University of Essex HR Excellence in Research: 2022-25 Full Action Plan

Details

Institution name:	University of Essex
Cohort number:	10
Date of submission:	

Institutional context: As part of an elite group of dual intensive universities, we are committed above all to two main things, excellence in teaching and excellence in research.

Having developed an international reputation for research we are a member of Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN) and Young Universities for the Future of Europe (YUFE) alliance. Our diverse community and international profile create an outward looking research culture underpinned by our values of inclusion and responsibility, academic freedom, respect, trust, and evidence-based rigour.

We nurture and support our researchers at all career stages by embedding a strong yet flexible research development framework and encouraging continuous personal and professional growth.

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	160	The key target audience of this action plan.
Postgraduate researchers		
Research and teaching staff	718	
Teaching-only staff	301	
Technicians		
Clinicians		
Professional support staff		
Other (provide numbers and details):		

									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:- Essex already has in place a published commitment to the Concordat available for the whole researcher community (and the wider staff) on our Staff Directory (our intranet). Our Concordat underpinning institutional Researcher Development Framework is included in our induction programme for all researchers (and wider academics). The University's Research Strategy and supporting action plan, and the REF Code of Practice are accessible on our Staff Directory, which sets out our governance standards, links to the Concordat, and includes our Code of Good Research Practice.										
ECI1	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Our commitment to, and a link to, the Concordat principles to be included as part of the recruitment 'pack' for all research roles.	N	Dec 2022	Head of Resourcing	100% of new researchers at all grades aware of the Concordat				
		Commitment to the Concordat to be included in the 'Pathway to Permanency' (P2P) supporting materials, development conversations and networking events.	N	Dec 2022	HR Business Partner – Academic	100% of all researchers involved in the P2P process aware of the Concordat within twelve weeks of joining the university.				
		Our career development statement to be available as part of the recruitment process for new researchers, and we will share more detailed information as part of our on-boarding process.	N	Dec 2022	Head of Resourcing	Incorporated into the recruitment/on-boarding process for all new researchers (100%)				
		We will provide annual reporting for the Researcher Development Framework to Research Committee and the People Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group (which includes members from the University Steering Group) to highlight progress with the Staff Concordat.	N	Dec 2022	Director of OD, Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Maintaining a high visibility and profile of the Concordat and our action plan with senior researchers and university leaders via an annual inclusion in the Research Committee agenda and annual update to the People Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group.				
Institutional policies are drafted with equality and inclusion considerations, go through a range of consultation mechanisms, including key research stakeholders, staff networks, trade unions, and our People, Culture, and Inclusion Advisory Group. Institutional policies and practices are freely available (in accessible formats) on our staff directory (intranet), with new policies/significant changes communicated to senior researchers for onward communication and engagement with the researcher community, and to all staff via our newsletter (Essex Weekly) and email updates from People and Culture (P&C). We also undertake focus groups and some one-to-one interviews (invitations include researchers) as part of our policy development phase – recent examples of this includes our Neuro-inclusion, Domestic Abuse, and Misogyny policies, and changes to our approach to induction for researchers.										
ECI2	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and	A new Equality Impact Assessment process for policies is being reviewed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team currently, and consultation on any changes will include members of our researcher community.	N	July 2023	Director of Inclusion	New Equality Impact Assessment process has been developed, with engagement with representatives of the researcher community, and implemented to ensure greater identification of any equality impact considerations and applied to all new and revised policies from Autumn 2023.				

	transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.									
	We have a number of institutional mechanisms and roles which ensure the research culture and quality of research is championed, supported and reviewed including: Research Committee, Faculty Research Committees, Faculty Deans Research, and Research Directors. The Research Action Plan is reported to Senate. There are termly reports from Faculty Research Committees. We have regular People Landscape meetings to review practice and identify trends and areas for action. Within Faculties, Faculty Deans Research often lead informal sessions based on research themes.									
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.	We will review and make a decision about whether the University of Essex should participate in the CEDARS survey in 2025 onwards	N	July 2023	PVC-Research/ Director of People and Culture	An informed decision about participation is made ahead of the cut-off date for involvement in CEDARS				
		Staff surveys and focus groups will be held with the research community to understand the experience of induction and career development from the individual and manager perspective, with a revised approach, informed by their feedback, being introduced in 2022/23	Y (7.1 20-22 action plan)	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	At least 30% of Researchers/managers are actively engaged to provide feedback that shapes the revised approach.				
	All researchers are encouraged to mentor other colleagues through the institutional peer mentoring database and through external mentoring schemes with Eastern ARC and YUFE. Role specific Essential Training (Postgraduate Research Supervisors, Pathway to Permanency Academic Advisers, Heads of Department) highlights expectations to be a supportive colleague, particularly for those new to research. There is a 'citizenship' responsibility included in every researcher role description, which includes commitments to things like mentoring, environment, knowledge exchange.									
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.	See above. No new actions.								
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: Essex have signed the Mindful Employers Charter as part of our commitment to supporting mental health at work. We have an extensive provision of wellbeing support through internal and external providers, including our Employee Assistance Programme (with counselling service), SilverCloud (CBT) programme. There are sections dedicated to wellbeing in the Future Leaders, Strategic Leaders and New Heads Induction programmes. We have a Mental Health First Aider roll-out programme, with annual 'booster'. Stress Risk Assessments are completed within every department.									
ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	A detailed workload survey was undertaken involving all staff in 2021. A joint working group with the trade unions is being established in Autumn 2022 to oversee a review of the approach/principles for workload allocation models and a range of focus groups to explore some of the key themes emerging from the workload survey and to try and identify actions to improve some of the factors impacting workload e.g. systems.	Y (3,4.1)	October 2023	Director of People and Culture, Head of Employment Policy and Projects	Areas for action are identified, with either 'quick wins' put in place, or specific sub projects set up to explore and realise improvements and actions in more complex areas that will have a positive impact on workload for the researcher community.				
		Our organisational Stress Policy and supporting resources are currently being updated, with revised guidance due to be published in 2022-23, including specific sections for wellbeing and mental health, and organisational commitments in relation to workload.	N	December 2024	Director of People and Culture, Head of Employment Policy and Projects	Stress Policy and guidance approved and communicated to researchers. Pulse surveys or other forms of engagement indicate a positive shift in views on workload, resulting in a 20% reduction in instances of reported stress.				
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	A new 'How We Manage at Essex' Essential Training programme for managers of researchers will be launched in Autumn Term 2023, which includes modules/sections related to wellbeing and mental health	N	December 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched with modules covering wellbeing and mental health, with 70% attendance by managers of researchers in first year of launch.				
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports	Our organisational Stress Policy and supporting resources are currently being updated, with revised guidance due to be published in 2022-23, including specific resources to promote wellbeing and support for mental health, and guidance for managers of researchers.	N	July 2023	Director of OD/Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing	Revised Stress Policy and supporting resources approved and communicated to 100% of managers of researchers.				

	researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	'Enabling Environment' is a core principle in the University's People Supporting Strategy, and we are working with the Royal College of Psychiatrists to gain Enabling Environments Accreditation.	N	July 2024	Director of OD/Director of Workplace Health Safety and Wellbeing	Enabling Environments Accreditation gained.				
		Our 'Essential Training' which all research staff complete and have 'boosters' annually is being revised, with strengthened sections/information in relation to wellbeing and mental health, and includes extra modules specifically for managers.	N	July 2024	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched with modules covering wellbeing and mental health, with 70% of researchers undertaking the revised training in the first year of launch.				
Our recruitment practices for all researcher roles encourage consideration of flexible working arrangements before appointment. We have a range of institutional policies and guidance for managers that include: Flexible Working, Family Leave, and Special Leave.										
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	New Hybrid Working organisational principles have been developed with specific principles for our researcher community (allowing for different approaches for different subjects/faculties within the overarching principles). Researchers have been actively engaged in the development of the principles and have been provided with resources/development to help them to manage hybrid teams effectively. The new principles and supporting resources will be published in Autumn 2022.	N	Dec 2022	Director of People & Culture/Director of OD/Head of Employment Policy/PVC Research	Hybrid Working principles and resources approved and shared with researchers and guidance published for researcher managers, enabling effective hybrid working.				
		We are currently developing a new Volunteering Policy, to support, promote and allow for volunteering in the wider community, for interested staff, including the researcher community. There will be consultation and engagement on the new policy (including with researchers) and it will be considered by our People, Culture, and Inclusion Advisory Group.	N	December 2023	Head of Employment Policy/Policy Officer/Director of OD	New Volunteering Policy developed, approved, and communicated to all researchers by end 2023.				
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	See above actions.								
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:

Essex has a 'Zero Tolerance of Harassment and Bullying' policy for all staff and students, which is easily accessible through our Staff Directory and reviewed and updated regularly. We provide 'bystander intervention' training, with 300 staff (including researchers) and students trained in being 'active bystanders' to date. The Harassment Advisory Network allows confidential discussion of harassment and bullying. | | | | | | | | | | |
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.	A new 'Tackling Misogyny' policy is currently being developed (with extensive consultation through a range of internal groups and networks, which include research staff, and specialist external organisations). We aim to publish the new policy with supporting guidance before the end of the 22/23 academic year.	N	July 2023	Director of People and Culture/Director of Inclusion	New Tackling Misogyny Policy developed, approved, and communicated to 100% of all managers of researchers, for briefing and dissemination to all the researcher community.				
		Following focus groups with staff (including researchers) and students, we will be reviewing our 'Report and Support' service. This service can be used by staff and students to report small (e.g. micro aggressions) and serious incidents of harassment, bullying and violence, and reports can be made anonymously if someone wishes. We will be reviewing the dashboard and rebranding the service to ensure that people know what it is for and how they can use it.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	Revised Report and Support Service implemented and communicated to 100% of all managers of researchers, for briefing and dissemination to all the researcher community.				
		Increased Privilege and Microaggressions training scheduled for delivery in the professional development opportunities for all staff in academic year 22/23, with promotion and attendance aimed specifically at our researcher community.	N	July 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Privilege and Microaggressions training taking place with active participation from 30% of the research community in the first year of scheduled training.				
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination,	The 'Report and Support' system (and its rebrand – see above) will be included in the How We Manage At Essex programme, so that managers of researchers understand and can promote the system to their teams.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Promotion of the revised Report and Support system included in the How We Manage at Essex training programme.				

	bullying and harassment.								
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.	See above sections.							

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:

At Essex, all new researchers undertake our essential 'How We Work at Essex' training, which includes modules in relation to diversity and inclusion and automatic bias. Completion of this training is monitored through the probation agreements. There is an annual How We Work at Essex 'booster' programme which all employees undertake. The University is leading a pioneering new project 'Transitions and Transformations: Black Researcher's Journey' aimed at developing a sustainable model of support for Black researchers consisting of a digital platform, training for PGRs and research staff, funding, mentoring, career and professional development opportunities. We have University of Sanctuary Status – supporting refugees and people in the asylum system. We hold the MoD Silver Armed Forces Covenant. The University of Essex has made a public pledge to encourage more young people from Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showman and Boater (GTRSB) communities to come to Essex. All managers undertake our Essential Training for Managers (How We Manage at Essex programme), which includes content related to managing diversity, and equality/diversity in relation to recruitment and selection. We have senior 'Diversity Champions' for all Protected Characteristics, and a range of equality and diversity-related staff networks, including: Essex LGBT Alliance, Essex Access Forum, Global Forum, LGBT+ Allies, Women's Network, Parent's Support Network. The Researcher Development Framework outlines support for funding for research and a dedicated area for inclusive research

ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Our essential training for managers (How We Manage at Essex) programme is currently being reviewed with an aim to include more on 'inclusion' and 'automatic bias'.	N	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training			
		We hold an institutional Athena Swan bronze award and 14 departmental awards. We are proactively working with the remaining 4 eligible departments to submit in 2023. We have also made contact with AdvanceHE to explore whether previously ineligible departments may now be eligible under the transformed charter.	Y (see 6.3 in 20-22 plan)	December 2023	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	Retain institutional AS Award. 80% of eligible departments to hold a bronze or silver award by 2025.			
		We are aiming to submit an institutional application for the Race Equality Charter.	N	January 2024	Director of Inclusion/Inclusion Manager	We have been successful in our application for the Race Equality Charter			
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.	See above (in grey) for existing 'equality, diversity and inclusion' commitments and actions already in place.							

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:

At Essex we have departmental Directors of Research who are responsible for supporting the strategic development of the department's research activity, including excellence in research quality, integrity, intensity and impact. They provide research mentoring and peer support. Comprehensive training programme in research integrity is delivered in line with the Concordat. We have a Research Integrity and Misconduct Task and Finish Group. We have a centrally co-ordinated research governance structure with a University Code of Good Research Practice and a Research Integrity Annual Report is published. We have a Responsible Use of Research Metrics Guide (based on the principles of the Leiden Manifesto). Institutional policies are in place to act as a channel for managers to report. The University produces an annual Research Integrity Report for Senate and Council which is made public. We have an institutional Procedure for the Investigation of Allegations of Research Misconduct, which is visible to all researchers and their managers.

| ECI5 / ECM2 | Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct. | See above (in grey) for existing 'research integrity' commitments and actions already in place. | | | | | | | |
| ECM3 | Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity. | See above (in grey) for existing 'research integrity' commitments and actions already in place. | | | | | | | |

ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.	See above (in grey) for existing 'research integrity' commitments and actions already in place.							
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	See above (in grey) for existing 'research integrity' commitments and actions already in place.							

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:

At Essex, the researcher community is represented at a senior governance level (including Senate) and has opportunities to engage with decision-making. They are represented by UCU union, which the university has a formal recognition agreement with. Researchers are involved in a range of policy consultations, recent examples include our new Hybrid Working Principles, Financial Sustainability, Tackling Misogyny, and work to develop a Neuro-inclusion Policy at Essex.

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.	As part of changes to how we engage on the development of new/revised policies, we will be setting up workshops, involving managers from the researcher community to help shape new policy approaches.	N	July 2023	Head of Employment Policy and Projects	Policy development workshops being held once a term with active engagement from members of the research community.			
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.	See EI7 and above (in grey) for existing 'policy development' commitments and actions already in place.							
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.	See EI7 and above (in grey) for existing 'policy development' commitments and actions already in place.							
ECR5	Encourage researchers to consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	See EI7 and above (in grey) for existing 'policy development' commitments and actions already in place.							
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the								

	wider academic community.								

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:

OTM-R is at the heart of our recruitment processes at Essex, and we operate in line with the requirements as a YUFE partner, including: open internal and external advertisements; consistent/ standard application approach for all roles; pre-defined and consistent job descriptions/job criteria. Every interview panel member is required to attend training in fair selection prior to being allowed to attend. The equality profile of those applying for promotion, both successful and unsuccessful candidates, is audited annually and identified issues are considered by our governance committees, including the Academic Staffing Committee. The Technician Commitment action plan outlines a commitment to maintain regular updates for technical staff.

EI1	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	See above (in grey) for existing 'recruitment and induction' commitments and actions already in place.							
EI2	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	New model of Academic Induction being developed for implementation in Autumn 22, including role specific Essential Training for new heads, academic advisors and new research staff.	N	December 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	New Academic Induction programme launched and attended by 95% of new members of the researcher community within the first twelve months.			

