Royal Holloway University of London Action plan Nov 2021 - 2023

Institution name: Royal Holloway University of London

Cohort number: 18
Date of submission: 26-Nov-21

Institutional context:
Royal Holloway first achieved the HR Excellence in Research Award in November 2019. The impact of the covid-19 pandemic has been disruption to our normal cycles of work, as well as a change to our institutional focus and strategic direction. A 3-year strategic plan covering key priorities was agreed by our Council in October 2020, and work is now underway to develop strategic themes and priorities in relation to people, EDI and environmental sustainability. The 3-year strategic plan for research is focused on developing a number of significant strengths which can catalyse a College-wide strength in challenge-led research.

The primary audience for our HR Excellence in Research action plan for 2021 - 23 will be staff who are employed to conduct research, with specific actions highlighted to support early career researchers. Aligning with our emerging People Strategy priorities, the strategic outcomes we seek through our HR Excellence in Research action plan in 2021-2023 will be to ensure that:

• our early career researchers successfully develop their research identity, navigate role uncertainty and build successful careers
• researchers maximise time available for research and development
• research leaders and managers are inspiring and effective in leading their teams to success
• our research environment and culture is positive, outwardly aware and focused, enabling all researchers to flourish and achieve their full potential
• learning and development opportunities for researchers are effective, valued and maximised
• the impact of covid-19 on research work and careers is mitigated.

All of the actions within our plan link to achieving these outcomes, and these will enable us to develop the strengths and capacity needed for our research strategy.

The institutional audience for this action plan includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience (beneficiaries of the action plan)</th>
<th>Number of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professors (Teaching &amp; Research)</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readers (Teaching &amp; Research)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturers (Teaching &amp; Research)</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers (Teaching &amp; Research)</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Doctoral Researchers</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>669</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Success measure (SMART)</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Progress update (to be completed for submission)</th>
<th>Outcome/result</th>
<th>Action carried over from previous action plan?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECI1</td>
<td>Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat</td>
<td>Develop a staff intranet site on the Concordat alongside pages on HREiR, incorporate this into new ECR hub</td>
<td>Webpages set up and active. Increase from 15.3% to sector benchmark (28.7%) in CEDARS question related to knowledge and understanding of the Concordat.</td>
<td>31-Mar-22</td>
<td>Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI2</td>
<td>Ensure that institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers</td>
<td>Review how institutional policies and practices are communicated to researchers and their managers and develop communications and training as appropriate. (See also EM2)</td>
<td>10% point increase in understanding processes to report discrimination, (58.5% to 68.5%) bullying and harassment (59.5% to 69.5%) and incidences of research misconduct (48.8% to 58.8%) (EM2 also needed to achieve this outcome)</td>
<td>01-Sep-22</td>
<td>Head of HR Operations and Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI3</td>
<td>Promote good mental health and wellbeing through, for example, the effective management of workloads and people, and effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues</td>
<td>Develop a staff wellbeing strategy focusing on working, living, community and support, as part of the new People Strategy.</td>
<td>Increase from 37.7% to sector benchmark (47.9%) in CEDARS survey question on working environment supporting health and wellbeing.</td>
<td>31-Mar-22</td>
<td>Senior Vice Principal (Staff and Student Experience)</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI4</td>
<td>Ensure that managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and mental health</td>
<td>Develop and deliver new training modules in EDI awareness, dignity at work, unconscious bias, being an ally and anti-racism and microaggression.</td>
<td>10% point increase (69% to 79%) in CEDARS question on managers receiving EDI training.</td>
<td>31-Jul-23</td>
<td>Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ECI5       | Ensure that researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity | - Update our Ethics Policy and processes, following the recommendations of a task and finish group this year involving academics at all levels and disciplines. Publicise at School and Department level. 
- Sign off and promote the Research Misconduct Policy 
- Action plan and promotion around DORA 
- Promotion of Ethics and Integrity at School level to complement central resources | 10% point increase (65.9% to 75.9%) in relation to responses to CEDARS question that the College promotes the highest standards of research integrity and conduct | 31-Jul-22 | Director of Research & Innovation | CARRIED FORWARD |
| ECI6       | Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and use the outcomes to improve institutional practices | No further action at this stage | | | | |

