The national context for research staff development

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Research Excellence Training Team (RETT) - (Formerly known as RDT)
The European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers sets out some principles for good working conditions for researchers.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (UK only) provides a single statement of the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders. It is a national document with many signatories including Universities UK, HEFCE and the research councils UK.
7 Principles – which are specific to UK context and encompass most of the 40 principles set out in the European Charter

**Principle 1:** Recruitment and Selection (5)

**Principle 2:** Recognition and Value (6)

**Principle 3 and 4:** Support and Career (14)

**Principle 5:** Researchers’ responsibilities (6)

**Principle 6:** Diversity and Equality (10)

**Principle 7:** Implementation and Review (5)

https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat-to-support-the-career-development-of-researchers
Why is it Important?

‘Through the implementation of its principles it aims to enhance the researcher workforce and thereby sustain research excellence bringing benefits to the health, economy and well-being of the UK.’

‘As a researcher the Concordat should have a direct impact on your life and working conditions. It aims to ensure that researchers are nurtured and supported in managing and planning their careers. By developing your understanding of the intent behind the principles and engaging with institutional processes related to your career development you will help to maximise its impact.’ -Vitae
Benefits of the Award

• European recognition which can add value to grant applications
• REF – the environment section required reference to how the Concordat was being used to support researchers and may continue to do so
  • Genuine commitment to researchers’ development, advancement and excellence
• Alignment with the ethos of Athena SWAN
The Process

The Concordat is referenced in all the Research Councils’ Delivery Plans and an expectation that research intensive universities who employ researchers will be able to demonstrate alignment with the principles.

How?

In UK 5 step process:

1. Institute conducts internal analysis (depts., CROS, RSA, RS events, HR, Athena SWAN)
2. Institute publishes an action plan and how analysis took place
3. UK HR excellence Panel reviews the strategy
4. Institute carries out self-assessment every 2 years and submits updates to action plan
5. External evaluation conducted at 4 years

UoY action plans:
http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/researcher-development/staff/concordat.htm#tab2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Recruitment and Selection</th>
<th>Recognition and Value</th>
<th>Support and Career Development</th>
<th>Researchers’ Responsibilities</th>
<th>Diversity and Equality</th>
<th>Implementation and Review</th>
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<td><strong>Key actions</strong></td>
<td>• Establish a Postdoctoral Fellowship</td>
<td>• Review and continue to develop Research managers training: Develop a website to advise line managers, continue to offer the research leaders programme, review support for researchers to engage in outreach and public engagement, Review training and support in light of new research strategy</td>
<td>• Develop an online Careers pathway guide Review use of exit information – use career destination to inform the career development offered Raise awareness of internal support available to RS in applying for grants/fellowships Engage with RS to continue to refine and improve skills training: through CROS and shared practice and encouraging RSAs Review mentoring provision Promote the benefits to depts. and PIs in supporting the professional development of their RS New PGCAP module 1 pathway developed to enhance opportunity for RS to access HEA fellowship Encourage depts. to have RS on their dept committees</td>
<td>• Encourage researchers to take up training in knowledge transfer, commercialisation of research, ethics and research integrity. Development of data management policy/guidance and training in best practice. RS encouraged to keep professional development record.</td>
<td>• Continue to engage with Athena Swan project. Review equality activity in AHSS Analyse flexible working policy evidence Investigate how maternity pay is honoured when no provision made by funding body. Gender bias awareness to form part of recruitment and selection training.</td>
<td>• University to run CROS April-May 2015 • Align concordat action plan with Athena Swan and University Strategy • Review membership of Concordat Implementation group • Continue to support and encourage depts. to update their local action plans and share good practice. • University will engage with other institutions and stakeholders to share good practice and promote principles of concordat.</td>
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<td>• Review the recruitment and selection process: Ensure PIs understand their responsibilities and are competent in effective recruitment, seek feedback from candidates, monitor that the correct guidance is being followed.</td>
<td>• Monitor the number of RS that apply for promotion Review of availability of bridging funding in depts</td>
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Achievements 2015-2016

• York is one of ten UK universities to retain the ‘HR Excellence in Research Award’ from the European Commission. The 6 year review will be submitted in September 2016.
• 91% researchers indicated they have participated in performance review (Staff Survey 2014)
• 50% of researchers now have a formal record of CPD (CROS15) (average compared to RG)
• A career development online guide is now available. More video clips will be added over the summer
• A University wide Learning Needs Analysis has been carried and identified a range of training and support needed to align with the Research strategy
• Award Winning Leadership and Management programmes and coaching available to all researchers
• A new HE Academy accredited Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education Award is now available to research staff
Strategic Engagement

• York are part of ‘Researchers 14’ which is a group of Russell Group universities representing 65% of research staff in the UK. We are working with the research councils to influence policy and practice around researcher development.

• ‘Researchers 14’ are drafting a revised version of the Concordat to reflect the changing landscape of researcher development and to provide further challenge to universities in supporting researchers. This will be discussed with the research councils later in 2016.
What can you do?

- **Get involved** - to our knowledge there are 7 postdoc/researcher forums in existence (Biology, Chemistry, Environment, CRD, Health Sciences, Computer Science and Psychology). If you would like to set up something in your area there are people to speak to who can help.

- **Get heard** - ask for opportunities to get involved with departmental and faculty committees where relevant. Use the performance review process to discuss your professional development.

- **Get support** - take advantage of the range of training on offer (click on ‘course and events’ from the HR page).

- **Get informed** – follow us on twitter @rett_york and fb.com/rett.york and open the online research staff newsletter for all the latest information on opportunities and support.

- **Get active** - set up a vitae account (with your UoY email) and register to use their extensive resources. Vitae are hosting an online hangout on Mentoring on 16 June.