**BIRKBECK’S HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD ACTION PLAN 2017 – 2022 – v16 11th September 2017**

**Glossary and abbreviations:**

**AAB:** Academic Advisory Board **BGRS:** Birkbeck Graduate Research School

**Business World:** the comprehensive integrated Finance, **Careers:** Careers and Employability Service

HR/Payroll and Research Grants management system

which replaces our current systems in 2017 **CoI:** Co-Investigator on a research grant: may be the College academic lead

**CTPLT:** Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching **D&AO:** Development and Alumni Office

**E&D:** Equality and Diversity **ECR:** Early Career Researcher

**ER:** External Relations **FTC:** Fixed term contract *or open ended contract reliant upon grant funding*

**H&S:** Health and Safety **HR:** Human Resources

**HRER:** The HR Excellence in Research Award **HRSPC:** HR Strategy and Policy Committee

**HRSS:** Head of Research Strategy Support **MCR:** Mid-Career Researcher (may include people on FTCs with sufficient experience – i.e. have held several short term research posts)

**New:** New member of research staff – any career stage

 **P&S:** Professional and Support staff

**PDR / AR:** Progress & Development Review / Academic Review

 **PDRA:** Postdoctoral Researcher

**PhD:** PhD student

 **PI:** Principal Investigator on a research grant. Any project will only have 1 PI

**RDF:** The Researcher Development Framework (the national

framework from Vitae which describes the training researchers **RF:** Research Fellow

should receive)

 **RGCO:** Research Grants and Contracts Office

**Senior Researcher:** Senior academic researcher

 **T&R:** Teaching and Research (the standard academic contract type)

**T&S:** Teaching and Scholarship (typically a teaching only

contract designation – may be fixed term or permanent) **Vitae:** The national organisation to support the career development of

 researchers

**Constituencies:**

The principles within the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* apply equally to any member of staff engaged in research, and provide a framework of good practice for the management of all researchers and their careers. The College is applying the *Concordat’s* broad definition of researchers to the process, whichstates that “researchers in Higher Education and research institutions constitute a diverse group, including postgraduate students, research-only employees on short-term projects, part-time staff, lecturers and professors with a range of duties including research.”

For the purposes of this report the following definitions are used to define the constituency for the action:

* **PhD** - a student undertaking a research project and working towards the award of a PhD degree.
* **PDRA** is used to define a postdoctoral researcher on a fixed term contract (or possibly an open ended contract subject to grant funding for its continuation) who has been employed on a project designed by someone else. It is expected that this person’s main employment function is to undertake research. This person’s actual job title may be Research Associate or Research Fellow, and in many cases this is initially defined by the project funder.
* **RF** - Research Fellow is used to define a postdoctoral researcher who is undertaking research they have designed themselves. It is expected that this person’s main employment function (for the duration of the fellowship) is to undertake research. Research fellows may be on permanent or fixed term contracts and at any stage in their research career.
* **FTC** – anyone in the College with a fixed term contract or on an open-ended contract which is reliant upon grant funding for its continuation. This may incorporate some people from the categories above as well as other members of the College
* **ECR** - An early career researcher is an academic researcher who may have been appointed to their first academic teaching and research position in the last few years and is beginning to establish an independent reputation for their research
* **MCR** - A mid-career researcher is more difficult to define (other than as someone who is more well-established than an ECR but not yet a senior researcher). An MCR has work which has developed over time and maintained its presence for a number of years. They are established and recognised by their peers but not yet a senior researcher
* **Senior** **(Researcher)** - A senior academic researcher would typically hold a Readership or be of Professorial standing. They are recognised as being a leading thinker in their discipline.
* **New** - A new starter is a member of staff who joined the College within the last 12 months. They may fit into more than one other category.
* **All** – when the action applies to researchers from each of these categories

NB1: All references to equality issues should be taken to refer to the appropriate protected characteristic(s), including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation

NB2: in the action plan timeline the following abbreviations are also used:

**MRP -** Mandatory Review Point;

**CR – Continuous Review.** An action which is reviewed as necessary across the cycle, possibly where specific review points will be task-based so more difficult to define

**Executive Summary:** This action plan has been drafted to support Birkbeck College to be more effective in its implementation of the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and to underpin an application in October 2017 to the HR Excellence in Research Award.

This action plan was drafted following a year-long gap analysis process where each of the Schools and Professional & Support departments involved in supporting researchers were interviewed about their current practice. Questions were also asked about the training elements of the other three Concordats (Public Engagement, Research Integrity, Open Data) which were included in this exercise to reduce duplication.

This process identified some areas of good practice and highlighted key areas to investigate further with the research base. 10 focus groups were organised with researchers and, in addition, an online survey was circulated to PhD students (who had not engaged strongly with the focus group format). This process led to the identification of 145 specific actions to improve the support for the career development of our researchers. These actions were stratified and where possible combined to leave the actions identified in the action plan below (although some repetition has remained where this wasn’t possible).

The College also ran the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) and Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) in 2017 towards the end of the process. Overall, ca.10% of researchers participated. The responses to both surveys were reviewed thematically, and issues and areas in which the College could improve were cross-referenced with actions already identified, and any new actions were incorporated into the action plan.

