

Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Universities and Research Institutes

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Statement on how the organisation creates, maintains and embeds a research culture that upholds a positive and inclusive environment for researchers at all stages of their careers (*max 500 words*)

At the University of Glasgow (UofG) a positive research culture is vital to the engagement, development and success of Researchers. The Concordat is one of the main mechanisms for this, delivering on our ambitions for Researchers (Research-only Staff, and other related research-active groups). The Research Culture and Researcher Development Team (RC&RD) lead on collaborative delivery of our institutional Concordat Action Plan (CAP; 2024).

In 2023-24:

We renewed our commitment, co-creating a new CAP (2024-2027) through a pan-institutional collaborative review of progress, gaps and direction setting, integrating and building on our learning from 2020-23.

To enable and enhance collaborative delivery this year:

- We strengthened our work with Senior Research leaders (Deans and Directors of Research) and key University Services teams (HR, College Research Offices)
- The 'Research Staff Assembly' provided continuous opportunities for dialogue, consultation, and information sharing.
- We designed new tailored support for those with responsibilities under the Researcher Concordat Action Plan: the Institution, Managers of Researchers and Researchers.

The CAP connects to our university strategies which take a people & culture and environment focus:

1. **The UofG Research Strategy (2020)** states that by working in teams, building on each other's ideas, and making Glasgow the best place to develop a career, our research will transform lives and change the world. This university-wide vision is operationalised through three priorities: Collaboration, Creativity and Careers. The new CAP continues to be strategically aligned to these priorities and present a mechanism for the implementation of the Strategy. Specifically, actions in 2023-24 were designed to support researchers to creatively fulfil their career ambitions by working collectively, supporting interdisciplinarity, and seeking greater connectivity and representation within their respective Colleges.
2. **The UofG Research Culture Action Plan (2020)** promotes positive research culture within the ways we: evaluate, support and reward quality; recognise diverse contributions to research; enable colleagues to support each other to succeed; build a collaborative atmosphere of openness and trust. Clear alignment

with the new CAP is visible in that both aim to increase development provision and engage all those who are research active in the pursuit of their chosen careers. Both the Culture and the Concordat Action Plans, underpin the work of 'The Lab for Academic Culture', (Co-Chairs: Head of Research Culture and Researcher Development and VP Research & Knowledge Exchange) and report to the Research Planning and Strategy Committee (Chair: VP Research & Knowledge Exchange).

- 3. The UofG People & Organisational Development Strategy (2020)** sets out how we nurture an inclusive, dignified and respectful working culture in which everyone is valued, recognised and praised, and success is celebrated. The CAP has been informed and strengthened through alignment with Glasgow's wider people development ambitions.

Collectively our CAP and the above strategies share cultural priorities and are supported by other guiding initiatives we support (Concordats for Research Integrity, and Open Research, DORA, Technician Commitment).

Provide a short summary of the institution's strategic objectives and implementation plans for delivering each of the three pillars of the Concordat (environment and culture, employment, and professional development of researchers) for your key stakeholder groups together with your measures for evaluating progress and success (max 600 words)

Between October 2023 and October 2024, we maintained established provision and expanded our reach by working towards 11 interlinked *deliverables*. Eighteen, Success Measures (SM) are identified:

Environment and Culture

- Invest in supporting the growth of College-level Research Staff Networks*
[SM1] Research Staff (RS) Networks to be established for all four Colleges.
[SM2] Links established to the central Research Staff Assembly
- Embedding structures to increasing Research Staff Representation and Voice*
[SM3] Growth of the Research Staff Assembly (hybrid Research Staff community) into an active space for Research Staff engagement.
[SM4] Launch the Research Culture Commons and engage 15 research staff as Community Co-leads.
- Increasing awareness and self-tracking of 10 days development for Research Staff through Inkpath.*
[SM5] Transfer of provision and users (PIs, Research Staff) to platform – use opportunity to increase awareness of the Concordat.
[SM6] Increase visibility of RS provision for PIs – produce guidance on how to use Inkpath to support RS development.
- Develop Research Staff as 'Associate Supervisors'*

[SM7] Greater integration of Research Staff through all supervisor development (attendance at workshops, members of Supervisor CoP)

[SM8] Increase of RS officially recorded as supervisors.

