

HR Excellence in Research Award: Six Year Review

Progress, Next Steps and Future Focus for Kent

Since our last submission in 2017, the University of Kent has made great strides in terms of our researcher development action plan and bringing together our support for researchers into an even more cohesive structure. This is underpinned by a new University-level [Kent 2025 strategy](#) that puts researchers and their support firmly at the centre of our ambitions. Research and Innovation is one of the three themes in the strategy. The strategy has seven actions, of which the two most salient are:

- Adopt a ‘researcher developer’ approach, to identify and support individuals and research groups to deliver significantly high quality outputs and impact and generate income with the potential to be the next signature area¹.
- Focus support for building excellent research across the university, supporting careers and professional development across the academic life-cycle, from postgraduate to professor.

The University is currently going through a restructuring project called Organising for Success, with new structures set to be in place by the end of 2020. This involves the dissolution of our three faculties and the creation of seven new academic divisions as schools merge. Changes will also be made across the University to allow key professional services to be delivered within these divisions. At present, researcher development is provided by a number of separate professional services and academic units: Research Services, Kent Innovation and Enterprise, the Graduate School, Learning and Organisational Development, and the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching. While we have a long history of working together on researcher development (and other areas), this will be enhanced by establishing the new Research and Innovation Services and the formation of the Graduate and Researcher College (GRC). We see this structural change as being a huge enhancement for our researcher development ambitions.

The establishment of the Graduate and Researcher College builds on and expands the activities of our current Graduate School. The GRC will play a lead role in implementing the principles of the new Researcher Development Concordat, ensuring that researchers will be ‘equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse global environment and employment market.’ It will aim to improve the induction, training and support of all our research staff. By joining up PhD support and development with that for academic research staff, we will be able to encourage greater collaboration across the academic career span, strive to retain staff through support mechanisms, and improve our funding application culture and research ambition.

Internal Evaluation and Monitoring

The Researcher Development Working Group (RDWG) was established in 2013 to ensure the University’s compliance with the principles and ethos of the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#), and support the maintenance of the University’s [HR Excellence in Research Award](#). In June 2018, the Graduate School commissioned an external consultant, Dr Natalie James (ResearchCoach - <https://www.researchcoach.co.uk/>), to undertake a review of the induction, support and training opportunities offered to research staff at the University. Dr James met with key stakeholders at the University (including: Researchers, Research Managers/PIs, Associate Deans for Research, the Director of Research Services and Dean of the Graduate School). This report identified the following challenges:

- Lack of operational and budgetary support for research staff development
- Lack of reliable reporting systems to establish who Kent’s ‘Research Staff’ are
- Lack of information to support Research Managers.

The report recommended the implementation of the following for ECRs:

- A code of practice
- A dedicated staffing resource
- An information reporting system



- Targeted information, communication and events

The decision was then taken to supersede our internal Researcher Development Survey with the **Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)** in 2019, to understand working conditions and personal development for Kent's Early Career Researcher Staff (ECRS) in relation to the sector.

Kent's CROS (54% response rate) highlighted the following key priorities: 1. Bespoke communications (for ECRS and their managers) 2. Briefings around promotions 3. Building an ECR community 4. Enshrining the importance of personal development (which will be supported by the new Concordat) in all processes.

The findings of Dr James' Review, the CROS report and the resulting recommendations and priorities will be central to the ongoing refresh of the 2017 Action Plan, creating a new plan (including accountabilities and timeframes) which will map onto the new Concordat principles.

The University's 2017 Bronze Institutional Athena SWAN submission was successful and so the last two years have been focussed on delivering the associated action plan, identifying new areas for action and supporting more Schools in their own Athena SWAN work. At an institutional level, a key focus has been to collaborate with the Researcher Development Working Group to establish the ECR Network and raise awareness of the career development opportunities available for researchers. We were delighted that we were able to improve the family friendly benefits (focused on maternity/paternity leave) for our own PhD Vice Chancellor's scholarships to be in line with those offered by UKRI funders. We continue to work on improving our family friendly offerings for all staff, building on a change in policy in 2018 that enhanced our shared parental leave benefits. At the senior end of the academic career pipeline, we have seen an increase in the proportion of women promoted from Senior Lecturer to Reader from 25% to over 40% for the last two years. At School level, we have seen Athena SWAN Bronze awarded for the first time to eight Schools, as well as being renewed at one School. We also celebrated our first School Silver award.

Learning & Organisational Development (L&OD) and New HR Information Systems: The launch of the training module of the HR Information System (Resourcelink) in October 2018 provides integrated information about attendance at L&OD courses and the ability to analyse results by staff group (e.g. researchers). A policy change made in July 2018 made it explicit that an annual appraisal (Reflect Plan Develop) conversation is mandatory for *all* staff. This has been supported by monthly reporting by the L&OD team to the University's Executive Group on appraisal completions for all staff. CROS revealed that 48% of participants had not received an appraisal over the last two years. This policy change and new reporting mechanism will help rectify this and will be formalised in the updated action plan. L&OD focus on the provision of leadership and management development, personal and professional effectiveness, and equality, diversity and inclusion training to all staff across the University, forming an essential resource and processes for Researcher Development in our current and future actions plans. In addition, our Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UJLT) and the Employee Apprenticeship Manager are exploring possible solutions for delivering the Level 7 Academic Professional Apprenticeship Standard as part of their offer.

Key Achievements and New Initiatives

Research Excellence Framework (REF): In line with our approved [Code of Practice \(CoP\)](#) for the 2021 REF exercise we will be submitting all eligible staff, including those contract researcher staff who can demonstrate independence as a researcher. We have clearly articulated in our CoP what the criteria for demonstrating such independence are and this has been shared with all staff. To proactively support this process, we ran a number of (very well attended) sessions for ECRs and contract research staff on the REF, with specific sessions on the eligibility criteria and the criteria for (and process for claiming) independence.

Postdoctoral Researcher (PDRA) Experience Lunches: In 2018/19 a forum was created for Research Staff/PDRAs to receive relevant information regarding activities/ initiatives at the University that may benefit their current and future careers and their ongoing personal development. These inclusive events have also enabled

Researchers to network with their peers from across the University. So far five PDRA Experience Lunches have taken place. Topics have included Signature Research Themes, Organising for Success, research funding opportunities, Research Staff Associations and the transition from Postdoc to a substantive academic career. The Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation and the Dean of the Graduate School have all supported and presented at these lunches, creating inclusive and interactive meetings illustrating the commitment the University has to providing ongoing Researcher Development and support. The penultimate PDRA Experience Lunch also included an **'Open RDWG meeting'** for all PDRAs/ Researchers – demonstrating transparency and commitment to the Researcher community. These events will continue in the current academic year but will evolve as a new body is established in the near future: the Kent Research Staff Association.

