



CONCORDAT SESSION GUIDE

FOR RUNNING EVENTS LOCALLY



This is a guide for leading a session on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers in your School/College, as part of research staff society plans and events.

<https://researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/>

What is the Concordat?

The Concordat has three defining principles: Environment and Culture, Employment and Professional and Career Development. Under each principle there are obligations for the four key stakeholder groups: Funders, Institutions, Researchers and Managers of Researchers.

The Concordat aims to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK and to improve the quantity, quality and impact of research for the benefit of the UK society and its economy.

What are we doing about it at Edinburgh?

- On 4th February 2020, The University of Edinburgh became a signatory to the Concordat
- A Concordat Implementation Group (CIG) was convened in March 2020
- The University-wide action plan was published in March 2021
- In April 2022 we published our first-year report and updated action plan

Concordat Reporting

Research Staff Hub

Central to the action plan was the creation of a Research Staff Hub. The Research Staff Hub provides a focus for research staff related communication and activity and a platform to update on Concordat progress and developments for researchers and their managers. It is now the main landing page for research staff at the University.

support-for-researchers.ed.ac.uk

Raising awareness of the Concordat at a local level

The aim of this guide is to provide a structure and outline of a session or event that could be run at School/College level, to raise awareness of the Concordat, progress at Edinburgh and to identify what is happening, or could happen, at local levels to support its implementation.

What is my role as facilitator?

As a facilitator it is your job to both arrange and manage the session or event. Some key considerations:

- Online, in-person or hybrid? What do you need to do to make this work?
- Length of session or event – full day, half day or shorter?
- Who are your participants?
- How will you promote the session or event?
- How will you document the event? your planning and organisation of the event, the items discussed and actions planned.
- Could you collaborate with another School/College?

Senior Input

Consider asking senior members of your School/College to attend. This would demonstrate their support of the event and in implementing the Concordat in your area. It may also ensure the longevity of any outcomes and actions that come out of the discussions. This could be the Head of School/Director of Professional Services, along with your local postdoc/research staff/ECR champions. Consider asking them to do the Welcome/Introduction at the start – setting the scene and putting the Concordat into a School/College context – or ask them to get involved in and help facilitate some of the sessions.

How the Researcher Development team can provide support

The Researcher Development team manage coordination of the Concordat for the University, so can provide support, advice and ideas on how to plan and structure the event. The team can also attend the event to update on progress and outcomes, linked to the Concordat.

Example structure of a Concordat focused session

Session Outline | 2 Parts

Part 1: IAD Update

- **Concordat at Edinburgh**
 - Why it's important
 - Action Plan
 - Concordat Implementation Group
- **Resources available**
 - Research Staff Hub
 - Careers
 - Leadership
- **10 Days Professional Development**
 - What this covers
 - How to record this

Part 2: Group Work

Select a theme – this could be done prior to the day, via registration, asking participants what they'd like to discuss.

Depending on participant numbers/ interest in specific themes, one theme could be discussed in different groups or themes split between different groups.

The idea of this part of the session is to allow discussion and generate ideas and actions for your School/College.

Discussion Points around the Concordat themes

The following pages provide some ideas that you could focus on as part of your session. A session could include one or more of these areas, but would not need to cover all.



CONCORDAT THEME : EMPLOYMENT

Understanding your research staff population

Do you know the demographics of your research staff population? If you did, would this help to support them in your School / College?

Redeployment Support

Is this something people know about in your School/College?

What could be done to ensure effective dissemination of this process and the benefits to all involved?

Induction Support & Annual Review

Induction best practice – what do you do in your School/College, do you have a research staff society, do they provide any further induction/training support?

Do you have exemplars of annual reviews/P&DR, what happens in your area? Is there anything you include in annual review forms, or you think should be included as part of the process?

Clarity about rights & responsibilities

There are resources, information, and policies to help researchers understand their rights and responsibilities – are your researchers aware of this, what could you do to ensure they know what to do if something is not working?

Research Staff Societies (RSS)

Are there any societies in your area?

If not, would you consider setting one up and what would you do?

What could be done to further support RSS in your area?

Policies and Processes

What support do managers of researchers need to help them navigate relevant policies and processes around recruitment, flexible working, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, etc.?

Long term researchers (LTRS)

Are you aware of any LTRS in your School/College? What support do they need?

Are you aware of the LTRS Network?



CONCORDAT THEME: ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE

Wellbeing in Research

Are researchers/managers of researchers aware of the information available to support wellbeing in research? What can you do in your school/college/society to highlight this support and ensure researchers are accessing it?

Research Staff Hub (RSH)

What could you do in your area to highlight the RSH to researchers/managers of researchers, and ensure they're using it to support their role.

Do you have any feedback on the RSH, anything that's missing?

What benefit would a physical space, allocated to societies for training, social events and networking meetings bring? How would you use this space?

Postdoc/Research Staff/ECR Champions

Do you have postdoc/research staff/ECR champions in your area? If not, consider what this role could add and what support could they offer in your School/College, to your RSS. Are researchers aware of this role, what could you do to raise awareness?

Diversity of our Research Staff Population

Are you aware of the demographic of your research staff population, if not how can you find out? Do you have a broad representation in your society? What could you do to get different groups involved, ensuring they are represented and supported? (e.g. international researchers, part-time researchers, etc.)

Research Culture

What research culture initiatives can your society consider to improve connectivity with the research staff community – who would you ask to support this? (e.g. champions.)

Bullying and Harassment Policies

Are you aware of the University's policies and wider support available around bullying and harassment? (e.g. Dignity and Respect Advisors, Report + Support) What can you do in your area to raise awareness of initiatives and support researchers who are affected?

Concordat Initiatives

Identifying and highlighting what is happening in your School/College around Concordat initiatives is a great way to share best practice, highlight work going on and create opportunities for collaborations. What can you do to feedback on initiatives related to the Concordat and input into university wide reporting?

Are there any members that sit on university committees, if not what benefit would this bring and how would you manage this as a society? (e.g. rolling member on committee, feeding back to the society / Committee).



CONCORDAT THEME: PROFESSIONAL & CAREER DEVELOPEMENT

Visibility

How could improving your visibility as a researcher support your career development?

What are the benefits to being visible and how can you make this happen?

Do you have an online profile, is this up to date? What support is available to create effective online profiles in your School/College, could you do more?

Are you aware of the support around creating PURE profiles? What could you do to make researchers aware of it?

Careers Support

Are you aware of the Researcher Development careers support available to researchers?

What can you do as a society to promote this?

What could you do to encourage researchers to be more proactive with their career?

How could you use the RSH, and its links to university wide support around funding, consultancy, commercialisation, etc., to support the career development of researchers in your School/College?

Are you aware of the different career paths available to researchers? What could you do as a society to improve information and support researchers in navigating the different options and helping them progress into fellowship routes, into academic roles or into other careers?

Leadership

As a society, what can you do to raise awareness of leadership opportunities in your society and wider? (e.g. joining university committees, leading and managing events).

Are your researchers and managers aware of all the leadership support & development opportunities available in the university – what could you do to make these clearer?

10 Days Professional Development

What can you do to raise awareness of the 10 Days Professional Development allowance available to researchers in your School/College?

As a society, what could do to support researchers' development? Could you provide examples of what could be included in the 10 Days, create exemplars, and provide support, run events?

Could you work with your School/College to get this allowance included in your annual reviews, as part of inductions?



EXAMPLE SESSION TIMINGS | 4 OPTIONS

Option 1 | Morning half day session (with two Concordat themed discussions)

09:30am – 09:40am	Welcome, introduction, programme/plan for day
09:40am – 10:00am	Researcher Development update
10:00am – 10:30am	Discussion group 1
10:30am – 10:45am	Feedback
10:45am – 11:00am	Break
11:00am – 11:30am	Discussion group 2
11:30am – 11:45am	Feedback
11:45am – 12:00pm	Action planning and next steps
12:00pm	Close

Option 2 | Afternoon half day session (with two Concordat themed discussions)

12:30pm – 12:40pm	Welcome, introduction, programme/plan for day
12:40pm – 13:00pm	Researcher Development update
13:00pm – 13:30pm	Discussion group 1
13:30pm – 13:45pm	Feedback
13:45pm – 14:00pm	Break
14:00pm – 14:30pm	Discussion group 2
14:30pm – 14:45pm	Feedback
14:45pm – 15:00pm	Action planning and next steps
15:00pm	Close

Option 3 | Lunchtime session (with one Concordat themed discussions)

12:30pm – 12:40pm	Welcome, introduction, programme/plan for day
12:40pm – 13:00pm	Researcher Development update
13:00pm – 13:30pm	Discussion group 1
13:30pm – 13:45pm	Feedback and next steps
15:45pm	Close

Option 4 | Full day session

(with two Concordat themed discussions and a planning session)

09:30am – 09:40am	Welcome, introduction, programme/plan for day
09:40am – 10:00am	Researcher Development update
10:00am – 10:30am	Discussion group 1
10:30am – 10:45am	Feedback
10:45am – 11:00am	Break
11:00am – 11:30am	Discussion group 2
11:30am – 11:45am	Feedback
11:45am – 12:00pm	Action planning and next steps – pick a popular idea/initiative from the discussion groups to develop after lunch
12:00pm – 13:00pm	Lunch
13:00pm – 14:00pm	Planning for implementing initiatives in your School/society
14:00pm – 14:30pm	Feedback from groups on plans going forward
14:30pm	Close

USEFUL LINKS

HR Webpages (Redeployment, On-boarding, HR policies & processes)

 www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-guidance/a-to-z-of-policies-and-guidance

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Dignity & Respect Advisors and support)

 www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity

Researcher Development support (information, tools and advice to support your development as a researcher or research leader)

 <https://research-office.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development>

Researcher Development blog

 <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development/>

Research Staff Hub (Wellbeing, postdoc champions, international researchers, Concordat reporting, online profiles, leadership profiles, career resources, 10 days professional development)

 support-for-researchers.ed.ac.uk

Researcher Development Concordat

 www.researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk/