

# Every Researcher Counts

## Briefing for staff developers

### About this briefing

**This briefing provides information for staff developers who work to support and develop research staff, principal investigators, research group leaders and research managers. It is part of the Every Researcher Counts project funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), supported by the other UK Funding Bodies and managed by Vitae to promote equality and diversity in research careers as an important part of their implementation strategies for the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.**

Further information at

[www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts)

### Overview

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers has clear expectations for institutions 'to enhance the research workforce and thereby sustain research excellence in the UK, bringing benefits to the health, economy and wellbeing of our nation'. The Concordat 'sets out a vision of working practices, roles and responsibilities that will ensure the continued provision of well-trained, talented and motivated researchers that is essential to the continuation of our research excellence'.

Principle 6 of the Concordat states that 'Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and management of researchers'. Many of the challenges relating to equality and diversity are systemic within higher education, particularly in relation to research staff. The demanding nature of research work can often have a detrimental and disproportionate effect on the performance and career progression of certain groups, particularly women, black and minority ethnic and disabled researchers.

Equality and diversity, and good staff management within the research environment are an important part of successful research excellence, recognised by funders and institutions. Guidance for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) recognises the importance of the Concordat and equality and diversity in creating an excellent research environment and research outcomes.

#### Benefits of embedding equality and diversity in professional development

- Enable researchers to achieve research excellence
- Maximise the impact of your researcher development programmes on institutional strategic objectives
- Empower researchers to maximise their potential and research outputs
- Develop principal investigators to be effective leaders and realise all research talent
- Achieve external recognition for good practice in equality and diversity through awards such as HR Excellence in Research, Athena SWAN or Investors in People

## Policies, implementation and review

As staff developers supporting and developing research staff you should consider how your institution's equality and diversity policies can be made inherent in your development programmes and activities and how you can act as a champion, aiding the communication of equality and diversity amongst research staff and principal investigators.

### Areas to consider

- Inform your strategy for researcher development by reviewing data on equality and diversity for research staff within your institution through surveys and projects such as the Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS), the HESA Staff Record, the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), and Athena SWAN
- Consider how to embed equality and diversity, and good staff management, specifically within researcher development strategy and provision, identifying and meeting the requirements of under-represented and disadvantaged groups
- Explore how to collect and respond to feedback from principal investigators and research staff, particularly from those with specific requirements, on the appropriateness and impact of development activities in providing equality of opportunity

**"Equality and diversity is, and has to be, central to/embedded in everything we do and to our support of every individual researcher"**

Professor Terry Threadgold,  
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Staff  
and Diversity, Cardiff  
University

## Recruitment and selection

For an institution to be successful it needs to recruit from the widest pool of talent and consider equality and diversity at all stages of the process so it attracts and retains the highest calibre researchers, to contribute to research excellence. Staff involved in recruitment need to ensure that the processes to recruit, select and retain research staff focus on transparency, fairness and consistency.

### Areas to consider

- Consider how to ensure that principal investigators are aware of the importance of and are informed on equality and diversity in recruitment processes
- Include equality and diversity in interview training, staff induction, leadership programmes and other relevant training
- Invite equality and diversity specialists to inform and contribute to training and development opportunities
- Incorporate into training sessions the idea of challenging expectations about what sort of people are needed for certain roles and how jobs have to be done
- Consider changes you can make in your training programmes in order to help senior managers address any issues raised when reviewing recruitment and selections data

### Acting on robust data, University of Leeds

The University of Leeds has implemented detailed equality monitoring forms (including asking applicants questions on caring responsibilities, religion/belief and sexual orientation) as part of their new e-recruitment project. Applicants are asked to complete an on-line form as part of submitting their applications. The e-recruitment system allows for considerable reporting, including generating tabled reports on applicants, short listed candidates and successful interviewees by protected characteristics. This data will be presented to all faculties on an annual basis as part of the integrated planning exercise, for comment and action where appropriate.

**"Using recruitment and selection data is an important way for managers in institutions to review what is happening in practice and identify if there are any issues relating to equality and diversity. Using this data provides the evidence to take action."**

Patrick Johnson, Head of Equality and Diversity,  
University of Manchester

## Recognition and value

The Concordat stresses the importance of recognising, managing and rewarding research staff fairly and transparently.

