



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers Annual Report 2022

The University of Lincoln became a signatory of the Vitae Concordat in February 2020. The Vitae Concordat has three defining principles:

- 1) Environment and Culture
- 2) Employment
- 3) Professional and career development

For each of these Principles, the Concordat outlines the key responsibilities of the four main stakeholder groups: researchers, manager of researchers, institutions and funders, in order to improve the employment and support for researchers and research careers in HE. The importance of this is reiterated in the government's ambitions in the R&D roadmap '...identify actions we can take to increase support for early career researchers and giving them the skills, knowledge and experience needed to progress their careers inside or outside academia.'

The University of Lincoln's key objectives for the second year as signatory of the Vitae Concordat were:

- a) to increase engagement of researchers to the consultation group up to 30 members
- b) running the CEDARS survey (a national survey which would allow us to benchmark against others in the sector) in the summer of 2021. The aim was to increase response rate to up to at least 100 responses
- c) increase training offering for early career researchers, and continue working through the different actions identified in the Action Plan:

<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/researchatlincoln/concordatforresearchers/>

Research and Enterprise and HR set-up a working group in early 2020. This group has received continued support throughout 2021 by a larger consultation group formed by researchers at different stages of their career. The consultation group, which increased from 24 to 35 members in 2021, was involved in the activity described below:

- The researcher consultation group met twice during 2021; their commitment to this activity was crucial in increasing awareness of the Vitae Concordat amongst the researcher community; contributing towards review and discussion of actions completed; and sharing ideas and best practice for actions in progress.

- Promotion and dissemination of the Culture, Employment and Development of Academic Researchers Survey (CEDARS) 2021. The survey received 107 responses and were included within the national aggregate results allowing a benchmarking exercise to take place.
- A page on the corporate website which details both the HR in Excellence Award and the Vitae Concordat signatory obligations was updated to include the Annual Report 2021. The webpage continues to be widely publicised via HR Line, Staff News and PGR-targeted communications.

Progress made against the Action Plan during 2021 includes an increase in mental health and wellbeing support across the university, increased training and development opportunities for the researcher community including at PGR/ECR level, and increased opportunities for leadership and management development. A detailed account of all the activity undertaken in 2021 can be consulted in Appendix 1.

The plan for the forthcoming year is to continue to deliver the Action Plan, supported by the findings of both CEDARS responses and the recent UK Research Supervision Survey (UKRSS) report (<http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/uk-research-supervision-survey.aspx>). This will be carried out with the help of both the joint Research and Enterprise and HR working group and the larger, researcher-focused, consultation group.

Key objectives for 2022 are:

- a) to increase engagement of researchers, with a focus on early career researchers, in the consultation group up to 40 members
- b) With HR colleagues, work towards implementing actions resulting from CEDARS findings
- c) increase training offering for early career researchers. We will also continue working through the different actions identified in the Action Plan:
<https://www.lincoln.ac.uk/home/researchatlincoln/concordatforresearchers/>
- d) With HR colleagues submit the 2-year review for the European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award by 27 January 2023.

Appendix 1	Annual Report – The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers – Detailed activity
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Environment and Culture	Researcher consultation meetings took place on 25/01/21, and 13/10/21 with continued engagement throughout the year. Members are regularly encouraged to extend membership to other researchers, in particular early career researchers. The group will continue to meet twice per year to review actions, progress made, and contribute views and experiences.
	The university ran the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS) 2021 in June 2020 and received 107 responses. The institutional results of the survey have been benchmarked against the aggregate results.
	Information sessions on the Researcher Development Concordat are regularly included in Doctoral School events (Doctoral School Induction and Life Beyond the PhD events). Information on the Researcher Development Concordat is also included in Doctoral School induction literature.
	Continual Researcher Development Concordat promotion to academic research staff via Research and Industrial Partnerships newsletter, HR newsletter and through relevant seminars and events, including a recent Eleanor Glanville Centre-led research seminar on Equality, diversity, and inclusion for early career researchers.
	Increase in wellbeing and mental health initiatives within the Doctoral School including facilitator-led sessions (for example, imposter syndrome and resilience), and mental health week sessions and activities. These initiatives are aimed at supporting PGRs and ECRs.
	New principles in use for supporting new PGR mental health through a long and thin induction both at college and Doctoral School level. The project was funded by the Student Mental Health Research Network (SMaRteN) and led by Dr Trish Jackman: New guidance to support Doctoral researchers' mental health. – lili (lincoln.ac.uk)
	Creation of ECR mailing list to share opportunities both internal and external to the university.
	We now have a group of 99 mental Health first Aiders. Their role is to be a point of contact and support for any member of staff experiencing a mental ill health issue or emotional distress.
	Our One Community Values were established in 2020, there is now an action plan currently being drawn up to establish how these values become embedded as part of our university community.
	The University received the Race Equality Charter Bronze Award for its efforts to tackle racial inequality during August 2021. The University is one of only 21 UK universities to hold the Bronze Award status from Advance HE, which recognises the work the University is doing to identify and reflect on institutional and cultural barriers facing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and students.
	University Ethics – Introduction to LEAS course is now mandatory for all PGRs.

	Wellbeing strategy – HomeHub was developed to support staff during lockdowns to provide information on wellbeing initiatives, guidance and advice for employees. These have been expanded upon to include wellbeing toolkits for a variety of different areas.
	Postgraduate Research Experience survey ran from 22 March to 16 May 2021 and provided an opportunity for Postgraduate Research students to feedback on their experience in a range of topics including Supervision, Research culture, Progress and Assessment, Responsibilities, Research skills and Professional development.
	External collaboration funding bid opportunity made available for doctoral researchers in partnership with UCL doctoral researchers – two grants available for UoL/UCL collaborations.
	Updated training available to academic staff and PGRs on Research Integrity in Practice. The university continues to offer research integrity and ethics training to all staff and ensure researchers are aware of the requirement to submit an ethics application via Lincoln Ethics Application System (LEAS) to sign to say they have read and understood the University's Code of Practice for Research and Research Ethics Policy.
	Review of the Employee Assistance Programme provision, which has resulted in moving providers to CareFirst that offers extensive resources available include articles on health, advice and support for issues at home, management support tools, questionnaires and self-management tools for your wellbeing, including mental health, as well as 24/7 helpline.
Employment	Additional training and support made available for supervisors, including supervisor ethics training, supervising international students, as well as supervisor training refresher sessions taking place locally
	The Annual Academic Planning Review (AAPR) has aligned the previous objective setting processes of the Academic Appraisal (ADA), Individual Research Plans (IRP), Individual Scholarship & Professional Practice Plans (ISPP) and Academic Workload Model (AWM) to create a clear and streamlined framework. This was rolled out in July 2021 to enable academics to set objectives for the 21/22 academic year.
	Guidance has been produced to support managers and staff in the blended move back to working on campus, this will continue to evolve and has been supported by a pilot training programme for managers around “Leading and Learning in an Agile World”.
	The Academic promotions round opened for 21/22 which saw 40 academics promoted, 28 of which were Associate Professors on T&R or Professors on a research route.
	Recruitment and Selection training was revised and now includes a section specifically on the recruitment of research staff
	Responsible Metrics policy is now included in an online training module. The Responsible Metrics policy was cascaded through SLT and academic promotions panels were familiarised with the Responsible Metrics policy.
	The short-term research cover process was implemented in Spring 2021.

Professional and career development	Life Beyond PhD events run in April 2021 – alumni attended to talk about their own career paths and give advice. Within this series, the Doctoral School promoted schemes such as the EGC Pipeline, and external opportunities with the Brilliant Club. Further events planned for 2022.
	An Enterprise Summer School ran in June 2021 with the aim to equip PGRs and ECRs with the skills required to commercialise their research. Another similar event will run in May 2022.
	Regular email comms sent to the researcher community promoting the Researcher Development Programme and Academic Development Programme, as well as other initiatives and opportunities.
	Research First week took place in both March and November 2021 and included sessions on funding offered by the British Academy, Leverhulme Trust and the European Research Council as well as developing external partnerships. The Research Development team also run regular funding surgeries for post-docs.
	New training sessions included in Doctoral School’s Researcher Development Programme including Public Engagement for PGRs, Co-creation for PGRs, Working with a Supervisor, Research Integrity, and Introduction to LEAS.
	A Research Themes Showcase ran in June 2021 via LIAS, with the aim of bringing researchers together to both get a feel for what others are doing in a particular research area as well as to feed into and expand the community of researchers comprising each Theme.
	New sessions included in the Academic Development Programme such as Consultancy, Working with Industry, and Developing Research Impact Literacy training to reflect a change in UKRI processes around impact in funding bids.
	“Inclusive Leadership” training has been rolled out as a mandatory training course to all line managers and seeks to equip managers to ensure they are leading in an inclusive manner.
	“Insightful conversations” training has been piloted in many areas to encourage staff to have conversations around race and racial inequalities. This will look to be rolled out as part of our mandatory offering to all staff.
	A Leadership and Management Training Review has begun to establish a clear development journey for all our leaders and managers at the different levels they operate at.
	Management Engagement groups continue to run to bring managers together to discuss key current relevant topics.
	Academic Development Programme is now signposted in Departmental Induction Checklist for academic staff.
	The academic workload model process was reviewed in 2021 and processes consolidated to create the Annual Academic Planning Review. 10 days of professional development are included in the categories for workloading. IRPs and ISPPS have been included in the Annual Academic Planning Review system.