

University of Oxford HR Excellence in Research Award

Action plan 2016-2018: review *and* Action plan 2018-20: new actions

Aim	Action	Lead	Timescale	Success measure
1. <u>Representation</u> (Concordat principles 2,5,7) To build on OxRSS' presence on key committees at departmental and divisional level, and to create new and strengthen existing links with key personnel and groups within departments; and to ensure cohesion between these mechanisms so that researchers' voices have influence at all levels of the University.				
Previous actions 2016-18				
Strengthened links with departmental research staff groups/societies and committees	OxRSS reps to maintain contacts list and assign liaisons (to include e.g. departmental postdoc networks, Athena SWAN working groups, departmental HR managers)	OxRSS	HT 2017	All departments/faculties have at least one named contact
OxRSS' role as a representative body for researchers to be widely recognised, to be achieved via publicity and increased engagement	Develop OxRSS comms strategy	OxRSS	TT 2016	Engagement in events, consultations, and other OxRSS work remains sustainable and representative of broader population

	Create network of research staff 'voices' (real and virtual) to inform policy and set agenda	OxRSS	TT 2017	% survey respondents who say they have heard of OxRSS increases over time (Q46)
Progress against 2016-18 actions				
<p>OxRSS representation has expanded and strengthened over the last two years. Forty two departments and faculties now have an OxRSS rep. OxRSS is now formally represented on University committees, including Research and Innovation Committee and the MPLS Divisional Board. In the 2016 Staff Survey 42% of respondents said that they had heard of OxRSS, and the expanded and high-profile events programme is helping to increase this.</p> <p>OxRSS 'voice reps' are now a valued and prominent network for giving research staff a voice and for liaising with the central University. Voice reps discussed and fed back on a variety of issues including the Employer Justified Retirement Age consultation, Race Equality Charter and Athena SWAN action plan submissions. They have also formed formal sub-groups to consider and advise the University on particular issues, such as on a planned housing project, Careers Service provision for researchers, and have instigated and are jointly organizing with the University a conference on Brexit.</p> <p>OxRSS reps are now also regular participants at the termly welcome event for new researchers. In this way we enhance new researchers' awareness of the research staff society at Oxford.</p>				
New actions 2018-20				
Strengthened links with departmental research staff groups/societies and committees	Appoint rep in remaining departments/faculties not currently represented	OxRSS	End TT 2018	All departments have at least one named contact.

OxRSS' role as a representative body for researchers to be embedded	Continue and consider representation of researchers on decision-making mechanisms: (a) OxRSS are currently co-opted members of Research and Innovation Committee, the Equality and Diversity Panel and one Divisional Board (MPLS) and sit on the Medical Sciences Research Staff Advisory Group (b) OxRSS representation on informal working groups continues (e.g. housing working group)	Council Secretariat/Divs	Ongoing	Sustain co-opted representation of OxRSS on University and divisional Committees as appropriate (currently 1 Committee of Council, 1 Panel, 1 Divisional Board and 1 Divisional Research Staff Advisory Board). Continue representation on informal working groups as appropriate.
Ensure that researchers' voices input and influence the impact of Brexit to ensure high-quality research continues in Oxford	Run a one-day conference to produce written submissions on the issues that ought to be considered in the Brexit negotiations	OxRSS and Research Services	End HT 2018 By end of MT 2018	Conference held and minimum attendance target of 50 researchers reached. Documents with recommendations for the issues needing consideration to facilitate high-quality research in UK Universities produced and made available.
Nurture new partnership between OxRSS careers sub-group and the Careers Service towards sustainable collaboration driven by researcher priorities.	Establish termly/bi-termly meetings with lead Careers Adviser and colleagues planning specific events (e.g Insight into Academia seminar series, Careers Conference for Researchers and International Careers Day)	Careers Service / OxRSS	Ongoing	Working group membership retained (one representative per division), most members and linked Careers Advisers consider the group to be influential and effective in achieving joint work measured by termly anonymous poll.

