

University of Oxford HR Excellence in Research Award

Four-year review report

How the internal evaluation was undertaken

During the period of the review the University has built excellent communication lines with our research staff body and the evaluation has made full use of these. Oxford has a range of committees which seek to be inclusive and representative in their membership. This report has been written under the aegis of the Research Staff Working Group whose membership includes Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Personnel and Equality and for Research, senior representatives from each of the academic divisions, representation from both the Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) and the UCU, and officers from a broad range of services which support researchers. Detailed consultation on this report has been undertaken with key groups, in particular:

- OxRSS consultation event, June 2015
- Code of Practice Implementation Group meeting, October 2015. The Group includes divisional skills trainers, OxRSS co-chairs and divisional reps, and others working on researcher development from the Oxford Learning Institute, the Careers Service, Personnel, and on Athena SWAN in divisions
- OxRSS reps meeting, November 2015

The review is also linked with Athena SWAN work: the several actions in the previous action plan that form part of the Athena SWAN institutional action plan have been assessed as part of a mid-term review of our Athena SWAN work; and liaison throughout has taken place with Athena SWAN Co-ordinators in the Equality and Diversity Unit and in divisions to ensure that the two agendas are interlinked where appropriate. A similar process will be undertaken from summer 2016 to take into account Oxford's application to the Race Equality Charter Mark and institutional Athena SWAN renewal, and actions added if appropriate.

We have also drawn upon several surveys, in particular the culture change surveys of all research and academic staff in two divisions, covering roughly half of our research staff, as well as departmental level Athena SWAN surveys and the yearly HR audit. We are currently running a single staff survey (to replace CROS, PIRLS, and other staff experience surveys), as we believe we will obtain more useful and more nuanced results. This will be analysed from a researcher development perspective, including by relevant protected characteristics, over summer 2016 and the results used to inform actions that will be added to this action plan, as necessary.

Key achievements and progress

Comparison against the original and two-year action plans shows excellent progress: all the actions have been completed or are underway. Much of the practice introduced and developed in the early stages of Concordat implementation is now embedded and part of normal business; it is also much less a standalone activity than one linked holistically with other initiatives such as Athena SWAN. A marked cultural shift has seen embedded and proactive researcher development specifically, and attention to staff experience more widely, become the norm rather than the exception. The full action plan, including success against KPIs, can be viewed at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/resstaff/hrexcellence. Key achievements over the last two years include:

Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) (Concordat principles 1, 2, 4, 5)

OxRSS, launched with the support of the Research Staff Working Group, and with start-up funding and championing at the highest level of the University, has progressed from its foundation three years ago to a flourishing, self-sustaining society with its own website (www.oxrss.ox.ac.uk), Facebook page, and LinkedIn group. It runs regular social and professional events and has representation on key University and divisional committees, including Research Committee and Research Staff Working Group, ensuring researchers' voices are heard at the highest levels of University governance.

Research staff peer mentoring scheme (Concordat principles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Following a successful pilot in January 2014, in 2015 peer mentoring circles for research staff were rolled out across Medical Sciences Division. A senior mentor is matched with three or four mentees, all from different departments, to provide networking opportunities, a fresh perspective, and a space to consider personal and professional development with the support of colleagues. 86% of the 55 mentees taking part in the pilot said they would recommend it to a colleague, and 70 mentees are enrolled in the current iteration of the scheme, which will continue to run on a yearly basis.

Researcher Connections workshops (Concordat principles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)

As part of our commitment to a coherent offering from recruitment to exit, we have initiated a new, centrally run series of workshops under the banner *Researcher Connections*. These build on the introductory Welcome Event for Research Staff by providing further opportunities for researchers to connect: opportunities for networking, for accessing support for researchers across the University, and for connecting research with other disciplines, with the public, those who make use of research, and with a range of potential careers. 60 researchers attended *Managing people and projects in a research context* in July, and 45 attended *Balancing family and a research career* in October, with more events planned over the year.

Principal Investigators' programmes (Concordat principles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)

These programmes support PIs in developing confidence as leaders and managers. In addition to delivering programmes at Oxford, research staff at all levels, (early career to PI) have taken part in research leaders' programmes in our overseas units in Kenya, Vietnam and Thailand.

Personal Development Review (Concordat principles 2, 3, 4, 5)

Rising from 52% in 2012, in 2014 70% of those departments which employ researchers had PDR schemes in place. With PDR now mandatory for all contract research staff in Medical Sciences Division, it can be expected that the 2016 survey of staff will show a further rise in availability of PDR. MPLS Division has recently introduced mandatory career development plans, which must be completed by postdocs and their PIs.

