

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	<b>HREiR Action plan template</b>		<b>Must read prior to completing action plan</b>					
2			Following an update to the HREiR Award action plan in 2026 you are now required to map actions in your plan to a minimum of 6 obligations and at least one from each pillar (Environment and Culture, Employment and Professional and Career Development). In your summary report you will have confirmed what those obligations will be by assessing what change you want to see in the next 3 years and from this analysis you will pick what obligations align with those desired changes. In the action plan below please add your chosen obligations from the 'Obligations tab' and complete the					
3	<b>Action plan timeline:</b>	March 2026 - March 2029						
4	<b>Institution name:</b>	University of Hertfordshire						
5	<b>Cohort number:</b>							
6	<b>Date of submission:</b>	02/04/2026						
7	Please feel free to remove & add rows for your chosen obligations as appropriate							
8								
9		<b>Obligation</b>	<b>Action to be taken during three year cycle to support obligation</b>	<b>Carried over from previous action plan?</b>	<b>What will success look like?</b>	<b>Expected Impact of this Action for your plans audience (please include Research only staff (Concordat priority audience))</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
10		include the overall obligation and sub obligations	the number of actions you choose to include per Obligation is at your institutions discretion		progress and impact will be measured through SMART objectives, supported by clear KPIs, metrics, and feedback mechanisms			
11	<b>Environment and Culture</b>							
12	Obligation 2	<b>Wellbeing and mental health</b>						
13	2A	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	<p>1. Monitor the impact of the new Academic Workload Allocation Framework to support a positive research environment by promoting an equitable distribution of teaching, research, and leadership responsibilities, helping staff manage effectively and sustain a healthy work-life balance.</p> <p>2. Monitor the positive impact of the wellbeing question on the new online Performance and Development Reviews (PDR) to ensure it helps enable Line managers and researchers to discuss wellbeing issues and signpost actions and solutions.</p> <p>3. Promote the Employee Assistance Programme resources and Leafyard resource, freely available to all research staff</p>	ECI3 and ECR3	<p>1. Researchers having a consistent and equitable workload allocation across schools</p> <p>2. Effective conversations between managers and researchers regarding their wellbeing due to, <b>100% PDR completion</b> in line with People and Culture strand of the University 2025 - 2030 strategy.</p> <p>3. Researcher managing their own mental health and well being through maintaining <b>70% engagement with Leafyard or the EAP</b>, in line with the People and Culture strand of the University's 2025–30 Strategy.</p> <p>4. Increase CEDARS 27to <b>70% (from 53%)</b> who agree/strongly agree their working environment supports their mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>5. Staff Survey Researcher only results for The University does enough to support my wellbeing (mental and physical health) move from <b>41% favourable to 65%</b>.</p>	<p>•Researchers are able to sustain good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace through engagement with the processes and resources available to them.</p> <p>•The university supports Concordat Principles for Environment and Culture Take – Researchers must 3. take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.</p>	Annual monitoring , 2027 and 2029 CEDARS	HR/ L&OD/Wellbeing Lead

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
14	2B	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health and promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	<p>1. Implement a new Mental Health Awareness online module for all researchers covering what to look out for and signposting support.</p> <p>2. Implement new Wellbeing Champions for Researchers in each of the University's five Schools drawn from the Wellbeing Network, providing accessible guidance on wellbeing and work-life balance, acting as a local point of contact for advice, and signposting researchers to relevant resources and initiatives.</p> <p>3. Implement mandatory training for Principal Investigators (PIs) and their line managers in wellbeing, supporting managers to recognise and respond to researcher's workload pressures and mental health challenges.</p>	ECI4/ECM3	<p>1. Research Managers engage with the online mental health awareness module and put the learning into practice.</p> <p>2. The Wellbeing Champions report evidence of positive impact from their role.</p> <p>3. To have <b>80% of</b> Principal Investigators (PIs) and their line managers completing wellbeing training and impact of putting the learning into practice.</p> <p>4. In line with the People and Culture strand of the University's 2025-30 Strategy, maintain <b>83%</b> staff survey score for flexible working practices</p>	<p>Managers of researchers feel confident discussing and supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of those they are responsible for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researchers are able to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing through their engagement with the processes and resources available to them.</li> <li>The university supports Concordat Principle Environment and culture Managers or Researchers must:</li> <li>Promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health, including reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment, and poor research integrity.</li> </ul>	2029	Wellbeing Lead/L&OD
