Researcher Development Concordat/ HR Excellence in Research Award Action Plan (2022 - 2025) June 2024 update.

Code	Obligation	Action	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted impact of the action (success measure)	Progress to date. AY2023-24	Any proposed new actions, include timeframe for the actions
Environment and Culture 1							
Wellbeing and mental health 1.1							
The aims of these obligations are to champion positive wellbeing amongst researchers, both through appropriate training and enabling new ways of working.							
ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	a. The University has embedded a commitment to a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing in Strategy 2030. Enabling this includes the Framework for a University Wide Approach to mental Health and Wellbeing with workstreams of Healthy Study, Healthy Work, Wellbeing Support and Community Wellbeing. b. The University promotes and supports a robust Performance and Development Review process which support the agreement between staff and line managers on the activity and objectives, for all aspects of the role, for the coming period. The process includes the identification of capability development to achieve the objectives and any agreement on growth development of objectives. c. Explore ways to communicate and demonstrate the value and importance of research work as an integral part of the university.	a.b.2022/23 & 2023/24 c. Jun 23	a.b. People Services c. PVC Research& Sr research leaders.	**Workload (CEDARS)** Q16.5 'allocation of additional work beyond contracted workload' 2023 58% (2021 48%, UK2023 50%) **Institution environment** Q44.6 your working environment supports your mental health and wellbeing 2023 51% (2021 52%, UK2023 45%) **Deliverable:** improved experience of workload management and work-life balance. Research activity is recognised as valued part of the academic role with clear workload allocations consistent across the university. Workload model is rolled out and embedded within university PDAR system.	a. Completed. The framework supports the development of resources, services and training and development opportunities, open to all staff, to equip and empower our people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise and appropriately support students, colleagues and peers who are struggling with their mental and physical health. b. Completed. Staff and line managers have access to training and development on the PDAR process and the effective development of SMART objectives and development plans. The PDAR cycle and training opportunities are promoted University wide and supplemented by focused comms, via the Graduate School, to the Research Community. c. Ongoing. Importance of research work as an integral part of the university is being recognised through ongoing Executive's engagement with Sr research leaders, Research Centres and Academic Schools/depts..	The work on the achievement of the University Framework for a University Wide Approach to mental Health and Wellbeing is monitored through University committee structures in accordance with agreed governance. Any new actions and development will be approved through the relevant committees. .

ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	a. Further roll out of SAMH mental health awareness training b. Continued Promotion of existing Employee Assistance Programme	Jun 23	People Services	**CEDARS Management of researchers** Q26 Managerial CPD undertaken: Mental health and Wellbeing 2021 68% (2020 44%) **Deliverable:** increased uptake of mental health and wellbeing CPD.	a. Ongoing. Continued delivery of mental health and wellbeing training across the University. Neurodiversity Celebration week, March 2024 with training, conversation café and network. Applied suicide intervention skills training (ASIST) delivered: May 2023 26 attendees September 2023 24 attendees. b. Ongoing. Continued promotion of EAP and associated app.	ASIST training scheduled for: • April 2024 • September 2024 in line with Suicide Prevention Day.
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	a. Develop and embed the Emotionally Demanding Research Network to support researchers undertaking challenging research topics. b. Provide forum and opportunity to share practice and improve wellbeing.	a. Aug 23 b. Mar 23	Graduate School	**CEDARS Professional & career management** Q31.9 Researcher CPD uptake: Mental health and Wellbeing 2023 77% (2021 68%) UK2023 (54%) **Deliverable:** well developed, supportive network enabling researchers at all levels to safely undertake challenging research in an environment of mutual support and understanding	a. Ongoing. EDRN (Emotionally Demanding Research Network) supervisor and PGR workshops were not delivered in house and instead other relevant external events were promoted to the Network via the new MS Teams space. b. Completed. MS Teams space created for communication, making connections and the sharing of resources.	2024/25 planning - continue to promote EDRN to new PGRs/ECRs and ensure relevant external activities are promoted to the Network.
Bullying and harassment 1.2							
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. Revise Staff Conflict and Complaints Policy and Guidance (in response to experiences learned following the implementation of the Report and Support Reporting Tool). b. Explore and implement solutions that will improve the experience of researchers related to discrimination, bullying and harassment. Include this exploration as an integral part of the cross-uni WG exploring discrimination, bullying and harassment improvements to the staff experience.*	22/23	a. People Services b. People Services c. People Services	**CEDARS Bullying and harassment:** Q48.3 trust HEI to investigate reported incidents fairly and take appropriate action 2023 56% (2021 60%) UK2023 (56%) **Deliverable:** reduce bullying and harassment and when it does arise, an ability to deal with it, with trust and support in the university's policies, processes and practice. New (research) staff policy and guidance to improve reporting of complaints and conflict, enabling increase in trust of process.	a. Ongoing. Annual review of staff policies. Ongoing review of the implementation of the Report and Support tool, which will inform any required changes to online guidance. b. Ongoing. December 2022 EDI Staff Survey provided some insight into staff experiences (particularly in relation to race and gender equality) - further work required at University and local School/Dept level (e.g. focus groups) c. Ongoing. Report and Support tool is communicated at key points throughout the year	New Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategic implementation plan which is bringing together all aspects of EDI work, including addressing discrimination, bullying and harassment, is scheduled for approval by People Committee in May 2024 and Court in June 2024. New EDI Campaigns group will include promotion of Report and Support as part of campaigns and awareness raising.

