**HR Excellence in Research Award**

**6 Year Review Report – January 2019**

**Introduction and Background**

Warwick University received the HR Excellence in Research award in 2012 and subsequently undertook a 2 and 4 year review in 2014 and 2016 respectively. At each review a modified action plan covering the period up until this 6 year review was implemented. As demonstrated in Warwick’s 2012 submission documentation and subsequent reviews, the University wholeheartedly supports the principles outlined in the Concordat to support the career development of research active staff and works proactively to adhere to the principles. Support for research active staff continues to be demonstrated in posts and in the wide range of learning, development and support offered to employees on research and teaching contracts as continues to be evidenced in **Appendix 1**.

**Process for Internal Evaluation**

Internal evaluation and monitoring of the Action Plan is undertaken in conjunction with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) team, the Learning and Development Centre (LDC), Human Resources, Research Impact Services (R&IS), the Research Staff Forum (RSF) and the University Research Committee (URC), chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research, Professor Pam Thomas, with representation from RSF. The URC whose membership consists of academic staff, research staff and senior professional and support staff meet termly and report to the Senate, one of the key strategic committees of the University.

Operational responsibility for monitoring and updating the Action Plan lies with the ED&I and LDC team and at key review stages (years 2 and 4) plans were discussed, amended and approved through the URC. Information is shared with research focussed and appropriate support staff for input and comment on the submission/reviews. Feedback and responses to questions are provided both electronically and face to face with attendance/discussion at RSF. In line with feedback from assessors in the 2016 review, we have begun to implement some of the recommendations and started with including more metrics in the progress of the Action Plan.

Since the initial submission and reviews of the HR Excellence in Research award, the Action Plan has continuously been up-dated with completed actions noted and published on Warwick’s webpages. Significant proportions of the plan still need to be considered as ongoing, partly due to the nature of fixed-term employment contracts that some of the postdoctoral/research/teaching staff are employed on. There is recognition that learning and development of research active staff is essential and embedded as a result, not only to equip individuals to progress in their careers, but to ensure that researchers are equipped with critical transferable skills, whether they remain at Warwick or move elsewhere (HE, industrial, national and international organisations).

Warwick continues to have a proactive Athena SWAN agenda, which has some synergy with some of the actions identified in the Action Plan for the HR Excellence in Research award work, and which has assisted in many of the key actions being met. In addition, the University is a Race Equality Charter member of AdvanceHE, is a Stonewall Diversity Champion, as well as working towards the Business Disability Forum Standards and a holder of the National Wellbeing Charter Mark. The work associated with all of these standards impacts significantly to improve procedures and processes and supports all staff who may identify with particular protected characteristics. Significant and positive progress has been made on the majority of actions (as demonstrated in the 4 Year Review Action Plan - **Appendix 1**).

**Key Achievements and Progress over the Six Year Period**

Key achievements since 2016 have been selected for each principle to outline progress (other key achievements have been previously recorded on the Reports for 2014 and 2016. However **Appendix 1** demonstrates full progress against each principle for this review period.

**Principle 1: Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining research active staff**

* Chair of Recruitment Panel training both in **2015/16** (**220** staff with recruiting responsibilities trained over **24** sessions) and in **2017/18** a further **6** sessions were held with a further **81** members of staff being trained. 100% of evaluation forms recorded that attendees were satisfied/extremely satisfied with the training overall. In addition, a ‘How to Guide’ was created to assist panel chairs in creating the right panel composition and ensuring fair selection methods are used throughout the process.
* Annual analysis of recruitment/retention trends inform the recruitment strategy in line with our Gender, Race, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religion and Belief work. All data is benchmarked against local/ sector population.
* The Provost, supported by the Promotion Staff Engagement Group and the Warwick Gender Taskforce undertook a review of the Promotions process in **2018** (which will be implemented in the **2018/19** promotion round), making the process fairer and more transparent, and will address previous inequities for female staff.

**Principle 2: Research active staff are recognised and valued by the University as an essential part of our human resource.**

* For research and teaching focussed staff on probation, a new section was added in **2017/18** on Family Leave (e.g. maternity, adoption, long term parental leave) which states the period of academic probation will be extended automatically by one and a half times the period of absence.
* Warwick Academic Returners Fellowship, which buys out up to 60% of teaching and administrative duties for staff on full academic contracts returning from maternity/adoption/long term parental leave. Since **2015**, **32** staff have taken advantage of these Fellowships.

