

Key Principles with defined Actions	Issue to be addressed	Success criteria	Responsibility for Action	Timeline	Completion/ Progress
Principle 1. Recruitment and Selection					
Devise approaches and strategies for increasing the diversity of recruitment panels.	Recruitment and progression panels should reflect diversity as well as a range of experience and expertise	Demonstrable increase in diversity of panels	Associate Director HR (ED) and Equality & Diversity Committee	March 2015	Completed - The HR Advisor Business Partnership model in Schools continues to work well in providing effective support and promoting diversity in recruitment panels. A new Director of HR and OD will be taking responsibility for overseeing equality and diversity from January 2016.
Extend recruitment and selection training to all panel members (currently just Chairs)	Recruitment & selections panels should have received relevant recent training.		Associate Director HR (Schools of Study)	In place by January 2015. Rolling programme for training. Monitor annually.	Completed - It is now mandatory for chairs of recruitment and progression panels to have completed the training course "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Managers". This covers equality, discrimination, harassment and bullying legislation and explores the concept of unconscious bias.
Review 'Managers and Leaders' resources to ensure advice on all aspects of recruitment practice are current and reflect best practice	Continued best practice in recruitment	Maintenance of excellent responses on recruitment practice in both CROS and PIRLS surveys	Associate Director HR (Schools of Study)	April 2015, then review annually	Ongoing - There is a dedicated "Managers and Leaders" website which is reviewed regularly, to support managers on HR issues. This includes Vidcasts and Quick Reference Guides which are used by all Schools: http://www.aston.ac.uk/staff/hr/managers-resources/ Resources promoting the Concordat and Every Researcher Counts are also available to Managers here:

					http://www.aston.ac.uk/research/support/ecr-development/information-for-ecr-supporters/
Join Euraxess and utilise their services	Provides access to a complete range of information and support services to researchers wishing to pursue their research careers in Europe	Euraxess resources are used by Aston's researchers. All research staff posts advertised through Euraxess (currently only those with EC grants). Demonstrable increase in recruitment from Europe and elsewhere.	Associate Director HR (Schools of Study)	December 2014. Monitor impact annually ONLY EC	Completed - All Marie Curie studentships are advertised on Euraxess and the new HR recruitment team are well placed to support the use of Euraxess where appropriate.
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Principle 2. Recognition and Value					
Review of the leadership and management training for research managers	Research managers aware of, and understand, their responsibilities for the management of researchers.	Addresses issues raised in PIRLS 2013. Updated and relevant training programme/ opportunities. Uptake positive and feedback confirms relevance.	Associate Director HR (OD) and Staff & Graduate Development	Initiated September 2014. Review completed and programmes and opportunities implemented March 2015. Update in response to CROS and PIRLS 2015 and 2017.	Ongoing - Data from the Aston PIRLS 2015 Survey (response rate 40%) indicated that 92% of respondents felt confident in leading their group. 39% overall indicated that they needed more training. Leadership and Management courses (ILM Levels 2 and 3) are now offered routinely to research managers alongside a one-day "Manager's Toolkit" workshop.
ECR Development programme reviewed annually, and updated in line with ECR Committee requests and CROS survey feedback	Early career researchers views are valued through their significant input into defining the training opportunities made available to them	Positive feedback from varied sources, including CROS survey, on appropriateness of the training provided.	Research and Enterprise Office	Initial review January 2015. Annual review thereafter.	Completed but continuing to monitor - Whilst almost two-thirds (62.5%) of CROS 2015 respondents rated Aston's PDR appraisal scheme as useful (50%) or very useful (12.5%), more than half of respondents (55%) indicated that they would welcome more CPD activities on career management. A series of "Inspiring Life Stories" seminars was

