University of Salford HR Excellence in Research Award
Eight Year Report

1. Introduction
This review presents progress on the University of Salford's implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers since 2010. A summary of progress of these activities is shown by relevant Concordat Principle heading. Please also refer to the 2 year Report for expanded details on progress for 2016-18.

How this evaluation was conducted and how researchers' views were taken into account
This review was undertaken by the University of Salford Researcher Development Working Group who act as an advisory and consultative forum at key stages of the design and development of researcher training. The group has representation from researchers at all levels and staff involved in researcher training and development. Salford continues to work closely with ECR and PGR communities through regular focus groups, informal discussions with researchers and through the continuous feedback model during and after training (formal evaluation) and the anonymous online suggestion box. A researcher Training Needs Assessment was completed across the University in May 2017 and previously to this PRES and Staff Surveys that contributed to the development feedback process. Progress and future priorities are discussed as regular items at the PGR Forum and Research & Enterprise Committee (REC) meetings. Progress on the Concordat action plan, and priorities for further development of the plan were discussed and reviewed at the June 2018 Meeting. Additional evaluation measures and consultation with the ECR community were in place during the University's Festival of Research in June/July 2018 to feedback into this review and at regular contact points. Opportunities and challenges facing ECRs were identified, in particular support for evidencing impact and accessing funding streams, publications and academic mentorship, networking development and career leadership opportunities. The University participates in the annual staff survey, and Research & Knowledge Exchange works with Schools and the Organisational Development (OD) teams to identify data of relevance to researchers and define future recommendations and actions.

2. Summary of Key Achievements
- Development of the University of Salford Doctoral School and appointment of the Doctoral School Director to further enhance research specific support The Research & Enterprise division is now known as Research & Knowledge Exchange to fully encapsulate the service and support available.
- Launch of the University Inaugural Festival of Research to support research development, networking opportunities and connections to the wider researcher community.[1] The Festival attracted attendance of over 1200 participants and over 150 specific researcher development activities.
- Review of the University's Research Governance Manual, which includes the 'Statement on Integrity and Self-Regulation in Research.' Update of The University's Research Code of Practice, and Research Ethics workshops to support researchers to develop the expected standards of rigour and integrity relevant to their research and to raise awareness of the good practices and expectations related to research.[2] An online provision and 'E' for Ethics campaign was introduced to raise awareness, increase transparency and accessibility.
- Introduction of the SECRET Programme (Salford Early Career Researcher Enterprise Training) a comprehensive training programme specifically for ECRs. Attendance at training has more than doubled from *1009* attendees 2014 -16 to *2707* in 2016-18.
- Enhanced Industrial collaborations with 35 live industrial projects and 16 Industry sponsored PhD Studentships this is a 50% increase in Industry sponsored PhD's since August 2016.
- University-wide Training Needs Analysis for Researchers – all PGRs and ECRs were invited to participate and input into the training and development process. 20% of the researcher community responded with 94% of PGRs feeling personally supported by their supervisor and 75% ECRs reporting they have developed contacts and professional networks.
- Launch of The Women's Voice Network (2017) and Women's Voice Awards (2018)[3]
- Development of the Salford Wellbeing Concordat for PGRs[4] in 2017.
- The University achieved Athena Swan Bronze Award and is working towards Silver award status.

- The University is a founder partner in the University Alliance Doctoral Training Alliance for Applied Biosciences for Health and currently has DTA studentships.
- The University's Open Access (OA) policy was launched in April 2015, and the Library actively supports researchers to upload papers to the University's research repository in 2017-18.