### Areas to consider

- Ensure that research staff have equality of access to staff development opportunities, irrespective of employment status, length of service or individual circumstances
- Ensure that appraisal processes and associated training include guidance for the principal investigator and research staff on how to be flexible and inclusive and to recognise individuals' contributions
- Explore how the Vitae Researcher Development Framework can be used to encourage principal investigators and research staff to recognise and value the wider contributions of individual research staff
- Ensure that staff are aware of reward and progression processes and how to access them

### Stellar HE, Imperial College

The "Stellar HE strategic development leadership programme", supported by HEFCE's Leadership, Governance and Management fund, is targeted at managerial and research staff with the aim of increasing the representation of black and minority ethnic (BME) professionals at senior management and academic levels in higher education. It also aims to provide equal access to promotion and professional development, improve staff motivation and achieve better retention of talent.

The programme addresses the distinct but often subtle challenges and variations to the unwritten rules and models for success that BME leaders face and must master as visible minorities operating in a majority higher education context.

### Every Researcher Counts: Important conversations

Vitae has developed a resource on important conversations for you to use with your principal investigators and research staff. The resource has been designed to help principal investigators navigate their responsibilities towards their research staff with regard to equality and diversity.

Learning objectives:

- Building awareness of the different needs of different individuals
- Understanding the elements of equality and diversity in practice
- How to prepare for important conversations with research staff.

[www.vitae.ac.uk/ercresources](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/ercresources)

## Support and career development

Policies on equality and diversity provide a reference against which to review your researcher development provision. As a research staff developer you can implement this in practice by, for example, reviewing existing diversity and equality training and guidance, ensuring that it is tailored to the requirements of your researchers.

### Areas to consider

- Ask for specialist equality and diversity input into provision and embed equality and diversity in all activities
- Organise activities in ways that provide equal opportunities for all, for example flexible scheduling and online options
- Identify and work with equality and diversity champions within your institution to help develop and promote your programmes to principal investigators and research staff

### Vitae Researcher Development Framework

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages them to aspire to excellence. Staff developers should use the Researcher Development Statement to review their provision of support and career development opportunities for researchers, particularly in relation to equality and diversity. Staff developers should also encourage all researchers and principal investigators to use the framework to support their career development, and consider their contribution to creating an inclusive environment and equality of opportunity.

The framework highlights the importance of providing institutional and individual leadership in equality and diversity. Senior managers and principal investigators should aspire to 'act as a role model when dealing with diversity and difference, educate, advise and guide less experienced researchers, set an example locally, nationally and internationally and help shape departmental/institutional policy and implementation'.

Vitae Researcher Development Framework [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf)

Vitae Researcher Development Statement [www.vitae.ac.uk/rds](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rds)

## Researchers' responsibilities

The Concordat makes it clear that researchers share the responsibility for their own development. Research staff should be encouraged and enabled to be proactive in ensuring provision is accessible to them and in raising any equality and diversity issues. Principal investigators need to be empowered and able to create a culture of equality and diversity in the research environment. As staff developers, you have a key role in ensuring that principal investigators and research staff are aware of their respective responsibilities and are skilled and capable of creating a supportive and inclusive research environment.

### Areas to consider

- Raise awareness of your institution's equality and diversity policies relating to research staff development with principal investigators and research leaders
- Ensure all researchers and principal investigators are aware of the professional and career development opportunities available to them
- Encourage all research staff to take responsibility for their own professional development
- Encourage all research staff to aspire to excellence by identifying and promoting examples of role models for particular researcher groups
- Explore ways for research staff, particularly under-represented and disadvantaged groups, to create their own development opportunities and networks

### Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)

The 2011 CROS results revealed that the majority of research staff believe that their institution is committed to equality and diversity (52% agreed and 33% strongly agreed). However, they were less informed about the substance of institutional policies. Respondents were generally aware of the existence of equality and diversity policies and processes, with 49% of respondents stating they had some understanding, while 46% knew they existed but didn't know the detail.

