

HREiR Action plan template January 2023



Details	
Institution name:	Staffordshire University
Cohort number:	17
Date of submission:	Jan-23
Institutional context:	The university embraces its reputation as an institution that is 'research inspired, and teaching led'. This is reflected in the contracts of our academic staff, with 17% on the Teaching, Research, and Innovation (TRI) contract. Our review report refers to our small number of research-only staff (n=5).

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	5	
Postgraduate researchers	370	
Research and teaching staff	98	
Teaching-only staff	117	
Technicians	1	
Clinicians	0	
Professional support staff	2	
Other (please provide numbers and details):	4	Includes research active managers (e.g. Deans,

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.										
EC11	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	a) Information update through Workvivo staff intranet and annual staff engagement event on action plan b) Information updates and consultation on Concordat action plan through School staff meetings and Research Centre meetings c) Information update through regular staff support sessions led by ADRIs	Yes	31/07/2023	Head of Research Environment and Development, ADRIs	Increase in awareness of HR Excellence in Research award, to 50% of staff who have 'some understanding of this' in CEDARS 2025 [2022 baseline 16.7%]				
EC12	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.	a) all new policies to have an equality impact assessment (EIA) completed before approval b) all new policies approved by university committees to a 'communication' plan and be disseminated via a variety of mediums(email, IRIS, staff app, recorded/ voiced over PowerPoints)	No	31/12/2026	Head of EDI; Director of Research	a) 100% of policies approved by Research and Innovation Committee in the period to have had an EIA b) Bespoke CEDARS2025 question: 75% of staff agree or strongly that new policies are communicated clearly and transparently	Ongoing monitoring via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys - opportunity for quicker feedback on this question to assess progress between CEDARS. Can be targeted to particular groups if required.			
EC16	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.	a) continue to monitor staff opinion via CEDARS survey at end of action plan period b) Research Environment and Development, including results from CEDARS surveys and related actions plan, to remain standing item on RIEC agenda c) regular 'pulse' surveys to be held via staff app for specific issues, in conjunction with HR d) annual review by RIIS of relevant staff exit survey data, to identify common issues in the environment encouraging staff to leave the institution	No	31/12/2026	Director of Research, Research Policy & Governance Manager	a) 70% respondents CEDARS agree or agree strongly that they have good job satisfaction b) 70% respondents to CEDARS agree or agree strongly that they feel valued at work	Researchers consulted annually for their views these measures via internal 'pulse' surveys, cross check with broader employee engagement survey			
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.	a) Participation and engagement of researchers in Research Centre meetings and activities and Professoriate Working Groups b) Contribute to induction and peer mentoring support for new recruits	Yes	31/07/2023	Director of Research, Research Centre Directors, HR business	80% agree or strongly agree that they feel included in their immediate research environment/group [2022 baseline 71%]	Review of progress against this measure via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
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.										
EC13	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	a) Review of academic work loading policy and data by HR b) Managers to undertake mental health awareness training c) Review of bullying and harassment policy by HR, in consultation with services and trade unions	No	31/07/2025	HR Head of Health, Safety and wellbeing	a) 60% of respondents to CEDARS2025 agree or strongly agree they are treated fairly with regards to their contracted workload [2022 baseline 48.4%] b) 70% of managers in CEDARS2025 to have completed mental health training [2022 baseline 50.8%] c) 80% of respondents in CEDARS2025 aware of institutions mechanism to report bullying and harassment [2022 baseline 67.7]	Review of progress against this measure via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			

