearly 50% more than 2014. Responses were overwhelmingly positive, with the #ResDev16 twitterfeed reflecting live feedback and a feedback survey demonstrating that 92.9% of respondents thought that the conference was beneficial, 87% said it met their expectations and 89.3% would attend a future University researcher development conference. Respondents valued the 3-minute research snapshots and networking with 'people from other areas of the university'. A 14% response rate (28 responses) included research students (40.7%) and staff (59.3%).

Principle 2 Recognition and Value; Principle 3 Support; Principle 4 Personal and Career Development: In July 2016, we held our second Public Engagement with Research Conference, an internal event to share current public engagement projects and good practice in public engagement. Simultaneously, we ran a Research Innovation Showcase to demonstrate to an internal and external audiences research-led innovations in science, engineering, health, creative arts and the humanities. To

support these events, we produced <u>twelve short videos</u> of current researchers talking about their research which have on-going value both for public engagement and development.

Principle 3 Support; Principle 4 Personal & Career Development; Principle 5 Researchers' Responsibility & Engagement: To support the personal, professional and career development of our research staff, consistent with the University's commitment to the <u>Concordat</u> and Vitae's <u>Researcher Development Framework</u>, the RDWG runs Skill Up!, an annual researcher-led research skills development award scheme. All staff are eligible, and ECR applications are particularly encouraged. Awards of up to £500 per School are made to individuals or groups to support a wide spectrum of development, such as: organising a workshop or conference with a developmental element; covering or contributing to training course fees or group training activities; travel for networking; attending skills enhancement courses; business collaboration activities; undertaking community engagement/outreach, volunteering, and career coaching and advice. Awards are not made to support conference attendance, or for development that is already available through the University's Researcher Development Programme. As well as developing the award winners, Skill Up! offers a developmental opportunity for the ECR School representatives who run the scheme, and is a useful way for applicants to input into the development offering, whether or not they are awarded scheme funding. For example, in 2016 CRIPACC (Centre for Research in Primary and Community Care) made two applications, each for workshops which would benefit a group of colleagues. Because both were needs-based, timely and fundable, one achieved Skill Up! funding and the other was funded from the HR Development budget and opened to a wider group of participants. For the applicant, the process of applying clarified the needs of a group of colleagues and the potential benefits of the workshops. RDWG is aware of the benefits of allocating a budget to this mode of development.

Principle 3 Support; Principle 4 Personal and Career Development: A coordinated Researcher Development Programme for staff and PGR students is delivered jointly by HR Development, the Research Office, and the Doctoral College. In addition, the University of Hertfordshire's ten Schools and research centres and groups provide local researcher development on a needs basis. In the last two years (2014-15 and 2015-16), the University recorded 318 research training events involving 1870 participants, which equate to 709 individual staff members. Our training provision is consistently rated 'good' or 'excellent' by respondents to our follow-up surveys. For example, in May 2015, 100% of respondents (40% of participants) rated the content and format of our 'Engaging Researcher' workshop as excellent. The following month (June 2015) 100% of our 'Applying for Horizon 2020' workshop respondents (response rate 75%) rated the content, format, quality and facilities of the course as good or excellent, and agreed that the length and pace of the session was about right. One respondent summarized it as 'a very timely session which provided everything I need to know to get an application started'. In the same month, 100% of the 7 respondents who evaluated our 'Responsible Research' workshop rated it and the facilities as 'good' or 'excellent', with 85% rating the format and quality as highly. This group particularly valued the practical group work elements as enhancing their understanding of health and safety. Similarly, our 'Introduction to Research Impact' session in October 2015 scored 'good' or 'excellent' for all aspects with one respondent particularly valuing the opportunity of 'working with others who had a better understanding of Impact and had time to listen and suggest ideas to me'. Sessions on the University's Research Information System in February and June 2016 were rated 'good' or 'excellent' across all aspects (content, format, quality of presentations, facilities). In June 2016, we hosted a Vitae regional meeting on Mentoring, presenting our approach to mentoring and coaching and the skills required. Participants were invited to take part in a coaching taster session. Feedback was very positive: 'I found the day very rewarding and really appreciate all the work that went into arranging and planning such a great session'.

