

Reading our updated action plan – 2018

The following action plan was submitted in 2018 as evidence that we were implementing the action plan we revised in 2016 as part of our four-year review for the HR Excellence in Research award.

The first column of the plan states which principle(s) of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers the action is designed to address. The seven principles are outlined on page 32.

The second column indicates within what broad policy area, funding stream or activity the specific action is.

The third column restates the action which we stated in our original action plan and the deadline by which we stated we would have completed the action is in brackets.

Subsequent columns outline progress against the original Action Plan and revisions made in 2014 and 2016.

The final column indicates what progress we made against our revised 2016 action plan.

Scottish Funding Council (SFC) updated action plan - 2018

Principle	Activity/Policy/ Funding	Original action plan (deadline)	2014 update	2014 action plan	2016 update	2016 action plan	2018 update
1-7	Activities specifically to support implementation of the Concordat	<p>Gaining the HR Excellence in Research Award as sign to sector of importance of agenda (early 2012)</p> <p>Further collaborative activity to share good practice among Scottish and UK institutions (ongoing)</p>	<p>Complete. In May 2012, SFC awarded HR Excellence in Research Award. We wrote to all Scottish Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Principals to urge them to apply.</p> <p>On track and ongoing. We have worked with the sector to enhance the link between SFC and research training practitioners across Scotland, resulting in a refreshed partnership between Universities Scotland Research Training Sub-Committee (RTSC) and SFC.</p>	<p>Submit successful two year review demonstrating progress and highlighting future priorities.</p> <p>Further collaborative activity to share good practice among Scottish and UK institutions. 11 Scottish HE institutions currently hold the HR Excellence in Research Award. We will work to ensure they maintain the award and for an increase in the numbers who join the award scheme (Summer 2016).</p>	<p>Complete. In mid-2014 conducted an internal review of our progress in achieving the actions set out in our original action plan. On the basis of this review we were successful in retaining the award.</p> <p>Ongoing. We continue to work with the sector to enhance the link between SFC and researcher training practitioners across Scotland through our participation in Universities Scotland's Research Training Sub-Committee (RTSC). For example, SFC presented at and participated in the RTSC's annual policy forum in January 2016.</p> <p>The number of Scottish HE institutions has been maintained at 11.</p>	<p>Submit 4-year review of HR Excellence in Research Award demonstrating progress and highlighting future actions.</p> <p>Future collaborative activity to share good practice among Scottish and UK institutions.</p>	<p>Complete. Review of progress undertaken in 2016 and Action Plan updated to reflect future priorities and success measures. Award retained for a further two years.</p> <p>Ongoing. SFC continues to work with the sector to enhance the link between SFC and research training practitioners across Scotland through membership of Universities Scotland Research Training Sub-Committee. Through this engagement the SFC funded a forum in June 2018 entitled, <i>Supporting and Enhancing Researcher Wellbeing in Scotland</i>. Forum report is pending. SFC to consider recommendations and agree next steps in partnership with sector by December 2018.</p>

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							The number of Scottish institutions in receipt of the HR Excellence in Research Award has increased from 11 to 13 over 2016-2018.
1-5	Co-funding and support for Research Pooling and other collaborative initiatives	Aligned with both the Scottish Government's policy and the UK Research Council's focus on quality and scale, SFC will continue to work towards collaborative, quality driven and multi-institutional HE provision where appropriate (ongoing).	<p>On track and ongoing.</p> <p>We have continued to fund pools and their wide range of innovative training and development opportunities both to the staff and students within them. For example, as provided by the Scottish Universities Physics Alliance Graduate School.</p> <p>Earlier funding cuts to the pools, which took place in 10-11 were restored on the condition that the funds are used centrally (by each pool) to facilitate early career researchers' exchanges with business and industry, both within Scotland and internationally.</p> <p>The pools have served as the central academic core for the development of some of the Innovation Centres.</p>	SFC will make available funding of up to £150k per annum for up to 5 years after the end of the original funding for each 'successful' research pool. This additional funding will be targeted at the maintenance of shared people resource. Sustaining central administration and coordination support positions will enable the continued collaborative benefit of clustering research in a pool and continued central support to graduate training, Knowledge Exchange (KE) activity, international development and similar.	<p>Complete. Funding made available as planned to those pools who have reached the end of their original funding.</p> <p>We continue to monitor and evaluate the investments we have made in the first UK Fraunhofer Centre, the International Max-Planck Partnership and the Innovative Medicines Initiative to ensure they are being delivered collaboratively across a range of partners, ensuring further research opportunities are available to Scottish researchers.</p>	Aligned with both the Scottish Government's policy and the UK Research Councils' focus on quality and scale, SFC will continue to work towards collaborative, quality driven and multi-institutional HE provision where appropriate.	<p>Ongoing. Funding for research pools, Innovation Centres and other collaborative strategic investments continues to be allocated, monitored and evaluated to ensure best possible outcomes are achieved.</p> <p>SFC's Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee recommended at its June 2017 meeting that an independent evaluation of the research pooling initiative be undertaken. Evaluation will commence in autumn 2018. The provision of support and training and development opportunities for researchers will be considered with the aim of identifying areas for future focus. Evaluation findings and recommendations to be published in autumn 2019.</p>