3. Progress by Concordat Principle

A. Recruitment and Selection

- The Academic Roles Manual was revised to reflect the role of the researcher and the University's evolving structure and strategy. To enhance the organisational research culture and grow research capability and capacity a policy was introduced in 2014, requiring that all new appointments to academic posts are research active. Interview panels include School Associate Deans or their nominees.
- The creation of strategic, 5-year Career Development Research Assistant and Fellowship posts has supported the retention and career development of post-holders since 2014 with 28 Research Fellows recruited between August 2015 to July 2018.
- Links with industry have been strengthened with a further 16 iCASE PhD studentships created that provides PGRs with connections, industrial experience and mentorship. The original strategy aimed to recruit 15 iCase and iMRes per year but this target was restricted by the level of funding available. A new iMRes programme is being established for 2018-19 rollout and the PhD iCase studentship numbers continue to increase each year. New Pathway to Excellence and industrial CASE (iCase) PhD studentships have been created, iMRes to be rolled out in 2018-19.
- The level of PGR and ECR industrial engagement has increased with participation at industry specific training activities and national events such as The Research and Knowledge Exchange Symposium[5] - Research working with Industry: Vitae North West member seminar 2018.
- The HEIF Knowledge Exchange (HEIFKE)[6] is a business improvement programme and a recent addition to the portfolio of industry engagement offerings available. Developed by the KTP & Partnership Office, the HEIFKE enables companies to benefit from University expertise and longer term engagement.
- Salford has doubled the planned recruitment target of 4 PGR students enrolled on University Alliance DTA Studentships with 8 students currently registered. Salford hosts their first DTA Autumn School in November 2018 to further enhance the development of researcher skills.
- As part of the 2014-2020 Research Strategy, the University has recruited fully-funded 25 Pathway to Excellence PhD Studentships.

B. Recognition and Value

- Provision of a bridging funding scheme to support continuity of employment for researchers between grant funding was introduced with over 20% of applicable researchers accessing this.
- Introduction of The Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Award (for ECRs), to recognise excellent research with impact, 20% research allocation time has been assigned in-line with the original action plan. The programme is now being further developed based on ECR feedback collected to date.
- Activities to support early career researchers to achieve REF submission standards have been implemented and include specific REF and Impact focussed training for all levels of researchers and all levels of experience. The approach to training development included building confidence with one-to-one mentoring and support provided by Impact Coordinators in each School. As part of an institutional mock REF exercise, ECR's were included in the modelled REF submissions to help work towards the target of 10% ECR impact case studies and increase outputs assessed as 3-4* from 34 to 50. ECRs make up 14% of the Impact Coordinator roles at Salford, further ECR specific roles are being developed such as Deputy REF submission coordinators as Unit of Assessment leads within each School. It's anticipated that this continuing work will increase the quality of researcher outputs and citations.
- The overall total number of research outputs produced with 3-4* IPR scores has also risen from 239 in 2016-17 to 650 in 2017-18 and in a recent reporting sample, there has been an overall 4% increase in Salford publications featuring in the top 25 journals.
- The promotion route to Senior Research Fellow has also been formalised with a role descriptor and clear career pathways for researchers is developed for a September 2018 rollout. Leadership has been

embedded at all levels as part of the Salford behaviours which is a University-wide Leadership and Capability Framework[7].

- A model to standardise workload allocations for research was piloted in the Schools of Computing, Science and Engineering, and Health Sciences, with the aim of ensuring consistent and effective research workload allocation and increased researcher productivity and satisfaction.
- Since 2014, 8 Innovation Fellowships of £5,000 each have been awarded to PGR students and ECRs to pump prime new technologies and opportunities for commercial products.

C. Support and Career Development

- We continue to support researchers to develop a higher profile and promote opportunities to engage with interdisciplinary research with an institutional subscription to ORCID to ease researchers' workflow and ensure they get accurate credit for all of their outputs. Many researchers are now using ORCID and a broader roll-out is currently underway. To further enhance profile development, researchers at Salford produce videos and media during a series of specialist training support activities[8]. An example of this is 'Bite-sized' – A Video Abstract competition[9], established to showcase and further encourage development. During the Festival of Research and Café Research (talking about research in public spaces) projects over 50 individual ECR and PGR videos were created. These form part of a wider body of work to support researchers develop their profiles and reach out to different communities locally, nationally and globally.
- The Vice Chancellor's ECR Awards - 20% research allocation time has been assigned in-line with the original action plan. The awards will be re-branded and updated to provide enhanced connections and support the development of research methods and approaches.
- The University has established funding routes for industrial collaboration for researchers to access and engage with interdisciplinary research and ICZs. £2500 of funding was set aside to support researchers develop their profiles with industries and brands such as The Printworks and The Hard Rock Café as part of a Café Research[8] project. The Vitae Northwest hub is also based at Salford and the summer series of workshops included topics such as how researchers can work better with Industry [6]
- Partnerships and development activities with external providers continue such as The Brilliant Club, Salford and Manchester EPS faculty co-hosted two days of Vitae Effective Researcher training. More recently the Salford festival of Research worked with partners to host and co-host development events such as the Vitae Northwest Seminar[5] and Hard Rock Café, Café Research.
- All staff have the opportunity to explore mentoring and coaching as a development option and competitions and initiatives to encourage bid writing across disciplines.

