

Principle 1: Environment and culture				
Key Principles and requirement	Issue to be addressed	Success criteria	Responsibility and Action	Timeline
1. Ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Lack of specific induction to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Research Staff to highlight the benefits, responsibilities and commitments	Researchers and their managers aware of their responsibilities and commitments to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Research Staff	RKE with OD: Introduction of specific training/induction to researchers and managers to ensure awareness of their responsibilities under the concordat. create a one-stop-shop online to increase awareness and make easier access to this information during Staff Induction and awareness of access to committee	Jan 2020
	Concordat Champions	The appointment of the Concordat Champions and for them to have an active role in promoting the concordat, buy-in at School level, and drive the culture change	PVC and Deans: nominate and assign the Concordat Champions who will be part of the HR Excellence Award' oversight group	Sept 2019
2. Ensure that institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.	The university holds an Athena SWAN silver award, which demonstrates our commitment to working towards gender equality	Athena Swan gold award	ED: Maintain and improve upon current Athena SWAN status across the university	April 2022

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	<p>Historically we have produced regular staff equality reports but not been utilised effectively from Research perspective</p> <p>Maintenance of relevant institutional policies and awards</p>	<p>Effectively utilise equality reports to inform commitment to the concordat.</p> <p>Maintain and up to date policies and engagement with external charters and awards</p>	<p>Engineering and Applied Sciences Athena SWAN Gold</p> <p>HR: produced and published annually to be assessed by the research committee and ECR committee.</p> <p>HR and ED Planned work:</p> <p>Equality and Diversity policy</p> <p>Aston university timelines for engagement with external charters and awards are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Disability Confident Employer (level 2) b) Race Equality Charter Bronze c) Engineering and Applied Sciences Athena SWAN Gold d) Internal audit of Stonewall Workplace Equality Index e) Disability Confident Leader (level 3) f) Life and Health Sciences Athena SWAN Silver g) Institutional Athena SWAN Silver/Gold h) Languages and Social Sciences Athena SWAN Silver i) Internal audit of Stonewall Workplace Equality Index j) Aston Business School Athena SWAN Silver 	<p>November 2020</p> <p>Jun2020</p> <p>due for review in 2021</p> <p>December 2019</p> <p>July 2020</p> <p>November 2020</p> <p>December 2020</p> <p>July 2022</p> <p>November 2021</p> <p>April 2022</p> <p>November 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>April 2023</p>
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			Executive (HSE) stress management standards and take best practice from the soon to be published Universities Safety and Health Associations guidance on stress in the workplace. To support this campaign there will be a number of awareness and learning interventions to support the guidance.	
4. Ensure that managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and mental health.	Equality & Diversity training is mandatory for all staff at Aston. However, more work needed to promote the relevance of this work.	Increase uptake of the available training.	OD: Aston will be launching a comprehensive intranet site containing e-learning, infographics and video guides and will be promoted to all staff.	April 2020
5. Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity.	Research integrity, ethics and governance is not well promoted across the University	Introduction of the new ethics processes and research integrity training	AURIO: Dedicated training and resources to address research integrity and ethics in research. FAQs/good research practice examples. Research Integrity and Ethics surgeries across the University	Oct 2019
6. Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and use the outcomes to improve institutional practices.	Lack of analysis to assess the effectiveness of the existing resources to managers and research leaders.	Gather feedback from managers and research leaders to inform the and shape the current resources.	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: Online resources to be reviewed in the context of the PIRLS 2021 survey results to ensure they are meeting the needs of the research managers using them and introduce a mechanism to analyse current feedback gathered directly from modules attendees. future PIRLS survey question to be reviewed to measure the	Ongoing