An example of new training and methods that we have introduced in 2015/16, is our Social Media Academy (SMA). This innovative programme promotes the use of social media in communicating research to a wide audience. All twenty places were filled within 24 hours and there was a waiting list. SMA involved four face-to-face sessions connected by intervening online engagement with the tutor through the messaging and collaboration platform Slack. This successful programme developed its 'graduates' from novices into effective social media users who understand its potential. Two SMA graduates presented about social media at the ResDev16 and were rated good to excellent by 75% of respondents.

Awareness of commercial opportunities was raised through quarterly Business and Commercial Development networking lunches, as well as the popular 'Sunset Soiree and Research/Commercial Mixer' which attracted 41 attendees. Two new workshops were delivered for researchers interested in commercialising their research: 'Publish and be Damned?' and 'Impact through Research Commercialisation'. Both workshops were extremely well received, with one participant summarising the events as 'An excellent training and development opportunity [which I] would highly recommend especially to early careers researchers, [and] PhD students'.

Principle 6 Diversity and Equality: The University of Hertfordshire is one of only 8 institutions to have been awarded Bronze in the <u>Race Equality Charter mark</u> pilot (see our <u>Race Equality Charter application and Action Plan</u>). The University of Hertfordshire, and 4 of our STEMM Schools, received the <u>Athena SWAN</u> Bronze award in November 2014 in recognition of work in recruiting, retaining and promoting women. Working with the Charter has helped the University engage with staff and students, identify issues affecting women in STEMM, develop ways to increase women's representation and support career development. The University and its STEMM Schools are ensuring that their Athena SWAN action plans are being implemented so that we can continue to reflect on, and improve, current practices. Two items from the 4-year HREiR action plan relate specifically to Athena SWAN and continue into the 6-year action plan. To support the University's activities related to Athena SWAN, schools using the post-May 2015 application process must think about the issues affecting trans staff and students. We delivered a series of half-day workshops by Gendered Intelligence to raise awareness of trans equality.

Principle 7 Progress Review: We have analysed CROS & PIRLS results to inform our action planning. For CROS, it is positive that 87% of respondents feel able to access training and development activity, 85% have had an appraisal - which is significantly better than the sector average – and that nearly 90% agree that they take ownership of their career development. It is concerning that only 64% feel they are encouraged to engage in personal career development and that the use of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework remains low across the sector. Equality and Diversity is the topic UH respondents have undertaken the most training in (65%), closely followed by Teaching and Lecturing (62%): both averages are around double the national and UA averages. The highest percentage of respondents have spent between 0-3 days on training and CPD activities. Although this appears low when taken in the context of a 12-month period, it is in line with national and University Alliance averages. PIRLS responses indicate that staff are aware of most leadership training and support provision at the university. We are pleased to report that 149 research staff participated in supervisor training in the last two years. However, despite reasonable levels of awareness, the proportion of staff participating in our leadership and training provision is low. More positively 88% of UH 2015 respondents have participated in staff appraisal during the past two years. The most useful aspects of appraisal are seen as reviewing personal progress and identifying strengths and achievements.