Our Academic Advisory Board then instructed us to prioritise those actions that improve transparency and improve infrastructure, and then to consider the size of the affected constituency to refine priorities further. This led to the timescales for the actions proposed in the plan. The Academic Advisory Board also asked us to consider questions of equality of opportunity, to think creatively about solutions (e.g. making more use of on line training provision in some areas) and to address those areas where small changes would have a big impact – e.g. those actions where we had been asked to clarify existing provision.

When proposing timescales, existing institutional action plans were also reviewed to ensure these aligned where necessary, and actions have been incorporated into existing plans where appropriate (for example, See table 2.1 – establishing an early career network; this has been incorporated into the Colleges Digital Transformations project which is a root-and-branch revamp of the College website; or Table 3 career progression and promotion (actions 3.2 and 3.4); – this is aligned to the priorities within the institutional People Strategy and its Delivery Plan; whole plan versus the Athena SWAN action plan).

**Governance Structure:** Responsibility for ensuring that the actions are delivered sits with the Academic Advisory Board (a group comprising ca. 10 researchers who between them represent each School and each career stage (i.e. PhD, PDRA, ECR, MCR and Senior) with support from HR and the HRSS). The AAB formally report to our HR Strategy and Policy Committee (HRSPC) once a year (and informally on a quarterly basis). These reports will also be sent to the College’s Research Committee for reference. Operationally, the project will be delivered by members of HRSPC and through the working groups of the Research Committee, primarily the Research Student Sub Committee (which includes representatives from the academic base and research students), the Research Support Group (P&S staff with a responsibility for research management) and the Research Strategy Group (the PVM (Research) plus the Associate Deans for Research/PGR from each School).

**Project Management:** The person designated in the ‘responsible’ column in the action plan holds overall responsibility for ensuring the action is delivered. It is assumed they will need to work across other stakeholders as necessary to deliver and monitor the on-going implementation of the action. A bespoke but appropriate delivery plan will be developed for each action and approved by the AAB prior to the initiation of the action, which will be completed by the date shown in the action plan (with intermediate and final reports to the AAB as appropriate). The delivery plan will include any additional success measures deemed to be necessary when the detailed delivery plan is developed. A process for ongoing monitoring of the activity will also be defined in the delivery plan and then monitored by the AAB after the end of the action. Each action must have at least one monitoring point after completion. Where possible a single point of responsibility has been identified (e.g. when the designation HR is used this is the Director of HR, but it is recognised much of operational work will sit with the wider teams in the HR Department and across the College, who may have responsibility for ongoing implementation).

**Please note:** the numbers in brackets in the ref column denote the relevant criteria from the [*Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers*](https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat-to-support-the-career-development-of-researchers).

**Table 1: Recruitment and Selection:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion**  | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **1.1**(1.2) (2.1) (2.2) (2.4) | Review and improve internal communication of academic and research vacancies to encourage internal redeployment Make sure emails about job opportunities are sent to staff on Fixed Term Contracts (manually or through Business World)See also table 8(3) | PhDFTCT&SFTC | Oct 18Oct 18 | * Review complete and any identified improvements implemented
* Feedback through staff survey
* 100% of staff employed on FTCs receive emails about job opportunities
 | H | D | HR  |
| **1.2**(1.2) (1.4)(6.1)(6.2)(6.7) | Set up task and finish groups to:* Define training requirements for members of recruitment panels, who and by when
* Review and improve policy on equality composition of all staff and student panels
* Investigate how to improve training provision and make more efficient e.g. through online resources
* Review student recruitment processes across all Schools
* Quantify how meaningful data can be captured to ensure that we can monitor the diversity of all those involved in student recruitment decisions
* Define processes to monitor the equality composition of student recruitment processes
* Define the process to equality impact assess the body of people who influence recruitment decisions (staff and student) and monitor regularly

Review policies, processes and procedures to ensure that all staff who influence staff recruitment decisions receive appropriate recruitment training, which currently includes in equality & diversity and unconscious bias, on a regular basisReview policies, processes and procedures to ensure that all staff involved in student recruitment decisions receive appropriate recruitment training, which currently includes in equality & diversity and unconscious bias, on a regular basisSee also table 8(3)Consider how best to ensure all staff recruitment is carried out in accordance with latest institutional policies and procedures | All  | Dec 18Dec 20Jun 19Jun 19July 22 | * Initial review complete
* [recommendations from the task and finish group implemented (NB the task and finish group must include representation from the HRER AAB)]
* HR records of panel memberships and training for staff recruitment
* School & HR records of staff involved in student recruitment operations
* Equality impact assessments carried out from Dec 18
* Further actions defined once the data is available
* Reminder about when people were last trained sent on an annual basis
* All staff who influence recruitment decisions have received appropriate training which currently includes unconscious bias and equality & diversity **(100% by June 19**)
* All staff offered appropriate training which currently includes unconscious bias and equality & diversity **(100% of all staff will be offered training from January 18**)
* staff have received appropriate renewal of training **(10% by Jul 20**)
* Training routinely planned for the full academic year to support diary planning
* Positive feedback on training
* benchmark against national best practice such as that developed to implement the DORA declaration

