

HREiR Action plan template 2023-2026

Institution name:	Edinburgh Napier University
Cohort number:	Cohort 2
Date of submission:	12 July 2023
Institutional context:	<p>Edinburgh Napier University is the #1 Modern University in Scotland (THE World University Rankings 2023) and a Top 10 UK Modern University (Times/Sunday Times GUG 2023). We have over 21,000 students studying with Edinburgh Napier, across our three campuses in Edinburgh, as well as through international and online delivery of our programmes.</p> <p>Our primary audience for our Researcher Development Concordat Action plan has always been our contract research staff. We currently employ 72 contract research staff (CRS, at Jan 2023). This includes Research technicians, Research Assistants, Research Fellows, Post-doctoral research associates, Senior Research Fellows, and Principal Research Fellows. We have 46 members of staff who act as Line Managers for our contract researchers (LM of CRS).</p> <p>Over the next three years we want to make a step-change in the job security and career progression for our contract research staff, which have emerged as they key priorities for CRS. We aim to connect the HREiR to other strategic initiatives such as our Research and Innovation Strategy, our KE and RI concordat plans as well as our preparations for REF20208.</p> <p>We have some clear actions already identified in this action plan, and we see this as a live document, to be updated as more detailed actions and measures emerge. Our first steps in 2023 are to scope out our five priority areas, consider our current data and baseline information, alongside developing and piloting initiatives. We will continue to bring updates and discussions about the Concordat Action Plan to our Research Innovation Committee, and will continue to receive feedback from our contract researchers and their line managers, including through running CEDARS 2023, to gain their insights into our priorities and action plan.</p>

The institutional audience* for this action plan includes:

Audience (direct beneficiaries of the action plan)	Number of	Comments
Research staff	67	Our contract research staff are the primary beneficiaries of our Concordat Action P
Postgraduate researchers	246	Some of the initiatives within the Action PGR students
Research and teaching staff	714	Some of the initiatives within the Action activities for Early Career Academics (€ activities were appropriate, and mentor
Technicians	5	We have included Research technician Action Plan. Distinct initiatives for technr challenging due to the small numbers o we recognise some of the initiatives w will also benefit technical staff as well.

Complete for submission								To be completed only when reporting on action p	
Obligation	Action	Carried over from previous action plan?	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted impact of the action (success measure)	Comments (optional)	Progress update	The actual impact of the action (reporting against the success measure)	
Environment and Culture									
Awareness and engagement									
The aims of these obligations are to work towards an open and inclusive research culture, and to ensure broad understanding and awareness of this amongst researchers.									
ECl1	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.								
ECl2	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.								

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ECI6	Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and using the outcomes to improve institutional practices.	Run CEDARS in 2023 Run Research Culture Survey in 2023 Report on findings at Research Innovation Committee	No	Dec-23	Head of Researcher Development Head Research Governance	Impact: Running and analysing these surveys provides feedback on the progress of our initiatives Measure - To see improved scores on CEDARS in 2023 compared to 2021 data Measure - to see improved score in Research Culture survey compared to 2022 data	CEDARS2023 was run during June 2023; received a 40% response rate. Data now being analysed.		
		Hold focus groups with Contract research staff and senior academics to identify key areas of focus for the HREiR action plan. Will run further focus groups in 24/25 to continue engagement with CRS, their Line managers and senior academics.	No	Jun-23	Vice Principal (R+) / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Running focus groups helps with engagement of CRS with the action plan and raises the visibility of the HREiR initiatives. Measure: Attendance at focus groups from target audiences	Focus groups and email submissions were run during June 2023 to engage with CRS.		
ECR1	Encourage researchers to actively contribute to the development and maintenance of a supportive, fair and inclusive research culture and be a supportive colleague, particularly to newer researchers and students.	Include research staff at all career stages in mentoring schemes to share experience and practice	Yes	Launch of mentoring scheme for start of AY23/24	Mentoring working group	Measure: Evidence of engagement by researchers at all career stages in mentoring schemes	Recruitment launched in June 2023 - over 30 people now registered for scheme		
Wellbeing and mental health									
The aims of these obligations are to champion positive wellbeing amongst researchers, both through appropriate training and enabling new ways of working.									
ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.								
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include training in relation to EDI and MHW for line managers and CRS)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of EDI and MHW issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.								
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.								
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.								

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Bullying and harassment									
The aims of these obligations are to eliminate bullying and harassment in the research system, tackled through progressive policies and secure mechanisms to address incidents.									
ECI3	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.								
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.								
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to discrimination, harassment and bullying.								
Equality, diversity and inclusion									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in-, aware of- and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion.									
ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include training in relation to EDI and MHW for line managers and CRS)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of EDI and MHW issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.								
Research Integrity									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in-, aware of- and maintain high standards of research integrity, and are able to report infringements or misconduct.									
ECI5 / ECM2	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.								
ECM3	Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity.								
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.								
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.								
Policy development									
The aims of these obligations are to encourage all researchers to actively contribute to the development of policies driving positive change at their institution.									
E17	Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.	Review memberships of university committees and aim to increase CRS representation on key bodies Explore the use of 'observer' opportunities for CRS to gain better understanding of policy making routes within the university	No	Sep-24	Head of Researcher Development / University Secretary	Measure: increased committee representation of CRS	Added after focus groups in June 2023		

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ECM5	Encourage managers to engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.								
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.								
ECR5	Encourage researchers to consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.								
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.								
Employment									
Recruitment and induction									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation.									
E11	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	Review pre-interview information for candidates to explain different job families to potential CRS recruits	Yes	Jan-24	HR Recruitment team	Measure: Development of pre-interview information for CRS candidates			
		Reference commitments to Concordat in recruitment literature	Yes	Sep-23	HR Recruitment team	Measure: Recruitment advertisements make clear connections to our commitments to the Concordat			
E12	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include support for line managers to understand induction requirements specific to CRS)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of induction issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
Recognition, reward and promotion									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression.									
PRIORITY AREA #2: RETENTION AND RECOGNITION: we will explore and remove any barriers to retention and recognition of researchers									
PRIORITY AREA #5: PROMOTIONS PATHWAYS: we will ensure contract research staff and their line managers understand the current processes for promotion of research staff and ways to progress towards promotion									

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EI3	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	Review promotions framework for researchers to ensure that criteria match the current research environment and opportunities for CRS	No	Sep-25	VP (R+) / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: review of promotions framework ensures we have an effective pathway for promotion of CRS that staff recognise and can see working. Measure: continue to monitor applications/success rate to see if review increases applications and successful promotions for CRS.	Added after focus groups in June 2023		
EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include support on writing job adverts, developing criteria for CRS roles, interview techniques to support transparent and fair recruitment)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of induction issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
Responsibilities and reporting									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers and their managers understand and act on their obligations and responsibilities.									
EM2	Managers familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.								
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.								
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.								
People management									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.									
EI4	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include project management training)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of induction issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
EI5	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.								

EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of induction issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.								
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.								
Job security									
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers.									
PRIORITY AREA #1: BARRIERS TO JOB SECURITY - we will work to have a clear, shared understanding of the types and lengths of contracts used to employ researchers and explore the feasibility of other models									
E16	Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.	Provide guidance to CRS and LM about contract types (fixed term / open ended / open ended subject to funding)	Yes	Jan-24	HR / RIE	Monitor for improved feedback on induction in CEDARS data - aim for 10% (Q17)			
		Establish data set on contract type, length of contract, re-contracting, transfers to academic contracts, and EDI characteristics of CRS and regularly report on trends	Yes	01/01/2024 to establish data set and then biannual reporting	Senior Data Analyst - HR	Impact: data to base decision on and to be able to evaluate the success of future initiatives Measure: definition of data required for reporting and establishment of regular reports. Review of data trends at RIC.			
		Establish a working group to review and enhance redeployment processes for CRS	No	Sep-25	VP (R+I) / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: a stronger redeployment process should lead to better retention of CRS. Measure: data on recontracting of CRS across all Schools to determine if better retention achieved.	Added after focus groups in June 2023		
		Work with research centre leads to understand level of integration of CRS into the newly established research centre activities.	No		Head of Researcher Development / Head of Research Centres	Impact: greater integration of CRS into research centres should help with more deployment opportunities. Measure: establish base line of CRS involvement in the new research centres (year 1-3) and monitor success of initiatives to increase this	Added after focus groups in June 2023		
Professional and Career Development									
Championing professional development									
HREiR Action plan, Vitae 2020									

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The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it.									
PRIORITY AREA #4: VALUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: we will work to ensure contract research staff and line managers understand the requirement for research staff to undertake 10 days of CPD pro rata per annum, and we will work to raise awareness of different types of development for contract research staff									
PCDI1	Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.	Develop institutional statement on 10 days of professional development, including examples of relevant activities and monitoring processes	Yes	Sep-24	Concordat Steering group	Impact: increased uptake of CPD opportunities by CRS Measure: Statement on professional development available for all CRS and LM. Measure: Monitor engagement with CPD through HR attendance data, MyContribution and CEDARS2023 data (aim for >60% of CRS have +5 days of CPD pro rata)	Focus groups in June identified that knowledge of the 10 days professional development was still patchy		
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.								
PCDM3	Managers allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.	Develop guidance on costing development time into funding applications to support the 10 days CPD pro rata per year	Yes	Jan-24	External Funding Team / HR	Impact: increased uptake of CPD opportunities by CRS Measure: Monitor engagement with CPD through HR attendance data, MyContribution and CEDARS2023 data (aim for >60% of CRS have +5 days CPD pro rata)			
PCDR1	Researchers take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.								
Career development reviews									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews.									
PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	as per ECM4 - Develop a programme of training for Line managers of CRS highlighting requirements with Concordat (which would include training in relation to career development support for researchers)	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	HR Capability Development Manager / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: Line managers will be aware of induction issues and can support staff effectively Measure: Evidence of engagement from Line Managers through regular monitoring by HR of event attendance Measure: improved score on relevant questions in CEDARS2023			
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.								

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PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.								
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.								
Career development support and planning									
The aims of these obligations are to promote researchers' career development planning through tailored support and gathering evidence of professional experience.									
PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.								
PCDR3	Researchers maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.								
Research identity and leadership									
The aims of these obligations are to provide researchers with opportunity to progress in their careers by developing their research identity and leadership capabilities.									
PRIORITY AREA #3: ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES: we will work to ensure that there is equity of access to opportunities for contract research staff to develop their own research identity and leadership skills									
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	Launch university wide mentoring scheme	Yes	Launch for start of AY23/24	Mentoring working group	Measure: uptake of mentoring opportunities by CRS Measure: Evaluation data of mentoring programme	Recruitment launched in June 2023 - over 30 people now registered for scheme		
		Create a mechanism to broker between CRS looking for opportunities to develop leadership skills and initiatives/working groups being established across the university	Yes	Jan-24	HR / Schools / RIE	Impact: increased opportunities for CRS to develop their research identity and leadership skills Measure: Monitor for improved feedback on support for developing leadership skills in CEDARS2023 - aim for 10% (Q30)			
		Review access to PgCert in teaching and other Professional Development on teaching for CRS	No	Sep-24	Head of DLTE / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: access to a teaching qualification may help CRS with mobility into other career paths Measure: registrations of CRS on PgCert and award of certification	Added after focus groups in June 2023		
		Review access to supervision of PhD students for CRS to ensure consistency across Schools. [We are establishing a Doctoral College during AY23/24 and supervisory arrangements will fall into the new Doctoral college remit. The timeline for the different workpackages are being agreed at the moment, so supervision arrangements will be considered within this wider initiative].	No	Sep-25	Head of Doctoral College	Impact: increased access to supervisory opportunities will help CRS build their CVs towards promotion/other opportunities. Measure: more CRS having access to supervisory opportunities Measure: more CRS using evidence of supervision in	Added after focus groups in June 2023		

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PCDM4	Managers identify opportunities, and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills, and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.								
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.								
PCDR5	Researchers to seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills								
Diverse careers									
The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research.									
PCDI5	Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.								
PCDM2	Managers support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.								
PCDR2	Researchers explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.								
PCDR6	Researchers consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation.	Deliver further KE training as part of our KE Concordat Action plan (see link 1)		During AY23/24	Head of KE / Head of Researcher Development	Impact: CRS engaged in more KE activities Measure: evidence of CRS engagement with KE training events monitored through attendance records Measure: evidence of engagement of researchers with KE team's activities			

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