	<p>Assess the new ECRs handbook</p> <p>Lack of informed and coordinated liaison within Aston involving multiple stakeholders</p>	<p>Update the handbook based on feedback from ECRs.</p> <p>Informed and coordinated liaison within Aston</p>	<p>success of any improvements introduced</p> <p>GS: Feedback from ECRs through the ECR committee and the next CROS survey.</p> <p>PVC research Establishment of the 'HR Excellence Award' oversight group chaired by GS academic lead, operational lead within GS and school links represented by the champions (senior academics), HR representation and RKE.</p>	<p>Next CROS survey 2021</p> <p>Sept 2019</p>
Principle 2: Employment				
Key Principles and requirement	Issue to be addressed	Success criteria	Responsibility and Action	Timeline
<p>1. Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.</p>	<p>Lack of Comprehensive training resource for staff</p>	<p>Launch a comprehensive intranet training site available to all staff</p>	<p>OD: Launch a comprehensive intranet site containing e-learning, infographics and video guides to Recruitment and selection available to all staff</p>	<p>April 2020</p>

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	<p>Evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of existing resources to managers and research leaders.</p> <p>Lack of steps to monitor training uptake.</p>	<p>Updating the resources for managers and research leaders and continues monitoring plan.</p> <p>Ensure that those involved in the recruitment process are appropriately trained.</p>	<p>'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: Assessing and updating resources based on feedback through the 2020 PIRLS survey by including an additional question in to measure whether the resources are useful and how often they are used (to include free text field for comment).</p> <p>HR/OD: Annual checks will be introduced to monitor the uptake of the training to ensure that those involved in the recruitment process are appropriately trained.</p>	<p>PIRLS 2020 survey and review</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position</p>	<p>To promote ECR training programme across the university and use the Researcher Development Framework to develop it.</p> <p>Researcher/ECR Induction</p> <p>Increase, visually and user friendly, access to all new starters with all the</p>	<p>Ongoing: development and introduction of new training modules and sessions.</p> <p>Run a successful ECR induction in addition to the ECR conference</p> <p>Evaluation of the intervention, its effectiveness and advantages</p>	<p>OD/RKE: working to develop and add new training modules and sessions</p> <p>GS: Conference done OD/RKE: revise ECR induction to address their specific needs</p> <p>ADR for Aston Business School Introducing Microsoft Sway, piloting this approach, within Aston Business School</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept. 2020</p> <p>Sept. 2020</p>

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	<p>information they need on the research</p> <p>Research staff are encouraged to take opportunities to engage with the working life at Aston and broader research communities. Opportunities are not well assessed nor promoted</p> <p>The ECRs handbook was last updated in 2017</p>	<p>Research staff are able to progress to professorial level on either our Research & Teaching or Research promotion pathways. These pathways are available to staff in all schools.</p> <p>Handbook to be updated as an online resource with reference to the Researcher Development Framework and the new Aston ECR training provision.</p>	<p>to allow a more visually and user friendly access to all new starters with all the information they need on the research</p> <p>Champions Need to identify, assess and further promote available opportunities for participation in researcher based committees, societies. Use the feedback results from the next PIRLS and CROS surveys will help identify these and plans will be drawn from this.</p> <p>organising seminars, helping with PhD/PGT/UG supervision, delivering some lectures/seminars, organising internal research conferences, liaising with industrial contacts for talks/visits/UG projects and external conferences.</p> <p>'HR Excellence Award' oversight group Launch updated handbook at start of Academic Year 2020/21</p>	<p>Ongoing: next review April 2021</p> <p>April 2020</p>
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	In CROS 2017 30% of those that responded felt that they were not integrated into their School research environment	Better integration for ECRs into the School research communities	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: working with the concordat champions identify and agree mechanisms for better integration of ECRs into School and Departmental research communities. Work with schools on workspace design that is more conducive to people feeling integrated within the wider team.	Dec 2020
3. 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	The annual academic promotions cycle includes a promotion path for those on the research career path. Applications for research posts up to Professorial equivalent level are considered. The criteria for researcher promotions are set out in the Procedure for Academic Promotions, which is available on the staff intranet. This is subject to ongoing review to ensure it meets individual and organisational needs. We currently have no method of monitoring progression rates for research staff into all types of role including academic roles.	Meeting the needs of individuals and Aston University in terms of the academic promotions. Have a clear plan to monitor progression rates	HR: ongoing review to ensure it meets individual and organisational needs. HR: monitor progression rates e.g. email surveys, exit questionnaires, postal surveys, and social media	Ongoing: next review April 2020 Sept. 2020
4. Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers,	Unclear how useful the existing resources are to managers and research leaders.	Determine the usefulness of the existing resources are to managers and research leaders	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: Analyse and review current resources using feedback from future PIRLS	Sept 2021

