HR Excellence in Research Badge: Action Plan Update

The HR Excellence in Research Badge

SOAS greatly values its research staff and has long had in place measures consistent with the provisions of the Concordat for Research Staff for their fair employment and career support. In 2012 SOAS successfully applied to the European Commission for recognition under the HR Excellence in Research Badge, confirming this commitment to the support and development of research staff. As part of this process, SOAS is required to monitor progress against the published action plan, and report this to the school's Research and Human Resources Committees each session. The action plans for 2011-13 and 2012-14 were both signed off by these committees.

2012-14 Action Plan

The action plan update for 2012-14 includes input from HR, the Careers Service, Staff Development, the Diversity Adviser and the Research Office, and has additionally been discussed and approved at the Research and Enterprise and HR Committees. This builds on, and updates, the reported action plan of 2011-13.

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SOAS, University of London Concordat Action Plan 2012-14

Concordat section(s) addressed	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility	Update
A: Recruitment & Selection 1	**Recruitment and Selection** Review of recruitment and selection policy & procedure, and the addition of refresher training	July 2014	HR & Staff Development	Updated Policy & Procedure agreed at Executive Board 7 April 2014.
A: Recruitment & Selection 2	**Recruitment and Selection** Provide Equality refresher for those on recruitment panels	August 2014	Staff Development	Refresher training for those who last attended Part 1 course prior to 2010. Relevant staff must attend and this is monitored by HR.
A: Recruitment & Selection 3	**Training for Recruiters** Review of recruitment and selection training, and the addition of refresher training	August 2014	HR & Staff Development	Training reviewed and additional material on Unconscious bias added to course. Refresher training for those who last attended Part 1 course prior to 2010.
A: Recruitment & Selection 4	**Recruitment and Selection** Ensure access to International Staff resource is made available at an early stage of the recruitment process by adding information to the relocation pack	December 2014	HR	Deadline moved.
B: Recognition & Value 1	**Recognition & support** Identify those members of staff who are research managers & ensure they are clear about what is expected of them and what support is available to them in that role	July 2014	Research Office	Due to staff shortages this process is still in development. However Research Office has a good idea of what support can be offered. This will be formalised and communicated.
B: Recognition & Value 2	**Redeployment Opportunities** Ensure research staff engagement with redeployment processes and opportunities through end of fixed term contracts process	July 2014	HR, HoDs	Automated end of fixed term contract process sending reminders to the managers of research staff. End of fixed term process includes discussion on redeployment and career discussions.

B: Recognition & Value 3	**Staff Development & Review Scheme (SDR)** Monitor engagement of researchers with SDR process ensuring that all post-probation research staff hold annual reviews and that the process includes an explicit focus on career development	Annually from 2013-14	Staff Development	Will be included in report to HR Committee Term 1.
B: Recognition & Value 4	**Identify Principal investigators who currently manage teams or who aim to in the future and offer tailored courses** a) Develop 'Practical Grant Management. Course(s) including information on HR issues, managing grant finances and reporting to funders, and building capacity through follow up funding b) Develop 'Managing a Team' for experienced PIs or consultants	Course developed and delivered by July 2014	REO, HR, Finance	Due to staff shortages and turnover in the Research Office, action deferred.
B: Recognition & Value 5	**Probation Procedure** Ensure that researchers and their managers follow the institutional probation procedure in all cases for staff employed on at least 6 months' contract.	As recruited	HR, research managers	Clear process for research staff on contracts of at least 6 months exists. Shorter contracts fall within the Employment of Casual Staff Policy.
C: Support & Career Development 1	**Induction & Orientation** Encourage research staff to attend the School's orientation programme; ensure research staff receive supporting materials at induction and orientation and have access to International Staff site	Ongoing	ADRs, Research Office, Staff Development	Research staff are invited to the School's Orientation programme. Induction materials sent out including link to International Staff site.
C: Support & Career Development 2	**Mentoring Scheme** Encourage research staff to make use of the School's mentoring Scheme, and monitor take up	Annual	Research Office, Staff Development	To report to HR Committee annually.
C: Support & Career Development 3	**Training & Career Development** Consideration should be given to the most appropriate way(s) of providing researchers with the opportunity to reflect on the career development related both to the skills needed for a funded project to be successful, and those of transferable skills	By July 2014	Careers, Staff Development	In progress
C: Support & Career Development 4	**Grant Applications** a) Run specific sessions for research staff on making grant applications including deciding on who to apply to at different points in the research career. b) Produce short videos on bidding for funding for ECRs to embed in web content	By July 2014	Research Office	Due to staff shortages and turnover in the Research Office, action deferred.

D: Researchers' Responsibility 1	**Support for Researcher Development** a) Develop and run 'Good conduct in research' course (to include research Ethics, Authorship etc b) Develop 'Work in the Field' course	July 2014	Research Office, Staff Development, Health & Safety Office	Will be developed in light of the report and recommendations of the Working group on Research Governance, New deadline of July 2015 agreed
D: Researchers' Responsibility 2	**Support for Researcher Development** Hold a review of the services offered by the Careers Group, including how to better reach this group of staff and find out what training and development needs they have	July 2014	Careers, Staff Development	In progress
D: Researchers' Responsibility 3	**Support for Researcher Development** All research staff to be made aware of the dedicated careers support and guidance available to them	Ongoing	Careers, research managers. Doctoral School Management group	In progress
E: Diversity & Equality 1	**Public Sector Equality Duty** The 'Public Sector Equality Duty' working group will ensure that all strands of equality and diversity will be reviewed and specific issues of under-representation or lack of progression addressed, including researchers. This group will report to Equality Committee	July 2013	Deputy Secretary, Diversity Adviser	Done. PSED working group has been meeting and has produced new draft of E&D sub-strategy for Equality Committee in May 2013
E: Diversity & Equality 2	**Diversity & Equality Sub-Strategy** Develop the School's Equality and Diversity sub-strategy, and ensure that research staff and their managers are aware of this	April 2013	Diversity Adviser	The new sub-strategy is under development (see above). Once complete will be publicised to researchers and their line managers
E: Diversity & Equality 3	**REF Code of Practice** Monitor the Code of Practice for the REF to ensure that the personal circumstances of researchers are considered	July 2013	Diversity Adviser; Pro-Director Research; Research Office	Working group on personal circumstances on 24 April 2013 to consider further applications
F: Implementation & Review 1	**Staff Survey** Analyse data from research staff as a separate category in the annual pulse staff survey to ensure that their concerns are noted (if different from other staff groups). Report to HR Committee	October 2013, 2014	HR, Staff Development	October 2013 – insufficient returns from research only staff to report on separately.

F: Implementation & Review 2	Identify key questions from CROS and PIRLS that are of interest and include in staff survey or separate survey on research staff issues	July 2014	Staff Development, Research Office	Decision not to run these surveys due to small number of research only staff and results not being statistically relevant.