



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



HREiR Action plan template for institutions (2023 - 2026)

Details

Institution name:	Royal Holloway, University of London
Cohort number:	18
Date of submission:	24 November 2023
Institutional context	The primary audience for our HR Excellence in Research action plan for 2023 - 26 will be staff who are employed to conduct research, with specific actions highlighted to support early career researchers. Aligning with our emerging research culture strategy, our aim will be to build further awareness and engagement with researchers and their managers; promote wellbeing and effectively manage workloads; address bullying, harassment and discrimination; ensure that we promote and maintain high standards of research integrity; implement a review of our academic promotions process and how we support career development; build a new cohort-based approach to professional development, ensuring that it is relevant and well-targeted.

The institutional audience* for this action plan includes (only include direct beneficiaries; complete or delete, as appropriate):

Audience (direct beneficiaries of the action plan)	Number of	Comments
Research staff	119	
Research and teaching staff	581	
Teaching-only staff	204	
Technicians	72	
Professional Practice staff	30	

Complete for submission							To be completed only when reporting on action plan		
Obligation	Action	Carried over from previous action plan?	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted <u>impact</u> of the action (success measure)	Progress update	The actual <u>impact</u> of the action (reporting against the success measure)	Outcome (ongoing/carried forward/no further action)	
Environment and Culture									
Awareness and engagement									
The aims of these obligations are to work towards an open and inclusive research culture, and to ensure broad understanding and awareness of this amongst researchers.									
EC11	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Include Concordat in induction information. Reference Concordat in probation advisor and career conversations training. Reference Concordat in Performance Development Review Guidance.	NEW	July 2024	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity.	At least 40% of respondents say that they are aware of the Researcher Development Concordat in CEDARS. (currently 27%)			

		wellbeing and specifically address matrix management arrangements.			Development and Diversity				
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	Roll out further Mental Health Awareness for Line Manager training and ensure engagement of Heads of Department and Research Managers.	CARRIED FORWARD	Nov 2026	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	50% HoD participation and 50% research manager participation. CEDARS increase in managers having training to 45% (from 33%)			
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	Complete an audit of existing wellbeing initiatives for staff assessing awareness and relevance. Identify gaps and prioritise actions. Deliver improvements to communication approaches including intranet pages presenting all support and initiatives. Add promoting a healthy working environment to the Job Description for Vice Deans - Research and Knowledge Exchange Add as a standard agenda item for all research committees and School Executive Boards.	CARRIED FORWARD and updated	Nov 2026	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity Associate PVC – Research and Innovation	Wellbeing initiatives co-ordinated, intranet pages launched. CEDARS – working environment supporting mental health and wellbeing increase to 40%. (from 28%)			
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	Review of Flexible Working policy and special leave policy. Recommunicate updated policies ensuring managers are aware of the provisions in the policies.	NEW	Nov 2026	Head of HR Operations	CEDARS: manager confidence in managing requests for flexible working to 85% (from 82%)			
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	See ECM3							
Bullying and harassment									

The aims of these obligations are to eliminate bullying and harassment in the research system, tackled through progressive policies and secure mechanisms to address incidents.									
ECI3	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	Undertake a comprehensive review to gain better insight and understanding into the prevalent root causes of Bullying and Harassment and bring more nuance and focus to the action plan.	NEW	April 2024	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	Review complete and action plan established.			
		Complete an audit of existing arrangements for prevention, reporting, management, and mitigation. Develop and implement a holistic action plan covering role of leadership, training, awareness, policy, processes.	NEW	Aug 2024	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	Action plan implemented CEDARS – personally experienced bullying or harassment reduced to 14% (from 28%)			
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	Ensure completion of mandatory EDI modules which include Bullying and harassment and Inclusive Leadership. Develop anonymous case studies to describe how concerns about bullying and harassment will be dealt with through our policies. Refresh and ways to address and report.	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	100% completion for Heads of Department and Research Managers. CEDARS increase in understanding processes to report discrimination, (61% to 67%) and bullying and harassment (64% to 70%)			
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to discrimination, harassment and bullying.	Ensure completion of mandatory EDI modules which include Bullying harassment and Allyship. Publish content raising awareness of reporting mechanisms and support for colleagues.	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	100% completion. CEDARS increase in understanding processes to report discrimination, (61% to 67%) and bullying and harassment (64% to 70%)			

Equality, diversity and inclusion									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in -, aware of- and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion.									
ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Ensure completion of mandatory EDI training for managers, including Inclusive Leadership.	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	100% completion			
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.	Ensure completion of mandatory EDI training for researchers. Grant award communication with direct links to relevant policies – new grant induction package.	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Head of Organisational Development and Diversity Director of Research and Innovation	100% completion.			
Research Integrity									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in -, aware of- and maintain high standards of research integrity, and are able to report infringements or misconduct.									
ECI5 / ECM2	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.	Continue with the development of Ethics and integrity training; using UKRIO and other external experts as appropriate. Update and promote Code of Good Practice for Research Develop role of Policy and Integrity team in R&I	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Director of Research and Innovation	Code of Good Practice updated			
ECM3	Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity.	Training and development for managers on Research Misconduct policy and processes.	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Director of Research and Innovation	CEDARS – increase in managers reporting receiving training from 50% to 60%.			

ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.	Continue with the development of Ethics and integrity training; using UKRIO and other external experts as appropriate. Update and promote Code of Good Practice for Research Develop role of Policy and Integrity team in R&I including new Research Compliance role Embed into new grant award communication direct links to relevant policies	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Director of Research and Innovation	Code of Good Practice updated			
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	Training and development for managers on Research Misconduct policy and processes	CARRIED FORWARD	Review annually	Director of Research and Innovation	Increase in researchers reporting receiving training from 30% to 40%.			
Policy development									
The aims of these obligations are to encourage all researchers to actively contribute to the development of policies driving positive change at their institution.									
E17	Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.	See EC12							
ECM5	Encourage managers to engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	See EC12 Develop guidance within the promotions review to explicitly address how contributions impacting on policy development, policy application and enhancing research culture are recognised	CARRIED FORWARD	Nov 2024	Director of HR	New policy, process and guidance materials produced.			
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.	See EC12 and EM5							
ECR5	Encourage researchers to consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive	See EC12							

	research environment and culture within their institution.								
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.	See ECI2							
Employment									
Recruitment and induction									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation.									
E11	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	<p>Complete Recruitment and Selection policy update and update training.</p> <p>Through policy and training, ensure journal metrics or journal 'reputation' are not used as the primary basis for decision making.</p> <p>Develop toolkit of selection questions and approaches.</p> <p>Ensure completion of mandatory Recruitment and selection training.</p>	CARRIED FORWARD	Nov 2026	Head of HR Operations, Head of Organisational Development and Diversity	<p>New Recruitment and Selection policy launched, with accompanying R&S training.</p> <p>100% training completion.</p>			
E12	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	No further action.							
Recognition, reward and promotion									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression.									
E13	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	<p>Complete review of academic promotions process, focusing on criteria for assessment, decision making processes and user experience.</p> <p>Through process and criteria review, ensure journal metrics or journal 'reputation' are not used as the primary basis for decision making.</p>	CARRIED FORWARD	Nov 2024	Director of HR	New policy, process and guidance materials.			

EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	See EI3, ECI4 / ECM1							
Responsibilities and reporting									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers and their managers understand and act on their obligations and responsibilities.									
EM2	Managers familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.	See EI3, ECI4 / ECM1							
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	See ECR2, ECR4							
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.	See ECR2, ECR4							
People management									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.									
EI4	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	Include research leadership in new researcher development programmes based on career stage and using a cohort structure.	NEW	July 2024	Head of OD and Diversity	Cohort programmes set up and 100% recruited to each year.			
EI5	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	See ECI3, EI3							

EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	Promote completion of all mandatory manager training	CARRIED FORWARD		Head of OD and Diversity	100% completion.			
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.	See ECI3, E13							
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.	See ECI3, E13 Promote completion of appraisee training							
Job security									
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers.									
E16	Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.	Review the redeployment process and how it is effectively communicated to managers and researchers	CARRIED OVER	Aug 2024	Head of HR Operations	Research manager training and engagement implemented on this process. 75% of Heads of Department attended, 50% of other research managers Increase in CEDARS survey question in relation to manager confidence in giving guidance on redeployment from 24% to 34%			
Professional and Career Development									
Championing professional development									
The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it.									
PCD11	Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.	Needs analysis and further development of Researcher Development Programme to ensure content is relevant and well targeted.	CARRIED FORWARD	Aug 2024	Head of OD and Diversity	Return occupancy levels to 75%.			

PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	Review how training records for researchers are gathered and maintained and make recommendations for improvement	NEW	August 2024	Head of OD and Diversity	Review complete and improvement plan in place.			
PCDM3	Managers allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.	See PCDI1							
PCDR1	Researchers take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.	See PCDI2							
Career development reviews									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews.									
PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	Implement career development review training for research managers	NEW	Nov 2026	Associate PVC for Research/ Head of OD and Diversity	50% attendance for HoDs, 50% for Research Managers			
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	Include a question on career conversations in the 2024 People and Culture Survey.	NEW	February 2024	Head of OD and Diversity	Question included and response assessed.			
PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.	PCDI2							
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.	PCDI2							

Career development support and planning									
The aims of these obligations are to promote researchers' career development planning through tailored support and gathering evidence of professional experience.									
PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	Review and roll out further career management training.	CARRIED FORWARD	Head of OD and Diversity	July 2024	75% occupancy on courses. CEDARS – training on career management increase to 25% (from 17%)			
PCDR3	Researchers maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.	No further action.							
Research identity and leadership									
The aims of these obligations are to provide researchers with opportunity to progress in their careers by developing their research identity and leadership capabilities.									
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	Implement new researcher development programmes based on career stage and using a cohort structure.	NEW	Head of OD and Diversity	July 2024	Programme in place and 100% recruited to each year.			
PCDM4	Managers identify opportunities, and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills, and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.	See PCDI2,							
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	See EM1							
PCDR5	Seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills	See PCDM2							

Diverse careers									
The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research.									
PCDI5	Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.	Continue to offer a placement scheme as part of the Social Science Impact Accelerator to provide opportunities for researchers to spend time with partner organisations or for partners to spend time at Royal Holloway.	NEW	Director of Research and Innovation	Nov 2026	Offer a minimum of 10 residencies per year.			
PCDM2	Managers support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.	See ECR1							
PCDR2	Researchers explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.	See ECR1							
PCDR6	Researchers consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation.	See ECR1							

* The Researcher Development Concordat defines researchers as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose by a higher education institution or research institute. The primary audience is research staff, e.g. postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, research assistants. The Researcher Development Concordat encourages institutions to include other groups who actively engage in research as beneficiaries of their Concordat action plan. These could be postgraduate researchers; staff on teaching and research, or teaching contracts; clinicians; professional support staff; technicians.

Further hyperlinks and supplementary information (more rows can be added)	
1	
2	
3	
4	

Abbreviations and glossary (more rows can be added)	