*HREiR Action plan, Vitae 2020*
## Funders must:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECF1</th>
<th>Including requirements which promote equitable, inclusive and positive research cultures and environments in relevant funding calls, terms and conditions, grant reporting, and policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECF2</td>
<td>Consider how funding opportunities and policies can facilitate different patterns and ways of working, and promote the wellbeing and mental health of researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECF3</td>
<td>Ensure that funding call requirements and selection processes offer equality of opportunity between different groups of researchers, recognise personal contexts, and promote positive research cultures and working conditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Managers of researchers must:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECM1</th>
<th>Undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECM2</td>
<td>Ensure that they and their researchers act in accordance with the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECM3</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECM4</td>
<td>Consider fully, in accordance with statutory rights and institutional policies, flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECM5</td>
<td>Engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Researchers must:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECR1</th>
<th>Actively contribute to the development and maintenance of a supportive, fair and inclusive research culture and be a supportive colleague, particularly to newer researchers and students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECR2</td>
<td>Ensure they act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity, and equality, diversity and inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR3</td>
<td>Take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR4</td>
<td>Use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour, particularly in relation to discrimination, harassment, bullying, and research misconduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR5</td>
<td>Consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Institutions must:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EI1</th>
<th>Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EI2</td>
<td>Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI3</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI4</td>
<td>Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Notes:**
- **ECF1**
  - Participate in EDI training made available (see ECI4)
  - 10% point increase (69% to 79%) in CEDARS question on managers receiving EDI training. 31-Jul-23 (Research managers)
  - NEW

- **ECM1**
  - Participate in EDI training made available (see ECI4)
  - 10% point increase (69% to 79%) in CEDARS question on managers receiving EDI training. 31-Jul-23 (Research managers)
  - NEW

- **ECM2**
  - See ECI5
  - CARRIED FORWARD

- **ECM3**
  - See ECI3, ECI4
  - NEW

- **ECM4**
  - See ECI2
  - NEW

- **ECM5**
  - No further action at this stage

- **ECR1**
  - See ECI4
  - NEW

- **ECR2**
  - See ECI5
  - CARRIED FORWARD

- **ECR3**
  - See ECI3
  - NEW

- **ECR4**
  - See ECI3
  - NEW

- **ECR5**
  - No further action at this stage

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**Notes:**
- **EI1**
  - Complete introduction and implementation of a new Recruitment and Selection policy to strengthen policy and practice. Adjust R&S training accordingly. (see also EM3)
  - Increase CEDARS response to sector benchmark level, for questions relating to fair, (62.4% to 88%) transparent (64.7% to 77.5%) and merit-based (82.4% to 84.3%) recruitment. (both EI1 and EM3 are needed to achieve this outcome) 31-Oct-22 (Head of HR Operations, Head of Organisation Devl and Diversity)
  - CARRIED FORWARD

- **EI2**
  - Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position
  - No further action at this stage

- **EI3**
  - 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
  - Increase in CEDARS positive response to question related to clarity of institution's pathways and processes from 54% to 64%. 31-Jul-23 (Head of HR Operations and academic leaders and managers)
  - CARRIED FORWARD

- **EI4**
  - Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent
  - Review training needs identified through CEDARS survey, schedule existing line and project management training as appropriate.
  - 10% point increase in CEDARS question related to managing staff performance training (29.3% to 39.3%) (both EIM and EM4 are needed to achieve this outcome) 31-Jul-22 (Head of Organisation Devl and Diversity)
  - NEW
EI5 Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation

- re-examine workload models to take into account changes and additional work for teaching/admin which have resulted from the response to the pandemic
- identify ways in which maximisation of research time can be achieved, for example through directing student queries appropriately and managing expectations around response to support researchers to protect research time
- review promotion criteria in light of covid changes in time for 2022/23 promotion round
- communicate adjustment of probation expectations resulting from the disruption to research caused by the pandemic

Percentage of staff contracted for 21% - 40% research time who report that they spend this time on research increased from 41.8% to 51.8%, measured through CEDARS.

31-Jul-23 Senior Vice Principal (Student and Staff Experience)

EI6 Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress

- review the redeployment process and how it is effectively communicated to managers and researchers (see also EM6)

Increase in CEDARS survey question in relation to manager confidence in giving guidance on redeployment to sector benchmark level (20.4% to 34.4%) (Both EI6 and EM6 are needed to achieve this outcome)

31-Jul-22 Head of HR Operations CARRIED FORWARD

EI7 Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making

No further action at this stage

Funders must:

EF1 Include requirements which support the improvement of working conditions for researchers, in relevant funding calls, terms and conditions, grant reporting, and policies

EF2 Review the impact of relevant funding call requirements on researchers' employment, particularly in relation to career progression and lack of job security

EF3 Support institutions to develop policies and frameworks to promote sustainable employment arrangements and enhance job security, and provide opportunities for career progression

Managers of researchers must:

EM1 Undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care

- engage with training and communications, and apply the redeployment process with individuals in their teams seeking redeployment (see also EI8)

Increase in CEDARS survey question in relation to manager confidence in giving guidance on redeployment to sector benchmark level (20.4% to 34.4%) (Both EI6 and EM1 are needed to achieve this outcome)

EM2 Familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding

- engage with training and communications, and apply the redeployment process with individuals in their teams seeking redeployment (see also EI8)
- engage with training and communications on bullying and harassment (see also EC12)

Increase in CEDARS survey question in relation to manager confidence in giving guidance on redeployment to sector benchmark level (20.4% to 34.4%) (Both EI6 and EM1 are needed to achieve this outcome)