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:

At Essex we have clear procedures, guidance and processes for research staff to demonstrate their achievements in order to gain reward and promotion. The guidance is kept under review annually. Decisions about additional remuneration are made by formal committee decision, and outcomes are monitored to ensure fairness and equity across protected characteristic groups. The decisions for promotions are reviewed by the University Steering Group and Senate, and the decisions for additional incremental progression reported to ratified by the Remuneration Committee. There is established promotion criteria consistent across every role (with incremental steps from early career through to professor. We will continue to monitor, support and advise managers at all levels to follow the established University policies and procedures for equitable recruitment, supporting researchers with career progression and additional reward mechanisms. This will be monitored by various means including recruitment data and the annual reporting to Senate and Remuneration Committee on salary review and promotion outcomes.

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.	To set up a joint working group with the trade unions for 2022/23 academic year to address our equality pay gaps specifically focusing on gender, ethnicity and disability. This will include considering pay gaps in the context of intersectional identities. Our Academic Staffing Committee will be involved, which includes our PVC-Research.	N	Jul 2023	Director of People and Culture/Director of Inclusion	Working group established with agreed actions identified to address equality pay gaps and a plan in place to implement focus areas.			
		Roll out of the system for promotion applications, managed through the Electronic Document Management System	Y (3,4.5)	End 2024	Employee Reward Manager	95% of promotion applications managed through the Electronic Document Management System.			
EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	See EI1 above regarding selection training for managers.							

Responsibilities and reporting									

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

Our Research Strategy sets out our vision of Essex researchers as one of activists, advocates, change-makers, innovators, reformers and disruptive thinkers. Our diverse community and international profile create an outward looking research culture underpinned by our values of inclusion and responsibility, academic freedom, respect, trust and evidence-based rigour. Our institutional policies are easily accessible through our Staff Directory, and key additions or changes are highlighted to managers of the researcher community. Our Essential Training for managers covers core expectations in relation to good people management. At Essex, all our people-related policies and strategies reflect our values of inclusion, partnership and community. We are clear with our managers and the wider research community that we expect judgement and decision-making to be based on our institutional values and our procedures are designed to help colleagues connect their judgements, decisions, behaviours and actions with our values, legislation and any funder requirements.

EM2	Managers familiarise	See EI5 and above (in grey) for existing 'responsibilities and reporting' commitments and actions already in place.							

	themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.								
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	Our 'Essential Training' which all researcher staff complete and have 'boosters' annually is being revised, with strengthened sections/information in relation to a range of policy areas e.g. wellbeing and inclusion	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised Essential Training programme launched with 95% attendance from the researcher community.			
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.	See EI5 and above (in grey) for existing 'responsibilities and reporting' commitments and actions already in place.							
People management									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews: Our Strategic Projects Office provide a range of workshops, training, and guidance to support anyone involved in project management, including a 'one-stop-shop' resource on all things project management, and access to our 'project managers network' for sharing experience and best practice. We currently operate an annual Performance Development Review process for all staff. For academic/research staff, discussions take place alongside the workload allocation process to balance the career aspirations of individuals with the needs of the department and fair allocation of work. Heads of Departments are reminded to let staff conducting appraisals know they should communicate the criteria for promotion as part of the annual appraisal process.									
EI4	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	See above (in grey) for existing 'people management' commitments and actions already in place.							
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.	Our new 'How We Manage at Essex' programme will provide a foundational level of support on key aspects of effective line management for all managers of researchers.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training			
		An open modular programme of support will also be available for managers of researchers to engage with, integrated within the professional development framework.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Open modular programme developed and launched within the researcher community with 70% engagement			
		Pilot cohorts for L3 and L5 Management Apprenticeships, including the researcher community, during academic year 22-23	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Members of the researcher community participating in the L3 and/or L5 pilots.			
		We will develop Research Leadership Programme for implementation next academic year, in collaboration with PVC-Research, Faculty Deans Research and REO.	Y (see 3,4.3, 3,4.7, 3,4.8 in 20-22 plan)	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	New Research Leadership Programme launched and 20% of research managers attending in first twelve month of launch.			
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	See response to ECI4 / ECM1 and EI5							
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular	See above (in grey) for existing 'people management' commitments and actions already in place.							