Divisional and departmental training (Concordat principles 2, 3, 4)

University-wide initiatives to support researchers are complemented by a raft of training and support delivered locally: for more detail of the extensive researcher support in divisions please see their webpages (linked at www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/personal-and-professional-development/training-and-workshops). Highlights include: in Humanities, an AHRC-TORCH Public Engagement Summer School (www.torch.ox.ac.uk/ahrc-torch-public-engagement-summer-school); in Social Sciences, a high profile seminar series 'Impact and Knowledge Exchange in an Evolving Research Environment' (www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/research/impact-and-knowledge-exchange-seminar); in Medical Sciences a regular lunchtime seminar with speakers showcasing careers outside academia; and in MPLS an ECR Forum with representatives from all departments and an associated mandatory career development plan for all postdocs.

Training for all staff has also been updated to pay more attention to unconscious bias and equality and diversity issues, meaning that recruitment and selection practice is more likely to lead to recruiting from the best possible pool of researchers.

Single survey for all staff (Concordat principle 7)

The introduction of a single survey for all University staff will provide an efficient and coherent mechanism to monitor progress and to ensure that future initiatives continue to address the needs of researchers. Taking the principles of CROS and PIRLS (including some specific questions) and combining them with other staff experience questions will allow us to identify holistic and nuanced areas for attention that is commensurate with the diverse and multifaceted nature of our research staff. See www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/staffexperiencesurvey.

Returning Carers' Fund (Concordat principles 1, 2, 6)

Introduced in 2015, the Fund allocates small grants of c.£5k to support return to research following a break of at least six months for caring responsibilities. Awards have been made to 89 staff to date. Evaluation is underway but the scheme has been greeted extremely positively and has had both concrete impact (successful fellowship and grant applications, contract extensions, publications, greater visibility of research, new research collaborations) and is also viewed as a signal of the University's support for those with caring responsibilities.

Progress by Concordat principle

Reflecting on actions identified in the two-year review and with reference to the original action plan, including indicators and metrics where appropriate

- See action plan linked at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/resstaff/hrexcellence and key achievements outlined above.

Strategy for the next four years

Context

As is evident in our updated action plan and the highlights above, researcher development is embedded extensively in our policies and practice. Our continuing work aims to ensure that this is sustained and equitable: the strategy set out below focuses on ensuring that all researchers can benefit from the widespread good practice across all principles of the Concordat. The strategy is therefore underpinned by existing equality initiatives (addressing policy and structure across the University) and specific objectives to equip individuals and departments to continue to provide excellent support for researchers.

A holistic approach that takes into account equality work is particularly germane to supporting researchers. Research staff are our largest staff group (just over one-third of all staff) and are the most diverse group in the University: women make up 45% and Black and Minority Ethnic researchers 16% of this group. While celebrating the impact of the Concordat in ensuring that research staff are recognised and valued as a distinctive group, the context has developed from one in which researcher development is a unique strand of work to one which is increasingly embedded into everyday practice. Our wider strategic objectives in this area are therefore relevant to the researcher development agenda. Athena SWAN has been a particular driver: although its main focus is on the career progression of women, it has encouraged systematic examination of departmental culture, policy and practice, and has had a strong impact on researchers. All of our departments in MPLS and MSD, which between them employ around 85% of the University's research staff, have achieved Athena SWAN awards: 18 at Silver and nine at Bronze. It is anticipated that the commitment of our Social Sciences and Humanities departments to apply to the expanded Athena SWAN Charter, and our engagement with the Race Equality Charter Mark at institutional level, will

further reinforce this. Our new staff experience survey will enable us to take into account these intersections and pay attention to the particular needs of research staff in context.

Within an overall framework of policies and procedures determined by the University, the academic divisions and departments are responsible for setting their own research priorities and managing their resources with support provided by the central University, including recruiting, managing, and developing researchers. In addition, departments' engagement with the Athena SWAN initiative means that policies, processes, and culture are being examined for all staff, and this local ownership is where much of the practice that goes towards achieving these objectives is situated. This strategy and action plan therefore focus on institutional level policy and initiatives which complement the support at local level underpinned by departmental and divisional researcher development strategies in their particular contexts.

Vision:

To enable a context and culture in which all research staff (and, by extension, all staff) have the best possible experience of Oxford while they are here and are in the best position at the end of their contract to move on to their next step.

Objectives:

To create this context and culture we will focus on four key areas. Actions that will contribute towards these objectives are given in the associated two-year action plan; relevant commitments from the University's Strategic Plan 2013-2018 are cross-referenced in the boxes. Progress towards these objectives will be evaluated by means of the success measures against the actions that comprise them, for which please see the two-year action plan.

1. Representation (Concordat principles 2,5,7)

To build on OxRSS' presence on departmental and divisional committees, and to create new and strengthen existing links with key personnel and groups within departments; and to ensure cohesion between these mechanisms so that researchers' voices have influence at all levels of the University.

