

Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Universities and Research Institutes

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Statement on how the organisation creates, maintains and embeds a research culture that upholds a positive and inclusive environment for researchers at all stages of their careers (max 500 words)

The University of Glasgow (UofG) believes that a positive research culture is vital to the engagement, development and success of Researchers. The Concordat is the primary driver for delivering this vision, and the Research Culture and Researcher Development Team (RC&RD) lead on delivery of our **Concordat Action Plan** (CAP; 2020): Clarify Career Expectations; Provide CPD Opportunities; Raise Career Awareness; Track Career Destinations; and, Support Principal Investigators.

The CAP has been designed to connect with other high-level strategies which take a people/culture focus:

The UofG Research Strategy (2020) states that by working in teams, building on each other's ideas, and making Glasgow the best place to develop a career, our research will transform lives and change the world. This university-wide vision is operationalised through three priorities: *Collaboration, Creativity and Careers*. The actions outlined in our CAP are strategically aligned to these priorities and present mechanisms for the implementation of the Strategy. Specifically, the CAP is designed to support researchers to creatively fulfil their career ambitions by working collaboratively.

The UofG Research Culture Action Plan (2020) promotes positive research culture within the ways we: evaluate, support and reward quality; recognise diverse contributions to research; enable colleagues to support each other to succeed; build a collaborative atmosphere of openness and trust. Clear alignment with the CAP is visible in that both aim to increase development provision and engage Research Staff in the pursuit of their chosen careers. Our Research Culture work has received external recognition from the Royal Society, UK Research Integrity Office, Academy of Medical Sciences, Guardian University Awards and BEIS R&D People & Culture Strategy. Both the Culture and the Concordat Action Plans, report to 'The Lab for Academic Culture', and to the **Research Planning and Strategy Committee** (Chair: VP Research & Knowledge Exchange).

The UofG People & Organisational Development Strategy (2020) sets out how we nurture an inclusive, dignified and respectful working culture in which everyone is valued, recognised and praised, and success is celebrated. The CAP has been informed and strengthened through alignment which names actions for the university, individuals, and managers.

Working together with shared cultural priorities and supported by other guiding initiatives (Concordats for Research Integrity, and Open Research, DORA, Technician Commitment), these strategies are building significant momentum.



We prioritise collaborative delivery, of these strategies. We work with key Professional Services teams (The Library, HR, Careers). Our 'Research Staff Assembly' provides continuous opportunities for dialogue, consultation, and information sharing.

In 2022-23 we have significantly scaled up our approach by:

- **Investing in 5 new posts (the Research Culture Team) to support Research Culture and Researcher Development, enabling the launch of several new comprehensive programmes and frameworks for the development of Research Staff, and the development of PIs.**
- **Developing innovative structures for the representation and engagement of Research Staff in university life, in cross-university dialogue, and as key stakeholders in their own development.**

Provide a short summary of the institution's strategic objectives and implementation plans for delivering each of the three pillars of the Concordat (environment and culture, employment, and professional development of researchers) for your key stakeholder groups together with your measures for evaluating progress and success (*max 600 words*)

In Year 3, we maintained established provision and significantly expanded provision through 14 interlinked deliverables. Success measures (SM):

Environment and culture

1. Create a strategy for Research Staff Communications
[SM1] Investigate the range and effectiveness of comms channels and optimise to devise a strategy for reaching Research Staff
2. Increase ability to rapidly evaluate and communicate outcomes, impact, and the value of investment in Researcher Development.
[SM2] Design evaluation measures at the point of programme design and produce frequent and timely reports/reflections via open access communications.
3. Recruit to five new roles as part of a new Research Culture Team who will play a key role in delivery of the CAP
[SM3] Design and fill all roles with aligned objectives across Culture and Concordat Action Plans.
4. Deliver the aims of the British Academy ECR Network (Scotland) creating inter-university collaboration for SHAPE Research Staff development, across Scotland.
[SM4] Recruit a Network Coordinator to deliver a Scotland-wide Research Staff development offer, with shared objectives with UofG Culture and Concordat Actions Plans.
5. Expand UofG capacity to work in collaborative partnership with key internal and external stakeholders for Research Staff Development.