[SM9] Engage RS in working towards UKCGE Associate Supervisor Recognition

Employment

5. *Support HR review of 'Precarity in Research Contracts'*

[SM10] Contribute to the review and action planning

6. *Support awareness and navigation of the promotions process for Research Staff*

[SM11] Run a promotions-focused RSA briefing, and exploratory workshop, create guidance for RS, in collab with the Performance Pay and Reward team

7. *Support understanding and engagement with the redeployment process*

[SM12] Collaborate with HR to create a guidance pack for RS on how to navigate redeployment

8. *Formalise College-level Concordat groups as sub-groups of College Research Committees*

[SM13] Establish College-level Concordat groups to align activity with the central university action plan and support cross university dialogue.

Professional Development of Researchers

9. *Strengthen Routes into Fellowships building culturally aware future research leaders*

[SM14] Develop and pilot Talent Lab – Ignite Fellowships

[SM15] Pilot 'This Fellowship Life' half day

10. *Define the principles of a PI development framework, a delivery plan, and comms plan.*

[SM16] Define a PI development framework to include e.g. learning from 'People Make Research' blog series, funding opportunities round up, a lunchtime workshop series.

11. *Embed the impact of Talent Lab – Flourish into mainstream provision*

[SM17] Review the successes of Talent Lab – Flourish and embed elements into the mainstream RS development framework.

12. *Targeting provision for Communication skills*

[SM18] Take a focus on developing a wide range of communications skills, experiences and approaches for RS covering e.g. academic writing, blogs, narrative, policy, public engagement, impact, visual methods.

Summary of actions taken, and evaluation of progress made, in the current reporting period to implement your plan to support the three pillars in respect of each of your key stakeholder groups [Institution; Academic Managers of Researchers (Deans, Heads of Schools/Departments/Pis); Researchers]

<p>Environment and Culture (max 600 words)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>Since October 2023 the <u>Research Staff Assembly (RSA)</u> has grown to 240 researchers (6 to 18%) with increased engagement through MTeams and monthly meetings. The RSA is a hub for communicating RS opportunities/experiences. We have also observed increase in engagement from key Research Professional (University Services) teams to engage and consult with RS (e.g. REF PCE Team, Research Information Management, People and Organisational Development). RS representatives on institutional groups such as the ‘Lab for Academic Culture’ or newly established College Concordat Groups utilise the RSA for consultation and communication. [SM3]</p> <p>The <u>Research Culture Commons</u> launched in November 2023. Inviting all members of the research ecosystem at Glasgow, the Culture Commons acknowledges that what any given person may need to thrive within their research culture, or to make an incremental change to this (be it guidance, opportunity, knowledge, ideas, skills, tools, templates or resources, an ally, a career conversation, or simple reassurance) often already exists within our collective research community. An online MTeams space has a community co-leadership model (22 of 99 co-leads are Research Staff) drawn from across different disciplines, specialisms, and roles at UofG. [SM4].</p> <p>Investment was secured to pilot the <u>Inkpath platform</u> as a learning management and tracking system. Inkpath supports integrated career reflection and planning which enables MoR to take greater responsibility for supporting career development. We now have over 800 of RS engaging with the platform (60%). We have embedded sign up through Research Staff Induction and career development planning support [SM5].</p> <p>In August 2024 we included new wording in <i>HR letters</i> (offers of contract) for all new RS which directly links them to the central Research Culture and Researcher Development Team, key communities and available provision [SM5].</p> <p>Academic Managers of Researchers (MoR)</p> <p>In April 2023 we launched <i>new Researcher Development and Research Culture websites</i>. Through an associated comms campaign, we increased the visibility/navigability of support,</p>
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	<p>provision and guidance for RS and MoR centrally and from our College colleagues [SM6].</p> <p>Researchers</p> <p>In partnership with Academic and Research Professional College Concordat leads we supported the establishment of <i>three new Researcher Networks</i>. Using ‘MVLS NERD’ a long-standing RS Network as an example, we worked closely with Researchers in each of the three remaining Colleges to launch researcher-led networks. These networks were supported financially and embedded into College interests, through reporting to Research Strategy Committees [SM1].</p> <p>In tandem with the College-level Concordat Groups (section below) and the RSA, RS Networks and the researchers who lead them were connected and integrated as ‘<i>RS Representatives</i>’ with key responsibilities to ensure cross-pollination and collaboration with each other and with feed into university governance structures [SM2]. This representation model was extended to include RS Reps on the newly expanded ‘<u>Lab for Academic Culture</u>’. Creating a growing and diverse community of Research Staff voices formally invited to take part in strategic discussions. [SM3]</p> <p>We positioned RS as ‘<i>Associate Supervisors</i>’ (UKCGE) for those providing PGR support: (1) Glasgow’s PGR code of practice was updated in August 2024 to include RS as supervisors (<u>Section 5.2.8</u>). To enable tracking, we secured access to new datasets. Around 10 RS took up the opportunity in the first few months [SM8]. (2) We encouraged all RS irrespective of current supervisory responsibilities to engage with <u>all Supervisor Development programmes</u> as well mentoring on the established <u>Thesis Mentoring programme</u> [SM7]. We held an RSA discussion on Associate Supervision and piloted a writing group to support and fund applications to the UKCGE Associate Supervisor Recognition Programme (10 participants and 2 submitted in 2024) [SM9].</p>
<p>Employment (max 600 words)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>Working to build impact through creating spaces to engage in dialogue and to provide formal listening and recording of the issues Research Staff face, we have utilised the monthly Research</p>