Periodic reviews complete | HHHH | EEEE | HR HR (Schools)HR HR |
| **1.3**(1.2) | Clarify processes for internal appointment to more senior roles e.g. AD | All | Dec 18 | Guidance produced and readily available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HR |
| **1.4**(1.2)(1.4)(6.7) | Produce guidance and procedures to define on who should sit on recruitment panels | All | Dec 19 | Guidance produced and readily available(uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HR |

**Table 2: Fixed Term Contracts & Early Career Researchers (ECRs)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **2.1**(2.1)(3.6)(3.7)(4.10)(5.4)(5.5) | Set up ECR network; based on ongoing work with BGRS – to include social and academic events and a dedicated webpage to effectively disseminate information, particularly around induction and career development, work with Schools and Departments to embed as appropriate locally Consider whether or not to Include section of information for new starters Embed ECR network within relevant HR frameworks Investigate whether this constituency (i.e. ECRs and/or new starters) would value support to produce a formal career development plan (or if this should be e.g. incorporated into academic review processes)See also table 5 line 6 (closely related activity) | (PhD), FTC, PDRA, RF, ECR (MCR), (New) | Jul 20Dec 18Mar 20 | * Network established

at least 1 social and 1 academic event take place per term* Web page set up and functioning
* Web hits (number to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Network functioning at the local level

ECR network and resources are embedded within relevant HR frameworks, such as induction, probation, and support for career progression.Investigation complete, and formal career development planning implemented if appropriate  | HHM | EEE | HRSS |
| **2.2**(2.1)(2.2)(2.3)(5.1)(5.2)(5.3)(5.6) | Produce guidance about the roles of the supervisor and the mentor, establish processes to ensure that staff on FTCs have access to both as requiredSee also table 5 line 3 (closely related issue) | FTC(ECR – as a CoI on a grant potentially) | Dec 18 | * Guidance exists and readily available
* Number of downloads (number to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HRSS |
| **2.3**(1.3) (2.2) | Clarify College policies and procedures around use of FTCs and ensure these are readily available | FTC | Dec 18  | Guidance exists and readily available  | H | E | HR  |
| **2.4**(2.2)(3.1)(4.10) | Codify and suitably publicise the processes for moving from an FTC to a permanent position – needs to consider the transition from Research Only, T&R (Fixed term) and T&S contracts. NB need to clarify terms e.g. difference between permanent and open ended contracts Monitor to ensure fairness and transparency. | (PhD), FTC, PDRA, RF, ECR (MCR), New | Mar 20 From Mar 20CR From Jul 20  | * Guidance exists and available – flowchart or similar format if possible (see MRC and Vitae)
* Formal briefings to senior management
* HR BPs routinely involved in staff authorisation processes for FTCs
* Increased numbers of line managers trained in the use of FTCs, including redeployment where appropriate (see 2.5 & 2.6 - 100% of line managers recruiting to an FTC trained from Mar 20

Monitoring mechanisms in place and used | H | E | HR (HRSS)HR |
| **2.5**(2.2) (2.4) | Review and where necessary improve Redeployment Policy & communicate it to all PIs and CoIs with responsibility for staff. Incorporate into line-manager training – see table 7 line 4 | All | Mar 20 | Revised policy available and used (uptake through line manager training to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HR  |
| **2.6**(2.2) (2.4) | Ensure everyone coming to the end of their fixed term contract is reviewed by a committee to consider opportunities for re-deployment. As a minimum this should involve the Line Manager and relevant HRBP, and, where appropriate, other relevant stakeholders. Discussions at management meetings should also be considered to advertise availability to those with vacancies | FTC | June 18 | * Reliable data provided to Schools and P&S Departments
* Process established and operating in Schools and P&S Departments
 | H | D | HR  |
| **2.7**(2.2)(3.2)(3.3)(5.4) | Once the Business World system is live, monitor for staff who roll from one FTC to another (potentially with breaks in service). This may include (repeated) contract extensions. Once we have the necessary data, review whether or not this case requires a specific set of guidelines and/or policies.  | FTC | CR From June 18 | * Data collected
* Review complete
* Existing policies implemented effectively or new guidelines/ policies produced as appropriate
 | H | E | HR |

**Table 3: Career Progression and Promotion**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **3.1**(2.6) (3.2)(3.4)(3.5)(3.8)(4.10) | * Ensure careers advice is available to researchers from across the College is clearly articulated and communicated via relevant websites
* Where it doesn’t currently exist, develop processes to engage with alumni if researchers are interested in moving to a different sector or vice versa
 | All – primarily PhD, PDRA, RF, FTC  | Dec 18Dec 18 | * Information available on the web
* Web hits (number to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Number of researchers accessing the careers service (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)

Process established | LL | DD | HRSS (D&AO,BGRS) |
| **3.2**(2.6) | Clarify the College’s expectations around academic promotion points – including* What level of research output is expected in the context of the discipline? (contextualised to consider the role individual circumstances may play)
* How are outputs reviewed from a quality perspective – needs to be sensitive to disciplinary differences – and the role and responsibilities of the professoriate
* What training are staff at particular levels expected to have had? How is this monitored? How would these expectations relate to training received at different institutions?

