Research Culture Action Plan 2024

Executive Summary

This document details a high-level action plan to respond to community feedback on Research Culture that was gathered within the University during 2023.

The five areas for focus in our first Research Culture (RC) action plan 24-25, are:

- Enabling excellence in responsible research,
- Recognising diverse contributions,
- Developing Careers,
- Connecting and Belonging,
- Wellbeing.

A Research Culture implementation group will be responsible for delivery of the action plan, and progress will be monitored by the Research, Innovation & Impact Committee (RIIC).

The execution of this action plan is underpinned by achievement of numerous other commitments to concordats, as signatories to international declarations and our own internal plans delivering the Research and Innovation, and Enterprise Strategies. Within the OGSM (Objectives, Goals, Strategies and Measures), we will take care to design the measures of successful implementation with those who are being measured.

We recognise the dynamic nature of the research culture landscape and from active listening to our community, and we will remain agile as we monitor emerging issues, actions and progress.

Introduction

Swansea University Strategic Vision and Purpose

Swansea University's community of colleagues, students, partners and stakeholders is characterised by distinct values, culture and behaviours. Within the University strategy ([Vision and ambition - Swansea University](#) p10), we describe the values which enable our collaborative purpose: to serve the world through knowledge and its translation for good.

The five key pillars of our University strategy are marked by our commitment to making a difference, to being socially responsible, to striving for excellence, and to maintaining a global outlook, enabling us to be a University with international reach and reputation.

What is Research Culture?

Research Culture is defined by the Royal Society as "The behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and the norms of our research communities. It shapes the ecosystem in which we operate. It influences who is doing research, what research is done, and how that research is communicated. Research Culture impacts the whole research system, including the integrity of research, diversity and inclusion in research, the career pathways researchers follow, reward and recognition, open research and the ethos of collaboration within the research system".

Swansea University is committed to developing an inclusive, open and responsible **Research Culture**. In December 2021, we appointed our first Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research Culture, Professor Biagio Lucini, now succeeded by Professor Ian Mabbett from April 2024. The DPVC Research Culture is supported by Research Culture Manager, Dr Anna Seager.

Culture lies at the heart of Swansea University R&I and Enterprise Pillars

At Swansea, we uphold our institutional commitment to provide an environment that enables our researchers, professional support colleagues (research enablers) and our collaborators to deliver and undertake excellent, responsible research and innovation.

Our researchers are committed to producing rigorous, innovative and significant research with impact. In an increasingly competitive research and innovation funding landscape, we are aware of challenges faced by colleagues at different career stages from postgraduate researcher through to Professor and within different career paths, particularly those on precarious career paths. How research success may be measured through metric indicators can drive behaviours that do not align with our values. It is our shared

institutional responsibility to reduce the risk that these competitive pressures may lead to undesirable behaviours which in turn undermine our commitment to responsible research.

To address these risks, an understanding of what we value is critical for us in considering our way forward ([202304-recognising-what-we-value.pdf (scienceeurope.org](202304-recognising-what-we-value.pdf)).

Our culture directs how we should monitor improvements in research environment: what we measure must reflect our values (taken from Vision and ambition - Swansea University), namely that we;

1. Invest in our people and reward excellence:
2. Give freedom for colleagues to think in pursuit of intellectual stimulation, originality and impact:
3. Act responsibly in research to create and impart knowledge:
4. Respect all colleagues and students, providing a compassionate, tolerant and mutually supportive community:
5. Are collaborative, flexible, collegial.

Research Culture Actions - Current position (2023/4)

In establishing a Research Culture action plan, we are mindful of the complex ecosystem in which this plan operates, including our actions designated within commitments to concordats, as signatories to international declarations and our own internal plans for:

A. Research and Innovation
B. Enterprise
C. Concordat to Support Knowledge Exchange (KEC)
D. Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
E. Concordat to Support Research Integrity
F. Technician Commitment
G. CoARA
H. Morgan Advanced Studies Institute
I. Research Wales Innovation Fund
J. Research Excellence Framework 2029
K. UK Reproducibility Network – Open Research
L. Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)
M. Athena Swan Charter/ Race equality Charter

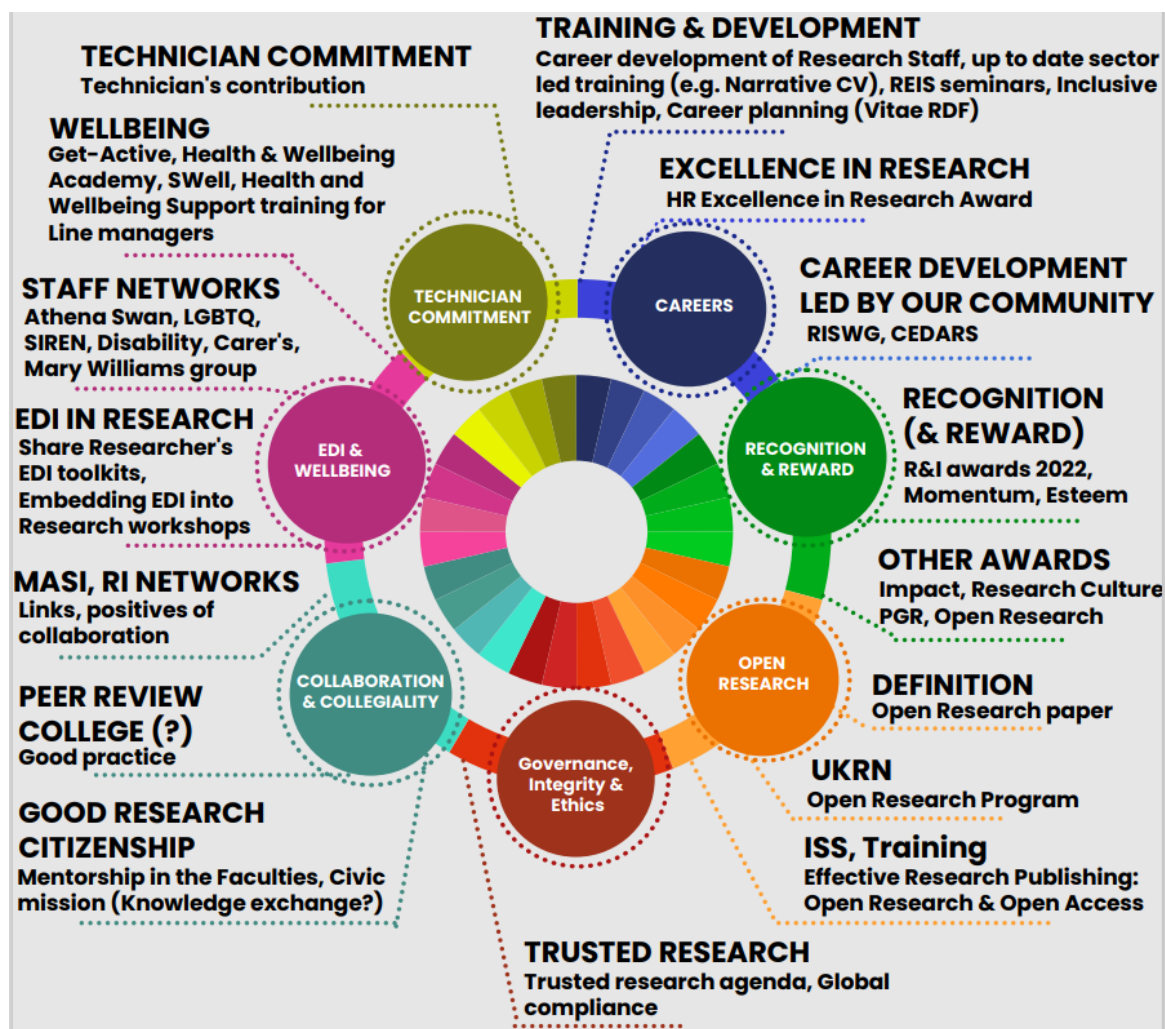The range of commitments and activities, in 2023, are summarised in Figure 1. below;

TECHNICIAN COMMITMENT
Technician's contribution

WELLBEING
Get-Active, Health & Wellbeing Academy, SWell, Health and Wellbeing Support training for Line managers

STAFF NETWORKS
Athena Swan, LGBTQ, SIREN, Disability, Carer's, Mary Williams group

EDI IN RESEARCH
Share Researcher's EDI toolkits, Embedding EDI into Research workshops

MASI, RI NETWORKS
Links, positives of collaboration

PEER REVIEW COLLEGE (?)
Good practice

GOOD RESEARCH CITIZENSHIP
Mentorship in the Faculties, Civic mission (Knowledge exchange?)

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
Career development of Research Staff, up to date sector led training (e.g. Narrative CV), REIS seminars, Inclusive leadership, Career planning (Vitae RDF)

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH
HR Excellence in Research Award

CAREER DEVELOPMENT LED BY OUR COMMUNITY
RISWG, CEDARS

RECOGNITION (& REWARD)
R&I awards 2022, Momentum, Esteem

OTHER AWARDS
Impact, Research Culture PGR, Open Research

DEFINITION
Open Research paper

UKRN
Open Research Program

ISS, Training
Effective Research Publishing: Open Research & Open Access

TRUSTED RESEARCH
Trusted research agenda, Global compliance

Circle segments: TECHNICIAN COMMITMENT, CAREERS, RECOGNITION & REWARD, OPEN RESEARCH, Governance, Integrity & Ethics, COLLABORATION & COLLEGIALITY, EDI & WELLBEING

Figure 1. Current Swansea University activities associated with Research Culture.

The R&I and Enterprise strategic plans include a series of actions that have been developed to enhance research cultures within their individual remit. A number of actions are common between these plans and the Concordats and Commitments of which we are signatories. Consequently, our consolidated research culture action plan will embrace the important and diverse actions from these plans, with the aim to increase their visibility, harmonise their delivery and simplify access for all.

Good research citizenship, supporting the research environment, is already demonstrated through a number of visible roles, including EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity) and PGR (Postgraduate Research) leads, ECR (Early Career Research) reps, RISWG (Research and Innovation Staff Working Group) and mentors, as well as through less-visibly recognised support (such as research and innovation development, peer review, and career

advancement opportunities) . Here we aim to promote and recognise good citizenship. In some target areas for action, there is limited activity, or visibility of the activity and the purpose of this plan is to catalyse activity and responsibility for action in those areas.

Our goal is for all staff who are engaged in research and support for research, irrespective of career stage or pathway, to benefit from a unified Research Culture action plan.

Within our action plan to address the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, we committed to undertake a biannual CEDARS (Culture, Employment, & Development of Academic Researchers Survey). We will gain deeper insights through a range of informal active community listening exercises. **The voice of our research community was recently collated through CEDARS 2023.** The survey was responded to by 223 researchers, at early, at mid and at established research career stages. We were pleased to see an increase in engagement relative to the previous survey (189 in 2021), which was conducted as part of our HR Excellence in Research Action Plan. Feedback from CEDARS 2023 is presented in Databoxes1-5.