The PDRA /Undergraduate (UG) Summer Vacation Research Competition: The idea behind this internally funded competition was two-fold. (1) To provide an opportunity for PDRAs to model grant writing and application processes, to design an independent research project, gain a mentor, receive training and to be involved with short-listing, interviewing and managing their research assistant. (2) To give UGs the opportunity to apply for a research orientated position, get feedback on their application form, feedback on interviews, and an opportunity to be part of cutting-edge research whilst earning a living wage. After a successful pilot project in the Sciences Faculty in 2018, the competition was extended across the university. The competition funded 10 projects with funding from Careers and Employability Services, the Science Faculty, a Teaching Enhancement Small Award, Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Discretionary Funds, the Graduate School and the Humanities Faculty.

In 2019, 6/10 PDRA winners were women, and the PDRAs came from six different schools and all three faculties. The UGs were invited to apply to specific projects, and overall 100 UG applications were made. All UG applicants received detailed feedback on their applications from the PDRAs, and 38 were invited to interview. The feedback from both the UGs and PDRAs has been incredibly positive, and an event for the PDRAs/UGs to showcase their research is planned. The competition was highlighted as a 'beacon of excellence' in the review by Dr James. We therefore plan to hold the competition on a yearly basis.

Grants Factory and Early Career Research Network (ECRN): The Grants Factory is a series of workshops that develop the skills and inside knowledge necessary for writing successful applications. They are led by academics and experts with experience in applying for, reviewing and assessing applications. The University's Early Career Researcher Network was established to offer mutual support to academics at the beginning of their careers. As well as regular talks and workshops there are opportunities to meet other ECRs from across the University to share the highs and lows of getting started in academia. In 2018, these programmes were re-evaluated to mesh with the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#). At present these workshops are run by Research Services, but, as the Graduate School evolves into the Graduate Researcher College, it will develop a programme of talks and workshops and mentoring to support Researchers at all stages to progress in their careers within academia and beyond.

The submission of this two-year review comes at a pivotal time not only for the University of Kent but also just after the publication of the revised, aspirational Concordat. The publication of Kent's new strategy which places researcher development at its core, the Organising for Success project, the enhanced collaboration between the stated different professional services and academic units and the formation of the Graduate and Researcher College validate Kent's robust commitment to its research staff.

The Action plan has been updated and realigned with our new strategy. New actions and success measures have been added and mapped to the revised Concordat, setting out our priorities for the next two years. The updated document will also form the baseline for our future HRER and Concordat Action plan submissions.

¹Signature Research Themes are currently being developed at the University of Kent. These themes are being identified collectively through conversation, exchange and sharing ideas, a process which has involved researchers from all career stages. This initiative will have positive implications for how research is done at Kent and opportunities for researchers to work in an interdisciplinary manner.



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF KENT HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH SIX YEAR REVIEW – NOVEMBER 2019



The University of Kent Action Plan for Researcher Development 2017 – 2021 was drafted to comply with the principles of the previous Concordat, to incorporate the Kent Research and Innovation Strategy 2016 - 2020 and the Kent People Strategy 2015 – 2020.

Since our last submission in 2017, the University of Kent has made great strides in terms of our researcher development action plan and bringing together our support for researchers into an even more cohesive structure. This is underpinned by a new [Kent 2025 strategy](#) that puts researchers and their support firmly at the centre of our ambitions. Research and Innovation is one of the three themes to the strategy and it has seven actions, the most salient two are:

- Adopt a ‘researcher developer’ approach, to identify and support individuals and research groups to deliver significantly high quality outputs and impact and generate income with the potential to be the next signature area.
- Focus support for building excellent research across the university, supporting careers and professional development across the academic life-cycle, from postgraduate to professor.

When updating this Action Plan, careful thought has been given to the new 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers' and our current and future initiatives can be found at the end of this document.

GLOSSARY: DTP (Doctoral Training Partnership); ECR (early career researcher), KIE (Kent Innovation & Enterprise), KEIN (Kent’s Enterprise Network), L&D (HR Learning & Development), Grad School (Graduate School), Graduate Researcher College (GRC), RDWG (Researcher Development Working Group), Res Serv (Research Services), RIB (Research & Innovation Board), RPD (Appraisal), SAM (School Administration Manager), UELT (Unit for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning)

KEY TO STATUS UPDATES:

R1	Not done
R2	Started but stopped
A1	Begun but incomplete
A2	Completed but outcomes not as predicted/desired
AF	Carried forward: further work needed or revised approach
G	Completed with outcomes as predicted

Amber and red actions to be carried forward to the new action plan unless otherwise stated

Actions required 2017-2021		Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item	Status	Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
1	Valuing Researchers						
1a	The University recognises the importance of equal treatment for all its employees, and as such is committed to using fixed term contracts when there is an objective and justifiable reason (currently for 80% of research staff). RIB actively ensures that this policy is embedded in Schools with appropriate documentation and procedures in place.	RIB Res Serv	Two-year monitoring (surveys in 2019, 2021)	Less than 30% of staff see fixed term as a barrier. 70% aware of development offers. Uptake of development by 40% of people	1.3, 1.5	AF	The impact of fixed term contracts on development is still an issue. From the results of CROS 2019: - 42% of respondents felt a fixed term contract was a barrier to their development There is still work required to raise awareness and uptake of certain development opportunities CROS 2019 told us: - on average, there is 53% awareness level of development opportunities - knowledge of the Early Career Researcher Network (ECRN) is 91% - on average uptake of development opportunities is 19% - uptake of ECRN is 51% and Graduate School offerings 38%
1b	RDWG will engage support from its members or other researchers and stakeholders in engaging with national developments and initiatives relevant to the benefit of research staff including participation in Vitae conferences	RDWG	quarterly	Promote support for funding one researcher per year to attend the Vitae conference	7.1, 7.4, 7.5	AF	PDRAs were asked this year if anyone wanted to attend, but no one was available to take up the opportunity. Carrying forward a new approach.
1c	Research Services to ensure that grant funding continues to comply with Concordat principles and will inform the Researcher Development Working Group of any issues.	RIB Res Serv	quarterly from June 2017	Non-compliant proposals rejected (reason for rejection recorded)	7.3	G	Since 2017 the Secretary to RDWG has been a Research Development Officer; this ensures the group is updated from a grant funding / new scheme perspective. As Funders are now being asked / have signed up to the new Concordat, compliance should not be an issue.
1d	Monitoring of funding expiry dates and notification of end-of-funding to PIs and researchers prompts consultation to ensure staff on fixed term contracts are supported and alternative employment is identified where possible.	RIB Res Serv	monthly	Survey of SAMs in June 2018 captures leavers' next roles	2.2, 2.4	G	We have now put in place a process to alert SAMs (School Administration Managers) / PIs about impending contract ends, and offer signposting to coaching or our Careers and Employability Service.
1e	Analyse biennial Researcher Development survey to inform University practice in supporting Research Staff.	RDWG	April 2019/21	Review of survey in spring 2019	3.3	G	In 2019 we moved from an internal Researcher Development Survey to CROS, which provided valuable insights through national benchmarking. The response rate was 54% of our Early Careers Research staff. One respondent commented: "Kent is clearly trying to improve career options for fixed-term research staff. Thank you!"

