

HR Excellence in Research Award Two Year Internal Review Progress Report

London South Bank University received the HR Excellence in Research Award from the European Commission in May 2014. As a holder of the award we are required to undertake a two-year internal review of our progress in achieving the actions set out in our Concordat Implementation Plan from 2014. This report summarises the internal review.

How was the internal review undertaken?

The internal review comprised a 3 step process overseen by Central Research Support Services (CRS). The CRS team is based within the department of Research, Enterprise and Innovation and assists with applications for research funding (pre and post award); management of the PhD programmes; tracking and identifying impact from research undertaken at LSBU; REF submission; researcher development events and opportunities. The process included:

- 1) Initial review of achievements and progress to date against the original action plan commenced in October 2015 by CRS, and drew on findings from LSBU participation in the 2015 CROS and PIRLS surveys; consultation with researchers through focus group/researcher 'coffee morning' organised by CRS and facilitated by the Key Skills Provider (December 15); meetings with new School Management teams; People and Organisation (PO) and Athena Swan Officer.
- 2) The Action Plan review was discussed by researcher representatives from all Schools at the meeting of the LSBU Concordat Group in January 2016 and again in March 2016. The Concordat Group consists of senior and early career research staff from each School, staff from the CRS and PO including Athena Swan officer. This Group operates in guiding policy and direction for the development of the Concordat and in researcher development in general.
- 3) The final version of the review and updated action plan was completed by CRS.

Key achievements and progress against original action plan

Progress against the original 2014 action plan sits in the context of a major restructure of the University commenced in September 2014. As part of the process the University moved from four Faculties to seven Schools with new School Management and Committee structures. The Concordat Group evolved in line with the new structure increasing participation to ensure representation from both early career and experienced researchers from the 7 Schools; People and Organisation and Department of Research, Enterprise and Innovation. Whilst the restructure impacted on some of the deadlines set in the original Action Plan, it also presented further opportunities for embedding researcher representation within new committee structures and an impetus for new PO programmes such as the Academic Pathway and Leadership Academy as well as additional central resource for supporting researchers. This included appointing both a Researcher Development Officer based in CRS to support on the Concordat and an Athena Swan Officer in the People and Organisation. The University also strengthened its research support team with the appointment of an Impact Manager (March 16) and an additional Research Support Manager (April 16) and Research Support Officer (Jan 16). Further non staffing investment in support for researchers included subscriptions to a number of research resources including Vitae, RDF Planner, research funding opportunities and research policy database; and central Repository; institutional ORCID; research intelligence software.

Full details of progress and achievements against the original action plan are given in the document 'London South Bank University Implementation Two Year Review – April 2016' of which the key achievements are summarised below:

Principle 1 Recruitment and Selection

Launch of the LSBU Behavioural Framework and Values in 2015. This is a significant development that underpins the LSBU approach to recruitment, development and organisational behaviour. This identifies the standards expected across the University and supports the recruitment, selection and retention of researchers. All staff undergo mandatory training to support these goals, including diversity and equality training. The approach underpins staff appraisal and goal setting, as well as the research and academic framework of the University. Staff are now expected

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to comment on how they have adhered to the University's core values in their annual appraisal (91% completion rate in 2015) as well as planning their future developmental needs.

Principles 2 Recognition and Value

Launch of the Academic Framework in 2015. The new academic pathway sets out the robust and coherent structure for colleagues to develop and progress within the University, based on performance against a set of generic post descriptors for each academic grade. These descriptors inform personal development plans as well as forming the basis for future selection and recruitment.

Principle 3 & 4: Support and Career Development

Researcher Training Programme. Development of coordinated training workshops for researchers through the REI workshop and Key Skills programmes. Workshops have been mapped against the domains of the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and the programme includes specific sessions on use of the RDF and the RDF Planner tool. Attendance at the Key Skills training programme increased significantly over the period with an increase of 52% for the March 16 series compared to the March 2015 series. The REI workshop programme which includes introduction to research at LSBU; training on impact; funding opportunities; proposal writing; ethics and research integrity and IP teaching. The REI training programme launched in December 2016 and 12 workshops have been delivered to date. Initial take up has been low with most sessions attracting under 10 bookings but feedback has been positive with 88% of those attending the most recent set of workshops responding that they would attend a similar workshop in the future. An Impact Manager has been appointed (March 2016), sitting within the CRS, with a remit to raise awareness of impact and support researchers in understanding and identifying pathways to impact, impact itself and increasing public engagement.

Networking and Competitions. We have developed the programme of activity for engagement of researchers through; facilitated discussions; invited speakers including from research funders; briefing sessions on specific funding schemes; networking lunches and regular opportunities to interface with the Concordat Group to provide direct feedback. Attendance at organised events has increased slightly over the period with the average attendance for 2016 of 23 researchers. Establishment of a regular poster competition for research staff, held successfully in 2014 and 2015 with approximately 60 posters in total submitted each year in 2015 and 2016 to sit alongside the Research Summer School Conference. The University also hosts a 'Research in Action' Award at LSBU annual staff awards and researchers are encouraged to submit for external awards such as the H&V News Awards, where they won the award for best collaboration.

