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Annual Report for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Name of Institution	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Reporting period	01 September 2024 to 31 August 2025
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Web address of annual report	Researcher Development Concordat Cardiff Metropolitan University
Web address of institutional Researcher Development Concordat webpage	https://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/research/Pages/concordat.aspx
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Date statement sent to Researcher Development Concordat secretariat via rdc@ntu.ac.uk	09 April 2026

Statement on how the organisation creates, maintains and embeds a research culture that upholds a positive and inclusive environment for researchers at all stages of their careers (max 500 words)

We continue to use the concordat as a vehicle to make progress in developing a strong and sustainable research culture and environment for our staff, with continued structured support being offered via a wide range of initiatives. These include:

- Supporting the ‘Women to Reader and Professor’ scheme, available to all women academics at any career stage, which has pushed our percentage of women in the Professoriate from well below the HESA benchmark to significantly above it and resulted in a career pipeline of Readers where women outnumber men by more than 2:1. In 2023/24 RIS moved from only offering Action Learning sets to delivering events and workshops focused on Career Stage and CV and Application Clinics. In 2024/25 this mode of delivery continued however the pause of the Institutional promotion process, changes to the steering group and the impact of the transformation programme on all staff resulted in a reduced programme of events.
- Recognising the need to support our existing professors, the Women Professors network was established to provide a confidential space to discuss challenges and an opportunity to engage in active diversification to support women and those from ethnic minorities to Professorship via the Women to Reader and Professor scheme.
- Our Doctoral academy provides supervisor training and support sessions for Staff, with up to 20 different sessions either delivered in person or via e-module aligned with the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) Supervisory Framework. The sessions provide opportunities for peer learning, research dissemination, and academic community building.
- Our ‘How I became...’ lecture series, open to all staff and research students, where research Professors from a range of backgrounds give a recorded 20-minute lunchtime talk followed by 40 minutes of Q&A. The talks are recorded and available on our RIS pages and in 2024/25 we had 115 staff register for these events.
- Our ‘Reveal’ programme, now in its fifth year, is a targeted, bespoke support package aimed at emerging researchers with the potential to capture significant funding from cherished sources and includes training and mentorship elements.
- Following the success of Reveal, a new Research and Innovation Funding Starter Scheme (Rise), was launched in 2024/25. Aimed at early career researchers, the programme provides training, mentoring and peer support for academics to write their first grant application.
- The R:IDEAs network was launched in July 2024 to cultivate and support researchers at all stages of their career and from all areas of the University. During 2024/25 the academic lead analysed the outcomes from the sessions and identified four main areas for further exploration. Work on the network was paused during the transformation programme and will resume in 2025/26.
- The Welsh Universities Research Leadership Programme is a pan-Wales research leadership initiative aimed at enhancing researchers’ leadership capabilities, skills, abilities, and confidence to lead and manage more effectively. The programme draws on expertise in leadership from within the Welsh University community and the Learned

Society of Wales to build and foster cross-institutional engagement and networking. The programme provides a mix of online workshops, group discussions and coaching to enable participants to reflect on their own approach to leadership and identify how to further enhance their skills as research leaders in Universities across Wales.

- Recognising the important role that the Learned Society of Wales play in strengthening collaboration, integrity and inclusivity across the Welsh researcher community Cardiff Met was pleased to host their:
 - Early Career Researcher (ECR) symposium on July 3rd and 4th, 2025. The event was the third annual ECR Colloquium, providing a platform for 140 early career researchers to share their work and network with colleagues and fellows from across Wales in a supportive and inspiring environment.
 - Pilot Women’s Network event to support more women being nominated to Fellowship of the Society and extending their existing networks.
 - Future Fellows sessions online and in person for all staff interested in either becoming a Fellow or finding out how to nominate fellows.

Institutionally we remain committed to our Athena Swan Silver award and were awarded our Bronze Award under the Race Equality Charter in 2024/25. Both initiatives are an important vehicle in our aims of embedding a diverse research culture.

