

University of Surrey HR Excellence in Research 2018-2020 Action Plan

Introduction

The University of Surrey is a research intensive institution with twenty-two research active departments/schools/centres within three faculties: Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS), Faculty of Human and Medical Sciences (FHMS) and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). Surrey has undergone transformational change in the last two years, with the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Max Lu. Along with his appointment has been an increased emphasis on research and on researcher support, outlined in a new Research Strategy. Embodied in the new Research Strategy is the vision for the newly launched Doctoral College (<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/doctoral-college>) tasked with supporting newer researchers, both postgraduate researchers (PGRs) and early career researchers (ECRs), and leading the HR Excellence in Research (HREiR) process for the University. The HR Excellence in Research Working Group (HREiR WG) and Doctoral College Management team have worked closely with senior management throughout this period of change to align the University's strategy for supporting ECRs with the Principles of the Concordat and to embed the HREiR process within the University's re-developed research infrastructure.

In consultation with ECRs and other stakeholders, the Doctoral College has formally defined the term ECR very broadly, encompassing all research and teaching-research staff within 10 years of their doctorate, as well as allowing other people to self-identify as ECRs, due to career changes/breaks or a desire to be actively involved in research, despite contracts that do not reflect this activity. With this definition, University of Surrey has approximately 450-500 early career researchers (ECRs), spanning a wide range of disciplines and contract types including fixed-term (FT) research only (linked to specific grant funding), open-ended (OE) research-only, probationary research-teaching, and primary teaching (FT and OE). Of these the largest group are FT research only contracts (~300), followed by probationary lecturers (~130), teaching fellows wishing to remain research active (~45) and ~65 who have self-identified as ECRs but do not fit any of these categories. This HREiR action plans is intended to inclusively support this varied population of ECRs. All HREiR documentation is available on the Doctoral College Website: <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/doctoral-college/hr-excellence>.

Acronyms	
ECR- Early Career Researcher (defined inclusively as stated above)	DC- Doctoral College
HREiR- HR Excellence in Research	RIC- Research and Innovation Committee
HREiR WG- HR Excellence in Research Working Group	RDP- Researcher Development Programme
SuRSA-Surrey Research Staff Association	CROS- Careers in Research Online Survey
FEPS- Faculty of Engineering and Physical Science	PAW-Postdoc Appreciation Week
FHMS- Faculty of Health and Medical Science	FT- Fixed term
FASS- Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	OE- Open ended

2018 Action Reference number (related 2016 action)	Action	Success Measures	HREiR WG action owner	Progress update points
Principles 1 & 2				
2018_1 (new)	Embed the use of a recruitment checklist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently include our commitment to Athena SWAN, the Race Equality Charter Mark, Stonewall and Disability Confident in all adverts and recruitment packs • Actively promote flexible working/job shares unless there is a critical business need preventing this commitment • Ensure adverts and supporting materials are checked for unconscious bias, gender-neutral language <i>etc.</i> • Place adverts in a wider variety of locations, <i>e.g.</i> WISE and WES being defaults for recruitment into science and engineering Introduce target numbers for applications/shortlists for academic posts from under-represented groups (<i>e.g.</i> women in engineering, men in healthcare):	Faculty targets (embedded in Athena Swan documentation) are met and the gender gap in academic populations begins to close.	Academic Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Dec 2018 for first review and setting of revised targets. Aug 2018 –new system operational. Aug 2019 – pilot evaluation complete.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish appropriate targets taking into account current population and benchmark data • Require selection panels to show that they have reflected on the gender balance of applicants before shortlisting and to seek further applications if necessary • Actively consider gender balance at short-listing stage. If a single sex shortlist results, re-examine the gap between that group and the best candidate of the opposite sex with a view to inviting to interview if the gap is small <p>Evaluate the viability of anonymous long-listing for academic positions</p>			
2018_2 (new)	<p>Clarify expectations and share best practice for ECR appraisal process by creating a guide for both appraisers and appraisees.</p>	<p>Trial guide within a subset of specific departments and gain feedback. Initial target of at least 30% of responders indicating usefulness of resource.</p> <p>Adjusted guide available to all ECRs, with impact evaluated over the next two years. We will aim to have a 10% increase in positive responses year on year.</p> <p>Note that we will be analysing data in context of new system appraisal system.</p>	<p>Researcher Development ECR lead and Academic Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>Trial completed in 2018.</p> <p>Adjusted guide available in 2019.</p> <p>Feedback on usage Nov 2019.</p>

