# HR Excellence in Research Progress Report 2019-2021

**HUMAN RESOURCES,**

**Organisational Development**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Original Concordat Principles** | **Objectives** | **Action** | **Success Measure** | **Owner** | **Progress update** | **Outcome/result** |
| **Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research - Concordat Principle 1** | **Ensuring UCL is able to attract, develop and retain the outstanding talent needed to deliver our academic mission.** | Develop new talent strategy that includes a specific focus on researchers that enables us to identify our top talent leading to clear succession planning and retention plans. | New talent strategy is consulted on, approved, and published, enabling clear pathways to better talent management. | OD | Completed | We have recently completed the pilot for the new talent management project and are now refining the talent resources, building a SharePoint site, and developing comms to share with UCL. The programme will be launched in 2022. |
| Implement new recruitment system to help transform recruitment at UCL. | New recruitment system is implemented, providing better support for the recruitment of researchers, and allow us to capture more information employee life cycle at UCL. | HR Recruitment | Carried over in 2022-24 AP |  |
| Implement new recruitment system to measure talent retention and redeployment. | New recruitment system will tag researchers and follow them through the employee life cycle, including redeployment process.   Capture new data to assess how many researchers are engaging with redeployment at UCL. | OD | Carried over in 2022-24 AP |  |
| Design, implement and embed new connected and comprehensive Welcome to UCL. | Phase 1 of this project, transforming onboarding checks and introducing a new Welcome event is already underway.   100% of new starters at UCL to attend Welcome Event on the first day by January 2020.   Phase 2 of this project to complete by March 2020. Phase 2 includes a welcome to your department on your second day, with requisite systems access already in place; buddying system and a welcome to your community of practice or research domain. | OD | Partial completion, additional targets included in 2022-24 AP | New online induction suite: Belong at UCL launched in 2020, replacing live Welcome events, which were suspended due to pandemic.  New Belong at UCL: Researcher induction e-learning will launch 22/23 academic year (see AP 22-24). |
| All researchers - though especially new starters - are offered termly information & networking event highlighting the support mechanisms and services available to them as researchers for an improved researcher experience, including careers support. | OD | Carried over, new targets included in 2022-24 AP |  |
| **Creating an environment where all our people feel able to grow and progress to be accountable and responsible for the benefit of UCL and themselves.** | Embed new Academic Careers Framework across HR activities | Continue to increase the dissemination of Academic Careers Framework so that it is widely used and understood.   Pilot new Academic Promotions Workshops, open to all but focused on reducing the homogeneity of the researcher profile by encouraging equity-seeking groups to participate. Assess the impact of these workshops on the number of staff who then achieve promotion and then consider broadening the beneficial impact UCL-wide. | HR Pensions and Rewards | Completed | Academic Careers Framework included in the induction and leadership programmes. HR Pensions and Rewards is supporting faculty promotion decisions. |
| Introduce a new online staff appraisal and development system for all UCL staff including 360 feedback | Implementation of Phase 1 is piloted between January and March 2020 in order that system can be tweaked and improved before full roll out in 2021. | OD | Partial completion, new targets included in 22-24 AP | New 360 feedback and system refreshed. Appraisal resource updated, system update included in 22-24 AP. |
| **Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation’s human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research - Concordat Principle 2** | **Enable and celebrate our researchers.** | Continue to grow Postdoc Appreciation Week with a greater focus on co-creation and building relationships with researchers. | Engagement: we achieve increasing engagements with Postdoc Appreciation Week (2019) and the Festival of Early-Stage Researcher (2021)   Co-creation: we achieve 25% researcher-led events within the week, with specific events focused on equity-seeking groups. | OD | Completed | Target engagement achieved (over 700 unique registrations, increase from 300 unique registrations in 2019), co-creation partly achieved (10%). |
