University of Greenwich

Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Implementation Review Summary Report - January 2015

1   Introduction and Organisational Context

Organisations that hold the HR Excellence in Research Award are required to undertake a biennial self-assessment review of progress in achieving the actions set out in their Implementation Plan for review by the UK HR Excellence in Research Award panel. This report provides a summary of key achievements against the University of Greenwich's *Gap Analysis and Action Plan* of January 2013.

The University's Strategic Plan 2012-17 and associated KPIs, contains ambitious expectations to progress the research and enterprise agenda by increasing the proportion of academic staff who are research active (1* REF output per annum) to 75% and academic staff with internationally excellent research (at least one 3* or 4* REF output per annum) to 25%. A new academic framework (with large Faculties and Departments) and refreshed models of governance and oversight was introduced in 2013-14. This process has involved significant organisational change including a leaner University leadership framework and revised organisational structure.

2   Internal Evaluation

Overall responsibility for the University's engagement, implementation and compliance of the Concordat rests with the Early Career Researcher Steering Group (ECRSG). This body has the full support of the Vice-Chancellor's (Management) Group (VCG) - in its workings towards ensuring compliance across the University. The composition of the ECRSG is set out in section 7.1 of the *Gap Analysis and Actions 2015–2017*. At local level implementation and operation rests with academic Departments, Faculties and Researchers, assisted by ECR Ambassadors within each of the four Faculties. The ECRSG has been responsible for producing the two-year review - a process that has involved consultation with:

1. University's Research and Enterprise Committee (R&EC) - a strategic group reporting to Academic Council, that includes the Directors of Research of each of the University's four academic Faculties, along with Early Career Researcher representation.
2. The University Athena SWAN Working Group (ASWG) – this group comprises 17 staff from across the University, involving both early career and senior academics.
3. Academic and Research staff - involving all-staff and individual consultation with Pro Vice-Chancellors and Faculty staff through surveys, facilitated sessions and face-to-face meetings to identify issues, areas of good practice and inform on-going researcher development.

3   Key Achievements and Progress

A summary of key achievements aligned to the Principals of the Concordat are outlined below. Full details of progress against the original action plan are provided in the *University of Greenwich Implementation Review - January 2015*.

PRINCIPLE 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research
- The Appointment of Staff Regulations policy was updated to reflect the move to the e-Recruitment system in May 2014.

- Learning and Talent Development annual programme of events is in place each year: autumn, spring and a summer school.

PRINCIPLE 2: Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.

- Appraisal now has dedicated web pages, training events and an e-learning module linked to induction available through the staff portal.

PRINCIPLE 3: Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.

- A new support post (Researcher Development Manager) was appointed in April 2014 to implement the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and associated initiatives outlined in the gap analysis.
- New RDF web pages explaining the self-assessment process and outlining training offered have been developed on the Greenwich Research and Enterprise (GRE) section of the University web pages, including a new Moodle page hosting the Epigeum suite of e-learning courses mapped against the RDF domains.
- A Training Needs Analysis was undertaken by GRE in summer 2014 to gain an understanding of the development needs of researchers. The response rate increased from last year by 40%.
- Two female-only initiatives were established at the University in 2014: the Women's Professoriate Group (WPG) and *Aurora*. The WPG was set up to provide peer support and mentoring to other female colleagues who want to apply for the role of Reader or Professor. The Leadership Foundation's *Aurora* programme enables women in academic and professional roles to engage with leadership development at early stages in their careers. There are 15 women participants in 2014-15: 5 from professional services and 10 from Faculties, including ECRs.
- Introduction of researcher-specific information was incorporated into the corporate New Employee Welcome and Introduction Programme (NEWI), which was launched in November 2012. Attendance figures for NEWI are 2012-13 (68), 2013-14 (64) and 2014-15 to date (48).
- Familiarisation with the RDF is now a mandatory part of local induction for academic staff and appears on the line managers' checklist.

PRINCIPLE 4: The importance of researchers' personal career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career

- The Educational Development Unit runs a number of professional development programmes which contribute to the training of staff in assessment and feedback, including the PG Cert in HE for new staff. Any staff member who does more than 60 hours teaching (over one academic year) is automatically eligible for completion of PG Cert. Once completed, the staff member automatically gets HEA Fellowship. The course is also open to Research Assistants.

PRINCIPLE 5: Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.

- Research Integrity is now available as part of the new suite of Epigeum e-learning courses. Completion of this module is now a mandatory part of local induction for academic staff and appears on the line managers' checklist.
- Researcher-specific training courses are now themed under the RDF Domains and workshops have been expanded to incorporate the sub-domains of the RDF, such as specialised statistical analysis, social media (e.g. podcasts) and managing research teams. A total of 197 staff attended courses during the 2013-14 academic year.

- Since 2010 the University has rewarded a number of ECRs in recognition for their achievements including; 4 ECR Communicator Awards, 14 ECR Excellence Awards and 45 travel bursaries.

PRINCIPLE 6: Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers

- The University submitted its Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze application in November 2014. The ASWG instigated the formation of Departmental 'Champions' and 'Self-Assessment Teams' (SATs), comprising 4 – 6 representative staff from every department to engage the whole University in organisational change. As part of the project, an academic staff survey was circulated to gauge feedback on staff experience and perceptions. The survey attracted a 49% response rate.
- A new Staff and Student Bullying and Harassment Policy was approved in November 2012.
- The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Staff Network was set up in May 2013 following a staff survey. The Network has formal Terms of Reference and regularly meets to discuss LGBT related issues and consult on policy.
- Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken on the REF Codes of Practice, GREAT 2012 (REF mock exercise) and REF 2014 submission.
- The University extended its monitoring of protected characteristics in relation to sexual orientation from the 2012-13 academic session.

PRINCIPLE 7: The sector and stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.

- The Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) and Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) were circulated in 2013 and their results have helped inform the support and training offered by GRE. Response rates were 30% for CROS and 45% for PIRLS.

4 Next Steps

The University has identified a new set of actions to support the implementation of the Concordat. The actions are aligned to the University Strategic Plan 2012-17, HR Strategy and Athena SWAN project, with a broad focus on identifying career pathways, increasing participation in researcher development activities and enhancing support. Key themes for 2015-17 aligned to the principals of the Concordat (and their success measures) are outlined:

- **Principal 1:** Understanding and supporting researchers on fixed term contracts (*guidance, reporting and succession planning in place by December 2015).*
- **Principal 2:** Design a programme of leadership enhancement activities (*research staff and management engaged in activities by November 2015*).
- **Principal 3:** Identify career pathways for researchers, standard expectations and mechanisms for feedback (*establish, promote and recognise a promotions scheme by August 2016*).
- **Principal 4:** Develop and enhance appraisal and mentoring support for researchers at all career stages *(enhanced appraisal system, increased provision of mentors by August 2017).*
- **Principal 5:** Awareness of professional conduct and continuing development tools *(communication of new policies and implementation of Vitae RDF trial by August 2017).*
- **Principal 6:** Reporting on research staff equality data and improved support for protected groups *(data analysed and used to inform actions, guidance promoted, managers trained and departmental Athena SWAN awards submitted by August 2017).*
- **Principal 7:** Continued self-assessment *(sector benchmarking, CROS and PIRLS surveys and regular reviews of progress undertaken by the University ECRSG by January 2017).*