[SM5] Create new opportunities for partnership/collaborative working and capacity building for Research Staff development across UofG and externally.

Employment

6. Evaluate engagement of Research Staff with existing provision analysing data by College/School/role type to create a targeted engagement plan.
[SM6] Identify hot and cold spots for staff engagement, as a proportion of College numbers, and agree engagement strategies with key senior staff for each College.
7. Design and launch a monthly 'Research Staff Assembly' to increase dialogue with Research Staff through a live forum.
[SM7] Deliver inclusive and collaborative monthly 1h events on current issues for Research Staff
[SM8] Work with Research Staff to devise a co-created programme of themes for discussion.
8. Design and launch quarterly, cross-university Research Staff Induction events and accompanying online induction resource.
[SM9] Design and deliver Induction events which engage new starters.
[SM10] Engage cross-university Research Professional Staff in co-delivery creating connectivity with key support colleagues.
9. Create and launch Talent Lab for Research Leaders (Academic Managers) taking a leadership development focus with clear alignment to the Culture and Concordat Action Plans.
[SM11] Support delivery and evaluation of a Culture-aware, and Concordat-aware leadership development programme for the Managers of Researchers.
10. Design and deliver Pathfinder, a strategic approach to supporting Researcher Career Destination awareness, readiness and destination tracking.
[SM12] Create a visual identity and web presence for Pathfinder, to maximise awareness of and engagement with the initiative.
[SM13] Map provision, and gap analysis of career support for Research Staff and Managers. Design and deliver initiatives to create a holistic end-to-end development suite.

Professional Development of Researchers

11. Deliver the pilot of Flourish, a cohort-based career navigation and leadership programme for newer Research Staff.
[SM14] Pilot the programme for 40 newer Research Staff.
[SM15] Engage Academic Managers in the delivery of the programme, ensuring their involvement in career conversations with Research Staff.
12. Design and deliver Catalyst Mentoring a career navigation and leadership programme for Research Staff.
[SM16] Design and pilot (10 pairs) a person-centred mentoring programme.



<p>[SM17] Engage the Academic Managers of Researchers as mentors providing training, and support for practice. Evaluate the impact of mentoring training for Managers.</p> <p>13. Redesign the Glasgow Crucible programme to take a culture-aware leadership focus.</p> <p>[SM18] Deliver a new Culture-aware, and Concordat-aware programme for emerging research leaders.</p> <p>14. Design and deliver the Fellows Network to support development of emerging research leaders.</p> <p>[SM19] Collaboratively design the Fellows Network and associated programme of events, taking a Culture-aware, and Concordat-focus on leadership development.</p>	
<p>Summary of actions taken, and evaluation of progress made, in the current reporting period to implement your plan to support the three pillars in respect of each of your key stakeholder groups [Institution; Academic Managers of Researchers (Deans, Heads of Schools/Departments/Pis); Researchers]</p>	
<p>Environment and Culture (max 600 words)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>Designed and piloted a communication strategy to build regular dialogue with Research Staff (RS) delivered through: (a) new Research Staff mailing list (b) a monthly Research Staff Assembly (1h, All RS meeting + MS Teams space, read more). We are curating and translating opportunities for RS, and offering guidance on comms to parties seeking to engage them. [SM1]</p> <p>Designed a layered approach to impact evaluation (programme level/session level) using quantitative, qualitative, formal and informal approaches as appropriate. Defined a team commitment to rapid evaluation turnaround and open sharing (through the Auditorium blog) of impact of investment (with RS, MoR). We increased reporting to University-level and College-level groups, and invited feedback and discussion to increase awareness and reach. [SM2]</p> <p>Created a new Research Culture Team (five roles) including a Research Culture Manager, with responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Culture Specialist (Researcher Communities & Collegiality) • Research Culture Specialist (Researcher Career Destinations) • Research Culture Project Administrator • PGR Intern for Research Culture Events <p>[SM3]</p> <p>Appointed the BA ECR Network Scottish Hub Project Officer in November 2022, and built the largest (750+ members) and most</p>