		c. Raise awareness of GCU's mechanisms for reporting bullying/harassment and provide training and support for people in accessing and using these mechanisms.					

Equality, diversity and inclusion 1.3

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.	The following actions are part of the People Services Operational Plan 2022-23 for all staff. Research managers are included within this population. a. Embed EDI in staff leadership development programmes. b. Facilitate staff involvement in training and development. c. Communicate policies and guidance. d. Support the design and delivery of awareness days/events/campaigns as part of a wider initiative. e. Embed Disability Confident commitments. f. Lead on the tackling racism recruitment recommendations and Research Concordat. g. Support implementation of tackling racism recommendations and Advance HE Race Equality Charter. h. Support implementation of institutional and School Athena Swan action plans including continuing to deliver the Advance HE Aurora Leadership Programme, and supporting in-house CPD programme to support the university's Gender Action Plan and maintenance of Athena SWAN Silver Award.	a.b.c.d f g h 22/23 e23-24	People Services	**CEDARS Management of researchers** Q26 Managers undertaken training; EDI 2021 60% (2020 96%) **Deliverable:** EDI as inherent part of leadership model at GCU, increased uptake of EDI training.	a. Ongoing. EDI is a core part of the new People Managers Pathway Programme (Developing Others). b. Ongoing. Broader EDI development is part of the Skill Boosters online resources, and reinforced by GCU specific projects – BIG Project (cultural awareness), EDI in the Curriculum project, Digital Accessibility project, and Student Wellbeing and Disability teams. c. Ongoing. New policies (e.g. Staff Carers Policy) are communicated via the regular channels for staff (intranet, staff newsletter). d. Ongoing. New EDI Campaigns Group has been established to advise and support EDI days/weeks/months. e. To commence AY 2023-24 as outlined in our Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 plan f. & g. Ongoing. The AdvanceHE Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team is developing an application for accreditation and action plan. h. Ongoing- led by GCU institutional and School–level Athena Swan leads. Aurora programme continues to be supported by People Services. Gender Action Plan no longer exists, as it is not required by Scottish Funding Council. New staff LGBTQIA+ network created.	a. PMP EDI content to be supplemented with 'Inclusion in Practice' webinar series. e. New Disabled Staff Network has been formed to provide those with lived experience input to inform recommendations and actions to improve disabled staff experience. Themes include: policy and practice, reasonable adjustments, leaning and development, disclosure. f. & g. Implement recommendations from AdvanceHE Race Equality Charter application New programme of work led by the LGBTQIA+ staff network in development.