15	Obligation 3	<b>Bullying and harassment</b>						
16	3A	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	<p>1. Deliver mandatory discrimination, bullying and harassment training for all Principal Investigators (PIs) and their line managers, emphasizing their responsibility to encourage reporting and address issues proactively (3A, 3B).</p> <p>2. Provide mandatory training for all research staff, including research-only staff, focused on recognising, preventing, and reporting bullying and harassment (3A).</p> <p>3. Offer specialised training for senior researchers and supervisors on managing difficult conversations and preventing abuse of power (3A, 3B).</p> <p>4. Train selected researchers as Dignity and Respect Advisors to promote respectful workplace behaviour, raise awareness of policies, act as a bridge between staff and senior management, and provide peer support on bullying and harassment issues across all schools (3A).</p> <p>5. Strengthen confidential reporting and support pathways (EDIO), ensuring research-only staff have clear access to guidance and protection (3B).</p> <p>6. Revise the annual survey to track awareness of bullying and harassment, capture staff experiences, and measure</p>	ECI3 and ECR4	<p>1. <b>100% completion</b> of mandatory training for PIs, line managers, and research staff.</p> <p>2. At least <b>3 Dignity and Respect Advisors</b> who are researchers trained and actively supporting researchers across all schools.</p> <p>3. Clear evidence that managers are encouraging reporting and addressing issues through. Increase from <b>85% to &gt;90%</b> of managers completing CEDARS 27 feel confident to respond to any issues relating to bullying and harassment.</p> <p>4. Decrease from <b>25% to 15%</b> of researchers who witnessed or were subjects to incidents of bullying and harassment and increase from <b>12% to 25%</b> reporting these. CEDARS 27 5 Staff Survey results Researchs for I feel able to challenge the inappropriate behaviour of others in the workplace such as microaggressions or other discriminatory behaviour move from <b>49% favourable to 65%</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes a healthy, inclusive, and respectful research environment.</li> <li>Protects research-only staff, early-career researchers, and other vulnerable groups.</li> <li>Strengthens trust in reporting mechanisms and managerial support.</li> <li>Improves overall research culture and alignment with Concordat principles.</li> </ul>	End of 2026 (Dignity and Respect Advisor training) December 2028 (full 3-year cycle)	EDI Team (Dignity and Respect Advisor training), HR Department Open Herts Steering Group, L&OD, EDIO

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
17	3B	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	See above	ECM3	Staff Survey results for			
18	Obligation 4	<b>Equality, diversity and inclusion</b>						
19	4A	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	<p>1. Implement new mandatory training for Principal Investigators (PIs) and their line managers on their responsibilities for EDI, to further promote fair treatment, equitable access to opportunities, and inclusive research environments.</p> <p>2. From October 2025, ECRs and SRRs returning from at least six months of maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental, parental, or long-term sickness leave will be eligible for a four-week transition period, allowing them to focus on research and reconnect with projects and collaborators before resuming their full workload.</p>	ECI4 / ECM1	<p>1. Principal Investigators (PIs) and their line managers providing fair and equitable treatment of researchers through 80% attending and engaging in EDI training.</p> <p>2. Evidence of ECRs and SRRs utilising the four week transition period and reporting a positive impact as a result of it.</p> <p>3. In line with the People and Culture strand of the University's 2025–30 Strategy, achieve 70% staff survey score for 'treats people fairly and equally' by 2030 (currently 59%) in Staff Survey.</p> <p>4. Researchers recognise they are treated more fairly and inclusively and this increases in CEDARS 27 from 75% to 85% of respondents who agree/strongly agree the institution is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.</p>	<p>▪ All researchers are treated in an equitable, fair and inclusive manner by their PIs and line managers.</p> <p>▪ Supports the Concordat Principal Environment and Culture for Managers of Researchers and Researchers</p>	2027 and 2029 CEDARS	EDI/HR