Staff Assembly (event) and Assembly Teams site as *key listening stations for conversations related to Research Contracts* (learning about for example experiences of recruitment, parity of reward package, induction, redeployment, and promotion). Next steps are to create new partnerships to feed this learning into the relevant areas of the university including via People and OD Services, and HR Business Partners at College and School-level. [SM10 & SM12]

In partnership with our Academic and Research Professional College Concordat Leads we supported the establishment of 3 new *College-Level Concordat Groups*. Using the College of Social Sciences Concordat Group as an example, we worked closely with Research Leaders and Research Professionals in each of the three remaining Colleges to establish groups with their governance, remit and reporting embedded within each College's research management and development frameworks. The Concordat Groups are further supported and connected through cross-representation (from a central Research Staff Development Specialist) creating cross-college dialogue [SM13].

In January 2024 the University's *Lab for Academic Culture* was refreshed and relaunched with an expanded membership. The Lab's focus is the maintenance, development and enhancement of positive academic cultures in which everyone can thrive. The meetings of the Lab's membership support connectivity and complementarity across key strategies, policies, and processes, bringing together, for example: Researcher Development, Leadership Development, Promotion Pay and Reward, EDI, and Wellbeing. Senior academic leaders and researchers from the University's four colleges were selectively appointed as members of the Lab to take an active part in university wide consultations, and the design and testing of new initiatives [SM13].

Academic Managers of Researchers

Through a university-wide '*PI Consultation*' delivered on campus and online we have identified key areas on which to focus support for the Managers of Researchers to raise awareness and understanding of their responsibilities under the Concordat. In response we designed and piloted development activities that support engagement of PIs with their duties as Line Managers (see Professional Development section below for details) [SM10 & SM12].

	<p>A newly launched <u><i>Career Conversation Toolkit</i></u> is a resource for both Managers of Researchers and Research Staff to support good quality career conversations. This is part of a sustained emphasis on the need for all Managers to drive opportunities for career reflection, analysis and planning to support equitable and inclusive access to career development for all. The training for Academic Mentors entering the Catalyst Mentoring programme provides an additional mode of developing the skills to facilitate quality career conversations. Data from the programme documents that trained mentors feel more equipped to lead career development discussions both within the formal programme and expand this to supporting their own research groups [SM12].</p> <p>Researchers</p> <p>In collaboration with People and OD Services, we held a <i>Promotions focused Research Staff Assembly</i> and from this developed a <i>2-hour collaborative workshop</i> to support Research Staff specifically to understand and engage with the promotions process, understand grade profiles and criteria, and develop their applications and engage with their Line Managers. High engagement and positive feedback from the RSA and the associated workshop indicated that Staff had previously considered promotion success to be a hidden curriculum (accessed differentially dependent on Line Manager support) and that the workshop had supported them to access knowledge more equitably. Based on positive evaluation, the workshop will now be part of the annual framework for developing staff [SM11].</p>
<p>Professional development (max 600 words)</p>	<p>Institution</p> <p>Through additional investment in <u><i>Talent Lab</i></u>, new initiatives were co-developed within the Ignite programme. Talent Lab is our institutional initiative to develop research leaders with 12 programmes aimed at different career stages. Ignite is our Fellowships Accelerator that was developed in conjunction with funding specialists and designed to support RS to apply for a Fellowship Award, including workshops, writing groups and peer networking. We also expanded support for UKRI Future Leaders Fellowships through <i>Ignite FLF Accelerator workshop</i> for institutionally selected applicants – supporting the development of Narrative CVs, Career development statements and research impact plans. 74% respondents were very/extremely satisfied showing significant increases in skills and confidence [SM14]. <i>This</i></p>

Fellowship Life was piloted comprising a peer-to-peer panel in which current Fellows shared the realities of applying for and holding a Fellowship. The event was particularly positively highlighted in *Ignite* feedback [SM15].