2. Transparency and equality of opportunity (Concordat principles 2,3,4,5,6)

To ensure that researchers are aware of relevant policies on e.g. eligibility for grant applications, teaching opportunities, research strategies, and other career and professional development opportunities, and have equal access to and support for taking advantage of them; or that where access is limited that this is communicated proactively and transparently.

Previous actions 2016-18				
Promote consistent policy on advertising teaching vacancies	Gather information from colleges about their activities	OxRSS	TT 2016. May be relevant to RECM/Athena	% of survey respondents who say they would like to teach but didn't have the opportunity decreases (cf. CROS 2013 Q19m: 40% would like to undertake teaching) % who found teaching by application increases (Q48)
Ensure transparency and easily accessible information about finding and applying for grants	Consider how best to support researchers in finding and applying for grants e.g. explore demand for developing online resource(s), links to external content etc	Research Services/depts	HT 2017	% survey respondents saying they have sufficient support for grant writing increases (Q47 a-b)
	Many departments have related actions in their Athena SWAN action plans http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/gender/athenaswan/applications	Depts	N/A	Usage of resources, if applicable
Transparency about research strategies and priorities	Consider how best to ensure research staff are aware of how their research sits in relation to their department's plans and priorities	OxRSS/depts/divisions	TT 2017	% survey respondents who are clear about research plans increases (Q49)
Principal investigators are equipped and committed to proactively supporting researchers to develop	Develop new PI programme, including a learning community that has staff development as a specific area for discussion and sharing; a webinar on ways to develop staff; and an element of face-to-face delivery covering development.	OLI	TT 2016	Number of PIs who access support is sustainable and appropriate ¹ (workshop attendees; website hits; discussion forum participants) % survey respondents who say their PI is supportive increases (Q50a-c)
	Publicise new website focusing on what development is and ways to do this, which is relevant to PIs.	OLI/Personnel	HT 2016	(cf. CROS 2013 Q18a: 69% agree)

¹ By 'sustainable and appropriate' (here and in other measures), we mean that numbers remain healthy (making e.g. workshops viable) and that participants are drawn from a range of backgrounds (e.g. across divisions, both genders, responding to priority requests for support, etc) – where this is not the case targeted effort will be made to ensure those who need it are accessing support. A measure of simply increasing numbers participating is neither realistic nor necessarily desirable.

	Develop online learning communities for aspiring and current PIs that will provide and collect guidance on a number of topics identified as relevant to PIs. Where personal development reviews indicate that specific needs exist in departments or divisions these will be met by bespoke provision face to face (e.g. project management)	OLI	TT 2017	PI free text comments in survey allow us to identify appropriate areas to target support (Q56-57)
Progress against 2016-18 actions				
<p>Provision to support researchers in developing their careers has burgeoned. Activity undertaken to address disparities in progression by gender as part of the institutional Athena SWAN action plan has led to a range of implemented or planned actions to improve and cohere support for researchers, including the recently-begun development by the newly formed Early Career Researcher Development Forum of a researcher development strategy (to complement the PGR development strategy) to work across the institution. Provision to support PIs has also expanded, with a new PI programme developed, including a new workshop on Leading a Research Team, which had 44 participants in 2016-17 and positive feedback. An online learning community has also been developed (replacing the blog), with over 140 members discussing issues related to being a PI. Work is underway to investigate the use webinars: we are reviewing the technology to be able to deliver this in 2018. The 2016 Staff Experience Survey shows that a large majority of researchers agree that their PI is supportive: <i>Giving me opportunities to develop within my current role</i> (86%); <i>Creating a positive work environment</i> (84%); a somewhat smaller proportion agreed that their PI was supportive in <i>Helping me think about the next steps in my career</i> (72%). A new Staff Development Website has been launched and publicised so that all staff have access to information and resources.</p> <p>We also continue to run the successful termly Welcome Event for Research Staff: <u>all</u> new starters are invited to the event where they can find out about central and divisional support available to them throughout their time at Oxford. In 2016-17 there were 195 participants and for each event 95-100% of respondents said they would recommend the event to a colleague.</p>				
New actions 2018-20				
Review and revise the governance mechanism in line with strategic priorities	<p>Consider the alignment of RSWG as a group operating within the University's strategic REF programme reporting into Research and Innovation Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Form new group, the Early Career Researcher Forum (ii) Agree terms of reference (iii) Formulate and agree ECR strategy (iv) Regularly report into R&I Committee 	PVC Research & ECRDF	<p>By end of HT 2018</p> <p>By end of HT 2019</p>	<p>Group established</p> <p>ECR strategy agreed and published</p>