1f	Work with research councils/funders to ensure the shaping of career development of researchers.	Res Serv	annual	Funder/DTP meeting	3.3	AF	Funders are central to the new Concordat. Research Services will continue to work with Funders / delivering feedback / to ascertain eligibility for certain ECR schemes.
1g	Consider how to enable researchers to develop capabilities that fit the institutional Research and Innovation Strategy and People Strategy, encouraging mobility in research careers.	RDWG	annual	New advice in RPD & on-line guidance from November 2017	3.8	G	The Grants Factory and Early Career Research Network (ERCN) programmes have been mapped to the Vitae Researcher Framework and expanded from 36 events in 2018/19 to a confirmed 43 events in 2019/20. The PDRA / Undergraduate (UG) Summer Vacation Research Competition (New Action No 21) has been designed to give PDRA's the opportunity to apply for research funding to employ an UG on their independent research project.
1h	Submitted proposal for new staffing dedicated to postdoctoral training. If successful, will enable: (i) benchmarks of approaches at other institutions (ii) review options to promote researchers' value to Kent (Postdocs in publicity and marketing, flyers showcasing their research, economic and societal impact of research roles) more widely.	Grad School	March 2018	Outcome of proposal (July 2017) Outcome of review - March 2018 (subject to proposal outcome)	1.4, 2.6	R2	The staffing proposal to better support postdoctoral training has been superseded by a wider strategic organisational review of the University. Kent is in the process of creating a Graduate and Researcher College (GRC) that will bring training and development support for postdocs and early career researchers into a single place. These actions will be carried forward under the remit of the GRC. It is anticipated that the GRC will be fully operational by autumn 2020.
2	Network for Researchers, Internal Events, Researcher voice						
	Actions required 2017-2021	Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item		Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
2a	Use ECR networks to gauge reasons for perception of barriers to accessing development at Kent	Res Serv	April 2018	Capture qualitative feedback from ECR workshops for RDWG	2.1	G	The Early Career Research network is now well established with 91% awareness score in the CROS 2019. Accessing development opportunities at Kent is a key theme that the network covers and the more recent 'PDRA Experience Lunches' (New Initiatives, No 22) are also used to capture feedback and perceptions around development.

2b	<p>Expansion of the Early Career Researcher Network provision could include the following support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Getting Recognition: Promotion & Pay at Kent' - Careers information sessions (60-80% of researchers have not used on-line resources, careers advisers, Learned Societies, Research Councils or Vitae as sources of advice) and input from mentors/PIs. - Communicate development pathways and opportunities. - Examine and encourage good practice for career development planning for researchers and links to Kent Personal Development Plans and Vitae RDF (researcher networking events in 2018/19). - Increase awareness on how to develop research capability through (meetings, events and workshops) - Extension on briefing and support in use of the Researcher Development Framework - Research governance and research ethics (including informal briefings in network sessions). The University has a Research & Ethics Governance Officer who provides training to schools and research groups. - We will raise awareness of policies on EDI through provision of information at researcher network meetings -Formalised feedback discussions at sessions as opportunities to feed back to RIB and Executive Group. 	Res Serv & Grad School	October 2017 through to June 2018	Two new workshop topics incorporated into Early Career Researcher programme by June 2018	1.4, 3.1, 3.8, 3.9, 4.10, 4.13, 5.1, 5.3, 5.6, 6.4	G	<p>The 2018/2019 Grants Factory (GF) and Early Career Research Network (ECRN) was the most comprehensive yet. While these workshops are aimed at particular career stages, all Researchers/Academics are encouraged to 'self- select' the most appropriate sessions for their personal circumstances. Both the GF and ECRN are tied to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, helping to create further awareness of the framework. Ten ECRN workshop sessions were delivered in 2018/19 and we run 13 ECRN workshops in 2019/20. The topics of the workshops have been informed from feedback from PDRAs and the new Concordat and include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership - Balancing the Conflicting Demands of Academia - Using the Media to Publicise your Research - Transition to Independence - Fellowships for PDRAs - Boost your Research and Develop your Creativity - Project Management - Careers advice for PDRAs <p>ECRN details can be found here: https://research.kent.ac.uk/researchservices/ecrn/</p>
2c	Submitted proposal for new staffing dedicated to postdoctoral training (see 1h) which, if successful, will enable it to explore dedicated training and support, with an initial proposal for a researcher induction/welcome event.	Grad School	Spring 2018	Outcome of '1h' above. Review in March 2018 (subject to proposal)	3.3, 3.6	R2	<p>See 1h above.</p> <p>The Research Coach report commissioned in 2018 highlighted the need for a specific researcher induction pack / event. The formation of the Graduate and Researcher College will enable this responsibility to be located in a single unit.</p> <p>This action will be carried forward under the remit of the GRC</p>
2d	Further raise awareness of the Vitae RDF (e.g. through ECR network events) as a basis for considering how to develop their skill set and experience.	RDWG Res Serv	October 2017 to June 2018	Awareness of RDF to increase to 50% in survey in April 2019	3.7	A1	<p>The CROS results showed that 50% of respondents had some awareness of the Researcher Development Framework (24% had some understanding, 26% knew it existed but without knowing the detail) so we will continue to raise visibility through the established ECRN and PDRA lunches as well as future induction packs/events</p> <p>CROS - 50% of Kent researchers had never heard of the RDF. 2 We intend to embed the RDF in an induction pack for greater visibility, also see 1g above.</p>