Increase in CEDARS survey question in relation to manager confidence in responding to bullying and harassment to sector benchmark level (54.3% to 64.3%) (Both EC12 and EM2 are needed to achieve this outcome)

EM3 Commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers

Complete new R&S training following update of policy (see EI1)

Increase CEDARS response to sector benchmark level for questions relating to fair, (82.4% to 88%) transparent (64.7% to 77.5%) and merit-based (82.4% to 84.3%) recruitment. (both EI1 and EM3 are needed to achieve this outcome)

Jul-23 Research managers CARRIED FORWARD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EM4</th>
<th>Actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers</th>
<th>Complete line manager training in performance management. (See EM4)</th>
<th>10% point increase in CEDARS question related to managing staff performance training (29.3% to 39.3%) (Both EM4 and EM5 needed to achieve this outcome)</th>
<th>Jul-23</th>
<th>Research managers</th>
<th>NEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM5</td>
<td>Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase from 71.5% to 80% of staff reporting via CEDARS that their immediate manager provides clear, constructive and timely feedback on their performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Researchers must:

| ER1 | Ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder | See EC12 | | | | |
| ER2 | Understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities | No further action at this stage | | | | |
| ER3 | Positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers | No further action at this stage | | | | |
| ER4 | Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community | See EC15 | | | | |

### Professional and Career Development

| PCD1 | Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors | - Develop an ECR hub of information to promote training opportunities and structured support  
- Develop a network of communications points to improve awareness of what is available  
- Broaden definition of CPD through how this is presented to researchers  
- Clearly identify our ECR community and develop ways to enable them to communicate and collaborate | 10% point improvement in the number of ECRs reporting via CEDARS that they engage in more than 5 days CPD per year (36.8% to 46.8%)  
80% occupancy rate for the Advance Programme in 2021/22 (increase from 75% in previous year)  
85% occupancy rate for the Advance Programme in 2022/23 | 31-Jul-23 | Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity/ Head of Research Services | CARRIED FORWARD |
| PCD2 | Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers | - Develop the College's provision of mentoring and career advice for researchers  
- Engage Researcher managers in PDR training to improve career discussions  
- Complete guidance for research managers in having effective career and workload allocation discussions with staff returning from maternity/family leave or with other caring responsibilities. | Research mentors identified in all six of the College's schools.  
10% point increase (61.5% to 71.5%) in response to CEDARS question on usefulness of manager career development review. | 31-Jul-23 | Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity | NEW |
| PCD3 | Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers | - Explore options for access to professional advice on career management | 10% point increase in response to CEDARS question related to access to professional careers advice (0% to 10%). | 31-Jul-23 | Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity | NEW |
| PCD4 | Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills | See PCD11, EC5 | 10% point increase in response to CEDARS question related to time to develop your research identity (27.8% to 47.8%). | 31-Jul-23 | Senior Vice Principal (Student and Staff Experience), Head of Organisation Devt and Diversity | CARRIED FORWARD |
| PCD5 | Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this | Introduce a research secondment scheme to develop greater external awareness | 5% point increase in response to CEDARS question related to experience of other employment sectors (15.4% to 20.4%). | 31-Jul-23 | Senior Vice Principal (Academic Strategy and Research) | NEW |
| PCD6 | Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities, and researcher career development reviews | | | No further action at this stage | | |

### Funders must:

| PCDP1 | Incorporate specific professional development requirements in relevant funding calls, terms and conditions, grant reporting, and policies. This should include researchers’ engagement in a minimum of 10 days’ professional development pro rata per year, and evidence of effective career development planning | | | | | |
| PCDP2 | Embed the Concordat Principles and researcher development into research assessment strategies and processes | | | | | |
| PCDP3 | Acknowledge that a large proportion of the researchers they fund will move on to careers beyond academia, and consider how they can encourage and support this within their remit | | | | | |
## PCDM1
**Engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers**, including holding a career development review at least annually.

Engage in PDR training to improve career development discussions. 10% point increase (61.5% to 71.5%) in response to CEDARS question on usefulness of manager career development review.

31-Jul-23 Research managers

### PCDM2
Support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.

See PCD2

### PCDM3
Allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata, per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.

See PCD1

### PCDM4
Identify opportunities, and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills, and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.

See PCD1, EI5

### PCDM5
Engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.

See PCD2, PCDM1

### Researchers must:

#### PCDR1
Take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.

See PCD1

#### PCDR2
Explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.

See PCD2

#### PCDR3
Maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.

No further action at this stage

#### PCDR4
Positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.

See PCD2

#### PCDR5
Seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.

See PCD1

#### PCDR6
Consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation.

See PCD2

* The Concordat defines researchers as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose by a higher education institution or research institute. The primary audience is research staff, e.g. postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, research assistants. The Concordat encourages institutions to include other groups who actively engage in research as beneficiaries of their Concordat action plan. These could be postgraduate researchers; staff on teaching and research, or teaching contracts; clinicians; professional support staff; technicians.  

HREIR Action plan, Vitae 2020