

HR Excellence in Research Award – 6 year review

How our evaluation was undertaken

Our internal evaluation was informed by a review of the previous HR Excellence in Research six-year review by the Director of Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange, Director of HR and Organisational Development and Equality Manager (all of whom were appointed in 2018/19) and the Pro-Warden for Research and Enterprise (appointed in 2017). This process has enabled us to reflect on the significant areas for improvement in the way in which we co-ordinate and measure the impact of initiatives designed to support the career development of researchers at Goldsmiths. As a result of this self-assessment we are setting out clearer accountability researcher support. Responsibility for the career development of researchers falls across a number of different functions at Goldsmiths, where the roles are broadly as follows:

- Human Resources has primary responsibility for the support and development of all staff, including researchers.
- Research Services has primary responsibility for providing targeted support to researchers in the form of research workshops to help researchers develop their research careers.
- Academic Departments – have primary responsibility for providing the environment, research cultures and support to support all their researchers in the development of their careers.

The evaluation is informed by a wide-scale review of support for researchers, focusing primarily on Early Career Researchers, conducted in 2017 by the college's Concordat Implementation Group (CIG). CIG had been established in 2012 to co-ordinate support for researchers, and was comprised of 16 members, 10 of whom were research staff. This review included:

- 2 focus groups for ECRs nominated by their departments and for Concordat Implementation Group funding awardees.
- There were in total 20 attendees in the 2 focus groups from 9 departments (roughly 50% departments) and similar numbers from each of the 3 Schools.
- The Chair and co-ordinator of the CIG met with the management of 15 academic Departments (a further 2 Departments responded by email).
- The report was discussed at 2 CIG/ECRG meetings and in May 2018 a paper (including the report and survey data) presented to the PWRE for review by the Research and Enterprise Committee.

In 2018 the Early Career Researcher Group (a broader network of ECRs from across the College) and the Concordat Working Group, chaired by the Pro-Warden Research & Enterprise, were formed, replacing CIG. CWG has a responsibility for the formal governance of support for Research staff and ECR and which aims to plan a better, more standardised and consistent delivery of support to researchers across the governance structures in the university. Our 2017 review revealed different definitions of Early Career Researchers, including: PhD students, Goldsmiths' PhD student alumni within one year of the successful award of their, Associate Lecturers who have an intention to pursue a research career, Post-Doctoral Fellows (i.e. on a research grant), Research Assistants (i.e. working for a Principal Investigator on a grant-funded project), T&R Contract Staff within four years of their first academic post. These categories fall into three general groups – PhD students, post-PhDs (i.e. PhD students who were supervised by academic staff at Goldsmiths who have completed and are within one year since their successful completion of the PhD) and staff employed by Goldsmiths.

On the basis of academic departments' own definitions, it was estimated at that time that ECR represented around 206 FTE staff. We plan to develop a means of monitoring the number of ECR amongst staff through our HR database in order to better track ECR career progression and identify appropriate support. Finally, we will submit our Athena Swan Institutional Bronze application in November 2019. This process, including the staff survey (536 respondents) has provided further evidence of the areas in which we need to improve in order to support the career development of all academic staff, including Researchers. We have drawn on the Athena Swan survey to inform our 2019-21 HR Excellence in Research action plan.

Progress on Actions (2017-2019)

Recruitment and Selection: Recruitment and Selection training has been delivered to 35 staff in the past 2 years with a further 118 staff participating in unconscious bias workshops. The training supports recruiting managers to develop job descriptions and person specifications appropriate for the role. The training and related resources explore best practice

interview and selection techniques, and provide guidance on mitigating unconscious bias in recruitment. In 2017 Goldsmiths was accredited as a Disability Confident Employer; as part of which we operate a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria. The Athena Swan process has highlighted the need to further embed good practice in recruitment and selection, we are therefore introducing a requirement for Chairs of panels to have been trained (action 2.1 2019-21).

Recognition and Value: 14/17 academic departments offer mentoring to Researchers and internal funding support for conferences and projects (varying amounts from £500 to £1,500). 12/17 departments offer researchers individual support for their own projects and to support conference attendance (£1,500-500 automatically for staff; £150 -£500 where PhD students are considered ECRs). The Graduate School Fund (GSF) support activities such as conference attendance, events organising, fieldwork visits, and training costs. In 2017/2018, a total of £30,576.39 was awarded to doctoral researchers through the GSF. Other internal funding schemes such as Alumni Fund and Public engagement fund offer opportunities to fund research activity. The review of support for ECR revealed that staff felt time for their own research was limited; barriers to matching funds for prestigious external schemes; structures in departments may not support new staff/ECRs who have difficulties in being embedded in the research culture (action 3.4 2019-21).

Support and Career Development: Research staff are encouraged to take part in HR learning and development events, including leadership programmes. However, participation from academic staff in leadership programmes is low (44 in 17-18) and HR has not monitored take up specifically for researchers. Actions (2.4 2019-21) have been identified to increase participation of Researchers with the L&D programme. Research Services deliver targeted workshops for researchers e.g. Research Impact, Making Research Grant Applications, Intellectual Property (7 attendees '18-19) Nvivo training (17 attendees '18-19). Online resources are provided, including links to external briefings. The Graduate School deliver a programme of training for PHD students, including Research Methods Training (14 PGRs participated in '17-18).

Equality and Diversity: Since 2017-18 we have successfully increased our ranking in the Stonewall workplace equality index and have been commended for our work in relation to trans equality. As part of our EDI Strategy the college regularly publishes 'spotlight on' pieces, featuring researchers from diverse backgrounds, and promoting research events and forums relating to equality and social justice, this helps to raise the profile of researchers from under-represented groups.