2. Transparency and equality of opportunity (Concordat principles 2,3,4,5,6)

To ensure that all researchers are aware of departmental, divisional and University policies relating to eligibility for grant applications, teaching opportunities, research strategies, and other career and professional development opportunities, and have equal access to and support for taking advantage of them; or that where access is limited that this is communicated proactively and transparently.

University Strategic Plan

- **Research Commitment 1 (item 21)** we will provide appropriate training in research methods and conduct at all career stages from research student to principal investigator
- **Personnel Commitment 11** To work towards an increasingly diverse staff profile (item 56). We aim to develop an increasingly diverse staffing profile through both recruitment and career development (items 58 and 59 in full)
- **Vision: Aspiration 3G** to recruit and retain the best academic staff and ensure that under-represented groups have equality of opportunity in recruitment, personal development and career progression in all areas of employment in the University.

3. Management and leadership (Concordat principles 1,2,3,4,6)

To equip all PIs and research supervisors to be confident and competent both as managers and leaders in recruiting, managing, and developing researchers, for equitable and good practice and to support individual researchers in developing in their roles and careers.

University Strategic Plan

- **Research Commitment 3 (item 24)** training the research leaders of the future

4. Parity of experience (Concordat principles 2,6,7)

While acknowledging the differing needs and contexts locally, to share and encourage good practice across departments in the areas above, so that the experience of a University of Oxford researcher is excellent wherever that individual is based, and whatever their gender, ethnicity, or other characteristics.

University Strategic Plan

- **Personnel Commitment 12** To develop all staff to enhance their effectiveness and contribution to the University's goals (item 60), the University will strengthen support arrangements for all groups of staff, including courses for personal and professional development, mentoring and the use of regular opportunities to review progress and promote career development

HR Excellence in Research Award Updated 2012-16 action plan

Glossary:

EDU – Equality and Diversity Unit (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop)

HT – Hilary Term (Spring term)

MPLS – Mathematics, Physical, and Life Sciences Division (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk)

MSD – Medical Sciences Division

MT – Michaelmas Term (Autumn term)

OLI – Oxford Learning Institute (www.learning.ox.ac.uk)

OxRSS – Oxford Research Staff Society (www.oxrss.ox.ac.uk)

RECM – Race Equality Charter Mark

RSWG – Research Staff Working Group

TT – Trinity Term (Summer term)

This action plan resulted from the initial gap analysis against the Concordat in 2012 and details the programme of work planned and carried out during the period 2012-16. The table presented here shows the action plan as originally submitted for the HR Excellence in Research Award in January 2012, the updates made in 2014 when the award was renewed, and in green, updates as of January 2016.

All the actions we identified have been either completed, or are underway, and the plan has been regularly reviewed as part of an embedded consultative and evaluative approach: we are therefore confident that the measures we identified in order to implement the Concordat will have had a positive impact. At the time of the 2014 review, it had been intended to draw quantitative data for some of the success measures from the 2015 CROS and PIRLS survey (hence references such as “PIRLS 2015”). However, it was subsequently decided to replace CROS and PIRLS with a new Oxford-specific staff survey whose first set of results will be ready analysis in summer 2016. Some measures have therefore been annotated “% tbc”, since the data required will not be available until the completion of the survey later this year. Measures will be added to the plan and uploaded as soon as they are available. For more information on the survey please see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/staffexperiencesurvey.

| Action | Description | Lead | Progress and comments | Timescale | Success measure (where applicable) |
|---------|--|------|---|--|--|
| 1.2 | Equality and diversity training for REF Unit of Assessment co-ordinators. | EDU | Training complete, and positively evaluated, with supplementary sessions for new appointees run in MT2012 and HT2013. | Completed | The Equality Impact Assessment of the REF showed no differences in the likelihood of members of different groups of staff being selected – including ECRs. |
| 2.3 | Online guidance for PIs to support PDR of research staff to be supplemented by new materials, such as a toolkit for supporting research staff development based on existing guidance . | OLI | Online material developed: to be uploaded Spring 2014. 2016: <i>Guide to PDR for PIs and Guide to PDR for research staff</i> uploaded to OLI website (www.learning.ox.ac.uk/pdr/resources) | Spring 2014 Complete | Number of downloads of online guidance: 200 downloads from PDR page Increased % of PIs saying they are confident conducting PDR (PIRLS 2015): % tbc |
| 3.3(i) | Continue work on incorporating the Researcher Development Statement into existing web presence, to increase visibility and to allow effective use. | USG | 2014: Work is ongoing via a working group of key stake-holders (including divisions, OLI, Careers Service and Personnel Services). We participated in Vitae's free pilot of the Planner: we will promote the Planner to departments while exploring alternative ways of engaging research staff with the RDF. 2016: The Humanities Division is developing an App allowing researchers to access the Researcher Training Tool, an interactive skills training planner that links to a development plan and available training and resources. | April 2016 | Improved visibility of RDF online: The RDF is linked on the PDR page of the Support for Researchers website (www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/personal-and-professional-development/personal-development-review) and has a dedicated page on the intranet portal where divisional courses are displayed. |
| 3.3(ii) | Researcher Development Officer | RD | 2014: RDO conducted research into research | Complete | |