successful BA hub to date, in year 1 ([Year 1 round up report summary here](#)) delivering 10 large-scale, hub-led and researcher-led initiatives including [An inclusive call for seed funding in Scotland which \(uniquely\) engaged RS in Independent Research Organisations as PIs and collaborators](#). [SM4]

Committed to a collaborative approach to RS engagement and development (with key groups acting as MoRs) most notably a quarterly RS Induction, and the monthly RS Assembly. We have created open opportunities for co-design and delivery with groups across the university, taking a 'development everywhere' approach. [SM5]

Academic Managers of Researchers

Discussed and agreed RS comms strategy and style guide with key groups (Managers of Researchers: MoR) who want to reach RS to create a consistent value-led approach to promoting a wide range of opportunities. Colleges of Social Science (COSS) and Medicine, Veterinary and Life Sciences (MVLS) have worked with HR to create RS comms channels. MVLS Researcher Network provides quarterly reports to College Management Group to discuss RS related issues and support needs. [SM1]

Devised an integrated approach to cross-university working, by creating RC&RD Team partnerships with College Research Offices (MoR) to work in alignment to support RS. This began as a reactive 'call for content' and has been shaped over the year to engage stakeholders proactively in creating and sharing RS Development opportunities. [SM3]

The BA Network is co-led with MoR (Research Professionals and PIs) from across all Scottish universities. Network activity is informed by and aligned to all Scottish universities' Research Culture and Concordat objectives for SHAPE RS. RS development practice sharing through the network is a key aim. [SM4]

Strengthened relationships with internal and external experts in research impact, interdisciplinarity, open research, policy, engagement, communication, data management, innovation, income capture, and integrity. This has led to greater opportunities to tailor and translate these key hot topics for RS. [SM5]

Researchers



	<p>Step-change increase in delivery of the CAP, notably the Research Staff Assembly, Pathfinder Careers Destinations strategy, new Mentoring Programmes, and Peer Networks [SM12-19]. [SM3]</p> <p>Recent delivered collaborations for RS development include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal: workshop supporting Future Leaders Fellowship Applicants with tailored development plans Personal/Teams. • International: NaUKMA six-day <u>RS development programme on research communications</u> and <u>Twinning for Impact</u>. • Scotland-wide: See BA Network above [SM4]. <p>[SM5]</p>
<p>Employment (<i>max 600 words</i>)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>Assessed engagement with Concordat initiatives with data normalised to numbers of RS per College (noting a 4%-50.5% range of engagement by College). We detected proportionally low engagement with Researchers in Arts and Humanities, as well as a concerning volume of wasted places (no shows, around 40% overall) across all RS initiatives. Though this varies by initiative with competitively awarded places, and spaces on mentoring programmes less likely to be wasted [SM6].</p> <p>We launched quarterly in person Inductions for new RS (~80 to date) as cohort experiences designed to help them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain awareness of the Concordat and their 10-day allowance, and how to engage with CPD. • Understand provision for professional/career development. • Build networks across College boundaries. • Build relationships with the RC&RD Team • Connect to the wealth of expertise and support available through our Research Professional services colleagues (MoR). <p>COSS piloted an induction module for RS with a career development section signposting initiatives and support. This will be reviewed in 2023/24 and will inform College-level design in the other three Colleges.</p> <p>[SM9&SM10]</p> <p>Academic Managers of Researchers</p> <p>Worked with College Deans of Research, and Research Office staff to target particular staff groups with tailored initiatives. Future work to establish both College-level Concordat Groups and Researcher-led Networks will support increased engagement and reduce wasted places. [SM6]</p>



The Research Staff Assembly (RSA) launched in June 2023 as hybrid briefings and a Teams site (80 researchers: 6%). The content of these monthly 'hot topics' assemblies is created in collaboration with Research Staff, researcher-led communities, and MoR (College Research Offices. [Read more about the design of the Assembly and reflections on its launch here.](#) [SM7&SM8]

COSS created a guide for Research Line Managers – to set out the roles and responsibilities for managing research colleagues. This will help shape similar College-level guides in 2023/24 [SM10].