**Principle 3: Research active staff are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in the global research environment.**

* Research staff forum is used as a mechanism to consult and inform research active staff on the research environment, learning and development and career enhancing opportunities.
* New in **2017/18** was an LDC research active staff collaboration with the Public Engagement team which resulted in five workshops and resource bank webpages.
* Two leadership courses with the addition of the new follow up meeting for research active staff to support building capability and capacity.

**Principle 4: Recognition of the importance of research active staff personal and career development at all stages of their career.**

* Increased opportunities for research active staff to engage on impact and public engagement.
* Research Active Staff Networks – we continue the exemplar of the research staff networks as highlighted in the feedback from the 2016 review.
* R&IS and departments support preparation and costings of external awards and fellowships to facilitate success. In **2017/18** R&IS supported academic departments to submit **1,814** applications totalling **£481.5M,** compared to **£441.9M** in **2016/17.**

**Principle 5: Individual research active staff share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development.**

* The review of the Global Research Priorities Programme – research active staff had the opportunity to contribute to the review to shape the GRP programme moving forward.
* Responsibility/opportunity for career development is discussed in Development Performance Reviews.

**Principle 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of research active staff.**

* In 2016, a consultation took place with key stakeholders (including Trade Unions) on updating and revising the Equality Objectives for 2016-2020 in line with the University and Research Strategy. Progress is monitored annually and reported at strategic committees and published on the University’s webpages.
* A number of Equality and Diversity training programmes, both online and face to face are held each term and uptake monitored (total of **5027** staff have undertaken the online diversity training since **2012**).
* Warwick continues to participate in the Athena SWAN Charter Mark and was successful in renewing its Silver Institutional award in **2018**. We are also a member of the Race Charter Mark, subscribe to the Business Disability Forum (**April 2018**) and currently self-assessing against the Disability Standards. Over the last 3 years, Warwick has risen **182** rankings in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, which is seen as a significant achievement. Indeed in 2018, Warwick scored the highest points in the new Trans Support Section of the Index (**58%**) compared to both Education (**41%**) and all Sectors (**33%**). In May 2017, Warwick achieved the National Wellbeing Charter Mark.

**Principle 7: 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.**

* Public Engagement team and Science Faculty supported ‘Voices of Young Science’ national media and engagement training in **June 2018** for ECRS Post Docs and PhD students. Warwick hosts the Midlands workshop.
* **12** Early Career researchers from the four international partner institutions have been awarded three month placements at Warwick to catalyse long-term interdisciplinary collaborations and undertake training activities to support their career development.

**Strategy for the Next Two Years**

Warwick’s strategy is to develop and promote considered approaches to supporting and growing Warwick’s research strengths and being responsive to the dynamic environment in which researchers operate. Warwick is committed to ensure that our research makes a distinctive, competitive impact on the world, particularly in the sciences and medicine. Achieving the required growth will call for bold and creative steps in these areas, cutting across disciplinary boundaries, both intellectually and institutionally.

To recognise that to succeed, we need to keep investing in our staff and students, in their experiences and development, in our facilities and infrastructure, and in enabling the interdisciplinary ways of working that are so integral to our research. We recognise the distinctive contribution of our doctoral students and post-doctoral community and we will continue to nurture this. Our ambitions for scale and global competitiveness depend on all of these factors.

To continue providing an excellent environment for learning, we will invest significantly in new and renewed facilities. Every design will have as its guiding principle the need to stimulate the interdisciplinary and collaborative culture that drives both world-leading research and research-led teaching.

Warwick’s research strategy has six strategic priorities: Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Excellence; Transformative Interdisciplinarity; Excellence with Impact; Global reach and significance; Partnership; and Innovation.

The seven work strands that underpin these strategic priorities are:

1. Support, foster and showcase the talent and ambition of all our researchers
2. Undertake world-leading research at the forefront of knowledge
3. Spearhead research with relevance for impact & innovation
4. Cultivate world-class interdisciplinary research communities
5. Pioneer state-of-the-art accessible research infrastructure
6. Communicate our research to provide leadership and influence in the global knowledge economy
7. Build an income and partnership platform to sustain and grow our world-leading activity

By linking our goals with the concordat principles we aspire to maintain and improve upon the progress already made since our initial award in 2012. This will be done through ongoing appropriate consultation, development of new initiatives, evaluation, monitoring and reported impact on those initiatives – see new Action Plan – **Appendix 2**. Warwick therefore values this framework as a tool to ensure we meet our obligations to all of our research community.