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| | and Code of Practice Implementation Group to continue to explore ways of promoting the Researcher Development Statement by working with Vitae and with other institutions and organisations at a national level, and liaising with divisions and departments. | O | staff's perceptions of the Researcher Development Framework, via a 9-month project comprising questionnaires and focus groups. 13 research staff participated, with representatives of all divisions except SSD and the results have been fed into a cross divisional working group. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | RD O | <p><i>New action (2014):</i> In response to the findings of the research, actions have included developing an Introduction to the RDF workshop (piloted so far in one Medical Sciences department, will comprise part of the training for mentees in the pilot mentoring scheme, and which will, from February 2014, be offered as part of the Welcome Event for Research Staff).</p> <p>2016: Now included as part of the termly Welcome Event for Research Staff as optional session.</p> <p>Four workshops have been run in MSD for Athena SWAN departments; the RDF is included as part of mentee scheme training (cf action 4.5).</p> | Complete | <p>No. of depts. requesting workshop: Four workshops have been run in MSD in 2015</p> <p>Feedback from Welcome Event: 100% of Welcome Event attendees responding to the evaluation say they would recommend it to a colleague.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.6 | Continue to ensure promotion of induction activities is as effective as possible via reviewing and maintaining communications strategies. | OLI | <p>2014: A central aspect of induction is improved information about support available as well as improved resources: this will continue to be addressed via the revised communications strategy (see 5.6). Improvement in awareness of and perceived usefulness of induction has been outstanding:</p> <table><tr><td><i>Induction not offered</i></td><td><i>CROS 2009</i></td><td><i>CROS 2013</i></td></tr><tr><td>Local role</td><td>40%</td><td>22%</td></tr><tr><td>Department</td><td>51%</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>Institution</td><td>71%</td><td>27%</td></tr></table> | <i>Induction not offered</i> | <i>CROS 2009</i> | <i>CROS 2013</i> | Local role | 40% | 22% | Department | 51% | 25% | Institution | 71% | 27% | Ongoing | <p>% of new staff receiving induction to be updated from 2016 survey</p> |
| <i>Induction not offered</i> | <i>CROS 2009</i> | <i>CROS 2013</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local role | 40% | 22% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Department | 51% | 25% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institution | 71% | 27% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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|-------------|-----|---|---|--|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|--|--|
| | | | <div>Induction very useful/useful</div> <table><tr><td>Local role</td><td>39%</td><td>63%</td></tr><tr><td>Department</td><td>28%</td><td>48%</td></tr><tr><td>Institution</td><td>13%</td><td>35%</td></tr></table> <div>2016: figures will be added from the survey when available. Bookings for the Welcome Event for Research Staff are regularly over 100 – a significant rise on previous years – suggesting higher levels of engagement in induction activities.</div> | Local role | 39% | 63% | Department | 28% | 48% | Institution | 13% | 35% | | |
| Local role | 39% | 63% | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Department | 28% | 48% | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institution | 13% | 35% | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | OLI | <div>New action (2014): Induction for new research staff and the PIs who manage them is being revised as part of a wider University initiative to ensure new staff have the best possible induction experience, and the OLI is working on making guidance already available in the Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff more readily accessible as part of improved induction resource packages for researchers and PIs.</div> <div>2016: New page for researchers new to Oxford on revamped <i>Support for Researchers</i> webpage (including Code of Practice checklist): http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/new-oxford</div> <div>There are many departmental-level actions contributing to this action under Athena SWAN (for example on bullying and harassment and creating an inclusive environment for all staff) including training in MSD and some MPLS</div> | Complete | <div>Download/ requests for induction materials: 1,737 users of the 'New to Oxford' page of Support for Researchers website between 1 June 2015 and 2 December 2015</div> <div>Increased % of CROS respondents saying they received induction, and found it helpful: % tbc</div> | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | departments. PI induction materials under development | Hilary Term 2016 | |
| 3.9 | Continue to support departments and individuals in implementing PDR and encouraging those who do not have schemes to develop them. | OLI | <p>The OLI continues to work with departments to support them in implementing PDR, and is developing guidance specific to research staff (see 2.3), to be launched Spring 2014.</p> <p>2014: 70% of departments which employ researchers had a PDR scheme in 2014 (rising from 52% in 2012).</p> <p>2016: PDR is now mandatory for research staff in Medical Sciences Division; career development plans are mandatory for postdocs in MPLS Division and, across the University over 78% of departments either already carry out regular PDR for research staff (73%) or are actively in the process of introducing it (5%)</p> | Complete 2016 | <p>Increased % of research staff receiving PDR to a target of 80% in 2016 (Athena SWAN Action 3.2) 2015 Audit total 78%</p> <p>Increased % of PIs feel confident about conducting PDR %<i>tbc</i></p> |
| 4.5 | Continue to support and promote the Code of Practice/Concordat and specific opportunities to ensure PIs and RS are aware of the range of mentoring possibilities on offer. | OLI | Many departments are focusing on mentoring as part of their Athena SWAN action plans, so much of this action is being addressed at the local level. | Ongoing | Successful Athena SWAN applications: All science depts. have Athena SWAN awards: 18 Silver, 9 Bronze. |
| | | | <p><i>New action (2014):</i> Pilot divisional mentoring schemes in Medical Sciences and MPLS divisions (cf. Athena SWAN institutional action plan Action 3.3b).</p> <p>2016: Mentoring schemes have been piloted in MSD (55 mentees, 18 mentors across 6</p> | Spring 2014 Complete | <p>Mentoring circles established and evaluated: 86% of mentees said they would recommend it to a colleague. Scheme now rolled out with a new</p> |