| Launch a new Researcher Experience Strategy in line with UCL's 2019 Research Strategy. | The RX Strategy is widely consulted on across all Faculties, agreed by Council and published online. Wholesale agreement on new more focused emphasis on researcher experience in support of enabling, celebrating, and developing researchers is achieved. | OD | Scratched | Continued Researcher Experience projects under the guidance of UKRI’s People & Culture Strategy and Concordat obligation. |
| **Enable research leadership in all its forms** | Create a learning and development framework that will support academic leadership and review all leadership and management programmes in line with it. As a first measure, introduce a new Heads of Department Induction. | All new Heads of Department receive preparatory training for the role and are part of a supportive peer-to-peer learning group as they transition into the role. | OD | Completed | Head of Academic Departments and Senior Leader Induction (G9-10) launched in 2021-22 academic year. Mentoring scheme for Heads of Academic Departments in place as part of the programme. |
| **Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment -Concordat Principle 3** | **Support the development of early career researchers** | Continue to build and develop the work of the UCL ECR Liaison Committee, which reports into the RSCG. | Researcher's views on their experience, development and support needs are heard and at the highest levels at UCL. | OD | Completed | The Career, Employment, Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS) attracted 2,400 responses (~30% response rate). CEDARS results were used to inform UCL Research Culture recommendations which were presented to high level committees at UCL. |
| Provide leadership training for all new Principal Investigators | New blended learning package on Research Leadership developed and piloted.  Within Appraisal Project, new module 'Great Development Conversations', based on a coaching methodology and coaching approaches to line-management and appraisal is tested with Principal Investigators and recommendations considered before launch.   Package includes module on people management, including relevant information on wellbeing, bullying, sexual misconduct policy, personal relationships Code and Report, Support tool for reporting information for them, as well as policies of research funding bodies. | OD | Partial completion, new targets included in 22-24 AP | Launched a leadership programme for first-time PIs in 2021-22.  Additional appraisal resources launched in 2022. |
| **The importance of researchers’ personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career - Concordat Principle 4** | Develop and deliver the Research Staff Development Programme (RSDP).   Streamline provision, create learning, and career pathways and map it to the UCL Academic Careers Framework. | In partnership with Faculties and Professional Services teams (UCL Careers, UCL Culture, UCL Innovation and Enterprise, Libraries, Open Science, UCL Arena, Research IT services and Digital Learning), a more streamlined RSDP provides new ways of supporting development, including skills self-assessment, skills-tracking, and a learning and career model based on a fellowship qualification. | OD | Partial completion, new targets included in 2022-24 AP | New skills pathways, presented in the form of RSDP timetable, launched in December 2021. |
| Develop a proof of concept for improved support mechanism for postdoctoral researchers | Following proof of concept, plans are initiated for implementation of new approach. | OD | Scratched |  |
| Work towards the aspiration of 20% of researchers' time dedicated to skills, personal and professional development | Engagement with all Faculties and minimum 1,000 research staff is achieved via consultation. Following consultation RSCG will consider next steps. | OD/ RSCG/ Faculties | Completed | Consultation achieved via the Career, Employment, Development in Academic Research Survey (CEDARS), which attracted 2,400 responses (~30% response rate). |
| We will introduce a 'development levy' (using the Apprenticeship Levy) to prioritise offering an accredited coaching qualification to staff. | Following tendering process, accredited coaching qualification providers are appointed to deliver the programme. Graduates of this programme will be contracted to coach internally to UCL colleagues, including researchers. | OD | Carried over in 2022-24 AP | Coaching apprenticeship scheme piloted in 2022, with further goals added in 2022-24 AP |
| Introduce a Technician Development Strategy to support our commitments | Technician Development Strategy is launched and published to provide clearer career development pathways to Research Technicians. | OD | Partial completion | TOPS Technical Staff Project Manager now leads the project with support from OD. |