Actions Partially Completed (Carried into 2019-21 Action Plan)

- Participation rates in CROS/PIRLS: Our aim was to engage at least 40% of researchers in the CROS and PIRLS. The surveys are promoted through regular newsletters and in briefings co-ordinated by Research Services, however, response rates continue to be low (20/ 24% to CROS and 9/ 21% to PIRLS in 2017). Increasing response rates will continue to be a priority - we will engage directly with colleagues to promote this, e.g. Research Services will promote the survey to Heads of Department and Directors of Research. We have set ourselves a target of a 30% to 35% response rate by July 2021.
- Participation in annual Professional Development Review (PDR) process. All staff are entitled to PDR and these are promoted through staff training and communications. The CROS indicated that researchers found PDRs useful to record career progress and training, however, access to PDRs was mixed and 4 participants did not find them useful. Athena Swan Survey data indicates 42% of staff have had a PDR in the past year (Actions 2.5 2019-21 action plan seek to address this)
- Athena SWAN application: Institutional Bronze award: Goldsmiths submitted its first application for a Bronze Athena Swan award in April 2017. While unsuccessful, the feedback primarily reflected the need for more complete data to be available for evaluation and reflection. The quality of our staff data was a known problem at that time and has been the subject of an institutional project overseen by the Data Management Leadership Group from May 2017 onwards. Staff data integrity has seen a significant improvement since that point and the institution is in the process of submitting an institutional award. Two departments also plan to submit their own applications in November

Next steps: Key actions for 2019-21

Our priority is to enhance support for researchers at all stages of their careers, early, mid and senior, in order to make the most of their potential and help the College build and extend its capacity for excellent research. To support the development of this framework (and to heighten the training and support currently available), we will review resources within HR and Research Services. We intend to appoint a dedicated member of staff within Research Services, a Research Development Officer, to oversee a coherent and integrated programme of research support, with the aim of increasing attendance at research support events and raising the profile of early career researchers within the College. We will develop awards (on

similar lines to our successful Public Engagement awards) to recognise and celebrate outstanding researchers at all career stages, as well as those who go above and beyond in their contributions to business or the local community. We will continue to seek out the views of researchers at each stage of their careers, involving them in relevant committees, our Research and Enterprise Committee includes Researchers at different stages of their careers, enabling us to ensure that decisions about research training, ethics and integrity, and knowledge exchange is transparent and informed by the views of researchers. Goldsmiths will continue to involve Researchers (including ECR) in the Concordat Working Group (CWG) to oversee the action plan and Framework over the next two years. We have reviewed our action plan and structured our priorities around those set out in the new 2019 Concordat. Our priority actions are set out below.

Environment and culture

- Promote awareness of the new Concordat and HR Excellence in Research action plan via Departmental Directors of Research, REC, and Research Services mailing lists, in order to raise awareness of the steps Goldsmiths is taking to supporting the career development of researchers. Target: 80-90% of researchers to state they know about the Concordat and how it applies to them. (Action 1.1)
- Continue to deliver Mental Health First Aider training (train at least 45 MH First Aiders Jan 2020 – Jan 2021), encouraging Research staff to take part so that they are aware of how to support colleagues experiencing mental health difficulties. Encourage Research Managers to participate in our Mental Health training (target: 40 participants between Dec 2019 - Dec 2020). These measures will aim to ensure that managers/researchers are effectively trained in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, wellbeing and mental health. (Action 1.4)

Employment

- By June 2020, we will launch new Recruitment and Selection training and embed guidance on positive action in recruitment procedures to ensure selection procedures are fair (target: all-line managers (300 staff) by 2023 (150 / 50% by 2021). By June 2021 80% of training participants report a better understanding of how to apply fair and transparent recruitment and selection practices. (Action 2.1)
- Consult with staff on the feasibility of developing academic career pathways for teaching, research and knowledge exchange, for these pathways to have clear promotion opportunities, and for key stages in these careers to be marked by clear and transparent indicators. (Action 2.3)
- Review Performance and Development Review (PDR) guidance for staff and managers (including PIs and Research managers), to ensure that all researchers have opportunities to discuss their development needs, and for these to be supported by the institution. Review guidance by September 2020. (Target: 50% of survey respondents report engaging with PDR by 2021 and an increase of 10% thereafter). (Action 2.5)
- Test online professional development planning (PDP) and progress monitoring tool (Inkpath) October 2019. Roll out to all PGRs in 2020/21 if testing phase is successful (if funding is made available) 80 students and supervisors engaging with Inkpath by September 2020). (Action 2.5)
- Develop co-ordinated support for ECR, to complement the provision within departments, including a package to allow students who have successfully completed their PhD at Goldsmith a continuing affiliation with Goldsmiths (library card; alumni email address; opportunity to join a mentoring programme; and opportunity to access dedicated internal funding opportunities). Introduce post-PHD support package by Dec 2020. (Action 2.6)

Professional and career development

- Appoint a dedicated member of staff within Research Services to oversee a coherent and integrated programme of research support, with the aim of increasing attendance at research support events and raising the profile of early career researchers within the College. Appoint role by Dec 2020. (Action 3.1)
- By June 2021 consult with Researchers, Unions and the wider community to identify the steps that may be taken to meet the Concordat recommendation of 10 professional development days per year. (Action 3.1)
- Align the researcher development offer to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and use this as a resource for Researchers to consider the skills they may need at various stages of a research career. By June 2021 we will develop a dedicated website to promote academic skills aligned to the RDF with the option to download the career tracker. We will monitor the engagement of Research staff in HR Learning and Development Activities and will take steps to increase the participation of researchers - publicising the Learning and Development Programme directly to researchers and via Heads of Department and Department Directors of Research. Our overall aim is to increase Academic staff participation in L&D from 130 in 2017/18 to 200 in 2021 (50% increase).