	constructive performance management with their researchers.									
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.	See EM4 response								
Job security										
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers: Our Redeployment Policy was revised in 2021. We have an established commitment to the use of appropriate contract types in the University's People Supporting Strategy, with annual reporting to the People, Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group.										
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.	We have agreed to review the contracts of all fixed-term staff with four or more years' service on 31 July 2022. The aims of this review will be to identify where additional permanent posts can be created and/ or provide individual post holders with additional career development support to enable them to apply for permanent roles at Essex or elsewhere, should they choose to. The University is genuinely committed to decasualisation and we would conduct this review in that spirit.	Y (2.1 of 20/22 action plan)	December 2022	Director of Employee Relations and Reward	Fixed term contract review completed with revisions made to identified researchers on fixed-term contracts and identified actions for additional career development support have plans in place for implementation.				
		Our Pathway to Permanency Moodle Resource has been developed to support colleagues engaged with the P2P process, with highlighted support for academic advisors, including coaching support, as a means of supporting career development and job security and will be implemented in Autumn 2022.	Y (3,4.5 of 20/22 action plan)	December 2022	HR Business Partner - Academic	P2P Moodle Resource developed and implemented within the researcher community, with 70% engagement.				
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: A University of Essex Researcher Development Framework has been designed and implemented, with involvement of the researcher community, to ensure that colleagues have a consistent level of support and focus for their researcher development at all career stages. One of the four themes of the framework is "Engagement, Knowledge, Exchange and Impact" that outlines resources and events related to the theme. The Impact Toolkit (an online resource) was launched July 2021 alongside an annual Impact Academy Programme that provides opportunities for researchers to attend impact related events throughout the academic year. The programme includes workshops, webinars and best practice sharing, including some externally commissioned training. We have established 'Newcomers' which is an active network for Early Career Researchers. It brings together researchers interested in different aspects of the research lifecycle and aims to stimulate collaboration and opportunities for shared learning. It also provides training and resources to support researchers. Develop at Essex resource provides guidance to support career development planning, in alignment with the Researcher Development Framework. Our 'development dashboard' includes monitoring of our researcher community. Researcher Development Framework Annual Update (submitted to Research Committee and University Steering Group) will outline levels of engagement with the framework and highlight institutional approaches to increase levels of engagement. Essential Training Policy outlines expectations for all managers to support direct reports to engage with professional development activities (no set limit).										
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.	Professors' network to support networking, collaboration and the development of a community that are strong role models and mentors across the university to be reintroduced and delivered biannually.	N	July 2023	PVC-Research/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Re-launch of Professor's Network with promotion and engagement within the researcher community with 30% of professors attending in the first twelve months				
		Staff surveys and focus groups will be held with researchers to understand the experience of induction and career development from the individual and manager perspectives.	Y (see 7.1 of 20-22 action plan)	July 2023	Director of OD/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Engagement with members of the researcher community taking place to gain their views on induction and career development.				
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	See above (in grey) for existing 'championing professional development' commitments and actions already in place.								