					therefore organised to address this need by drawing on the experiences of more senior colleagues at the University, by inviting speakers from Industry and by organising a speaker from 'The Brilliant Club', which offers opportunities for researchers wishing to gain teaching experience in Schools: www.thebrilliantclub.org . Two workshops on Writing Fellowship Applications were also well received during 2016.
Development of case studies of researcher profiles from amongst Aston's research staff	Career paths for research staff highlighted and showcased	Case studies available on the web. Case studies used in recruitment and induction materials.	Staff & Graduate Development and ECR Committee	June 2015. Case studies refreshed annually.	Completed - The series of 'Inspiring Life Story' seminars aimed to highlight and showcase the opportunities and varied career pathways available to researchers and emphasised the importance of developing a range of transferable skills. Aston actively promotes the use of Vitae's careers case studies to ECRs and the PDP-ROC online careers modules.
Principle 3 & 4. Support and Career Development					
Investigate provision in other employment sectors (to be defined) and consider adoption of best practice from elsewhere	Career Development which is comparable to, and competitive with, other employment sectors	Ability to demonstrate to researchers that Aston's offering of career development is comparable. Information shared at recruitment stage and for established staff.	Associate Director HR (OD)	Completion of review - March 2015 Incorporation into development programmes and opportunities - October 2015	Completed - We now provide Early Career Development Planning training opportunities to doctoral students encouraging them, from the outset, to develop those skills which are in demand in employment sectors outside academia.
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Review and evaluate training content of the ECR Development programme to ensure currency and relevance.	Training and development interventions are fit for purpose	CROS survey shows all key areas of activity defined as being essential for researcher development are being provided and well received. Researchers indicate that the content is having a positive impact.	Associate Director HR (OD)	Initial review January 2015. Annual review thereafter.	Completed in response to 2015 CROS results and continuing to monitor through feedback obtained at annual ECR Professional Development Programme and individual events, seminars, workshops and related activities.
Evaluate effectiveness of the initial training needs analysis (component of the ECR Development programme)	Development of training, skills and competencies to carry out the funded project	Map HERA research staff role profiles with existing training provision. Update mapping of training provision against Researcher Development Framework.	Staff & Graduate Development	June 2015	Ongoing – This will form part of the new Action Plan.
Map HERA research staff role profiles with existing training provision.	Development of training, skills and competencies to carry out the funded project	Revised training provision if gaps identified	Staff & Graduate Development	March 2015	Ongoing – This will form part of the new Action Plan.
Consider how to offer training and placements to broaden awareness of other sectors	Broaden awareness of other sectors to assist with career transitions	Opportunities are available. Example case studies prepared.	Staff & Graduate Development	June 2015	Completed – Speakers from industry contribute to our ECR Development Programmes.
Use of Researcher Development Framework Planner trialled and evaluated. Decision taken on its use, and if decision is no, new planning tool sourced or designed.	Career planning for researchers is supported by an effective planning tool.	Planning tool in use and feedback through CROS survey is positive.	Staff & Graduate Development	December 2015	Review completed. Researcher Development Framework is promoted at all courses and professional development events. Ongoing work to promote planning. Will form part of new Action Plan.
Produce induction pack for new research staff	Improve the induction experience for new staff.	Improvement to scores on induction questions in CROS survey	Staff & Graduate Development	December 2014 Monitor and evaluate annually	Completed. An induction handbook is available on Human Resources web pages to support induction. Ongoing

					monitoring of its effectiveness through CROS.
Review local and institutional induction for research staff	Improve the induction experience for new staff.	Improvement to scores on induction questions in CROS survey	Staff & Graduate Development	Review - June 2015 Implement - October 2015	Further work is needed in this area as data from the 2015 CROS also indicated that improvements in induction could be made. There is a need to ensure that induction activities are labelled as such. This action will be combined with the one above.
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Development of a specific career development strategy for researchers	Requirement for a researcher strategy which translates various activities and initiatives into a clearly understood vision for researcher development	Strategy in place, disseminated widely, and understood.	Associate Director HR (OD) and PVC Research	June 2015 Update June 2017	In relation to career planning, CROS 2015 data were encouraging with the vast majority of respondents (89%) reporting that they took ownership of their career development. However whilst four-fifths of respondents (79%) reported that they were encouraged to engage in personal and career development, only two-thirds (69%) reported that they had a clear career development plan. See new action plan.
Monitor efficacy of mentoring arrangements within the ECR development programme, and take appropriate actions for improvement.	Availability of mentors in providing support and guidance for CPD	Monitor uptake of mentors by research staff. Compile database of career counsellors and mentors that are qualified to give relevant advice for specific research areas.	Staff & Graduate Development	Annual monitoring of mentoring, with associated update to action plan if needed. Database compilation - March 2015	Partially completed - We have begun to identify suitable mentors at the University and to create a database of volunteer mentors to work with researchers. These mentoring opportunities are promoted via the University's intranet. http://www.aston.ac.uk/staff/staffdev/mentoring/ This work builds on an innovative and popular peer mentoring scheme which is already in place for research students. Details of this have been published as a case study on the Vitae web pages at: https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-