2e	Monitor uptake of the University's KEW-NET mentoring network (on-line system from April 2017) and analyse participation in ECR, KEIN and other networks (including the potential of Vitae's SUMAC scheme matching mentors and mentees across universities) for people to develop external networks and related benefits. Mentoring networks will be reviewed and re-invigorated for all staff (including participating researchers)	RDWG with L&D and Grad School	Spring 2018	Researchers on KEW-NET to grow 10% points annually to 30% by Spring 2020. SUMAC proposal to RDWG (April 2018)	4.10	AF	The development of new approaches to researcher mentoring are being developed as part of a wider mentoring strategy at the University. A mentoring working group has been established and has been lobbied by both the Researcher Development Working Group and the institutional Athena SWAN gender equality team to ensure that the specific requirements of early career researchers are also included. On a technical note, KEW-NET has been discontinued by the University.
2f	Review selection/involvement of contract researchers on the Research & Innovation Board (1 current member)	RIB	August 2017	1 researcher attends RIB for 4 in 5 meetings and nominates alternate when not available.	4.13	G	Researcher representative on RIB. The position is advertised to researchers, who then apply for the position. RIB now takes place 3 times a year, with the PDRA representative invited to each meeting.
2g	Develop an electronic ethics review system to simplify, streamline and standardise the process of seeking ethical approval. This will facilitate simpler engagement with issues around the ethical implementation of research.	Res Serv	Spring 2018	System goes live in Spring 2018	5.3	AF	The development of an institution-wide system (universal system) is ongoing; a version of this review system is available in the School of Psychology.
2h	Encourage research staff to engage with entrepreneurial, knowledge exchange initiatives, including Enterprise & Innovation Network events, and innovation funding opportunities (ideas with commercial potential).	RDWG Reps KIE	Autumn 2017	KEIN attendance up by 10% each year (2019 survey data)	5.2	AF	Kent Innovation and Enterprise (KIE) have a new approach for networking events and will be running termly KIE lunchtime networking events that will be open to researchers and cover the themes of entrepreneurial knowledge exchange and funding opportunities

3 Development of research Managers to support researcher development						
Actions required 2017-2021		Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item	Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
3a	<p>Support will be developed and offered for Research Managers/PIs to establish good practice across Faculties/research groups as well as managing expectations of researchers, including fixed term contracts, equality & diversity, mentoring, developing and allowing consideration of careers within/outside academia :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Leader Training for postdocs in supervisory positions (or with planned future responsibilities). - Promote 'Foundations of management' courses to PIs and postdocs in supervisory positions. - Kent's EDI agenda through available management programmes and e-learning packages - Network events for Research managers/PIs in mentoring on RDF and Career development of researchers 	L&D RDWG	Sept 2017 to July 2018	Develop sessions in the termly Research Administrator and Directors of Research network events delivered by Aug 2018. 1 workshop per year on Research Team Leadership. PIs at 'Foundations' modules	2.3, 3.1, 3.4, 3.7, 6.9	<p>A1</p> <p>There has been take-up of Learning and Organisational Development (L&OD) training programmes at all levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9 PIs/Research Managers have attended the Leadership in Areas of Significant Responsibility programme - All new Heads of School are offered knowledge-based development under the New Senior Leaders programme - One PI has attended the Foundations of Management programme. - A total of 43 researcher managers have attended a range of 18 courses across a range of topics including leadership and management, EDI, personal and professional effectiveness. <p>We will continue to raise awareness and encourage participation for existing and new training programmes</p>
3b	The University ensures that Contracts Officers from Research Services meet with PIs who are starting projects to ensure that they are fully briefed as to their role and responsibilities, both to the external funder, but also to those working on the project. As part of this, the resources available at the University for researchers are highlighted and PIs are encouraged to support their researchers in accessing them.	Res Serv	Autumn 2017	Develop a checklist for Research Services to issue to PIs by Spring 2018	3.6	<p>G</p> <p>Project kick-off meetings in schools are now mandatory for all grants where it is the PI's first grant award or first grant at Kent (as well as larger collaborative ones). Research Services teams meet with the School administration and PI. Meetings are initiated by Research Services. Researcher Development opportunities available for researchers highlighted by Research Services, at this initial meeting.</p>

4 Signposting Guidance for Researchers (through the Researcher Development Portal)						
Actions required 2017-2021		Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item	Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
4a	Review the broad programme presented through the Researcher Development portal, based on offerings from Graduate School, UELT and L&D in research, transferable skills and career advice. Consider rebadging some events to avoid some researchers being discouraged from attending alongside PhD students (i.e. co-sponsoring certain events between Grad School and the ECR Network). Monitor implementation through RPD feedback and surveys.	RDWG	Annually in June	Formal review conducted in June 2018 and outcomes and action minuted/documente d by RDWG	3.3, 5.4, 5.5	A1 Following the programme review, a new dedicated session for PDRAs on career planning and opportunities beyond academia took place in December 2019. Work will continue in the light of the new GRC to help foster a culture of collaboration for ECRs and Postdocs, and making sure researchers can choose what the courses and development opportunities they feel match their specific requirements.
4b	All research staff to be informed (through on-line portal, Twitter or through network meetings) of relevant development opportunities.	RDWG	Monthly	Level of awareness up to 70% by development source (2019 survey)	4.10	A2 The ECRN and PDRA lunches have been used to raise awareness of development opportunities. CROS 2019 showed a 53% awareness level of development opportunities, below the 70% target, so need to review the communication strategy within the context of the new Graduate Researcher College
4c	Communicate research career pathways and promotion procedures for Researchers to Researchers themselves, PIs, Heads of School and School Administration Managers via the Researcher Development portal Revised guidance for 2016-2017 https://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-staffinformation/promotion-salary-review/index.html	RDWG Faculty Reps	completed	Web page visit trend (analytics) Useful advice experienced by over 50% of staff in 2019 survey	1.4, 2.5	A2 CROS 2019 showed: - 68% of Kent's ECRs felt that they didn't have awareness of career development opportunities in non-research roles. - 48% of staff aware of information on promotion; 45% not aware; 41% were clear on opportunities for progression, 53% were not clear on opportunities for progression. As with 4b this work will continue in the context of the new Graduate Researcher College
4d	Promote awareness of career switches between research and non-research roles (63% of people do not know of these opportunities and 5% of staff are not clear about opportunities for career progression (2017 survey))	RDWG	Annual from October 2017	Awareness of career switches increased to 50% in 2019 survey	3.4	A2 CROS 2019: 68% of Kent's ECRs felt that they didn't have awareness of career development opportunities in non-research roles. As with 4b this work will continue in the context of the new Graduate Researcher College

