Principle 1

Recruitment and Selection

Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.

Proposal	Benefit	Action	Measure
1.1 Appoint a cohort of 35 Vice-Chancellor's Fellows to join us from September 2019. These permanent roles have unique, attractive terms aimed at recruiting and nurturing ECRs in their first permanent research and teaching role.	The cohort of new Vice-Chancellor Fellows (many are ECRS) will strengthen the university's research profile and activity.	Appoint 35 high quality Vice-Chancellor's Fellows who are either aligned with our areas of existing strength or will support Northumbria in growing research capacity in other areas related to our disciplines. Manage and track the progress of the successful candidates, ensure that ECRs are effectively supported and developed with appropriate mentoring and development opportunities. **Target Date: September 2019 (appointment); September 2020 (one-year review)** **Responsibility: HR Manager (Recruitment), Faculty Executive Teams**	• High quality candidates are appointed. • New colleagues are developed and supported to deliver high levels of performance. • Can evidence the university's research profile and activity has strengthened as a result of the new appointments; e.g. increase in the number of staff submitted to REF2021 to c.1000; increase in the number of quality research outputs by a factor of seven (measured between 2010 and 2018).
1.2 Develop and deliver a new bespoke research induction for academic and research staff new to the University. Develop an informal ECR welcome event hosted by the ECR Forum to supplement the new research induction.	Provide researchers with a structured induction programme to include formal and informal welcome events to introduce them to the research and wider academic community at Northumbria. Thus enabling a smoother transition into what might be their first academic position and introducing support networks as soon as possible.	HR and RIS will deliver up to four induction programmes annually that will cover an introduction to research and knowledge exchange at Northumbria. This module will introduce new academic colleagues to Northumbria's research and knowledge exchange strategy, including REF planning, and the research policy landscape. The session will also be focussed on Northumbria's research integrity training and governance, and how the University supports academic colleagues to strengthen NU research outputs by increasing their quality, accessibility and impact of their research outputs. It will also familiarise attendees with institutional processes and support mechanisms around; submitting applications; costing and pricing; and working with business, government and third sector and ways to develop pathways to impact. The ECR Forum Management Group proposes holding a welcome event for new ECRs, including PDRAs and contract researchers, in October 2019. The aim of the event is to introduce ECRs to the research culture and environment at Northumbria and promote the ECR forum to new colleagues. The event will include: • A welcome from the PVC R&I. • Discussion and networking with current Northumbria ECRs	• ECR forum welcome event, including PDRAs and contract researchers, held in October 2019. • NU Research Induction event, including PDRAs and contract researchers, held in November 2019. • Aim to have 80% of new ECRs attend (including the Vice-Chancellor Fellow cohort) for these events. • Increase in CROS response for induction question +10%. • Use feedback and analysis for future welcome events.

		Target Date: December 2019 **Responsibility: Chair of ECR Forum, RIS Research Policy Manager**	
1.3 Support contract research staff in preparing for their next role by delivering career workshops as part of the ECR forum and providing research development training to support the development of future funding applications.	CROS survey response for access to career development and training opportunities was lower than the sector average (69% vs 79%), therefore need to identify specific training for contract researcher staff to support them preparing for their next role inside, or outside of academia.	Deliver Career workshops with internal and external speakers to provide insights into working both outside and inside academia. Provide tailored support to contract research staff from Research Development Team through online resources, face to face workshops, and support for funding applications. **Target Date: January 2021** **Responsibility: Chair of ECR Forum, Research Policy Manager, Head of Research Development.**	• Careers workshop for ECRs and contract research staff (aim for 30+ attendees): June 2020 and December 2020. • Development of online and face to face support for contract researchers to develop funding applications (September 2020). • CROS 2021 survey response for access to career development and training opportunities + 10% • CROS 2021 survey response for undertaking training in career management and developing a career plan + 10%
1.4 Improve online researcher career development resources and raise awareness of Researcher Development planner.	Provide tools for researchers to use individually and help to develop pro-active career management skills. Raise awareness of Vitae career support materials for researchers and PIs.	Develop specific university intranet webpages with signposts to useful external resources such as VITAE. Explore the value of the university subscribing to Vitae RDF planner organisation membership. **Target Date: July 2021** **Responsibility: Research Policy Manager**	• Webpages are relevant and up to date • Positive feedback is received from researchers (monitored through page 'likes') and target 30 unique hits per month. • CROS 2021 survey response for undertaking training in career management + 10% • If recommended, organisational membership of Vitae RDF planner is approved
1.5 Implement a career pathway for technical staff.	The career pathway will introduce a clear promotion and framework for individuals and will support the university to plan a sustainable route for developing technicians.	Review current technical roles and responsibilities and make recommendations for improvement. Other actions will be determined based on the recommendations. **Target Date: July 2020** **Responsibility: Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor; HR Manager**	• Review completed on time and recommendations taken forward. • Other measures will be determined and action plan updated based on the recommendations.