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| | | | participating departments) and MPLS divisions (12 mentees, 4 mentors). Following the successful pilot the scheme has been rolled out across MSD, with 70 mentees and 16 mentors. Many departments also have their own local schemes. | | cohort each January. |
| 5.5 | Continue work to ensure that web presence clearly signposts the comprehensive support offered by the University to PIs and research staff in managing research staff careers. | OLI | <p>The Research Support page of the main University's website has now been revised to contain a comprehensive set of links of use to research staff, including Research Services, divisional training, and University-wide guidance and support: www.ox.ac.uk/supportforresearchers.</p> <p>Work is underway to develop the Support for Researchers webpage to be more user-friendly and accessible, with greater functionality. 2016: New Support for Researchers website launched (www.ox.ac.uk/supportforresearchers). Most Athena SWAN departments have revised their websites.</p> | Complete Complete | <p>Webpage revised and usage monitored for increased traffic: 12,661 users between 1 June 2015 from 31 December 2015, of whom 50% were return visitors</p> |
| 5.6 | Continue to provide support, particularly through work to implement PDR and promote the RDS, to enable research staff to pay attention to their career development. | OLI | <p>2014: See 3.9 for ongoing PDR implementation and 3.3 (ii) for RDF. CROS results were very encouraging in relation to research staff paying attention to their career development, with the percentage saying they are encouraged to undertake career and professional development rising substantially from 55% in 2009 to 69% in 2013.</p> <p>OxRSS' work to promote and encourage researchers to engage in professional development is complemented by a comprehensive communications strategy, including:</p> | Ongoing Ongoing | <p>Continued increase in numbers subscribing to mailing lists/ Twitter; requests for leaflet;</p> |

| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website (see 5.5 above) • Mailing list for research staff (currently 996 members) • Twitter account (1218 followers) • Research Staff Update monthly bulletin to staff supporting research staff (currently 60 members) • The Researcher Development Officer has been working with departments to produce bespoke briefings or attending departmental careers and/or social events (33 briefings/meetings in 2012-13) to raise awareness of the Concordat and Oxford's support for researchers. • Printed leaflet, distributed to departments Oct 2012; reprinted June 2013. Departments are including this as a key induction material with new researchers' contracts. • Use of other University communications channels (Springboard, Oxford Women's Network, Personnel Services) <p>Results from PIRLS institutional questions on awareness are testament to the effectiveness of the communications effort, shown below as % of PIs saying they are aware of the source of support:</p> <table> <tr> <th><i>Source</i></th> <th><i>PIRLS 2011 %</i></th> <th><i>PIRLS 2013 %</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td>Divisional</td> <td>66</td> <td>81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OLI</td> <td>87</td> <td>93</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Careers Service</td> <td>90</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IT Services</td> <td>98</td> <td>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Language Centre</td> <td>85</td> <td>87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Research Services</td> <td>95</td> <td>96</td> </tr> </table> | <i>Source</i> | <i>PIRLS 2011 %</i> | <i>PIRLS 2013 %</i> | Divisional | 66 | 81 | OLI | 87 | 93 | Careers Service | 90 | 95 | IT Services | 98 | 99 | Language Centre | 85 | 87 | Research Services | 95 | 96 | <p>depts requesting visits/info stands: 2304 Twitter followers; 1719 members of mailing list; regular slots at several departments' career days (e.g. Physics, Engineering)</p> <p>Increase in % of CROS and PIRLS 2015 respondents' awareness of support: %tbc</p> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------|----|----|-----|----|----|-----------------|----|----|-------------|----|----|-----------------|----|----|-------------------|----|----|---|
| <i>Source</i> | <i>PIRLS 2011 %</i> | <i>PIRLS 2013 %</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Divisional | 66 | 81 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OLI | 87 | 93 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Careers Service | 90 | 95 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IT Services | 98 | 99 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Language Centre | 85 | 87 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Research Services | 95 | 96 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | CROS awareness was also very encouraging, though there are no comparable questions in 2009 to measure improvement. | | |
| | | ED U and divs | <i>New action (2014) (Athena SWAN Action 3.5b):</i> Develop a series of case studies and interviews illustrating different career paths. This Athena action has the particular aim of supporting female research fellows to progress to University Lectureship positions, but will be of benefit to all research staff unsure of their career options. 2016: Funding to create an online repository of the experiences of women in science at Oxford has been awarded by the Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Fund, and is being carried out by the Department of Primary Care Health Sciences. | HT 2016 | Departmental Athena applications report higher levels of internal career progression: <i>tbc following Athena SWAN review</i> |
| | | ED U and OLI | <i>New action (2014) (Athena SWAN Action 3.5a):</i> Pilot a career development programme to identify and retain the most promising female postdocs. 2016: This action is being progressed via a project funded by the Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Fund, a scoping project with women researchers to identify the best means of support women researchers at Oxford to progress their careers, with the findings implemented as phase 2 of the project. | Report due TT 2016 | Pilot delivered and evaluated <i>Project underway</i> |
| 6.3 | Continue to support departments in MPLS and MSD in achieving Athena SWAN silver awards. | ED U | 2014: Significant progress is being made: To date, five departments have achieved a Silver award, and fifteen have been awarded Bronze. The remaining MSD and MPLS departments have established their self-assessment panels and are progressing with applications to be submitted by April 2014. Awareness of Athena SWAN amongst research staff is excellent, with 75% of CROS respondents being aware as | Complete | All STEM departments to achieve Athena SWAN silver awards by 2016: <i>All science depts. have Athena SWAN awards: 18 Silver, 9 Bronze.</i> Take-up of Gender Equality Charter Mark |

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| 7.4 | Continue to liaise with Vitae and other institutions and organisations to share, disseminate and implement practices to support researchers' development. | OLI | <p>2014: RDO has attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitae Policy Forum • Vitae's CROS/PIRLS Steering Group • Vitae International Researcher Development Conference <p>2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Excellence in Research event, Jan 2015 • CROS/PIRLS Steering Group • Researchers14 Group • US National Postdoc Association Annual Meeting, March 2015, and meetings at NYU, Harvard and MIT | Ongoing | |
| New action: | | | | | |
| 3.3(iii) | Promote and encourage leadership and management development for research staff and PIs | OLI | <p>PIRLS 2013 results indicate that Oxford PIs feel more valued than those in other Russell Group and UK-wide institutions with respect to developing research staff (68% vs 57%/58%) and managing research staff performance (63% vs 54%/52%).</p> <p>2016: Currently in development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online resource for PIs on developing their research staff that will include topics such as "What is development?", "Ways that staff can develop", "Personal development planning", and "Career conversations". • Online induction resource for PIs <p><i>Researcher Connections</i> workshop 'Managing people and projects in research context' ran July 2015, with 60 attendees.</p> | <p>Summer 2015</p> <p>HT-TT 2016 (carried over into new action plan)</p> | <p>Strategy for the Leadership and Management for Researchers developed and delivered: Strategy developed by OLI and approved by RSWG HT 2015</p> <p>Increased % of CROS and PIRLS respondents saying they are confident in management and leadership: %tbc</p> |

University of Oxford researcher development action plan: 2016-2018

Glossary:

EDU – Equality and Diversity Unit (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop)

HT – Hilary Term (Spring term)

MPLS – Mathematics, Physical, and Life Sciences Division (www.mpls.ox.ac.uk)

MSD – Medical Sciences Division

MT – Michaelmas Term (Autumn term)

OLI – Oxford Learning Institute (www.learning.ox.ac.uk)

OxRSS – Oxford Research Staff Society (www.oxrss.ox.ac.uk)

RECM – Race Equality Charter Mark

RSWG – Research Staff Working Group

TT – Trinity Term (Summer term)

This table sets out only new or extended activities relating to researcher development. It does not seek to provide an overview of the extensive work already underway (see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/staffinfo/resstaff/hrexcellence and www.ox.ac.uk/supporttforresearchers). It also focuses on actions at institutional level: there is a plethora of support at departmental and divisional level that it would be impractical to include here. We therefore focus our action plan on higher level policy and initiatives that overarch and complement local practice.

