Loughborough University Concordat Action Plan 2018-2020

This revised Concordat Action Plan has been created over the Spring and Summer of 2019 incorporating feedback from the HR Excellence in Research review panel, and in further consultation with Research Staff, including the now well-established LU Research Staff Association (LURSA).

The actions described are intended to fulfil the University's Research Staff Vision.

Loughborough University is working to create an environment for Research Staff that provides the:

Capability for Research Staff to succeed in their roles at Loughborough University and in their future careers, whether at Loughborough or beyond, providing appropriate development and support;

Culture that values Research Staff and their contribution to the University's success, recognising the important contribution that they make;

Community for Researchers at discipline, School and University level to enable researchers to thrive as members of their research discipline, as active participants within their academic Schools and to the broader University community, for example through our CALIBRE Research Strategy.

In working towards this vision, the actions in this plan have also been mapped to and where possible built into two key elements of the University's strategy: the newly developed People Strategy, which has been published following our initial report and action plan, and, where appropriate, the CALIBRE Research Strategy. The actions described within the plan have originated from multiple sources and reflect changing priorities of the sector, the University and of Research Staff themselves. Actions originating from Research Staff (marked "RS" in the code column) were elicited through specific engagement with LURSA to identify new actions for the plan, and also via the Careers in Research Online Survey, which we ran in May 2019 and is the most current barometer for Research Staff Experiences at Loughborough.

Actions new to this iteration of the plan are marked "NEW". Taking on board the feedback from the evaluation panel, the new actions include a greater level of scrutiny of progress through the 'Research Quality Enhancement' (ResQuE) Sub-Committee, which will bolster the measurement of progress against the action plans. Research staff views will also be solicited to a greater extent through School-level engagement, and by Schools feeding back to the Research Staff Working Group, ensuring that the University is responding to the needs of the research staff population. Associate Deans for Research are now explicitly mentioned with responsibility for actions, as the senior leaders for research at School level.

Glossary

ADR	Associate Dean for Research
CALIBRE	Collective Ambition at Loughborough for Building Research Excellence
CROS	Careers in Research Online Survey
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HROD	Human Resources and Organisational Development
LURSA	Loughborough University Research Staff Association
MRDF	Midlands Researcher Development Forum
PDR	Performance and Development Review
PI	Principal Investigator
PIRLS	Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey
PVCR	Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research
RA	Research Associate
ResQuE	Research Quality Enhancement Sub-Committee

Principle 1 - Recruitment and Selection

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
1-1	Embed Research Staff Employment Code of Practice into recruitment, induction and training for Research Staff and PIs.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 5	Human Resources and Organisational Development	March 2020	Research Staff will know the practices related to their employment, measured through CROS and staff surveys (10% increase annually).
1-2	Complete the review of Research Staff Employment Code of Practice.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 5	Human Resources and Organisational Development	January 2020	Revised Code of Practice updated and approved by LURSA, Research Committee and Human Resources Committee.
1-3 **RS** **NEW**	Explore mechanisms to improve retention of highly skilled research staff.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 4 CALIBRE – Research Leaders	PVCR, Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office	October 2020	Report to Research Committee and Human Resources Committee with recommendations.
1-4 **RS** **NEW**	Review redeployment policy to determine its effectiveness for retaining highly skilled Research Staff.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 3	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research Staff Working Group	February 2020	Report to Human Resources Committee with recommendations for effective use of redeployment in retaining highly skilled researchers.
1-5 **NEW**	Review of accommodation information for new staff moving to Loughborough, including Research Staff.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 5	Facilities Management	September 2019	Delivery of report and recommendations, with Research Staff identified as a specific group within.

Principle 2 – Recognition and Value

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
2-1	As outlined in the emerging Organisational Development Strategy, develop a "one-stop-shop" website for development opportunities for all staff at the University, containing specific training and development opportunities for Research Staff in a single location.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1 CALIBRE – Research Leaders	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office	January 2020	Website completed and reviewed by LURSA, with review and feedback every 6 months. Increase in the quantity and variety of development opportunities undertaken by Research Staff.
2-2	Develop bespoke research staff induction practices at School level. Recognising the variation in Research Staff populations in Schools, each School to ensure new Research Staff receive a formal induction process within 3 months of joining the School.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 5	ADRs in Schools	January 2020	Schools to monitor induction uptake via School action plans (Action 7-1). Increase of 10% in researchers reporting local induction in CROS and other staff surveys.
2-3	Create framework for all ADRs to meet with Research Staff or a LURSA-affiliated representative on a regular basis, and representation of their views at School Research Committees	**Community** People Strategy Priority 2 CALIBRE – Research Leaders	ADRs in Schools, Research Staff Working Group	March 2020	All ADRs to provide the opportunity to meet with Research Staff or a LURSA-affiliated representative on a regular basis, with information relayed to the School's Research Staff population. To be monitored quarterly by the Research Staff Working Group (Action 7-2).
2-4	Review current practice relating to conversion of long-serving staff from fixed-term to open-ended contracts, identify potential actions to improve transparency of the process and facilitate conversion where it is appropriate to do so.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 5	Human Resources and Organisational Development	June 2020	Current practice reviewed and any recommendations for change put forward to the appropriate committees. Eventual increase in number of eligible research staff moving from fixed-term to open-ended contracts.

2-5	Develop specific guidance on the PDR process for Research Staff and their reviewers	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development	January 2020	Provide guidance to reviewers and reviewees in the form of training and supporting documentation prior to the forthcoming PDR round in January-March 2020. Minimum 10% increase in Research Staff satisfaction with PDR process as measured by CROS and internal surveys.
2-6 **NEW**	Raise awareness of reward and recognition programmes and opportunities to researchers and managers.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 3	Human Resources and Organisational Development	June 2020	A 10% increase in positive feedback in questions relating to reward and recognition in CROS and Staff Surveys, greater number of Research Staff being put forward for recognition awards.
2-7 **RS** **NEW**	Ensure that Research Staff are explicitly included in existing mechanisms that provide development and funding opportunities, where appropriate.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 2 CALIBRE – Research Leaders	Research and Enterprise Office, Human Resources and Organisational Development	January 2020	Review of development opportunities across Organisational Development, resulting information to be made explicit on Research Staff website. Research Staff to be explicitly invited to presentations from funding providers (e.g. UKRI, Wellcome) and included in other Development opportunities.
2-8 **RS** **NEW**	Schools to develop individual policies for research staff participation at School staff meetings and committees and make public.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 2	ADRs in Schools, Research Staff Working Group	January 2020	Each School to publish a policy based on fair access for Research Staff, to be reported as part of individual action plans to ResQuE Sub-Committee.

Principle 3 – Support and Career Development – Supporting Researchers

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
3-1	As part of University-wide needs-analysis, review Research Staff Development opportunities and participation on an annual basis. Ensure clear and unambiguous information on the development opportunities available to Research Staff via the "one-stop-shop" and signposted from the Research and Enterprise Office website.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Library, Research and Enterprise Office	January 2020, then annually thereafter	Updated Development guide to be published and distributed to Research Staff by the start of each year. Participation of research staff in development opportunities through one-stop-shop, 10% increase over 2 years. Expanded range of development opportunities included, 5% increase over 2 years.
3-2	Monitor PDR uptake on an annual basis. As part of an institutional learning needs analysis, examine resulting PDR data including developmental needs and requests for support, to ensure Development opportunities reflect development needs.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research Staff Working Group	January 2020, then June 2020 & annually thereafter	All eligible members of Research Staff continue to participate in PDR, Research Staff Working Group will review development requests made through PDR process.
3-3 **NEW**	Develop a Fellowship pipeline, including funding and developmental support for selected Early Career Researchers (internal and external) to develop their research to the stage of a research fellowship application.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 1 CALIBRE – Research Leaders	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office	October 2019	Creation of Doctoral Prize Fellowship scheme, recruiting minimum of five 2-year independent Fellowships per year. Alongside this, create a Fellow development scheme with spaces to be made available to other research staff via a competitive application process. Pilot scheme with Doctoral Prize Cohort currently underway (April – Oct 2019).

3-4 **RS** **NEW**	Provide Research Staff-specific development opportunities for public engagement and publishing research.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Library	March 2020	One new development opportunity to be delivered in each of public engagement and publishing research.
3-5 **NEW**	Staff supporting researchers to attend regional and national meetings and conferences relating to Research Staff issues.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office	September 2019	Support staff to attend and engage with Research Staff-specific sessions at the Vitae Conference, attend MRDF, plus other conferences and events as appropriate. Attendance and participation a minimum of 5 external events/meetings per year, and report Research Staff Working Group.
3-6 **NEW**	Within Research and Enterprise, undertake a 'task and finish' project to investigate the inclusion of the training and professional development of Research Staff development on grants, where possible.	**Capability** People strategy Priority 1	Research and Enterprise Office	March 2020	Evaluation undertaken of existing practice regarding inclusion of researcher development costs within eligible grants. Recommendations for any required improvements put forward to Research Committee.

Principle 4 – Support and Career Development – Recognition and Promotion

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
4-1	Targeted careers provision for Research Staff: Run an annual Careers event specifically for researchers, rolling programme of Research Staff workshops in Schools, and embed careers consultant into other workshops and events. Events and services to be promoted via email, periodic postcard distribution and posters in schools	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1	Careers Network	September 2020	Careers Consultant to engage with minimum of 10% of research staff population per year through events, workshops and consultations.
4-2	Develop mentoring for Research Staff, starting with Research Fellows, including creating procedures and best practice for mentoring. Incorporate Research Staff into the University-wide Coaching and Mentoring Scheme that is currently under development.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office, Academic Schools	March 2020	All Research Fellows and Doctoral Prize Fellows to be provided with a mentor outside of their line management structure and be meeting on a regular basis. Mentoring guidelines to be created and shared with mentors and researchers.
4-3 **NEW**	Review the monthly Research Staff Bulletin to communicate news, events and development/funding opportunities from across the university.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 2	Human Resources and Organisational Development	November 2019	Canvas researchers to determine the types of content they would find most useful in the bulletin. Updated bulletin to be distributed to all Research Staff on a monthly basis.
4-4 **RS NEW**	Create a Research Staff log in to the new Doctoral College Development Portal, to allow access to further development opportunities including methods training.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1 CALIBRE – Doctoral College	Human Resources and Organisational Development	December 2019	Research Staff given the ability to self-register for the Doctoral College's Development Portal, with target of 15% of Research Staff registered by end of 2019.

4-5 RS NEW	Support Research Staff in benefitting from initiatives within the CALIBRE Research Strategy, including engagement with Beacon, Global Challenge and Institute of Advanced Studies activities that will support their professional develop	Culture CALIBRE – Beacons, Global Challenges, Here to Stay (Institute of Advanced Studies)	PVCR, CALIBRE Academic Leads, Research and Enterprise Office	June 2020	Research Staff encouraged to engage with CALIBRE activities including participating in internal funding bids, and Institute of Advanced Studies themes. Measure involvement with CALIBRE initiatives.

Principle 5 – Researchers' Responsibilities

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
5-1	Provide organisational and financial support for LURSA to run bespoke, Research Staff-specific events throughout the year.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development	October 2019	Member of staff allocated to provide dedicated support to LURSA; ring-fenced funding for LURSA to run events and activities.
5-2	Run networking lunches for Research Staff, across the campus, throughout the year	**Community** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development, LURSA	July 2020	Annually hold three networking lunches, each in a different part of the campus, to be advertised to and open to all Research Staff. Attendance to be monitored, 15% of population to attend an event.
5-3	Increase engagement and attendance of research staff at Fellowship Inaugural Lectures and Annual Research Conference. Further engage with LURSA and ADRs to select topics and define activities, and to aid in promotion of events.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development, LURSA, Academic Schools	November 2019 and annually thereafter	LURSA and Research Committee invited to join planning meetings for Fellowship Inaugural Lectures and Annual Research Conference. Notification of all events to Research Staff via the Bulletin. 10% increase in Research staff participation per year.
5-4 **NEW**	Further publicise Vitae events and resources, including dedicated webpages and section in Research Staff Bulletin.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development	October 2019	Dedicated sections created on website and Bulletin; increase in Research Staff accessing Vitae resources and events, as measured by hits on website and through responses to questions in CROS.

Principle 6 – Diversity and Equality

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
6-1	Create a portal for researchers to access face-to-face and online resources for English and Academic language skills.	**Capability** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Student Services	January 2020	Website in place drawing together opportunities in language skills, research staff able to access academic language workshops via Doctoral College Development Portal.
6-2	Review, enhance and embed flexible working practices for Research Staff.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development	June 2020	Measure as part of People Strategy implementation, ensuring Research Staff are represented in uptake of flexible working practices. Increase in understanding of policies as measured in CROS and PIRLS.
6-3	Make further commitments to improve equality for minority ethnic staff by convening a Self-Assessment Team for the Race Equality Charter by the end of September 2019.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 2	Planning	October 2019	Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team convened.
6-4	Work towards achieving Athena SWAN recognition in all schools and departments by 2022.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 2	Planning	October 2022	All schools and departments to have achieved a level of Athena SWAN recognition.
6-5 **NEW**	Ensure that Research Staff benefit from the EDI Action Plan. The University has set out a range of actions in its EDI Action Plan to improve EDI for all staff, these to include reviewing membership of committees and identifying how to accelerate women's progression in the organisation.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 2	Human Resources Committee	December 2020	Ensure that specific communications, actions and outcomes are inclusive of Research Staff and where possible address other aspects of the Concordat Action Plan.

Principle 7 – Implementation and Review

Code	Action	Strategy	Responsibility	End Date	Success Measures
7-1 NEW	Create individual Concordat action plans for each School, taking account of results from CROS and PIRLS, and views of Research Staff via LURSA and Research Staff representatives. Progress against plans to be scrutinised at Research Quality Enhancement (ResQuE) Sub-Committee chaired by Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 1	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office, Academic Schools	December 2019	Plans created for each individual school, shared with ADRs and Research Committee. ResQuE to feedback progress to Research Staff Working Group to consider during quarterly review meetings. Progress with School actions prior to HR Excellence review period in October 2020 (Action 7-5).
7-2 RS NEW	Research Staff Working Group to meet quarterly to monitor progress against Action Plan.	**Community** People Strategy Priority 2	Research Staff Working Group	June 2019 and quarterly thereafter	Research Staff Working Group to review Action Plan Progress at each meeting, with any concerns or further actions to be reported to the following Research Committee by the Working Group Chair.
7-3	Participate in the biennial CROS and PIRLS surveys to provide quantitative and qualitative data to guide Concordat Implementation.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 4	Human Resources and Organisational Development	June 2019	Response rate of greater than 35% for CROS and 25% for PIRLS, with representation from across the University.
7-4	Apply for renewal of the HR Excellence in Research Award in December 2020.	**Culture** People Strategy Priority 5	Human Resources and Organisational Development, Research and Enterprise Office	December 2020	Research Staff and stakeholder consultation to be completed by October 2020, with progress review and new Action Plan approved and submitted for review by deadline.