		Increase CROS score on overall usefulness of appraisal from 68% to 75%		
2018_3 (new)	<p>Share best practice and enhance the University's research community and culture, inclusive of all researcher stages.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To do so Doctoral College will create an official statement of Surrey's research community and culture, to be approved by University research and innovation committee (RIC). We will participate in International Postdoc Appreciation Week annually, highlighting best practice across the University and delivering special events for ECRs. Doctoral College will also hold annual competitions for funding to support new initiatives to build departmental or interdisciplinary research culture. These bids will be open to any researcher, including ECRs. Funding will only be provided to initiatives that support newer researchers, PGRs and ECRs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Statement created and approved by RIC. Annually participate in International Postdoc Appreciation Week (PAW) and collect feedback on impact. Data collected via electronic anonymous survey following the 2017 PAW indicated that 26% respondents felt that PAW achieved its aim to raise the visibility and highlight the valuable contributions of ECRs in the university; while 48% felt this was partly achieved. Next year we will aim to increase the percentage of those who felt that aims were achieved from 26% to 40%; and those who felt it partly achieved its aims from 48% to 60%. Funding competitions delivered with ECRs participating in the calls and in the initiatives 	<p>Director of Doctoral College, RDP ECR lead, Manager of Doctoral College</p>	<p>Statement online by Dec 2018.</p> <p>2018 competition awarded by May 2018.</p> <p>Case studies created and available by Jan 2019.</p>

		<p>themselves and track engagement through trend data on submissions involving ECRs and awards made to ECRs. Aim for at least five submissions to each funding call resulting in at least one ECR funded project a year. Impact of receiving funding will be captured in case studies, which will be shared to encourage greater ECR participation year on year. Faculty and University recognition of ECR award winners.</p> <p>Overall success measure: Improved CROS scores for feeling integrated into departmental community more generally (currently 70%), aim for 75% in CROS 2019. As well as CROS score for feeling more integrated into the institution's community (currently 57%), aim 65%.</p>		
2018_4 (linked to 2016_4)	<p>Ensure that there is an infrastructure facilitating ECR representation from department level through to faculty level linking into the newly restructured high level research committees, which now have a clear line of reporting for ECR issues. Investigate other University</p>	<p>ECR representation within each department. Currently 15 of 22 departments are represented. Target is all 22 have representation.</p> <p>An academic 'champion' in each department. This is a new initiative so</p>	<p>Director of the Doctoral College and Associate Deans of Doctoral College</p>	<p>ECR reps recruited by July 2018.</p> <p>Academic champions</p>

	Committees that ECRs would benefit from involvement in.	we would need to identify 22 champions.		recruited by Dec 2018.
2018_5 (linked to 2016_6)	Support recognition and value of best practice in managing ECRs by introducing university level awards for best practice in line-managing researchers with nominations from the researcher community.	Best PI award in place and year-on-year growth in nominations made by ECR members of research teams. Target of at least five nominations in the first year, with each faculty represented.	Manager of Doctoral College	Award launched in May 2018, and awarded at Doctoral College Conference in July 2018
Principles 3 & 4				
2018_6 (linked to 2016_5 and 2016_10)	Continue to develop professional development training and support for ECRs; including the Researcher Routes programme, short mini development session. All incoming ECRs will be invited to a one-to-one coaching session to introduce them to this offering, and provide and individualised professional development action planning session.	Participant feedback indicating increased understanding/knowledge of the content area as well as progress against individually defined aims (where appropriate). Baseline numbers and percentage of invited ECRs engaging will be collected for introductory ECR one to one meetings. Target of 50% of those invited attending a coaching session. To assess impact of sessions a short follow up survey will be administered. Target 60% positive feedback about	Researcher Development ECR lead	Evaluation of programme Aug 2018 and Aug 2019.