The success of a number of actions will be measured by the University of Oxford Staff Experience Survey (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/inpractice/staffexperiencesurvey), results of which will be available in summer 2016. CROS and PIRLS 2013 results are referenced here wherever possible to indicate a benchmark that we are aiming to outperform (these are indicative only since the questions do not always directly correspond). Where CROS and PIRLS results are not available, benchmarks will be added from the new survey in summer 2016. Questions from the new survey are referenced.

| Aim | Action | Lead | Comments/ timescale | Success measure |
|--|--|-------|---|---|
| 1. Representation (Concordat principles 2,5,7) To build on OxRSS' presence on key committees at departmental and divisional level, and to create new and strengthen existing links with key personnel and groups within departments; and to ensure cohesion between these mechanisms so that researchers' voices have influence at all levels of the University. | | | | |
| Strengthened links with departmental research staff groups/societies and committees | OxRSS reps to maintain contacts list and assign liaison roles (to include e.g. departmental postdoc networks, Athena SWAN working groups, departmental HR managers) | OxRSS | HT 2017 | All departments/faculties have at least one named contact |
| OxRSS' role as a representative body for researchers to be widely recognised, to be achieved via publicity and increased engagement | Develop OxRSS comms strategy | OxRSS | TT 2016 | Engagement in events, consultations, and other OxRSS work remains sustainable and representative of the broad research staff population |
| | Create networks (real and virtual) of research staff 'voices' to inform policy and set agenda | OxRSS | TT 2017 | % survey respondents who say they have heard of OxRSS increases over time (Q46) |
| 2. Transparency and equality of opportunity (Concordat principles 2,3,4,5,6) To ensure that researchers are aware of relevant policies on e.g. eligibility for grant applications, teaching opportunities, research strategies, and other career and professional development opportunities, and have equal access to and support for taking advantage of them; or that where access is limited that this is communicated proactively and transparently. | | | | |
| Promote the better dissemination of information about teaching opportunities | Work in departments and faculties with course organisers to find mechanisms for researchers' interest and expertise in teaching to be made available to those appointing teachers (including University teaching staff and college tutors) | OxRSS | TT 2016. May be relevant to RECM and Athena SWAN | % of survey respondents who say they would like to teach but didn't have the opportunity decreases (cf. CROS 2013 Q19m: 40% would like to undertake teaching) |

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| Ensure transparency and easily accessible information about finding and applying for grants | Consider how best to support researchers in finding and applying for grants e.g. explore demand for developing online resource(s), links to external content etc. | Research Services/ depts | HT 2017 | % survey respondents saying they have sufficient support for grant writing increases (Q47 a-b) |
| | <i>Many departments have related actions in their Athena SWAN action plans</i> http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/gender/athenaswan/applications | Depts | N/A | Usage of resources, if applicable |
| Improve researchers' understanding of the research context in which they work | Consider how best to ensure that research staff are aware of how their research sits in relation to their department's plans and priorities | OxRSS/ Research Services | TT 2017 | % survey respondents who are clear about research plans increases (Q49) |
| Principal investigators are equipped and committed to proactively supporting researchers to develop | Develop new PI programme, including a learning community that has staff development as a specific area for discussion and sharing; a webinar on ways to develop staff; and an element of face-to-face delivery covering development. | OLI | TT 2016 | Engagement by PIs is appropriate and sustainable ¹ (workshop attendees; website hits; discussion forum participants) |
| | Publicise new website focusing on what development is and ways to do this, which is relevant to PIs. | OLI/ Personnel Services | HT 2016 | % survey respondents who say their PI is supportive increases (Q50a-c) (cf. CROS 2013 Q18a: 69% agree) |
| | Develop online learning communities for aspiring and current PIs that will provide and collect guidance on a number of topics identified as relevant to PIs. Where personal development reviews indicate that specific needs exist in departments or divisions, these will be met by bespoke provision face-to-face (e.g. project management). | OLI | TT 2017 | PI free-text comments in survey allow us to identify appropriate areas to target support (Q56-57) |

¹ By 'appropriate and sustainable' (here and in other measures), we mean that engagement by research staff measured both by number and diversity (e.g. with regard to discipline, gender, ethnicity, etc) is sufficient to allow substantive progress and is at a level that can be properly met by the available resource. An aim simply to increase numbers participating is neither realistic nor necessarily desirable.

3. Management and leadership (Concordat principles 1,2,3,4,6)

To equip all PIs and supervisors to be confident and competent both as managers and leaders in recruiting, managing, and developing researchers, for equitable and good practice and to support individual researchers in developing in their roles and careers.