					professional-development/engagement-influence-and-impact/coaching-and-mentoring-researchers-articles-and-case-studies-from-our-network/the-unexpected-outcomes-of-cross-cultural-mentoring-for-research-students
Investigate provision of preparatory training for teaching for researchers who do not teach	Initial training in teaching to support possible career choices	Investigation completed, and if appropriate, provision implemented. Uptake by researchers	Staff & Graduate Development	Investigation complete - February 2014. Implement any provision from October 2015. Review in 2017	<p>Completed - Aston University's Centre for Learning Innovation and Professional Practice (CLIPP) has extended access to its Introduction to Teaching and Learning Practice courses and there has been very good uptake among Early Career Researchers as well as research students. See: http://www.aston.ac.uk/clipp/key-activities/</p> <p>The University also offers an innovative Research Inspired Teaching Excellence (RITE) Programme: http://www.aston.ac.uk/clipp/key-activities/rite-programme/</p>
Establish closer working relationship between Staff & Graduate Development and the Research Support Office (now called the Research and Enterprise Office – REO)	Ensure coherence of development provision for researchers	Researchers perceive provision of development opportunities as 'seamless'. They are clear where to obtain information on development provision. The two departments can clearly articulate each other's role in researcher development.	Associate Director HR (OD) and Head of the Research Support Office (now REO)	January 2015. Kept under review	Completed - The University has reinforced its commitment to researcher development by appointing a Professional Development Advisor (Research), who joined HR in December 2014 and transferred to the newly structured Research and Enterprise Office to facilitate this work. The Professional Development Advisor works closely with the Aston Postdoc Society, the Early Career Researchers Committee and the Graduate School to provide online resources, to lead on skills training

					courses and to facilitate professional development events.
Produce a Researcher Development Handbook	Ensure coherence of development provision for researchers	Researcher Development Handbook to be produced and Researchers report that it is a valuable resource.	Staff & Graduate Development and ECR Committee	December 2014. Review annually.	Completed – An induction handbook is available on the Human Resources web pages. This will be reviewed and kept up to date as part of our New action plan.
Principle 5. Researchers' Responsibilities					
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Invite ECR Committee and representative established research managers to consider how to assess/judge whether researchers are taking responsibility for a number of defined areas. Then to initiate a plan to make the assessment.	Researchers should develop increased capacity for independent, honest and critical thought. Researchers should develop their ability to transfer and exploit knowledge. Researchers should conduct and disseminate research in an honest and ethical manner	Evidence available of researchers developing these attributes.	Associate Director HR (OD) & PVC Research	June 2015	Completed – The ECR Committee is run independently by ECRs and are responsible for determining the content of training.
Principle 6. Diversity and Equality					
Devise approaches and strategies to improve the progression of research staff to academic posts	Improvement to progression rates for research staff into academic roles	Improvement in progression	Associate Director (ED) and Equality & Diversity Committee & Athena SWAN groups	March 2015	Partially completed - There is anecdotal evidence of good retention of research staff and several ECRs now hold academic posts at the University. Our new Action Plan will continue this work and obtain HR data to monitor effectiveness.

Review flexible working practices for research staff	Respond flexibly to requests for changes to working patterns	Review procedures for capturing and holding data, including consideration of how systems can be better integrated	Associate Director (ED) and Equality & Diversity Committee & Athena Swan groups	June 2015 Monitor effectiveness - June 2016	Completed - The September 2016 ECR Professional Development event (an annual conference) included presentations by speakers from HR on promotion procedures and the application procedure for applying for flexible working.
Devise approaches and strategies for increasing the diversity of recruitment panels	Diversity reflected in selection and evaluation committees	Demonstrable increase in diversity of panels	Associate Director HR (ED) and Equality & Diversity Committee	June 2015	Completed - Centralised recruitment has enabled us to increase consistency in recruitment practise across Schools. Progress has been made and this is something we will continue to give attention to. Refer to previous action on this topic.
Review all HR policies in the light of Aston's new ethical framework to ensure no direct or indirect disadvantage to researchers	Ensure policies do not directly or indirectly disadvantage such groups	Policies removed and amended if necessary. Research staff are re informed of the review and its outcomes.	All Associate Directors in HR	Initiate immediately. Complete first scan by December 2014. Policy reviews in 2017	Completed – HR policies have been reviewed by the University Good Governance Group. Aston's ethical framework was launched in December 2014 and will be reviewed in 2017: http://www.aston.ac.uk/about/management-structure/university-governance/ethics-framework/
Apply for Athena SWAN Silver for the University and for School of Life and Health Sciences, and Athena Swan Gold for the School of Engineering & Applied Science	Participation in schemes such as Athena SWAN Charter, the Juno project, and other initiatives.	Athena SWAN applications submitted and achieved.	Associate Director (ED) and Equality & Diversity Committee & Athena Swan groups	Applications for Silver submitted by April 2015. Application for Gold submitted by April 2016	Partially completed - Aston University will be submitting an application for the Athena SWAN Silver award in April 2017. The University's School of Engineering and Applied Science was awarded the Silver Athena SWAN Award in November 2014 and will be submitting an application for the renewal of this in November 2016, led by the Engineering and Diversity Working Group. The School of Life and Health Sciences will submit an application for a Silver award in April 2017, The School of Languages and Social Sciences in November 2017, and Aston Business School in November 2017. Aston has publicised several "Women in Science and Engineering" case