Principle 2
Recognition and Value
Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.

Proposal	Benefit	Action	Measure
2.1 Support continued development of the University-wide ECR Forum.	Provide a University-wide, cross-disciplinary space for our different ECR communities to develop support mechanisms and raise issues relevant to the different ECR experience at Northumbria.	• Refresh the ECR forum management group membership and elect a new chair annually. • Develop the Terms of Reference for the Group to ensure they are fit for purpose. • Plan two events per annum for ECRs on career support open to contract researchers (linked to action 1.3) • Develop two thematic forums per annum to increase networking and development opportunities for ECRs. • Develop and deliver monthly peer writing workshops from October 2019. **Target Date: August 2021** **Responsibility: Chair of the ECR forum, RIS Research Policy Manager**	• To deliver four forums per annum by August 2021. • To review ECR representation at relevant committees and groups. • To develop communication strategies with ECRs e.g. ECR distribution list. • CROS 2021 survey response for access to career development and training opportunities + 10% • CROS 2021 survey response for undertaking training in career management and developing a career plan + 10%

2.2 To deliver a Scholarly Publications programme of training.	1. Empower ECRs (both those new to research and those who have just completed a doctorate) to identify high quality journals in their discipline to publish in and raise their research profile and employability.
	2. Develop professional networks to support academic publishing and dissemination for those new to research.
	3. Support for individuals to begin article for publication.
		• To develop and deliver a scholarly publication training programme, including:
		    ○ Publication masterclass with key Publishers and journals e.g. Nature, Elsevier.
		    ○ Facilitated writing workshops
		    ○ Develop peer support 'write clubs'.
		This represents a significant new investment in research training and development for our ECR staff (up to £10K over two years), who are either new to Northumbria, or who have had a career in teaching and learning and are new to research.
		Target Date: September 2020
		Responsibility: RIS Research Policy Manager
			• Deliver a scholarly publications training programme to all nominated academic staff by September 2020.
			• We will run six cohorts of 10-20 for ECRs depending on departmental requirements.
			• Analyse feedback and from attendees to build on future training. As this is a significant financial investment in researchers, we aim for 85% positive feedback for the sessions.

2.3 Analyse data collected though surveys (University Staff Survey 2018, CROS and PIRLS 2019) to monitor the engagement levels of research and academic colleagues and to increase responses to all surveys.	The outcomes of the analysis will help us to understand overall levels of satisfaction, motivation and pride, and the factors which are contributing to it so that areas of concern can be addressed.	Cross reference the analysis of the University Staff Survey 2018 data against the analysis of the 2019 CROS and PIRLS data. Identify any areas of concern that need further consideration which are not already being addressed. Follow up with focus groups/ facilitated sessions with research and academic colleagues.	• An increase in participation rates for CROS/PIRLS 2021 by 10%. • Undertake analysis of CROS/PIRLS 2019 results. • Hold focus group (2x with minimum of 15 attendees) with each audience (contract researchers and PIs), to define follow up on actions from analysis of results. • Actions are identified which are relevant to research staff and communicate effective changes as a result

