

Concordat Implementation Group

31 October 2017, 15:00–16:30
YH/001b, Research Centre for Social Sciences (ReCSS)

MINUTES

Chair: Deborah Smith

Present: Karen Clegg, Jane Dalton, Lisa Kim, Alex Medcalf, Stephanie Prady, Paul Walton, Helen Weatherly

Apologies: Nick Barraclough, Katrin Besser, Charlotte Chamberlain, Ana Duarte, Anna Grey, Anna Reader, Liz Rylott, Fatma Said, Helen Selvidge

Minutes: Helen Goodwill

1. Minutes and action log

The minutes of the last Concordat Implementation Group meeting held on 30 June 2017 were **approved** and the action log reviewed.

2. [Consultation on the Concordat Review](#)

The deadline for the consultation is **1 December**.

- Do we wish to submit a UoY response and collate responses from *researchers and/or do we wish to feed into a Researcher's 14 response?
- How do we wish to respond? Question Set [here](#) (Encl.3)

Karen Clegg (KC) summarised the need for the Concordat review citing that Researchers14 (R14) have been influential in persuading Vitae and RCUK that one is necessary. The group has looked back over the past ten years to identify what has worked and what hasn't and it is clear that there has been a distinct lack of progress made with regards to recruiting researchers onto open term contracts due to the nature of fixed-term funding. PI principles also appear to be missing with very little stated about what they are required to do. As a group, Researchers14 has therefore written and drafted Principle 8 around PI responsibilities. In addition to the Researchers14 response, Karen is keen to co-ordinate a University of York response that includes as many opinions as possible - however, the deadline for responses is **1 December 2017**.

Discussion ensued re the best way to gather opinion as the survey for individuals to complete is particularly onerous and in reality may not be the best way to obtain people's opinions. Consensus was reached on the following actions:

AP17-18/01 KC: Draft the University's response which will be sent to CIG members for approval by 6 November (before Researchers14) along with the Researchers14 draft submission and Anna Reader's Athena Swan report

AP17-18/02 CIG members: Review the University's draft submission and provide feedback to KC by 13 November

AP17-18/03 CIG members: Review the R14 draft submission and decide whether or not to put the University's name to it

AP17-18/04 KC: Update University response to go out to researchers for consultation via postdoc societies/fora, the Staff Digest, research staff newsletter and HR

AP17-18/05 KC: Update the submission following these consultations and distribute to CIG members by 23 November allowing enough time for a final response before submission on 1 December

It needs to be clear to researchers that they can contribute to the institutional response by contacting Karen/RETT or that they have the option to go into the form directly and submit their feedback independently (this is also a way of doing it anonymously).

Completed: The University submission can be found [here](#) along with the Reserachers14 response

3. Discuss the relevant action points from the Chairs of Departmental Research Committee Shared Practice Event held on 6 July (Encl.4).

- ***Discuss with the CIG the potential to build in release time for postdocs/ECRs to teach***

It was felt that this release time would enable staff to gain a degree of research independence and an opportunity to explore their own ideas and as such would be a powerful REF precedent to set. Whilst it was acknowledged that this couldn't be made mandatory, a steer could be provided with good/best practice guidelines. While there is always likely to be some pushback due to resource implications it would be good to improve on the number of departments which do offer this to their research staff as they are currently few and far between.

AP17-18/06 KC: Approve the below with Joss Ivory (new Director) in HR.

Outstanding

AP17-18/07 KC: Circulate what we have in the way of existing plans back to faculties via DRCs and Concordat contacts and recommend that they look at them in the context of Athena Swan and the REF environment. Suggest that they convene themselves, review what is there and develop something sensible aligned to the University action plan.

Completed.

In terms of the above, Anna Reader should be involved and Anna Grey needs to be aware of what is taking place.

It was also acknowledged that there was a training gap - GTAs are required to attend training (Introduction to Teaching and Learning) before teaching but there are no requirements for postdocs. It would be useful to have some guidance on this for departments including support schemes for postdocs.

AP17/18/08 KC: Discuss this training gap for postdocs with John Robinson.

Ongoing due to move of GTA portfolio to ASO

- ***Develop a Humanities Research Centre (HRC) Concordat Action Plan (which each arts and humanities department could adopt). There are some departments in Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences with relatively few researchers. It was agreed that that these departments might appreciate the opportunity to have a faculty-level or group submission. It was recognised that due to numbers a Science faculty submission probably wouldn't work.***

A starting point would be to take existing plans from the various departments within a specific faculty and

merge them into one. A&H in particular have a small number of researchers (about 40) and CIG members felt it would be worth the effort. Individual departments could then call on this action plan whilst working on Athena Swan and this could be of great value both for the departments themselves and in terms of systems such as REF.

Karen noted that while departments had been made aware they would need to revise their Concordat action plans, they haven't actually been asked to do anything yet.

AP17-18/06: KC to go to HRC with the current A&H departmental action plans and facilitate a decision on whether the preference is for individual action plans to be revised within the A&H departments or for there to be a faculty-based HRC submission.

Discussion with Kate Giles and Judith Buchanan underway - some concern about where the responsibility for the implementation of action plans lie -at Faculty or Dept level.

- ***Departments were asked to indicate if there was any interest in a cross-departmental mentoring scheme. Professor Tom Stoneham, Dean of the YGRS, has since indicated that he would also appreciate an indication of any departmental mentoring schemes that are available for PGR students.***

With regards to mentoring, the current pilot scheme is in the process of being reviewed. KC will take any recommendations to the RET Steering Group on 14 February 2018 as well as discuss them with HR.

Ongoing dialogue with L&D/HR about the roll out of mentoring due to re-prioritisation of mentoring for other key staff groups

4. Verbal update on Research Staff Impact Bootcamp, 13 October 2017 (KC)

The Bootcamp consisted of the following 5 sessions which people could sign up to independently:

Session 1: What is impact?

Session 2: Who can help me build partnerships?

Session 3: How I got impact from my research - academic colleagues share their experiences

Session 4: How do I communicate my research to a non-specialist audience?

Session 5: How do I capture and evaluate my impact?

Update: There were 154 session attendances over the day which was slightly disappointing as considerably more had initially booked tickets (239). Those who did attend however appeared to find the content very useful with almost 90% finding the sessions useful or extremely useful and 98% saying they would recommend the sessions to others. Videos of three of the sessions were taken and are available to view [here](#) along with PowerPoint slides from all of the sessions.

5. Update on CIG membership

[Dr Fatma Said](#) (Research Staff Liaison Officer) and [Charlotte Chamberlain](#) (President of the GSA) are new members of the Concordat Implementation Group. Unfortunately, neither were able to attend this meeting so we hope to be able to make official introductions at the next meeting in March.

6. AOB

Dates of next 17/18 meetings

Thursday 3 May, 10:00-11:30, RC/110

Tuesday 3 July 2018, 10:30-12:00