		session, 40% taking specific action based on the session.		
2018_7 (linked to 2016_10 & 2016_12)	Continue to develop Careers support for ECRs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased relevant online content accessed via the Doctoral College's virtual learning environment and/or the Employability and Careers Service web pages (), Expansion of bespoke resources / workshop / seminar provision delivered under the Careers Smart framework (including investigating best methods to acquire and share various career stories that are relevant, broad-ranging and inspiring for researchers) One-to-one specialist career consultation sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete development and deployment of CareerSmart toolkit within the VLE, establish baseline usage numbers. Create of online "pinboard" area where relevant opportunities are easily accessible for ECRs (and PGRs), establish baseline usage numbers. Target 10% ECRs using online resource in first year after development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase engagement of ECRs with careers provision by 10%. ECR feedback collected about careers support provision to inform updates and new developments. Target 60% positive feedback. CROS target: 10% increase reported engagement with career management.	Researcher Careers advisor	VLE development completed by July 2018. Initial evaluation of provision within framework Nov 2018.
2018_8 (linked to 2016_10 and 2016_12)	Continue to expand engagement of ECRs with mentoring programmes; including the ECR mentoring programme, the employer mentoring programme and first funding mentoring. Also encourage ECRs	All ECRs offered mentoring and the opportunity to be a mentor during introductory one-to-one coaching sessions (see 20118_6).	Researcher Development Mentoring lead	Evaluation of programme Aug 2018 and Aug 2019.

	to act as mentors for more junior colleagues &/or PGRs.	<p>A 10% increase in uptake of mentoring opportunities year on year.</p> <p>Creation of mentoring case studies that demonstrate impact of mentoring for ECRs. These are to be made available to all ECRs, to help share the variety of ways mentoring can benefit newer researchers.</p>	And Head of Researcher Development	Collection of initial case studies by Jan 2019.
2018_9 (linked to 2016_10)	Doctoral College to launch an Alumni programme for former University of Surrey ECRs and PGRs, providing continuing access to Researcher Development, Career support, IT infrastructure and library services during transition period to next career stages.	<p>Doctoral College Alumni programme launched.</p> <p>Establish baseline of ECR engagement with programme. Target initially engage at least 10 ECR alumni, and attempt to double numbers in the next year.</p> <p>Evaluate impact of participation in programme on the transition from Surrey to next career stage.</p>	Head of Researcher Development and Researcher Development ECR lead	<p>Programme launch April 2018.</p> <p>Initial Evaluation of programme Dec 2018.</p>
Principle 5				

2018_10 (linked to 2016_10 and 2016_13)	Formally allocate a specific amount of protected development time for ECRs, in line with previous RCUK recommendations. Create case studies available on Doctoral College VLE giving examples of how this protected time can be utilised in different ways to develop different skills and specialties.	University policy regarding protected development time for ECRs approved by Research and Innovation Committee and on Doctoral College website. Evidence that ECRs are making use of protected time, creating a baseline measure.	Director of the Doctoral College and Associate Deans of Doctoral College	Policy in place by Oct 2018. Review of policy impact by Oct 2019.
2018_11 (Linked to 2016_11)	Deliver at least three multidisciplinary/intersectoral events, which providing ECRs an opportunity to present their research and network with people outside of their discipline area. Furthermore, provide training to support collaboration and networking skills to support ECRs getting the most out of these events.	At least 3 events delivered in 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic year. Track ECR participation and conduct follow up evaluation to determine impact of participation in such events. Increase CROS score on participation in training on collaboration and networking with a CROS 2019 target of 25% engagement (CROS 2017 score was 19%).	Head of Researcher Development	Deliver and Report on 2017-18 activities by Aug 2018.
2018_12 (Linked to 2016_11)	Investigate technical solutions to help ECRs better plan and record their professional development activities. This links to other actions which encourage ECRs to participate in a variety of professional and career development activities, as ECRs have reported that one contributing factor to non-participation is	InkPath completed and feedback collected. Active participation of the Doctoral College to inform new HR system development in line with ECR needs.	Director of Doctoral College and Researcher Development ECR lead	Trial InkPath by April 2018. Report feedback by June 2018. Decision made about best way

