

**University of Exeter**

**HR Excellence in Research: 2021–23 Action Plan**

An internal evaluation of the University’s HR Excellence in Research Award was undertaken in 2021 to assess the performance of the University in meeting its obligations under the Concordat and to gauge progress against actions arising from the 8-year evaluation review in 2018. We examined the key findings from the relevant PRES, CROS, PIRLS and CEDARS surveys when undertaking this review and the development of this action plan.

An internal evaluation of the University's HR Excellence in Research Award was undertaken in 2021 to assess the performance of the University in meeting its obligations. Whilst a substantial amount of development has been achieved to support researchers to be the best that they can and to ensure consistent high-quality training and development throughout their careers at the University of Exeter on all four campuses, there is further development and enhancement work that will be carried out.

We continue to develop our emerging ‘Research and Impact Strategy’ (2020-2025) which aims to nurture and reinforce a culture of interdisciplinarity and collaboration, building further on the teaching and research ecosystem and explore new and different sources of funding and discovery in our new global environment. Academic and Professional Services staff from across the University are involved in the consultation which is now nearing completion and include researchers at all stages of their careers with strong representation from Early Career Researchers.

Our HR Excellence in Research Action Plan is central to the work of our strategic ‘Exeter Academic’ programme and is one of the core action plans that will progress our three sovereign strategies (Global, Research & Impact, Education).

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| **Institution name:** | **University of Exeter** | **The institutional audience\* for this action plan includes:** |  |
| **Cohort number:** | **3** | **Audience (beneficiaries of the action plan)** | **Number of** | **Comments** |
| **Date of submission:** | **24th September 2021** | Research staff | 1,029 (903 FTE) | Research Staff are the primary beneficiaries for this action plan. |
| **Institutional context:**  [Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/research/ref2021/) is the national assessment of the strength of UK research. The results show that we at Exeter have increased the proportion of our research which is world-leading by more than 60% and increased the size of our research community by 70%. | Postgraduate researchers | 2296 | PGRs are beneficiaries of this action plan mainly through access to the Researcher Development Programme, University PGR Liaison Forums and, training and support across the University |
| Research and teaching staff | 1,246 (1176 FTE) | Research and teaching staff are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the Researcher Development Programmes, University ECR Liaison Forums, training and support across the University, and participation in CEDARS.  |
| Teaching-only staff | 1,264 (499 FTE) | Teaching-only staff are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the Researcher Development Programme, Teaching (LTHE) University and Departmental Forums, training and support across the University and participation in CEDARS.  |
| Technicians | 235 (213 FTE) | Technicians are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the Researcher Development Programmes (Essentials), University and Departmental Forums, training and support across the University and participation in CEDARS. |
| Clinicians | Unable to provide numbers in clinical roles | Clinicians are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the Researcher Development Programmes (Essentials), University and Departmental Forums, training and support across the University and participation in CEDARS. |
| Professional support staff | 3008 (2675 FTE) | Professional support staff are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the University and Departmental Forums, training and support across the University and participation in CEDARS. |
| Managers of Researchers and Research Leaders | Not able to provide numbers in management roles | Managers of Researchers and Research Leaders are beneficiaries of this action plan through access to the University and Departmental Forums, training and support across the University and participation in CEDARS. |

| **Obligation** | **Action required** | **Success Measure (SMART)** | **Responsibility** | **Deadline** | **Progress Update** |
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| **Concordat Principle 1: Environment and culture**  |
| **1.1 Institutional requirements** |
| ECI1 All relevant staff are aware of the concordat | Provide opportunities, at all career stages, to increase awareness of Concordat and its principles to all relevant staff.Reflect the Concordat and its principles in the unified Work Plan and in the operations of the relevant services. | 100% researchers at all Grades are aware of the Concordat.Measure awareness through inductions, surveys, Research Culture workshops, DORA Champions and surveys (PRES and CEDARS).Run the PRES and CEDARS surveys during the reporting period, with an aim to improve on scores across the board compared to the previous surveys in 2017 and 2018. For PRES, where appropriate, relate results to those obtained in the PGR ‘Pulse Check’ surveys in 2021. | RD&RC (via surveys, networks and comms)HR support with coms and inductionsConcordat SG supports activities | 75% by end of 2021100% by end of 2023Full PRES and CEDARS analysis complete by April of the relevant reporting years | 2021 CEDARS saw an increase of 5% saying they had ‘some understanding of the Concordat’ from 2020 (30% up from 25%). 2023 data is not yet available. PRES does not ask for awareness/understanding. Unified work plan has been developed including strengthening links between RD and PD via a new role to support the Concordat delivery.  |
| ECI2 Ensure that institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers. | Review relevant policies and practices on a regular basis via the Concordat Steering Group.Ensure appropriate training is available for researchers and their managers. Continue to provide opportunities for ECRs and PGRs to be active members of the Impact and Engaged research Network. Through the ECRNs. PGRs also have the opportunity to keep up to date on the latest policy developments, training and networking opportunities. HREIRA (4.4 and 5.3).Concentrate effort on gender equality (through the Gender Equality Group), Inclusivity and Diversity (through Athena SWAN working groups including further institutional College submissions). (HREIRA 6.8)Athena SWAN Working Groups within STEMM Colleges will be broadening their remits become Inclusivity Groups, to include all protected characteristics. Applications for additional Athena SWAN awards. Renewel of existing awards.Continue developments within our ‘Exeter Academic’ project with the inclusion of ECR representative and appropriate provisions (from consultation at ECR LFs), including refinement of the promotion/progression criteria to include clear and explicit REF/TEF/KEF reference.Continue to develop leadership and people management induction and development programmes for existing and aspiring academic leaders.Continue to provide opportunities for ECRs to be active members of the Impact and Engaged research Network.Ensure that through the ECRNs PGRs also have the opportunity to keep up to date on the latest policy developments, training and networking opportunities. | Concordat SG to review policies annually.Concordat SG to monitor training provision.CROS and PIRLS had previously indicated that the proportion of Research Staff who agreed that the University is committed to equality and diversity was 89.5%, compared to a sector average of 86.5% and that 85.3% of PIs and Research Leaders agreed that the University treated staff fairly, compared to 79.2% for the sector average. We will aim to maintain or improve on this with 2021 and ongoing CEDARS results.Positive feedback from ECR networks and other sources about revised criteria and reporting via the DCSB.Research leadership development programmes are in place. 85 delegate places per year provided during reporting period. PGR Supervisors 25; ECR 30; Mid-career and senior 30Networks are in place and occur regularly, ECRs and PGRs are directed to relevant information and support during induction and via bespoke pages on the DC websiteTo continue to broaden the Athena SWAN Working Groups within STEMM Colleges and extend their remits to become Inclusivity Groups, to include all protected characteristics. Renewal of existing awards in other colleges and review any missing provision across the University.Inclusivity groups are runningGeography silver award Renewal of other silver and bronze awardsInstitutional silver award. | Concordat SG monitors/feeds backRD&RCCollegesHR | Sept 2021 – June 2022 action plans in placeMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meetingsData analysed for individual surveys by end August, in reporting yearAction planning and areas for action identified January, in next reporting yearOngoing till end of reporting period | Policies and practices are examined, when required and as relevant, by formal groups such as RIEC (which has dedicated PGR/ECR meetings) and at PGR/ECR LFs. The Concordat SG also has a watching brief on policies and practices.CEDARS 2021 shows that 77% feel the institution is committed to equality and diversity, this is in line with the national average. 2023 data not available.A comprehensive set of training modules cover regulatory, legal and University requirements (e.g. Research integrity, Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity). These are regularly reviewed by the subject matter experts.There are currently 15 ECRNs in place and they have been largely unaffected as based in departments. All faculties have networks, but we continually encourage specific disciplines to engage and form new networks. With admin support from DC. We don't hold data on ECRN engagement but ECRN activity regularly reported by ECRLF which occur every term.We currently have 11 departmental Athena Swan awards and one institutional award, the latter due for renewal in January 2024. Existing awards for departments which have been impacted by the restructure (e.g. CLES Cornwall) remain valid for up to one year post-restructure (Sept 2023) when departments submit either an interim award application, or a transfer of award form to Advance HE, depending on the extent of changes to the department. Advance HE are currently finalising their policy governing these applications, so we are awaiting further information about this process.Inclusivity groups have survived the restructure and continue to meet. Faculty WICCs have also been formed to actively progress EDI and wellbeing agendas at a more local level.Exeter Academic Review Group now at consultation stage with all academic colleagues (including researchers). Ready to implement recommendations in Sept 2023. Feedback from researchers has featured in project via formal routes (DCSG, RIEC and other groups) and informal consultation.Researcher leadership development program delivered at full capacity in 2021 and 2022, with an approval rating of 83% in 2022.  |