The 'Talent Lab for Research Leaders' ran April-October 2023. We combined a strategic leadership development programme for experienced investigators on a trajectory towards securing large-grants, with personal reflection on their leadership experience and approach, supporting them in their role as MoR. [Detail of programme design/impact can be found here.](#) [SM11]

Researchers

The first RSA involved a facilitated co-design process engaging RS, and prioritising key topics of RS employment to be covered each month. In addition to interdisciplinary networking, and the opportunity to bring employment matters of concern to the RC&RD Team, monthly themes have covered: REF, Research Communities, Setting up College-level Research Staff Networks, Researcher Visibility and Online Profile, Publications and Copyright Policy, and Recognising Research Contributions. Online materials support each and are shared widely via MSTeams. We aim to continue to grow engagement with the Assembly in 2023/24 [SM8]

In addition to the cohort effect of increasing knowledge of researcher support and increasing engagement, RS Induction has provided a much needed opportunity to help research staff to connect with Research Professional Staff outside their direct disciplinary areas. This has the triple effects of (a) building support relationships with specialist colleagues, (b) giving research staff – who can be siloed into specific small projects a greater sense of how large research organisations work and the types of knowledge required for academic careers, and (c) introducing a wide range of potential post-academia career types and potential mentors. Research professionals report the value to them of meeting new RS. [SM10]



<p>Professional development (max 600 words)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>COSS pilots: (1) two 3-year hybrid Research Associate posts. Line managed by the Director of Research, they work on their own projects and as RAs for others (2) career development/contract end management discussions for RS (3) Investigator Fellowships to support submission of a research proposal as PI to RS at risk of redundancy. [SM13]</p> <p><u>Flourish is a cohort-based programme</u> focusing on career development for newer RS. Its structure and content were co-designed with the community. Core elements provided scaffolded support, fostered a wider sense of community and created permission to make career development a priority. [SM14]</p> <p>Academic Managers of Researchers</p> <p>Throughout application, launch and at key points in the Flourish programme we engaged PI's in supporting their RS, sharing the overall aims and scope of Flourish and how they could enhance the effectiveness and support their researchers. We provided training related to delivering Career Conversations with RS [SM15]</p> <p>Catalyst impacted on mentors' perceptions of their power to help others, building their confidence mentoring techniques useful for their roles as MoR, providing guidance and career support. Mentors reported greater understanding of the power of a mentoring conversation, as well as feeling more in tune with work-life struggles of others, gaining a better sense of 'how academia works'. <u>Read more about the impact of the programme here.</u> [SM17]</p> <p>We asked 28 Fellows how a closer, more formal Fellows Network might support them to lead well as their careers progress. The Fellows Network was launched to serve aims related directly to the identified research leadership challenges. <u>Read about the design and formal aims of the network here.</u> [SM19]</p> <p>Researchers</p> <p>We reviewed UofG Career Development provision, and designed <u>Pathfinder</u>. Year one provided the opportunity to pilot and experiment with several formats: online/on-campus, 1:1/group, time-bound/self-paced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800+ UofG researchers, and academic staff (MoR), engaged with Pathfinder March-October 2023. • Thousands of external Researchers, Researcher Developers, and Careers Experts across the sector engaged with, and
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utilised resources – generating around 50,000 views/comments on the [Pathfinder LinkedIn](#) page, the [Pathfinder Narratives blog posts](#) and the [Expert Voices](#) articles.

