

University of Nottingham – Researcher Development Concordat Action Plan (2024-27)



Institution name:	University of Nottingham
Cohort number:	Cohort 4
Date of submission:	Jan-24
Institutional context:	The University of Nottingham employs approximately 1,100 staff members who fit the Researcher Development Concordat's definition of researchers ('individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose', p.8). Colleagues in this staff group typically hold titles such as Research Assistants, Research Associates, Research Fellows, Senior Research Fellows, Principal Research Fellows and externally-funded Fellows. These 1,100 colleagues are distributed across the university's five faculties and across its four main UK campuses. Many have hybrid working patterns which include working from home, remotely and on-site (lab or research office). The Concordat is a UK-centred document, and so this action plan and reporting around it consider the University of Nottingham UK only.

Audience (direct beneficiaries of the action plan)	Number of	Comments
Research staff	1148	Primary audience of action plan
Postgraduate researchers		
Research and teaching staff	1570	As line managers of researchers
Teaching-only staff		
Technicians		
Clinicians		
Professional support staff		

Complete for submission							
	Obligation	Action	Carried over from previous action plan?	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted impact of the action (success measure)	Progress update
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.							
EC1	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Action EC1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Concordat Steering Committee to request data to support the monitoring of progress on the implementation of action plans (faculty and institutional) to ensure positive impact on researchers and research culture. This data should include access to insights from pulse surveys, the People & Culture Survey and surveys on research culture that relate to research-focussed staff and research environment.The Concordat Steering Committee should continue to champion for relevant surveys to include questions, where appropriate, that enable disaggregation of responses of key stakeholder groups (research-focussed staff, managers of researchfocussed staff and research support staff).		Jan 25, Jan 26	Concordat Steering Committee (c/o Researcher Training and Development Manager for Research-Focussed Staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual reporting through governance channels on the implementation of the Concordat; this includes lessons learnt and identification of remedial actions to maintain progress.The Concordat Steering Committee requests action leads to provide interim progress reports with RAG rating of progress in May each year; interim reports show 75% green/amber.All relevant institutional surveys have question(s) that enable the impact of the Concordat action plan and wider research culture activities on researchers to be monitored, and remedial actions to be identified; relevant survey results are made available to the Concordat Steering Committee and Research Staff Group for the monitoring of impact and the development of future action planning.	
EC12	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.	Action EC2: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Researcher Development Concordat action plans are implemented and monitored in each faculty; the action plans are informed by researchers, line managers and local research environment needs and drivers.Open conversations enabling transparency and clear lines of contribution are established.		Sep-25	Researcher Academy Faculty Leads + Research Staff Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All faculties have a Researcher Development Concordat action plan in place, with mechanisms for updating and reviewing actions.There is regular communication around impact, and feedback/input from the community is regularly sought.	
EC16	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.	Action EC3: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Capture exit interviews and improve the granularity of data.Develop and launch an e-exit questionnaire process in Digital Core which is triggered for all leavers in the University. [Link to Athena Swan Action AG13.02.01]		Feb-26	Associate Director of HR Digital, Systems and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All leavers will be offered the option to complete an exit questionnaire.Issues identified fed back to UEB/Faculties/Schools as appropriate, and acted on.	
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.	Action EC4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Working with faculties and schools, develop communication strategy to increase awareness and appointments to the 'Assistant Supervisor' role.Undertake a scoping project to gather good practice from schools on the appointments of Assistant Supervisors; this should include monitoring of role holders in schools. (Link to Athena Swan action plan AG06.02.02)	Partial EC15	01/09/2025 (original deadline: September 2024)	Head of Researcher Development (Researcher Academy) + Researcher Academy Faculty Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guidance notes for researchers on the Assistant Supervisor role.Increased views (20% increase per year) of on-demand 'Supervisory practice' videos.All Research-Focussed Staff confirm via surveys that any teaching they do is recognised.	Following the success of the initiative by the School of Life Sciences (within the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences) to collaborate with HR to formally recognise the 'Assistant Supervisor' role, this action has been revised. This initiative will now serve as a case study to raise awareness and encourage the appointment of researchers to the 'Assistant Supervisor' role across other faculties and schools.
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.							
