HREiR Action plan template (2024 - 27)

Details	
Institution name:	**University of Cumbria**
Cohort number:	**12**
Date of submission:	**23rd February 2024**
Institutional context:	The University of Cumbria (UoC) was established in 2007 to catalyse individual and regional prosperity and pride within its region, building upon 150 years of higher education (HE) in Cumbria and Lancashire (Charlotte Mason College, Ambleside; Cumbria Institute of the Arts, Carlisle; St Martin's College, Lancaster; and the Cumbrian campus of UCLan). Since 2014, UoC has consolidated its place as a HE provider with an increasing emphasis on research and innovation. UoC has a 'Research, Knowledge Exchange & Graduate School' Directorate (RKE-GS) and we refer to RKE-GS throughout this action plan to encapsulate the diverse activity that our staff engage in, and which would be supported by the Concordat and Action Plan.

The institutional audience* for this action plan includes (only include direct beneficiaries; complete or delete, as appropriate):

Audience (direct beneficiaries of the action plan)	Number of	Comments
Research staff	1 (1 FTE)	We have 457 Academic posts - 376.52 FTE total *(Our systems do not allow us to report in granular detail the split of academic duties due to the complexities of the contracts and low numbers in some areas).*
Postgraduate researchers	114	
Research and teaching staff	434 (354.52 FTE)	
Teaching-only staff	N/A	
Technicians	30 (23.21 FTE)	
Clinicians	N/A	
Professional support staff	545 (463.66 FTE)	
Other (please provide numbers and details):	22 (21.2 FTE)	Academic contract - neither teaching or research whose duties predominantly relate to management. This includes the VC, DVCs, Directors and Heads of academic areas.

	Complete for submission							To be completed only when reporting on action plan		
Obligation	**Action**	**Carried over from previous action plan?**	**Deadline**	**Responsibility**	**The targeted impact of the action (success measure)**	**Comments (optional)**		**Progress update**	**The actual impact of the action (reporting against the success measure)**	**Outcome (ongoing/carried forward/no further action)**
Environment and Culture										
Awareness and engagement										
The aims of these obligations are to work towards an open and inclusive research culture, and to ensure broad understanding and awareness of this amongst researchers.										
ECI1	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Update HREiR Staff Hub pages and external website pages and include annual message in Managers Brief alongside hosting 2 information sessions for staff to attend	Y	30/06/2024	Director of People and Culture	Overall aim to reach 200 views to HREiR Staff Hub (17.1.24 - 125 views). Annual message distributed by March 2024 (post views to be monitored - aim for 200 views) Attendance at sessions monitored and reported (aim for minimum 30 attendees). The aim is that all staff have access to the information around HREIR and are aware of the Concordat by easil;y accessed intranet pages and a yearly internal communication.				
ECI2	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.	Policy review schedule determined within HR yearly plan with associated EIAs completed and approved with a min of 2 policies a year to be reviewed, consulted on and approved to aid legal and statutory compliance.	N	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture	Minimum 2 policies a year reviewed - Researchers involved in consultation process. Number of EIAs approved monitored in line with this over next 3 years. Improved policy communications evidenced in next staff survey results, aiming for satisfaction rates of above 70% in 2024/25				
ECI6	Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and using the outcomes to improve institutional practices.	Survey staff to gather feedback on research environment and culture as part of improvement initiatives in this area	N	01/02/2025	Director of People and Culture/Director of RKE	Feedback on research culture and environment collated and utilised to inform forward planning and provison to research environment and culture.	Mechanism for feedback designed and launched to allow continuous feedback and regular pulse checks sent out quarterly to gauge views.				
ECR1	Encourage researchers to actively contribute to the development and maintenance of a supportive, fair and inclusive research culture and be a supportive colleague, particularly to newer researchers and students.	Peer review system for papers and external bids to be planned for implementation.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Peer review system implemented in order to improve quality of papers (> 50) and research funding applications (>20). Projected increase in researcher's acceptance to higher impact journals and increased success in funding awards.	A peer review system for academic outputs/ external bids is planned for implementation by RKE in 2024.				
		Establish an ECR Forum to facilitate positive engagement in professional and career development.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE/CAPE	Definition of ECR established. Forum meets a minimum of 3x year with remit for ECR professional and career development.	The ECR forum will be a priority area of researcher development in 2024; due to staffing and role changes, this work was unable to progress in 2023. Discussions with RKE committee and the REF Steering Group will take place to define ECRs as Cumbria (with acknowledgment of the proposed changes to the next REF exercise and links to RASA and PPDR frameworks). A framework will be developed for discussion with ECR staff before presentation at RKE Committee in summer 2024, with the forum then established in AY 24/25.				
		Increased utilisation of Professoriate for mentoring/development and raise awareness of the current scheme.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	% increase in staff engaging with Research Mentoring Scheme and staff evaluation feedback collated to indicate benefit/improvement of the scheme.	We will raise awareness and increase visibility of the scheme by including information on Research Mentoring in the PebblePad induction information that is sent out to new staff, and also include it in our HR Staff Intranet Induction pages. We will monitor engagement with these resources, in order to quantify their impact (how many people go through induction / enquiries mentorship - metric end of year). This wil be compared against existing data for engagement with the mentoring scheme.				
Wellbeing and mental health										
The aims of these obligations are to champion positive wellbeing amongst researchers, both through appropriate training and enabling new ways of working.										

ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	Health and Wellbeing Action Plan reviewed to assess the impact of the organised programme of events, proactive interventions, support and guidance and relevant policy and workload review as part of the rolling objectives. Workload review part of the People and Culture strategy work to address key wellbeing issues. Mantal health first aiders to be introduced in 2024	Y	28/02/2025	Director of People and Culture	Staff survey - May/June 22 - 15% responded strongly disagree/disagree responses to "The University has increased support for my health (including mental health) and wellbeing at work". Aim to decrease this to 5% on next staff survey due late 2024/early 2025 Workload review to commence 2024 including Union led surveys, focus groups and benchmarking across the sector. The aim is to address the underlying causes of poor wellbeing which may effect the H&W action plan success Aim for minimum 12 Mental Health First Aiders trained in 2024.	**University Towards 2030 strategic aim -** - establish a university culture and environment that places wellbeing and mental health at its heart, implementing the University wide Health and Wellbeing strategy, that sets the context and importance of health and wellbeing, equipping students and staff with the insight to support their own wellbeing and that of their peers and colleagues.		
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	Mental health/suicide training for managers as part of the wellbeing action plan and OD calendar of events with min 2 CPD events held each year to upskill staff and improve confidence and knowledge through staff survey results showing a high level of management competence through their staff Managers hub to include information for managers on how to support staff with their Health & Wellbeing	Y	31/09/2024	Director of People and Culture	Aim to have Mental Health courses to a minimum of 3 sessions in 2024. Managers hub launch with mental health information - monitor page views to assess engagement aiming for minimum 500 views by late 2024. Impact of better informed managers and less mental health cases or stress related issues.	**University Towards 2030 strategic focus -** - training our staff to be aware of and to respond to mental health difficulties that others might be experiencing and to act appropriately.		
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	HRBP - Wellbeing to engage with managers to actively promote and signpost the services managers have available to staff and to encourage confidence in dealing with difficult situations, less simple low level case work seen coming in to the HRBP team	N	01/12/2024	Director of People and Culture	Attendance on sessions aimed at 100 attendees by Dec 2024 to raise awareness of support at the University and give managers the knowledge and signposting information needed to deal with issues effectively.	**University Towards 2030 strategic focus -** - establishing a university culture and environment that creatively places wellbeing and mental health at the heart of its strategy.		
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	Hybrid working policy to be developed after hybrid working trial to assist in standardising behaviours and working practices for consistency and fairness. Automation of manual form for flexible working to allow easier tracking and audit control Develop report to allow monitoring of the number of flexible working requests received (particularly from researchers) to assist in monitoring take up of the scheme and any barriers/blockers.	Y	28/02/2025	Director of People and Culture	Hybrid working formalised through a dedicated policy in line with the flexible working policy. Feedback sought from researchers at HREIR steering group. Monitor and report on the number of flexible working applications agreed and rejected. Staff survey (2024) aim for 80% (2022 - 77%) in Strongly agree/Agree response to the question - "The University enables flexible working".	**University Towards 2030 strategic focus -** - realising the benefits to be gained from working with agility, and continuing with practices to encourage and enable staff, as well as students, to work-flexibly, on and off campuses.		
		Introduction of Reasonable adjustments action plans for individuals to document key data such as OH reports, Reasonable adjustments, WAPs etc). To aim to reduce data loss when staff move depts or change line managers Digitalise system to allow records to be kept in online secure filing areas.	N	01/06/2024	Director of People and Culture	Monitor the number of action plans agreed and distributed. Aim to digitalise action plans by 2025 to allow secure access and easier dissemination of information to those authorised to access. Improve confidence in the process through robust GDPR compliance to allow greater engagegment from staff.			
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	Health and Wellbeing Action Plan reviewed to assess the impact of the organised programme of events, proactive interventions, support and guidance and relevant policy and workload review as part of the rolling objectives. Report of findings to be taken to the EDI and Wellbeing Committee and VCED	Y	28/02/2025	Director of People and Culture	Survey response 2020 - 68% strongly agree/agree - the University offers a good selection of health and wellbeing information/support. 2024 survey aim to increase satisfaction "Strongly agree/agree' response to 75%. H&W action plan review to provide quantative and qualitative data to assess impact and effectiveness of initiatives. The impact is to review and provide a more streamlined fit for purpose offering of support, information and initiatives for all staff	**University Towards 2030 strategic focus -** - providing a range of learning and practical opportunities for our staff and students to equip them with the needed insight to support their own wellbeing and that of their peers and colleagues.		
Bullying and harassment									
The aims of these obligations are to eliminate bullying and harassment in the research system, tackled through progressive policies and secure mechanisms to address incidents.									
ECI3	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	Implementation of the new combined prevention of sexual misconduct and harassment policy and associated reporting guidelines/intranet pages and launched to all staff to raise awareness and promote healthy working practices	Y	31/12/2024	Director of People and Culture	Monitor numbers of complaints and grievances over next 3 years to assess effectiveness of the new policy/process. Aim to see 80% positive response in 2024 staff survey results when answering - "bullying and harrassment is dealt with well at the University."	**University Towards 2030 strategic aims** - recognise that our differences are our strength, and we foster and nurture a culture of inclusivity, seeking and valuing different perspectives and ideas. - create an inclusive environment, where staff, students and visitors are encouraged to be their true self to enhance the individual and collective experience. In doing so, sharing the social responsibility of enabling this, valuing, respecting, and celebrating difference, to ensure that we generate a sense of understanding and belonging.		

ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	Online Wellbeing Hub expanded to target specific areas of concern and allow efficient signposting to policies and staff networks - new sexual misconduct page to be launched early 2024. Also see EC13	Y	31/12/2024	Director of People and Culture	Aim to see 80% positive response in 2024 staff survey results when answering - "bullying and harrassment is dealt with well at the University." Page views - aim for Minimum 100 views in 2024 with a wider impact of receiving no allegations of sexual misconduct and a wider understanding of the issues and support surrounding this area	University Towards 2030 strategic focus - - ensuring that our staff and student leaders are educated, informed and inclusive in their roles.		
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to discrimination, harassment and bullying.	Code of Conduct to be reviewed in line with the new University values and towards the University's 'Towards 2030' strategy, specifically addressing discrimination, harassment etc. Performance management training sessions continue to be delivered to managers to raise standards and awareness.	Y	30/06/2026	Director of People and Culture	Code of Conduct reviewed in line with new People and Culture strategy values and behaviours and feedback received from researchers at HREIR steering group. ER cases tracked in HR. Increase sessions in line with new PPDR system roll out inclduing intranet content to support managers - min of 2 sessions before in 2026	University Towards 2030 strategic aim - - implement a behavioural and value-based competency framework and performance management process that sets clear individual expectations and objectives and agrees support needed, to develop our staff to reach their full potential, encouraging innovation and enabling career progression.		
Equality, diversity and inclusion									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in-, aware of- and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion.									
ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Mandatory EDI Training completions monitored to track compliance Develop managers guidance on Mental Health and wellbeing to be incorporated into the new Managers hub section on the staff intranet and into Induction material for new starters .	Y	31/12/2024	Director of People and Culture	Maintain mandatory EDI training completions above 85% University wide Monitor staff engagement through intranet page hits.	Towards 2030 strategic aims - - recognise that our differences are our strength, and we foster and nurture a culture of inclusivity, seeking and valuing different perspectives and ideas. - create an inclusive environment, where staff, students and visitors are encouraged to be their true self to enhance the individual and collective experience. In doing so, sharing the social responsibility of enabling this, valuing, respecting, and celebrating difference, to ensure that we generate a sense of understanding and belonging.		
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.	Not a current priority	N						
Research Integrity									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in-, aware of- and maintain high standards of research integrity, and are able to report infringements or misconduct.									
ECI5 / ECM2	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.	Convene working group to review research integrity approach and visibility, to update Code of Practice for Research and Research Ethics Policy, and to implement online system of ethics approval.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Updated Code and Policy approved by Academic Board. Online ethics system used for 100% of ethics applications.	Stonefish have been commissioned to develop an online ethics application system, which is expected to enhance the process, reduce administrative burden, and improve quality and version control. StoneFish developers are currently reviewing the 'routing' of progressing application requests. We will receive a pilot link to test the new system in the New Year 2024 to share with Ethics Panel colleagues to test and iron-out any further issues before launching in Summer 2024. A new specific Research ethics and integrity webpage is now live on the UoC external website, which includes links to our current ethics application process, 'best-practice' guidance templates, relevant ethics policies, key contacts and UoC's annual reporting requirements to UUK Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2019). The Research Ethics policy is due for review in Summer 2024 and is included on the schedule of business at the next Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.		
ECM3	Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity.	Not a current priority	N						
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.	Ethics and Post Award team organises training and support sessions for researchers and ethics panel members on research ethics and integrity.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Two sessions provided per academic year.			
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	New values from the University's 'Towards 2030' strategy, specifically addressing discrimination, harassment etc. to be included in the People and Cuklture strategy launch Performance management training sessions continue to be delivered to managers to raise standards and awareness.	Y	30/06/2026	Director of People and Culture	New People and Culture strategy launched with values and behaviours and feedback received from researchers at HREIR steering group or consultation sessions. The successful launch of the P&C strategy with attendance at Q&A sessions and launch sessions at minimum 60% of all staff to increase awareness and disseminate behaviours and values. Increase sessions in line with new PPDR system roll out including intranet content to support managers - min of 4 sessions before 2026.	University Towards 2030 strategic aim - - implement a behavioural and value-based competency framework and performance management process that sets clear individual expectations and objectives and agrees support needed, to develop our staff to reach their full potential, encouraging innovation and enabling career progression.		