4e	Improve promotion of induction processes and events to inform researchers and managers and share best practice. Include researcher case studies, cases of alternative career pathways for example researchers moving to Teaching & Research or to Teaching & Scholarship, or Professional roles (through ECR network & Faculties)	RDWG ECR Reps, Res Serv	To Autumn 2019	Case study on website, Oct 2017 Event on careers beyond HE research by October 2019	3.2, 3.3, 3.8	AF	The alternative career event was held in December 2019. The GRC will develop an induction resource pack, to be emailed to new researchers and new PIs and ECR reps and Dirs of Research (also to promote new ECR reps for divisions).
4f	Promote the existing 'Diversity in the Workplace' E-Learning packages through Networks, induction and the portal	RDWG	Twice per year	Take-up up to 60% (2019 survey)	6.8	AF	Whilst CROS 2019 showed a 77% awareness rate of the training, the uptake was lower with 47% reporting that they had undertaken EDI training in one question, 35% in another. Training completion is now recorded in the central HR system which will help the monitoring of uptake.
4g	Submitted proposal for new staffing dedicated to postdoctoral training (see 1h) which, if successful, will support development of easy-to-access resource library including key articles, books and videos, online collection of podcasts or stories about Kent Careers. Include links to Vitae's 'What Researchers Do', RCUK's research careers webpages, other resources (e.g. the 'More than Lucky' report), and stories about barriers encountered by ECRs.	Graduate School	June 2018	Outcome of '1h' proposal above. New resource links on Researcher Development portal by June 2018 (subject to proposal)	2.6, 3.2	R2	See status update for 1h A key recommendation from both reviews (ResearchCoach - and CROS) was the need to establish a dedicated and up to date mailing list for ECRs which is now in place. The Researcher Development Portal and its related resources are being reviewed as part of the plans for the new GRC. These actions will be carried forward under the remit of the GRC
4h	Wider communication of development opportunities to researchers and Principal Investigators (targeted emails, campus on-line and researcher development portal), including Public Engagement Fund projects, innovation funding opportunities, Knowledge Exchange (maintain visibility on Researcher Development portal and twitter)	RDWG, Res Serv, KIE	Annual cycle	Links from school/centre websites at 100%, June 2018. Annual page visits on portal: 30,000 by 2019.	3.4, 4.10	A1	Upgrade of the Researcher Development Portal is ongoing. Research Services distribute opportunities through the PDRA email list and the ECRN list and information for PIs through the School refund lists. Covered by new review of the communication strategy (see 4b)

5 Career Development including Reflect Plan Develop (RPD), mentoring and careers advice						
Actions required 2017-2021		Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item	Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
5a	Monitor contract research staff uptake of RPD and Identify key schools/faculties where uptake is low, and promote through RDWG bespoke training in line with current RPD support for research managers PIs with RPD training for new researchers and new research managers in faculties on an annual cycle	RDWG, L&D	Mar 2019, 2021	Increase to above 60% uptake in survey in 2019. Number of session attendees per year	2.1,2.6, 3.5, 3.8, 3.9, 4.10	A2 CROS 2019 - 51% of research staff have had an appraisal in the last two years. HR have a new monitoring system in place which reports on appraisals undertaken in the last year, to enable more effective monitoring of appraisals. Following the implementation of the training module of the central HR System in October 2018, L&OD now monitor RPD completion rates through monthly reporting. A policy change was implemented in summer 2018 to make it explicit that an annual appraisal is mandatory for all staff.
5b	Develop career development advice for research managers, to support career discussions within faculty RPD (appraisal) discussions (also to issue during RPD training) including signposting staff to utilise on-line support material and external training where appropriate	RDWG reps	Sept 2017	Take-up of on-line support increases to 50% in 2019 survey	2.3, 5.1	AF CROS 2019 - 47% awareness of support, 13% engagement rate. Sessions on mentorship and mentorship skills for PIs are being planned.
5c	Engage with academics in their involvement in coaching, mentoring and researcher development and explore how existing mentoring further supports researchers in career development in key areas	RDWG reps	Sep 2017 to April 2018	Qualitative feedback from network events by April 2018 informs future actions	3.1, 3.7	AF The Graduate and Researcher College will take responsibility for the development of coaching and mentoring to support the career development of researchers. An initial all-research-staff engagement event on 21 November 2019 began a discussion with participants about how they feel this could best be delivered. This action will be covered by the wider University strategy on
5d	Faculty research mentorship to be promoted and encouraged; professional mentoring by research managers and peer mentoring by research staff	RDWG reps	Quarterly	Mentoring uptake increases to 80% in 2019 survey (76% in 2017)	3.9, 4.14	AF This action will be covered by the wider University strategy on mentoring (see 2e).
5e	Further promote the use of on-line career advice for researchers and RDF guidance through the portal. Monitor uptake of careers advice through Survey (50% awareness of school support 56% awareness of Careers and Employability Service (CES), 11% of other support. Overall 46% have useful advice on prospects/careers in 2017)	Careers RDWG	Feb/March 2019 and 2021	Take-up over 60%, 2019 survey Usefulness of advice up to 50% in 2019 survey	2.4,3.2, 3.8	A2 CROS 2019: - 29% awareness of CES, 4% engagement with CES - 13% engagement with online resources

5f	Encouragement of Personal Development Planning monitored through surveys.	RDWG	Annual	Take-up above 60% in 2019 survey	4.14, 5.6	A2	61% (of 54 responses found the RPD useful) but 45% of respondents had not had an appraisal in their first two years. On-going, uptake will be monitored through the central HR system (see 5a)
5g	Graduate School has submitted a proposal for new staffing dedicated to postdoctoral training (see 1h) which, if successful, will enable it to develop some PDP templates for researchers.	Graduate School	Spring 2018	Outcome of '1h'. PDP material out late 2018, subject to proposal	4.14	R2	See status update for 1h Also, PDPs has been replaced by the RPD approach which is now mandatory for all colleagues
6	Equality of Access to Careers and Development						
	Actions required 2017-2021	Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item		Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
6a	University of Kent's Athena SWAN Working Group has drafted a five year plan for all of its schools to submit applications for Athena SWAN accreditation, with submission deadlines.	Athena SWAN Working Group	November 2017-21	Accreditation of schools in November 2021	6.10	G	The University has invested in a dedicated Athena SWAN team and there is now a planned timescale of submission and renewal of School and Institutional awards
6b	Faculty researcher representatives will review researcher-related data available in schools and faculties (through Athena SWAN reporting) and will inform RDWG for review of equality in career development of researchers.	RDWG	December 2018	Review data from Athena SWAN, identifying action in spring 2019	6.2, 6.3	G	The new Athena SWAN Project Manager joined RDWG in 2018, informing RDWG of pertinent issues on an on-going basis. Athena SWAN updates are also a standing item on the termly Faculty Research and Innovation meetings.
6c	Across all Faculties under the Athena SWAN initiative there is a plan to monitor diversity balance of promotion candidates and departments now monitor equality (including panel members) at recruitment application, interview and appointment stages. Extend good practice to other faculties.	Athena SWAN Working Group	Spring 2017	Review trends in progression data from Athena SWAN, identifying action in spring 2019	1.4, 6.7	G	The University Promotion Committee (UPC) now monitors this. Trends in the gender and ethnicity profile of promotion applicants and success rates is presented to the UPC at the beginning of the promotion round. Gender and ethnicity analysis of promotion data is now embedded within the promotions process. The promotion policy and guidance is updated yearly and for 2020 will include enhanced requirements for panel EDI training improvements for assessing mitigating circumstances. For the recruitment process, the new recruitment system now prompts hiring managers to consider whether a positive action statement is needed to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
6d	Continue to monitor researcher access to development through the biennial survey (current rates at 32% of contract staff seeing fixed term as a barrier to development, reduced from 37% in 2015)	RDWG	Feb/March 2019, 2021	Less than 32% in survey see fixed-term contract as a barrier	2.1	AF	Covered by action 1a

