Introduction and background: The University of Dundee received the HR Excellence in Research Award in September 2011 and retained it in subsequent reviews in 2013 and 2015. This report and associated action plan outline our internal evaluation process and provides an update on activities carried out to progress and achieve the deliverables detailed in previous action plans. Following the most recent review of the plan, further actions have been identified and form the basis of an updated action plan for 2017-19.

Process of internal evaluation: This process has successfully become embedded as part of the University infrastructure. The previous Concordat Steering Group has now been replaced by a new Career Development for Research Staff steering group (CDRS), with a remit to promote the implementation of the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers throughout the organisation, including supporting personal and career development opportunities for research staff. The steering group, chaired by the Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact), with research academic and research staff representatives from Research Staff Associations (RSAs), Organisational and Professional Development (OPD), HR and the Careers Service, reviews progress and reports to University Committees of Court and Senate: People and Organisational Development Committee (PODCO) and Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC). The Researcher Development and Projects Officer (RDPO) and the HR Manager (Operations) ensure that issues raised, and decisions taken by the Group, influence training provision and HR Policy respectively.

The internal evaluation included careful review of progress against previous action plans with input from all key stakeholders across the University (including HR, OPD, Equality & Diversity, Careers and Enterprise and Revealing Research). Data from Careers in Research online Survey (CROS) 2015 and from the 2015 University Staff Survey which included CROS like questions for research staff, feedback from the researcher development workshop programme within OPD, along with discussions at meetings of CDRS shaped priority areas focused on in this review and action plan. RSAs and representatives’ inputs to the action plan were received via CDRS and RSA committee.

A draft of the internal evaluation report was shared with Vitae at the end of August 2017 for comment and feedback. The revised action plan covering 2017-19 focuses on further tasks planned and carries forward those still in progress from the previous plan. The action plan can be viewed [www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/hrexcellenceinresearch](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/hr/hrexcellenceinresearch)

Key achievements and progress against original action plan and four-year review

Progress against Principles 1 and 2: Recruitment and Selection; Recognition and value:

Significant progress has been made in recruitment activity – The HR Officer (Resourcing) post was reconfigured to that of HR Officer (Recruitment) in light of Business Transformation activity and the development of Target Operating Models. The appointee to the HR Officer (Recruitment) post commenced January 2017.

There has been a concerted effort by the Deans/Directors in the University to get staff to complete the mandatory Equality and Diversity training. This has resulted in a positive outcome with the impact resulting in doubling the number of staff completing the training from the previous report. To date current University completion rate stands at almost 70%. Progress against mandatory training is
reported on a quarterly basis to the University Equality and Diversity Committee and is broken down by Schools and Directorates, as well as professional and academic posts.

The University’s appraisal process, Objective Setting and Review (OSaR), is an integral part of supporting research staff and providing an opportunity to discuss training and career development. OSaR paperwork was revised with a distinct training and development section. The current University completion rate stands at 82%. The University is taking proactive measures to ensure 100% uptake of OSaRs for research staff.

An Unconscious Bias training module was introduced to senior level staff at the University. Face to face Unconscious Bias training was introduced by OPD in 2016/17 for all staff and is available through the 2017/18 OPD Programme This training is not mandatory.

**Progress against Principles 3 and 4: Support and Career Development:**

The second University Staff Survey took place in 2015. The results of the Staff survey and CROS are used to drive new activity across training provision. OPD identified actions, such as further supporting research staff associations, which were progressed via a new ‘Have Your Say’ forum for research staff in 21 April 2017. This event looked at the challenges that face research staff and empowered them to look at solutions and actions they would take or highlight to the relevant committees.

A Training and Development Officer post was created and appointed in January 2017 which has oversight of existing and proposed mentoring schemes. A new booklet *Mentoring, making the difference* and short video are now available on the OPD website [www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/otheropportunities/mentoringschemes](http://www.dundee.ac.uk/opd/otheropportunities/mentoringschemes).

Now that the Welcome for Staff is an established event for all new staff, including research staff, the University have further developed the local induction programmes held at School level to ensure they complement the University wide provision and that specific groups of staff such as contract research staff are provided with appropriate information and support to allow them to fulfil their potential in their respective roles. A School Induction Checklist to help new researchers and their supervisors and other key stakeholders to plan specific induction activities, which relate directly to their role has been piloted. In addition, the 2017/18 OPD Programme has specific workshops and programmes for researchers, as well as broader training for all staff.

**Progress against Principles 5: Researchers’ Responsibilities:**

All researchers have a responsibility to be proactive in developing their understanding of good research practice and of the various standards that govern research. The University of Dundee is committed to excellence in research by promoting the highest standards of research integrity and leading on university-wide training on the subject. As such the University commissioned an online training resource entitled: *Responsible and Ethical Practice in Research*. The resource includes a video, quiz and case studies. In addition to 6 sub-topics, a compendium of *Case studies and notes for moderators* was also produced for supervisors and senior academics, to support face-to-face training at School level. Research Staff have had access to the Research Integrity training as of May 2017.

**Progress against Principles 6: Diversity and Equality:**

The University published its 2017 - 2021 Equality Outcomes and Equality Outcome Action Plan in April 2017. The plan sets out timescales for the completion of a range of actions which include the introduction of Equality Impact Assessment training for all Schools and Directorates. This will complete by the end of October 2017 when Equality Impact Assessment will be used across the University to identify, amongst other things, gaps in services, data and development of all staff. The
Action Plan also sets out a commitment to supporting applications for Athena Swan and Race Equality Charter Marks, as well as an application for the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

Equality and Diversity Committees have been established in each of the Schools and are supported by the University Equality and Diversity Office to develop local plans, addressing local issues, as well as supporting the delivery of the Equality Outcome Action Plan.

An additional Equality and Diversity Officer has been appointed to a permanent, full time position to support delivery of the Equality Outcome Action Plan. The University submitted the renewal of the Athena SWAN Dundee Bronze Award in April 2017. Confirmation will be received in September 2017. Refer to University of Dundee Athena Swan submissions and Awards www.dundee.ac.uk/about/athenaswan/aboutathenaswan/

Progress against Principle 7: Implementation and Review: Progress is monitored and reviewed via CDRS. The University’s 2015 Staff Engagement Survey included CROS like questions and feedback from our research staff cohort inform ongoing and new activity.

**Strategy and success measures: 2017 - 2019**

**Strategies to support Principles 1 and 2:**

The new University Strategy 2017-22 will be launched in September 2017. HR will develop a statement of HR Service Excellence and its People Strategy and Action Plans will be aligned to the new University Strategy.

Due to the implementation of a University wide Business Transformation (BT), HR will be focusing efforts on the implementation of this new business system with outcomes and subsequent actions dependent on this system.

In light of BT the OSaR process will be reviewed with opportunities to tailor the paperwork and process to different job categories.

**Strategies to support Principle 3 and 4:** The University Staff Survey, which contains CROS-like questions for research staff, will run again in December 2017. In 2015, the response rate was higher for the University Staff Survey than from CROS and the decision was made to continue only with the Staff Survey in 2017, avoiding duplication of resources, while maintaining feedback with a higher engagement level. Relevant actions from the survey will be identified, disseminated and actioned accordingly.

A business case will be submitted for a dedicated careers researcher developer (Researcher Enhancement Officer) to enhance our support for researchers in this area. This new post will enable further development and support in the area of career development, associated training and expert advice.

The Cross Institutional Early Career Academics’ Mentoring Scheme which has run with the University of St Andrews for over a decade is being rebranded and expanded for the 2017/18 cycle. The new scheme will hereby be referred to as Teaching, Research and Academic Mentoring (TRAM). Research staff will also have the further opportunity to access mentors from our Professional Services directorate following the launch of our new Professional Services Mentoring Scheme in 2018.

**Strategies to support Principle 5:** Following a successful pilot of the online Research Integrity training resource with postgraduate researchers, a mirror site for research and teaching staff has now been launched. Staff will be encouraged to complete this training by letter of endorsement from the Chair
of the University of Dundee Research Governance and Policy sub-committee. Research Integrity training is to be strongly recommended as part of the University’s agreed standard set of criteria for research supervision accreditation.

**Strategies to support Principle 6:** The University has applied for Athena SWAN Bronze renewal in April 2017. Confirmation of this award will be announced in September 2017.

We will execute the action plans for both Athena SWAN and the Equality Outcomes Plan, in order to provide new plans going forwards.

**Strategies to support Principle 7:** Continue to monitor and respond to researcher opinion and maintain links with other HEIs. The Staff Survey will run again in December 2017, the results will be used to inform improvements in researcher development support. The internal and external evaluation processes provide a good opportunity to establish and review ongoing support for the career development of researchers. There continues to be research staff representatives on management committees.

**Broad Success Indicators:** Our success is measured in the timely achievement of the actions set out in the Action Plan, many of which include specific deliverables and a flexibility to refocus. PODCO and CDRS are updated on progress. Broad measures include:

- Evidence of improvement in University staff survey 2017 when compared with previous surveys in terms of the percentage of returned surveys. The University completion rate for the survey in 2015 was 59%. The University seeks to improve this completion rate by 10% in the 2017 survey.
- Increase in uptake of Objective Setting and Review (OSaR). The University expects all eligible staff to have undertaken an OSaR review on an annual basis and therefore to improve the completion rate from 82% to 100%, supported by regular OSaR training events at University-wide and School level.
- Achievement of Athena SWAN Awards in 2017 and 2019
- Achievement of Race Equality Charter Mark status in 2018
- Submission for Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in 2017
- Implementation of new University Strategy 2017-22 and the supporting People Strategy
- Continue to build on the development programme for our leaders, including research leaders, measuring impact of the programme
- Quarterly progress reporting of the Equality Outcome Action Plan