EC13	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	Action EC5: Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">Phase 1 – To hold a series of focus groups with research-focussed staff to explore the volume of issues and identify any new/emergent concerns impacting researchers regarding workload.Phase 2 – identify where remedial actions may need to be taken; launch a 'You Said, We Did' campaign to flag relevant policy and support mechanisms arising from Phase 1.	Yes Action EC4	Jul-24	Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pilot of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences 'You Said, We Did' project:Focus groups/pulse surveys are run in FMHS amongst researchers and their managers.Changes required in policy/guidance are flagged.Information disseminated via 'You Said, We Did' campaign.	The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences piloted the 'You Said, We Did' project, conducting school-level focus groups in September 2023 to address workload and other concerns – particularly for early-career researchers, though academic and research-focused staff were also engaged. The focus groups revealed a lack of awareness about the Concordat. Future focus groups will be conducted in all schools and at the faculty level to gain a broader understanding of researcher issues and concerns as well as how to best raise Concordat awareness.
EC14	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.						
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	Action EC6: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduction of UoN-wide approach to having 'Open Conversations' to support colleagues (particularly line managers) in identifying, sharing and providing appropriate support around issues which may include wellbeing, bullying, harassment and/or other personal or difficult topics (Athena Swan action plan AG09.09.01).		Dec-24	Associate Director of Organisational Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Numbers of staff agreeing they are confident to ask for mental health and wellbeing support increased to > 80%.Staff disagreeing that work-related mental health is recognised and supported reduced to <5%. <p>Indicative benchmark from People and Culture Survey 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">'I feel I can be myself at work': 76% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement;'Our university ensures that all people are treated fairly and equally': 56% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement.	<p>The Organisational and People Development (OPD) team has launched a university-wide 'Open Conversations' framework and programme. This work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The design and delivery of workshops for line managers on how to approach Open Conversations.The design and delivery of workshops for all colleagues on how to approach Open Conversations.The delivery of a range of bespoke workshops for teams/departments on open conversations, including ones with specific focus on: feedback, wellbeing, microaggressions. [more than 20 workshops have been delivered to date]The pilot of an inclusive approach to Open Conversations.Developed an approach to evaluating work aligned to open conversations, including understanding the experience and confidence of those who have been part of development opportunities, and how future People Surveys can be used. <p>On the broader topic of support for staff wellbeing and mental health, the OPD have recently published a Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2024-2026.</p>
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.						
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.							
EC13	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	Action EC7: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Roll out 'Bystander Training' for all staff (and students).		Dec-26	Associate Director of Organisational Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Training data indicates 100% of staff have completed 'Bystander Training' by December 2026.	
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.	Action EC8: • Explore improved communication to researchers for 'Report and Support' and misconduct reporting mechanisms (e.g. within all-staff and researcher induction materials). • In the Research Culture 2023 survey, 60% of research staff respondents agreed that the workplace was free from bullying and harassment; however, only 36% indicated they were happy with how bullying and harassment issues were handled in the workplace. [Link to Athena Swan action AG02.03.01.]		Dec-26	Associate Director of Organisational Development (for all staff inductions) + Head of Researcher Development (Researcher Academy) (for research inductions)	• >75% of all staff report awareness of 'Report and Support' and agree that they would feel comfortable to use it if needed.	
Equality, diversity and inclusion							
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in, are aware of and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion.							
EC14 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Action EC9: Faculty of Science • Develop a set of recommendations for Faculty of Science to embed anti-racism in its support for ECRs.		Mar-25	Director of EDI (Faculty of Science) + Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Faculty of Science)	• Secure funding for the project. • Recommendations developed and shared with Faculty of Science faculty members. • Recommendations shared with other faculties as a best practice resource. • Faculty-level data responses see an increase in awareness around EDI. • Evidence that managers are EDI-aware and function accordingly. • Positive survey responses to EDI questions.	• Funding was secured for the project from the central EDI Fund in summer 2023. • A PGR in Psychology has been working on the project over the last few months and has written up a report on the activity. • Discussions on the recommendations to follow, these will be shared and discussed at a faculty People and Culture meeting.
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 and aware of research integrity, maintain high standards of research integrity, and are able to report infringements or misconduct.							
