# University of Birmingham
## Researcher Concordat Action Plan 2015 – 17 Revised April16

The University's new Strategic Framework recognises that "We have created a research environment where academic rigour, innovation, and delivery are made possible by brilliant people, outstanding facilities and strong collaborative networks. Our goal now is to do more and better research". It goes on to state "Our staff and students are our greatest resource: their success is our success. Their work and achievements are rooted in the University's vibrant intellectual environment, and we focus our resources on building, maintaining and enhancing the environment."

The strategy identifies the need to focus on
- Attracting, retaining and celebrating talented staff
- Growing leadership capacity – specifically research leadership, including supervision of research students.
- Collaboration including working with other Universities.

The new HR Strategy supports these aims by focusing on recruiting, selecting and developing talent; supporting, managing and rewarding performance; developing and building leadership and management capacity; inclusivity and well-being.

Following our 4-year review, our revised plan seeks to support these organisational priorities, addresses areas for further development and builds on areas of strength.

The 2015 – 17 plan focuses on 4 key themes: -
- Enhancing the institutional commitment to the Concordat
- Developing research leadership
- Recruiting, developing and supporting talented research staff
- Equality & diversity

**Key actions are**
- To establish a more robust institutional framework to focus on developing our commitment to researcher support and development
- To continue to develop and deliver excellent leadership programmes and develop new opportunities that increase our leadership capacity and capability
- To establish cross University resources to identify, develop and promote best practice in local researcher development.
- Driven by CROS 2015 data, to identify and deliver programmes that meet development requirements of research staff
- To increase involvement of RS in developing and evaluating Concordat related activity
- To meet and exceed institutional Equality & Diversity targets.

UoB RSConcordatPlan2015-17Revised April 16

| Key Area of Focus / Action | Key Principle | Success Measure | By When | Who |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Institutional support for and monitoring of Concordat implementation**<br>It is recognised that more robust and formal structures would enhance our ability to meet the Concordat principles including increased involvement of RS in development and evaluation activity. | 5,7 | | | |
| 1. The University Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee is now formally committed to regular review of RS development and support and progress against Concordat action plans. Formal reporting of Concordat related issues and progress against actions will take place twice per year. | | Change to ToR approved by Senate | April 2016 | PCV R&KT |
| | | Initial report & update received | Sept 2016 | |
| 2. Establish an operational working group to manage the day to day commitments to the Concordat. Membership to include<br>• Academic and Post-Doctoral representatives from each College<br>• Representatives from relevant central professional services departments e.g. HR, Research Support, Strategic Planning.<br>Group to meet termly | | Reps. identified | May 2016 | PVC R&KT / POD / Colleges |
| | | Initial meeting | June 2016 | |
| | | Termly meetings | Sept '16 – Aug '17 | |
| | | | | |
| **Research Leadership & Management**<br>Effective leadership and management are critical to our success. We will deepen the reservoir of ability in this area. | 1,3,4 | | | |
| Continue to develop and deliver existing leadership programmes. | | | | |
| 3. 1 x Senior Leadership Programme per year<br>3 x Emerging Leadership Programmes per year<br>1 x Developing as a Research Team Leader per year | | • Programmes run at 90% capacity<br>• Participants report changes to personal leadership & management practice and performance | Annually to August 2017 | POD |
| 4. Evaluate each programme to determine reaction, behaviour change and impact. | | | August 2017 | POD |
| 5. Pilot a management programme for new College Board members to deploy the essential "nuts and bolts" of good subject leadership and management skills | | | September 2015 | POD |
| 6. Pilot new Research Leadership Programme | | | June 2016 | POD |