Employment 2							
Recruitment and induction 2.1							
The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation.							
EI2	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	Develop online Welcome/Induction pack for Research Staff to connect with local ECR network and wider GCU opportunities	Sept 23	Graduate School and DARE	**CEDARS Induction** Q20 Usefulness of Induction: 2023 agree at GCU level 58% (2021 52%, UK2023 48%); at department/school level 70% (2021 59%, UK2023 62%); local level 79% (2021 63%, UK2023 67%). **Deliverable:** online resource connected to all relevant aspects of GCU provision for ECRs, allowing a better induction experience.	Completed. New ECRs receive a welcome email from the Graduate School with information on Concordat, HREiR (HR Excellence in Research) and DARE. They are also added to a mailing list where opportunities for researchers are advertised. Completed. Develop Research Staff section of Graduate School website with further details of Staff Researcher Development opportunities, DARE group and links to other useful resources I.e., Pure, library support for research. https://www.gcu.ac.uk/research/graduateschool/researcherdevelopment/workshops/researchstaff	Action for 2024/25 - collaborate with ADSL/RIO re research focus in induction. Enabling new research active academic staff to engage with relevant departments at an early stage and begin to network in their community.
Recognition, reward and promotion 2.2							
The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression.							
EI3	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.	a. Carry out data analysis to check equity of progression/promotion/regrading across protected and other key characteristics (e.g. mode – pt/ft etc) b. Develop the policy and process for the designation of staff as Sig Res and embed it within GCU's reward and promotion pathways	a. 22/23 b. July 24	a. People Services b. RIO	**CEDARS Career progression** Q19.1 promotion pathways are clear 2023 48% (2021 44%, UK2023 50%); Q19.2 equitable opportunities for career progression 2023 49% (2021 42%, UK2023 44%); Q19.4 redundancy processes are clear 2023 19% (2021 20%, UK2023 23%) **Deliverable:** improved understanding of promotion pathways and perception of promotions as merit based, with data on progression checked for equity on gender and other key characteristics.	a. Completed. The University's provision of the 'Promotion Scheme for Academic & Research Roles'; there is University reporting on academic promotions outcomes through the 'EDI lens' after every promotions round is complete. b. Ongoing. Sig Res framework and process being developed for consideration by UEG, URC. Similarly for Research Careers pathway.	
People management 2.3							

		The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.					
EI5	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	a. Explore why only 50% of researchers find appraisals useful and implement solutions for this to be improved.* b. PCDI2 Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.* c. Recognise and value the importance of regular discussions on activity, outputs, barriers and successes as informal appraisal opportunities informed by the formal PDAR appraisal.	a.b.c22/23	a.b. People Services. c. Research managers & staff researchers	**CEDARS staff appraisal** Q24 Usefulness of staff review/appraisal 2023 58% (2021 49%, UK2023 55%) **Deliverable**: improved perception of staff reviews as being useful.	a,b,c Completed. Annual review awareness and skills sessions for both managers and staff rolled out as part of PDAR cycle in 2022 and embedded in People Manager training and continuing in 2024.	
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	Design and implement line manager training to support any changes to guidance/process to maximise understand/implementation of policy/guidance changes	Jun 23	People Services and Graduate School	**CEDARS Professional & career development** Q33 Managerial CPD undertaken: Managing Others 2021 32% (2020 24%) **Deliverable:** managers informed and empowered via CPD opportunities, leading to better researcher environment	People Services: People Managers Pathway (new L&D for line managers) rolled out with access open to all People Managers. March 2024 update: People Managers Pathway programme indicates is successful in building capacity and confidence in a range of people management responsibilities. Experienced managers have found it to be a valuable mechanism to refresh their skills and share their knowledge as well as building their internal networks. AdvanceHE leadership programme attendance by research leaders e.g. • Research Team Leadership in Changing Times • Transition to Leadership • Preparing for Senior Strategic Leadership.	For 2024/25 Graduate School will collaborate with People Services to explore options to offer bespoke training for managers of researchers.
Professional and Career Development 3							