| ECI3 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 | Ensure researchers at all career stages are aware of University wellbeing services and support and this is signposted in the relevant forums and online.Ensure researchers at all career stages are aware of University’s policies and support available for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment and this is signposted in the relevant forums and online.Ensure the wellbeing of researchers is central to the development of action flowing from the new University Mental Health and Wellbeing Board as well as the Academic Workload Allocation Group.Report on a range of Wellbeing indicators via new ‘Wellbeing Dashboard’ to University Mental Health and Wellbeing Board and University Health & Safety CommitteeDevelop College Mental Health Action Plans based on data from Wellbeing Dashboard and feedback in Wellbeing surveys (e.g Colleague Wellbeing survey Dec 2020)Provide relevant development opportunities and monitor uptake, identifying and resolving gaps in engagement. | CEDARS 2020 indicates that 80% of research staff are satisfied with their work/life balance (compared to a sector average of 72%) 75% of PIs and Research Leaders reported a very high level of job satisfaction (compared to a sector average of 74%). We will aim to improve on these results during the reporting period.The DC to continue to work closely with HR via the Concordat SG to ensure wellbeing is being monitored and addressed at the University.The 2021 ‘Big Discussion’ and dedicated Research Culture departmental workshops and surveys will provide an additional comparisons. | Concordat SG monitors/feeds backRD&RC | Data analysed for individual surveys by end August in reporting yearsAction planning and areas for action identified January, the following reporting yearsMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meetings | Wellbeing services are signposted during all levels of induction to the university for both staff/ECRs and PGRs. Newsletters to staff/ECRs and PGRs contain a wellbeing section and there are support pages, with links to services, on the Doctoral College and ECR hub websites. In the 2021/22 year there was a 5.6% increase in PGRs accessing the PGR education welfare advisor service. No data for 2022/23 yet.CEDARS job satisfaction levels were 74% in 2021 (similar to 2020). 2023 data unavailable. The University's policy and signposting to support are covered in induction for PGRs and during induction and there is regular mandatory training for ECRs and managers this has seen an increase in R only staff compliance rates since 2021 of 14%, E&R staff compliancy has dropped by 2% [Equality & Diversity training compliance – 2023 R only = 82% and E&R = 74%, compared to 2021 compliance rates of 68 and 76% respectively]. The EDI webpage (with reporting function) are linked on the DC PGR support page and the ECR hub wellbeing page. CEDARS 2021 data shows an increase in awareness (compared to 2020) of mechanisms to report each area of issue: discrimination, bullying and harassment.A new Wellbeing, Inclusion and Culture Committee (WICC) was formed in 2022 to address all wellbeing and cultural issues. This has increased the visibility of such matters. The Concordat SG has access to WICC. Wellbeing is a standing item on the SG and the PGR Education Welfare Advisor now sits on the SG. In addition each Faculty has a Faculty WICC that examines such matters at a Departmental and Faculty level.Research culture workshops resulted in departmental action plans that will be monitored as part of the Annual Research Monitoring exercise. Departmental action plans are monitored by our DVC for Research & Impact.In 2023 our Wellbeing team launched their [Wellbeing Network](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/groups/networks/wellbeing/#a0) which is open to all colleagues. This is aimed at creating a supportive community to help people with their wellbeing.In May 2023 our Wellbeing and Occupation Health teams won the ‘Wellbeing’ award at the UHR conference. |
| ECI4 Ensure that managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and mental health. | Provide relevant training and monitor uptake, identifying and resolving gaps in engagement.Encourage participation in Interview, Selection and Unconscious Bias training for those involved in the recruitment process Promote and encourage Researcher participation in Positive Working Environment activities (including staff festival). Promote Inclusivity tool to researchers. The university has an ongoing university wide commitment to inclusivity and a zero tolerance when it comes to harassment and bullying- <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/speakout/> Continue to promote this as part of DC induction programmeContinue to develop the specialised wellbeing support for PGRs and access via the DC webpages. New PGRs to be signposted to wellbeing services at mandatory ‘Induction’ events.Ensure all managers of research staff engage with the new on-line development course ‘Managing Stress within your team’ due to be launched across the University in Term 1 2021.Encourage participation in wellbeing events (e.g. staff festival) and ensure ECRs are signposted to relevant support services and training. | Doctoral College website and communications are used to promote PWE, Inclusivity tool and wellbeing opportunities and events. Embed wellbeing into everything we do, so the focus is all year round rather than one week/month of the yearContinue to increase engagement with PGR wellbeing activities by 10%, by 2022, compared with 2020.To continue to link the specialised and extensive wellbeing services offered via the DC webpages and induction information.Specialised wellbeing support for ECRs and access via the ECR hub in place. New staff signposted to wellbeing services at ‘ECR Staff Orientation’ events. ECR presence on the Wellbeing and PWE working groups.100% of managers of research staff engage with Managing stress online training 70% of research managers have undertaken all the relevant mandatory online EDI training, working towards improving this figure during the reporting period. | DC/HR | OngoingNov 2023OngoingThroughout ’21, ’22 and ‘23 | 83% of line managers in R only roles are compliant for ‘Recruitment & Selection’ training, which covers unconscious bias. This is an increase of 21% since 2021 when compliance for R only line managers was 62%. E&R line managers have seen an increase of 1% from 81% to 82% compliant. Self-reported (CEDARS) confidence in ability to ‘use inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment processes’ is up 8% at Exeter compared to the national average (95% vs. 87%). The Inclusivity tool has since been replaced by [new EDI resources](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/).Everyone is informed of policies relating to discrimination and misconduct at induction and staff (including ECRs) undergo regular mandatory training on 'Equality and Diversity' (R/E&R line manager compliance 76%, all R/E&R compliance 78% and Uni wide 83%). Additionally, CEDARS 2021 data shows the number of people that have felt discriminated against, bullied or harassed has dropped since 2020.The new course 'Supporting the mental wellbeing of your team' was rolled out but has seen low engagement [Only 7.3 % of R/E&R line managers]. This is a priority focus for our future actions.PGR supervision has also been reviewed institutionally and new training programs are being put in place, including mental health support for PGRs. This has a dedicated resource associated with it and a Doctoral Supervision Steering Group (DSSG). Bystander training and a Decolonising the Curriculum Festival have also been held and were open to all staff and PGRs.Wellbeing services are signposted during all levels of induction to the university for both staff/ECRs and PGRs. Newsletters to staff/ECRs and PGRs contain a wellbeing section and there are support pages, with links to services, on the Doctoral College and ECR hub websites. Support is also flagged at related training events, PDRs and PGR/ECR liaison forums. Due to new structures the PWE has been superseded. The staff festival no longer takes place.Monthly PGR coffee, cake & conversation sessions have been run to allow face to face community building.  |