D. Researchers' Responsibilities

- The University signed off the 2014-2020 Research Strategy in May 2014. This has been revised in 2018 and aims to optimise the structures and support mechanisms to enable researchers at all levels to achieve high quality research, outputs and impact.
- An Impact Development Fund assisted researchers in developing Impact Case Studies for the REF 2014 and is available as part of the preparations for REF 2020. New Impact Coordinator roles and REF leads have been established to support the researcher community and support activity for REF.
- Increased capacity at ECR bidding training events since 2016. Further work is underway to support researchers in the bidding process so that a greater number of those who attend training have the confidence to develop bids and succeed in securing funding for research.
- ECRs and PGRs are represented on a range of University committees, their presence and input helps to ensure that the direction of research and training is relevant and accessible to all levels and areas of the researcher community.
- Salford provides continued support for researchers available through schemes such as the PGR Conference Support Fund which funds over 20 PGRs per year to travel to national and international conferences.
- Salford provides continued support for researchers is available through schemes such as the PGR Conference support fund which funds over 20 PGRs per year to travel to national and international conferences.

E. Diversity and Equality

- The development of joint research and enterprise training events has helped researchers to focus on evidencing impact which has led to a series of impact development workshops. The training reach has been broadened to include all levels of researchers and additional writing retreats have been provided to help support grant writing activity. The training sessions are attending by ECRs and PGRs as well as more experienced researchers.

- The updated Research Strategy focuses on REF and ICZs, is inclusive and responds to feedback from the research community. There's emphasis on supporting specific training such as research methods and providing dedicated space for researcher communities. In 2017 we introduced a dedicated PGR Wellbeing space with further space being made available as part of the Doctoral School in 2019

- The procurement and implementation of a research information system has not taken place. However, processes to make information more transparent are underway. This work includes utilising ORCID, the development of research information dashboards and setting up a series of communities of practice to support researchers. One example of a community of practice that has informed policy and provision is the supervisor forum – through these discussions it was felt supervisors would benefit from training to support the mental wellness of their PGRS. A series of workshops called 'Psychological First Aid' have been provided to meet this need as well as helping to establishing the University's PGR Wellbeing Concordat.

- There is ECR representation on committees to support Women in Research and Athena Swan to help support the delivery of key actions. ECR input has been critical to enable a series of development activities including a support package for those returning to research after a period of absence and training to enhance confidence development. The University has already obtained Athena Swan Bronze award and will be submitting for Silver award based on the sustained progress that has taken place.

- In response to researcher feedback, the timing of training and alignment of the training provision has changed. This includes reducing the length of training, changing the format, increasing online and remote working presence, grouping training together, providing clearer information and increasing capacity.

F. Implementation and Review

- The Overarching Research Governance for researcher development has been embedded into University processes. This includes an active Researcher Development Working group; a process of continued development and enhancement; regular mechanisms to complement formal surveys such as an open and anonymous 'Suggestion box' to gather researcher feedback.

- University Research Governance policies and procedures have been updated to embed researcher development and the University Concordat to Support Research Integrity is an example of this. The Concordat identifies specific development for ECRs and PGRs to support commitment and evidence in the five commitments for researcher integrity. The training developed that runs alongside this has been produced in consultation with the researcher communities and builds on their feedback. ECRs and PGRs can take the training on-line and attend sessions to develop confidence in this area. Much of the training utilises gamification to encourage the sharing of ideas and practice, providing researchers with a network of support and an enhanced learning experience.

- As part of the institutional Training Needs Analysis and highlighted in the recent Vitae Review 'Exploring wellbeing and mental health and associated support services for postgraduate researchers'[10]. Salford has sought additional external funding to support this critical areas and has developed an implementation plan to improve researcher mental wellness. An example of progress is the University's PGR Wellbeing Concordat that sets out our commitment to improve wellness both on and off campus[4].