		Improve awareness of CROS and PIRLS and increase future participation through targeted campaigns e.g. 'you said, we did'. **Target Date: September 2020** **Responsibility: HR; Research Policy Manager**	of CROS and PIRLS surveys to increase awareness and participation. • Update action plan as appropriate. • Increase in responses to CROS and PIRLS Surveys 2020 by +10%.
2.4 Implement a Research Data Management Policy and research data management training open to all research staff groups.	To develop staff's research and professional skills. Research Data Management policy remains fit for purpose	Research Data Repository procurement process for Figshare is near completion; implementation process is ongoing: • Data repository pilot planned for May to September 2019. Launch in October 2019. • Research data management drop-ins scheduled once a month from October 2019. • Research data management session to be delivered as part of Researcher Development Programme in 2019/2020. • Development of more extensive online interactive training on Research Data Management and Data Protection is expected to be complete in June 2019. **Target Date: October 2020** **Responsibility: Head of Library and Learning Services**	• Figshare pilot workshops and launch of live platform. • RDM training online, monitor completions (40% academic staff, 50% PGR by March 2020) and feedback. • Delivery of Researcher Development Programme sessions.
2.5 Undertake a review of Northumbria's research culture, including; examining reward and recognition for collaborative research (e.g. Co-I accreditation), good research practice, and communication and engagement mechanisms with research staff.	To generate an empowered research culture by identifying best practice in Faculties and Departments for reward and recognition systems, and support for development of, and engagement with researchers at all career stages.	• Analyse information from Staff Survey and CROS and PIRLS 2019 for areas improvement and further dialogue with researchers. • Undertake four Faculty based research culture workshops – based on the Royal Society template. • Identify and share areas of good practice. • Identify areas for development and develop action plan for addressing issues (including any identified in CROS & PIRLS 2019). **Target date: January 2021** **Responsibility: Deputy Director, Research and Innovation Services**	• Undertake three research culture workshops – based on the Royal Society template • Feedback to Faculties via FRAKES. • Implement and share areas of good practice identified. • Increase in Staff Survey response; how optimistic staff are about their opportunities for career progression +5%; how the University recognise and appreciates good performance +5%;

Principle 3 Support and Career Development *Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment*			
Proposal	**Benefit**	**Action**	**Measure**
3.1 To undertake a GAP analysis of the researcher development offer across Research and Innovation Services, based on Vitae Researcher Development Framework.	The GAP analysis will identify areas missing from the Academic and Research Development Training Programme, and plan appropriate training, guidance or support to plug those gaps for researchers at all career stages including ECRs, PDRAs, and contract researchers. .	• To complete a GAP analysis of the researcher development, offer across Research and Innovation Services, based on Vitae Researcher Development Framework. • Identify gaps and provide/ develop appropriate training and guidance materials for researchers at different career stages. • Develop online training materials using Articulate software. **Target Date: September 2020** **Responsibility: RIS Research Policy Manager**	• Publication of new programme in September. • Monitor attendance numbers for each course (compulsory programmes 97% attendance rate; non-compulsory programmes we aim for a minimum of 12 attendees per session). • Web hits for online training and resources. We aim for 30 individual hits per month with an increase to 50 individual hits per month, after the resources have been online for six months. • Positive feedback from course participants (70% positive feedback). • CROS 2021 survey response for access to career development and training opportunities + 10% • CROS 2021 survey response for undertaking training in career management and developing a career plan + 10%
3.2 Review the current use of the mentoring scheme to support ECRs including PDRAs, contract researchers and experienced academic staff who are new to research. Identify areas of best practice in Departments and develop an approach to drive improvement in other areas.	Mentors are skilled and supported to undertake their role effectively. Early Career Researchers are allocated an appropriate mentor and feel supported to take responsibility for their own growth and learning and development.	• Understand the current position on the number of ECRs who have a mentor. • Hold a forum with our different ECR communities to understand their needs. • Identify areas of best practice in Departments. • Review the content of the training available and, if needed, review and implement ensuring that the responsibilities of the mentor and mentee are clear. **Target Date: September 2021** **Responsibility: HR Manager; Research Policy Manager; Heads of Departments.**	• Early Career Researchers are allocated an appropriate mentor (our aim is for each ECR, including contract researchers, to have research mentor). • Positive feedback from mentors and mentees (70% positive feedback on scheme). • Colleagues will be supported to take responsibility for their own growth and learning and development.
3.3 Deliver mental health awareness training and bite-size sessions.	Develop a more resilient workforce and support mechanisms for colleagues.	• Delivery of Mental Health Awareness training to staff (1/2-day session). • Six bite size mental health session delivered on the following topics – Anxiety; Depression; Bi-Polar; Psychosis; Suicide; and Panic Attacks **Target Date: December 2019 and ongoing** **Responsibility: HR**	• Early signs of mental health issues are more easily understood and responded to. • The right number of Mental Health First Aiders are appointed and trained. • Reduction in the number of long-term mental health issues. • Target of over 100 staff trained on mental health awareness per year.