| ECI5 Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity | Provide relevant training and monitor uptake, identifying and resolving gaps in engagement.Continue to provide and update as necessary the mandatory training for research staff and PGRs.Refresh of the mandatory training materials to take place during the reporting period. | The DC (RD&RC) to continue to work closely with HR via the Concordat SG to ensure appropriate training is being advertised, engaged with and monitored and addressed at the University.RD&RC to continue to work closely with the Research, Ethics and Governance team to ensure that training materials and workshops are updated and promoted accordingly.Ensure that new mandatory training materials are online and being used within the reporting period.70% of research staff have completed Research Integrity mandated training, working towards improving this figure during the reporting period. | DC/RD&RC/HR | OngoingTo be completed during the reporting period, deadline June 2023 | All research staff are expected to undertake research integrity training from PGR to researcher manager. This is detailed on the DC, ECR hub and staff training website. However, compliance has been low (average 50% over 3 years) and mandatory training is currently under review and development. Training and other initiatives to support wider research ethics is being undertaken and will be carried forward to new action plan.CEDARS 2021 shows that Exeter researchers report higher numbers undertaking research integrity training compared to the national average (50% vs 41%). The following are considered mandatory for PGRs and are available online: Information Governance and Security (Postgraduate), Health and Safety Mandatory Training, Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Training and Research Integrity. |
| 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. | Conduct and analyse CEDARS survey.Conduct and analyse Employee Engagement Survey 2021.Conduct research culture forums across different Colleges that seek feedback on main cultural drivers, from the departmental Research Culture Workshops.Collate and analyse feedback from ECR and PGR Liaison Forums, Networks and other relevant sources.Ensure the views and needs of research staff as expressed in The Big Conversation flow into policy development.Produce a rolling action plan to address research culture issues, opportunities and challenges. | Run the PRES and CEDARS surveys during the reporting period, with an aim to improve on scores across the board compared to the previous surveys in 2017 and 2018. For PRES, where appropriate, relate results to those obtained in the PGR ‘Pulse Check’ surveys in 2021.Liaison forum feedback to be discussed, monitored and actioned as appropriate via the DCMG, RIEG and Concordat SG.Results from the Research Culture departmental workshops to be developed into action plans to be agreed with department heads to focus on priority areas. This will also be used with results from planned ‘deep’ dive workshops on priority areas, with ECRs and Research Leads, separately. | DC/RD&RC/RS/HR | Data analysed for individual surveys by end August, in reporting yearAction planning and areas for action identified January, in next reporting yearOngoingAction plan to be produced by July 2022, implemented in 2023 | CEDARS in 2023 has not yet been analysed but an improved response rate of 31% was achieved (compared to 26%). Analysis will be captured in the next reporting period (2023-26). Employee engagement surveys were stopped. In 2023 we launched our termly Cultural Index tool that will replace these larger surveys with a more dynamic, short-term measure of staff engagement and wellbeing. The summer term response rate was 56%.Action plans have been reported and will be monitored as part of annual research monitoring for all 26 departments. Key topics (e.g. mentoring, co-location of researchers and teams) are being picked up by special initiatives reported elsewhere.CEDARS 2021 shows that 34% or researchers feel their contributions to ‘institutional policy and decision making’ is valued, compared to the national average of 29%. Policy development that has led directly from the Big Conversation has involved researchers through the Research Culture Workshops and through formal routes like RIEC. Impact of this work is measured through our annual PRES and CEDARS surveys as well as feedback from ECRLFs and RIEC. |
| **1.2 Managers of researchers**  |
| ECM1 Undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work. | Report on uptake of relevant training.Seek feedback from diverse sources to demonstrate application of principles and adherence to guidance and law.Work with relevant departments to address challenges and issues. | PD to continue to work closely with the DC via the Concordat SG to ensure appropriate training is being advertised, engaged with and monitored and addressed at the University.PD to continue to work closely with the Research, Ethics and Governance team to ensure that training materials and workshops are updated and promoted accordingly.70% of research managers have completed EDI mandatory online training, working towards improving this figure during the reporting period. | DC/RD&RC/PD | Ongoing throughout reporting period | 76% of R only and 74% of E&R managers have completed the mandatory EDI training, this is a small drop on 2021 and improvement will become an ongoing action. [Research and EDI Deep Dives](https://universityofexeteruk.sharepoint.com/sites/ResearchandEDI/SitePages/Network-Deep-Dives.aspx): BME, Disability, LGBTQ+, International and Gender as these groups have active networks. These deep dives occurred in 2021-2022. The dives have resulted in an [action plan](https://universityofexeteruk.sharepoint.com/sites/ResearchandEDI/Lists/Deep%20Dives%20Actions/AllItems.aspx) to address challenges and issues. A [Research and EDI](https://universityofexeteruk.sharepoint.com/sites/ResearchandEDI/SitePages/Training-%26-Support.aspx) SharePoint site has also been created with links to training and support. |
| ECM2 Ensure that they and their researchers act in accordance with the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct. | Report on uptake of relevant training.Seek feedback from diverse sources to demonstrate application of principles and adherence to guidance and law.Work with relevant departments to address challenges and issues. | PD to continue to work closely with the DC via the Concordat SG to ensure appropriate training is being advertised, engaged with and monitored and addressed at the University.PD to continue to work closely with the Research, Ethics and Governance team to ensure that training materials and workshops are updated and promoted accordingly.70% of research managers have completed Research Integrity mandated training, working towards improving this figure during the reporting period. | DC/RD&RC/PD | Ongoing throughout reporting period | All research staff are expected to undertake research integrity training from PGR to researcher manager. This is detailed on the DC, ECR hub and staff training website. However, compliance has been low (average 50% over 3 years) and mandatory training is currently under review and development. Training and other initiatives to support wider research ethics is being undertaken and will be carried forward to new action plan.CEDARS 2021 shows 61% of research managers have self-reported undertaking research integrity training, this is a 6% drop on last year but still above the national average (53%).  |
| ECM3 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. | To fully promote these core values at induction and though relevant mandatory training modules.Report on uptake of relevant training.Seek feedback from diverse sources to demonstrate application of principles and adherence to guidance and law.Continue to develop a healthy working environment a part of the University ‘Thriving at Work’ Action PlanWork with relevant departments to address challenges and issues. | To continue to deliver a range of events and programmes that promote opportunities and support the post-graduate research experience including researcher development and health and well-being.To facilitate effective inductions for all PGR students and new staff irrespective of the point in the academic year in which they start, the campus they attend or whether they are on or off-campus students.To further develop the wellbeing training programmes with equal emphasis on support, reporting and addressing incidents.For training materials to get above 75% recommendation rates and excellent review scores. | Wellbeing/DC/RD&RC | Ensure induction is effective and timely and monitor attendance, evaluate feedbackEvaluate all events for 2021, 22 and 23Annually reviewed (June) and reports to DCSB and REIGTo be monitored at the Concordat Steering Group, Exeter Academic Steering Group and ECR LF’s | Inductions for PGRs are now at 100% cover due to be running twice a year (Sept. and Jan.) across all campuses and online.Researcher development training recommendation rate is ~95%, with a score 4.5/5.Research culture workshops and Research and EDI deep dives have been conducted to help identify challenges and issues. ECR and PGR liaison forums and dedicated RIEC meetings allow these groups to feedback on their working environment.  |
| ECM4 Consider fully, in accordance with statutory rights and institutional policies, flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers. | Ensure managers understand policies through the provision of high-quality induction and training (see EI4 below).  | The DC (RD&RC) to continue to work closely with HR via the Concordat SG to ensure appropriate training is being advertised, engaged with and monitored and addressed at the University.To facilitate effective inductions for all PGR students and new staff irrespective of the point in the academic year in which they start, the campus they attend or whether they are on or off-campus students. | HR/RD/RD&RC | To be monitored at the Concordat Steering Group, Exeter Academic Steering Group and ECR LF’s | In 2021 CEDARS 84% of research managers reported feeling confident in their ability to ‘manage requests for flexible working appropriately’, the national average was 74%. We have an 'Induction for people managers' course for line managers. Since 2021 there has also been a 108% increase in researchers attending induction for people managers training (2021=12; 2022/3=25).The new faculty structure has also resulted in new training for managers. PGR supervision has also been reviewed institutionally and new training programs are being put in place, including mental health support for PGRs. This has a dedicated resource associated with it and a Doctoral Supervision Steering Group (DSSG). Training on how the Research and Impact Management Environment (RIME) can be used to support research has also been provided to academic leaders |