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| Equip PIs to feel confident managing and leading researchers | Develop PI programme in two strands, for aspiring PIs or for existing PIs plus acting team-leaders of research units, based on the identification and prioritisation of their different learning needs; include support tailored for individual groups and departments; and encourage PIs to take part in mainstream management development activity. | OLI | HT 2016 – HT 2018 | Engagement by PIs is appropriate and sustainable (workshop attendees; website hits rise over time; discussion forum participants) |
| | Develop PI induction packs to be made available online. | OLI | TT 2016 | PI engagement with mainstream management programmes remains appropriate and sustainable |
| | Continue to develop PI blog and webpage to provide a central point of information. | OLI | Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018) | % survey respondents who say their PI is supportive increases (Q50a-c) |
| | Online resource for PIs on developing their research staff that will include topics such as “What is development?”, “Ways that staff can develop”, “Personal development planning”, and “Career conversations”. | OLI | HT 2017 | PI free-text comments in survey and feedback from departments allow us to identify appropriate areas to target support (Q56-57) |
| | Guidance on management principles for PIs running research groups. Guidance will take three forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online resources; • webinars to increase access to guidance; • face-to-face opportunities to discuss issues. This provision will be supported by existing online material on management processes which, though generic in nature, is directly relevant to PIs. | OLI Personnel Services | TT 2016 | |
| | Develop and repeat <i>Research Connections</i> management workshop | OLI | MT 2016 | % survey respondents saying they have sufficient support for supervising or managing other staff/students increases (Q47f) (cf. PIRLS 2013 Q11di: 40% would like more support) |

4. Parity of experience (Concordat principles 2,6,7)

While acknowledging differing local needs and contexts, to share and encourage good practice across departments in the areas above, so that the experience of a University of Oxford researcher is excellent wherever that individual is based, and whatever their gender, ethnicity, job role, age, or other characteristics.

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| Sharing good practice | Establish two online learning programmes to help share best practice: one for aspiring PIs and one for PIs. These will provide a structured area for researchers to share their ideas and comment on the ideas of others. | OLI | HT 2017 | Google Hangouts used and positively evaluated |
| | Publish hints/tips advice for depts; collate activity from Athena SWAN applications | OLI | HT 2017 | Advice and practice shared and used |
| Benchmark against sector | Engage with Researchers14 group, Vitae, and other similar institutions informally | OLI | Ongoing | Gaps in policy and practice identified and implemented if appropriate |
| Mentoring accessible to all | Roll out peer mentoring scheme currently in MSD to be taken up more widely in the division, and in other divisions/depts if appropriate | OLI/divs | Ongoing (to be evaluated HT 2018) | Numbers of mentees in new MSD cohort remains stable at ~70 or increases, with sufficient mentors available that all eligible mentees who apply may participate Priority requests for mentoring in divisions/depts are met Increasing % of survey respondents say they are satisfied with mentoring support |
| Under-represented groups receive tailored support if appropriate | Continue to promote Springboard and Navigator programmes | MPLS | Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018) | Provision of Springboard and Navigator (or similar programmes) remains appropriate to demand |
| | Develop and pilot women researchers' career development programme (if appropriate) based on results of current scoping project in order to connect women at this career stage into existing pipeline activities in the University | OLI | HT-MT 2016 | Over time, a reduction of the gender-gap in the likelihood of postdocs progressing/remaining in a research career (detail to be added in conjunction with Athena SWAN institutional award work) |

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| | Consider (as part of Race Charter work) whether provision for BME or international researchers is needed - this action plan to be updated accordingly once work carried out from summer 2016 onwards. | EDU/OLI | TT 2017 | Action plan updated if relevant |
| Ensure fair treatment for all | Continue to embed implicit bias awareness in recruitment and other training | OLI, Personnel Services, and divs | Ongoing (evaluated HT 2018) | Number of people completing <i>Recruitment and Selection</i> course and implicit bias training increases |
| | Improved recruitment training (see Strategic Plan) | Personnel Services and divs | Ongoing | HR compliance survey shows: a) improved recruitment processes in place: and, b) all chairs of recruitment panels have been trained Increase in % of women appointed to senior roles (target to be agreed) and % of BME staff (measure tbc after data reviewed for RECM) |
| | New guidance for PIs on management of maternity and other family leave | Personnel Services | MT 2016 | <i>See Athena SWAN Institutional Action Plan action 5.2</i> |
| | Gain national institutional charter marks: race at Bronze and gender equality (Athena) at Silver | EDU | 2017 | Charter marks successfully gained |
| | <i>Researcher Connections</i> additional sessions designed to meet the needs identified through representation initiatives | OLI | HT 2017 | Researchers' training needs are strategically identified and increasingly met (Q47) |
| | Main responsibility for training lies with departments and divisions, who will continue to ensure that provision meets the needs of the range of researchers in their discipline | Divs/depts | Ongoing | |
| | Access to learning through Lynda.com, with playlists that point researchers to appropriate learning materials | IT Services/ OLI | Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018) | |