Academic Managers of Researchers

Ignite (as for Flourish) *engaged the MoR* in launch/recruitment communications via information packs and sessions. MoRs were asked to endorse applications providing a statement of support for participation and the resulting Fellowship applications. RS uncomfortable requesting a support statement were still welcomed, and non-supportive MoR noted [SM15].

PI development Framework [SM16]. Data related to the development needs of Research Leaders was drawn together from several sources to design a PI Development Framework, recognising the duality of leading research and leading researchers.

- We held *PI consultation events* to discuss the demands of their MoR roles, focusing on developing collegiality, supporting agency and independence, and career conversations.
- We analysed input and contribution on this from wider groups in the Research Ecosystem: RS, Research Professional Staff, and PGRs, via thematic analysis of data submitted to the *People Make Research annual positive recognition project* that collects 100-word stories of research leadership that has apposite impact on others.
- We collated FAQs and common sticking points from requests for support for 'developing researchers' 'research culture' and/or 'research environment' components of grant applications. This provided additional insights into how MoRs understand the value of developing people and culture as underpinning to research success.

Outcomes from the analysis underpinned the design of Research Leaders (PIs and PGR Supervisors) provision. We *refreshed the Supervisor Series* (mini-workshops) to resonate with PIs and PGR Supervisors adding workshops: Creating a Research Team Charter, Making the most of PDR, Running Effective Group Meetings. The expanded series enjoyed high engagement and enthusiastic feedback [SM16].

Researchers

Building on the success of the Flourish pilot (career development programme (part of Talent Lab) co-developed and tailored specifically for our research staff community) we worked to integrate tested content into the wider RS Development Framework. We opened the successful core structure to create a dual ‘programmatically’ and ‘dip in’ experience that increased accessibility and engaged a greater number of RS and MoR. This also allowed us to enhance the model overall though adding new modules and bespoke resources such as the Career Conversations toolkit [SM17].

New RS Development provision for 2023-24 centred on ‘Communication’ [SM18], we:

- Invested in a new FT post: Researcher Development Specialist: Writing and Communications
- Tested new workshops: ‘Writing your Research’ and ‘Writing your Narrative CV’
- Piloted a 2-week writing festival ‘Write of Spring’. Covering three themes ‘Developing your Voice as a Writer’, ‘Growing our Writing Communities’, and ‘Developing Specific Writing Skills for Specific Writing Contexts’, a total of 29 events were held for all in the research community

Beyond our SMs, we invested in Pathfinder, our Careers Support Framework for RS.

- Pathfinder Mock Interviews provide tailored support for interviews (all career paths). RS can take part as a candidate and as a panellist.
- A narrative CV resource bank was developed with colleagues from Research Services, Careers, and the Colleges. New workshops include: ‘Making Narrative CVs Work For You/Your Researchers’; Writing your Narrative CV’
- This Auditorium Article – ‘Making Narrative CVs work for your Researchers’ was 2024’s most read blog post.

Comment on any lessons learned from the activities undertaken over this period and any modifications you propose to make to your action plan and measures of success as a result. (max 500 words)

UofG’s new 3-year CAP was launched in June 2024 containing actions to consolidate and extend work to date. To launch the document, and signal UofG’s intention to engage Colleges and School structures as well as every RS member and MoR with the delivery of the CAP, a university-wide communications campaign is underway. Through reflection on

the successes of the prior CAP, we note the significant distance travelled 2021-24, with specific achievements in:

Engagement of RS

Over the last year we have seen a continued increase in engagement with RS and MoR. This has been a result of several factors, including RS Induction, the RS communication strategy the Research Staff Assembly, People Make Research, and Talent Lab. We are committed to the Inclusion of Research Active Staff outside traditional RS roles and are beginning to actively target Learning and Teaching specialist colleagues, and Professional Services who are engaged in research. *However, we are currently reaching less than 50% of our intended audiences (RS and MoR), and so we will continue to extend our reach in the coming year with tailored targeting of the diverse groups that comprise the RS caucus.*

Development Provision

We have achieved a continued increase the volume and diversity of our central provision and sustained active audiences, achieving highly rated evaluation scores. For RS we will consolidate gains in provision related to Writing and Communications, and Career awareness, planning and progression into 2024-25. *Building on momentum from Ignite we will develop a suite of bespoke new activity to support Fellowship Award success, establishing a pipeline approach. For MoR, we will continue to strengthen Glasgow's approach to developing leaders and leadership, through a new Talent Lab and an expanded Research Leaders Series.*

Structures for Delivery.