| ECM5 Engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution. | Provide opportunities to engage with policy development, positive working environment and research culture.  | HR to continue to work closely with the DC via the Concordat SG to ensure opportunities are being monitored and addressed at the University.The 2021 ‘Big Conversation, dedicated Research Culture departmental workshops, surveys and follow on ‘deep dive’ sessions and agreed departmental action planning will provide additional indicators to ensure opportunities are being provided and taken. | HR/RD/RD&RC | To be monitored at the Concordat Steering Group, Exeter Academic Steering Group and ECR LF’s | Policy development that has led directly from the Big Conversation has involved researchers through the Research Culture Workshops and through formal routes like RIEC. Impact of this work is measured through our annual PRES and CEDARS surveys as well as feedback from ECRLFs and RIEC.Research culture action plans have been reported and will be monitored as part of annual research monitoring for all 26 departments. Key topics (e.g. mentoring, co-location of researchers and teams) are being picked up by special initiatives reported elsewhere. |
| **1.3 Researchers** |
| ECR1 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. | Ensure appropriate induction takes place for all new researchers.Support development of fair and inclusive research culture – develop PGR Supervisors, provide PGR Buddying and ECR Mentoring support. | Continue with induction sessions, including the opportunity to meet current researchers.Scope and plan extension of the pilots of the PGR peer-to-peer mentoring training and engage with an increasing number of disciplines.Demonstrate continual growth of numbers at induction and mentoring events | DC/RD&RC/HR | Ongoing | Since 2022 Exeter has been part of the GW4 Connect programme. GW4 Connect is a suite of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) pilot programmes which will bring together postgraduate researchers from diverse backgrounds to form peer-to-peer networks of support for marginalized and underrepresented communities in higher education. GW4 Connect includes: 11-month peer-to-peer mentorship programme for 30 postgraduate researchers of colour (with wrap-around support), or 10-month facilitated, group coaching programme for 12 postgraduate researchers with parental responsibilities. Exeter has 4 delegates on the mentoring programme (20 across all 4 universities) and 5 on the coaching programme (16 across all 4 Universities).A pilot programme of ECR peer mentoring in the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (HLS) featuring 20 mentors was discontinued due to the impact of the pandemic. We are reviewing mentoring as part of a university-wide project. A small pilot of micro-mentoring was a success (10 sessions completed) but we have not been able to scale this up. This is also now part of a university-wide review of mentoring.  The One Step Beyond scheme for academic mentoring (since 2017) is being substantially overhauled to accommodate the new department-based Senior Academic Mentor role launched in 2022. We are supporting a range of start-up schemes in different departments who are identifying mentors and establishing matching processes to meet their precise needs (Centre for Ecology & Conservation, Business School and the Medical School are early adopters). This will dramatically increase the number of mentors and mentoring for researchers (and all academic staff) being undertaken. |
| ECR2 Ensure they act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity, and equality, diversity and inclusion. | Monitor completion of relevant mandatory training (employer): research integrity, EDI. (PGR, R, E&R).Continue to provide training and support for PGRs and ECRs on good practice in research, ethics and governance.New mandatory online training on research integrity is now available in, supported by in-depth classroom training and 1:1 assistance for individual researchers  |  | DC/RD&RC/HR | By July in each reporting year – ’21, ’22 & ‘23 | Mandatory training compliance rates for R/E&R staff combined has in general gone up by a few percentage or remained equal.The rates in 2021 and 2023 respectively are: Equality & Diversity 72% and 77%, Health and Safety 71% and 76%, Information Governance76% and 76% and Prevent Duty 65% and 61%. Compliance for research integrity training has been low (average 50% over 3 years) and is now under review and development. Training and other initiatives to support wider research ethics is being undertaken and will be carried forward to new action plan. |
| ECR3 Take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health. | Monitor completion of relevant training: H&S, Managing Stress (PGR, R, E&R)Provide range of appropriate H&S training and monitor uptake.Provide range of wellbeing and OH services and monitor uptake through the Concordat Steering Group. | Monitoring uptake and survey responses to training in order to evaluate promotion of training and encourage engagement via DoRs, within the reporting period.Take appropriate action if engagement falls below a target figure (to be agreed by the Concordat Steering Group). | DC/RD&RC/HR | To be monitored at the Concordat Steering Group, Exeter Academic Steering Group and ECR LF’s | Since 2021 there has been an 11% increase in attendance at relevant mental health and wellbeing courses (17 courses in total)Levels of engagement with PGR welfare services increased in 2020/21 (from 2019/20) and remained at these increased numbers in the 2021/22 year (2022/23 data not available). |
| ECR4 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. | Continue to evaluate and develop new ‘Speak Out’ reporting toolsProvide appropriate support, policies and processes (HR). | An evaluation of the impact of ‘Speak Out’ will take place during 2021-23 a part of the EDI Annual Action Plan.There are existing policies and processes which are regularly reviewed. | HR (EDI) | By end of 21/22Reviewed during ‘23 | Speak out undergoes an annual evaluation which involves a report to UEB and council. This report includes a reflective piece (looking at themes/trends identified that year and actions taken), as well as a next step piece for the year ahead.Managers are signposted to university policies.  |
| ECR5 Consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution. | Provide opportunities researchers to contribute to policy development.Seek researchers’ feedback from PGR and ECRN networks and other relevant forums (e.g. Concordat Steering Group, Research Culture departmental workshops).Conduct and analyse Employee Engagement Survey 2021, and ongoing reporting years.Continue to provide opportunities for ECRS and PGRs to be active members of the Impact and Engaged research Network. Through the network researchers have the opportunity to keep up to date on the latest policy developments, training and networking opportunities. | Action planning and areas for action identified by January 2022.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meetings.Demonstrate continual growth of numbers at events. | DC/RS/HR  | May in reporting years – surveys completed  August inn reporting years - data analysedOngoing | ECRNs/ECRLFs contribute to RIEC and concordat steering group. The Employee engagement survey ceased shortly after this action plan was reported. In summer 2023 the Culture Index tool was started as the tool gives a ‘live’ understanding of the experiences of colleagues and will be conducted termly. The summer term response rate was 56%.Public engagement training was offered twice in 2022 and will be continued. 3 ECR dedicated policy development and engagement training sessions were run in 2022. |

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| **Action area** | **Action required** | **SMART Success factor** | **Responsibility** | **Target date** | **Progress** |
| **Concordat Principle 2: Employment**  |
| **2.1 Institutional requirements** |
| EI1 Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices. | Provide relevant recruitment and selection training (mandatory and supplemental – selection and unconscious bias) and monitor uptake. | Review provision of recruitment and selection training with a view to reinstating full provision beyond the existing mandatory training. This will include selection interviewing and unconscious bias and online interviewing. | HR (EDI) | Review by Dec 2021New training in place Term 2 (Feb 2022 target) | Selection interviewing and unconscious bias are now part of the recruitment and selection training. 83% of R/E&R managers have completed Recruitment & Selection training (in 2021 the combined compliance was 71%). The university wide compliance in 2023 is 84%.  |