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			<p>We have also provided funding for the first UK Fraunhofer Centre at the University of Strathclyde, the world's first International Max-Planck Partnership amongst five Scottish universities and the European Union Innovative Medicines Initiative European Lead Factory for Drug Discovery. All of these are being delivered in a collaborative manner with partners both in and out of Scotland, leading to enhanced transnational research opportunities.</p>				<p>SFC has continued to provide funding in support of the pan-Scotland Graduate Schools – the Scottish Graduate School for the Social Sciences (SGSSS) and Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities (SGSAH).</p> <p>SFC remains committed to supporting the SGSSS through the allocation of £600k over AY17/18 to AY22/23 for the second phase of this investment which helps to rationalise the social science doctoral training landscape in Scotland.</p> <p>SFC announced an additional £1.2M in support of the SGSAH in August 2018 in parallel with the award of Doctoral Training Partnership funding via the AHRC to support 190 PhD students over the next five years. Alongside additional contributions from HEI members, this award will allow the Graduate School to continue to provide</p>

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							unique and innovative training opportunities for students. Since 2014 SGSAH has funded more than 50 student-led training events, supported 80 internships and engaged with more than 145 external organisations.
1-5	Signatory to other Concordats		Since May 2012, SFC has become a signatory of both the Research Integrity Concordat and the Concordat for Public Engagement with Research, having been involved in the development of both. Both complement the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. They do this through ensuring that research integrity and public engagement are recognised and valued by the sector; that researchers are equipped and supported to maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of research and to undertake public engagement; and that researchers share responsibility for	We will continue to promote the Concordats to the sector (ongoing, with specific developments aligned with Outcome Agreements by August 2014).	On track. SFC remains a signatory of both the Research Integrity Concordat and the Concordat for Public Engagement. Completed. Through our outcome agreement process, we now ask all Scottish HE institutions for a statement of assurance that their institution has in place processes and structures to implement the principles and commitments in the Research Integrity Concordat.	Continue to encourage good practice and support the Research Integrity Concordat and the Concordat for Public Engagement with Research.	Ongoing. SFC remains a signatory of both the Research Integrity Concordat and the Concordat for Public Engagement. SFC will be working with the Concordat signatories group over AY18/19 to revise the Research Integrity Concordat. SFC has continued to promote the Concordats to the sector through the Outcome Agreement process. Institutions are required to provide evidence of compliance with the principles set out in the Universities UK Concordat to support research integrity. Institutions are asked to share their plans and ambitions for public

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			<p>developing the skills required for their own personal and career development and lifelong learning.</p> <p>We required universities to include a statement of commitment to the Research Integrity Concordat in their latest Outcome Agreement.</p> <p>We have also funded the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement, which is the only organisation that is exclusively focused on supporting the strategic embedding of public engagement within the UK HE sector.</p>		<p>On track. In March 2016, SFC agreed further funding for the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, given its strong track record of engaging the Scotland's HE sector.</p>		<p>engagement.</p> <p>In May 2017 the SFC agreed further funding for the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement in recognition of the continuing need to encourage and help institutions to embed public engagement within the UK HE sector.</p>
1	Research Excellence Grant (REG)	We will begin a process of reviewing the underlying model for the distribution of the REG in advance of the Research Excellence Framework in 2014 (Dec 2014).	On track and ongoing. Guidance from SFC published in October 2012 for AY 13/14 Outcome Agreements specified 'More even representation of staff from different protected characteristic groups' as a key outcome, alongside 'Scottish university sector to be world leading in research excellence'.	Review of REG will be complete in time to inform funding for AY 15-16. Discussing principles currently with Universities Scotland (Dec 2014). International competitiveness in research and equality related outcomes for researchers to continue to	Complete. The review of REG was completed in time for AY 15-16. There are 5 key principles, one of which implicitly spells our SFC's and the Scottish HE sector's commitment to supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. On track and ongoing.	Provide QR funding to Scottish institutions.	SFC has continued to provide funding to universities through the REG. An underpinning principle of this grant is a commitment to supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. SFC announced in July 2018 that it will uplift funding allocated through the REG

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	Research Excellence Framework (REF)	<p>International competitiveness in research to be included within institutional Outcome Agreements (Sept 2012).</p> <p>SFC to continue working with the UK REF Steering Group to develop and implement the REF and consider whether links between the Concordat and REF can be strengthened (ongoing).</p> <p>The REF Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel</p>	<p>Research outcomes were included within all HEI Outcome Agreements for AY 13-14.</p> <p>In July 2013 for 14-15 Outcome Agreements SFC published guidance which specified gender segregation within researcher careers as a primary inhibitor to fulfilling our research ambitions and to be tackled as a priority.</p> <p>Activity is underway to review the REF2014. This will include the analysis of feedback from UK HEIs on all aspects of the REF. In the letter/request for feedback all HEIs were asked to consider the changes from RAE2008 when preparing their responses - this included <i>'strengthened measures to promote equality and diversity'</i>.</p> <p>On track. Changes were implemented to the REF process to ensure fairness in the process of</p>	<p>be included within institutional Outcome Agreements, with increasing focus on stretching ambition in latter area (ongoing, with specific progress to be made by August 2014).</p> <p>SFC to continue as part of the UK REF Steering Group to consider whether links between the Concordat and REF can be strengthened (ongoing, scheduled for completion for REF2014 by the end of 2016).</p>	<p>International competitiveness in research continues to remain a key priority for SFC as demonstrated in its Strategic Plan 2015-2018 and in its Outcome Agreement Guidance to Scottish universities.</p> <p>On track and ongoing. In our AY15/16 Outcome Agreement Guidance to Scottish universities, SFC set out an expectation that HEIs would build on the progress made during the REF2014 process in respect to equality and diversity in staff selection and that HEIs would use both REG and RPG funding to take steps to address equality and diversity issues in the wider context of research and research postgraduate provision.</p>	<p>Amended. 2016 Action Plan included specific action under equality and diversity heading below.</p>	<p>from £231.8M in AY2017-18 to £242.3M in AY2018-19, strengthening its commitment to research, research staff and their development.</p> <p><i>SFC is currently working with the UK REF steering Group to implement the recommendations of the Stern Review and support preparations for REF 2021. This includes supporting the work of the REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel and embedding equality and diversity in the submission and assessment process. See heading, <u>Mainstreaming of Equality and Diversity</u> below.</i></p>

