

Preparation for HR Excellence in Research 4 year assessment

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Or...

Why it's not always good to be
first....!



- Our approach to the 2 year review
- Reflections following the 4 year external review
- Methods for effective review of progress:
 - Indicators
 - Success measures
 - Future review points



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2 year review process - preparation

- Various monitoring mechanisms in place, eg bi-monthly steering group, committees
- ‘Doing very nicely thank you’
- Away day after Easter to identify new initiatives for next plan (icing on the cake)
- On track, then...



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Consequences:

- Fewer involved in the review process
- Process more rushed
- Less consultation than we would have liked
- Retrospective endorsement of new plan, so potentially less ownership...?
- Success measures not thought through (in fact some added at the last minute following prompting by Vitae when I was on leave!)
- We'd hoped 'explore', 'consider', 'investigate' new initiatives would suffice...



Our 2 year internal review documentation:

- Report – achievements against benefits identified by Vitae research
 - Contribution to strategic goals
 - Impetus for change
 - Supporting internal processes to embed and enhance researcher development
 - Meeting researchers' needs
- Progress against plan
- Mapping of CROS and PIRLS
- New plan



How were researcher views taken into account?

- Progress updates and new draft plan on website
- Consultation with research staff via mailbase, research staff working party, UCU
- Mapping of CROS and PIRLS results against plan – supported success claims and identified gaps for new plan
- Chairs of Staff Committee and University Research Committee – full committee later



Success measures:

- There weren't any in our first plan! ...but most actions had measurable outputs, eg role profiles, develop policy, amend criteria, implement etc so progress easy to demonstrate
- The new plan was aspirational and stretching – after all we'd finally 'cracked' the Concordat...



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And just when we thought we'd got there...



‘At European level, peer reviewers have been appointed and the process will confirm that actions have been taken by institutions consistent with their stated plans. The level to which the principles of the C&C are embedded within institutional practice will not be the main criteria for retaining the Award.’



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The race to the finish line

- Some actions were behind schedule
- Regular mapping of progress against plan
- Regular review of progress and outstanding actions with wider group of people
- All hands to the pump – with positive results as more staff around the University had to become involved in our work ...and I don't suffer in silence!



The review

- Considerable evidence gathering exercise as we hadn't thought how to measure everything
- Surveyed our research staff through mailbase and virtual researcher panel survey
- Mapped employee opinion survey results
- Mapped progress against plan
- Consulted UCU
- Consulted Chairs of Staff Committee and URC



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Our new *draft* Implementation plan

- Stakeholder group established
- Researcher representation
- Researchers surveyed for ideas
- Measurable outputs
- More focused
- Organised by Concordat principle
- Still draft at this stage – new appointments
- Probably still a little ambitious...?



Documentation

- Worrying!
- Felt awkward and repetitive
- Impossible to fit everything into four page report, so improvised....!
- Two year plan/four year strategy
- Can't use '*Ongoing*' – but don't want to measure for the sake of it!
- Solutions (I hope they're right!)



Indicators and Success Measures

- Steering Group minutes
- Web updates
- Specific outputs
- Numbers and percentages
- Survey responses
- Regular monitoring/review (replace 'ongoing')
- 'Scorecard' approach



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Scorecard

quarterly

Nos attending PI briefings

% RAs receiving PDR

Nos RAs attending University induction

Nos RAs attending Faculty induction

Nos mentors

Nos mentees

annually (end July)

Nos hits on PI manual

Nos hits on Careers online resource

Nos hits on case studies

Nos RAs attending career pathways events

Nos career pathways reviews undertaken

Nos 1-1 careers interviews

Nos attending Transitions course

Nos attending Career Bites

Nos RAs engaged with schemes such as KTS, Impact accelerator accounts etc

Nos RAs with MSCA outgoing fellowships

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Nos ERC, RISE or Erasmus exchange participants

Nos RAs gaining travel assistance

Nos RAs awarded International Research Collaboration Awards (IRCA)

Nos applying through Euraxess jobs portal

Nos Athena SWAN Bronze awards

Nos Athena SWAN Silver awards

Nos Athena SWAN Gold awards

Nos Athena SWAN applications submitted

Nos completing exit questionnaires

Nos committees with researcher representation

Nos using myImpact

survey results

% participation in CROS, PIRLS, EOS

% RAs reporting engagement in student supervision in CROS

% RAs reporting engagement in mentoring activities in CROS

% PIs reporting confidence in PIRLS 2015

% RAs reporting PDR in CROS

% RAs reporting attending Faculty induction in CROS

% RAs reporting attending University induction in CROS



Reflections

- Think about how to measure from the start
- Embedded isn't enough – you have to prove it
- 'Ongoing' doesn't work – you need to measure it
- Plan the review with good time and schedule meetings, time etc
- Don't take holiday until you've submitted!



Any questions?