| EI2 Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position. | Provide effective induction for researchers.Provide buddying (PGRs) and mentoring for new researchers (see 1.31b above). | Continue to enhance the new induction resources and the bespoke ‘Early Career Research Staff Orientation’ event, to enhance familiarity with developmental offerings, the ‘ECR Hub’ and the ECR Networks.Ensure access to learning and development, career pathways advice and support.To ensure that at least 75% of all new ECRs employed at the University attend the ‘ECR Staff Orientation events’ within 3 months of starting at the University and ensure they have access to associated support via the ‘ECR Hub’ and ‘Exeter Academic’ provisions. | RD/RD&RC/PD | Ongoing | Numbers indicate we are hitting the 75% mark (or close to) for attendance of new ECRs at induction. In the 2021 CEDARS 55% of new research staff found the institutional induction useful, compared to the national average of 51%. 2023 CEDARS data is not available at the time of reporting. Inductions for PGRs are now at 100% cover due to be running twice a year (Sept. and Jan.) across all campuses and online.  |
| 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. | Provide role descriptors (through Exeter Academic)Provide clear promotion and progression criteria with examples of successful promotion (through Exeter Academic). | Ensure Researcher promotion and progression criteria reflect the requirements for support and development for ECRs and are inclusive for all contract types.Review of Exeter Academic is being undertaken 2021-2023.  | HRExeter Academic | Data to be analysed by end Dec 2021 and ongoing throughout the reporting periodDec 2021 – June 2023 action plans in place and ongoing throughout the reporting periodAction planning and areas for action identified Mid 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting periodMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting during reporting period | Role descriptors and progression criteria are on the [Exeter Academic website](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/exeteracademic/probationpromotionprogression/). Final recommendations from the review are being considered by WICC and UEB at time of reporting. Communication and implementation of new processes/policies (if applicable) will take place from June 2023 onwards.In the 2021 CEDARS 55% of research staff reported that the ‘promotion pathway and process’ was clear to them, this is down 3% on 2020 but still higher than the national average.  |
| EI4 Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent. | Deliver PGR Supervision programme (workshops plus self-directed learning).Develop and deliver Research Leadership programme (structured programme).Deliver comprehensive mentoring programmes. This to include exploration of GW4 potential.Ensure participation of Directors, Heads and ADs in Leadership Difference programme and relevant Forums (DoR, HoD Engage).Monitor uptake of training and evaluate feedback at all levels. | Supervisory training to be reviewed at DC Exec Group in October 2021 and enhanced programme developed for delivery in the new academic year.To continue to develop and promote engagement with the Researcher Leadership development programmes for ECRs and research leads.Review and revise mentoring provision for researchers by investigating informal mentoring that is not recorded and understanding how to best meet this need more formally to ensure rigour and effectiveness.Reserve 30 places annually for research leaders on our award-winning academic leadership development programme The Leadership Difference.Review our complete leadership development ‘landscape’ in light of The Big Conversation.Explore specific Research Leadership provision mapped within our leadership landscape (*ie following Betts, Bennett and Button paper in prep).*Report on uptake of all leadership and management training and feedback on an annual basis. | AD/RD&RC/HR/PD | Action planning and areas for action identified Mid 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting periodMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting during reporting period | The tailored Research Leadership Development Programme (RLDP) instigated in 2021 has had a total of 43 attendees. While the numbers have stayed constant in 2022 improvements in content has led to the net recommender score has increased by 17 percentage points (from 66% to 83%) since the first course in 2021. In 2022 we revised our leadership landscape to reflect the huge increase in development opportunities. Since 2021 we have doubled the number of generic leadership and management development opportunities, resulting in a 61% increase in attendance by Researchers in 2023 (49 delegates in 2022/23).In 2022 we launched a new generic leadership programme tailored to the needs of the Faculty Restructure. 11 researchers attended this new programme (22% of the delegates).Mentoring provision is now the subject of a comprehensive review and a new strategic approach is emerging (see note in EM3). |
| 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. | Deliver training on conducting reviews and PDRs.Monitor uptake of training.Monitor uptake of reviewsReview and update Promotion criteria as required (see 2.13).To review workload allocation | PDRs are currently being reviewed to identify best practice in undertaking regular and annual reviews and how best to record and monitor them.A review of The Exeter Academic (role profiles) will take place during 2021-23. All aspects of people development and support will be central to this review. | HR and Exeter Academic | PDR Review reports by Nov 2021New PDR process and recommendations in place by March 2022 | A number of strategic review groups were launched in 2022 that have explored a range of topics around Academic and Professional Services work, development and careers. Ideas and suggestions about PDR have also been emerging from other groups, teams, individuals, Departments and Directorates. This has resulted in numerous observations, suggestions and recommendations for the future of PDRs in terms of policy, process, content, recording and delivery.The Task & Finish Group will report in Summer 2023 with a view to implementing any changes to PDRs by March 2024, subject to any required procurement and integration of systems. Since 2021 there has been a 66% increase in attendance of PDR training (2021 =32; 2022/23 = 53). |
| 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. | Seek to reduce FTC and Permanent-Time Limited posts.Implement recommendations flowing from the Fair Employment For All project with reference to increasing the use of more open ended contracts of employment | See actions in EI7.Review our existing redeployment policy with reference in particular to Researcher staff.Data shows that for R only staff, there are 79% Fixed Term Contracts (FTC) and 21% Permanent positions at the University. The proportions vary across Colleges and there are some gender differences.Our aim is to continue to reduce the proportion of FTC to Permanent contracts. | HR | Progress by July 2022 | Since 2021 there has been an increase in permanent contracts of 2% for female and 4% for male researchers. There has been a concurrent drop of -2% female and -7% male, in fixed term contracts respectively. We continue to improve this position year-on-year.In addition to this our Living Systems Institute has trailed a ‘bridge fund’ in 2022/23 to pay ECRs between contracts. So far this has been utilised 4 times.  |
| **2.2 Managers of researchers**  |
| EM1 Undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care. | Monitor uptake of and feedback from work described in EI4 above. | Actions under EI4 above.  | AD/RD&RC/HR | Action planning and areas for action identified Mid 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting periodMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting | Research leadership program delivered in 2021 and 2022 (at full to capacity). Approval rating increasing from 66% in 2021 to 83% in 2022.Since 2021 we have also doubled the number of generic leadership and management development opportunities, resulting in a 61% increase in attendance by Researchers in 2023 (49 delegates in 2022/23). |
| 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. | Provide relevant induction and training, in particular “Induction for People Managers” – encourage engagement through variety of channels (via Service providers and Researcher networks, University communications). | Monitor the participation in the ‘Induction for People Managers’ amongst the manager of research staff (promote where necessary). Aim to attract at least 50% of new research people managers to this programme.Explore potential for similar programme tailored to the needs of Researchers, as part of a new suite to support Research Leadership. | HR/PD | Review uptake Dec 2021Potential for tailored programme by Feb 2022 | Since 2021 there has been a 108% increase in researchers attending induction for people managers training (2021=12; 2022/3=25). This is partially the result of new training tailored specifically to the needs of academic colleagues. |
| EM3 Commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion, and reward of researchers. | To continue to develop our strategic approach to foster effective leadership in research.Provide research leadership development opportunities.Provide mentoring programme to support development of research leaders, building on our established ‘One Step Beyond’ programme. | Strategy (as part of wider Academic Leadership Strategy) in place.Programme of development in place.Mentoring programmes in place. Provide 100 matches per year in the reporting period. | PD/HR | July 2022Ongoing (research leadership training and mentoring programmes) | The tailored Research Leadership Development Programme (RLDP) instigated in 2021 has had a total of 43 attendees. While the numbers have stayed constant in 2022 improvements in content has led to the net recommender score has increased by 17 percentage points (from 66% to 83%) since the first course in 2021. Since 2021 we have also doubled the number of generic leadership and management development opportunities, resulting in a 61% increase in attendance by Researchers in 2023 (49 delegates in 2022/23). Since 2021 there has also been a 108% increase in researchers attending induction for people managers training (2021=12; 2022/3=25). This is partially the result of new training tailored specifically to the needs of academic colleagues.Peer mentoring: a pilot programme in HLS featuring 20 mentors suffered a lack of momentum due to the impact of the pandemic. We are reviewing this as part of a university-wide project.Micro-mentoring: A small pilot of this innovative support was a success (10 sessions completed) but we have not been able to scale this up. This is also now part of a university-wide review of mentoring.One Step Beyond (OSB) and the Senior Academic Mentor (SAM) role: the OSB scheme for academic mentoring (since 2017) is being substantially overhauled to accommodate the new department-based SAM role launched in 2022. We are supporting a range of start-up schemes in different departments who are identifying mentors and establishing matching processes to meet their precise needs (Centre for Ecology & Conservation, Business School, Medical School are early adopters). This will dramatically increase the number of mentors and mentoring for researchers (and all academic staff) being undertaken. |