Championing professional development 3.1							
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.	a. Enhance the design and delivery of the DARE to Lead core RD programme for ECRs and mid-career researchers. b. Facilitate engagement of School local ECR networks in developing and communicating their School RD programmes and sharing their best practice cross-university. c. Develop online DARE Hub with relevant RD info and events and hub for staff communities. d. Embed the Academic Writing programme of workshops and writing retreats for research staff. e. Extend the programme to include a range of flexible timetabling and one to one research writing development opportunities for research staff (writing for journal publication) f. Recognise and value the importance of protecting time and encouraging researchers to link with at least one research group/Centre; for research/line managers to participate in research group/centre activities and for research group leads to develop their activities to meet the needs of their members.	a. Mar 23 b. Jun 23 c. Nov 22 d,e 22/23 – 23/24 f. Jun 23	a.b.c.Graduate School, RIO, DARE d.e. Graduate School f.Research groups/ Centres, Research leaders/ Managers <mark>(EC1)</mark>	**CEDARS Professional & career development** Q40 CPD areas low uptake: Open Research: 2023 29% (2021 22%);UK2023 31%) Career Management: 2023 28% (2021 17%); UK2023 15%) Communication and Dissemination 2023 50% (2021 56%, UK2023 43%) **Deliverable:** DARE Hub to coordinate and promote opportunities for ECRs. Engagement cross-university in building a network of ECRs. Increased uptake of CPD around publications for research staff and a supportive environment to develop ECRs. A research community that is connected, engaged and supports each other through research groups/Centres and mentorship of research leaders/line managers.	a. Completed. Reporting of DARE to Lead programmes delivered by the GS and by RIO set up to be at end of each Trimester. Report contains attendance data and feedback workshop evaluation data. 1st report Tri A 22 to DARE (Jan 23), to URC (Mar 23). b. Ongoing. DARE membership refreshed to include new leads of local ECR networks, including GCUL & Yunus Centre. c. Complete. DARE committee decision to move away from developing online Hub. Promotion and communication by social media, GS website and online presence has improved to be sufficiently dynamic and current. d.e. Ongoing.programme of support around Academic Writing successfully implemented. g. Ongoing. School research groups/centres encouraged to do this. Will move forward with exploring revision of Research Strategy 2030 and PGR strategy with focus on growing research clusters of research excellence. Example: the Research Centre for Health (ReaCH) in SHLS Delivered 2023 **ECR Crucible leadership training programme** for research leaders of the future to work with policymakers, practitioners, third sector, media & the public. This competitive 3 day programme culminated in a visit to the Scottish Parliament and meeting with policymakers.	b) New ECR Vice Chair of DARE established (April 2024) g. Proposal to re-run the ECR Crucible leadership programme in SHLS / Yunus in 2024/25 (if budget allows) and will consider demand for similar ECR programmes in the other Schools.
Career development support and planning 3.2							

		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.	Explore solutions to providing researchers access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers: research related, as well as more broadly, including opportunities outside Higher Education.	23-24	Careers	**CEDARS Professional & career development** Q35.3 aware of support institution provides for your career and professional development 2023 50% (2021 45%, UK2023 55%);	Ongoing. The Careers Service is working in conjunction with key stakeholders to identify ways of providing targeted specialist advice and support to researchers in their career management. Ongoing. Career Pathways information is available on Connected intranet. Also, researchers' line managers are expected to advise their staff on career development, and to have knowledge of professional bodies/organisations they could point staff to for further advice.	2024/25. Student Life will input to PGR induction to outline core services that students have access to. This will include careers and wellbeing support. New scoping work to be initiated to establish support PGR students would like with their career development. The intention is to hold focus groups with PGR representatives to identify needs and formulate an action plan.
Research identity and leadership 3.3							
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. The provision of time to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills is part of the response to ECI3 b. The Performance and Development Review process includes the identification of capability development to achieve the objectives and any agreement on growth development of objectives. b. Provide researcher development opportunities and mentoring in the development of research identity and leadership skills and research funding processes.	a. 22/23 – 23/24 b. Nov 22; Aug 23	a.People Services b.GS, Sr research leaders, RIO	**CEDARS Professional & career development** Q35.7 have time to develop research identity 2023 33% (2021 33%, UK2023 43%); Q35.8 have time to develop leadership skills 2023 42% (2021 38%, UK2023 42%)	a Staff and line managers have access to training and development on the PDAR process and the effective development of SMART objectives and development plans. The PDAR cycle and training opportunities are promoted University wide and supplemented by focused comms, via the Graduate School, to the Research Community. b. Ongoing. The following Graduate School led workshops for researchers have taken place since the last update in February 2023: Introduction to Leadership course delivered on campus in November 2022 with 18 researchers taking part, Leadership Skills four-part series delivered in January 2022 for researchers, on average 16 participants attended each session. All the participants said the course exceeded (54%) or met (46%) their expectations and they all said they would be able to use what they have learned in the sessions. • Introduction to Open Access Publishing for Researchers (March 2023)	