6e	Monitor available data on protected characteristics and plan improvements supporting the next research excellence (REF) exercise including Athena SWAN trends, to better identify areas of under-representation or lack of progression in relation to the Protected Characteristics.	RIB	December 2018	Improved representation trends in emerging REF data spring 2019	1.4, 6.1, 6.8, 7.5	G	<p>Selection of staff for REF2021: The University has chosen to submit 100% of eligible staff and has set out clear criteria for the definition of Independent Researchers for inclusion in REF2021. This approach removes previous steps that may have introduced selection bias.</p> <p>Selection of outputs: The EDI profiles of staff with selected outputs have been monitored for each Unit of Assessment in the December 2019 pilot exercise and will be for the final submissions, in line with the University's REF Code of Conduct</p> <p>Decision-making panels: EDI data for members of the decision-making panels has been being collected.</p>
6f	Review researcher awareness of Equality Diversity & Inclusivity policies (70% aware in 2017), researcher uptake of parental leave (17% uptake by researchers in 2017) and other Equality Diversity & Inclusivity provisions	RDWG Reps	Mar 2019,2021	Awareness of EDI policies increases to 75% in 2019 survey	6.5, 6.6, 6.8	G	<p>CROS 2019 - 53% of respondents said their line manager / PI informed them about University policies.</p> <p>77% aware of the EDI training. 47% said that they had undertaken EDI training in one question, 35% in another.</p> <p>82% agree that the institution is committed to equality and diversity. Survey feedback suggested some avenues for improvement in EDI materials around childcare, religion and positive discrimination.</p> <p>The feedback has been incorporated into the University's wider EDI approach</p>
6g	Monitor the effectiveness of induction through survey feedback	RDWG	Sept 2017	Improved induction satisfaction to 85% in Apr 2019 survey	3.6	A2	<p>CROS 2019:</p> <p>Induction satisfaction fell this year: 65% were satisfied with local inductions, compared to 75% in 2017; only 46% found the University induction useful in 2019 compared to 78.4% in 2019. These figures were all higher than the CROS average. However, Kent's departmental inductions scored 45% satisfaction compared to a national average of 48%.</p>

7	Provision of Development (External events and Materials) 7						
	Actions required 2017-2021	Institutional Lead	Proposed Timeline	Success Measures	Concordat Item		Nov 2019 - 6 Year Review
7a	Improve targeting of the researcher community for internal recruitment and development.	Faculty/ School	Termly	No. internal recruits in	2.6	G	<p>Development - The new ECR mailing list is used to publicise development opportunities e.g. grants factory, ECR events, promotion workshops etc. L&OD have a newsletter which individuals can subscribe to and which is circulated within Schools.</p> <p>Recruitment – HR implemented a new recruitment system in February 2019. Researchers can register and receive relevant job alerts by email. An improvement offered by in parallel is that all vacancies are advertised for a minimum of one week internally before being advertised externally (if agreed) which facilitates the redeployment process. A single-sign on process makes it easier to restrict internal vacancies to current members of staff.</p>
7b	Encourage applications for funding available to researchers (Public Engagement with Research Fund (currently 51% awareness); Researcher Development Fund (currently 48% awareness) and the Eastern ARC Training Fund. Develop further small internal research funding schemes accessible to researchers to give experience of designing, leading and managing a project, including supervision of staff (such as student interns). This will build on existing provisions such as the fund for Public Engagement. A number of funds are available to all staff at Kent to develop their research, including researchers: faculty small grants, Faculty research fund (open to fixed-term contract staff in Sciences and Social Sciences), funding for developing collaborations across Europe and with Eastern ARC partners, and funding for Global Challenges and other strategic initiatives. Examine new development	Faculty Reps/ RDWG/ RDWG Faculty Reps	May 2017 to May 2019	Number of applications (successful and unsuccessful) by researchers for each available funding pot increasing year on year	3.1, 4.11	AF	<p>As for 1(g), the new PDRA / Undergraduate (UG) Summer Vacation Research Competition has been designed to give PDRAs the opportunity to apply for research funding to employ an UG on their independent research project.</p> <p>Our subscription to Research Professional allows all staff and students to search the comprehensive database of funding opportunities.</p> <p>We will continue to investigate funding the transition between PhD and ECR, to consider whether there are any internal sources of funding that can be found for this.</p>
7c	Active engagement with Eastern ARC (University of Essex and UEA) and other external stakeholders (including Universities of Greenwich and Canterbury Christchurch at Medway) initiatives on shared Researcher Development provision including events, conferences and training including on-line programmes	RDWG, Res Serv	Autumn 2018	Increased number of relevant events conducted compared to 2016	3.4, 7.4	G	The three universities have invested in an EARC Director to coordinate and take forward the initiative. He is currently developing a five year strategy, which includes a pillar on PGR provision and broader researcher development. As part of this there is the intention to look at developing shared resources and training between the universities.