Provide a short summary of the institution’s strategic objectives and implementation plans for delivering each of the three pillars of the Concordat (environment and culture, employment, and professional development of researchers) for your key stakeholder groups together with your measures for evaluating progress and success (max 600 words)

During 2024/25, Cardiff Met, much like other Universities within the sector, underwent a programme of financial recovery which dominated activities. As a result, the University underwent a Transformation Programme, looking at cost savings and realigning services to meet a refreshed Strategy 2030. The refreshed Strategy renewed our missions to create a greater clarity of purpose and introduced revised KPIs resulting in many of the planned activities being delayed or refreshed.

Environment and culture

The institution’s Strategy 2030 sets out a clear ambition to enable a better Environment and Culture. In our Research & Innovation Thematic Strategy we have committed to increasing research engagement, income, outputs and impact across our entire academic portfolio, and develop an open data culture. In support of the new refreshed Strategy, a Research and Innovation Services departmental restructure and centralisation of services was initiated in March 2025 with ongoing consultation and service redesign taking place throughout 2025/26.

Although delaying actions, commitments remained in place to ensure a supportive environment and culture for Researchers with priorities pivoted to developing a new Resolution Framework. The framework combines a compassionate culture with legal

compliance integrating performance, disciplinary and grievance procedures. It is based on restorative principles and blends informal local resolution practices with formally trained and accredited staff, and interventions with the more formal resolution practices and standards as set out in the ACAS code of practice. The framework will launch in the new academic year 2025/26.

Employment

As part of our Institutional People Strategy we have committed to using our values of creativity, innovation, inclusivity and trust and our behaviours of leadership, courage, accountability, and agility, to provide the framework to attract, recruit, develop and retain our people to reflect our diverse communities, investing in building the skills and attributes needed to work equitably with individuals and groups of all backgrounds in Wales, the UK and globally. Specifically in relation to Researchers, we aim to achieve this by ensuring recruitment, selection and career progression at all levels are aligned to our EDI values. We achieve this by:

- Proactively using a wide variety of resources, platforms, and networks to promote and advertise our roles across networks and communities.
- We advertise flexible working where the job supports it and use inclusive language in all our literature and communications in both Welsh and English. We encourage applications from candidates and provide information for individuals looking to work in the UK.
- All our selection panels undergo mandatory recruitment and selection training and unconscious bias training. They are diverse in gender, with the aim of having a broad spectrum of characteristics including ethnicity and disability.
- To reduce unconscious bias in the recruitment process, personal demographic information is removed from applications to allow for anonymous shortlisting (otherwise known as blind shortlisting). Where the University does require academic CV, or other form documentary evidence, candidates are notified and encouraged to remove personal information.
- We remain committed to our Disability Confident Accreditation and the Armed Forces Covenant by ensuring that candidates who either declare a disability, or that are part of the armed forces community and meet the essential criteria for the role, are interviewed.

Professional Development of Researchers

We will continue to support the Professional Development of Researchers pillars by delivering the following:

- developing a high-performance research environment where time, space and support is given to research;
- a comprehensive R&I staff development programme to support the provision of 10 days of Professional Development;
- a schedule of funding calls to support R&I projects of all sizes, and academics at all career stages.

Summary of actions taken, and evaluation of progress made, in the current reporting period to implement your plan to support the three pillars in respect of each of your key stakeholder groups.

The following is a summary of the actions taken through our 2024/25 Implementation Plan in respect of each of our key stakeholder groups designated as Institution (CMU); Academic Managers of Researchers (Deans, Heads of Schools/Departments/PIs; AMR) and Researchers (R)

Environment and Culture

In May 2024 we translated and published the 2023/24 Annual Report to the Board of Governors on the University website in line with our commitment as a signatory to Concordat. (CMU)

A revamped Framework for our internal Insite pages has been developed specifically for 'R&I Staff Development' to ensure better access to information and resources about the Concordat and our commitment to our staff. Work continues to ensure information is relevant and current. (CMU, AMR, R)

Following the successful UKRIO Research Integrity Training pilot, Cardiff Met launched the updated version in May 2025. Cardiff Met will make this training available to all staff and doctoral researchers in 2025/26. (CMU, AMR, R)

Cardiff Met has launched a mandatory ethics training module for all new recruits. (AMR, R)