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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'championing professional development' commitments and actions already in place.							
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.	Centrally delivered induction for researchers and the Pathway to Permanency Process (and the P2P role based Essential Training) highlight the importance to researchers of taking responsibility for their professional development. Further revisions are planned in 22/23, in collaboration with the researcher community to improve P2P and induction further	Y (see 3,4,5 of 20-22 action plan)	July 2023	Director of OD/ Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revisions made (following researcher engagement) to both induction and P2P process with emphasis on taking responsibility for their own professional development.			
Career development reviews									
The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews: Support is available to have development conversations, to conduct appraisals and develop career plans within the Develop at Essex Moodle resource. Researcher Development Framework Annual Update (submitted to Research Committee and University Steering Group) will outline levels of engagement with the framework, including engagement with the peer mentoring database.									
PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development reviews' commitments and actions already in place.							
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development reviews' commitments and actions already in place.							
PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development reviews' commitments and actions already in place.							
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development reviews' commitments and actions already in place.							
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: We have a well-established mentoring programme, academic advisors, CPD, professional networks and peer mentoring. Plot your career development pathway guidance is included within the Develop at Essex Moodle resource. Promotion criteria are transparent for all research roles with an indication of the type of evidence needed to demonstrate these successfully. Conversations are available with managers and mentors to discuss research related career development ambitions. We also provide research leave for members of the research community. Our Researcher Development Framework includes modules to support career development, including professional skills, funding your research, managing and leading research projects, and knowledge exchange and impact.									

PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development support and planning' commitments and actions already in place.						
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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'career development support and planning' commitments and actions already in place.						

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:

We have introduced an Essex specific Researcher Development Framework (informed by Vitae's RDF), which provides a comprehensive programme of support – resources, training, and mentoring. One of the four themed areas of our Researcher Development Framework is 'funding your research'. This includes support and resources for the following themes: the research and innovation landscape; funding for research activities; developing and submitting research proposals; improving funding success. Essential Training policy outlines expectations for all staff and managers to engage with professional development. Guidance for Academic Advisors and Heads of Department integrated within pathway to permanency essential training resource. No institutional limit on the number of days CPD per year. Statement of Future Objectives in promotion applications. Develop at Essex Moodle course resources to 'plot your own path'. Centrally delivered leadership programmes (Future Leaders, and Strategic Leaders). Places offered on external Advance HE leadership programmes are also secured most academic years to Aurora and Diversifying Leadership. External leadership programmes also considered on an ad hoc basis.

PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	See above (in grey) for existing 'research identity and leadership' commitments and actions already in place.						
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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'research identity and leadership' commitments and actions already in place.						
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	Leadership training is part of the new Researcher Development Framework and a revised researcher leadership development programme is planned for 22-23, in collaboration with external providers.	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised leadership training launched within the researcher community.		
		New 'How We Manage at Essex' Essential training for managers (as mentioned above in ECI4, EI5).	N	July 2023	Head of Academic and Professional Practice	Revised training programme launched, with 95% of research managers undertaking the training		

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:

Essex is leading a pioneering project, 'Transitions and Transformations: Black Researcher's Journey', aimed at improving access into research and diversifying and enhancing routes into a range of careers for Black researchers. Our People Supporting Strategy action plan commits to an action of: "Develop an approach to recruit colleagues who are changing careers or re-entering the workplace in a different capacity to further increase diversity and the Institution's access to skills from other sectors." Mentoring process in place for research staff of all career stages (peer mentoring database). A coaching for success service is available to provide opportunity for colleagues to consider their career development opportunities. Develop at Essex Moodle resource for all staff includes a resource dedicated to developing your career development pathway. Mentoring opportunities are possible through the Eastern ARC mentoring scheme. There are also mentoring opportunities available through YUFE and YERUN networks. New Centre for Public and Policy Engagement acts as a hub for dissemination of good practice, pump primes projects and provides training. Specialist teams support knowledge exchange, impact, and commercialisation.

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.	We are currently developing a new Volunteering Policy, to support, promote and allow for volunteering in the wider community, and other sectors for interested staff, including the researcher community. There will be consultation and engagement on the new policy (including with researchers) and it will be considered by our People, Culture, and Inclusion Advisory Group.	N	December 2023	Head of Employment Policy and Projects/Director of OD	New Volunteering Policy developed, approved, and communicated to all researchers by end 2023.				
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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'diverse careers' commitments and actions already in place.								
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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'diverse careers' commitments and actions already in place.								
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.	See above (in grey) for existing 'diverse careers' commitments and actions already in place.								

* 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)		Abbreviations and glossary (more rows can be added)
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