Principle 4
Support and Career Development
The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career

Proposal	Benefit	Action	Measure
4.1 Further develop the NGLAH (Next Generation of Large Award Holders) programme to tailor it more specifically to the career stage of participants.	By tailoring and developing the NGLAH programme to different cohorts, researchers at each stage of their career including ECRs and those ready for their first research leadership role.	• Develop the NGLAH programme of training activities around three career stages: (I) Preparing for research funding success– (aimed at ECRs and those new to research) (2) Next Generation of Large Award Holders (for experienced researchers, wanting to progress from small to large awards) (3) Fellowship Ready – for future research leaders • Focus groups with ECRs and research leaders will inform the content of the programmes (complete June 2019). • Programme launch September 2019. **Target Date: Cohorts training programmes designed by August 2019 and first cohorts completed September 2020.** **Responsibility: RIS Head of Research Development**	• We will run a cohort for (1), (2) and (3) annually and aim for 20 attendees in each cohort. • Feedback is currently at 90% positive so aim is to maintain this high score. • Increase in PIRLS response +10% for; building a research group; support to develop research staff. **Update:** Programmes designed and advertised. Currently identifying ECRs and research leads to be invited to each cohort.
4.2 Review of PGR supervisor training and development of online training materials.	Develop online resources to ensure supervisors are up to date with relevant training and changes in PGR processes or policies. Develop systems for monitoring supervisors training completions to support the competency of supervisors, and the PGR experience.	• Develop an online training module for PGR supervisors. • Pilot module and review feedback and making any appropriate changes. **Target Date: January 2021** **Responsibility: Graduate School Manager**	• Training module live and available to staff. • Monitor completion rates– 75% completion rate by December 2020. • Develop training module according to feedback (70% positive feedback, with a 10% increase each year).
4.3 Develop PGR training and support for PGRS who teach or demonstrate with route to HEA Fellowship.	Ensure PGRs are supported to teach ort demonstrate UG and PGT students, and that those students are taught by appropriately qualified lecturers.	• Develop a comprehensive training programme on lecturing or demonstrating at university for PGRs and route to HEA fellowship. • Support the development of peer to peer networks for teaching support.	• Launch training programme for PGRs who teach or demonstrate. • Monitor completion rates and feedback– 80 PGRs per year completion rate by December 2020, with 80% satisfaction rating.

		Target Date: January 2021 Responsibility: Graduate School Manager	• Review PRES results for teaching support feedback increase of +15%.
4.4 Development of programme of mandatory research ethics reviewer training.	Ensure staff are up to date with ethics and research integrity training, and that they can complete their roles as reviewers competently and confidently.	• Develop online training module of reviewer training. • Launch pilot in September 2019; review feedback and make any changes for launch in December 2019. Target Date: December 2019 Responsibility: RIS Research Policy Manager; Faculty Research Ethics Directors	• Develop online reviewer ethics training materials for all academic staff to access and complete training every three years • Monitor number of staff who have completed reviewer ethics training 2019/20 (80% completion rate) and 2020/21 (90% completion rate).

Principle 5

Researchers' Responsibilities

Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to proactively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.

Proposal	Benefit	Action	Measure
5.1 Development of career stage focused training for research and academic staff.	Developing career stage focused, cohort training will enable researchers to more easily identify training that is relevant to them, allows them to meet peers, while ensuring that it is fit for purpose and appropriate.	• Convene Focus Groups (ECRs and experienced academics) to co-develop our future offer. Target Date: July 2020 Responsibility: RIS Head of Research Development	• To hold two focus groups and use the feedback to develop cohort-based training packages and other online resources. **Complete**: Focus groups held, new initiatives identified, and programme updated.
5.2 Improve probation arrangements for new staff	New staff understand what is required of them and feel supported and prepared for their role. From the outset objectives and development needs are clearly defined, along with the resources and support the individual can expect.	• Extend online Performance and Development Appraisal to include Probation Management. • Develop online guides and other resources to support colleagues and their managers. • Implement online system. Target Date: October 2019, One-Year Review September 2020 Responsibility: HR Manager	• Online system and resources are implemented by October 2019. • At least 95% of new starters engage with the online system during year 1. Year 2 onwards 100% completion. • Positive feedback from new colleagues and their managers. • Review after three months and six months and adjust as necessary. • PIRLS response +5% for; 'confidence in conducting appraisals'. • CROS response +5% for; 'appraisal process was useful''.