When asked if they felt fairly treated in relation to opportunities to participate in decision-making processes compared to other staff, 51% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, while 31% disagreed or strongly disagreed. When asked whether all staff are treated fairly with regard to participation in decision-making processes, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability or age, 68% agreed or strongly agreed, while 15% disagreed or strongly disagreed. [www.vitae.ac.uk/cros](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/cros)

## Every Researcher Counts

Vitae was commissioned by HEFCE and supported by the other UK Funding Bodies to lead on a project to raise awareness of equality and diversity for research staff within higher education.

As part of the project, a suite of flexible resources for staff developers and principal investigators has been developed to ensure that, in relation to research staff, equality and diversity issues are understood, visible and prioritised in higher education institutions (HEIs).

The resources include adaptable training sessions and supplementary guides on:

- Team management: Important conversations
- Career conversations
- Using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework
- Flexible working
- Incorporating equality and diversity into existing workshops

The resources provide HEIs with a flexible set of activities and reference materials which can be embedded in existing staff development programmes to support institutional equality and diversity policies.

You can find downloadable versions of all these resources, stakeholder briefings on the Equality Act 2010 and further information about the Every Researcher Counts project on the Vitae website [www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts)

# The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination law consolidating and streamlining it into a single act. The Act recognises that different treatment is necessary to ensure equality and recognises nine protected characteristics.

When a member of research staff is treated less favourably than other staff because of one of the protected characteristics, they are not being treated fairly and a case for discrimination could be made. With the exception of marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, research staff are also protected from discrimination if they are perceived to have a protected characteristic or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

'Diversity recognises that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.'

'Equal opportunities, or equality of opportunity, may be defined as ensuring that everyone is entitled to freedom from discrimination. There are two main types of equality encompassed in equal opportunities: equality of treatment, concerned with treating everyone the same, and equality of outcome, focusing on policies that either have an equal impact on different groups or intend the same outcomes for different groups' [extract from ECU definitions]

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability (including carers of disabled people)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) briefing 'Equality Act 2010: Implications for higher education institutions' draws out the implications of the Act. [www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/files/equality-act-2010-briefing.pdf/view](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/files/equality-act-2010-briefing.pdf/view)

ECU also produces an annual statistical report. [www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/equality-in-higher-education-statistical-report-2011](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/equality-in-higher-education-statistical-report-2011)

Equality Challenge Unit works to further and support equality and diversity in UK higher education and is funded by Universities UK, GuildHE and the UK Funding Bodies.



## Useful links

- **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers** [www.researchconcordat.ac.uk](http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk)
- **Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland** [www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)
- **Equality Act 2010** [www.ecu.ac.uk/subjects/equality-act-2010](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/subjects/equality-act-2010)
- **Equality Challenge Unit** [www.ecu.ac.uk](http://www.ecu.ac.uk)
- **Higher Education Funding Council for England** [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk)
- **Higher Education Funding Council for Wales** [www.hefcw.ac.uk](http://www.hefcw.ac.uk)
- **Research Excellence Framework** [www.hefce.ac.uk/ref](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/ref)
- **Scottish Funding Council** [www.sfc.ac.uk](http://www.sfc.ac.uk)
- **Vitae** [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)

- **AthenaSWAN Charter** [www.athenaswan.org.uk](http://www.athenaswan.org.uk)
- **Careers Research in Online Survey (CROS)** [www.vitae.ac.uk/cros](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/cros)
- **Every Researcher Counts project and resources** [www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts)
- **Leadership development for principal investigators** [www.vitae.ac.uk/pi](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/pi)
- **Premia – resources for disabled researchers** [www.vitae.ac.uk/premia](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/premia)
- **Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS)** [www.vitae.ac.uk/pirls](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/pirls)
- **Stonewall** [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)
- **Vitae Researcher Development Framework** [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf)



Vitae is the UK organisation championing the personal, professional and career development of researchers in UK higher education institutions, working directly with institutions, policy makers and funders. Vitae leads on the UK implementation of the principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers by providing information, raising awareness and facilitating the sharing of strategies and practice.

Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK), managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities



'Every Researcher Counts: Briefing for staff developers' has been published by The Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Ltd and The Higher Education Funding Council for England. © 2011 The Higher Education Funding Council for England

To ensure that this is the latest version of this document, please go to [www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/everyresearchercounts)

Version 1 October 2011.