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	Supervision of postgraduate research students (PGRs)	<p>(EDAP) has been established from 2012 until 2014, to provide advice to the REF team, REF panel chairs and the UK funding bodies on the implementation and evaluation of the REF equality and diversity measures (Sept 2014).</p> <p>Explore with sector further work in this area, including collaborative provision (Discussion to be initiated by December 2012, with potential action, if appropriate, agreed in early 2013).</p>	<p>submission. For example, the adoption of a tariff of automatic output submission discounts for early career researchers, and those who had periods of parental leave and other absences. SFC was represented in both the Secretariat and in the Panel.</p> <p>Postponed. In mid-2013 the sector decided that the initiative which they had been developing around collaborative skills provision for PGRs should not be taken forward. A report highlighting possible elements of the initiative which could be taken forward was discussed by the Universities Scotland Research Knowledge Exchange Committee (US RKEC).</p> <p>The Stratified Medicine Innovation Centre has</p>	<p>SFC remains open to conversations with the sector to develop collaborative skills provision for PGRs. Explore with sector through Scottish Researcher Development Policy Forum further work in this area, including collaborative provision (discussion to be initiated late 2014, with potential action, if appropriate, agreed by mid-2015).</p>	<p>Ongoing. In December 2015 the UK government launched a UK-wide review of university research funding, including future REF exercises. SFC will continue to work with other UK funding bodies to develop and implement future REF exercises.</p> <p>In AY15/16 SFC announced a budget of over £34m and maintained this budget for AY16/17 to support the research postgraduate grant (RPG) demonstrating our ongoing commitment to Scotland's postgraduate research community.</p> <p>On track. Building on the Stratified Medicine</p>	<p>Specific action not included in 2016 Action Plan. <i>Update against Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) provided under relevant heading below.</i></p>	<p>Ongoing. Collaborative postgraduate provision remains in place at all 8</p>

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			designed postgraduate provision which will be collaboratively delivered by staff from the Universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Strathclyde. This development should be built on.		Innovation Centre experience, all 8 Innovation Centres now have collaborative postgraduate provision in place.		Scottish Innovation Centres. SFC funded 215 TPG places in AY2016-17 and AY2017-18.
2	Institutional HR practice	Explore relationship building with HE HR Community of Practice (Discussion to be initiated by mid-2013, with potential action, if appropriate, agreed by December 2013).	Amended and ongoing. The introduction of Outcome Agreements has facilitated enhanced conversations between SFC and individual institutions. Where appropriate, these conversations have included HR practices.	We will continue to use Outcome Agreements as the primary manner in which we will discuss matters of HR practice where appropriate and in relation to early career researchers (refreshed expectations published in Outcome Agreement guidance by September each year).	On track and ongoing. Outcome agreements continue to be the primary manner in which we discuss HR practice where appropriate with universities.	Continue to use Outcome Agreements as the primary vehicle in which we discuss matters of HR practice where appropriate with institutions.	On track and ongoing. SFC has continued to use the Outcome Agreement process as a mechanism for discussing HR practices with universities and ensuring good practice is implemented and embedded within Scottish institutions' policies.
3	Putting Learners at the Centre: Post-16 Educational reform.	SFC to continue on postgraduate work stream of reform and KE reform, as well as monitoring uptake of postdoctoral and early career exchanges (Ongoing <i>*Postgraduate Reform discussions,</i>	KE reform On track and ongoing. SFC has worked in partnership with the Enterprise agencies and HE sector to reform the KE landscape in Scotland with an in principle investment of £110M in core funding for Innovation Centres (ICs) from 2013 to 2018. Other funding is available for capital equipment and PG Taught (PGT) places.	KE reform SFC will continue to reform the KE landscape, enhancing collaborative models of engagement with industry where appropriate and most efficient (ongoing, including the following actions:) We will monitor the IC programme through a 6-monthly review cycle to ensure that industry	KE reform On track and ongoing. After extensive consultation with the sector, SFC introduced the University Innovation Fund (UIF) which incentivises Scottish universities to work collaboratively to design and adopt innovative new approaches to exploiting the research base that will lead to a significant	No action specific to KE reform or postgraduate reform included in 2016 Action Plan.	Ongoing. UIF introduced in AY2016-17. Outcome 4 of the UIF approach relates to the provision and promotion of entrepreneurialism opportunities to staff and students. Scottish HEIs currently engaged at an individual and at a national level in sharing good practice and developing collaborative approaches to delivering

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		<p><i>with actions agreed, by end of 2012</i> <i>*KE Reform: discussions in mid-2012)</i> .</p>	<p>Currently eight ICs in areas of strategic and economic importance to Scotland have been approved for funding. We are also currently implementing the Innovation Scotland Policy Forum.</p> <p>In addition we have made available 250 taught postgraduate places to support the development of academia/industry links in ICs and the skills and training needs of industry relevant to ICs. Most ICs also have budgets to support PhD places.</p> <p>Postgraduate reform Delayed. The Scottish Government is currently reviewing postgraduate provision with an aim to help more students, offer more flexibility for both learners and universities and align funding with strategic objectives.</p>	<p>engagement is ongoing. The next set of reviews for all 8 funded ICs is due by November 2014.</p> <p>The Innovation Scotland Forum will meet again in December 2014.</p> <p>Postgraduate Reform Outcomes of the review are expected in Summer 2014. Appropriate action for SFC to be decided by end of 2014.</p>	<p>positive change in Scotland's already good economic performance. The UIF will be introduced for AY 2016-17 to replace the Knowledge Exchange Grant and Knowledge Transfer Grant.</p> <p>The IC programme includes a community of 8 collaborative centres that are monitored on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Innovation Scotland Forum continues to advise on the implementation of a more collaborative, pan-Scotland approach to KE among other key areas of focus.</p> <p>Postgraduate reform Outcomes of the MacGregor review reported in December 2015. SFC awaits further guidance on any arising actions.</p>		<p>this Outcome.</p>

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			<p>Postdoctoral and early career researcher exchanges (PECRE) We have continued to provide funding of £250k/year to pools for these exchanges. Monitoring of pools' use of PECRE and Pools' Engagement in European Research funds has led to us introducing more flexibility between the two funding streams.</p> <p>In line with other funders, SFC is proposing to move to an online reporting system to replace traditional reporting for strategic projects. It is hoped that this will lead to a reporting system that is more efficient and effective, readily allows identification of the outcomes from investments and Increases our ability to learn from the success or failure of</p>	<p>PECRE SFC will continue to monitor the use of this funding to ensure impact (final reports due October 2014).</p> <p>We will be testing the new system over the middle months of 2014 and – if successful – will plan for a roll-out by the end of 2014.</p>	<p>PECRE Since AY 2011-12 SFC has allocated £250k pa of ring-fenced funding. Reports to July 2015 show that a total of 222 ECRs have visited laboratories across Europe, North America, India and China.</p> <p>In addition to the personal benefits for the individuals and their research, exchanges also contributed to new/ strengthened collaborations, raising pools' international profile and led to journal and conference papers, invited lectures and further grant applications.</p> <p>Following the pilot of the new reporting system, SFC decided to implement an in-house solution to creating a more efficient and effective monitoring log of its strategic investments which includes all KE/innovation projects.</p>	<p>PECRE Continue to support research pools for these exchanges and ensure learning is embedded within networks.</p>	<p>PECRE SFC has continued to provide funding of £250k per year to the research pools for these exchanges. 126 ECRs participated in exchanges in AY17/18. As previously reported, these exchanges deliver personal benefits for the individuals and their research, whilst also contributing to the strength of collaborations, raising the profile of the pooling at an international level and supporting the production of important research outputs.</p>

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			investments and so improve decision-making on future funding to maximise impact achieved in and by the sectors.				
		Continued work and further alignment with other public sector agencies tasked with delivery of reform agenda, specifically Scottish Enterprise, HIE and Skills Development Scotland to enhance the opportunities available for researchers (Ongoing).	Ongoing. There has been significant improvement in the links between SFC and other agencies, with the development of Innovation Centres a key example of an enhanced relationship with Scottish Enterprise.	Ongoing including the development of Skills Investment Plans in areas where there might be the potential to develop areas aligned with researcher development activity (2014).	Ongoing. We continue to work increasingly closely with other agencies (SE, HIE and SDS), specifically around the areas of entrepreneurship and innovation as can be evidenced by initiatives such as Enterprise Campus and the Innovation Centres.	Specific action not included in 2016 Action Plan.	<i>Following the Scottish Government's 16-17 Enterprise and Skills Review and the creation of a Strategic Board, SFC is working increasingly closely with other agencies (SE, HIE and SDS), specifically around the areas of entrepreneurship and innovation.</i>
	Clinical Academics ScotChem SPIRIT studentships Technology Innovation Centre	Continued support for studentship programmes which offer innovative training pathways equipping students for a diverse, mobile,	On track and ongoing. <u>Making Most of Masters</u> (MMM) Funding given to this programme in which masters students used a work placement as the basis for their dissertation. This project won the Times Higher Education Awards for	Continued support for studentship programmes which offer innovative training pathways equipping students for a diverse, mobile, global research environment (Ongoing, with specific actions as outlined below:)	On track and ongoing. <u>Making Most of Masters</u> (MMM) Further funding was awarded for a co-ordinator post from 2014-15 to 2016-17 based at University of Stirling, who now manage the project, with new partners including Universities of	Action specific to original heading/activity not included in 2016 Action Plan.	Making Most of Masters Project complete. <u>Innovation Centres</u> SFC allocated funding over 16-17 and 17-18 for 215 TPG places across the eight Innovation Centres. The programmes offered by the ICs continue to provide close industry