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<p>heads of department and equivalent</p>	<p>Aston Mentoring Scheme strand dedicated to ECR mentoring</p> <p>There is a need to recruit more mentors with professional services and industry backgrounds.</p> <p>Promote and encourage uptake of the available resources.</p>	<p>Implement a strand of the Aston Mentoring Scheme dedicated to ECR mentoring</p> <p>Increase the number of mentors from professional services and industry.</p> <p>Increase in the demand and sign up for the relevant training resources</p>	<p>survey results to ensure they are meeting the needs of the research managers. Also use them and introduce a mechanism to analyse current feedback gathered directly from modules attendees)</p> <p>'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: Adapt promotion criteria to recognise mentorship scheme</p> <p>OD and RKE: Raise awareness of existing OD mentoring courses. Increase the number of mentors from professional services and industry. We are planning a significant piece of work between now and the end of the 2020 to recruit academic colleagues to mentor ECRs – the plan will be to ensure every ECR has a mentor so the goal is around 150 academic mentors</p> <p>HR Excellence Award' oversight group: HR' System's team to provide regular reports to the oversight groups and increase the promotion of</p>	<p>Sept. 2021</p> <p>by Dec 2020</p> <p>First report Sept 2020</p>
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			available resources for managers.	
	The current ECR development programme have not been evaluated.	The current ECR development programme should fulfil the needs of ECRs.	HR Excellence Award' oversight group : Evaluate and provide a comprehensive training programme to cover each domain in line with needs	Sept 2021
5. Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation	The annual academic promotions cycle includes a promotion path for those on the research career path. Applications for research posts up to Professorial equivalent level are considered. The criteria for researcher promotions are set out in the Procedure for Academic Promotions which is available on the staff intranet.	Ensure current processes meet individual and organisational needs and " <i>excellent people management</i> " is more recognised as part of the review process.	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group : This will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that it meets individual and organisational needs.	Sept. 2020
6. 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.	Aston University is committed to work with funders across the academic landscape to find achievable ways to improve employment conditions for researchers through their policies and guidance	Improve Job security for researchers.	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group Work internally with Aston's Research Committee, HR, Exec. Deans and externally with funders and other academic and industry sector to establish plans to deliver this.	Sept. 2020

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	We do not have a process to guarantee redeployment of researchers	Establish a formal process and report regularly on redeployment and researcher retention (including improvements on the process)	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group; work with HR monitoring this information including the gathering of data to produce regular reports (annual).	Sept. 2020
7. 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.	CROS survey results are not consistently fed back to the Aston's ECR committee.	Establish a formal and systematic process to feedback CROS survey results to ECR committee	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: to produce the data report and feedback after receipt of CROS results.	Ongoing with CROS First deadline after receipt of CROS 2021 results.
Principle 3: Professional and Career Development				
Key Principles and requirement	Issue to be addressed	Success criteria	Responsibility and Action	Timeline
1. 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.	Engagement in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, is not consistent	Ensure ECRs have workload allowances to reflect their status and they get their 10 days of professional development per annum guaranteed across all schools and departments	Concordat Champions ; to work with dean, heads of departments, and researcher managers to implement this. This will be communicated to the senior management teams in Schools. Heads of Departments will be ensuring and monitoring that this happens	June 2020
	ECRs feel that they would benefit from a scheme where they are able to participate as a mentor to junior colleagues	Implement a strand of the Aston Mentoring Scheme dedicated to ECR mentoring	'HR Excellence Award' oversight group: Adapt promotion criteria to recognise mentorship scheme Introduce buddying initiative and assess requirements and	Sept 2021