			Ongoing	Forum reporting in to Research and Innovation Committee
Continue to develop career review support for research staff, accessible to all eligible researchers	Provide structured support for the development of research and teaching: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Investigate the use of the Apprenticeship Levy to fund the 'Aspiring Academic' programme (ii) Pilot programme (iii) Roll out programme, pending successful pilot 	OLI	By end MT 2019	Percentage of researchers agreeing that they feel supported to think about their career development increases to 80% (2018 <i>Staff Survey</i>)
	Explore the options for development centre approaches to provide additional support and development for specific target audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Investigate the feasibility of a leadership development programme for researchers with the potential to progress to multiple, significant grant awards, with a view to piloting with one cohort of 15-20 participants b) Pilot one cohort of a career review programme for early to mid-career researchers, targeting women and BME staff groups and review c) Share learning with colleagues across the University and consider for wider implementation 	Research Services and OLI	End MT 2018	Application for funding submitted; if successful, design for programme started
	Develop support for research grant applications by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Audit the current support that is provided to those making grant applications in order to identify gaps; on the basis of this, take action to ensure consistent minimum levels of support across MSD; (ii) Establish a network to provide training, updates and peer support for grants administrators in clinical departments; (iii) Extend learning to all Divisions as appropriate to their context. 	MSD Assistant Registrar Research	End HT 2019 End HT 2019 End MT 2019	The percentage of researchers who say they feel supported in making the next step in their career increases from 72% (2016 survey) to 75% (2018) to 78% (2020)

	Learn from department good practice to develop a framework to build the experience of early career researchers as co-PIs	ECRDF	End HT 2019	Draft framework produced for consultation
	Pilot a library of resources in SSD to support those preparing grant applications and avoid reliance on personal networks	Head of Research Systems, with SSD E&D lead	End TT 2019	Library piloted
	Pilot a web application with details of all researchers to facilitate collaboration and building of inter-disciplinary teams	Head of Research Systems	End TT 2019	Application piloted and evaluated
	Establish small group researcher symposia with a view to making an annual event	Medical Sciences Division	End MT 2018	Discuss and agree at Research Staff Advisory Group
Extend awareness of jobs beyond academia or at its interface by expanding annual 'Careers Conference for Researchers'	Build on the success of 2017 pilot and extend their interaction with employers keen to recruit postdocs through skills sessions and networking opportunities	Careers Service / OxRSS	Planning MT17 for 17 th March 2018	Uptake of conference places increases to 150+, spread across departments and feedback from feedback from researchers and employers indicates 70% satisfaction
Provide experiential learning opportunities in employability skills that researchers typically recognize to be weaker or missing	Learn from the current pilot of The Researcher Consultancy to assess feasibility for expansion. This term's offer of 30 places for researchers is full, the specialist training highly valued and participants now engaged in analysis ready to deliver presentations to clients in March 2018.	Careers Service and local companies, NGOs, OU dept's	TT 2018	Number of client projects identified for next round (target 8) Number of research staff applying, passing assessment and able to take up places (target 50 applicants for 40 places) Sustainable funding source found (proposal to KEISC)
3. Management and leadership (Concordat principles 1,2,3,4,6) To equip all PIs and supervisors to be confident and competent both as managers and leaders in recruiting, managing, and developing researchers, for equitable and good practice and to support individual researchers in developing in their roles and careers.				
Previous actions 2016-18				