	<p>lack of formal record and recognition for a wide range of developmental activities. Specifically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will trail InkPath application with a pool of ECRs and collect feedback • We will work with University to develop a new HR system to meet ECR needs. • Based on the two above actions a strategic decision will be made about a new system to support ECR development. • This will be fully reviewed six months after launch. 	<p>Decision made about best way in which to capture ECR professional development, based on ECR feedback.</p> <p>Feedback will continued to be monitored as ECRs start using new system.</p>		<p>to support ECR professional development portfolio creation August 2018.</p> <p>New HR System launched in Autumn 2018.</p> <p>Report on ECR feedback on new system(s) May 2019.</p>
<p>2018_13 (Linked to 2016_13)</p>	<p>Encourage ECR participation in Public Engagement through increased public engagement training offered and introduce University level awards recognising ECR participation in Public Engagement with the local community and Public Engagement with Research.</p>	<p>Introduce a suite of Public Engagement training.</p> <p>Establish a baseline of ECR involvement in Public Engagement training and support and evaluate effectiveness.</p> <p>Awards established</p> <p>Increase in ECR participation in Public Engagement activities. 2017 CROS has a 38% participation in Public Engagement, 2019 target is 45%.</p>	<p>University Public Engagement Forum and Researcher Development Public Engagement lead</p>	<p>At least two training courses delivered and evaluated by July 2018</p> <p>Awards established by Dec 2018.</p> <p>CROS results analysed by July 2019.</p>

Principles 6 & 7				
2018_14 (Linked to 2016_14 and 2016_15)	Retain University level Athena Swan award and continue to apply for silver and bronze Athena Swan awards increasing coverage across the university, with future ambitions to apply for gold. Achieve a Bronze Race Equality Charter Mark Award Achieve a Top 100 Stonewall Workplace Index	All Departments holding a Bronze Award, with some targeting higher Awards, by the end of 2020 We will submit for this in July 2018 We will complete our submission in Sept 2018	Academic Director for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Outcome of University Athena Swan April 2018 Outcome of Departmental Athena SWAN Submissions in Sept 2018 RECM Jan 2019 Stonewall 2019
2018_15 (Linked to 2016_16)	Continue to engage widely with the ECR community through a wide range of avenues; including CROS, the University reps committee, focus groups, Surrey Research Staff Association (SuRSA), quarterly newsletters to all ECRs. Working through these avenues, look to extend our engagement and ensure all ECRs feel they have a voice.	Increase in CROS participation to greater than 30% of ECR population. HREiR WG engagement with SRSA and ECR reps group meetings. Sharing progress with ECR community with specific actions based on ECR feedback included in ECR each newsletter.	Doctoral College Manager and Researcher Development ECR lead	Review feedback from ECRs quarterly at each HREiR WG meeting.
2018_16 (Linked to 2016_18)	Updating and review action plan in light of ECR feedback at quarterly HREiR WG meeting. Report progress and adjust actions as necessary to respond to ECR needs. Report and action Doctoral College board to support ECRs at	Quarterly HREiR meetings. HREiR report to every Doctoral College Board.	Head of Researcher Development	Quarterly updates.

	University Research and Innovation Committee.	Doctoral College Board to provide reports on ECR issues to University Research and Innovation Committee.		
2018_17 (new)	To continue to share best practice through engagement in national and international conferences, workshops and events; as well as through publication.	Two conference presentations on topics relevant to ECR support. At least one publication on a topic relevant to ECR support.	Head of Researcher Development	Review dissemination plan annual (Aug 2018, 2019).