European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award: University of St Andrews 6 year internal review report

1.   Internal review process
The internal review was undertaken between May 2017 and May 2018 by the University **HR Excellence in Research Working Group**, including representatives from **HR, Equality & Diversity, Careers Centre, CAPOD, Research & Innovation Services** alongside Research Staff (**RS**) and Postgraduate Research (**PGR**) reps. Members sit on other working groups (e.g. **Athena Swan, Wellbeing & Engagement**, Equality Compliance, **Research Integrity**), ensuring effective communication across the research space. The internal review consisted of 4 principal processes:
Review meetings, at 6-8 week intervals, were used to monitor progress against the **2016-2018 action plan** and to review the plan itself, ensuring that: Actions in progress were regularly updated; Completed actions were marked as complete and/or reformulated as appropriate; Out of date actions were rewritten or removed and new actions were added as required.
Surveying relevant cohorts (**CROS/PIRLS**, Staff Survey [SS]) to validate extant actions, provide evidence of progress and generate new actions.
Consultation with RS via the **Research and Teaching Staff Forum (RTSF),** regular networking events, 'fast focus groups' and researcher newsletters.
Gaining approval and commitment from the Principal's Office, who have endorsed the **2018-2020 Action Plan**, ensuring its alignment with the **University Strategy**. The Action Plan includes all actions from all previous versions, as well as all new actions (*added May 2017 - May 2018*)**.** All iterations are published on our **HR Excellence webpage**, along with a **glossary of terms**.

2.   Key achievements and progress since the 4 year external review.
This table sets out the key achievements over the 2016-2018 review period in relation to the **4 strategic themes described in the 4 year review report**, as well as aims going forward.
Important note: actions associated with Principle 1 of the concordat are directly addressed and progressed by the **RTSF**. HR Excellence Working Group members are directly involved.

Activity area	Progress against aims	Aims for the 2018-20 period	Date/Evidence
Strategic theme 1: Improve quality and effectiveness of induction, institutionally and locally, for all RS.			
Academic-specific, online induction *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	*Aim: 50% uptake of the **Academic Induction Resource** (AIR) by new researchers, ongoing:* webpage view rates could not be measured but AIR has be annually updated following user feedback. *Ref 5.3 (e).* **Manager Essentials**: ***new*** resource for managers created: covers 'HR Policies for Managers', 'Recruitment & Selection', 'Equality & Diversity' and 'Mentally Healthy Workplaces'. *Ref 2.3 (j), 2.3 (l).*	**Improve** AIR data collection **Launch** Manager Essentials. **60% uptake** for both resources *Ref: 5.3 (e), 2.3 (l)*	**Both: Dec 2019 Both: collect webpage data SS (Ref 2.1 (d)**
Induction-related online training for all new research and academic staff *Principle 3, 4, 5, 6*	*Aim: signpost all researchers to the Equality & Diversity (E&D) & Unconscious Bias online training - ongoing:* all new researchers are asked to complete the online **'Diversity in the workplace training' and 'Unconscious bias training'**. Since launch in 2016, 454 academic **(54%)** and 109 RS **(41%)** have completed 'Unconscious bias'; 338 **(40.3%)** academic and 114 RS **(43%)** have so far completed 'Diversity in the workplace' (launched 2010). **2017 CROS**: 51.9% had participated / would like to participate in further E&D training, (**28.5% > 2015 CROS**), indicating ↑ awareness, corresponding to ↑ institutional Athena SWAN (ASWAN) activity. *Ref 6.10 (d) 6.10 (e)*	↑ **Signposting** of induction materials to all Schools - every 6 months. *Ref: 6.10 (e)* **70% positive response** rate for awareness of materials *Ref: 6.10 (e)*	**Dec 2019 SS / CROS / PIRLS**
Institutional induction for RS *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	*Aim: above average rating for institutional induction for RS (measured via CROS), achieved:* **2017 CROS: 58.4%** of respondents found institutional induction useful **(20.5% > National Average [NA]).** For AY 16-17, 39 new RS and 27 new academics attended 'All New Staff Induction' (2 per yr.), 50 new RS and 20 new academics attended 'New Staff Essentials' (monthly). **Welcome to St Andrews e-mail:** new RS are contacted within 8 weeks of starting and signposted to induction activities & continuing professional development (CPD) ('open rate' of **19.6%**). *Ref: 2.3 (F)*	**Review Induction.** *Ref: 3.6 (g)* **Review** marketing strategy ↑ **Mail** out engagement (20%) ↑ **School** engagement with induction by 10%. *Ref: 2.3 (f)*	**May 2022 Dec 2018 Dec 2019 Attendance/ Surveys**
Local induction for RS *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	*Aim: above average rating for local and departmental induction of RS (measured via CROS), ongoing:* **2017 CROS: 43.8%** of respondents found their departmental / faculty / unit induction useful **(NA 45.8%)**; 62% found their local, role induction useful **(NA 63.2%)**, ↓ **27.6%** and **27.5%** respectively, since 2015. **Response: *new*** subgroup set up to focus on improving local RS induction experience. *Ref 3.6 (f)*	**Analyse** results from local induction survey ↑ **satisfaction** by 10% *Ref 3.6 (f)*	**May 2019 Dec 2019 SS**
Strategic theme 2: Improve knowledge (including Equality & Diversity), skills and confidence of PIs in managing people and supporting professional and career development of researchers.			