- Feedback has been exceptionally positive and documents impact on RS career awareness, decision-making, confidence, and success.

[SM12&SM13]

Data collected from the programme showed high demand and robust appreciation of Flourish ([read more here](#)). We also used engagement with this programme as an indicator of development needs for RS across UofG and piloted many Flourish events with the 1300+ RS community. [SM14&SM15]

Catalyst matched RS with more senior academic staff, who provide ‘agenda-free’ career conversations. Evidence from our pilot of 20 pairs, shows that Catalyst supports RS in gaining: self-awareness concerning how they relate to others, greater understanding of where they would like to take their career next, confidence to make career decisions. [Read more about the impact of the programme here](#). [SM16]

An initial 2-day residential was followed by four expert-led workshops: Engagement, Collaboration, Communication, and Funding Applications – each toned towards practical ways to build good research culture. The Crucible programme was framed by personal coaching sessions. Of evaluation respondents:

- 100% indicated that overall the programme had positive impact on them.
- 100% indicated new learning (communications, funding applications, navigating the university).
- 100% indicated new contacts/potential collaborators.
- 94% indicated a change in behaviour (how they interact with others, research practices, changes to the structures and purpose of research group meetings).
- 94% indicated thinking differently about their role in creating a positive research culture.

[SM18]

A programme of career-stage tailored events, plus a facilitated online space was launched in March 2023. Unfortunately, we struggled to engage Fellows with both events and online community. We have paused this initiative to reflect and redesign.

[SM19]

Comment on any lessons learned from the activities undertaken over this period and any modifications you propose to make to your action plan and measures of success as a result. (max 500 words)

Evaluation data, and feedback indicates that RS are excited by new initiatives, particularly **Flourish, Pathfinder, Catalyst Mentoring**. These all involve personalised development and support with immediate career goals. This extends our findings that the most successful initiatives are those in which RS receive support for immediate career goals. They are less engaged by courses and workshops that do not lead to a tangible, immediate opportunity, or career advantage. It's noteworthy that adding an element of competitive application or selection process increases engagement, perhaps due to perceived scarcity of the resource, and also perhaps due to the fact that adding 'competitively awarded place' to a CV line is appealing. A substantial challenge to impact was the conversion rate of booking to attendance, with a high proportion of 'no shows' without apologies, wasting around 1/3 of places overall. This phenomenon is common, according to our national professional networks, and other key informants across the university.

This is important against a background of sustained low engagement. We are consistently reaching <20% of RS across the university, and this has become an urgent priority for 2023-24. Efforts to engage and empower RS at the point of Induction, and through monthly Assemblies are effective and encourage sustained engagement for those who feel able to commit time, to the opportunities presented. We are aware that choice to engage with career and professional development is 'planned behaviour' (Ajzen, 1991) that requires individuals to have awareness that they are (a) eligible and capable of taking part, (b) to understand the career benefits to them, and, (c) importantly, to feel that 'others' would approve of their choice (PIs, peers, future employers). Work in 2022-23 has focused on (a) and (b), and future work will be targeted to the difficult cultural work of (c).

Through our initiatives this year we have heard from RS at different career stages, at different phases in their UofG lifecycle. Through our RC&RD Team planning rounds, we have analysed these data, and identified four priority areas of future focus, all intended to increase agency and engagement.

1. **Achieving clarity for RS concerning HR processes and policies.** Concerns, surfaced through Flourish, Assemblies and Inductions relate primarily to (a) career precarity and contract types (b) promotions and career pathways.
2. **Alignment between central provision and the Colleges.** We seek to reduce the risk of (a) conflicting guidance to RS (b) duplication of efforts between the RC&RD Team and the College Research Offices (c) lack of a mechanism to share best practice between Colleges.