| Develop, launch, and embed a Technician Careers Framework | Technician Framework is launched which describes the stages and expectations of development in a technician career pathway. The importance of research technicians and research assistants is recognised, and they are supported in their career development. | OD | Partial completion | The pilot Technician Framework is in development, working with a range of staff from Engineering. The Framework will illustrate the two potential career pathways for Technical Staff specifically. |
| Provide clear career advice and career development opportunities to research staff. | Ongoing expansion (10% annually) and development of provision in this area is achieved, including UCL Careers support for research staff: collaborative conferences, internships, 1:1 career advice and employer-led forums. The Academic Careers Office extend their annual Festival of Failure and ADAPT to Thrive series. Participate in new focus groups with Vitae and Oxford Brookes University to gauge women in STEM research's awareness of opportunities for spinouts. | UCL Careers, ACO, | Completed | **UCL Careers:** 1) We conducted a survey of early-career research staff (and PhD students) in 2020 to assess training needs and preferences for adjustments/additions to provision; 2) All provision was moved online due to the pandemic, increasing maximum attendee capacity at many events, and possibly making sessions more accessible to off-main-campus/busy researchers; 3) In response to the unique conditions of the pandemic, in Summer and Autumn 2020 we organised additional one-to-one 45-minute ‘Researcher Extra’ careers appointments for early-career research staff, growing the programme above the 10% target. 4) We continued to deliver and grow our annual Beyond Academia Life Sciences Careers conference, which is a collaboration with the ICH. 5) We continued to source internships and vacancies for researchers during an economic downturn. **ACO:** The ACO continues to build on the success of the ADAPT programme, which aims to build resilience in early career researchers. It provided CBT based online coaching to 80 PhD students in 2019 and held the highly successful Festival of Failure in November 2019, featuring speakers and attendees from around the UK and Europe, followed by an editorial in the Lancet, written by its chief editor Richard Horton. |
| **Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning Concordat Principle 5** | Encourage researchers to take responsibility for continuous personal and professional development | Pilot of digital skills and careers development tool for a first cohort of researchers to encourage continuous professional development is successfully launched.   Application launches within Postdoc Appreciation Week and is utilised by sample population within academic year 2019-20, therefore providing evidence of the case for wider use across the institution. | OD | Completed | Inkpath launched and available to all with UCL login |
| Review, update and disseminate Research Staff Code of Practice to ensure clear guidance on expectations of researchers at all levels. | Research Staff Code of Practice is reviewed annually via the Research Staff Consultative Group and in consultation with Faculties, updated, published online and disseminated.   Researchers report using the Code of Practice via multiple channels: Staff Survey, CROS survey, appraisal and anecdotally. | OD, Faculties | Completed, ongoing commitment included in 2022-24 AP | On track, CoP added to research staff induction |
| Continue to develop and expand channels for co-creation in researcher development | Applications to Researcher-led Initiative increases by 10%   50% the sessions within the March 2020 Creating Connections conference for early-stage researchers working by part-time mode, are devised, delivered and led by and for researchers. | OD | Partial completion | We received 43 applications in the 2019/20 award cycle, which effectively doubled the number of applications in 2018/19 year (21). During the pandemic, the interest slowed down, with 12 applications. The scheme will be refreshed and refocused in 2022/23 year.  Creating connections conference discontinued from 2020 to be merged with the Festival of Early-Stage Researcher. |
| **Review and relaunch Core Behaviours so they link clearly to UCL values and UCL 2034** | Ensure that we support people at every stage of their career with us – e.g., when they join, as they develop, when they are promoted, when they leave. | HR Dashboard provides key up to date demographic metrics on recruitment, selection, and career management opportunities, from doctoral candidates and prospective staff to the career experiences of current staff, including opportunities for appraisal and secondments, allowing HR OD to target and devise appropriate initiatives. | OD | Partially completed, new targets included in 2022-24 AP | Postponed due to the delays with procurement of new recruitment system. Smaller scale Learning & Development data dashboard is in place and provides vital overview of the engagement with central training programmes. |