| EM4 Actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers. | Encourage 1-1 reviews (via training and support) and engagement in PDR process. See actions in EI5 Continue to provide research leadership development opportunities. | Strategy (as part of wider Academic Leadership Strategy) in place.Programme of development in place.See actions in EI5 above. | PD/HR | July 2022Ongoing (research leadership training, PDR and mentoring programmes) | As mentioned under EI5 above the PDR process has been under review during this period. Annual communications encourage at least one PDR meeting per year, for all staff.  |
| EM5 Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution. | Receive input via formal and informal networks and operational groups (Concordat SG, DoR Engage, ECRN Networks).DCMG interfaces with Colleges (via RIEG) and other internal training providers.Continue to provide sector-leading opportunities for colleagues (especially ECRs) to have representation on strategic boards (e.g. RIEG, Exeter Academic etc.) representing feedback from the ECRNs | DCMG via RIEG to deliver the outcomes that will contribute to the University’s reputation as an excellent environment for postgraduate education and a destination for high quality PGR students and ECR staff.As a result of the new structures make provision for continue with sector leading support for ECRS within the activity of the Doctoral College. | DCMG/RS/DC | Ongoing – monitored annuallyOngoing – representation on strategic boards | DCMG is now the PGR board. ECR networks feed into termly ECR liaison forums. ECRs and PGRs are also able to report to specialised RIEC meetings. PGRs also have networks and liaison forum meetings.  |
| **2.3 Researchers** |
| ER1 Ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder. | To ensure that researchers engage in Induction and associated mandatory training.Ensure that researchers are having regular meetings with their PIs and that these areas of discussion are reflected in the PDR process.Data on training and development participation to be monitored and action taken as necessary to achieve 50% take up in year two years and increasing to the third year of reporting.  | Encourage and support full engagement with the ePDR process (80% +) and enhance training for reviewers to ensure career and development are discussed and objectives set.Ensure that 80% of ePDR reviewers are trained to deliver the best possible PDR experience.Training to focus on career conversations, support from VITAE (e.g. ‘The Balanced Researcher’) and highlight feedback from ECR LFs and the commitments to the Concordat.Carry out regular reviews on data for researcher learning and development uptake and present data regularly to Colleges to inform the PDR process.To ensure that learner info on iTrent systems is accurate to enable Researcher Development data to be available in one place and enable reporting ease as part of the ‘Exeter Academic’ | HR/RS | January 2022January 2022 and throughout reporting period.End to End Review is complete and action plans in place by Jan 2022 | PGRs annual monitoring and workbooks 'MyPGR' are completed regularly and can be checked by central services. We have also upgraded the training needs analysis tool so that it is online and more accessible to PGRs and supervisors. Post-pandemic the PDR has only been light touch (this has proved more popular). As mentioned in EI5 the PDR process is currently under review, with the report due in the summer. Looking to make PDRs more bespoke for ECRs.PDR Training: Since 2021 there has been a 66% increase in attendance of PDR training (2021 =32; 2022/23 = 53). This is significantly higher (proportionately) than the estimated increase in research managers (7%) showing that more managers are undertaking the training. We are confident that this reflects at least 80% of reviewers of research staff.End to end review was completed and new learning development programs have been successfully delivered in 2022/23.  |
| ER2 Understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities. | Provide guidance and a suitable induction process (EI2 above). | See action in EM2 above.Offer bespoke induction information to ECRs and all Research staff. | HR/RS | Throughout reporting period 2021-2023. | Please see EI2 and EM2. |
| ER3 Positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers. | Monitor engagement with formal PDR process.Receive and act on feedback from informal and formal networks (ECRNs etc).Further increase access to and participation in high-quality L&D opportunities, and career pathway advice and guidance. | Gap analysis undertaken, evaluation scores to be maintained at 90%+See action is EI5 above. | HR/RS | July 2022New PDR process and recommendations in place by March 2022Reviewed during 2023. | The 2021 CEDARS shows that 82% of research staff felt their PDR was useful, up 13% from 2020 and 6% above the national average. In the light of the pandemic, since 2020 we have promoted a "light-touch" approach to PDRs, recommending instead that regular 1-1 discussions are held and that the annual PDR concentrates on highlights, wellbeing, challenges and opportunities rather than a full review. The principle, policy, process and paperwork of PDRs is now the subject of a PDR review which will report in August 2023 with a view to a return to a more rigorous review process in March 2024.Since 2021 we have increased our staff resource to lead on career support for ECR and PGRs, featuring 1:1 appointments and specific career development opportunities. There has been a remarkable 312% increase in researchers attending career development workshops (2021=42; 2023=173). This has been partly due to an increase in number of workshops delivered (14 in 2023; 10 in 2021 – a 40% increase) but also improved communications with researchers (via the networks mentioned below, website and other channels).  |
| ER4 Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community. | Encourage Academic Citizenship to include support for colleagues (working with Colleges/PVCs/DVC Research).To continue to develop the role of the PGR by developing the role of the new PGR Pastoral Tutors via the Academic Development team.Continue to develop and extend development opportunities for PGR Supervisors and PIs.Develop PGR representation programmes to ensure that PGRs are independently supported and have a ‘voice’ across their academic college. To compliment the existing ECR representation and ECRNs (see EM5 above). | Ensure that wider citizenship of research staff is reflected in the review of The Exeter Academic.Training for Pastoral tutors has commenced.Review and plan development needs as ongoing PGR Pastoral tutors embedded.Enhanced PGR Supervisor and PI development available.To expand the PGR pilot schemes in Penryn and CMH to the other academic colleges, with an aim to maintain engagement at c.30%. | RS /DC/A | OngoingJuly 2022Dec 2021July 2022-September 2023July 2022 | Following the review of our Exeter Academic promotion and progression framework (implementation 2023/24), it is likely that responsible metrics will be built into recruitment and promotion. The pastoral tutor role is being reviewed at faculty level following the restructure.New online resources to support the role are being developed and the support page will go live in September 2023, along with new training.Were unable to achieve PGR pilot scheme expansion due to ongoing affects of the pandemic. However, PGRs have representation at bespoke RIEC meetings to share their voice.  |
| **Action area** | **Action required** | **SMART Success factor** | **Responsibility** | **Target date** | **Progress** |
| **Concordat Principle 3:** **Professional and career development** |
| **3.1 Institutional requirements** |
| PCDI1 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. | Provide guidance and encourage engagement with the principle through communications and support (eg DoR Engage, College groups).Provide general development opportunities via the Exeter Academic to support wide range of professional, personal and career development. | Increase and enhance academic support and development for the next REF, through integration of the ECR Development Programme with the ‘Exeter Academic’ provisions for support, development and criteria for promotions.Unified programmes and web presence to be developed with the ‘core ECR Development Programme’ linking to the now combined ‘IIB Essentials’ and ‘Research Services Essentials’ programmes developed via the ‘Exeter Academic’ provision.Engage 75% of R only and 50% of E&R staff in programmes (across all provision).  | DC/RS/HR | July 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | In the 2021 CEDARS 23% reported spending 5+ days on CPD (nationally 25%). 2023 data not available at time of writing. All programs (e.g. RD, Essentials and Exeter Academic) integrated on one ECR website.People Development and Researcher Development & Research Culture teams work closely, unified work plan with shared staff in post.30% increase since 2021 in the number of researchers undertaking training (725 in 2021 and 940 in 2022/23). |