| | Recruitment, development and support of talented research staff | 1,2,3,4,5 | | | |
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| | While there has been some success in establishing local researcher development groups there remains inconsistency and duplication in activities. The project launched in September 2015 is underway to identify and share best practice in local researcher support & development across Colleges; coordinate local and central initiatives; establish local researcher development groups where they do not currently exist; identify, promote and implement new central researcher development activity; support local groups to develop and deliver local development programmes. This project is driven by RS input and feedback to local groups feeding in to the new Operational Working Group; formal evaluation of existing activity; further detailed review of CROS and locally generated data. Initial areas to be explored will be induction, researcher learning & development priorities and PDR engagement. | | | | |
| 7. | Project allocated to individual POD Consultant | | • Staff member allocated | September 2015 | POD |
| 8. | CROS analyses presented to College leadership | | • College actions identified | January 2016 | POD |
| 9. | Identify and address causes of RS not participating in annual PDR | | • 80% RS having annual PDR | August 2017 | POD / College |
| **Induction** | | | | | |
| 10. | Investigate causes of RS reporting that they are "not offered" central induction | | • Reduce to 5% RS report "not offered" central induction | August 2017 | POD |
| **Learning & Development** | | | | | |
| 11. | Identify College RS learning & development priorities via CROS data and consultation | | • Top 3 priorities identified | January 2016 | POD / College |
| 12. | Central programme on researcher career development piloted | | • 95% capacity<br>• 80% recommend | July 2016 | POD |
| 13. | 1 additional centrally delivered researcher development programme piloted | | • 95% capacity<br>• 80% recommend | July 2017 | POD |

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| 14. | Evaluation of CMDS annual researcher development programme | | • 80% recommend<br>• Participants report changes to personal leadership & management practice and performance | Sept 2016 | POD / CMDS |
| 15. | Local annual programme of research staff focused development established in 4 of 5 Colleges | | • Annual attendance 30% of RS population | July 2017 | Colleges |
| **Research staff support networks** | | | | | |
| 16. | College RS development groups established in 4 of 5 Colleges | | • Termly committee meetings<br>• Local development programme in place | October 2016 | Colleges |
| 17. | New RS information web-portal available to all researchers | | | January 2016 | RIS |
| **Equality & Diversity**<br>Our aim is that all staff are treated with dignity and afforded respect as key aspects of their wellbeing. We will build on existing success in this area. | | 2,6 | | | |
| 18. | Remaining 3 STEMM Schools to obtain Athena Swan awards | | • Award obtained | May 2016 | |
| 19. | STEMM Schools to seek renewal or enhanced Athena Swan award as appropriate | | • Award obtained | Ongoing | |
| 20. | CAL / CoSS to seek Gender Equality Charter Recognition | | • Award obtained | Commencing 2015 | Colleges |
| 21. | 1 cohort undergo Aurora programme | | • 90% completion | August 2016 | POD |
| 22. | Appointment of an additional member of HR team focused on the staff equality agenda | | • New employee appointed | December 2015 | HRLT |
| 23. | Revised institutional Equality Plan | | • Plan published | December 2015 | UoB |
| **Evaluation of action plan** | | 5,7 | Robust evaluation data including feedback | Ongoing | Working Group |

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| Research staff have already provided feedback on this plan and will continue to do this via the Operational Working Group (Action 2). The working group will coordinate overall evaluation including the specific input from RS.<br>CROS survey and other internal systems will provide specific evaluation data<br>Dedicated project resource (Action 6) will manage local evaluation activity via local support and development groups. This will feed in to the working group. | | from RS informs future action plans | |
| 24. Birmingham will take part in CROS 2017 | | • 35% participation | April 2017 | |

**Glossary**

CAL – College of Arts and Law

College – Principle academic organisational unit within the University of Birmingham

CMDS – College of Medical & Dental Sciences

CoSS – College of Social Sciences

CROS – Careers in Research On-line Survey (national researcher survey)

HR – Human Resources

HRLT – HR Leadership Team

PDR – Performance Development Review scheme.

POD – People and Organisational Development. Team within University HR Department

PVC – Pro-Vice-Chancellor

R&KT – Research & Knowledge Transfer

RS – Research Staff

RIS – Research Innovation Services

STEMM – Science Technology Engineering Mathematics and Medicine

ToR – Terms of Reference

UoB – University of Birmingham