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		global research environment (Ongoing).	<p>Outstanding Employer Engagement in 2013.</p> <p>Work has already begun to embed the work of this project within core resource through a 'nodal network' proposed by the University of Aberdeen.</p> <p><u>Innovation Centres</u> One of the criteria of the innovation centres is '...to provide an environment that supports the development of the next generation of business innovators, academics and entrepreneurs in Scotland and a culture change towards greater and more effective university/industry collaboration.'</p>	<p>We will work with MMM to ensure the impact of the initiative is not lost (Proposal for next stage to be developed by end of August 2014).</p> <p><u>Innovation Centres</u> From 2014 we will allocate PGT places to 5 Innovation Centres for those offering innovative learning opportunities meeting industry need. We will monitor the uptake of these places through the 6 monthly reviews of the ICs (starting November 2014).</p>	<p>Dundee and Abertay Dundee, University West of Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. University of Strathclyde and Napier University Edinburgh have recently signed up to the project. Further benefits of the project have included placements for undergraduate and PhD students.</p> <p>From September 2015, we allocated funding for around 215 TPG places across all <u>8 Innovation Centres</u>. The programmes on offer by the ICs include close industry engagement, often in the form of placement with an industrial partner from the Innovation Centre. In addition several ICs have established industry-specific doctoral training programmes. We continue to monitor these places through the IC programme's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF).</p>		<p>engagement, often in the form of placement with an industrial partner from the Innovation Centre. Several ICs continue to deliver (in partnership with a host institution) industry led doctoral training programmes. SFC continues to monitor these places through the IC programme's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF).</p>

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			<p><u>Accelerated Growth of Energy Skills Programmes</u> SFC allocated funding to Heriot-Watt for accelerated growth of energy skills programmes including an additional 40 energy and related postgraduate programme scholarships in 2012-13.</p>	<p>Final monitoring report to be submitted by September 2014, after which we will continue to discuss development of the programme with Heriot-Watt.</p> <p>SFC has commenced discussions with the Enterprise Agencies and the sector on approaches to developing entrepreneurial skills (ongoing, with potential action identified by the end of 2014).</p>	<p>Project came to an end in September 2014. SFC continues to work with the sector and Skills Development Scotland to support the energy sector.</p> <p>On track and ongoing. With respect to entrepreneurship skills training, SFC funded the initiative, Enterprise Campus, in 2014. This is a joint initiative between the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Strathclyde to support postgraduate students from any Scottish university who want to set up their own business. In addition, SFC presented at and participated in the RTSC's annual policy forum in January 2016 which focused on 'Creating an Entrepreneurial Research Culture in Scottish HEIs'.</p>		
	Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee - Skills Committee Joint Working Group: High	Continue to work with sector to develop further employability focused collaborative	On hold. In mid-2013 the sector decided that the initiative which they had been developing around collaborative skills provision for PGRs should not be taken forward. A	SFC remains open to conversations with the sector to develop further employability focused collaborative skills provision for PGRs (ongoing, with specific	This remains on hold. We continue to be open to conversations with the sector to develop further employability focused collaborative skills provision for PGRs.	Action specific to original heading/activity not included in 2016 Action Plan.	

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	Level Skills for Postgraduates	<p>skills provision for PGRs (Ongoing with focus of activity in mid-2012).</p> <p>SFC has identified an opportunity for investment to integrate employer demand in the energy sector with educational provision at multiple levels across Further and Higher Education (March 2012).</p> <p>Work with institutions to increase recognition and use of the Researcher Development Framework (Ongoing).</p>	<p>report highlighting possible elements of the initiative which could be taken forward was discussed by the US RKEC.</p> <p>SFC funded the Energy Skills Partnership for three years which was then renewed until AY16-17 to develop links between colleges and universities through articulation for provision linked to the skill demands of the energy sector.</p> <p>SFC provided funding to the University of Strathclyde for ring-fenced Energy Industry Doctorate places (PhD) in 2013-14. This was awarded to Strathclyde, as the lead institution of Energy Technology Partnership, to distribute the funds amongst other institutions in the partnership.</p>	<p>discussion at Scottish Researcher Development Policy Forum in late 2014, with action, if appropriate, agreed by mid-2015).</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Ongoing. SFC continues to support the development of energy skills in Scotland. For example, in 2015, SFC contributed up to £450,000 to the research pool, Energy Technology Partnership. One of the expected outcomes of this funding is to support the energy sector with the skills it need, thus building on the successful Energy Industry Doctoral programme among other initiatives.</p>	As above.	

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2, 3 and 4	Graduate Schools	Continued and further partnership and funding for collaborative skills and training provision for postgraduate students (Ongoing).	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>We are evaluating the mid-term review of the Scottish Graduate School for Social Sciences (SGSSS). We believe this design of support for postgraduate students to be driving up the standard of training for all students, regardless of Research Council affiliation, and importantly to all students in social sciences in partner institutions even when they are not supported by a Research Council. Over the past two years the School has enhanced its governance structures to ensure it is better delivering its purpose. The learning from this investment was used in our discussions with the sector during AY 12-13 to develop the Scottish Graduate School for the Arts and Humanities (SGSAH).</p> <p>Similarly to the SGSSS, the SGSAH aims to equip students with key skills for future employment and to increase engagement</p>	<p>Continued and further partnership and funding for collaborative skills and training provision for postgraduate students (Ongoing with specific actions defined below).</p> <p>Through the mid-term review, work to maximise investment in SGSSS (by end of 2014) and secure appropriate sustainability of SGSSS beyond SFC funding (by 2015).</p> <p>Work to maximise investment and ensure appropriate sustainability of SGSAH (by 2018).</p>	<p>On track and ongoing. SFC's continued funding for the SGSSS allows them to share training and co-supervision opportunities amongst the Scottish HE sector. This is of benefit both to the studentship holders but also to those academic staff involved in those training and co-supervision opportunities.</p> <p>Liaison between the SGSSS and SGSAH has also occurred bringing about further partnership working to contribute to collaborative skills and training provision for postgraduate students.</p> <p>SFC's continued funding for the SGSAH has seen an extremely successful start to the initiative. This includes delivering over 600 training places to students from every Scottish member HEI in arts and humanities.</p>	<p>Amended. Action specific to original heading/activity not included in 2016 Action Plan.</p> <p><i>Progress made by Scottish Graduate Schools reported above under heading, Co-funding for Research Pooling and other Collaborative Initiatives.</i></p>	