| PCDI2 Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers. | Provide training to encourage effective reviews, including around formal processes (eg PDR). Ensure workload allocation for PDR is built into local agreements.See action in EI5 above. | See action in EI5 above. | HR/PD | New PDR process and recommendations in place by March 2022Monitor actions during 2023 | As mentioned above the PDR review process is almost complete and we expect the new process to be in place early 2024. |
| PCDI3 Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers. | Provide Career support and development through career mentoring and career conversations.Continue to provide 1-to-1 careers coaching for ECRs and careers planning tools, such as ‘Profiling for Success’.Continue to provide ECR specific training programmes and initiatives as detailed via the central online ‘ECR Hub’.Provide information on take up of training and development opportunities to all Colleges to enable colleges to track participation.PI opportunities continually developed following outcomes of 2020 & 2021 CEDARS (and ongoing throughout reporting period). | Reviews into this provision are ongoing and report back to the DCSB, REIG and are feed into and respond to the ECR LFs. | RD/RS | July 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | Comprehensive provision of careers coaching, etc. continues to be provided for both PGRs and ECRs, via a newly created combined post with the Careers Service for PGRs and a dedicated post within the DC for PGRS. All easily accessible via the DC web pages and ‘ECR Hub’.PGR 1-to-1 coaching appointments - August 2022 - 1 June 2023 - 130 attended (2 day post) ECR 1-to-1 coaching appointments – September 2022 – April 2023 – 40 attended (1 day post).Information on training is provided by dedicated reports to the PGR board and RIEC. Reviews also happened as part of the research culture action planning. There has been a remarkable 312% increase in researchers attending career development workshops (2021=42; 2023=173).The 2021 CEDARS shows that 72% of research staff felt their manager ‘supports me in my broader career aspirations’ an increase of 5% from 2020 and above the national average (65%).  |
| PCDI4 Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills. | Provide Researcher focused development opportunities curated via Researcher Development & Research Culture, IIB and Exeter Academic.Enhance the continual evaluation of current provision within the Researcher development programmes for Research Staff both in Exeter and Cornwall, using input from the ECRNs Steering Group in addition to the ECR LFs.Enhance where necessary the range of events and programmes available to Research Staff.Continue the Researcher-Led Initiatives.Continue the Images of Research Competition.Develop connected approach for all those supporting Research Staff at Exeter via the ‘Exeter Academic’ project and online materials to support induction.Establish clear communication channels via a dedicated role within the DC, for Research Staff. | Evaluate all Researcher Development provision ensure 70% good or excellent feedback, reporting annually to DCMG and via the ECR LFs.Demonstrate growth in numbers engaging with Images of Research and Researcher-Led initiatives as leads or attendees. | HR /AD/DC/RD&RC | OngoingJan 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.June 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | Significantly expanded [researcher development opportunities](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/research/doctoralcollege/early-career-researchers/traininganddevelopment/training/) .People Development and Researcher Development & Research Culture teams work closely. This includes a unified work plan and shared staff in post.Feedback/approval rating is 95%.The range of events and programs are reviewed via specific strategy meetings with divisional director of research services and via ECRN steering group and ECR LF reporting to RIEC.RLI has shown significant growth with 28 applicants in 2023, compared to 22 in 2021/22. RLI funding has been increased to 30k (33% increase).The Images of Research competition was continued in 2022 (post-pandemic) with 30 images submitted and a dedicated 3 month exhibition on campus. Online introduction to research, entrepreneurial practice, governance, compliance, GDPR and research integrity at Exeter was completed and online September 2018, when the ePDR process was implemented. This has been complimented by the new bespoke ECR Induction events. |
| PCDI5 Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this. | Seek to provide a range of secondment and shadowing opportunities and employer cafes to support researchers moving between jobs and sectors.Explore potential for GW4 collaboration with this.Continue to support DTC/P provision as appropriate Co-ordinate the preparation work ahead of the AHRC rebid process in 2019/20, working effectively with Research Support, Colleges and external partners.Work with IIB to strengthen the industry focus of PGR activity including externally funded studentships and programmesTo continue develop the LTHE Programme to meet the needs of ECRs who teach and/ or support learning across all campuses. Provide regular data to colleges to ensure all development opportunities are taken up and spaces taken.Encourage and support those undertaking LTHE and ASPIRE programmes for career development | Reflect the diverse range of skills and knowledge brought to the university via the review of The Exeter Academic. LTHE uptake remains equal or increases.Evidence of progression seen for those qualifying from ASPIRE/LTHE programmes to show how it supports career development.Explore the APP Researcher strand.  | HR/AD/DCMG/PD/GSE | Monitored Annually by end of August ‘23July 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | As part of the research culture action plans the range of opportunities is being reviewed.LTHE program became roll on/roll off enrolment for an online program during the pandemic restrictions. During this time enrolment went up compared to pre-pandemic levels (536 vs. 370), but completion went down (<80 vs. ~250 for unit 2). This course is going back to face to face only for terms 1 and 2 in 2023/24, with an online option in term 3, uptake and completion will be monitored. 248 PGRs registered for LTHE in the 2022/23 year, with (at the time of reporting) 130 completing unit 1 and 50 unit 2. ECR numbers are not robustly counted but it is thought that between 50-60 registered.The total number of PGRs becoming postgraduate teaching assistants in 2021/22 was 684, so far this year it is 661.Since 2021 we are now one of very few universities that deliver the academic apprenticeship program (APP) that includes a researcher focus (APP researcher strand).  |
| PCDI6 Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities, and researcher career development reviews. | Report and analyse engagement and feedback of researchers (PGR, R and E&R) from all development activities.Also via the ECR Liaison Forums, to consider future directions of the development programmes as part of the annual reviews of the Researcher Development Provision.To develop and an Action Plan for Researcher Development and ECR related activities from ‘extraordinary’ meetings of the ECR LFs and from a newly formed ECRN Steering Group.Continue to support RD&RC Ops Group for the PGR and ECR programmes.To present the revised and updated plan to the Doctoral College Management Group and to RIEG for approval.To continue to support our sector leading ECR representation on strategic boards. | Enhance engagement and inclusivity in our ECR community via the ECR LFs and the use of the ‘Researcher-led Initiatives’ and ‘Research Culture’ funding and support.To continue to pilot networking opportunities, for e.g. Doctoral College ‘coffee mornings’, and enhance and develop our blog and social media presence.Maintain and grow engagements with our ECR-led initiatives.Continue to increase the ECR presence on the DC enhanced blog and social media.Development of programmes and initiatives to be monitored annually by ECR LFs, the DCSB and RIEG and reviewed at the Concordat SG. See Actions in PDI1 above. | RS/DC/RD&RC/HR | July 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.OngoingMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | RLI’s and ECRLFs have all continued to be well supported as described elsewhere (PCDI4 & ECR5).Regular PGR Coffee, Cake & Conversation sessions are now offered – these face-to-face community-building events take place monthly each highlighting a specific topic.We continue to support Ops groups for the PGR and ECR programs. We have new PGR board and RIEC meetings, 3 times year (these RIEC meetings are bespoke for PGR and ECRs, supported by pre-meetings with the dean of DC and DVC research).See progress in PCDI1 above. |
| **3.2 Managers of researchers**  |
| PCDM1 Engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually. | Provide suitable training (PCDI2 above).Monitor uptake and feedback from training and formal processes (ER3 above). | See Actions in EI5 above. | HR/PD | New PDR process and recommendations in place by March 2022Monitored during 2023 | See EI5 action above. |
| 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. | Provide career conversations training (beyond that identified in PCDM1, above).Encourage managers to signpost opportunities. | Monitor and report on take-up of these services by research staff.Ensure training for managers includes careers and related support.See Actions in EM3 above | HR/PD | Ongoing July 2022 | See above progress in PCDI3 and EM3. |