Supervision. One third of those staff on research contracts are involved in supervision of doctoral students.

Principle 5: Researchers' Responsibilities

Annual Review At the heart of the University's development approach are individuals, and their desire to engage in personal and research development throughout their careers. This is delivered through the recognition and audit of individual skills; the development planning to recognise training and other development needs; and the need for annual review of progress towards skills targets and the new Researcher Development Strategy.

A new **Researcher Development Strategy** was implemented in December 2015 which identified a development pathway for all researchers at all stages of their development. This ensures that all researchers are given equal opportunity to develop, using the principle of a reflective cycle. LSBUs development approach is applicable to all research career stages, and provides for seamless transition between them. The University has committed to researcher development from early to late career stages in line with the European Commission's *Framework for Research Careers*. CRS has met with the Deans of School in order to consolidate the roll out of this procedure, and meetings, briefings and workshops are in progress or are planned to further achieve this.

Researcher representation Researcher representation on the Concordat Group has increased from 6 researcher representatives in 2014 to 9 researcher representatives in 2016 and includes representation from all seven Schools. The Concordat Group is key to dissemination of information about the LSBU approach, training and development opportunities, as well as the ethos of a sound research environment. Issues identified through the Concordat Group are referred to the University Research Committee for consideration. The newly formed University Research Committee membership also now includes representation of two members of postdoctoral staff.

Principle 6: Diversity and Equality

Athena SWAN Awards: The University is fully committed to eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values its staff. In November 2016, London South Bank University will submit an application for Athena Swan institutional Bronze Charter status. Through LSBU's submission, we are confirming our support for the

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advancement of women's careers in employment in higher education and research. Following the internal launch of the Athena SWAN submission, we have 60 champions from across the University and these are split into 4 working groups: Career Progression; Organisation and Culture; Data; Communications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan: A new Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and Statement has been agreed approved which sets out clear targets for the next couple of years including the setting up of Gender network and Statement. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training is now compulsory for all LSBU staff.

Staff Inclusion. LSBU's Staff Inclusion was one of a suite of policies that have been reviewed as part of our submission to the 2015-16 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI). The review of these policies, together with a series of actions in relation to staff development, procurement and community engagement, enabled LSBU to rise from a position of 176 to number 92 out of 415 organisations in the Stonewall WEI.

Principle 7: Implementation & Review

Researcher Feedback: LSBU participated in the 2015 PRES (24% response rate), CROS (33% response rate) & PIRLS (50% response rate) surveys for 2015 with analysis of feedback from the surveys reviewed and discussed at Research Board of Study and Concordat Group.

Summary of Updated actions and next steps to May 18

Principles 1 & 2

Career Pathway for Researchers Development of a specific Career Pathway for Researchers to sit alongside the existing Academic Framework. **LSBU Leadership Academy** Rollout of the four modules of the LSBU Leadership Academy programme to line managers. **Reward and recognition** Review and consideration of researcher entitlements.

Principles 3 & 4

Mentoring Programme. Completion of the review of existing mentoring in Schools and development of a centrally run mentoring programme for the University taking into account the needs of researchers. Participation in the Outside Insight work shadowing scheme for 2016. Alongside the mentoring programme, we will be assessing the opportunities for researchers to gain experience in the non-academic sector. **Research Environment and Training.** Trialling and development of School Moodle sites for Research; mapping of LSBU training resources to RDF Planner; expand the REI workshop and Key Skills programmes; Enhanced programme of training for PhD supervisors and opportunities to supervise; New online appraisal system to facilitate better data mining of training requirements. **Networking.** Creation and development of cross-school networking opportunities for researchers in the form of themed workshops and a dedicated space for regular researcher networking activities;.

Principle 5

Researcher Development Strategy. Embedding the new Researcher Development Strategy via a series of rollout sessions with staff in all Schools re the Concordat; what it is, support for researchers at the University and how to access that support.

Principle 6

Attainment of Athena SWAN bronze award Introduction of Dignity at Work Programme. Implementation of EDI Action Plan

Principle 7

Participation in CROS and PIRLS 2017 and PRES 2016 Analysis of results and comparison with data from the 2015 surveys. Raising awareness of UK initiatives for research

Success Measures

Success will be measured by achievement of the actions set out in the Action Plan. In particular these include:

- Submission to and achievement of Athena Swan institutional Bronze charter status.
- Improvement in the data from CROS/PIRLS/PRES data in comparison with 2014 data. Increase participation by 10% and assessment of feedback.
- Increased number of researchers using RDF Planner by at least 50% by April 2018 compared to April 2016.
- Increase average participation in researcher development activities including training workshops and networking events by at least 20% between April 2016 and April 2018
- Launch of LSBU mentoring scheme and participation of at least 10% of staff on research contracts in the scheme by April 2018