Although there were areas where we performed well against benchmark (national aggregate data based on 9351 responses across 66 institutions), such as mental health awareness amongst supervisors of ECRs, we noted several areas for improvement. Free text responses added further insight into areas of concern and opportunities to improve the research environment, and the **words to describe the existing Research Culture at Swansea have informed Figure 2.**

Figure 2. Word Cloud created from CEDARS 2023, respondents were asked to "Please provide three words to describe the existing research culture at Swansea University."

Research Culture Action Plan 2024-5

The five areas for focus in our first Research Culture (RC) action plan, as identified through surveying our researchers, are

>   RC1: Enabling excellence in responsible research,
>
>   RC2: Recognising diverse contributions,
>
>   RC3: Developing Careers,
>
>   RC4: Connecting and Belonging,
>
>   RC5: Wellbeing.

These five areas of proposed RC action map to the 5 strategic priorities of the University's P&C Strategy: Culture, Performance and reward, Workforce planning, EDI, Wellbeing.

Integration of RC within the University P&C strategy is necessary for successful delivery of all of our priority actions and ensures that the voices of researchers and supporters of research can influence the broader People and Culture policies and initiatives across the University. Swansea University governance supporting RC and Research & Innovation can be viewed in Figure 3. **We recognise the dynamic nature of the culture landscape, and we will remain agile as we monitor emerging issues, actions and progress.**

The following sections expand the needs and rationale for each area of focus. Specific actions for each of the areas are provided in the detailed implementation plan (Appendix 1).

RC1. Enabling Excellence in Responsible Research

As an internationally engaged University committed to solving global, as well as local and national, challenges our strategy outlines our Research and Innovation approach through partnership, and that this increases potential for risk exposure in all that we do.

We are committed to ensuring that our research environment promotes and supports the highest standards of ethics and integrity, as signatories to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity. There are a number of areas where we are making good progress and it

is important that we ensure our supportive frameworks for responsible research conduct are adapting to evolving risks and challenges.

We recognise our responsibility to make our academic publications freely available, and, where appropriate, to ensure that the underpinning research is managed and open for interrogation and collaboration. We have recently reviewed and updated our Research Publication Policy and now operate a Rights Retention Strategy and Creative Commons Licence for all publications. Equally, through our commitment to entrepreneurship we will also seek to protect and commercialise IP where it is commercially valuable, and when the opportunities to license or spin-out are evident.

Swansea University included several bespoke questions into CEDARS 2023, which cannot be compared with the national aggregate data, but provided a means of benchmarking our research community on a number of areas that enable excellence in responsible research such as on open research and research integrity (see Databox 2., below).

CEDARS 2023 feedback DATABOX 1

- **98% agree** or strongly agree that they are **confident on how to meet the critical ethical requirements of their research** (99% Early career / 91% Established career / 99% Senior Staff)

- **88% agree** or strongly agree they **understand the benefits of open research practices** (93% Early career / 83% Established career / 92% Senior staff)

- **73% agree** or strongly agree that **the University takes research integrity seriously** (77% Early career / 70% Established career / 66% Senior staff)

- **64% agree** or strongly agree in their experience that **research in the University is carried out using the best research practices** (77% Early career 77% / 57% Established career / 58% Senior staff)

- **55% agree** or strongly agree the **University promotes the benefits of open research** (43% Early career / 51% Established career / 60% Senior staff)

- **51% agree** or strongly agree that **open research practices are valued by the University** (37% Early career / 43% Established / 54% Senior Staff)

Based on the CEDARS 2023 results (Databox 1), there are many positive elements of enabling excellence in responsible research that Swansea University can strengthening

and build upon. For example, Research Integrity training is mandatory for research staff and PGR students and University Policy changes will mandate training for our staff in navigating the pathways through reputational, ethical and security risks. Areas for improvement include, raising awareness of the benefits of open research amongst research staff and recognising and valuing those staff that use open research practices. Through appropriate training and support (using best-practice tools) in integrity, trusted research, research ethics and open data, skills in enterprise, intellectual property development and knowledge exchange, our staff will have the enabling support needed to conduct high quality responsible research.

Our specific actions for RC1 (see Appendix 1) will align to:

1.1. **Facilitate Research integrity training**
1.2. **Ethical guidance and support**
1.3. **Open research and open innovation training and raising awareness of open research practices amongst research staff, UKRN OR4 commitment**
1.4. **Growing skills and support for enterprise and intellectual property development**
1.5. **Growing skills and support for knowledge exchange, business engagement, policy and impact development**
1.6. **Fair attribution of authorship**

RC2. Recognising diverse contributions

Swansea University is committed to advancing research assessment and creating a culture of open, responsible and inclusive research and research assessment. Our Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Boyle is a member of the CoARA Steering Group and Swansea University is a co-lead on the CoARA UK National Chapter. We signed the San Francisco Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) in 2018 and embedded the principles within our Research and Innovation Strategy (2020-2025). In addition, we are recognised by the Science Council for our Technician Commitment (TC) and our TC action plan (submitted and approved in 2023).

In 2022 Swansea University began an extensive review of its **Academic Career Pathways (ACPs) and Research Assessment**. A key part of this review has been to look at the use of metrics in the appointment, development and promotion process. The outcome of this review, which will be implemented from 2024, has been to make several key

enhancements to our use of research assessment practices for research and innovation promotion pathways.

The research criteria used in the new ACPs are closely aligned with the four modules of the UKRI Resumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI). Previously, the career pathways included a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)/ metrics associated with research and the student experience. We have removed the KPIs from the promotion process and recognised these metrics may have limited recognition and value of the diverse practices, activities and careers in research. In doing so, we have acknowledged that quantitative assessment using a narrow range of metrics focussed on a limited definition of success, does not capture the diversity of research activity at Swansea, or the value researchers may add to peers, research groups or wider society. We have also broken the link between our output assessment for the UK Research Excellence Framework and the promotions process by removing this performance measure from promotion assessment.

In order to promote collegiality, collaboration and respect for all as positive Swansea Researcher behaviours, we are including a leadership and management domain in ACPs to recognise the diverse contributions of colleagues. In addition to the broad examples provided through the CEDARS responses, such as contributions towards peer review and grant evaluation, and developing research staff, (see Databox 2, below), we are cognisant of a number of unsung heroes who play vital roles in securing the timely completion of PhD student studies through chairing Vivas and examining, membership of committees, organising mentoring and coaching, and peer review.

CEDARS 2023 feedback DATABOX 2

Swansea Researchers are **less likely to believe that the University values the contributions they make to their institution and less likely to feel recognised for their wider contributions** than the national CEDARS 2023 aggregate data:

- **67% disagree, strongly disagree (or don't know to what extent) that they are appropriately recognised for their contributions to Swansea University** (50% aggregate)

- **41%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **peer reviewing and grant evaluation** (aggregate 23.7%) (20% Early career / 48% Established career / 52% Senior staff)

- **30%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **external examination of research** (aggregate 18%) (9% Early career / 33% Established career / 45% Senior staff)

- **26%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **disciplinary, professional or sector bodies**, (14.8% aggregate) (11% Early career / 29% Established career / 39% Senior staff)

- **20%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **appraisal/development of staff** (9.8% aggregate) (11% Early career / 18% Establish career / 36% Senior staff)

- **19%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **managing staff performance** (10.3% aggregate) (7% Early Career / 18% Established Career / 34% Senior staff)

- **27%** believe their contributions are **not at all valued** in relation to **developing researchers** (13.5% aggregate) (11% Early career / 29% Established career / 42% Senior staff)

As the CEDARS 2023 data suggests (Databox 2) there are concerns that research staff feel under-valued for the contributions they make to the institution and the wider community, and that existing reward and recognition systems did not adequately value the diversity of contributions staff make to the research system. The reform of ACPs utilising a narrative CV format (based on the R4Ri four modules) will enable recognition of good research citizenship and impact of staff contributions. Further, we have introduced impact fellowships, to both celebrate and raise profile of this important activity, and to enable staff to have the necessary time to progress and develop the impact of their research.

Our specific actions (see Appendix 1) for RC2 are aligned to delivery of:

2.1. **Technician Commitment and WIN Technician Network**
2.2. **CoARA, Academic Career Pathways, including Responsible research assessment in policies and procedures for the recruitment, promotion and appraisal of researchers: to recognise the collaborative contribution of staff to research ecosystem institutionally, nationally and internationally, R4RI,**
2.3. **Impact fellowships, cross-sector exchange and impactful outcomes**
2.4. **Incentivising Open Research practices (OR4 case study)**

RC3. Developing careers

Alongside generic career development opportunities, the University provides access to several bespoke programmes that are designed to support the development of researchers at different career stages, including training for PhD supervision, sandpits to stimulate ideas creation, support for research grants and encouraging bold transdisciplinary research bids at scale. CEDARS 2023 reported 55% of Swansea respondents (higher than the national aggregate of 49.5%) engaged in 2 or less days of Continued Professional Development (CPD), and 45% of research staff engaged in more than 3 days CPD. Further feedback from CEDARS 2023 with regards to career development can be viewed in Databox 3.

Our training and support for research-engaged staff is distributed through a range of Professional Services recognising the bespoke nature of some of the development provided. For example, the PGRO (Post Graduate Research Office) support training for PhD supervision, Human Resources (HR) support implementation of the Researcher Concordat and the HREIR (HR Excellence in Research), alongside leadership and management development, REIS (Research, Innovation and Enterprise Services) support bid development, grant capture, impact and enterprise. Coaching is also available locally and on a competitive basis through our commitment to external schemes such as Aurora. We have recognised the disparity in successful external grant bids for researchers from BAME backgrounds, which is sector wide, and we plan to strengthen targeted support for this group of researchers.

MASI (Morgan Advanced Studies Institute) was established in 2020 from the Morgan Academy to be an Advanced Studies Institute, dedicated to developing the University's approach to interdisciplinary research. Since its inception, MASI has encouraged 'adventurous, ambitions research projects with impact and purpose'. The purpose of MASI is for developing the potential of our existing staff, investing in major new research initiatives building on our quality and disciplinary range, and to fully explore our own intellectual capital promoting sustained interdisciplinary research. Such research is important because many of our major human societal concerns require interdisciplinary inputs, and the major funding agencies are increasingly putting forward thematic areas which require such inputs to be successful.