Equip PIs to feel confident managing and leading researchers	Develop PI programme into two strands - aspiring PIs and existing PIs plus acting team leaders in research units - based on the identification and prioritisation of different learning needs, including support tailored for individual groups and departments; and encouraging PIs to take part in mainstream management development activity.	OLI	HT 2016- HT 2018	Number of PIs who access support is sustainable and appropriate (workshop attendees; website hits rise over time; discussion forum participants)
	Develop PI induction packs to be made available online.	OLI	TT 2016	PIs participating in mainstream management programmes remains sustainable and appropriate
	Continue to develop PI blog and webpage to provide a central point of information.	OLI	Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018)	
	Online resource for PIs on developing their research staff that will include topics such as What is development? Ways that staff can develop, Personal development planning, and Career conversations.	OLI	HT 2017	% survey respondents who say their PI is supportive increases (Q50a-c)
	Guidance on management principles for PIs running research groups. Guidance will take three forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online resources to enable PIs to access guidance at any time; • webinars, designed to increase access to guidance and advice; • face-to-face opportunities to discuss issues. This provision will be supported by existing online material on management processes which, though generic in nature, is directly relevant to PIs.	OLI	TT 2016	PI free text comments in survey and feedback from departments allow us to identify appropriate areas to target support (Q56-57)
	Develop and repeat Research Connections management workshop	OLI	MT 2016	% survey respondents saying they have sufficient support for supervising or managing other staff/students increases (Q47f) (cf. PIRLS 2013 Q11di: 40% would like more support)

4. Parity of experience (Concordat principles 2,6,7)				
While acknowledging differing local needs and contexts to share and encourage good practice across departments in the areas above, so that the experience of a University of Oxford researcher is excellent wherever that individual is based, and whatever their gender, ethnicity, job role, age, or other characteristics.				
Previous actions 2016-18				
Sharing good practice	Establish two online learning programmes to help share best practice: one for aspiring PIs and one for PIs. These will provide a structured area for researchers to share their ideas and comment on the ideas of others.	OLI	HT 2017	Google Hangouts used and positively evaluated
	Publish hints/tips advice for depts.; collate activity from Athena SWAN applications	OLI	HT 2017	Advice and practice shared and used
Benchmark against sector	Engage with Researchers14 group, Vitae, and other similar institutions informally	OLI	Ongoing	Gaps in policy and practice identified and implemented if appropriate
Mentoring accessible to all	Roll out peer mentoring scheme currently in MSD to be taken up more widely in the division, and in other divisions/depts. if appropriate	OLI/divs	Ongoing (to be evaluated HT 2018)	Numbers of mentors/mentees in MSD increase from 18/70 respectively Priority requests for mentoring in divisions/depts. are met Increasing % of survey respondents say they are satisfied with mentoring support
Under-represented groups receive tailored support if appropriate	Continue to promote Springboard and Navigator programmes	MPLS	Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018)	Provision of Springboard and Navigator (or similar programmes) remains appropriate to demand
	Develop and pilot women researchers' career development programme (if appropriate) based on results of current scoping	OLI	HT-MT 2016	Over time, % women retained after postdoc level increases (detail to be