EC15 / ECM2	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.	Action EC10: • Phase 1 (deadline: 1 September 2024) – Review the current offer for Researcher Development provided by the Libraries Research Support Team; develop a refreshed programme to support new publishing models, the open research agenda and research intelligence/metrics. • Phase 2 – Deliver programme. • Phase 3 – Seek feedback and update.		Sept-24, Sept 25, Sept 26	Associate Director for Research (Libraries)	• A dedicated programme to support researchers is designed; it is aligned with best practice in open research as well as UoN research and publication strategies; it is assessed through researcher feedback.	• Libraries Research Support training is available to all cohorts of researchers via Central Short Courses and advertised via Researcher Academy newsletters. • This academic year (2023/2024) a number of sessions like Open Access, ScVal and Research Intelligence have been requested by schools and this has enabled the Libraries Research Support team to reach early ECRs and research staff in addition to PGRs. • For the next academic year (2024/2025) the Libraries Research Support team are planning sessions on research profiles tailored to research staff and focusing on support for depositing outputs in the Research Information System. We are also working with the Researcher Academy to embed some of our Research Intelligence training sessions into their new programmes.
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.	Action EC11: • Formalise and capture the role of the Research Integrity Champions; this will include setting out expectations of Research Integrity Champion activities and formalising Research Integrity Champion training to ensure baseline practices that meet sector standards are achieved across the institution. • Enable Research Integrity Champions to deliver faculty-specific training that meets quality standards and facilitates best practice-sharing across faculties and schools.		Dec-24	Head of Research Integrity, Risk & Compliance (Research and Innovation)	• Formalised roles and training for Research Integrity Champions. • Researchers report in surveys a greater understanding of expectations around research integrity, and an increase in confidence that bullying, harassment and poor conduct are constructively challenged in their school or department (improving the 32% agree response in the 2022 Research Culture Survey to 50% agree in a future survey addressing these issues).	• The Research Strategy and Development team has taken steps to formalise the roles and expectations of Research Integrity Champions (RICs), whose expectations include delivering faculty-specific research integrity training. Training has been formalised to meet sector standards and share best practice across the institution. • Although training delivered by RICs has been successful, it currently occurs on an ad-hoc basis rather than as part of a consistent programme. Over the next 18-24 months, efforts will focus on establishing a more structured programme. • The Faculty of Social Sciences has integrated RIC responsibilities into the role of the School Research Ethics Officer instead of appointing a dedicated RIC. • A key success measure for this action is for researchers to report a clearer understanding of research integrity expectations and increased confidence that bullying, harassment, and poor conduct are being effectively addressed in their departments. A goal has thus been to raise agreement on this from 32% (as reported in the 2022 Research Culture Survey) to 50%. Accordingly, in the 2023 People and Culture Survey, 56% of research-focused staff agreed or strongly agreed that "Our university ensures that all people are treated fairly and equally."
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.						
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.	Action EC12: Faculty of Science • Enhance transparency around committee decision-making and promote an inclusive, equitable and transparent community by sharing of minutes and notes (Faculty action plan, point 6).		Dec-23	Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Science	• Minimum of one member of research staff on relevant committees in Schools.	
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.	Action EC13: • Faculty of Arts Research Staff Steering Group to explore processes of policy development (levels of understanding of procedure and process, scope for engagement).		Sep-24	Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Arts)	• Increased visibility of Faculty of Arts Research Staff Steering Group in the faculty. • Positive reporting in appropriate surveys by researchers (along the lines of the 'My contributions are valued' question in the Research Culture Survey 2022).	The Faculty of Arts Research Staff Steering Group has formally begun exploring policy development processes (including staff understanding of and engagement with these), with discussion of this topic scheduled for the group's first meeting of the 2024-2025 academic year.
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.	Action E1: • Undertake a review to assess the efficiency and efficacy of current recruitment and onboarding processes; this should identify areas for improvement for the current internal fellowship schemes (Nottingham Research Fellowships and Anne McLaren fellowships), ensuring the recruitment pipeline enables a diverse pool of applicants and is an accessible and equitable process that supports the very best talents irrespective of personal characteristics and personal circumstances.		May-25	Fellowships Manager (Researcher Academy)	• Review of processes undertaken and rolled out as part of standard recruitment practices. • Greater diversity in individuals observed within both the successful cohort and applicant pools, ensuring diverse backgrounds and individual characteristics are not lost from the recruitment pipeline.	
E12	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.						
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.							
E13	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.						