The CEDARS survey dates agreed by the Cardiff Met Implementation group fell within the Business case review period and so a decision was made to not run the survey in 2024/25 bench marking period. The survey will be launched and promoted during Term 1 of the 2025/26 academic year. (CMU, AMR, R)

In 2024/25 the University's Race Equality Working Group, involving staff across academic and professional services undertook a rigorous self-assessment process, which culminated in bronze award from the Race Equality Charter. Five key themed priorities were identified:

- Increasing representation of racially minoritised staff, and student metrics (progression, awarding gaps, recruitment) where disparities exist;
- Enhancing research careers and increasing representation of racially minoritised groups within our Professoriate, with a focus on intersectionality with gender;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing our inclusive culture, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all our communities, specifically those from racially minoritised groups; ○ Strengthening EDI governance. (CMU, AMR, R) <p>Since 2021 the Royal College of Psychiatry accredited i-act course has been a part of the Manage@Met programme. The session aims to explore how and why Mental Health and Wellbeing impacts individuals and gives managers the skills to have conversations and support individuals thus reducing the stigma which surrounds talking about Mental Health and Wellbeing. In 2024 approximately 100 staff across the University trained as Mental Health First Aiders available in a similar way as first aiders, which aligns with recommendations by HSE (Health and Safety Exec) (CMU, AMR, R).</p> <p>Valuing EDI, Leading Hybrid Teams, Leading Wellbeing in Teams modules in Manage@Met programme contribute to both team culture and wellbeing of all colleagues with the wellbeing module including guidance on how to do risk assessments on work based stress. (CMU, AMR, R)</p> <p>The 2024/25 Performance & Development review period which ran from May to September 2024 had a completion rate of 97% with a 10 Schools and Directorates hitting 100%. 'Valuing EDI, Leading Hybrid Teams, Leading Wellbeing in Teams and this now includes how to do stress risk assessment; all contributing to both team culture and wellbeing of colleagues. (CMU, AMR, R)</p>
<p>Employment</p>	<p>Work continues to ensure open and transparent recruitment with actions around enhancing the Jobs Boards and platforms where opportunities are being advertised. The introduction of the Narrative CV for use at application stage for all research only positions is an ongoing piece of work. (CMU)</p> <p>A RIS Induction Pilot took place in November 2024 with a small cohort of staff. Feedback we received identified refinements to the session which we incorporated. This Introduction to RIS induction will be offered to all new and existing target staff ensuring researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position. This was paused during the transformation programme and current redesign of Research and Innovation Services. (CMU, AMR, R)</p> <p>The approved progression pathway supporting progression from: Research Assistant > Senior Research Assistant > Research Associate</p>

	<p>> Research Fellow > Senior Research Fellow was paused due to transformation programme in 2024/25. The competency framework to support the roles developed in 2023/24 will remain a part of this work, once approval has been received to progress with this initiative. (CMU, AMR, R)</p> <p>Effective line management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent is provided as mandatory training via Manage@Met modules for all line managers. As of May 2025, 93% of all CMU Line Managers are in progress or have completed the manage@met programme. The Manage@Met programme contains 11 essential modules, and 2 additional modules that are applicable dependant on role. The programme has a minimum of 23.5 hours of learning, and a maximum of 27 hours. There is Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applied for staff that have covered module content as part of other Cardiff Met internal training. The modules continue to be reviewed against feedback and best practice or legislative developments. (CMU, AMR, R)</p> <p>The Staff Development Officer (SDO) delivered specific training on career planning sessions directly with Schools and groups. The SDO will continue to work on considering any bespoke training required for Line Managers into 2025/26. (CMU, AMR, R)</p>
<p>Professional development</p>	<p>A dedicated internal portal was developed for R&I staff (both Researchers and Academic Manager or Researchers) to support their professional and career development. The site was launched in 2024/25, providing a one stop shop of all support available and demonstrate the Institution's commitment to the implementation of this Pillar. In addition to this resource, monthly internal R&I newsletter updates and communication channels are used to promote these initiatives, and the following are some examples of the opportunities available to support staff's professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our 'Reveal' programme is a successful targeted, bespoke support package aimed at emerging researchers with the potential to capture significant funding from cherished sources and includes training and mentorship elements. A total of 23 academic staff have now successfully completed Reveal. • We accepted seven members of staff onto the Welsh Universities Research Leadership Programme. A Research Leadership programme available to aspiring leaders across Wales. The programme involved a series of virtual sessions delivered by senior academics and specialists from across Wales.