20	Obligation 5	<b>Research Integrity</b>						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
21	5A	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct. And that all members of staff use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	<p>1. Following receipt of the Human Tissue Act licence in November 2025, implement mandatory training for all researchers before they use human tissue, effective from January 2026.</p> <p>2. Finalize and implement the revised ethics approval application system in collaboration with the Human Tissue Licence Group (HTLG) to incorporate licence-related changes.</p> <p>3. Newly appointed Research Culture and Integrity Champions (from January 2026) in each of the five schools promote research integrity, act as the voice for mid- and senior-career researchers, and facilitate two-way communication.</p> <p>4. Organize regular workshops and communications on research integrity and ethics.</p> <p>5. Monitor compliance and gather feedback via surveys and KPIs linked to integrity standards.</p>	<b>ECI4 / ECM1 and ECR4</b>	<p>1. <b>100% completion</b> of mandatory HTA training by all relevant researchers.</p> <p>2. Ethics applications fully compliant with updated Human Tissue Licence requirements (<b>100% complete</b>)</p> <p>3. <b>50%</b> of research staff show active engagement with Research Culture and Integrity Champions. 4. Increase from <b>5% to 20%</b> of respondents reporting an incident or research misconduct.</p> <p>5. . Positive feedback on research integrity culture and awareness and increase from <b>61% to 76%</b> of researchers completing CEDARS 27 have undertaken Research Integrity training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensures ethical compliance and responsible research conduct.</li> <li>•Supports research-only staff with clear guidance and accessible integrity resources.</li> <li>•Enhances university's reputation for trustworthy research.</li> <li>•Aligns with Concordat principles on research integrity.</li> </ul>	Ongoing monitoring until 2028	<p>1. Human Tissue Licence Group, Ethics Committee, Research Culture, Designated Individual and Person Designate, Biological Biosafety Officer.</p> <p>2. Researcher Development Group, and Director Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity</p>
22	<b>Employment</b>							
23	Obligation 8	<b>Recognition, reward and promotion</b>						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
24	8A	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	1. Complete the ongoing review of academic promotion processes (2025–2026) for Professors, Associate Professors, and Readers, ensuring fair recognition of leadership, interdisciplinary research, and research culture contributions 2. The University has agreed a 3-year commitment to the WHEN - 100 Black Women Professors programme as there are not currently any black female professors at the University. The main aim is to enhance the opportunities for Black Women to successfully obtain professorial roles and provide support with career development to help remove institutional barriers. We have 6 initial participants with future cohorts of eligible staff given the opportunity to apply 3. The University's Strategy for 2025-30 states that our ambition is to be a top 50 university in REF2029, by delivering expert research that contributes to society, the environment, and the economy by building on our core strengths. We have been preparing for REF since	E13	1 An increase in the number of applications and the number of successful promotions in the updated Academic Promotions process for 2027 and 2028. This also includes the diversity of applications and the diversity of the successful promotions. 2. An increase in the number of Black women promoted to Reader, Associate Progress and Professor over the next three years as we build a pipeline to increase our number of Black female Professors. 3. A successful REF with high quantity of researchers entered and obtaining the highest level. 4. CEDARS 27 - <b>70% (57% previously)</b> agree/strongly agree the promotion pathways and processes are clear to them. 5. Increase the number of peer/manager and student nominations for VCA for Researchers of the year from <b>31 in 2025 up to 50 by 2028.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•A larger quantity of diverse Readers, Associate Professors and Professor roles at the university</li> <li>•A large quantity of successful and diverse entries for REF 2029, succeeding in the university achieving top 50</li> </ul>	2029 for WHEN CEDARS	OVC/HR/L&OD
25								
26	<b>Professional and Career Development</b>							
27	<b>Obligation 15</b>	<b>Research identity and leadership</b>						

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