Policy development

The aims of these obligations are to encourage all researchers to actively contribute to the development of policies driving positive change at their institution.

EI7	Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.	Not a current priority	N						
ECM5	Encourage managers to engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	Research staff rep to be included in relevant policy working/focus groups in agreement with the Director of People and Culture	Y	Ongoing	Director of People and Culture	Evidence of at least two working groups convened and policies enacted to include researcher views for holistic views and improved staff engagement.	**University Towards 2030 strategic aim -** provide an environment in which staff voices and opinions are heard, through opportunities for staff to engage informally and formally with the Vice Chancellor's Executive team, senior colleagues and across teams, as well as using surveys and focus groups.		
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.	Not a current priority	N						
ECR5	Encourage researchers to consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	Research staff rep to be included in relevant policy working/focus groups in agreement with the Director of People and Culture	Y	Ongoing	Director of People and Culture	Evidence of at least two working groups convened and policies enacted to include researcher views for holistic views and improved staff engagement.	**University Towards 2030 strategic aim -** provide an environment in which staff voices and opinions are heard, through opportunities for staff to engage informally and formally with the Vice Chancellor's Executive team, senior colleagues and across teams, as well as using surveys and focus groups.		
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.	Not a current priority	N						

Employment

Recruitment and induction

The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation.