3. **Increase development for PIs (MoR)** Each of the four Colleges has strengths and gaps in local provision for PI development and support. We will create a central framework that works in complement with local strengths, to create equitable provision and access to resources in inclusive ways.
4. **Consolidate our ability to track RS and MoR professional development.** We will deploy a new software solution that supports a single platform for RS and PI development, and tracking of individuals' engagement.

Outline your key objectives in delivering your plan in the coming reporting period (max 500 words)

Our university-wide objectives for 2023-24 takes a unified approach to: (a) responding to the issues and lessons learned (above), collaborating with other university service leaders and partners (e.g. IT systems, HR, College Research Committees), (b) expanding our innovative development framework by enhancing RS career and leadership development (Talent Lab), and (c) aligning the provision and support offered by Central University Services, through Colleges, and into RS Communities by creating new governance structures for the CAP. This will be achieved through 12 deliverables:

Environment and Culture

1. *Invest in three new College-level Research Staff Networks.* To do this effectively we will be using MVLS RS Network (NERD) as a model. The NERD committee work closely with RC&RD, to consult, co-deliver and to promote events, increasing reach and engagement.
2. *New structures to increase Research Staff Representation and Voice.* The Research Staff Assembly and the forthcoming Research Culture Commons will work in tandem to engage RS in leading conversations about their working environment.
3. *Increasing awareness and self-tracking of 10 days development for Research Staff.* Launching Inkpath as a single platform for RS and PI development, and tracking of individuals' engagement.
4. *Develop Research Staff as 'Associate Supervisors'.* Often tangible and unrecognised work, 'Associate' Supervision will be developed (workshops), monitored (RS able to be recorded as part of a supervisory team) and rewarded (UKCGE Associate Supervisor Recognition)

Employment

5. *Support HR review of 'Precarity in Research Contracts'.* A full HR UofG review of policy and process for RS precarity will take place in 2024, supported by the RC&RD Team in partnership with the RS Assembly.
6. *Support awareness and navigation of the promotions process for Research Staff.* We will collaborate with HR to create resources and information sessions that clarify UofG career pathways and support researchers to navigate the promotions cycle.
7. *Support understanding and engagement with the Redeployment process.* We will collaborate with HR to create a guidance pack for RS on how to navigate redeployment.

8. *Formalise College-level Concordat groups as sub-groups of College Research Committees.* This will support aligned activity with the central university CAP and support cross-university dialogue as well as increasing visibility of RS issues via key College committees.

Professional Development

9. *Strengthen routes into Fellowships.* We will develop and pilot a new Talent Lab programme, the 'Ignite Fellowships Accelerator' which supports development of future research leaders as research culture change agents.

10. *Strengthen the PI development framework.* We are planning the launch of a new PI Development Framework to include multi-modal ways to engage with a workshop series, online self-service materials, and support researchers through Induction, PDR and Promotion.

11. *Embed the impact of Talent Lab – Flourish.* We will use evaluation/impact data and researcher consultation through the Assembly, to embed universal aspects of Flourish, into mainstream provision for all RS.

12. Targeting provision for Communication skills. This will focus on development for a wide range of communications skills, experiences and approaches for e.g. academic writing, blogs, narrative, policy, public engagement, impact, visual methods.

Please provide a brief statement describing your institution's approval process of this report prior to sign off by the governing body (max 200 words)

This report was prepared with input from Staff in Research Services Directorate, the Library, Careers, British Academy ECR Network, the College Research Offices, and Research Staff Networks.

The report was approved by the University of Glasgow Research Planning and Strategy Committee, chaired by Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal for Research and Knowledge Exchange.

Signature on behalf of governing body:



Contact for queries: Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal for Research and Knowledge Exchange. (Chris.Pearce@glasgow.ac.uk)

This annual report will be analysed by Universities UK, secretariat for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, to identify good practices, themes for development and information to improve national research culture policy and practice.

If you have any questions, or suggestions on how the reporting process could be improved, please contact the secretariat at CDRsecretariat@universitiesuk.ac.uk

www.researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk