

Realising Our Potential

Backing Talent and Strengthening UK Research Culture and Environment

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Research culture and environment

Research culture encompasses the behaviours, values, expectations, incentives, attitudes and norms of a research community. It determines the way that research is conducted and communicated and can influence researchers' career paths and mental wellbeing.

Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

Research environment – the policies, procedures, rules and incentives which shape research performance and culture (e.g. REF environment statement)

- Research Report
 - Toolkit – ideas for Universities, Research Funders and Research Publishers
 - Case Studies
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A research culture and environment that inspires and enables

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Research
Careers

- Career stability
- Career progression
- Recognition and reward of collegiality & team leadership

The
Experience
of working
in research

- Wellbeing, effective line management and support
- Visibility, part of community & engagement

Inclusive and
Respectful
Environment

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Preventing and addressing bullying & harassment
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How to ensure the research culture inspires and enables?

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	Universities	Research funders
Research careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer contracts• Internal career ladders• Bridge funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer project awards• New funding models – e.g. FEC formula, platform grants
Career progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career development• Flexible pathways• Career assessment format – team contribution & skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build into funding models• Feedback: grant applications• Industry training• Career assessment format
Recognition & reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PI - effective leadership & collegiate team working• Open research practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding assessment criteria• Peer reviewer alignment• Open research practices

How to ensure the research culture inspires and enables?

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	Universities	Research funders
Wellbeing, effective management and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote, recognise & reward excellent team leadership & people management• Create support networks• Reduce bureaucratic burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PI assessment criteria• Funding model e.g. project management roles• Funding call timing• Reduce bureaucratic burden
Visibility, sense of community & engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ECR leadership & decision making roles• Mentoring• Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding of cohorts• Support networking & mentoring• Representation & consultation

How to ensure the research culture inspires and enables?

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	Universities	Research funders
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDI strategy & action plans• Recognise & reward EDI contribution• Career stability incl contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment criteria• Committee & panel diversity• Peer reviewer training & transparency• Targeted support
Preventing and addressing bullying & harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting systems• Support networks• Line management clarity & accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career stability• Reduce bureaucratic burden• Remove perverse incentives

Looking ahead – next steps

- Culture change needs time to embed and requires coordinated effort across the sector – by universities, research funders, publishers
 - The report, toolkit and practical examples are designed to support dialogue, shared learning and innovation
 - The RG members have committed to
 - use this toolkit to test, develop and extend good practice
 - collaborative effort and dialogue with research funders and other stakeholders
 - to assess progress in 12 months time
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University of Birmingham

University of Bristol

University of Cambridge

Cardiff University

Durham University

University of Edinburgh

University of Exeter

University of Glasgow

Imperial College London

King's College London

University of Leeds

University of Liverpool

London School of Economics

University of Manchester

Newcastle University

University of Nottingham

University of Oxford

Queen Mary University of London

Queen's University Belfast

University of Sheffield

University of Southampton

University College London

University of Warwick

University of York