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ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	a) See ECI3, managers to undertake mental health awareness training b) Continuation of Mental Health First Aider training programmes Planned university actions: -Mandatory e learning EDI training at induction for unconscious bias in recruitment -Equality e learning training to be launched	Yes	31/07/2024	HR Head of Health, Safety and wellbeing	a)95% of managers have completed EDI training in CEDARS 2025 [2022 baseline of 81%] b) 70% of managers have completed mental health and				
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	a) HR to roll out and refresh policies that support a healthy work-life balance, e.g., email expectations b) As in ECI3, managers to undertake mental health awareness training c) As in ECI3 HR to review work loading data with schools	No	31/07/2025	HR	a) 70% of managers in CEDARS 2025 have completed mental health and wellbeing training [2022 baseline 50.8%]	Ongoing monitoring of how staff feel via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between			
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	a) HR to review and disseminate flexible working policy to ensure managers understanding (not to be confused with flexible location based working policy) b) HR to gather and review data on number of applications received and approved/ rejected for flexible working	No	31/07/2024	HR	To continue to remain above the sector benchmark of proportion of staff responding to CEDARS 2025 that they are 'treated fairly with regards to requests for				
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	a) all researchers to have undertake mental health awareness training b) researchers to be signposted to the support available to staff, as is regularly done for students	No	31/07/2025	HR	Increase in number of applications during Action Plan period for research staff to be measured through new staff				
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.	a) Review of bullying and harassment policy by HR, in consultation with services and trade unions b) HR to review procedures for supporting those reporting issues, and best practice in the sector	No	31/07/2025	HR	a) 80% of respondents in CEDARS 2025 familiar with institution's mechanisms to report bullying or harassment [2022 baseline 67.7%]	Review of progress of measure via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	a) as in ECI3, HR to review bullying and harassment policy and ensure managers understand the reporting procedures for this	No	31/07/2025	HR	80% of managers confident or fully confident responding to any issues relating to bullying and	Review of progress of measure via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
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 ECI3	No			See ECI3				
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.	a) Staff to undertake mandatory e learning EDI training at induction for unconscious bias in recruitment b) Equality e-learning training to be delivered by HR	Yes	31/07/2024	HR	See ECI4				
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.	a) HR to regularly disseminate staff requirements and policies in terms of EDI via a variety of different channels b) RIIS to ensure researchers are aware of funder requirements via regular communication with grant holders and EIAs completed as part of project initiation activities	No	01/01/2026	HR; Head of RED	a) 95% of staff completed mandatory EDI training b) 95% of respondents to EDI staff survey report that they are 'aware of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policies and	While we have an institutional commitment for 100% of staff to have EDI training and awareness of policies, we have set			
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.	a) Information update through Workvivo staff intranet and individual emails to research active staff to raise awareness of research integrity and Staffordshire University Code of Conduct for Research b) Delivery of annual Ethics training c) Annual review of Research Integrity Action Plan by Research and Innovation Committee d) Dissemination of information on new Code of Conduct for Research (2022) to staff, and expectations, via recorded PowerPoint presentations which are also a permanent resource on the Researcher Development Network e) Workshops on research integrity to be delivered to all academic schools, and added to annual PGR training and development programme	Yes	31/07/2023	Research Policy & Governance Manager	a) 80% of managers in CEDARS 2025 have completed training on research integrity [2022 baseline 58.9%] b) 40% of CEDARS 2025 respondent have 'some understanding' of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity [baseline 26.1%] c) CEDARS 2025 response of 80% agree or strongly agree your institution promotes the highest standard of research integrity and conduct [baseline 68.1%] d) 95% of staff have completed mandatory ethics training	Ongoing review of researcher views via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARs surveys.			
ECM3	Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity.	a) Managers to attend specific training on 'what is research integrity' offered by RIIS b) at least one workshop to be held in every school/ department on research integrity and research misconduct including reporting	No	31/12/2023	Research Policy & Governance Manager	80% of managers in CEDARS 2025 have completed training on research integrity [2022 baseline 58.9%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARs surveys			

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ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.	a) Dissemination of information on new Code of Conduct for Research (2022) to staff, and expectations, via recorded PowerPoint presentations which are also a permanent resource on the Researcher Development Network b) At least one workshop to be held in every school/ department on research	No	31/12/2023	Research Policy & Governance Manager	a) 80% of respondents in CEDARS 2025 are aware of Staffordshire University's Code of Conduct for Research [2022]	Ongoing progress monitoring via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	See ECR2, awareness raising of the correct reporting mechanism.	No		Research Policy & Governance Manager	See ECR2				
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.										
E17	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.	The research targets within the School five year plans to be discussed annually at School planning days	No	01/01/2026	Associate Deans Research and Innovation	65% of CEDARS 2025 respondents feel they are treated fairly with regards to opportunities to participate in decision-making processes [2022]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARs surveys.			
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.	a) Research manager involvement in annual Action Plan review meetings b) Research manager participation and engagement in Research Centre meetings and activities and Professoriate Working Groups c) Continued engagement in Academic Strategy Development	Yes	01/01/2026	Associate Deans Research and Innovation	45% of researchers felt fully or mostly that their contribution to Institutional policy and decision-making was valued [2022 baseline 32.6%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARs surveys.			
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.	No actions								
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 ECM5								
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.	Researcher development sessions on effective public engagement held	No	31/12/2023	Head of Research Environment	50 researchers trained in public engagement				
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.										
E11	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	No actions								
E12	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	a) HR evaluation of induction / onboarding at Staffordshire b) Refresh intranet materials for induction for new research staff c) Research induction sessions launched	Yes	31/12/2023	Head of Research Environment and	a) 60% of respondents to CEDARS 2022 finding induction at institutional level useful [baseline 48.1%]	Feedback between CEDARs surveys sought via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
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.										
E13	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.	Develop guidance for TRI staff progression to develop new Associate Professor / Professor pipeline	No	Dec-24	Director of Research	Increase in TRI staff applying for re-grade (baseline 2 TRI staff applications during 2022)				
EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	See EC14, EC12.	Yes							
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.	a) Ensure that relevant legislation, codes of practice and institutional policies are published in easily accessible areas b) Engage in induction activities with RIIS and ADRIs (E12c)	Yes	31/12/2023	HR and Head of Research Environment and Development	a) 80% of respondents in CEDARS 2025 are aware of Staffordshire University's Code of Conduct for Research [2022 baseline 69.1%] b) 100% CEDARS respondents aware of Research Ethical Review Policy [2022 baseline 87.6%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARs surveys.			
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	See EC14 and EC15	Yes							
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.	No actions								
People management										

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The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.										
E14	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	University leadership training provision meets the needs of research staff	Yes	31/12/2024	HR	a) 50% of line managers of researchers in CEDARS 2025 have undertaken leadership training [2022 baseline 40.7%] b) 77% of CEDARS respondents agree that their manager clearly	Numbers attending training will also be collated			
E15	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.		Yes							
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	See E14								
EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.	All staff offered performance development reviews (mid year and end of year)	No	01/01/2026	HR	75% academic staff receiving end of year performance	While we have an institutional			
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.	See E15	Yes							
Job security										
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers.										
E16	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.	No actions								
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.	Launch of Your Career at Staffs Review of potential for dedicated development time in the university calendar	No	Jul-23	HR	40% of CEDARS 2025 respondents are aware of the support the institution provides career and professional development [2022 baseline 26.4%]	Ongoing monitoring via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	Use of new system to obtain reporting on professional development engagement.	No	Dec-25	HR&OD	New system showing increasing engagement over the lifetime of the plan - baseline to be set in 2023				
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.	No actions								
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.	Roll out of Your Career at Staffs to provide increased resources and support for academics to take ownership of their career.	No	31/07/2023	HR&OD	a) In CEDARS 2025, 60% of respondents to have taken 5 or more days of training and other continuous professional development [2022 baseline 42.7%] b) In CEDARS 2025, 35% of respondents to have taken 10 or more days of training and other continuous professional development [2022 baseline 23.9%]	Ongoing monitoring via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys			
Career development reviews										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews.										

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PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	a) Monitor the success of new career development pathways and PDR framework through responses to relevant CEDARS questions b) HR to review support and training for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers as part of new performance and development reviews	Yes	31/12/2025	HR	a) 40% of respondents to CEDARS to confirm that they have regular career development reviews with their manager [baseline = 19.4%] b) Reduction of respondent who felt career development review was 'not very' or 'not at all' useful [baseline = 42.9%] c) Researcher feedback on this issue obtained through the CEDARS to be reported regularly to the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Committee d) Increase in PDR completion data held by HR	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	See EM4								
PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.	a) Annual mandatory training to be provided for Heads of Departments on supporting their staff to apply for promotion through the annual Professorial Call b) HR to review training provision and offer appropriate training to managers on holding effective career development discussions with staff as part of performance and development reviews c) Ensure the progression and promotion process (via the annual Professorial Call) is promoted to all staff via staff intranet, webpages and email.	Yes	01/01/2026	HR, Research Policy and Governance Manager	a) All Heads of Department to have attended the mandatory training session on supporting staff to apply in the Professorial Call. b) 40% of respondents to CEDARS to confirm that they have regular career development reviews with their managers	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.	See PCDI4	Yes							
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.										
PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	a) Training and development programme has sessions which provide an introduction to publishing, knowledge exchange and the research funding landscape in order to familiarise research staff (especially ECRs and PGRs) with career opportunities b) Revision of careers guidance information available to staff on intranet, including resources for researchers to use to support their own development c) Provision of formal mentoring and coaching support d) Support from ADRIs and Professoriate for promotions	Yes	31/12/2023	Head of Research Environment and Development	60% of respondents to CEDARS 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that the University supports them in their broader career aspirations [2022 baseline 52.8%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
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.	a) Promotion of the use of Vitae RDF tool to support career planning b) Identification and review of career plan as part of PDR process (with support from ADRIs) c) Participation in a new University framework for CPD	Yes	31/12/2023	Head of Research Environment and Development	40% of CEDARS 2025 respondents to state that they have a clear career development plan [baseline 28.9%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
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.										
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	a) Training and development programme for 2020-21 includes sessions on aspects of research identity and leadership skills. This programme to be annually reviewed to consider researchers feedbacks and needs. b) Roll out formal mentoring and coaching support to help with the development of their research identity and leadership. c) HR offer a range of training opportunities on leadership skills. HR to review their provision and ensure these are effectively communicated to research staff. d) Development opportunities to be promoted via a range of channels such as	Yes	31/07/2023	HR and Head of Research Environment and Development	a) 50% of respondents to CEDARS 2025 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they have time to develop their leadership skills [2022 baseline 31.6%] b) Target of 50% of respondents to CEDARS 2025 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they have time to develop their research	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
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.	No actions								
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	a) Provision of a portfolio of leadership and management training on communication, coaching, leading, foundations of management, etc. b) Leadership opportunities to be promoted widely to research staff	Yes	01/01/2026	HR	a) 50% of line managers of researchers in CEDARS 2022 have undertaken leadership training [2022 baseline 40.7%] b) 35% of TRI staff have done leadership training [2022	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
PCDR5	Researchers to seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills	a) Attendance at a training session on how to develop your research identity b) Actions from PCDM5	Yes	01/01/2026	HR	a) 50% of line managers of researchers in CEDARS 2022 have undertaken leadership training [2022 baseline 40.7%]	Ongoing review of progress via bespoke internal 'pulse' surveys between CEDARS surveys.			
Diverse careers										