EI1	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	HR to monitor attendance on the recruitment and selection mandatory training module and report to Managers and relevant committees for accountability.	Y	Ongoing	Director of People and Culture	All relevant staff looking to sit on a recruitment panel completing training module annually to maintain compliance. Aim for 95% Minimum completion rates on e-learning module to ensure recruitment is fair and unbias	**University Towards 2030 KPI -** - Diversity of the university staff will have increased, and we will have achieved one of the nationally recognised awards for inclusivity.		
EI2	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	Induction programme reviewed to consider specific sessions/training on RKE, research integrity etc. and regular dates in the diary to allow staff to attend Bi-annual forum for research staff to directly feedback on employment aspects of the concordat, with DVC for Health, Environment and Innovation attending and HR rep attending.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture/Director of RKE	•RKE engagement with 3 corporate induction events per year with >80% of attendees stating that the induction programme met their needs to understand more about the University (with subset analysed from research staff). Specific feedback sought from researchers to gather qualitative data and increase the number of those that feel it met their needs to 90% by January 2027 to ensure key messages are delivered. •Research staff attend and provide structured feedback on employment practices and transparency, utilising the concordat principles.	•RKE/HR to agree induction content and delivery. •HR to report on attendee data. •RKE/HR to report on feedback and own any resultant actions.		

Recognition, reward and promotion

The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression.

EI3	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	Not a current priority	N						
EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	Not a current priority	N						

Responsibilities and reporting

The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers and their managers understand and act on their obligations and responsibilities.

EM2	Managers familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.	Now business as usual.	N						

Ref	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Owner	Success measure	Impact			
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	•Senior RKE Officer - Post Award (SRO-PA) supports funder contract management and adherence. •HR to publicise the university policies and procedures available and accessible to staff alongside Managers guides and information on the use of the processes. •HR colleagues qualified to advise on employment legislation - key colleagues hold appropriate CIPD qualifications or working towards.	N	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture/Director of RKE	•No contract breaches identified/reported. •Number of kick off meetings by Post Award with Principal Investigator for RKE projects. •Number of visits to university policy and HR/employee legislation page. •HR Team tracked against CIPD standards.	•SRO - PA will monitor contractual adherence and provide reports on any contractual breaches. •SRO-PA reports on number of PA kick off meetings for new projects.			
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.	Senior RKE Officer - Post Award supports funder contract management and adherence.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Researchers are supported to understand and fulfil their reporting obligations and responsibilities through the ongoing provision of expert advice and feedback.	•SRO - PA will monitor contractual adherence and provide reports on any contractual breaches. •SRO-PA reports on number of PA kick off meetings for new projects.			
People management										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.										
EI4	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	Not a current priority	N							
EI5	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	PPDR process to be reviewed across 24/25 with a view to implement new system module to enhance the process, provide better reporting, and encourage meaningful discussions.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture	PPDR process implemented and more than 50% of staff utilising new process. The impact is that this will enhance the experience of staff so they have a meaningful PPDR which tracks career development and CPD alongside objective attainment and setting to engage staff to bring their best selves to work and to address any performance issues quickly and successfully.	**University Towards 2030 strategic aim -** - implement a behavioural and value-based competency framework and performance management process that sets clear individual expectations and objectives and agrees support needed, to develop our staff to reach their full potential, encouraging innovation and enabling career progression.			
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	Continue to identify REF-eligible staff, and provide this information to Line Mangers/Institute Directors to support REF-staff development.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	REF-eligible staff emerging as a coherent group of staff to support research culture and environment.	Monitoring the REF-eligible staff group, including staff starters and leavers, was undertaken on a monthly basis using REF2021 Code of Practice criteria during the previous two years. This information was shared with the Unit of Assessment leads.

There has been a hiatus in reporting since August 2023 due to the potential implementation of new eligibility criteria yet to be formalised by Research England for REF2029 and staff vacancy/seconded role within RKE Directorate to be filled who would usually undertake this task.

A process for circulating the REF-eligibility staff data to Institute Directors/Unit of Assessment leads is currently under discussion within the REF Steering Group to be formalised by Summer 2024. | | | |
		New Research Development Manager and Business Development Manager posts approved and advertised for recruitment.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	RDM and BDM in post and supporting pre-award and KE activity.	These posts are additional FTE for the RKE team and will support researchers to secure external funding for their activities, contributing broadly to the development of our research culture and supporting the career development of research colleagues.			
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.	In line with PPDR review (EI5)	Y		Director of People and Culture	PPDR process implemented and more than 50% of staff utilising new process. The impact is that this will enhance the experience of staff so they have a meaningful PPDR which tracks career development and CPD alongside objective attainment and setting to engage staff to bring their best selves to work and to address any performance issues quickly and successfully.	**University Towards 2030 strategic aim -** - implement a behavioural and value-based competency framework and performance management process that sets clear individual expectations and objectives and agrees support needed, to develop our staff to reach their full potential, encouraging innovation and enabling career progression.			
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.	Now business as usual.	N							
Job security										
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers.										
EI6	Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.	Monitor redeployment opportunities and successful cases and develop reporting tools on the use of different contracts to be reported at PPCC and regular reports accessed by Management teams to emphasise the importance of job security and proper use of contracts	Y	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture	Monitor redeployment figures, recruitment stats, and contract use over next 3 years to establish common practice. This is hoped to aid retention of staff and raise engagement and job security which will be measured in the next staff survey 24/25				
Professional and Career Development										
Championing professional development										
The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it.										
PCDI1	Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.	Not a current priority	N							

Code	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Owner	Success measure	Notes		
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	Establish an ECR Forum to facilitate positive engagement in professional and career development.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture/Director of RKE	Definition of ECR established. Forum meets a minimum of 3x year.	The ECR forum will be a priority area of researcher development in 2024; due to staffing and role changes, this work was unable to progress in 2023. Discussions with RKE committee and the REF Steering Group will take place to define ECRs as Cumbria (with acknowledgment of the proposed changes to the next REF exercise and links to RASA and PPDR frameworks). A framework will be developed for discussion with ECR staff before presentation at RKE Committee in summer 2024, with the forum then established in AY 24/25.		
PCDM3	Managers allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.	Not a current priority	N						
PCDR1	Researchers take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.	Not a current priority	N						

Career development reviews

The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews.

Code	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Owner	Success measure	Notes		
PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	Not a current priority	N						
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	Establish an ECR Forum to facilitate positive engagement in professional and career development.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture/Director of RKE	Definition of ECR established. Forum meets a minimum of 3x year.	The ECR forum will be a priority area of researcher development in 2024; due to staffing and role changes, this work was unable to progress in 2023. Discussions with RKE committee and the REF Steering Group will take place to define ECRs as Cumbria (with acknowledgment of the proposed changes to the next REF exercise and links to RASA and PPDR frameworks). A framework will be developed for discussion with ECR staff before presentation at RKE Committee in summer 2024, with the forum then established in AY 24/25.		
PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.	PPDR process to be reviewed across 24/25 with a view to implement new system module to enhance the process, provide better reporting, and encourage meaningful discussions.	Y	02/02/2027	Director of People and Culture	PPDR process implemented and more than 50% of staff utilising new process. The impact is that this will enhance the experience of staff so they have a meaningful PPDR which tracks career development and CPD alongside objective attainment and setting to engage staff to bring their best selves to work and to address any performance issues quickly and successfully.	**University Towards 2030 KPI -** - There will be unambiguous evidence of staff development and progression and 85% of academic staff will have gained Advance HE fellowship, and we will continue to increase the percentage of staff who have a PhD or equivalent and are research active.		
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.	Now business as usual.	N						

Career development support and planning

The aims of these obligations are to promote researchers' career development planning through tailored support and gathering evidence of professional experience.