- We continue to participate in the Welsh Crucible Programme and actively promote it to our researchers. The Staff Development Officer has also taken over the Institutional Lead for the Welsh Crucible programme ensuring that in addition to the generic marketing of the programme that staff are targeted individually and also input is provided on the design of the programme, considering the needs of Cardiff Met academics.
- A new 'Rise' programme was developed in 2024/25 to support academic staff by providing knowledge, confidence and space to develop their first Research or Innovation funding application or enhance the quality of previously unsuccessful applications. The first cohort will begin their journey on the Rise programme in 2025/26.
- The Collaboration Kick-Off series provides opportunities for our researchers to explore new pathways and research connections. The talks allow researchers to meet exemplary research active academics and hear about their skills and experience and the collaborations they are keen to set in motion. Three talks were delivered during the reporting period.

Career Development support is provided on a coaching basis by the Staff Development Officer and offered as an open opportunity for anyone to engage with. Bespoke training sessions were developed in consultation with Schools. Sessions delivered included 'Developing a Research Plan' and 'Being strategic and Productive with your research time'.

The Supervision Information Centre is a dedicated resource for Doctoral Researcher supervisors. All staff approved as a Director of Studies, Supervisory Team Coordinator, Independent Progression Advisor and/or Supervisor will be monitored by RIES to ensure that they are meeting the requirement to undertake professional development every two years and that Doctoral Researchers (DRs) are still being guided towards successful completion. Supervision at Cardiff Met is one of the highest rated areas by DRs in the PRES (Postgraduate Research Experience Survey) at a satisfaction rate of 90% and above for the past five years. It is a requirement for Supervisors to continue their professional development aligned to Supervision every two years. There are five compulsory sessions that all supervisors must complete every five years to ensure they are fully equipped to support their doctoral researchers.

Comment on any lessons learned from the activities undertaken over this period and any modifications you propose to make to your action plan and measures of success as a result

The Concordat Implementation Group and the work carried out to date has allowed us to gauge our progress to date and understand where we are situated. This has provided an annual benchmark from which to build.

The transformation programme and restructure of Research and Innovation during the reporting period 2024/25 had a significant impact on the delivery of the action plan set. This impact will continue to be felt during 2025/26.

Outline your key objectives in delivering your plan in the coming reporting period

In recognition of the impact of the transformation programme on staff, the Staff Development Officer will prioritise the CEDAR survey in 2025/26 as a means of capturing the issues that are most prominent for researchers. The data will be analysed and used to help reprioritise the action plan.

Activities will continue around initiatives to include the Reveal, Rise, Welsh Universities Research Leadership Programme, Welsh Crucible and the Made in Wales Series.

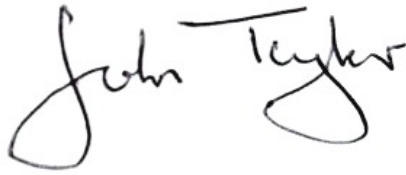
Ongoing work will also be prioritised around the introduction of the narrative CV at application stage for new research appointments. As part of this work, a review of Job Descriptions and Personal Specifications for researcher roles will also be undertaken.

Please provide a brief statement describing your institution's approval process of this report prior to sign off by the governing body

This report was reviewed and approved on the following dates by:

02 February 2026	Concordat Implementation Group
11 February 2026	University Research and Innovation Committee
04 March 2026	Academic Board (to note)
12 March 2026	The Strategic Planning and Performance Committee (subcommittee of the Board of Governors)
25 March 2026	Board of Governors

Signature on behalf of governing body:



John Taylor
Chair of the Board of Governors

Contact for queries: ymorgan@cardiffmet.ac.uk

This annual report will be analysed by Universities UK, secretariat for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, to identify good practices, themes for development and information to improve national research culture policy and practice.

If you have any questions, or suggestions on how the reporting process could be improved, please contact the secretariat via the email address listed on the RDC website:
www.researcherdevelopmentconcordat.ac.uk