7d	Explore possibilities for researcher mobility between Eastern ARC institutions on joint funded grants. Visit partner institutions to explore synergies (including researcher mobility, employability and development)	Faculty Reps/ RDWG	Summer 2017	Recommendations reviewed by RDWG/Faculty in January 2018	7.4	G	The three universities have invested in a facilitation fund that is available to all research-focussed staff, including researchers. It will have an open, rolling deadline, and activities eligible for funding will include pilot projects, exchanges and workshops. In addition, the Director is currently undertaking a mapping exercise to identify existing areas of overlap between the three universities.
7e	Evaluate the effectiveness of training provision in academic practice. Seek evidence that demonstrates impact on career development of research staff. Improve reporting on development events for researchers (annual or termly reports to RDWG) on attendance at development events by Research Services, Graduate School and L&D	Res Serv, Grad School, L&D, UVELT	Summer 2018	Funding of Sciences events for Sept 2017. Recommendations reviewed by RDWG in July 2018	4.11, 4.12	A1	Uptake of development training is now recorded through the central HR system and can be reported (see 3a). The use of Eventbrite for ECRN events and PDRA lunches also allows monitoring of attendees. Status marked as incomplete as more work needed to monitor the specific impact of training on career development
7f	Monitor the uptake of generic career development skills and abilities within the RDF framework	RDWG	Sept 2017	Topic take-up in 15-40% range in 2019 survey (7-28% in 2017)	4.11	AF	CROS 2019 - Only 8% of Kent ECRs used the RDF for CPD (compared to 11% of the national aggregate). New approaches needed to publicise Vitae resources through our existing and new communications channels



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



UNIVERSITY OF KENT HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH SIX YEAR REVIEW – NOVEMBER 2019



Here, the University of Kent's current and future researcher development actions are presented.

They consist of i) carried forward actions from the 2017 HRER Action Plan and ii) new actions mapped to the principles of the new Concordat

Many of these new actions have been mentioned in the review of the 2017 action plan above and the three-page report.

The on-going and new actions below are central to our future plans for researcher development at Kent.

GLOSSARY: DTP (Doctoral Training Partnership); ECR (early career researcher), KIE (Kent Innovation & Enterprise), KEIN (Kent's Enterprise Network), L&OD (HR Learning & Development), HR (Human Resources), Grad School (Graduate School), Graduate Researcher College (GRC), RDWG (Researcher Development Working Group), Res Serv (Research Services), RIB (Research & Innovation Board), RPD (Appraisal), UELT (Unit for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning - Kent's teacher training unit), CES (Careers and Employability Services), Postdoctoral Research Assistants (PDRAs), Vitae's Researcher Development Framework (RDF), Learning and Organisational Development (L&OD)

Reference	Carried forward actions from 2017-2021 Action Plan	Institutional Lead	Timescales	Success measures
2017 Action Plan				
Valuing researchers				
1a	Raise awareness and take-up of development opportunities, irrespective of whether colleagues are on a permanent or fixed-term contract. Advertise targeted development opportunities for ECRs and PDRAs.	GRC	Outcomes monitored every two years through the CEDARS survey (next one in 2021)	CROS targets: 70% aware of development offers 40% taken up development offers Less than 30% see being fixed term as a barrier to development
1b	Promote support for funding one researcher per year to attend the Vitae conference.	RDWG	Annually from 2020	Funded place is taken up and attendee reports back to peer group
1f	Work with Research Councils/funders to ensure the shaping of career development of researchers. Deliver feedback on schemes and ascertain eligibility of Kent colleagues for certain ECR schemes through funder and DTP meetings.	Res Serv (1st action) and GRC (2nd action)	Annually from 2020	Requirements of the Concordat Principle of Professional and Career development lead the agenda of funder/DTP meetings

1h	Carry out benchmarks of approaches of postdoctoral training at other institutions. Review options to promote researcher value to Kent.	GRC	Spring 2021	Understanding of Kent's postdoctoral training approach relative to sector Visibility of postdocs and their research impact in publicity and marketing materials
Researcher voice				
2c	Establish researcher induction events in addition to and to complement to central University (L&OD) and local inductions (possibly online).	GRC	From Spring 2021	CEDARS targets: 85% satisfaction with researcher induction event
2d	Further raise awareness of the Vitae RDF (e.g. through ECR network events, PDRA lunches, induction) as a basis for considering how to develop their skill set and experience.	RDWG/GRC	From Autumn 2020	CEDARS targets: 50% awareness of the RDF
2e	Include the mentoring of ECRs and PDRAs as part of the University's wider mentoring strategy being shaped by the Mentoring Working Group. Investigate joining Vitae's SUMAC scheme matching mentors and mentees across universities.	RDWG/Mentoring Working Group	Started Spring 2020	Mentoring approach for ECRs and PDRAs included in outputs of Mentoring Working Group CEDARS survey target: 80% uptake of mentoring opportunities
2g	Apply the learnings from the School of Psychology's version of the ethics review system to inform an institution-wide approach.	Res Serv	Review in December 2020	A university-wide ethics review system
2h	Encourage research staff to engage with entrepreneurial, knowledge exchange initiatives, including Enterprise & Innovation Network events, and innovation funding opportunities (ideas with commercial potential).	RDWG/KIE	Annual review	Targets for 2019/20: 5 KIE specific sessions in the Grants Factory/ECRN 3 KIE lunchtime network meetings 1 Early Career training day 6 School/topic specific events or talks

Development of research managers				
3a	Continue to raise awareness and encourage participation for existing and new training programmes for managers.	GRC/ L&OD	Annual review through CEDARS survey and reporting from central HR system	CEDARS targets: 70% awareness of developmental training opportunities 40% take-up Year on year increases in the take-up of training programmes
Signposting guidance for researchers				
4a	Consider rebadging events to maximise attendance from both ECR and PDRA communities.	GRC	From Autumn 2020	Mixture of ECRs and PDRAs attending same events
4b	Review the strategy for communication of relevant development opportunities.	GRC	Autumn 2021	CEDARS target: 70% awareness of development opportunities
4c	Communicate researcher career pathways and promotion procedures.	GRC/HR	2020/1 Promotion round (starts in December 2020)	Improvement on CROS 2019 result: 48% aware of information on promotion

4d	Promote awareness of career switches between research and non-research roles.	GRC	Annual event every December	Improvement on CROS 2019 result: 68% not aware of career opportunities in non-research roles
4e	Create welcome packs and induction material for ECRs and PDRAs to complement central and local induction arrangements.	GRC	Autumn 2021	All new ECRs and PDRAs receive a researcher induction pack
4f	Promote the existing mandatory EDI e-learning training.	RDWG	Twice per year	Compliance of training completion 80%
4g	Develop an easy-to-access resource library for ECRs and PDRAs including internal content and external resources (e.g. Vitae, UKRI).	GRC	Summer 2021	Resource library established and used by ECRs and PDRAs
Career Development				
5a	Monitor research staff uptake of appraisal/ RPD (Reflect, Plan, Develop) in partnership with L&OD.	GRC/L&OD	Monthly reporting Start Autumn 2020	Target 80% compliance
5b	Develop career development advice and signposting resources for research managers for RPD discussion.	RDWG	By Summer 2021	Improvement in quality of RPDs Improvement on CROS 2019 result: 61% found RPD useful
5e	Promote the use of on-line career advice for researchers and RDF guidance.	CES/RDWG	Annual review	Improvement on CROS 2019 results for career advice: 29% aware of CES 13% engagement with online resources

Equality of Access to Careers and Development				
6g	Monitor the effectiveness of induction.	RDWG/L&OD	Twice per year	CEDARSS targets: 80% satisfaction with all inductions (central, local and researcher specific)
Provision of Development				
7b	Investigate funding the transition between PhD and ECR, to consider whether there are any internal sources of funding that can be found for this. Continue promotion of other available funding streams.	RDWG	Annual review	Number of applications (successful and unsuccessful) by researchers for each available funding pot increasing year on year
7e	Monitor the specific impact of training on career development.	RDWG/L&OD	Annual review	Evidence of presence or absence of link between training uptake and career development
7f	Publicise Vitae RDF resources through our existing and new communications channels.	RDWG	Twice per year	Improvement in CROS 2019 result: 8% ECRs used the RDF for career and personal development

New Action Plan 2020- 2022: The actions below have been mapped to the new Concordat principles in anticipation of the design and delivery of a new Concordat action plan:

- a) Environment and Culture
- b) Professional and Career Development
- c) Employment

Reference and mapping	New Actions	Institutional Lead and monitoring	Timescales	Success measures
1 (a,b,c)	Create a new Graduate and Researcher College (GRC) with responsibility for implementing, monitoring and governing researcher development within the institution. (NB No additional staff time has yet been allocated to support Researcher Development within the Graduate and Researcher College. It is hoped that this changes once the University has finished its Organising for Success reorganisation project).	Dean of GRC Organisational Design Project	Implementation by Autumn 2020	Organisational structure in place by Autumn 2020
2 (a,b,c)	Develop a code of practice/set of principles for the management and career development of University of Kent Research Staff to include mandatory RPDs, building in time for training and development and providing information on support available for every stage of the researcher career lifecycle.	GRC	Consultation (2020-2021), implementation (2021-2022)	Code of Practice implemented for 2021/2022 academic year
3 (a,c)	Create an information pack for PIs including an induction checklist to complement existing induction checklists.	GRC	Autumn Term 2021	All PIs using the information pack
4 (b)	Include information on Vitae resources, including the RDF within the RPD.	GRC/HR/ L&OD	Spring Term 2021	CEDARS target: 50% awareness of the RDF
5 (b)	Hold briefings around progression and promotion in partnership with colleagues from Human Resources and put together a promotion pack reflecting the new institution-wide Academic Career Map.	HR/ GRC	Autumn Term 2021	Improvement on CROS 2019 result: 48% aware of information on promotion
6 (a)	Take responsibility for on-going updates to the Researcher Development website.	GRC	Spring Term 2021	Increased traffic and informative website analytics used to drive future design
7 (a)	Issue guidelines to PIs on Family Friendly offerings (parental leave and adoption arrangements).	GRC/ Athena SWAN team	Autumn Term 2020	Guidance pack available to all PIs

8 (a)	Create and sustain new social media communications.	GRC	Autumn Term 2020	Measurable, increasing engagement with social media
9 (a)	Establish and maintain a full email list of all research staff.	GRC	Autumn Term 2020	100% email reach to research staff
10 (a)	Introduce a campaign around publicising Researchers/Research staff/ECRs' successes, and a prize for Researchers/Research staff/ECRs and a prize for PIs.	GRC	Summer Term 2021	Evidence of increased visibility of researchers and PIs
11 (b)	Look into demand for HEA fellowship application support and teacher training from Researchers/Research staff/ECRs.	GRC	Spring Term 2021	Understanding of researcher requirements informs delivery strategy
12 (a)	Creation of a Research Staff Association and then automatic enrolment for Researchers.	GRC	Spring Term 2021	Active Research Staff Association with voice within wider organisation
13 (a)	Hold focus groups to further understand challenges and needs of diverse Researchers/Research staff/ECRs.	GRC	Autumn Term 2021	Researcher feedback informs GRC strategy
14 (a)	Publish profile articles of Researchers/Research staff/ECRs and PIs.	Graduate School, GRC	Summer Term 2021	Evidence of increased visibility of researchers and PIs
15 (a)	Participate in Vitae's CEDARS survey.	GRC	2021	Survey feedback informs GRC strategy
16 (a)	All postdocs offered the opportunity to enrol on Bloom (the Graduate School online booking system) so they can automatically book on courses.	GRC	Autumn Term 2020	All postdocs with access to Bloom
17 (b)	Make career coaching facilities available to all PDRAs.	GRC	Autumn Term 2020	All postdocs with access to coaching facilities
18 (a)	Investigate possibility of establishing more internal fellowship schemes to ensure a pipeline from PGR to PDRA.	GRC	Autumn Term 2021	Increase of current 9% institutionally funded researchers. Target: 17% to be in line with national aggregate

19 (c)	Investigate possibility of engaging with Alumni network to promote alternative career pathways.	GRC	Autumn Term 2021	Improvement on CROS 2019 result: 68% not aware of career opportunities in non-research roles
20 (c)	To support and encourage our ECRs to move into academic posts in Kent.	PIs	Spring Term 2021	Increase in proportion of academic posts filled by Kent ECRs relative to external recruits to 20%
21 (b)	Secure funding and embed the piloted PDRA/Undergraduate (UG) Summer Vacation Research Competition as an annual event.	UFLT, Res Serv, GRC and Careers and Employability	Annually	Funding secured and competition receives increased no. of applications and maintains positive feedback
22 (a,b)	Deliver Postdoctoral Researcher (PDRA) Experience Lunches.	GRC/ Res Serv	One per term	Positive feedback and attendance figures
23 (b)	Monitor uptake of training opportunities offered by L&OD.	GRC/L&OD	Annually	Data on uptake is used to inform both L&OD delivery strategy and GRC's communication strategy
24 (b,c)	Develop a programme of Grants Factory and ECRN talks and workshops to support researchers career lifecycle.	GRC/ Res Serv	43 events confirmed for 19/20	Positive feedback and attendance figures
25 (a,b)	Include eligible research staff in REF 2021 submission as per Kent's 2021 Code of Practice.	Res Serv	July 2020	Number of ECRs submitted to REF 2021