Code	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Owner	Success measure	Notes		
PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	Not a current priority	N						
PCDR3	Researchers maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.	Not a current priority	N						

Research identity and leadership

The aims of these obligations are to provide researchers with opportunity to progress in their careers by developing their research identity and leadership capabilities.

Code	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Owner	Success measure	Notes		
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	Renewed Graduate School Research Skills Development Framework implemented to include training and development for PhD candidates and supervisors.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	N PGRs engaging with RSDF.	Data provided by Graduate School (GS) administration and monitored by GS/RKE.		
		Internal funding provided to staff (VC Fellowship) staff to apply to as development opportunity.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	N staff taking up VC Fellowship scheme.	Data provided by RKE and used to inform future planning of KE funding and initiatives.		
		University wide research culture programme supports the development of researcher identity.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Senior Research Officer – Development (SRO-D) in post and supporting research culture, including training and engagement opportunities.	Attendance and feedback gathered from all events. Feedback gathered on resources provided to researchers and resultant actions owned by SRO-D.		
		Funding database software implemented to share funding opportunities with researchers	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Funding database software implemented and researcher feedback collated to indicate improvement in access to external funding opportunities.	Pre-Award team own process and collect researcher feedback.		
		Pre-award team to support researchers to develop funding bids in line with institutional policies and processes and funder requirements. Post award team to support researchers to deliver research/KE projects in compliance with funder terms and regulations.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Staff feedback collated to indicate utility of pre and post award support.	Pre-Award team own process and collect researcher feedback.		

University of CUMBRIA

HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Code	Obligation	Action	Y/N	Date	Responsible	Success measure	Progress			
		RKE introductory sessions offered to Institute Directors as part of team meetings / away days etc.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Increase number of RKE introductory sessions from 21/22 (n=3) to 23/24 (n=5).	In response to streamlining of the university's corporate induction, the RKE team have sought to raise awareness of the service provided by the directorate, including support for research ethics and integrity, at institute away days. Two such sessions have been provided so far in AY 23/24, with more planned to meet our target of 5.			
PCDM4	Managers identify opportunities, and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills, and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.	Not a current priority	N							
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	Not a current priority	N							
PCDR5	Researchers to seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills	Research active staff to engage with initiatives to improve research culture.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	N staff engaging with research culture enhancing initiatives.	•Attendance and feedback gathered from all events. Feedback gathered on resources provided to researchers and resultant actions owned by SRO-D. RKE's initiatives to develop research culture include the following resources and activities: •Ongoing endorsement and partnership working with the university's Professoriate as senior academics to promote and support this work is intended to help increase engagement, alongside targeted communications and promotion of the RKE webpages as an informational resource. •A refreshed and systematic approach to the sharing of funding calls, and impact generation opportunities, including policy engagement opportunities in the form of POSTNotes, the Parliamentary Areas of Research database, and policy profile software. •Recent and planned implementation of a range of training sessions on research impact, integrity, leadership and bid writing including the use of external subject experts to engage researchers. •Promotion of the uptake and use of online profile-raising tools, including university academic profiles, ORCID IDs and ResearchGate profiles. •Feedback will be sought from staff regarding additional culture and environment training and information needs, alongside ongoing monitoring of uptake of the initiatives outlined.			
		Research active staff to engage with sabbatical application scheme.	N	01/02/2027	Director of People and Culture	N successful sabbatical applications	Data on successful sabbatical applications provided by HR.			