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			needs after one year June 2020	
2. Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers	<p>The current online system (My Development Conversation (My DC)) is not inclusive of all.</p> <p>Not sufficient dissemination and encouragement for ECRs to develop and own a clear Career Development Plan</p> <p>Assess the effectiveness of available resources, including the training package</p>	<p>My DC online system to include staff on probation and short term contracts</p> <p>Raise ECRs awareness on how to develop and own a clear Career Development Plan</p> <p>increase in numbers of ECRs feeling that they have a clear Career Development Plan</p>	<p>OD: will implement this for researchers from day one.</p> <p>OD/RKE: A training package on the Career Development Strategy and how to develop a Career Development Plan will be delivered in partnership with OD as part of the new ECR training programme.</p> <p>OD: to gather feedback received following session and HR Excellence Award' oversight group through CROS 2021</p>	<p>Dec 2019</p> <p>April 2020</p> <p>CROS 2021</p>
3. Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	Aston University Careers and Employability Centre not well promoted within Aston	Increase awareness of Aston University Careers and Employability Centre	GS: to promote and make more available Aston University Careers and Employability Centre and include information about in the induction materials	April 2020
4. Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills	Alternative and unusual career pathways inside and outside academia not sufficiently promoted	Increase awareness of alternative and unusual career pathways inside and outside academia.	GS: Lunchtime seminar series for ECRs will include sessions on alternative career paths outside academia.	April 2020
5. Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support	Researcher Managers limited experience in career planning	Session on Career Development Planning, Clearer pathways, resources for PIs to deliver and facilitate this to support ECR	RKE: coordinate with Aston University Careers and Employability Centre to provide tailored training for PIs on careers guidance and	April 2020

<p>opportunities for researchers to experience this.</p>	<p>Awareness, and knowledge / experience on how to influence policy is not well promoted</p>	<p>Increased online visibility of ECRs and awareness, and knowledge/experience gain on how to influence policy, Knowledge Transfer, and Knowledge Exchange.</p>	<p>information for all research staff</p> <p>HR Excellence Award' oversight group: working with the schools and ECR committee on ways to increase online visibility of ECRs, which in turn will increase the potential for KE. Dedicated webpages through RKE for resources and advice in addition to the KT session and more KE sessions to be organised throughout the year.</p>	<p>April 2021</p>
<p>6. Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities, and researcher career development reviews.</p>	<p>Lack of clear analysis of exit surveys and how they feed into the promotion of alternative career paths</p> <p>Currently rely on feedback from PIRLS and CROS surveys to review.</p>	<p>Analysis to feed into ECR conference and lunchtime seminars</p> <p>Identifying trends from past and future CROS and PIRLS survey</p>	<p>HR to conduct analysis on alternative career paths from exit surveys and feedback to the HR Excellence Award' oversight group which in turn feedback to ECR committee and RC on annual bases</p> <p>HR Excellence Award' oversight group : Longitudinal analysis of CROS and PIRLS survey results to be conducted and reported accordingly.</p>	<p>Ongoing: First report June 2020</p> <p>First deadline after receipt of CROS and PIRLS 2021 results.</p>

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			
Champions - Concordat Champions are senior members of the 'HR Excellence Award' oversight group	OD - Organisational Development	PVC – Pro-Vice Chancellor			
ED - Equality and Diversity	PDR - Performance Development Review	RC – Research Committee			
HEA - Higher Education Academy	PI - Principal Investigator	RKE – Research and Knowledge Exchange (formerly known as Research and Enterprise Office)			