28	15A	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	<p>1. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the embedded Academic Workload Allocation Framework across all schools to ensure continued transparency and equity, enabling researchers to dedicate time to research identity development, leadership activity, and grant participation (15A).</p> <p>2. Embed and evaluate the ECR mentoring scheme launched in October 2025, involving mentors from other UK universities and international institutions through sharing best practice and using the ECR development material on HertsHub. Also, update researchers including ECRs regarding external research and innovation funding. Update HertsHub Academic Promotion pages with a relevant toolkit for ECRs (15A).</p> <p>3. Monitor and review the effectiveness of the new performance and development review process across all researcher groups to ensure it supports high-quality career conversations, and research development planning (15A &amp; 15B).</p> <p>4. Complete the ongoing review of academic promotion processes (2025–2026) for Professors, Associate Professors, and Readers, ensuring fair</p>	PCDI4	<p>1. Evidence of consistent and equitable workload allocation across schools with time allocated for research development, identity and grant applications.</p> <p>2. Improved quality and consistency of performance reviews and career conversations and Staff Survey</p> <p>Researcher only results for I found my last appraisal/performance review (PDR)/probation meeting helpful and/or constructive from <b>65% favourable to 75%</b></p> <p>3. Increased confidence in promotion pathways and fairness of progression processes.</p> <p>4. Increased uptake of leadership development opportunities by researchers, including research-only staff.</p> <p>5. Positive feedback from returners on the transition period.</p> <p>6. Managers demonstrate improved effectiveness in leadership and people management.</p> <p>7. Increase from <b>42% to &gt;50% of</b> respondents in CEDARS 27 who agree/strongly agree they have time</p>	<p>•Enables researchers to develop a clear and sustainable research identity within the HREIR cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improves access to leadership opportunities for research-only staff and ECRs.</li> <li>▪Strengthens leadership capability and management practice across the institution.</li> <li>▪Enhances transparency, equity, and confidence in career progression.</li> <li>▪Supports a positive research culture aligned with the Concordat.</li> <li>▪Supports researchers, including research-only staff and ECRs, to evidence and communicate their research contributions and impact clearly, enhancing career progression and leadership development.</li> </ul>	Promotion review completed by 2026 Annual monitoring through 2028	HR Department, Research & Innovation Office, RDG, Line Managers, L&OD, RO, RGO, ECRG

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
29	15B	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	8. Establish a new University Leadership Forum(ULF) comprising of senior leaders (including ADREs) and staff at professorial level. The ULF is designed to strengthen the capability, confidence and cohesion of UH's senior leadership community. Leaders at this level play a vital role in translating the UH Strategy 2025–2030 into operational reality, shaping organisational culture and driving performance across Schools and Strategic Business Units (SBUs). It develops a shared leadership identity aligned to UH values and strategic priorities, builds collaboration across organisational boundaries, and supports the development of a resilient and diverse leadership pipeline. The Forum focuses on equipping leaders to lead people, performance and change effectively, while maintaining inclusion, wellbeing and values-led decision making	PCDM5	1.Launching in March 2026 with four initial sessions attended by <b>90% of the 100+</b> senior leaders invited. 2. Change is led well with clear communication and planning, improving staff survey results. Improve the researcher only results for next Staff Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Change at the University is well managed from <b>29% favourable to 50% favourable</b></li> <li>■ Senior management (in your School/SBU) provide effective leadership from <b>46% favourable to 60%</b></li> <li>■ Management in my School/SBU listens to and responds to the views of staff from <b>36% favourable to 50%</b></li> </ul> 3. Increased quality of research-related objectives and developmental discussions captured through PDRs. 4. Demonstrable progress against key research KPIs (e.g. grant income, PGR growth, interdisciplinary activity, REF preparedness indicators).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Clearer communication and consistent implementation of the University of Hertfordshire Research Strategy 2025–30 across Faculties and research groups. Has a positive impact for Research-only staff (Concordat priority audience).</li> <li>■ Increased transparency around institutional research priorities, opportunities, and expectations, supporting fair access to information, leadership insight, and career development.</li> <li>■ More consistent and meaningful research-related development discussions, particularly for Research-only staff and senior researchers, supporting career planning and progression.</li> </ul>	Annual monitoring through 2028	VC, HR/L&OD - ADREs, Researchers at Professorial Level
30								