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			with creative and digital industries. It also aims to enhance institutional collaboration in the delivery of training, leading to effectiveness and efficiency gains and an enhanced learning experience for students. This initiative helped to secure funding for Arts and Humanities Research Council studentships across eight partner institutions. We have agreed to fund the school from 2013-14 to 2018-19.				
3 and 4	Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG)	We will begin a process of reviewing the underlying model for the distribution of the RPG in advance of the Research Excellence Framework in 2014 (December 2014).		On track.	On track and ongoing. The Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) is provided to universities to invest in the environment for high quality research training and development, and enhance the contribution of postgraduate research students to the research base in Scotland. The investment by SFC in the RPG is a continuous, explicit recognition of the significant role played by research students in the continued development of Scotland's high-quality research base.	Continue to provide universities with funding to invest in the environment for high quality research training and development.	On track and ongoing. The SFC continues to allocate the Research Postgraduate Grant (RPG) to universities to invest in the environment for high quality research training and development, and enhance the contribution of postgraduate research students to the research base in Scotland. In AY 16/17 and AY17/18 the SFC allocated £34.5M through the RPG.

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	Working with Vitae, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland, Vitae, HEA and the HE sector	Discussions with Vitae, Research Councils UK (RCUK) and other HE funding bodies over future partnership (Mid 2012). In line with the recommendations of the 2011 Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), SFC to explore working with the sector on developing work placements and secondments for staff (Discussion to	Complete. In July 2012 we agreed to fund Vitae from AY12-13 to 14-15 alongside the Research councils and other UK HE funding bodies. Vitae has moved to a membership model. We will continue to work with them to ensure sustainability past the end of our contract. Delayed. The development of the Innovation Centres offers enhanced links between business and universities but SFC has initiated no specific conversations on work placements and secondments for staff have taken place.	Work with Vitae to ensure outcomes approach for Scotland (2014) and ensure sustainability of Vitae (March 2015). Continue to ensure Innovation Centres offer innovative career pathways and to develop these opportunities where appropriate (ongoing, monitoring through the 6 monthly reviews commencing November 2014).	On track and ongoing. In Summer 2015, we agreed to fund Vitae from AY15/16 to AY17/18 alongside the Research Councils and UK HE Funding Bodies. From September 2015, we allocated funding for 215 TPG places across all 8 Innovation Centres. The programmes on offer by the ICs include close industry engagement, often in the form of placement with an industrial partner from the Innovation Centre. In addition several ICs have established industry-specific doctoral training programmes. We	Action plan amended. Action plan amended. <i>Progress report for Innovation Centre programme and links with postgraduate opportunities is provided above (see Principle 3).</i>	

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		be initiated by mid-2013, with potential action, if appropriate, agreed by December 2013).		<p>We intend to introduce Skills Innovation Vouchers (IV). Building on the current IV scheme and linking universities with Scottish SMES, this scheme would require a quality placement to be delivered by the industry partner (December 2014).</p> <p>In line with the recommendations of the 2013 CROS, SFC to explore working with the sector on developing work placements and secondments for staff (Discussion to be initiated at Scottish Researcher Development Policy Forum in late 2014, with potential action, if appropriate, agreed by mid-2015).</p>	<p>continue to monitor these places through the IC programme's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF).</p> <p>The Student Placement Innovation Voucher scheme was launched in February 2015 and aims to build on the success of the original SFC Standard Innovation Voucher project and be led by the same company, offering valuable business skills and experience to the student whilst they are hosted at the company premises for the duration of the project.</p> <p>On hold though discussions continue between the sector and various partners in terms of developing work placements and secondments for staff.</p>	Action Plan amended.	<i>8 Student Placement Vouchers have been awarded since January 2016.</i>