| 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. | Ensure principle is enshrined in training and support, including on service providers websites and Exeter Academic.Explore how this is balanced as part of SWARM allocations. | Explore how this can best be incorporated into the review of The Exeter Academic. | HR/ Exeter Academic | Throughout reporting period 2021-2023 | Being reviewed as part of research culture action planning. Which will be incorporated into the annual research monitoring exercise. This requirement is regularly raised with research managers and there is bespoke training planned.We will support the adoption of recommendations from the 2022/23 Workload Allocation Review for our E&R researchers and review these outcomes to explore the impact on R only researchers.In the newly developed TNA tool for our PGRs there is a specific question relating to the 10 day allocation. This data will be monitored as part of the annual research monitoring process and fed back to supervisors via DoPGRs. We hope this proactive mechanism will ensure PGRs are allocated the minimum 10 days.A similar suggestion will be fed into the PDR review group for ECRs. |
| 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 PCDM1 and PCDM2. Ensure this training supports managers to signpost relevant training and encourage useful conversations. | Promote opportunities to research staff as set out in The Leadership Landscape via PDR discussions. Ensure leadership is credited in Exeter Academic Review. | HR/PD/Exeter Academic | Throughout reporting period 2021-2023 | See progress in PCDM1 and PCDM2.2021 CEDARS:‘your manager encourages you to engage in personal and career development’ 76% (up 2% from 2020 and above national average of 73%). |
| PCDM5 Engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development. | See EI4 above. | See Action in E14 above. | HR/PD | Ongoing July 2022 | See progress in EI4 |
| **3.3 Researchers** |
| PCDR1Take 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. | 1-2-1 Careers coaching for ECRs and dedicated training sessions and online materials for ECRs and PGRs.Business case is currently being made for a dedicated PGR Careers Consultant post to compliment our bespoke ECR Careers Coach.See PCD1 above. | Reviews into this provision are regular and (see PCDI6 above) ongoing and regularly report back to the DCSB, REIG and are feed into and respond to the ECR LFs, from the ECRNS. | DC/RD&RC/HR | OngoingMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | Dedicated 1-to-1 support is supplemented with our **‘Career Development Essentials’**, which take researchers through all stages of the career development cycle.PGR 1-to-1 coaching appointments - August 2022 - 1 June 2023 - 130 attended (2 day post) ECR 1-to-1 coaching appointments – September 2022 – April 2023 – 40 attended (1 day post)Business case was successful. Now in post till 2024 at 0.6 FTE. With aim to make permanent. |
| 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 PCDI3 and PCDI5 above. | See PCDI3 and PCDI5 above. | HR/AD/DCMG | OngoingMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | See progress in PCDI3 and PCDI5 |
| 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. | Provide guidance on career planning and CPD recording. | Ensure provision and monitor uptake. | PD/AD/DCMG | OngoingMonitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meeting. | Provision of this continues and further details are provided in the actions above (PCDR1, PCDI3). |
| PCDR4 Positively engage in career development reviews with their managers. | Monitor engagement through various sources (CEDARS, networks, Concordat SG etc).Analyse data from surveys independently and together to identify trends / areas for improvement, develop written action plan.Involve all colleges to continuously inform our action plan and future developments to encourage meaningful career development reviews. | CEDARS survey carried out with aim to achieve 25% response rate 2021. Improve on scores across the board compared to the previous surveys in 2020.To investigate if a business case can be made for a dedicated PGR Careers Consultant post to compliment our bespoke ECR Careers Coach (see PCDI6 above) | DC/RS/HR  | June 2021 – surveys completed and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Data analysed for individual surveys by end August 2021 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Action planning and areas for action identified January 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Monitor actions arising at 6 monthly Concordat SG meetings | The response rate for CEDARS 2021 was 26% (above target). Data analysis shows improvement in many areas as well as a few areas that have slipped. CEDARS 2023 had a response rate of 31% but has not yet been analysed. Colleges (now faculties) are being involved via research culture workshops and action plans. As above (progress in PCDR1) a careers coach has been recruited.  |
| PCDR5 Seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills. | Monitor engagement in development opportunities and feedback from these (see PCDI6 above).Maintain our high levels of participation of the applicants from Exeter on the new GW4 Crucible for ECRs. | Active participation of at c. 20% of the applicants from Exeter on the new GW4 Crucible for ECRs | DC/RS/HR | Feb 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period. | Out of 30 admitted across GW4 we had the following participate:2021 - 13 2022 - 11 2023 - 9 The reduction in numbers reflect a rebalance of GW4 crucible admissions procedure based on a model from Exeter but is still above the 20% target in all years.  |
| 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. | Ensure development opportunities include these items (see PCDI4 above).Ensure that all researchers have equality of opportunity to submit output to external exercise, e.g. REF.Both ECRs and PGRs are able to access teaching opportunities and bespoke support training which can lead to fellowship of the HEA, up to ‘Senior’ level.Continue to deliver writing facilitation and Brilliant Club.The cohorts can also access ‘Researcher-led Initiatives’ (RLI’s) which consists of bespoke funding for peer development or networking activities. This gives our researchers an early chance at applying for a small amount of funding within a safe environment to help develop support activities for themselves, their peers and the wider community. | Developments in the strategic representation of ECRs at the University are monitored and enhanced with representation on an increasing number of strategic boards, e.g. Concordat SG, Positive Working Group, ED&I and Exeter Academic SG.To maintain the level of commitment to training to teaching, access to funding for RLI’s and the ability to obtain HEA fellowship. | RD&RC/RS/PD | July 2022 and ongoing throughout the reporting period.Ongoing | A comprehensive range of development opportunities have continued to be delivered as part of a bespoke RS/IIB essentials program. There has been a small reduction in the variety of courses (8 to 5) due to restructuring. Public engagement training was offered twice in 2022 and will be continued. 3 ECR dedicated policy development and engagement training sessions were run in 2022.REF has not happened in this period but we are reflecting on rules from 2020. We are also planning to run focused activities with REF panellists giving talks to departments on what REF is and how it is assessed. These are open to all research staff.ECRs can draw on public engagement funds, knowledge exchange translational funds and knowledge exchange culture funds.Ongoing access to teaching opportunities via LTHE program and collaboration with external organisations, e.g. the brilliant club. RLI funding has been increased to 30k (33% increase).Exbiblio and Shut Up and Write development opportunities have proved to be extremely supportive during the pandemic, fostering a community of support. |

**Glossary of terms and abbreviations**

1. ECR – Early career researcher (defined as research only staff on pay grades E-G)
2. PGR – postgraduate researcher
3. AD – Academic Development team, led by Manager of Academic Development, Dr Gillian Auld
4. ADR – Associate Dean for Research (per Academic College)
5. CB – Cate Bennett, Research and Research Culture Developer, in RD team
6. CRB – Head of People Development, Dr Clive Betts
7. CW – Head of Researcher Development & Research Culture, Dr Chris Wood
8. DC – Doctoral College. Led by the Head of Research Services/Doctoral College, Drs. Astrid Wissenburg
9. DCMG – Doctoral College Management Group
10. DCSB – Doctoral College Strategic Board
11. DPGR – Director of Postgraduate Research (per Academic Dept)
12. EASG – Exeter Academic Steering Group (Chaired by DVC Education)
13. ECR LF – ECR Liaison Forums
14. ECRN – Early Career Researcher Networks
15. EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (a team within HR)
16. EES – Employee Engagement Survey
17. ESE – Education and Student Experience HR - Human Resources
18. HR – Human Resources (HR Services)
19. KLP – Kelly Louise Preece, PGR Developer, in RD team
20. PD – People Development, led by the Head of People Development, Dr Clive Betts
21. PDDG – People Development Directors Group (Chaired by Director of Research Services)
22. RD – Researcher Development & Research Culture, led by Head of Researcher Development & Research Culture, Dr Chris Wood
23. RD&RC Ops Group – Researcher Development and Research Culture Operational Group (Head of Research Services, Dean of Doctoral College, Head of RD&RC, Head of PD, RD&RC team)
24. REG – Research Ethics and Governance, led by their Manager, Gail Seymour
25. RIEG – Research and Impact Executive Group (Chaired by DVC Research & Impact), this is now RIEC - Research and Impact Executive Committee
26. PGR LF – PGR liaison forums
27. DVC – Deputy Vice Chancellor
28. RIME - Research & Impact Management Environment
29. IIB – Innovation, Impact & Business
30. LTHE – Learning & Teaching in Higher Education
31. RLI – Researcher led initiatives
32. DoPGRs – Directors of PGRs
33. DORI – Directors of research & impact
34. R&I – Research and Impact
35. WICC – Wellbeing, inclusion and culture committe