Support for professional and career	*Aim to improve knowledge, skills & confidence of PIs in managing people and supporting development, ongoing:* **2017 PIRLS: 91.2%** and **63.3%** of respondents agreed that providing advice on careers inside and outside Higher Education (HE), respectively, was important in being a successful PI/research leader; **92.5%** agreed that	**Continue** to monitor the CROS results and signpost to careers support via the **Contract**	**Dec 2019 Surveys**

development of RS *Principle 2, 3, 4, 6*	developing RS constitutes an important part of this role; **68%** felt confident in providing advice on a range of careers **(5% > 2015 PIRLS)** and **62.9%** felt that their contributions were valued by the University. **These results were reflected positively** by RS in recent surveys: **2017 SS: 83%** of RS respondents felt that they worked in a well-manged School/Unit, indicating that Heads of School are effective in their role; **87.3%** agreed that their line manager supported their CPD; **94.5%** knew where to find CPD information. **2017 CROS**: **85.9%** of respondents felt encouraged to engage in CPD **(17.4% > 2015)** and **95%** agreed that they take ownership for their CPD. Positive response rates for both CROS questions increased **> 10%** since 2015 and sit **above NA. Ref: 4.6 (a)**	**Researcher (CoRe) Skills** webpages, the **Passport to Research Futures** (PRF) programme, induction activities & networking events **Ref 4.6 (a)**	
CPD for Academics: skills and confidence in managing people *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	*Aim: 30% improvement in attendance of PIs to relevant activities, ongoing.* **2017 PIRLS**: **90%** of respondents agreed they had access to CPD; **56.6%** undertook 1-5 CPD days in the last 12 months. For AY 16-17, 220 RS and 161 academics undertook activities associated with the **Academic Staff Development Programme** (ASDP); 26 RS and 16 academics attended 'Managing people in research teams'; 4 RS attended 'Leading a research group', 9 RS attended 'Managing people: motivation & performance'. **2017 PIRLS** respondents felt they would benefit from ↑ CPD / support around 'conducting appraisals' **(42.2%)**, 'leading their group' **(41.3%)**, 'managing group/ finances' **(48.9%)**, 'managing staff performance' **(52.6%)** and 'motivating individuals' **(40.4%)**, despite availability of relevant training. **Response:** ASDP review initiated in 2017 to broaden topics and ↑ engagement. *Ref. 2.3 (i), 4.6 (b)* **The Heads of School (HOS) toolkit:** designed to support new HOS, this resource was updated in 2017 *Ref 2.3 (k)*	↑ **ASDP** topics **Pilot** 3 new workshops **Gain access** to mailing list software for better targeting ↑ **Academic** CPD attendance by 20%. *Ref 4.6 (b)* ↑ **Accessibility** & awareness of HOS resources. *Ref 2.3 (k)*	**All Dec 2019** **Programme** **Access granted** **Attendance SS/PIRLS** **Webpage data SS/PIRLS**
Strategic theme 3: Continued focus on developing a mentoring/coaching culture to support professional and career development for researchers, such as more sophisticated matching in existing schemes to address specific career development issues, new issue-based networks (e.g. Public Engagement) and integration with induction processes.			