University of Nottingham – Researcher Development Concordat Action Plan (2024-27)



EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	Action E2: • Develop communication campaign to increase nominations of research-focussed staff for Nottingham Recognition Scheme (the current number of research-focussed staff receiving nominations is relatively low for job family); roll-out of campaign to target managers.		2025 cycle	Director of EDI (Faculty of Science) + Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Faculty of Science)	• Communication campaign rolled out. • Increase of 10% in the number of nominations for research-focussed staff.	
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.	Action E3: • Co-create an induction package for new research staff (irrespective of whether they are new to UoN) for completion within research staff's initial months (e.g. 3 months from commencement of employment contract). • Research Staff Group to convene a working group on the co-creation of induction resources (encompassing both non-research related and research-related elements).	Action E12 from AP 22-24	Dec-24	Head of Researcher Development, Research Leadership Development Manager + Researcher Training and Development Manager for Research-Focussed Staff (Researcher Academy) in collaboration with HR.	• Induction package for new research staff co-created by researchers and professional service colleagues, available via SharePoint. • Measure of impact through collection of views data from SharePoint page analytics. • Usage data evaluated annually.	The plan for the Researcher Academy and HR to create an induction package for new research staff has been delayed due to changes in staff roles and recruitment within the Researcher Academy. With new staff now in place, work on this action has resumed.
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.							
E14	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent roles.	Action E4: • Provide regular opportunities for all staff to refresh their knowledge of policies and resources (including support networks), promotion/regrading processes, ADC expectations and ways to report inappropriate behaviour. • Provide prompts and opportunity for re-induction/refresher as line management responsibilities evolve, and as staff return from a period of leave. [Link to Athena SWAN Action AG02.04.01.]		Feb-26	Associate Director of Learning & Development	• 80% of staff confirm they know where to find resources needed for their role. • 100% of staff returning from leave have received a refresher. Indicative benchmark from People and Culture Survey 2023: - 'I am able to access the learning and development I need in my current role'; 68% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement.	
E15	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	Action E5: • Explore the role of Pis in researcher inductions. • Create recommendations of researcher-specific topics to include in induction materials. • Create faculty-specific 'new staff member' checklists for Pis/managers of researchers.	Yes (adapted from E6 and E10 AP 22-24)	01/07/2025 (original deadline: December 2024)	Researcher Academy Faculty Leads + Research Staff Champions	• Creation of a 'Managing your postdoc' section in faculties' PI toolkits. • Positive reporting in surveys: Researchers report good knowledge of policies and resources, as well as of what is expected of them. • Benchmark against Research Survey 2022 data: - 93% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed that 'I understand what is expected of me in my research-related role'; the target is to maintain this. - 76% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed 'I feel able to make those expectations'; the target is to increase this to 85%.	In October/November 2024, the university will implement UniCore, a new HR, Finance, and Procurement system which will significantly impact, directly or indirectly, various actions - including this one. The 'Managing your postdoc researcher' section in each faculty's Principal Investigator toolkit needs to include guidance on UniCore processes, and so the deadline for this action has been moved to July 2025. The Researcher Academy is actively supporting this initiative.
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.						
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.	Action E6: • Review the Nottingham Reward Scheme to ensure equity across job families/levels/gender; consistency across schools, faculties, and job families. • Develop case studies (to be included in the review) which help improve understanding of the types of performance and behaviours that demonstrate exceptional 'above and beyond' contributions; ensure that case studies include examples of research-focussed staff, and that these case studies are promoted to line managers of researchers and researchers themselves. [Link to Athena SWAN action AG08.01.01 and REC Action 01.06.06]		01/07/2025 (original deadline: December 2024)	Associate Director of Pay and Reward	• Examples created and widely available on SharePoint and in training materials. • Analysis of NRS recipients indicates recipients are proportional for gender, ethnicity and disability across all job families and levels. • Benchmark against data from Research Culture Survey 2022 (72% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed that 'My contributions are valued'; 18% disagreed).	• This work is linked to the development of an organisational pay and reward strategy which will determine the strategic principles that we build our pay and reward strategic delivery plan on. • We have had a wealth of feedback on the NRS throughout consultation on the strategy so it will form an integral part of the delivery plan; however until the strategy is complete a timetable cannot be provided for the review. Its important we consider all aspects of reform and legacy issues to prioritise based on impact and risk. • The strategy is due to receive its final approval in March 2025; however, there will be a better idea on when we will review the NRS in late Autumn 2024. This has shifted the NRS review's action deadline from December 2024 to July 2025.
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.							
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.	Action E7: • Workstream 1 of the REC-HURDLES (Wellcome-funded) project: Complete a review of the use of all fixed-term contracts and permanent (with underlying funding) contracts across all research team roles, including their impact on different groups of researchers and the use of bridging funding. [Linked actions: PCD5 and PCD10.]		Mar-26	REC-HURDLES Workstream 1 Lead (HR)	• Review of policies, practice and guidance. • Development plans for pilot approaches to improve career stability, with approval for at least two pilot employment models.	
Professional and Career Development							
Championing professional development							
The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it.							
PCD11	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.	Action PCD1: • Undertaking the consultative Faculty-level projects to investigate 'What would 10 days' of CPD look like for Faculty researchers?'. • Co-creating faculty lenses to inform and support individuals to identify CPD activities relevant to their discipline. • Utilise outputs to help inform researchers and managers.	Carried forward action PCD2 from AP 22-24	Aug-26	Researcher Academy Faculty Leads	• Co-creation of documents and inclusion of materials in all ADC session resources and induction materials. • Positive reporting in pulse and culture surveys.	