| Within the terms of the Next Generation Life Sciences Coalition, of which UCL is the first UK member, data on destinations for postgraduate research students and research staff alumni, including demographic data on participation by gender, ethnicity, and disability.   Site is published, maintained, and updated annually. | OD | Scratched | Project discontinued due to GDPR restriction on alumni data. |
| An Alumni Employee Network is created, enabling a wider UCL community and helping us to understand researchers' career pathways. | OD,  Faculties | Scratched | Project discontinued due to GDPR restriction on alumni data. |
| **Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers Concordat Principle 6** | **Foster a diverse research community from the widest possible talent pool** | Continue to develop the Inclusive Advocates Scheme which encourages sponsorship of BAME staff at grades towards their career advancement. | BAME researchers are offered sponsorship from more senior advocates within UCL. Further recruitment to the scheme will take place in 2019/20. | EDI | Completed,  ongoing commitment included in 2022-24 AP | Last cohort recruited early 2020. currently 19% of scheme beneficiaries are researchers. Evaluation of pilot concluded at end of 2020. |
| Continue to develop the B-Mentor Programme for Research Staff. | BAME researchers are offered mentoring and the chance to mentor through a cross-institutional scheme. | EDI | Completed, ongoing commitment included in 2022-24 AP | UCL facilitates an annual mentoring programme across partner universities for BAME post docs to lecturers, beneficiaries include researchers. |
| We will recognise, respect, and celebrate the diversity of our people by providing a flexible, accessible, and inclusive working environment. | Athena SWAN Silver Charter Mark is successfully retained. | EDI | Completed | Athena SWAN Silver Charter Mark is successfully retained in 2021. |
| Disability Standard charter mark is successfully retained. | EDI | Carried over in 2022-24 AP | A Disability Equality Implementation Group has been established to focus on and progress disability equity. |
| UCL will host a conference on global best-practice prevention of sexual misconduct in June 2020 for which planning has begun. | EDI | Completed | Conference took place virtually and attracted 350 delegates from numerous countries. UCL continues with programmes addressing bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct, overseen by the Prevention of Harmful Behaviours Working Group. |
| New BAME leadership programme is designed and delivered to BAME staff, both research and professional services, as part of a suite of measures, including a new module in PI development module on inclusive leadership, to help foster a diverse community and improve rates of progression of BAME staff from grades 5 to 7, to 8, 9, 10 and above. | OD & EDI | Completed | BAME leadership programme launched in 2020, PI training launched in 2021. |
| Race Equality Charter Mark Bronze is successfully retained. | EDI | Completed | Race Equality Charter Mark Bronze is successfully retained in 2020. |
| **The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK. Concordat Principle 7** | **Our processes, systems, policies, and behaviours will enable the success of the University and allow our people to thrive** | The RX Strategy will include a specific stream of work around encouraging playfulness and experimentation in research at UCL | Flagship initiatives to encourage greater openness, collaboration and a playfulness are developed within Postdoc Appreciation Week. | OD | Scratched | While work on RX Strategy was discontinued, nurturing collaboration and co-creation, also in informal, playful manner, is encouraged via flagship initiatives (FESR, RLI). |
| Engage with Faculties and research staff to fulfil the requirements of the HREiR Action Plan | RSCG, UCL Liaison Committee and Postdoc Appreciation Week all provide a forum for regular and specific engagement activities to provide a forum for reviewing, developing, and delivering this action plan. | OD | Completed, ongoing commitment included in 2022-24 AP | RSCG continue to meet on termly basis, Festival of Early-Stage Researcher Town Hall event in 2022 included a Q&A with senior academics, the Provost, and Pro-Vice-Provost Doctoral School. |
| UCL will continue to liaise with Vitae and other institutions, sector-wide, to share best practice in researcher development and the researcher experience | UCL provides leadership in researcher development and researcher experience through flagship initiatives and effective practices. As a signatory of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers 2019, UCL contributes to work within the sector, and uses this action plan as a means of monitoring our progress against our commitment. | OD | Completed, ongoing commitment included in 2022-24 AP | UCL continues to share best practices across sector via R14, LERU and Vitae. |