					<p>studies of staff members, some of whom have been speakers for ECR Professional Development seminars and events: http://www.aston.ac.uk/eas/about-eas/athena-swan/</p> <p>It is noteworthy that 75% of PIRLS 2015 respondents and 93% of CROS 2015 respondents indicated that they felt that staff at Aston University were “treated fairly irrespective of their gender”.</p>
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Consider relevant schemes for the two non-STEMM Schools of Study to demonstrate commitment to equality of opportunity	Participation in schemes such as Athena Swan Charter, the Juno project, and other initiatives.	Relevant scheme identified, applications made and achieved	Associate Director HR (ED) & Equality and Diversity Committee	Identify schemes - January 2015 Applications submitted as determined by scheme rules	See above – LSS and ABS are now included. This action is combined with the above action in our New Action Plan.
Utilise Vitae's Every Researcher Counts resources for equality and diversity to develop workshops for researchers and principal investigators	Positive steps to promote equality	Increase in understanding of equality and diversity issues demonstrate through improved scores in CROS and PIRLS.	Associate Director HR (ED)	June 2015	<p>Completed - The University's mandatory training for doctoral supervisors promotes the 10 Every Researcher Counts Equality and Diversity actions and provides specific guidance on the admission, recruitment and selection of doctoral students. HR policies are promoted through the annual ECR Conference and workshops. (see: http://www.aston.ac.uk/research/support/ecr-development/)</p> <p>Events led by the University's LGBT staff network are promoted to all colleagues via the regular University 'Aspects' News Bulletin.</p>

Principle 7. Implementation and Review					
Present reports to Research Committee on progress with Action Plan	Undertake regular review of progress in implementing the principles of the Concordat	Evidence that reports are received and acted upon.	Associate Director HR (OD) & PVC Research & Enterprise	Biannually, between 2014 – 2017	Completed and monitoring will continue
Make additions and amendments to the Action Plan as new evidence and information becomes available	Action Plans to retain relevance in a changing environment	Evidence that Action Plans are updated and acted upon	Associate Director HR (OD)	Updates produced as required between 2014-2017	Completed and will be monitored.
Undertake regular review of progress in implementing the Principles of the Concordat	Research Committee responsible for monitoring	Reports to Research committee Amendments to Action Plan when issue are identified.	Associate Director HR (OD) & PVC Research & Enterprise	Annually - 2015, 2016, 2017	Completed and will be monitored.
Use of the Careers in Research Online Survey	Capture of relevant information to inform researcher development	CROS repeated and data utilised	Associate Director HR (OD)	Summer 2015 Summer 2017	Ongoing - Although the vast majority (89%) of CROS 2015 respondents recorded that they took ownership of their career development, only 69% reported that they had a clear development plan. Action points: to increase the proportion of respondents with a career development plan by 25% and raise awareness of the Concordat, of Vitae and of the Researcher Development Framework. Increase CROS response rate by 25% in 2017.
Use of the Principal Investigators and Research leaders Survey	Capture of relevant information to inform researcher development	PIRLS repeated and data utilised	Associate Director HR (OD)	Summer 2015 Summer 2017	Ongoing - Maintain PIRLS response rate at 40% in 2017 (or improve it). Feedback the main findings to staff, identify areas for improvement and implement a range of relevant actions.

<p>Monitor data for a broad range of indicators for researchers related to recruitment, retention and progression</p>	<p>Monitor equality and diversity indicators for researchers</p>	<p>Reports from Equality & Diversity Committee presented annually to Research Committee</p>	<p>Associate Director HR (ED) & Equality and Diversity Committee</p>		<p>Ongoing as reflected by the use of CROS and PIRLS data in the new action plan. On a range of CROS equality and diversity questions (section 36) we achieved some excellent responses which were very encouraging, however we are not complacent and aim to maintain these. It is noteworthy that 100% of CROS 2015 respondents felt they had not been discriminated against in their post.</p>
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ACRONYMS					
CPD - Continuing Professional Development	HERA - Higher Education Role Analysis	PIRLS - Principal investigator and Research Leaders Survey			
CROS - Careers in Researchers Online Survey	HR - Human Resources	PRP - Performance Related Pay			
ED - Equality and Diversity	OD - Organisational Development				
HEA - Higher Education Academy	PDR - Performance Development Review				
	PI - Principal Investigator				