CEDARS 2023 feedback DATABOX 3

Research Managers at Swansea University are **most confident** in (and more confident than the national aggregate):

- Actively supporting staff towards their career aspirations (94%, aggregate 90.3 %)
- Providing effective feedback to staff (93%, aggregate 92.8%)
- Managing the appraisal/review (91%, aggregate 89%)

Research Managers at Swansea University are **confident** in (but less confident than the national aggregate):

- Acknowledging good performance (88%, aggregate 97%)
- Responding to Health and wellbeing issues (73%, aggregate 82%)

Research Managers at Swansea University are **less confident** in (but more confident than the national aggregate):

- Dealing with poor performance (44%, aggregate 42.5%)

The top three areas that Research Managers would like training in are, (same for the national aggregate group):

- 41% **Leading a Research Group** (aggregate 39.1%)
  (100% Early career / 43% Established career / 38% Senior staff)
- 41% **Mental Health and wellbeing** (aggregate 35.5%)
  (Early career grade 0% -Note 100% have completed training in this area) (44% Established career / 44% Senior staff)
- 40% **Managing Staff Performance** (aggregate 38.7%)
  (100% Early career / 43% Established career / 38% Senior staff)

41% of respondents **agree** or strongly agree that they are treated fairly in relation to **career advancement opportunities**, (48.9% aggregate):

- 36% Early career
- 37% Established career
- 52% Senior staff

48% of respondents **agree** or strongly agree that they are treated fairly in relation to **opportunities to attend conferences and external meetings** (56.9% aggregate):

- 64% Early career
- 52% Established career
- 27% Senior staff

55% of respondents **agree** or strongly agree that the University **promotes a collaborative research culture** (Early career 72% / Established career 53% / Senior 43%)

Our specific actions for RC3 (see Appendix 1) are aligned to delivery of:

3.1. **Promoting Researcher Development Concordat, Aurora, Crucible, All Wales ECR leadership programmes, and external research board memberships**

3.2. **Enabling Coaching and Communities of practice for research outputs and bid quality enhancement for ECR and MCR**

3.3. **Enhancing success with MASI support, interdisciplinary, global challenges, big ideas**

3.4. **Managing others in a manner to increase collaboration and improve research culture**

3.5. **Encouraging internationalisation, enabled through external funding including Taith**

RC4. Connecting and belonging

Swansea prides itself on being a welcoming institution and colleagues will frequently go the extra mile to help another researcher (see Databox 4.). Underlying this generosity of spirit is a system of documenting and archiving which is difficult to navigate. From CEDARS 2023, we can view that induction and training are frequently insufficiently well-developed to meet researcher needs (Databox 4.). This leads to a period of insecurity, uncertainty and lack of belonging as they establish individual connections to help them.

To address this, we are committed to improve our internal web and intranet resources alongside a systematic roll out of induction for researchers within the staff on-boarding process. Communication will be an engaging dialogue whether virtual or face to face.

We also have had a mixed economy in mentoring across the University, and this has been recognised within Faculties. Each Faculty is now providing discipline-focussed support for personal development plans and mentoring, supporting research bids, outputs and impact.

A key driver of a more inclusive culture is the recognition and celebration of positive behaviour. Following a successful research culture day in autumn 2023, we plan an annual celebration to bring together the multiple facets of positive research culture, including celebrating open research practices with our R&I awards. Equally, it is important to recognise the identity and contribution of different communities of researchers and the role they play within the research ecosystem. With this in mind, we will encourage and

continue to support with **PGR Festival, Technician Symposium, Postdoc appreciation, EDI showcase and Research Culture events.**

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CEDARS 2023 feedback DATABOX 4.

- **51% found the induction offered at department/ faculty level useful** or very useful (61% aggregate), with **18% reporting a departmental/ faculty induction was not offered** (16% aggregate)

- **69% agree** or strongly agree that **members of the research community share their expertise when they ask them** (77% Early career 77% / 70% Established career / 61% senior staff)

- **48% disagree**, strongly disagree (or don't know) that **they are aware of the support the University provides for their career and professional development** (44.4% aggregate) (56% Early career / 43% Established career / 42% Senior staff)

- **64% disagree**, strongly disagree (or don't know) that **they have a clear development plan** (56.7% aggregate) (78% Early career / 56% Established career / 47% Senior staff)

- **71% disagree**, strongly disagree (or don't know) that **they have time to develop their research identity** (45% aggregate) (53% Early career / 85% Established career / 70% Senior staff)

- **67% disagree**, strongly disagree (or don't know) that **they have time to develop their leadership skills** (48% aggregate) (78% Established career)

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Our specific actions (see Appendix 1.) for RC4 are aligned to delivery of:

4.1. **New starter packs for researchers**
4.2. **Working to promote and improve a culture of dignity and respect for all researchers, including increasing a sense of belonging through inclusive and supportive, local and disciplinary mentoring, guiding researcher development plans**
4.3. **Celebrate our diverse colleagues and the many positive contributions they make and valuable impacts they have through our showcase events and support for PGR events, Technician Symposium, Postdoc appreciation, EDI Showcase and Research Culture events**

4.4. **RISWG Researcher mentoring pilot, supporting non-tenured researchers**

4.5. **Simplifying intranet access for and improving visibility of research commitments, training, systems, processes, policies for staff**

4.6. **MRI support for visibility, and R&I awards**

4.7. **Promote and improve a culture of inclusiveness, sense of belonging and anti-racism across the student body through promotion of engagement in anti-racism training and training regarding talking about race.**

RC5. Wellbeing

There remain several challenges within the career structure for researchers, particularly at early career stages, where concern over contract duration (for fixed-term staff), time available to do research and expectations of performance, both by researchers themselves as well as by managers, can hamper the capacity of researchers to develop fully. It is well known that PhD students are particularly affected by poor mental health, which will also influenced by the quality of supervisor-student relationships. Swansea aims to foster a working environment that supports researchers' mental health and wellbeing (see Databox 5.)