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3,4 and 5	<p>Scottish Crucible Programme</p> <p>Knowledge Transfer Scotland</p> <p>KE Step Change Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE)</p>	Continued support for collaborative leadership and development programmes (Ongoing).	<p>On track and ongoing.</p> <p>Crucible We have continued our support with funding of £270k from AY12/13 through to AY14/15.</p> <p>Converge Challenge We have provided funding for three academic years until 2014-15 for this initiative, which offers students and staff from all Scottish Universities and Research Institutes the chance to exploit the commercial potential of their inventions.</p> <p>SIE SFC has recently agreed 3 more years of funding for SIE. This is partially expected to enable them to generate additional income from other sources. Recent reporting from SIE highlighted that activities are run to give postgraduate research students a chance to apply their problem solving skills and ingenuity to current societal issues.</p>	<p>Continued support for collaborative leadership and development programmes (Ongoing with specific action as outlined below):</p> <p>Develop Outcome Agreement with SIE to ensure maximum impact of their activities (August 2014).</p> <p>Using the mid-term review in early 2015, work with sector to maximise impact of Sumac, ensuring sustainability by AY 15/16.</p>	<p>On track and ongoing.</p> <p>We have continued our support for Scottish Crucible with £225k from AY15/16 through to AY17/18. The expected outcome of the funding is to mould future generations of research leaders who are inspired to be more ambitious, creative and innovative in their research and interdisciplinary collaborations.</p> <p>We have continued our support for Converge Challenge with funding of £899k from AY15/16 through to AY17/18. Converge Challenge is the only business plan competition for staff and students of all of Scotland's universities working in any discipline. It has been operating since 2010 and has been a nationwide competition open to all of Scotland's universities since AY 2012-13.</p> <p>SFC, along with Scottish Enterprise provided SIE</p>	<p>Scottish Crucible Programme Continue to support collaborative leadership and development programmes</p> <p>Enterprise and entrepreneurship education Continue to explore with the Enterprise Agencies and the HE/FE sector innovative approaches to developing entrepreneurial skills. This is partly delivered through SFC's strategic investment in Enterprise Campus.</p>	<p>We have continued to support Scottish Crucible with funding of £225k from AY16/17 to AY17/18. Over this period, Crucible has focussed on delivering the annual leadership and development programme, support for collaborative interdisciplinary, cross institutional projects, and maintenance of the alumni network.</p> <p>Enterprise and entrepreneurship education Ongoing. SFC is working with the Enterprise Agencies and the HE/FE sector innovative approaches to developing entrepreneurial skills. Enterprise Campus was a pilot and SFC funding has no ended. Universities Scotland will examine how the outcomes of this pilot project can be embedded in university practice.</p>

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			<p>Mentoring In May 2013 we co-funded Mentoring Scotland, a one day conference with representation from 18 Scottish HEIs focused on sharing good practice on mentoring and developing multi-institutional collaboration.</p> <p>In December 2013, we agreed to fund Sumac (a multi-institutional data management system for mentoring and coaching) for AYs 13/14 – 15/16, subject to review. The funding will help to develop a sustainable system to support collaborative workforce/student skills development across Scotland.</p>		<p>with funding to ensure that 2014-15 was another strong year for SIE with 180 SIE workshops in Scottish Institutions and over 6000 student attendees. SIE also awarded over £115,000 to help students develop their business ideas through their competitions.</p> <p>SUMAC continues to upgrade its platform to make it more user-friendly. The platform showcased as an exhibitor at the 2015 Vitae Researcher Development International conference. SUMAC is currently drawing up a business plan for 2016-2020 which will look at income generation elements to support longer term income generation.</p>		
5	Strategic Dialogue Meetings (SDMs) with individual institutions	The delivery of 'Putting Learners at the Centre' requires working in direct partnership with staff and students in	Ongoing and refreshed. SFC started a new round of SDMs in February 2014. These meetings build mutual understanding and relationships between universities and the SFC. SFC Board members meet with both staff and	Over the next three years each university will be visited by SFC executive and Board members (May 2017).	On track and ongoing. SFC continues to hold strategic dialogue meetings (SDMs) with each institution. The most recent round began in February 2014 with a new three-year cycle of meetings.	Continue to hold SDMs with individual institutions to build mutual understanding and relationships between institutions (staff and students) and SFC.	On track and ongoing. SFC continues to hold strategic dialogue meetings with each university. These provide an opportunity for SFC staff and Board members to meet with staff and students to discuss

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		universities enabling individuals to share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning (Ongoing with key milestones to be achieved in 2012-2013).	students to discuss how the university is supporting them.				priority issues, including how the university is supporting them.
6	Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity	Targets for retention, articulation and	We are currently reviewing the impact of our funding for and activity around E&D with the aim of realigning our E&D strategy to fit better with the duties of the Equality Act 2010, the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland quality assurance processes and Outcome Agreements. Ongoing. Achieved with ongoing enhancements as the Outcome Agreement	Ensure enhanced impact and alignment of SFC funded equality and diversity related activity (November 2015). Targets for retention, articulation and widening access to be included	In 2015, SFC published its Mainstreaming Equalities report in which we outlined our ambition to deepen our understanding and action on equality with equality considerations to be central to policy development, decision making and delivery in order to realise the potential of staff, students and supporting equality in college and university careers. SFC continues to include ambitious targets for retention, articulation and	Identified equality and diversity as one of seven priority areas for development over the lifetime of SFC's strategic plan. Targets for retention, articulation and widening access to be included	Complete and ongoing. SFC published its Equality Outcomes in 2015, its Gender Action Plan in 2016 and Mainstreaming Report in 2017. It is actively engaged in delivering key actions and outcomes in partnership with the sector that are intended to enhance equality and diversity and maximise the potential of all students and staff. Ongoing. SFC continues to set demanding targets for retention, articulation and