5.3 Provide an enhanced range of online resources and a new programme of in-person briefing and workshop sessions to develop funding applications that can be utilised at all career stages, but with specific support for ECRs, PDRAs and contract researchers.	By having online resources available, researchers will have information at their fingertips to be able to understand the funding landscape and develop funding applications The in-person briefing, and workshop sessions will be designed to respond to funding and collaboration opportunities, enabling timely sharing of knowledge and insights with the researchers.	• Develop enhanced online resources for researchers on funding and developing successful grant applications. **Target Date: Enhanced online resources completed by September 2020** **Responsibility: RIS Head of Research Development** **Target Date: Delivery of annual programme of workshops and briefing sessions. December 2020** **Responsibility: RIS Head of Research Development**	• Online resources published on RIS webpages. • Monitor use of resources (target 30 unique hits per month) and feedback. • We will run ten additional workshops or briefing events each year (approx. 20 briefing events in 2019-20 reaching 300 academic staff).

Principle 6 Diversity and Equality *Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.*			
Proposal	**Benefit**	**Action**	**Measure**
6.1 Develop a comprehensive action plan to address Gender Inequality across the university. (Retain Athena SWAN Bronze Award)	Develop University's structures and processes to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.	Athena SWAN Bronze accreditation was achieved in October 2015 and we are in the process of resubmitting for accreditation at Institutional Bronze Level. Departments are currently preparing to apply separately for Athena SWAN departmental awards. **Target Date: November 2019 for resubmission of Institutional application.** **Responsibility: Athena SWAN University Self-Assessment Team**	• Successful re-submission for Athena SWAN institutional award in November 2019. • Ensure adequate representation of researcher and EDI issues on Concordat Working Group and Athena SWAN University Self-Assessment Team.
6.2 Establish VC Diversity and Inclusion Fund to encourage and support ideas for equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives from staff	New opportunities are created to encourage staff and support staff to develop ideas.	• Establish VC Diversity and Inclusion fund. • Use opportunities to promote the fund. • Monitor and encourage applications to the fund from academic staff. **Target Date: December 2019** **Responsibility: Organisational Development Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)**	Specific measures will be developed after analysis of the first round of applications, and actions related to researchers updated on Concordat action plan.

Principle 7
Implementation and Review
The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK

Proposal	Benefit	Action	Measure
7.1 Monitor the implementation of the Action Plan of 2019-21 by progress on relative committees, forums and working groups	Improved staff retention	Engage with research staff on our progress: • ECR Forum • ECR Forum Management Group • Concordat Working Group **Target Date: Quarterly meetings in 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years.** **Responsibility: Chair of the Concordat Strategy Group.**	• Successful implementation or development of all actions • Meeting dates, agendas and minutes/meeting notes
7.2 Review the action plan considering any changes to the revised Concordat including gap analysis between current and revised Concordat.	Ensure that the action plan is up to date and reflects the latest principles, and clauses of the Concordat.	• Review the revised Concordat at the Concordat Strategy Group **Target Date: September 2020** **Responsibility: Chair of the Concordat Strategy Group.**	• Meeting to review revised Concordat and to update the action plan accordingly. • Hold information events (3 per annum) on revised Concordat for academic and research staff. • Monitor online guides and webpage hits to measure awareness.

Glossary of Terms:

CROS: Careers in Research Online Survey
ECR: Early Career Researcher
ED&IM: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager
FHEA: Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
HR: Human Resources
NUPRS: Northumbria University Professional Recognition Scheme
ODA: Organisational Development Adviser

PDA: Performance Development and Appraisal
PI: Principal Investigator
PIRLS: Principal Investigator and Research Leaders Survey
PRES: Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
RaKE: Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee
RDM: Research Development Manager
REF 2021: Research Excellence Framework
RIS: Research and Innovation Services