We will continue to find routes to retain staff, and provide stable positions when funding is available. Nevertheless, it is important that researchers are aware of the support available to them (see Databox 4.), the role that they can play as active bystanders and that they know where to find relevant policies and support.

Alongside specific requirements and policies laid down by research funders, we will align our goals in Wellbeing with the University People and Culture strategy, and the wealth of support networks and advice available.

CEADRS 2023 feedback DATABOX 5

- **50% agree** or strongly agree that Swansea **promotes the importance of good mental health and wellbeing,** (57.4% aggregate)
    - Early Career staff at 70%; noting that 100% of managers in the early career group had done the Mental Health and wellbeing training
    - 39% Established career
    - 50% Senior Staff

- **31% agree** or strongly agree that Swansea's **working environment supports your mental health and wellbeing**, (44.8% aggregate)

- 57% Early Career
- 20% Established Career
- 23% Senior staff

- **One of the top three areas that managers would like training in is, (same as aggregate group):**
  - 41% **Mental Health and wellbeing** (aggregate 35.5%)
    (Early career grade 0% -Note "have done was 100% done) (Established Career grade 44% / Senior Staff 44%)

Our specific actions (see Appendix 1.) for RC5 are aligned to delivery of

5.1. **Raising awareness of bullying, harassment and associated policies in research, by increasing awareness of and improving institutional reporting systems so that staff report increased confidence in reporting and in the management of bullying/harassment incidents**

5.2. **Empowering positive action for mental health (actions from the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers and HR Excellence in Research (HREiR) Action plan) such as ensuring managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health**

5.3. **Raising awareness of and support for EDI in research, linking to Athena Swan charter, Race Equality Charter and Strategic equality plan (SEP). Encourage staff to engage with the range of EDI and Health and Wellbeing training and support provided by the university**

5.4. **Increase understanding of neurodivergent conditions and promote effective support to research staff –implement the requirements of the newly developed neurodiversity policy**

Governance - Measures of Progress

Our overarching approach to measuring success of the Research Culture Action plan, will be determined by those who are being measured.

We plan to engage with researchers to define the best measures for research culture development e.g. adopting INORMS and as exemplified by Newcastle here, and taken from 202304-recognising-what-we-value.pdf (scienceeurope.org)

- Autonomy/ Freedom: For recognition systems to foster free expressions of ideas, balanced with the needs of the local/national research systems

- Care and Collegiality: In order to recognize good leadership, teamwork, and mentorship that could help sustaining healthy research environment
- Collaboration: Rewarding the identification of collaborative activities where a range of competencies is required for the research activities proposed
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Promote diversity within research teams, and acknowledge the roles that different societies and cultures have on the career paths of researchers
- Integrity and Ethics: Reflect on how assessment criteria and peer review/panel processes can focus attention on the robust and reproducible research processes and good research practices
- Openness and Transparency: Open science practices should be explicitly recognized in assessment processes, and research organizations should provide clear guidance on the types of open science practices that they recognize

The measures will be developed by Research Culture Forum members (see Figure 3.), who will be selected from an open call to represent all career stages, pathways and Faculties, and links to other networks including the Reproducibility Network, the RISWG, the Technician steering group, to be chaired by the DPVC Research Culture. After recommending measures, the forum will play a key role in identifying emerging challenges in the research culture and advising on delivery of the RCAP. The research Culture Forum will report into the Research Culture Implementation Group.
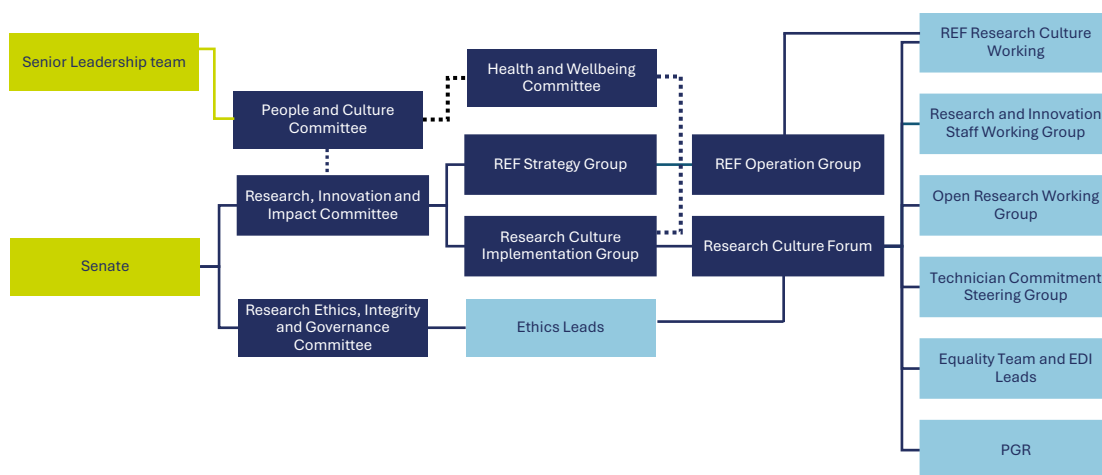
Figure 3. Governance structures supporting research culture.

Delivery and Implementation of the Action Plan

An implementation plan is shown in Figure 3. The RC Implementation Group will meet to monitor and report on progress against the plan at intervals appropriate to the measures. We have committed to re-running the CEDARS survey every two years to provide insight Research Culture change and enable us to identify any areas where there is delayed progress. Similarly, we will continue with the annual PGRES.

Alongside the Implementation Group, the RC Forum will act as a representative forum bringing together members from across our diverse research community. The Forum will play a key role in identifying challenges in our RC and advising on the delivery of the RCAP. The Implementation Group will report to the Research, Innovation and Impact Committee (RIIC). Communication and dialogue between RIIC and the People and Culture Committee will be active to ensure continued alignment of RCAP with the people and culture commitments and values of SU. As already stated, several of the actions we have committed to lie within individual commitments, concordats and plans. We propose that the Research Culture Implementation group receives an annual update from those groups with responsibility for monitoring and implementing the individual action plans, using an agreed set of indicators which are relevant to people and culture, identifying whether further action is needed.

Implementing, improving and maintaining systems, for supporting and evaluating the plan

As the University goes through a period of service redesign, our goal is to be more effective and efficient. We will achieve this in a number of ways, including through organisational change and through systems and policies. Elements of our Research Culture Action Plan will be positively influenced by proposed changes in how we upload our outputs and data onto RIS and the web, promoting open research, researcher visibility, internationalisation and visibility of contributions to external bodies. Examples of system changes in development and supporting research culture within the first RC action plan include:

- o New RIS for outputs and open data
- o Amazon secure servers
- o Epigeum/successor for research integrity training

Research Culture Implementation Group Members

- Helen Griffiths, Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) Research and Innovation (Co-Chair)
- Ian Mabbett deputy PVC Research Culture (Co-Chair)
- Anna Seager, Research Culture Manager
- Camilla Knight dPVC EDI and Belonging
- Dave Bembo, Chief Research and Enterprise Officer
- Charlotte Morgans, Human resources (HR) Transformational Lead: Learning and Development
- Ruth Bunting Technician Commitment
- Gert Aarts, dPVC Postgraduate Research
- Jessica Cotgias, HR Head of Employee Relations and Reward
- Gareth Jenkins, Associate Dean Research, Innovation and Impact (ADRII) Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences
- Jonathan Bradbury, ADRII Faculty of Humanities and Social Science
- Perumal Nithiarasu, ADRII Faculty of Science and Engineering
- TBC – Representative from Marketing, Recruitment & International
- Liz Kenny (Secretary), REF officer

Appendix 1 – Research Culture – Responsibilities for Implementation

Notes

1. Actions highlighted in green are in progress and are being delivered through a variety of different strategies and groups across the University. This plan brings the oversight of "green" research culture plans together so they can be reported on, e.g. for REF2029, and for them to be referred e.g. to in grant applications.
2. For the "green" actions, the focus of work for the research culture implementation group is to provide a greater level of visibility and to monitor engagement. Attention will be focussed on making it easier to find the training and support needed, to celebrate successful outcomes and to increase visibility of ongoing activities.
3. Actions in white boxes are planned, are required but are not yet developed.
4. In establishing new actions, and measuring those actions underway, it will not be sensible or feasible to measure everything (indicated by the table).
5. Once established, the RC focus group will consider what measures are appropriate to give an indication on progress e.g. adopting the INORMS approach.
6. The Implementation Group will focus on a limited number of measures (identified through INORMS by the RC Focus group) which exemplify the behaviours we wish to capture, where these measures have been developed by those who are being measured.

Number	Action	Responsibility	Existing strategy or plan	Existing measures, and to be developed by RC forum	Oversight committees And resources
1	**Enabling excellence in responsible research**				
1.1	To provide timely and valuable research integrity training e.g. through Epigeum.	REIS supported by Ethics leads	R&I Research Integrity Concordat	Diversity and number of trainees	Infonetica. Ethics leads, RI manager, RISWG
1.2	To provide timely and valuable research ethical guidance and support	Ethics Leads, Faculties	R&I, Research Integrity Concordat	Infonetica reports	RIESCG,
1.3	To encourage open research and open innovation, To organise Open Access training for funder compliance within the faculties.	dPVC Culture,	R&I, CoARA action plan UKRN OR4 commitment	OR4 case study, R&I Awards	Open Research Working group, REF SG
1.4	To provide guidance and training for fair attribution of authorship principles	Library, Faculty Ethics Leads	R&I	Author dispute numbers	RIESCG,
1.5	To grow knowledge, skills and support for enterprise and intellectual property development	REIS, IP & Commercialisation Managers, HR	Enterprise, RWIF	Diversity and number of trainees	Enterprise OGSM
1.6	To grow skills and support for knowledge exchange, business engagement, policy and impact development	REIS, Impact Manager	Enterprise, RWIF	Diversity and number of trainees	IAA's, Impact are planning training and resources for staff and students

Number	Action	Responsibility	Existing strategy or plan	Existing measures, and to be developed by RC forum	Oversight committees And resources
2	**Recognising diverse contributions**				
2.1	To establish impact fellowship programme, and stimulating cross-sector exchange for impactful outcomes	REIS, Faculties	RWIF	Diversity and number of fellows	RWIFSG, REFSG Impact fellowship scheme launched December 2023
2.2	To make progress with goals of Technician Commitment and active contribute to WIN Technician Network	Technician Commitment Steering group	P&C		Technician Commitment WG
2.3	To implement Responsible research assessment, e.g. R4RI, through revised Academic Career Pathways including PDR. To incentivise Collegiality, recognising its value in policies and procedures for the recruitment, promotion and appraisal of researchers	P&C	CoARA Action plan, P&C	Analysis of ACP outcomes	P&C
2.4	To incentivise Open Research practices in policies and procedures for the recruitment, promotion and appraisal of researchers	dPVC Research Culture, UKRN Reproducibility network	R&I, CoARA action plan UKRN OR4 commitment	OR4 case study,	Open Research Working group, REF SG

Number	Action	Responsibility	Existing strategy or plan	Existing measures, and to be developed by RC forum	Oversight committees And resources
3	Developing Careers				
3.1	To guide Career Development Plans e.g. to include development through concordat, HREIR, Aurora, Crucible, All Wales ECR leadership, Prof body membership	dPVC Culture, RISWG, HR P&C Committee	R&I, Researcher Concordat action plan	Number of staff engaging in Aurora, Crucible, etc. Promotion of development through Induction and other events. Increased uptake of DTS training.	RISWG Welsh Crucible 2024 launched January 2024 managed by DTS.
3.2	To proving coaching and to establish communities of practice for research outputs and impact planning, for all and including collaborative approaches with ECR and MCR for career development	Faculties, REIS and RQE teams	REF	Quality of outputs and impact case studies enhanced	REFSG
3.3	To enhance success in large interdisciplinary research bids, with MASI support, to address global challenges; to enhance bid quality by understanding and removing barriers to success	dPVC Culture	MASI	CEDARS, success stories from MASI and RI's	MASI Internal Steering board
3.4	To increase uptake of training for managing others and for leadership in a research context leading to an increase	HR	P&C	CEDARS,	

	collaboration and improved research culture			
3.5	To encourage internationalisation through access and signposting to external funding including Taith	REIS, Faculties	R&I	Diversity and number of scholars benefitting by career stage and protected characteristics

Number	Action	Responsibility	Existing strategy or plan	Existing measures, and to be developed by RC forum	Oversight committees And resources
4	Connecting and Belonging				
4.1	To deliver new starter packs for researchers including, communication of Vitae Research Development Framework (RDF, Concordat, CPD, goal setting within the wider University framework for recognition	REIS With input from HR/ RISWG	Concordat action plan, RISWG	CEDARS	RC Manager is creating Research focussed material for the LM new starter packs. RISWG manages the Researcher Concordat action plan.
4.2	Working to promote and improve a culture of dignity and respect for all researchers, including increasing a sense of belonging through inclusive and supportive, local and disciplinary mentoring, guiding researcher development plans	Faculty ADRI&Is, supported by HoS and REF leads	R&I	CEDARS?	
4.3	Celebrate our diverse colleagues and the many positive contributions they make and valuable impacts they have through our showcase events and support for PGR events, Technician Symposium, Postdoc	REIS, PGR development, in collaboration with ADRI&Is and (School Research Leads), Faculties		Possible Research days with faculty input, based on lessons	HEFCW additional funding

Planned Research Culture Café |

				learned from research week	events run by RC manager in liaison with Research leads
4.4	To establish a RISWG Researcher mentoring pilot project, targeting ECRs	REIS with support from/HR and RISWG	Researcher concordat	Evaluation Survey of the mentoring scheme, EDI monitoring of the mentors and mentees.	Plan to launch the pilot Spring 2024 with a cohort of 20 academic mentors. Training for mentors
4.5	To simplify intranet access for and improving visibility of research commitments, training, systems, processes, policies for staff including information from related Research Culture networks e.g. WIN	REIS/ Research Hubs/ RQE	R&I Enterprise REFSG	Posters and presentations at ARMA and VITAE	Dedicated input from MRI to realise visibility of RC work required in 2024
4.6	To continue R&I awards including recognition for research culture and with MRI support	MRI	R&I CoARA action plan	Traffic on webpages, CEDARS (Concordat, HREIR awareness)	Dedicated input from MRI to realise visibility of research citizenship in 2024
4.7	Promote and improve a culture of inclusiveness, sense of belonging and anti-racism across the student body through promotion of engagement in anti-racism training and training regarding talking about race.	HR, RACE Equality Charter	SEP		

Number	Action	Responsibility	Existing strategy or plan	Existing measures, and to be developed by RC forum	Oversight committees And resources
5	Wellbeing				
5.1	Raising awareness of bullying, harassment and associated policies in research, by increasing awareness of and improving institutional reporting systems so that staff report increased confidence in reporting and in the management of bullying/harassment incidents	REIS, Equality Team, Bullying and Harassment Advisors Network	R&I, Concordat action plan, SEP	CEDARS/ Staff Culture Survey	Bullying and Harassment Advisors Network has committed to raise awareness and increase accessibility of a current processes and policy
5.2	Empowering positive action for mental health such as ensuring managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health (Wellbeing training support for LM/ HR).	HR/ Wellbeing	P&C, Wellbeing Committee. SEP, Research Concordat	CEDARS	RC manger has been invited to join the Wellbeing Committee chaired by Deb Young
5.3	Raising awareness of and support for EDI in research, linking to Athena Swan charter, Race Equality Charter and Strategic equality plan (SEP). Encourage staff to engage with the range of EDI and Health and Wellbeing training and support provided by the university.	REIS, dPVC EDIB	Athena SWAN charter, Race Equality Charter, SEP		

5.4	Increase understanding of neurodivergent conditions and promote effective support to research staff –implement the requirements of the newly developed neurodiversity policy.	HR	SEP		

Systems required in support	Implement, improve and maintain systems, track and evaluate the plan				
In plan	· New RIS for outputs and open data	Library	REF		
In place	· Amazon secure servers	Library	R&I		
In progress	· Epigeum/successor	REIS	R&I		
	· Research & innovation and Enterprise visibility via intranet, website and comms	MRI	MRI		
Due in 2025	· CEDARs plus occasional pulse surveys	HR	R&I		