Ensure that these expectations reflect the balance of academic duties and that researchers can spend significant proportions of time on other academic duties, either ad hoc or for extended periods, which can have a negative effect on research output and income and that different balances across academic duties are consideredSee also table 8(3) | All except PhD | Dec 19CR until Dec 20MRP Dec 20 | * Expectations freely available in a sensible place on the web – use pictorial methods where possible to break up the information (consider if uptake should be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Briefings delivered re: academic promotion, including for line managers (100% of line managers who have been in post for >12 months received these briefings by Dec 20)
* benchmark against national best practice such as that developed to implement the DORA declaration
 | H | E | HR (Schools) |
| **3.3**(2.6)(5.3)(5.4)(5.5)(5.6) | * Have all relevant subjects (including e.g. H&S, E&D, ethics and integrity, public engagement and impact, open access etc) as a part of research inductions (see table 4 line 1)
* Plan a training programme for refreshers at all promotion points (including to PI)
 | AllECR, MCR Senior Researcher | Jun 21 Dec 21  | Comprehensive research induction framework produced and readily available(induction uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)Training programme available and offered as part of the promotion process and the new grant starter kit | MM | D | HR (HRSS) |
| **3.4**(2.3) (2.6) | Develop institutional framework for facilitating promotion and improve access to information for staff about the promotion process – for example:* produce FAQ documents
* initiate open Q&A sessions with members of the previous year’s panel
* identify promotion advisors - people to provide informed advice about the right balance of activities (possibly several years) before you apply
* include information about working towards promotion in the induction pack
* provide training to mentors and Line Managers (see Table 7 line 4) about the promotion process
* clarify processes for applicants to obtain feedback

See also table 8(3) | ECR, MCR, Senior Researcher | July 20MRPMar 22 | * Framework available and used across the College
* Training takes place at least annually, at an appropriate time to support applications for the annual promotion rounds
* Information readily available
* Consider metrics about successful application numbers as success criteria
 | H | E | HR  |
| **3.5**(2.3) (2.6) (3.2)(3.3)(3.5) | Career progression and promotion processes need to be 100% transparent with clear, independent guidance available from outside department/School where appropriate. Review promotion processes against national benchmarks to identify areas for improvement in terms of equality of opportunity for all individualsSee also table 8(3)It should be noted that career progression and promotion relates to all forms of pay reward through salary increase including all forms of non-annual increments and one-off discretionary payments  | All except PhD | July 20MRPMar 22  | * Processes clarified and guidance produced
* Process for an individual to obtain advice defined
* Current processes reviewed against national benchmarks
* Opportunities for improvement identified and implemented
* benchmark against national best practice such as that developed to implement the DORA declaration
 | H | E | HR  |
| **3.6**(2.6)(3.5) | Draft and publicise a clear College policy about out of sequence promotion processes and review whether or not the promotion process could run more frequently to minimise the need for an out-of-sequence process | All except PhD | Jun 22 | Policy exists, is publicised and is readily available.  | H | E | HR  |
| **3.7**(2.1)(2.2) (2.6)(3.1)(3.3)(5.1)(5.2)(5.3)(5.6) | Clarify the process for re-grading staff on Research only grant-funded contracts; and ensure that this process is fair and transparent. Re-grading may be within the same salary band or may involve moving to a higher salary bandSee also table 8(3) | FTCs | Mar 19 MRPMar 20 | Policy exists, is publicised and is readily available. | H | E | HR (HRSS, RGCO)  |
| **3.8**(2.3) (2.6)(3.9)(4.10)(4.14)(5.6) | * Review how the AR and PDR process can be best used to support an individual’s career ambitions, by enabling effective career planning and the development of goals as part of promotion planning; develop supporting guidance
* Ensure that guidance about the AR and PDR process is clear and accessible and that other processes for supporting career development, including research interviews and mentoring, are clearly referenced within such schemes
 | All except PhD | Mar 18MRPMar 20 Mar 18 MRPMar 20 | * Guidance exists and is freely available, and is referenced in associated HR documentation, such as induction, probation, appraisal (i.e. performance review/PDR)
* Guidance exists and is freely available, and is referenced in associated HR documentation, such as induction, probation, appraisal (i.e. performance review/PDR)
 | HH | EE | HR HR |
| **3.9**(4.13) | Review representation of contract research staff and PhD students on Departmental, School and College committees and identify Committees where additional representation is requiredEnsure processes to appoint student reps are fair and transparent in every caseSee also table 8(3)  | PhD, PDRA, RF | Dec 21Dec 21 | * Changes made to representation or explanation given for why there is no change
* Review periodically for effectiveness

Common process defined and publicised | MH | EE | HRSS (BGRS, Schools)  |
| **3.10**(6.3)(6.4)(6.5) (6.8) | Develop FAQs in relation to flexible working requests and their implications and ensure these are communicated to all Schools – include clarification about if/how a return to full time working can be protected if an individual requests to work part time for a periodSee also table 8(3) | All – NB separate document will be required for PhD students | June 18 | * FAQ document available and has been circulated and made available on cognate websites
* Staff survey questions
 | H | E | HR, BGRS |
| **3.11**(3.1)(3.3)(3.5)(3.7)(3.9)(5.2)(5.4)(5.5) | Clarify the role public engagement, outreach, impact and other 3rd mission activities play in career progression and promotion. Produce guidance and identify mechanisms to ensure this information is fully and accurately captured in College systems (e.g. Business World) | All except PhD | Sept 22Jun 21MRPSept 22 | Clear guidance drafted and freely available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)College systems capable of recording this information in a systematic way | HH | EE | HR |
| **3.12**(6.3)(6.4) | Clarify College expectations around long-term cover for a colleague (e.g. extended sickness leave, parental leave etc.)See also table 8(3) | All | Dec 21MRPSept 22 | * Guidance drafted and freely available
* College systems capable of recording this information in a systematic way
 | H | E | HR |

**Table 4: Inductions**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **4.1**(3.6) | * Fully map induction processes from across the College
* Develop an institutional induction framework for staff, including research, which can be tailored to meet local needs
* need different inductions- institutional/school/dept, research, teaching etc.
* balance of online and face-to-face; link to ECR network and BGRS but remember not all new staff fall into these categories – define processes to ensure more senior new staff don’t miss out
* create/enhance Research Support Website
* consider utilising resources like Moodle
* information about research related policies and procedures needs to be included
* Review induction frameworks regularly
 | New | Mar 20MRP Mar 22 | * Task and Finish Group (with academic representatives from all Schools) to undertake mapping exercise and oversee implementation
* Map created
* Frameworks developed
* Reviews happen
* Staff survey data
* benchmark against national best practice such as that developed to implement the DORA declaration
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HRSS (HR) |
| **4.2**(3.6)(4.10)(5.5) | * Link inductions to workshop series mentioned in table 7 line 26
* Include information about Health and Safety information and risk assessments in inductions
 | New | Mar 20Mar 20 | Workshops linked to induction programmeInformation in inductionsInformation included in inductions | MH | DE | HRSSH&S |
| **4.3**(2.3)(3.6)(5.5) | Link required line management training (see table 7 line 4) to induction programme – ensure line managers know what new staff need to know and how to access the information | All  | Jun 20  | Line manager training linked to induction programme  | M | E | HR  |

**Table 5 Mentoring**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **5.1**(2.3)(3.8)(4.14)(5.5)(5.6) | * Review local practice and develop clear guidance about mentoring pathways and the different mentoring mechanisms available
* Clarify what is expected of mentors, including the role of the professoriate in mentoring provision
* Develop training programme for mentors in mentorship if need is identified
 | All  | Dec 18Dec 18Dec 18 | * Produce College level guidance about all forms of mentorship which is readily available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Clear statement of expectations produced and communicated to the professoriate
* Training programme developed if required (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HRSS (HR, Schools) |
| **5.2**(2.1) (2.2)(3.8)(4.14)(5.5)(5.6) | Clarify processes for assigning mentors (especially to new staff and staff on FTCs and including staff on temp teaching contracts) | All – especially FTC, PDRA, RF, ECR, New | Dec 19 | Produce College level guidance about how to access a mentor (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS (HR, Schools) |
| **5.3**(3.8)(4.14)(5.5)(5.6) | PDRAs & RFs may well have access to a supervisor and not be automatically assigned a mentor. In practice they should have access to both as required. Clarify the College processes and expectations here | PDRA, RF,  | Mar 19 | Produce College level guidance (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS |
| **5.4**(2.3)(3.8)(4.14)(5.1)(5.5)(5.6) | Ensure mentors are confident to discuss issues around research ethics, research integrity and research governance – provide guidance about where they can go for advice if necessary | All | Jun 19 | Guidance produced and available on a dedicated research mentors section of the website (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS |
| **5.5**(3.8)(4.14)(5.1)(5.5)(5.6) | Apply same review and dissemination processes to PhD student mentoring – e.g. buddy systems | PhD | Dec 20CR until Jun 22 | * Review complete
* Information disseminated via BGRS website
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | BGRS (HRSS) |
| **5.6**(2.1)(3.6)(3.7)(4.10)(5.4)(5.5) | Review PGR progression good practice and map across to ECRs where appropriateSee also table 2 line 1 (closely related activity) | ECR | Jun 22 | * Review complete
* Information disseminated via ECR network
 | H | E | HRSS (BGRS) |