Establishing new communications through HR processes, and through greater engagement with the MoR we are begging to build a collaborative culture of development. The Lab for Academic Culture, new College Concordat Groups, new Researcher Networks, and the RS Representatives Network have provided enabling structures. Collating insight from all the above, plus a year of sustained conversation through the Research Staff Assembly, and our evaluation of delivered programmes, we continue to face and uncover hidden challenges in terms of understanding, awareness and agency around: contract types, career pathways and progression, equity or access to development, and the wider 'hidden curriculum' for RS. *Our priorities for 2024-25 under 'Employment' therefore centre on continued building of dialogue and trust between all stakeholders and partners to enable meaningful progress. We will work to establish a Research Funded Employment Working Group in partnership with HR and the Colleges.*

The CAP's impact requires deliberate and regular engagement with our College colleagues on 'their ground'. Experiences in the last year highlighted the importance of defining specific responsibilities for each UofG stakeholder, tailored at College-level. We plan to

strengthen College relationships, creating further opportunities for collaborative working, and for College-level action in 2024-25.

Outline your key objectives in delivering your plan in the coming reporting period
(max 500 words)

University-wide objectives for 2024-25 reflect the continued prioritisation of visibility of the Concordat and the expectations and support available for all stakeholders. They also build iteratively on the progress from the last four years, and are achieved through 9 deliverables:

Environment and Culture

1. *Communicate and clarify roles, responsibilities and relationships between RS, MoR and institutional committees.* Building on the momentum of a new CAP we will maintain strong communication with RS, MoR, and delivery partners.
2. *Raise awareness, visibility and engagement with College and School level Concordat Implementation.* Working collaboratively with College Concordat Working Groups and Researcher Networks to design College-focused actions and projects aligned to institutional CAP and core College priorities.
3. *Increase awareness of the 'ecology of development'.* Coordination of messaging on the 'how' and 'where' of navigating and accessing development for all stakeholders.

Employment

4. *Support understanding and engagement with PDR.* Providing support for RS and MoR in collaboration with HR.
5. *Increase understanding and awareness of Academic Career Pathways, including LTS, Research Scientist, Technical Specialist and Learning and Teaching roles.* Utilise established channels and spaces such as the Research Staff Assembly, Research Culture Commons and Research Professional Staff Network to raise awareness of these pathways and their requirements.
6. *Capture and make visible emerging best practice in the recruitment, support and development of researchers across the institution.* Publish Researcher case studies in collaboration with RS via the Auditorium

Professional Development

7. *Review and extend the impact of the Talent Lab provision, through micro-engagement activities.* Through evaluation of our suite of 'Talent Labs', identify elements to be developed into a 'bitesize series'.
8. *Explore pathways to provide development opportunities to design and deliver activity related to teaching/education for RS.* Map the wide range of available and accessible opportunities for RS to develop and gain teaching experience, viewing 'teaching and student support' in line with the UKPSF.

9. *Increase engagement of MoR with PI and Supervisor Development Frameworks.*
Increasing opportunities for MoRs to engage with Talent Lab and other development initiatives, as experts, mentors and panellists.

Each College has set out a key priority area in line with the institutional CAP:

- **College of Social Sciences**
Establish and communicate a single point of access for all CoSS Concordat stakeholders to policies and processes, aiming to increase awareness and quality and consistency of RS experience.
- **College of Arts and Humanities**
Explore establishment of appropriate welcome and induction pathways for new for RS to support increased awareness and access of key developmental and networking opportunities.
- **College of Medicine Veterinary and Life Sciences**
Scope and deliver initial phases of development for College-wide intranet (Sharepoint). A new central touch point to facilitate improved communication and signposting and support all MVLS Concordat stakeholders, to increase awareness and quality and consistency of the RS experience.
- **College of Science and Engineering**
Design, develop and pilot a CoSE Fellowship Preparedness programme. A long term (12-18months) cohort-based suite of development opportunities focused on preparing RS taking up a new postdoc position to develop towards Fellowship competitiveness.

Please provide a brief statement describing your institution's approval process of this report prior to sign off by the governing body (*max 200 words*)

This report was prepared with input from Staff in Research Services Directorate, the Library, Careers, British Academy ECR Network, the College Research Offices, and Research Staff Networks.

The report was approved by the University of Glasgow Research Planning and Strategy Committee, chaired by Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal for Research and Knowledge Exchange.

Signature on behalf of governing body: 

Contact for queries: Professor Chris Pearce, Vice Principal for Research and Knowledge Exchange. (Chris.Pearce@glasgow.ac.uk)

This annual report will be analysed by the secretariat for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, to identify good practices, themes for development and information to improve national research culture policy and practice.

If you have any questions, or suggestions on how the reporting process could be improved, please contact the secretariat via the email address listed on the RDC website: www.researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk.