A meeting of the Steering Group was held on 4th December 2017.

Present: Professor Tim Newman (Convener), Dr Lisa Anderson, Dr Lynsay Pickering, Dr Sandra Oza, Dr Clive Randall, Dr Sam Swift

Apologies: Alison Cartwright, Professor Divya Jindal-Snape, Dr Shona Johnston, Gillian Jones, Professor Wendy Moncur, Ajit Trivedi, SLSRSA Chair

In Attendance: Miss Nicky Millar

1. Welcome
The Convener welcomed the Steering Group, noting apologies received. Members were reminded that this would be the Conveners last meeting, as he was leaving the University on the 31st December 2017.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2017
The Steering Group approved the minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2017.

3. Conveners Communication
The Convener picked up on previous discussions around the bifurcation of the CDRS Steering Group, noting that further consideration would be required if post docs and technicians were to have separate forums. Input from these two groups would be essential going forward in order to best determine their needs.

4. Consultation on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
Universities Scotland welcomed comments to be fed into the ongoing review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers; the Concordat is being reviewed at the 10-year point to ensure it fulfils its intended purpose from 2018 onwards. The Researcher Development and Projects Officer, Organisational and Professional Development (OPD) prepared the response on behalf of the University of Dundee, consulting with CDRS Steering Group, and submitting to Universities Scotland for the deadline of 17th November 2017. The final publication of the report was expected in June 2018. The Researcher Development and Projects Officer (OPD) agreed to update the Steering Group with any progressing developments at subsequent meetings.

5. Support of the HR Excellence in Research Award
The Head of OPD updated the Steering Group on current developments with regards to the HR Excellence in Research Award. It was reported that an internal

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1 Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Career Development for Research Staff Steering Group.
review is undertaken every four years. Following the most recent review, the University was notified on the 13th October 2017 that the University of Dundee HR Excellence in Research 2017-19 Action Plan was not currently of a standard to retain the award and that substantial changes were required in order to retain the award. Should no actions be taken the University would subsequently lose the award. It was noted that the University had received a commended award at the previous external review in 2015 and as such had requested feedback. SMART actions and success measures for every action were required by the new deadline of 26th January 2018.

Looking forwards to the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021, the Research Policy Manager indicated that the HR Excellence in Research Award, similar to the Athena Swan Award, may be a critical point in terms of the REF environment statements. Such awards create a symbol of culture at the University.

It was agreed that the Convener would make contact with the Head of Vitae, Dr Janet Metcalfe, urgently to request feedback and see if any compromise could be reached to enable us to retain the award with the limited resource in the University to take this forwards.

**Action:** Convener to contact the Head of Vitae, Dr Janet Metcalfe, to request feedback and discuss the University of Dundee’s submission.

6. **Discussion on PDRA Culture**
   Following a recent presentation to the School of Life Sciences Research Staff Association (SLSRAS) the Convener provided some brief reflections on the PDRA culture in general at the University. Following the presentation, the Convener noted that the feedback from post docs highlighted that they appreciated hearing first-hand the ups and downs of a researchers career path. Discussions around the table agreed that mentoring would be a key activity for post docs, along with input from colleagues and professional service staff (Careers, OPD, etc) by way of different events, which would greatly benefit the post doc community.

7. **Handover to new VP Research**
   It was noted that Professor John Rowan would be taking up the position of Vice-Principal (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Wider Impact) as of the 1st January 2018. The Convener reported that a series of handover meetings were in the diary and CDRS Steering Group would be covered, with the incoming VP continuing as Convener. It was suggested that future meeting dates be determined once Professor Rowan was in post.

8. **AOB**
   No other business was raised.