- Progress on the University of Salford Concordat Action Plan was overseen by the updated Research Strategy Implementation Group, Chaired by the PVC (R&E)

4. NEXT STEPS – 2018-2022

Please refer to the detailed action plan for full details: http://www.salford.ac.uk/research/concordat

A: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION
All research staff to complete a personal 3-year research strategy by June 2020
Consultation on content and requirements of researcher's personal 3-year strategy to be collected and aligned. (Sept 2020 to review progress)
Training and development needs will be identified by RKE and will feed into the bespoke and University-wide training programmes. (Sept 2020)
Initiate a new iMRes designed to develop industrial partnerships and routes from industry to research. Recruit 15 students to the programme over a 4-year period by Jan 2022.
Increase PhD student numbers through the development of a flexible and accessible PhD format. This is to be measured by a 10% increase in student recruitment by 2022.
Embed creative and digital and co-creation (ICZs) to enhance impact: 20% increase in PGR publications and 30% of the PGR population providing impact case studies by June 2022.
A package of support for researchers returning from a career break will be initiated. Success is measured through personal development feedback and a 10% increase in research outputs by Sept 2022.
Development of a specific recruitment programme to target potential returners that links with national and local support networks. At least 5 researchers to be recruited through this route by 2022.
B: RECOGNITION AND VALUE
Creation of clear pathways to promotion embedded into the University's Academic Career Framework by 2022, managed through 3-year personal research strategies for all UoS researchers by January 2022.
Development of training and development tools to support career management available to all researchers by June 2019
Creation of opportunities to develop new research methods through funding and dedicated time investment that includes external opportunities to develop new research methods. A programme of opportunities to be published by Sept 2020. Encourage sharing of best practice so that at least 40% of Researchers accessing development support.
Extension of support for external dissemination e.g. support for conferences, travel, communities of practice to increase numbers of researchers who access the Conference support Fund by 10% and other opportunities.
C: SUPPORT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Identify the specific wellbeing and mental wellness challenges for ECRs through focus groups (with at least 20% ECRs from each School attendance).
Develop new or enhance existing PGR concordat for mental wellness to include ECRs specifically through the development of an online mental wellness resources by Jan 2020 with review and revision of the wellbeing concordat by July 2021.
Embed researcher mentorship across Schools from ECR level to senior leadership for research focussed staff and at PGR level for all new and existing PG researchers from Sept 2020.
Enhance existing mentoring and networks to support specific areas of development by July 2022 with 50% of ECRs accessing the programme at least once. Creation of external network mentoring programme by Sept 2020 with at least 20 ECRs identified to participate.
Identify and recognise digital best practice to improve access to digital skills development through online training by Jan 2020.
D: RESEARCHER RESPONSIBILILTIES
Provide online learning and monitoring to ensure compliance with 100% of new starting researchers completing training by Sept 2019. Improve the research ethics approval process to speed up the application process. Reduce application turnaround time by 50% so that applications are processed more quickly and efficiently by July 2020.
Support Supervisors wellbeing and mental wellness through training and support interventions with at least 30% of supervisors accessing this programme of support by Sept 2020.

E: DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY
Development of a suite of online resources to help those working and conducting research off campus to be in place by Jan 2020.
Provide improved access and support for female, BME and LGBT research communities through at least 20% accessing an online provision in place by Jan 2020.
Encourage researcher driven activities through peer-to-peer support with at least 50% of researchers actively involved or developing activities. Increase sign-posting and direction to existing resources and information measured by increased online traffic by 40%.
F: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW
Incorporate Wellness as a regular item on the Researcher Development Working Group Annual Business by Dec 2019. Improve access to resources and support on internal and external webpages by updating information and increasing web traffic by 20% by Oct 2019.
Review progress against action plan with at least 50% of activities achieved or on target to achieve. The review should include an audit of participation and outcomes of training.

[1] https://www.salford.ac.uk/events/event/2018/festival-of-research

[2] https://www.salford.ac.uk/ethics/research-governance

[3] http://staff.salford.ac.uk/newsitem/5645

[4] http://www.pg.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/files/PGR%20Wellbeing%20concordat_Nov2017.pdf

[5] https://www.vitae.ac.uk/events/past-events/north-west-member-seminar-2018

[6] http://www.salford.ac.uk/ktp/heif-knowledge-exchange

[7] https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1629346/Salford-Behaviours-Full-Detail-pdf.pdf

[8] https://vimeo.com/277974236

[9] https://twitter.com/DrGaryKerr/status/1020325693287206912

[10] https://re.ukri.org/documents/2018/mental-health-report/