**Table 6 Supervision & PhD Student-Specific Issues**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority****L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **6.1**(3.6) | Local inductions for PhD students seem to work well but PhD students would value more information about organisational policies and procedures relating to research through a mix of face-to-face and online/packs of materialsEnsure induction also includes information about the Training Needs Analysis process | PhD | Dec 18CR until Jun 22 | * Information available on BGRS website
* Pack of College-level induction materials available for supervisors and used at BGRS induction events (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Define programme to disseminate this information to PhD students
 | M | E | BGRS |
| **6.2**(2.3)(4.14) | Review supervisors code of practice to ensure fit for purpose | ECR, MCR, Senior | Dec 19MRP Dec 20 | Review undertaken, any necessary changes made (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |
| **6.3**(2.3)(3.8)(3.9)(5.5)(5.6) | Review and enhance current supervisor training provision - establish a rolling programme of supervisor training and establish a mechanism to ensure supervisors attend refreshers at suitable intervals (e.g. every 5 years if continually supervising) | All (PhD may wish to attend as a career development opportunity) | CR annually until Dec 21 | Rolling programme established (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |
| **6.4**(3.8)(3.9)(5.5)(5.6) | Provide greater clarity about the role of the second supervisor and how they are allocated and reflect this in the code of practice, repeat for joint supervision | All | Mar 18MRPDec 19 | Put this information onto the BGRS website (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |
| **6.5**(2.3)(5.1) | Ensure supervisors are confident to discuss issues around research ethics, research integrity and research governance – provide guidance about where they can go for advice if necessary | All | Jun 20MRPJun 22 | Guidance produced and available on BGRS website (see also table 7) (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |
| **6.6**(5.1)(5.3) | Produce guidance about the role of PhD students and the Research Centres/Institutes  | PhD primarily | Jun 18 MRPDec 20 | Guidance produced and agreed by Research centre/institute directors and made available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |

**Table 7 Training**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **7.1**(2.3)(3.3)(3.5)(3.7)(4.10)(5.1)(5.2)(5.4)(5.5)(5.6) | Create a new grant starter kit for PIs and put information about it on the Research Support section of the website – include information such as how to recruit to researcher posts (including accessing the necessary training), how to go about sorting out a period of parental leave, how and when PDRs should be done (and how to get trained as a PDR reviewer), probation processes, finance, admin, ethics, H&S etc. Include a check list which includes a change log so people quickly access information about what has changed since their last grant. Consider the training requirements of new CoIs and develop any required training | All – but primarily ECR, MCR and Senior Researchers | Mar 19Jun 19 | Kit created and readily available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)Either decision taken that specific training is not required OR training developed and delivered | HM | ED | HRSS (RGCO)HRSS (HR & RGCO) |
| **7.2**(2.3)(3.3)(3.5)(3.7)(4.10)(5.1)(5.2)(5.4)(5.5)(5.6) | Create a new student starter kit for supervisors and put information about it on the BGRS website – include information such as recruitment training, training needs analysis, how to go about sorting out a period of parental leave, transfer processes, finance, admin, ethics, H&S etc. Include a check list which includes a change log so people quickly access information about what has changed since their last supervision.  | All except PhD | Mar 20 | Kit created and readily available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS |
| **7.3**(2.3) | Review processes to ensure members of Promotion Panels have received appropriate training, including in equality & diversity and unconscious bias. Ensure the process to obtain this training is as efficient as possible (see table 1 line 2) | All | Dec 18 | * Review complete and published
* Changes to process to ensure maximum efficiency made
* 20 Promotion Panel members (c.80%) have received unconscious bias training
* 20 Promotion Panel members (c.80%) have completed equality and diversity training
 | M | E | HR  |
| **7.4**(1.3)(2.2)(2.3)(3.3)(3.5)(3.7)(4.10)(5.1)(5.2)(5.4)(5.5)(5.6) | Establish a required training programme for new line managers to address questions including supportive line management, effective people management, guidance on how to balance workloads fairly and equitably, etc. | All except PhD | Mar 20Mar 22 | * Training programme established and starting to be delivered – (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* 100% of new Heads of Department invited to Heads of Department training programme
* 1 programme scheduled each year