NEXT STEPS: In addition to 10 continuing actions from our 4-year action plan, 2015 CROS and PIRLS results have informed our revised Action Plan to be continuously reviewed by the RDWG. For Concordat Principle 1, we need to further increase awareness of national researcher development initiatives. We will introduce a quarterly Research Induction in Spring 2017 with a SMART success measure of 75% attendance by new Research staff. We will extend our use of the HREiR logo and links on 100% of recruitment communications. Following structural changes at the University we will appoint a HR member to RDWG by 25/01/2017. Survey respondents sought greater recognition for researchers. Our Career Pathways project will support staff in developing their careers and applying for promotion. Our SMART measure is that the 2017 CROS results will show 80% of staff feeling 'encouraged to engage in personal career development' and our Staff Survey will show staff satisfaction with their career pathways knowledge. Our Skill Up! Researcher-Led Researcher Development scheme will provide needs-based development priorities enhance 'soft' recognition of researchers, and ECRs particularly. Our SMART measure will see bids from all 10 schools and award of the total amount of funding annually. Researchers are represented on the University's new People Board via the RDWG Chair and the People Development Manager. Success measures will include completion of actions, reviewed at the quarterly meetings and in September 2017, and new actions being set. To ensure teaching is current and based on research, and to provide students with the support and skills to successfully undertake their own research activity, we will develop guidance and support for staff to consider how research informs their teaching and how they engage students in research activity (both discipline specific and pedagogic research), promote the Research Informed Teaching strand of the Curriculum Design Toolkit and develop case studies of Research Informed Teaching. Our success measure will be the number/proportion of Research staff attending the University's Learning and Teaching conference on Research Informed Teaching in May 2017, and achieving bronze or silver TEF working in partnership with LTIC.

For Concordat Principle 3 we will extend awareness of internal and national initiatives. RDWG will continue its two-way communication with the Schools through its quarterly meetings, annual Skill Up! funding and biennial conference, annual meeting with ADRs and reporting at each Research Committee (termly). Our SMART measure will be that the 2017 CROS will show an increase on 2015 results in awareness of UK initiatives, in line with the Alliance Group. All new research staff should attend mandatory Data Protection Act training within their probation period with the SMART measure that all new staff, c. 250, will have attended DPA training and all existing staff are to have attended by 2019.

Concordat Principle 4: To develop research staffs' research impact we will deliver social media training for researchers with success measures including social media outputs and positive evaluations. There will be ongoing training through School-based workshops and open training sessions for all academic and research staff. To support ECRs' development, and share the knowledge and skills of experienced research staff, we have the following SMART target: by December 2018, 5 schools will have mentoring programmes, CROS will show an increase of staff being mentored from 17% to 30%, and we will provide mentoring for some of the 50% who want a mentor. To help staff feel part of a community, we have a SMART target of 3 pilot groups meeting, and positive evaluation by group members trialled in 2018. To support staff undergoing transitions at work we will trial coaching partnerships. Training to raise staff's roles and responsibilities in risk management resulting in a more pro-active, early intervention approach will be considered successful when reporting from Occupational Health & Wellbeing shows a reduction in reported incidents.

Work towards Concordat Principle 5 will aim to enable all 2500 FTE staff to use technology relevant to their roles through the Digital Capabilities project. To enable all staff and students to use the new VLE we have an extensive programme of training (2017-19) and our success will be shown in staff and students making effective use of the new VLE.

We will respond to Concordat Principle 6 with the SMART targets of (i) increasing the proportion of BME staff at grades UH9 and above by 5% by 2020 - we will achieve this through a portfolio of training and briefings – and (ii) increase in the proportion of female academic staff at grades UH9 and above by 5% by 2020, through supporting staff to attend the Aurora and internal Future Leaders programmes. To fulfil the review and update of the University's Dignity and Respect policy (UPR EQ10) all Advisors and Investigators must attend training and face-to-face Equality and Diversity Essentials by 31/07/2017.

Our work towards Concordat Principle 7 will see CROS & PIRLS survey actions appearing on school action plans by September 2017. RDWG will work with all parties to ensure completion of the HREiR action plan by June 2020. The RDWG Project Coordinator will provide 6-monthly updates. HR will analyse and share Staff Survey 2017 results about satisfaction. The SMART measure is increased in staff satisfaction compared with the 2013 results. Finally, we will participate in regional and national initiatives including Vitae and SDF events and cascade learning quarterly via RDWG and host a Vitae event in 2018 or 2019.