Mentoring: **Update of established scheme** **Update of matching platform** *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	**Research, Teaching and Academic Mentoring Scheme**: provides a model for the sector; reviewed in 2017 to clarify target audience and ↑ engagement. Abertay University undertook their 2nd cycle, Glasgow School of Art undertook their 1st, strengthening our links with other Scottish Universities. *Ref 3.7(e), 3.8 (a)* *Aim: ↑ mentors by 20% achieved:* we have **152** Mentors in the **SUMAC matching database** **(31% > 16-17).** *Aim: ↑ partnerships by 20%, achieved:* the 17-18 cycle is now supporting **75** partnerships **(31.6% > 16-17).** **CROS 2017**: **75.6%** of respondents were aware of the scheme. **70.6%** of those who provided feedback for the 16-17 cycle were highly satisfied with their experience; **88.2%** would recommend the scheme. *Ref: 3.7(e).* **Aurora:** Since 2014, the number of women supported through has ↑ 5-fold, with 44 (academic and professional) benefiting so far. The University actively supports the mentoring aspect of participation. *Ref 3.7(e).* *Aim: more sophisticated matching, achieved:* the **SUMAC** matching database (developed at St Andrews) algorithm was updated in 2017. Matching was improved to include e.g. pedagogical research / ↑ gender options. *Ref 3.7(e)*	↑ **Scheme** networking to 2/yr. ↑ **Opportunities** for ↑ mentoring skills via **Scottish Mentoring Network** or **The Mentoring School.** ↑ overall participation by 20% **5 RS** apply for Aurora **Review** & develop mentoring platform yearly *Ref 3.7 (e)*	**All Dec 2019** **New activities** **Participation** **Applications** **Feedback**
Coaching: *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	**Coaching service for all staff:** this St Andrews - University of Aberdeen collaboration has so far supported 91 partnerships (professional and academic staff). On average, 2 academics join as coaches each year. **92.8%** and **94%** of coaches who provided feedback, indicated that the process had directly benefited their workplace/team and **93%** indicated that their performance at work had been enhanced following participation. *Ref: 3.7(d)*	↑ **awareness** of the service amongst RS & academics **Recruit** 5 new RS participants *Ref: 3.7(d)*	**Dec 2019** **Scheme database**
Equality and diversity: *All Principle 2, 6* Charters and Athena Swan	**2017 PIRLS**: 89.5% of respondents agreed that St Andrews was committed to E&D. **LGBT Charter:** renewed in 2017 following a submission process advised by **LGBT Youth Scotland**. **Carer Positive Employer Award:** renewed in 2017. **Athena Swan Awards**: The **Institutional Athena SWAN** Bronze award was retained. A number of Schools successfully attained/renewed: the Schools of Earth & Environmental Sciences, Management, Computer Science, Mathematics & Statistics and Medicine achieved Bronze and the Schools of Biology, Chemistry, Psychology & Neuroscience and Physics & Astronomy achieved Silver (plus Juno Champion for the latter). *Ref 6.10 (b)*	**Support** actions which arise from the LGBT charter and the Athena Swan process to help develop a strong University culture of E&D *Ref 6.10 (b)*	**Dec 2019**
Equality and diversity &	*Aim to develop new issue-based networks - ongoing:* *New* **networks:** 'call for interest survey' launched in 2018, for 4 new staff networks: **Staff BAME Network / Staff Carers Network / Staff Disability Network / Staff Parents**	**Launch** network activities	**Dec 2018** **New activities**

supporting development: New networks	**Network**. **Active LGBTIQ+ network:** provides a model for the sector and a supportive environment for LGBTIQ+ staff. ***New* Early Career Women Network (ECWN):** RS-led network (launched 2018) provides opportunities for early career women to network / discuss topics of mutual interest in a supportive environment. **All** active networks also function to inform policy and maintain a respectful environment. **Ref 6.11 (a).**	↑ **activities** to (4 per AY) **Develop** positive reputation around new networks **Ref 6.11 (a)**	**Dec 2021 SS**
Strategic theme 4: Improve information and support around career paths and career planning and enhance the employability and entrepreneurial skills of researchers across all cohorts.			