Participation rates reviewed. | H | E | HR  |
| **7.5**(5.3) | Establish a mandatory training programme for members of Departmental, School and College level ethics committees  | Committee members | June 18 | Training programme established and starting to be delivered (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS (HR) |
| **7.6** | Review and Refresh the College stress policy and the Colleges approach to stress risk assessment  | All | June 19 | Review undertaken revised process implemented | H | E | H&S (HR) |
| **7.7**(2.3)(5.3) | Define a clear set of common expectations for Research Centre Directors and make these availableDevelop a programme of required training for research centre/institute directors, supervisors and PIs in Health & Safety and research ethics and the College processes to deal with these issues. Research mentors to be made aware that this training opportunity exists and is available to them. | AllAll | June 18Jun 19MRP Jun 20 | * Guidelines available
* Number of downloads/webhits (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
* Training programme established and starting to be delivered
* Effective monitoring systems developed to track who has received training
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | HH | EE | HRSSHR (H&S & HRSS) |
| **7.8**(2.3)(2.6)(3.3)(3.7)(3.8)(3.9)(4.10)(5.6) | Review current training programmes across the College (central and local) to ensure they are fit for purpose (including mapping to external frameworks) and identify gaps in provision, including:* Map existing training to Vitae’s RDF
* Check that training which is required is easily available and if the requirement to undertake it is appropriate
* Establish which training elements support teaching, research or 3rd mission activities to support staff looking to boost an area for promotion purposes
* Investigate and implement mechanisms to improve participation
* Ensure gaps in current training provision are minimised
* Put all information about both central and local training provision into one place and make sure this is accessible – link through from cognate websites e.g. Research Support, ECR Network, BGRS etc.
 | All | Mar 19 | * Review of documentation complete, gaps identified available
* Existing training mapped to Vitae’s RDF
* Processes in place to ensure future training mapped to Vitae’s RDF
* Clear understanding of the College’s training offer
* Coordinated (institutional) approach to training opportunities
* Changes made to provision
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HRSS (HR, Careers, BGRS) |
| **7.9**(2.6)(3.3)(3.9) | Make information about researcher training opportunities (offered Centrally and locally) available on relevant websites – BGRS, ECR Network and Research Support | All | Sept 19 | Information on the websites (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS (BGRS) |
| **7.10**(2.6) | Investigate and clarify the process for staff or PhD students to access taught modules for training purposes – investigate alternative cost models to make this financially sustainable | All | Jun 18 | * New cost model established
* Increasing numbers of staff and students accessing these courses (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | M | D | HRSS (HR, BGRS, Schools, Finance) |
| **7.11**(2.6)(4.11)(4.12) | Review practice to ensure all PhD students, PDRAs, RFs and ECRs can access suitable teaching training even if they don’t have enough hours to do a Cert HE programme | PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR | Annual CR until Dec 21 | Training model developed and implemented (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | BGRS (CTPLT) |
| **7.12**(2.6)(3.5)(3.7)(3.8)(3.9) | Produce clear guidance about the College’s expectations for how much time PhD Students and staff on Research Only contracts should spend undertaking training (both project specific and generic) and what, in this context, constitutes training activities | PhD, PDRA, RF | Jun 18 | Guidance produced and available (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS (BGRS) |
| **7.13**(2.6) | Provide clear, School specific guidance on how researchers can access funds to attend a conference  | All – primarily PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR, New | Dec 17 | Guidance produced and readily available. | H | E | HRSS (Schools) |
| **7.14**(2.6)(4.11) | Establish a mechanism to recognise training given at a previous institutionPublicise this information as part of induction processes  | All | Jun 21 | * Mechanism identified
* Information included in induction process
 | M | D | HR  |
| **7.15**(2.6)(3.1)(3.9)(5.4)(5.5)(5.6) | All PhD students should have access generic training in bibliographic and computing skills, language skills, ethical and legal issues, skills for engaging with the public, exploitation of IP, communication and networking skills, leadership, research management and relationship management, professional and careers development. Review current provision to ensure it is fit for purpose and identify gaps. Develop a training programme to fill any gaps  | PhD | Mar 18Jun 20 | Review completed* Training programme designed
* Training programme delivered
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | BGRS |
| **7.16**(2.6)(3.3)(3.9)(6.8) | Current training timetables are perceived to be too rigid. We need to introduce some flexibility – e.g. by covering the essentials in an online training forum but follow up with the full training session as soon as possible. (Could even only allow the initial qualification to be taken once and only live for a set period to make people follow up.)* If a training course is oversubscribed it should be run again quickly and out of sequence if necessary
 | All | Mar 19 | * Mechanism to introduce flexibility identified and courses where it could be applied identified
* New mechanism tested by a pilot exercise and refined
* New mechanism rolled out to all suitable training programmes
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HR |
| **7.17**(2.6)(3.3)(3.8)(4.10) | Seek mechanisms to pro-actively offer relevant courses to researchers, such as time management, project management | All – primarily PDRA, RF, ECR | Jun 19Jun 21 | * Mechanisms identified and tested, rolled out if suitable
* 100% of researchers in receipt of direct communication at least once a term as a minimum