University of Nottingham – Researcher Development Concordat Action Plan (2024-27)



PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	Action PCD2: • Embed learning organisation understanding and changes in culture, including timely identification and awareness of training/development opportunities (i.e. mandatory, statutory, leadership, ADC, supervisory, EDI – including awareness or 'Report and Support', dignity, wellbeing, trans awareness) as part of organisational and cultural development. • All staff to have a training portfolio and the collection of training and development link to ADC. [Link with Athena Swan actions AG03 and AG05; Intersectional link to REC Action 4.12.05.]		Aug-26	Associate Director of Learning & Development (for all staff) and Head of Researcher Development, (Researcher Academy) (for researchers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training portfolios in place and linked with ADC processes. • Positive increase (20%) in reporting for researchers and their line managers in surveys. • Benchmark against Research Culture Survey 2022: 52% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed that they were 'satisfied with development opportunities'; 39% disagreed. • Benchmark against Athena Swan Survey 2021: 42% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed that they were 'able to spend the amount of time that seems right to me on career development'; 41% disagreed. <p>Indicative benchmark from People and Culture Survey 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'I am able to access the learning and development I need in my current role'; 68% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement; - 'I have the right opportunities to learn and grow here'; 61% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement. 	
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.	Action PCD3: Faculty of Social Sciences • Explore the embedding of 10 days' Continued Professional Development (CPD) expectation within role profiles for research-focussed staff.		Dec-25	Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Faculty of Social Sciences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot of role profiles. • Positive reporting in surveys of access and value placed on completion of professional development. • Benchmark against Athena SWAN Survey 2021: 42% of research-focussed staff respondents agreed that they were 'able to spend the amount of time that seems right to me on career development'; 41% disagreed. The target is to increase positive responses in surveys by 20%. <p>Indicative benchmark from People and Culture Survey 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'I am able to access the learning and development I need in my current role'; 68% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement; - 'I have the right opportunities to learn and grow here'; 61% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement. 	
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.						
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	See PCD2					
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.	Action PCD4: Faculty of Engineering • Develop processes to enable researchers to be part of the process of appointing an agreed Annual Development Conversation reviewer (i.e. line managers or non-line manager) to ensure discussion on career development and training. • All research-focussed staff Annual Development Conversation meetings include discussion of 10 days' Continued Professional Development (CPD).		Sep-25	Researcher Academy Faculty Lead (Faculty of Engineering)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty researchers report positive experiences with their Annual Development Conversation (ADC); >80% report that Annual Development Conversations supports their career development. • Benchmark against Research Culture Survey 2022: 72% of respondents at institutional level agree that 'Annual Development Conversation (ADC)/Personal Development and Planning Review (PDPR) supports career development'. <p>Indicative benchmark from People and Culture Survey 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'I have the right opportunities to learn and grow here'; 61% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement; - 'I am given support and encouragement to progress my career at our university'; 56% of research-focussed staff respondents indicated they strongly agree/agree with this statement. 	
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.	Action PCD5: • Workstream 2 of the REC-HURDLEs (Wellcome-funded) project: To provide individualised needs-based flexible professional development support for researchers facing barriers to career progression (with emphasis on under-represented groups). [Linked actions: E7 and PCD10.]		2027	Research Staff Group Chair + APVC- Researcher Academy & Research Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reports • Creation of case studies of personal/professional change at an individual level with evidence of positive effect on career effectiveness or progression. 	
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.							
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	Action PCD6: • Launch the Mid-Career Research Leadership programme in 2023/2024 with a cohort of 20. • Undertake an evaluation of the programme.		Sep-24	Research Leadership Development Manager (Researcher Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 mid-career researchers complete programme with positive evaluation. 	The Mid-Career Research Leadership programme was successfully launched in 2023/2024 with a cohort of 20, with positive feedback received. A full evaluation of the programme will be undertaken when more iterations have taken place and a baseline is established.
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.						

University of Nottingham – Researcher Development Concordat Action Plan (2024-27)



PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	Action PCD7: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the positive benefits of mentoring and coaching for research-focussed staff through the internal communication channels of the e-newsletters (2 newsletters to have Coaching/Mentoring editorials) and through Research Staff Champions within schools; this should include the promotion of benefits to line managers of researchers, too. • Evaluation to take place through annual RA-led data collection on mentoring session attendance. 	01/08/2025 (original deadline: August 2024)	Head of Researcher Development (Researcher Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor impact of the editorials in Research Academy newsletters through email click rates. • Measure impact of mentoring through annual evaluation processes and through monitoring take-up of mentoring opportunities. 	<p>Awareness-raising efforts about the benefits of mentoring and coaching for research-focussed staff as well as about the role of Research Staff Champions, planned through the internal Research Staff e-newsletter, have been impacted by the restructuring of coaching and mentoring programmes at the university to increase fit-for-purpose and up-to-date provision. Consequently, the timeline for this initiative has been extended from August 2024 to August 2025. Nonetheless, progress continues in other areas, such as collecting data on email click-rates related to mentoring, coaching, and Research Staff Champions, which will inform future success measures.</p> <p>Research Staff Champions (12 June 2024)</p> <p>Total sends: 1622</p> <p>Unique opens: 870 (54% of total sends)</p> <p>Article clicks: 2 (out of 84 total email clicks)</p> <p>Coaching Circles (8 February 2023)</p> <p>Total sends: 1684</p> <p>Unique opens: 655 (39% of total sends)</p> <p>Article clicks: 34 (out of 148 total email clicks)</p>
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.	Action PCD8: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation of the Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) programme has provided two key mechanisms to facilitate UoN staff moving across employment sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Charity Fellowships o Seed funding to work with policy partner organisations (across sector networks) 	Aug-24	Deputy Director of Institute for Policy and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reporting in evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CAPE charity fellowships scheme at Nottingham has been a highly successful pilot project. Fellowships placed academics within charities, working on policy-facing projects. This supported the needs of the host organisation in accessing expertise, while allowing fellows to develop skills and experience in an organisation outside of their usual environment. • In early 2023, the Institute for Policy and Engagement welcomed UoN staff to apply for the scheme: Applicants were invited to bid for up to £10,000 to cover eligible costs for the fellowship with a charity of their choice, which needed to be part-time to enable activity to sit alongside existing research responsibilities (or, where permitted by the faculty, replacing teaching time which the funding could buy out). Applicants were required to provide a letter of support from the charity they proposed working with. • Four applicants (from the School of Cultures, Languages and Area Studies; the School of Biosciences; the School of Medicine; and the School of Humanities) were successfully awarded a fellowship, commencing in spring/summer of 2023. • Seed funding for researchers to work with policy partner organisations enabled long-term collaboration, co-creation, relationship- and trust-building (including a buddying scheme in the Foreign Office); it enabled researchers to learn hands-on about writing and publishing in different formats, and how to collaborate better across policy, practice and research.*
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.	Action PCD9: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile case studies on career pathways/destination sector of Nottingham alumni and staff leavers (originate from exit survey data). • Case studies to be made available via Careers and Employability Service SharePoint, to demonstrate diversity of professional career options. 	Carried forward Action PCD7 from AP 22-24 (original deadline: December 2024)	02/06/2025 Careers Consultants for Postgraduate Researchers and Early-Career Researchers (Careers and Employability Service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 case studies published on SharePoint, with at least 5 specific to postdoc destinations. 	<p>The publication of 25 case studies by the Careers and Employability Service showcasing the diversity of professional career options, has been delayed due to the redesign of their website. The updated site will offer increased provision for research-focused staff, supported by these case studies. The timeline has been adjusted from December 2024 to June 2025, which has allowed the opportunity to ensure the postdoc case studies date from 2020 onwards, thus maximizing their relevance.</p>
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.	Action PCD10: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workstream 3 of the REC-HURDLEs (Wellcome-funded) project: To co-produce an expanded bespoke careers resource that includes 24/7 online provision, targeted for all career stages and job families. [Linked actions: E7 and PCD5.] 	Jan-27	Careers Consultants for Postgraduate Researchers and Early-Career Researchers (Careers and Employability Service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of access to new career resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long dwell times on webpages - Increasing rates of online careers resource-use and workshop attendance - Increased demand for 1-2-1 careers advisor support. 	

* 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.