Diverse careers

The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research.

| PCDI5 | Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this. | Not a current priority. | N | | | | | | | |

PCDM2	Managers support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.	Increased utilisation of Professoriate for mentoring/development and raise awareness of the current scheme.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	% increase in staff engaging with Research Mentoring Scheme and staff evaluation feedback collated to indicate benefit/improvement of the scheme.	We will raise awareness and increase visibility of the scheme by including information on Research Mentoring in the PebblePad induction information that is sent out to new staff, and also include it in our HR Staff Intranet Induction pages. We will monitor engagement with these resources, in order to quantify their impact (how many people go through induction / enquiries mentorship - metric end of year). This wil be compared against existing data for engagement with the mentoring scheme.			
PCDR2	Researchers explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.	Increased utilisation of Professoriate for mentoring/development and raise awareness of the current scheme.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	% increase in staff engaging with Research Mentoring Scheme and staff evaluation feedback collated to indicate benefit/improvement of the scheme.	We will raise awareness and increase visibility of the scheme by including information on Research Mentoring in the PebblePad induction information that is sent out to new staff, and also include it in our HR Staff Intranet Induction pages. We will monitor engagement with these resources, in order to quantify their impact (how many people go through induction / enquiries mentorship - metric end of year). This wil be compared against existing data for engagement with the mentoring scheme.			
PCDR6	Researchers consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation.	Establish an ECR Forum to facilitate positive engagement.	Y	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	Definition of ECR established. Forum meets a minimum of 3x year	The ECR forum will be a priority area of researcher development in 2024; due to staffing and role changes, this work was unable to progress in 2023. Discussions with RKE committee and the REF Steering Group will take place to define ECRs as Cumbria (with acknowledgment of the proposed changes to the next REF exercise and links to RASA and PPDR frameworks). A framework will be developed for discussion with ECR staff before presentation at RKE Committee in summer 2024, with the forum then established in AY 24/25.			
		Innovation Manager and Business Development Manager to support staff to access KE and commercialisation opportunities related to their research and expertise; researchers to access KE bulletin.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	% increase in staff applying for KE opportunities, contracts or KE specific funding.	Applications to KE opportunities to be monitored on an ongoing basis for comparison against existing data.			
		Researchers to engage with policy and public engagment specific funding streams	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	N applications to policy and public engagement specific fund.	Data collected on number of applications to each fund.			
		VC KE Fellowships advertised for staff to apply to as development opportunity.	N	01/02/2027	Director of RKE	N staff taking up VC Fellowship scheme	The scheme will enable academic staff to ngage in KE activities and external organisations, while increasing their skills in this area.			

* The Researcher Development Concordat defines researchers as individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed specifically for this purpose by a higher education institution or research institute. The primary audience is research staff, e.g. postdoctoral researchers, research fellows, research assistants. The Researcher Development Concordat encourages institutions to include other groups who actively engage in research as beneficiaries of their Concordat action plan. These could be postgraduate researchers; staff on teaching and research, or teaching contracts; clinicians; professional support staff; technicians.

	Further hyperlinks and supplementary information (more rows can be added)
1	https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/media/towards-2030.pdf
2	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - University of Cumbria
3	White Ribbon UK Accreditation - University of Cumbria
4	Athena Swan Charter Bronze Award - University of Cumbria
5	Universities of Sanctuary (cumbria.ac.uk)
6	Race Equality Charter (cumbria.ac.uk)
7	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data & Reports - University of Cumbria
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Abbreviations and glossary (more rows can be added)	
StaffHub	UoC intranet
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
ECR	Early Career Researcher
OD	Organisational Development
RKE	Research and Knowledge Exchange
REF	Research Excellence Framework
PPDR	Performance and Professional Development Review
VC	Vice Chancellor
KE	Knowledge Exchange
RDM	Research Development Manager
BDM	Business Development Manager
CAPE	Centre for Academic Practice & Enhancement
HR	Human Resources
W&ODM	Wellbeing and Organisational Development Manager
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
M&SR	Marketing and Student Recruitment
H&W	Health and Wellbeing
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
HRBP	Human Resource Business Partner
HR OPs	Human Resource Operations
PPCC	People and Performance Committee
RSDF	reSEARCH Skills Development Framework