Development award: PRF reviewed *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	**PRF Review:** this development award for RS has 29 current participants and 28 graduates who reviewed the programme via a detailed survey in 2017. The review indicated that **PRF** provides helpful information, support and advice, and provides a valuable space for participants to focus on themselves and longer term plans. During AY 16-17, 232 research and 71 academic staff attended activities associated with PRF. **Ref 3.3 (b, c & d)**	↑ academic-focused activities (by 3) ↑ within / outwith HE activities (by 2) **Ref 3.3 (c & d)**	**Sept 2019 Programme of events**
Career planning *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5*	**2017 CROS**: 85.9% of respondents felt encouraged to engage in CPD by their manager **(17.4% > 2015)**; 95% agreed they take ownership of career development. The 'Career paths for RS' and 'Career planning and self-development' workshops on the PRF programme were reviewed and subsequently tailored to participants. **Ref: 3.3 (b)**	**Review** feedback for tailored workshops & further develop these as required **Ref: 3.3 (b)**	**Dec 2018**
Employability & entrepreneurship *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5, 6*	The 'Entrepreneurship & Enterprise' stream within the PRF was updated for AY 17-18 with 6 new/restructured workshops. Greater awareness is also being addressed through the Scottish sector-wide 'enterprise' **enhancement theme**. Academic Forums around 'enterprise' were attended by 82 educators so far during AY 17-18. **Ref: 4.10 (c)** ***New* 'Public Engagement Portfolio' (PEP) proposal:** packages PE-related development activities into a structured and recognised programme. **Ref 6.11 (b & c)**	**Investigate** how employability & entrepreneurship can be embedded. **Ref 4.10 (c)** **Launch** PEP & **Recruit** 15 participants. **Ref: 6.11 (c)**	**Dec 2020** **Oct 2018** **May 2019**
Emerging theme - Researcher wellbeing:			
Wellbeing: *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7* HWL Silver Award successfully retained in 2017 Step Count Challenge	***New* Recognition** for good practice on **health & wellbeing provision:** NHS Scotland **Healthy Working Lives (HWL) Silver Award** attained 2016, retained 2017. Now close to achieving Gold. **Ref 6.4 (d & e)**. 2017 CROS: RS awareness of HWL ↑ **(37.7% > 2015 CROS)**. **Highlight from the 2017 award: 15% ↑ in engagement** of RS in the **Paths For All** initiative **Step Count Challenge**. **Overall participation** up from **33** teams to **78** teams in 2017, the highest level of participation for any University **Ref 6.4 (e).** For 2018, we opened up the challenge to PGRs. **Passport to Health & Wellbeing Excellence:** since 2016, 31 RS and 24 academics undertook Passport activities, covering mental, physical nutritional and workplace wellbeing. **2017 SS: 73.7%** of RS respondents knew where find University wellbeing advice / activities, compared to **48.6%** in 'THE University Workplace Survey'. **Ref 5.5 (c)**	**Obtain** HWL Gold Award **Recruit** 100 teams to the Step Count Challenge. ↑ **researcher** engagement with wellbeing activities by 20% **Ref 5.5 (c) & 6.4 (e)**	**Dec 2018** **Dec 2019** **Dec 2019 Attendance**
Wellbeing: Focus on mental health *Principle 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7*	***New* Mental health** training provision developed to equip those who manage/support staff and/or students **e.g.: 'Scottish Mental Health First Aid'** (2 day event). ***New*** NHS 'Mentally Healthy Workplace - Training for Managers': ***New*** 'Student Mental Health Toolkit' workshop**. PIRLS 2017: 59.4%** of respondents agree that St Andrews promotes better mental health and wellbeing at work. **Ref 2.3 (l), 5.5 (d)**	↑ **wellbeing** events (by 2) **2 or more** new members of the **Wellbeing & Engagement Group** **Ref 5.5 (d)**	**Both Dec 2019 Programme New group members**
Emerging theme - Community and engagement:			
Communication & network building *Principle 2, 3, 4*	**RTSF refresh** (***New***): to ↑ School & RS engagement and champion CPD, community & wellbeing. **Ref 2.6 (e)** ***New* Networking: CROS 2017 - 93.4%/86.1%** of respondents would value opportunities to network with RS in their own/other disciplines, respectively. **Response: *New* Closed Facebook Group:** launched 2017 with a view to ↑ RS connections, promote CPD/relevant activities (70+ members). **Post-doc pizza** & **Early Career Academic Networking:** launched in 2017 and 2018 respectively, provide short, CPD events, ↑ connections, inform CPD provision and ↑ RS engagement with University processes **Ref 2.6 (e)**	**Recruit** RTSF Reps from 80% eligible Schools **1 network** event per month **Investigate** engagement strategies. **Ref 2.6 (e)**	**Both Dec 2019 Attendance Surveys**
Other *Principle 7 (all)*	***New* Governance, data collection & reporting:** the 6 year review process raised awareness around a lack of governance and monitoring of online training and gaps in data availability against which goals can be measured. **Ref 7.6 (a)**	**Review** governance, data collection, reporting **Ref 7.6 (a)**	**Dec 2019**