					• Positive Habits for Emotionally Challenging Research (May 2023) • Successful Grant Writing (August 2023) • Write Away on the Move! Train Writing Retreat (August 2023 and November 2023) • The Productive Researcher (September 2023) • Academic Writing Month (November 2023) Delivered a series of workshops on creative academic writing methods • Getting started with Zotero (January 2024) • How to write a good Conference Abstract (March 2024) • Post-PhD jobs: Where to look and how to apply (March 2024) • Integrating Chat GPT for Transformative Academic Presentations (April 2024) • Mentoring and Coaching Skills (April 2024) • Managing Challenging Conversations (April 2024) • How to be an Effective Doctoral Supervisor series delivered three times per year: • How to be an Effective Doctoral Supervisor 1: Inducting your Research Student • How to be an Effective Doctoral Supervisor 2: Establishing Roles and Working Practices • How to be an Effective Doctoral Supervisor 3: Supervising the Research Process • HBEDS 4: Supporting, Motivating and Developing Students • Research Staff Mentoring Programme (delivered for research staff at GCU between April and November each year in 2023 and 2024)	
Diverse careers 3.4							

		The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research.					
PCDI5	Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.	Benchmark and monitor the % of ECRs that are undertaking: a) supervisor workshop series offered by the GS b) the opportunities to develop teaching skills and undertake the AHE teaching certificates offered by the Academic Development Dept c) the UHATCH programme or participating in the masters workshops on social innovation skills, entrepreneurship and commercialisation of research ideas offered by RIO/UHATCH.	a, b. Apr 23 c. Aug 23	a. GS b.ADSL c. RIO	**DATA Professional & career development attendance** The % of ECRs undertaking these development opportunities is benchmarked. The % is increased with the interventions of encouragement to engage put in place.	a. Ongoing. % ECRs undertook a Graduate School workshop for Supervisors between March 2023 and February 2024 (the same %age as the previous year).. b. Ongoing. 4 researchers are undertaking the PGCAP in 2023/24, 2 researchers have taken part in the GTA series in 2023/24. c. The employment opportunities to ECRs will be developed further, including entrepreneurship and moving between different sectors. a.b.c. A collated annual report to URC is planned.	
PCDM2	Managers support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.	Provide development opportunities for Managers as mentors within the GS researcher mentor scheme that raise awareness of their role in exploring and preparing researchers for a diversity of careers.	Jun 23	Graduate School	**CEDARS Professional & career development** Q35.2 manager encourages you to consider wide range of future career options within and beyond academia. 2023 33% (2021 38%, UK2023 38%)	Ongoing. Continued enhancement of mentoring programme, building on existing guidance and info available https://www.gcu.ac.uk/research/graduateschool/researcherdevelopment/mentoring Post-PhD jobs: where to look and how to apply, ran on 14 March 2024..	Promote opportunities with SGSSS/ESRC Post Doc Fellowship competition - =and support ECRs/post PhDs = potential applicants to maximise successful outcomes.

Abbreviations	
ADR	School Associate Dean of Research
ADSL	Academic Development & Student Learning Dept
DARE	Developing Academic Researcher Excellence Steering Group
E&D	The Equality and Diversity Forum
GCUL	GCU London School
GS	The Graduate School
GSBS	Glasgow School for Business and Society
PDAR	Performance and Development Annual Review
PGRT	Postgraduate Research Tutor
PS	People Services
RD	Researcher Development
RIO	Research Innovation Office
SCEBE	School of Computing, Engineering and Built Environment
SHLS	School of Health and Life Sciences
UEG	University Executive Group
URC	University Research Committee
PS	People Services
RD	Researcher Development
RIO	Research Innovation Office

EIA follows