	project in order to connect women at this career stage into existing pipeline activities in the University			added in conjunction with Athena SWAN institutional award work)
	Consider (as part of Race Charter work) whether provision for BME or international researchers is needed - this action plan to be updated accordingly once work carried out from summer 2016 onwards.	EDU/OLI	TT 2017	Action plan updated if relevant
Ensure fair treatment for all	Continue to embed implicit bias awareness in recruitment and other training	OLI, Personnel and divs	Ongoing (evaluate d HT 2018)	Number of people completing R&S and implicit bias training increases HR compliance survey shows a) improved recruitment processes in place, b) all chairs of recruitment panels have been trained
	Improved recruitment training (see Strategic Plan)	Personnel and divs	Ongoing	Increase in % of women appointed to senior roles (target to be agreed) and % of BME staff (measure to be decided after data reviewed for RECM)
	New guidance for PIs on management of maternity and other family leave	Personnel	MT 2016	See Athena SWAN Institutional Action Plan action 5.2
	Gain national institutional charter marks (race at Bronze and gender equality (Athena) at Silver)	EDU	2017	Charter marks successfully gained
	Researcher Connections additional sessions designed to meet the needs identified through representation initiatives	OLI	HT 2017	Researchers' training needs are strategically identified and increasingly met (Q47)
	Main responsibility for training and professional development and promotion of related opportunities lies with departments and divisions, who will continue to ensure that provision meets the needs of the range of researchers in their discipline	Divs/dept s.	Ongoing	

	Access to learning through Lynda.com, with playlists that point researchers to appropriate learning materials	IT/OLI	Ongoing (evaluate HT 2018)	
<p>Progress against 2016-18 actions</p> <p>Work to ensure parity of experience has started at policy level: we have engaged with the sector via the Researchers 14 Group, have hosted a Vitae visit, and the Chair of our Postgraduate Research Strategy Group is a member of the Concordat review panel. This overview has fed into institutional level strategy, and work on the Athena SWAN institutional award (successfully renewed at Bronze in 2017), departmental awards (all of our STEM departments now hold a Bronze or above), and Race Equality Charter (Bronze award to be submitted in February 2018) has been integral to informing our work to support researchers.</p> <p>The MSD Peer Mentoring Scheme has continued to run, and we are building on this centrally, investing in a coaching and mentoring matching software and developing a pool of mentors that will include PIs and researchers. We have also piloted a BME Staff Mentoring Scheme, in which nine of the pilot participants were researchers. A new two-day workshop, <i>Pathways</i>, for women researchers looking to advance their careers in academia has been piloted and rolled out.</p> <p>Work on Implicit Bias has taken off over the last two years, as a result of a project to train a central pool of facilitators to run two-hour workshops: we have run over 15 so far. A video on bias has been added to the Recruitment and Selection online course (departments are now tracking completion in line with our Athena SWAN commitment to train all Chairs); and sections on bias added into our management courses IMSO and DLMP. We have also launched a scheme <i>My Family Care</i> which offers access to emergency back-up childcare and adultcare, a 'speak to an expert' phone line, and a wide range of guides and webinars through a website called the Work + Family space.</p>				
<p>New actions 2018-20</p>				
Ensure a mentor is available to any researcher who would benefit from mentoring	Introduce an online mentoring matching tool (i) Pilot within the Radcliffe Department of Medicine (ii) If pilot successful, propose approach to all divisions	OLI and RDM	End TT 2018 End TT 2019	Pool of 80 mentors available to all staff (including researchers) in RDM Mentoring pair data (progress and success) from online system used to review progress and plan next steps
	Increase participation in Pivot BME Staff Mentoring Scheme amongst researchers	EDU	End HT 2019	Number of BME researchers participating in Pivot increases from nine to 15 in 2018
Ensure equality of opportunity in career	Ensure media engagement is representative of the research staff body:	PAD	End HT 2019	% of BME contributors reflects eligible population (20%)

development for under-represented groups, in order to prevent pipeline loss of BME and women researchers	(i) Collect and analyse ethnicity data on members of the Find An Expert database (ii) If necessary, introduce mechanism to increase number of BME contributors			
	Pilot career review programme for women researchers	OLI/MPLS	End TT 2018	Pilot complete and feedback indicating 70% satisfaction

Acronyms

- DLMP Developing Leadership and Management Practice at Oxford
- E&D Equality and Diversity
- ECRDF Early Career Researcher Development Forum
- ECRs Early career researchers
- IMSO Introduction to Management Skills at Oxford
- MPLS Maths, Physical and Life Sciences division
- MSD Medical Sciences Division
- PAD Public Affairs Directorate
- SSD Social Sciences Division