Participation rates reviewed | H | E | HR  |
| **7.18**(2.6)(7.4) | Increase institutional involvement in relevant networks and programmes e.g. Vitae | All – primarily PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR | Dec 19 | Greater institutional involvement | M | D | HRSS (HR, BGRS) |
| **7.19**(2.6)(5.1)(5.3)(5.5) | Plan integrated training programme which address issues around grant writing collectively: * how to write a grant
* how to read a call
* how to review a grant
* how panels work
* what are pathways to impact
* how to write about research for a non-academic audience
* the difference between writing a grant and a paper
* quality vs quantity
 | All – primarily PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR | Jul 18 | Training programme devised and delivered(uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | H | E | HRSS (HR) |
| **7.20**(2.6)(3.3) | Make all training events available to PhD students on the same basis as for staff | PhD | Oct 18  | Training opportunities made available to PhD students (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)  | H | E | HR |
| **7.21**(2.6)(3.3) | Integrate the research-specific training offered by the BGRS and careers service with the more generic offer from HR to ensure we deliver a complete programme to all stakeholders | PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR | Sept 19 | * Review undertaken and completed
* Integrated programme delivered
 | H | E | HRSS (HR, Careers, BGRS) |
| **7.22**(2.6)(5.4) | Ensure any ethics training provision takes an holistic view of the ethics process and considers ethical issues in teaching and 3rd mission activities as well as research | All | Mar 20 | * Review offered training to ensure it is fit for purpose
* Train the trainer activities as appropriate
* (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | H | E | HRSS |
| **7.23**(2.6)(3.9) | Ensure all new staff are recorded in the HR system with their correct hours/FTE, departmental affiliation and line manager to ensure necessary training can be targeted effectively | All | Oct 18 | 100% of new staff records include correct departmental affiliation and line manager  | H | E | HR |
| **7.24**(4.10) | Produce guidance about College-level expectations about editorial support/internal peer review for people producing papers and research grants | All but primarily PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR | Dec 18 | Guidance produced and disseminated (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)  | H | E | HRSS |
| **7.25**(2.6)(3.8) | Develop a series of short workshops from various PS departments e.g. library over the term/year to maintain regular dissemination of best/new practice | All | Dec 19 | Coherent Workshop series established and takes place annually (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes) | L | D | HR  |
| **7.26** | Incorporate the relevant recommendations from the College’s review of PGR provision into this process where appropriate | PhD | CR until Sept 22 | An annual report is produced for SPC about the implementation of this report, this should include on-going reports about this action point  | H | E | BGRS |
| **7.27**(2.3)(3.9)(4.10)(5.6) | Ensure that the shared ownership of CPD and training is reflected in appraisal (i.e. performance review and PDR processes)  | All | Jun 18 | Appraisal (i.e. performance review/PDR) documents reviewed and amended to improve processes for recording training needs and training attendance | H | E | HR |
| **7.28**(3.1)(3.5)(5.6) | Ensure all future training is mapped to Vitae’s RDF | All | Sept 22 | Training can be mapped | H | E | HR, BGRS, Careers, ER, Schools |
| **7.29**(1.4)(3.3)(3.4)(3.9)(3.11)(5.5) | Review and ensure the College offers training in the areas identified through the CROS, PIRLS and PRES Surveys | All  | Jun 22 | * Review complete
* Any training not offered added to the programme within 2 years (uptake to be defined for monitoring purposes)
 | M | D | HRSS//BGRS/HR |

**Table 8 Institutional and Infrastructure**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ref** | **Action** | **Constituency** | **Completion** | **Success measures** | **Priority** **L/M/H** | **E/D** | **Responsible** |
| **8.1**(4.10) | Undertake a review of all researchers to ascertain how they would like to receive communications about research-related issues | All | Dec 19 | * Review undertaken
* New processes identified
* New processes implemented
 | H | E | ER |
| **8.2**(6.10) | Define process to ensure institutional action plans work synergistically and minimise duplication | All | Jun 19  | Mapping undertaken | M | E | HR |
| **8.3**(6.5)(6.8)(6.10) | Ensure understanding and application of Disability Confident Scheme is communicated across business areas, and managers are supported to apply this in a way which supports the College’s Equality Objectives | All | Dec 18  | * Guidance provided on the Disability Confident Scheme (formerly Two Ticks) through the HR website and as part of recruitment processes
* Review recruitment processes to ensure that anyone recruiting signs off that they have considered Disability Confident criteria when setting the essential criteria
 | M | E | HR |
| **8.4**(3.1)(3.3)(3.5)(3.7)(5.5) | * Review policy on acting-up to increase transparency, openness and fairness in this area
* Review policy on secondments to increase transparency, openness and fairness in this area
 | AllAll | Mar 18Mar 18 | Policy reviewed, any revisions made (if appropriate) and readily availablePolicy reviewed, any revisions made (if appropriate) and readily available | LL | DD | HRHR |
| **8.5** | Develop a clear and consistent policy/framework about how information submitted as part of College/School/Departmental consultations should be used and how feedback should be addressed to stakeholders | All | Dec 21 | Framework developed and communicated and made readily available | L | D | HR  |
| **8.6** | Produce guidance on how Subject Librarians should be used in research  | All | Sept 19 | * Subject Librarians consulted
* Guidance produced and disseminated
 | L | D | HRSS |
| **8.7**(7.4) | Promote Vitae resources to appropriate stakeholders | All but PhD, PDRA, RF, ECR primarily | Sept 19  | Include this information on research support webpages, BGRS and ECR network pages | M | D | HRSS (BGRS, HR) |
| **8.8** | Look to improve the library website to make searching the databases and catalogues as straightforward as possible  | All | Sept 22 | Search functionality reviewed and improved if possible within technical constraints | H | E | ER |
| **8.9**(7.1) | Undertake focus groups from the gap analysis part of this process with staff whose primary function is not research. Identify any additional and specific gaps and incorporate into this action plan from year 2.  | T&S and P&S staff | Sept 21 | Focus groups completed, any actions identified are prioritised, and incorporated into this Action Plan | H | E | HRSS, HR |
| **8.10**(7.1) | Investigate how local good practice identified through the gap analysis process should be disseminated more widely as appropriate | All | Dec 18 | If appropriate, good practice disseminated  | M | D | HRSS, HR |
| **8.11** | Set up task and finish group to review College Room booking processes for research and recommend improvements,  | All | June 19 | New process designed and effectively implemented | H | E | HRSS |
| **8.12** | Repeat full gap analysis for 6 year re-submission of HRER award | All | Sept 22 | 6 year re-submission submitted on time | H | E | HRSS, HR |