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	Improved understanding of under representation of certain groups within research	<p>widening access to be included within institutional Outcome Agreements (July each year starting 2012).</p> <p>Using ECU Statistical Report and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data to generate improved understanding of under representation among staff and students with reference to ethnicity and disability (December 2012)</p>	<p>process improves and develops. The introduction of Outcome Agreements has resulted in a better understanding of institutional ambitions in these areas and ultimately we hope for a broader range of people accessing university from both school and college, enabling a more effective pathway into a research career.</p> <p>Ongoing. Having initially conducted such an analysis in 2012, we are currently conducting a similar analysis of staff and will compare results.</p>	<p>within institutional Outcome Agreements (Guidance published in August each year).</p> <p>We will analyse together with the Scottish analysis of CROS and Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) and develop our response in appropriate areas (Initial analysis Sept 2014, actions confirmed, if appropriate, by the end of 2014).</p>	<p>widening access in its Outcome Agreements with Scottish colleges and universities. In March 2016, a 'Blueprint for Fairness', the final report from Scottish Government's Commission on Widening Access, was published. The report set out a range of actions aimed at ensuring a student's background is not a barrier to taking up a place at university. SFC will work with other stakeholders to implement the report's 34 recommendations.</p> <p>Delayed. Due to changes in staffing no specific actions were confirmed from the Scottish analysis.</p>	<p>within institutional Outcome Agreements.</p> <p>Working in partnership with Vitae, Universities Scotland et al, encourage increased participation in the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) and the Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) in 2017 from Scottish institutions.</p>	<p>widening access within institutional Outcome Agreements.</p> <p>See update below.</p> <p>In accordance with SFC's Equality Outcomes and Gender Action Plan, SFC is currently engaged in using HESA data to establish a robust data set that will allow staff data to be monitored and enhance equality and diversity through the Outcome Agreement process by establishing baselines and identifying areas for improvement.</p>

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	Every Researcher Counts (ERC)	Working with institutions to further understand the impact and potential impact of our funding for strategic initiatives, on different underrepresent ed groups in research (December 2012).	Amended. We are currently reviewing the impact of our funding for and activity around E&D with the aim of realigning our E&D strategy to fit better with the duties of the Equality Act 2010, the QAA Scotland quality assurance processes and Outcome Agreements.	Ensure enhanced impact and alignment of SFC funded equality and diversity related activity (November 2015).	We have continued our funding of ECU from 2016-2018 for a 3-year programme of work to support universities and colleges in Scotland.	Continue funding of ECU to roll out three year programme of work to support the mainstreaming of equality and diversity in universities and colleges in Scotland.	SFC has continued to fund Advance HE (previously known as ECU) to deliver a programme of work to support the mainstreaming of equality and diversity in universities and colleges in Scotland. It continues to provide tailored Athena SWAN support to Scottish universities preparing applications to ensure continued higher rates of Scottish success (compared to UK averages) and improved outcomes.
	Gender inequality in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)	Working with institutions to promote and implement materials developed in ERC project (Mid 2012).	Ongoing. Through our support for Vitae we have supported the ERC project. This includes contributing to the Advisory Board and facilitating a Train the Trainer event.	Key note at ERC Scotland conference (June 2014). Continue to work with institutions to promote and implement materials developed in ERC project (ongoing, largely through RTSC).	Complete. Funding for this project has come to an end. Online course materials have ensured learning is embedded within UK research community.	In March 2018, SFC agreed to award 1.7M to Advance HE over AY2018- 19 to AY2020-21 for a programme of projects specifically for Scottish colleges and universities, including provision of advisory services and support, and access to Advance HE's core services, including UK- wide projects.	Thirteen Scottish universities and 73 individual academic departments have now
		Working with ECU and other funders and potential funders, to establish a sustainable future for the	Ongoing. In addition to core funding for ECU, we provided funding for AY 13/14 and 14/15 to support the Charter in Scotland. In June 2013 SFC hosted a workshop run by ECU focused on	Ensure enhanced impact and alignment of SFC funded equality and diversity related activity (November 2015).	SFC continues to support our universities' take up of Athena Swan through our Outcome Agreement discussions. ECU has published an updated toolkit for embedding equality in outcome		

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		Charter (September 2013).	<p>enhancing institutional and departmental applications in Scotland. Athena Swan has moved to a membership model to aid sustainability.</p> <p>Alongside other developments across the UK, SFC has played a significant role in enhancing take up of Athena Swan through our strong support of the Charter within our Outcome Agreement discussions. With Research Institutes now eligible to join the Charter, since April 2012, five new Scottish members have joined the Charter and nine new institutional bronze awards have been awarded to Scottish institutions. Amongst four of the bronze institutional members, there have been 12 departmental bronze awards, four departmental silvers and one departmental gold.</p> <p>There has been a strong presence at the Scottish</p>	<p>We will use the on-going evaluation of the Aurora</p>	<p>agreements to support HEIs to meet the enhanced SFC requirements on E&D, including conducting an equality impact assessment (EIA) of the outcome agreement. SFC continues to play a significant role in enhancing take up of Athena Swan through our strong support of the expanded Charter within our Outcome Agreement discussions. 11 Scottish HEIs hold an institutional Bronze award, one Scottish HEI holds an institutional Silver award and one Scottish research institute holds an institutional Bronze award. In addition to this, Scottish HEIs hold 40 departmental bronze awards, 1 departmental gold award and 11 departmental silver awards.</p> <p>There continues to be a strong presence at the</p>		<p>been recognised with Athena SWAN awards for their work to advance gender equality. During the November 2017 Athena SWAN round, 8 departmental awards (5 bronze, 2 silver, 1 gold) were announced. 3 Scottish HEIs were awarded an institutional bronze award.</p>

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			<p>Aurora programme with participants attending from 12 Scottish universities, as well as seven participants from SFC.</p> <p>SFC sits on the Steering Group of Equate Scotland. Following a significant period in which we were unable to attend, we now have a new member attending.</p> <p>Ongoing. ECU is currently running a trial awards round for its new gender equality mark. This aims to address gender inequalities and imbalance in the arts, humanities and social sciences, in particular the underrepresentation of women in senior roles. The charter mark utilises the experience and</p>	<p>programme and conduct our own review among our internal participants, to decide on how best to support the programme in future, with the intention to expand (November 2014).</p> <p>Better align our work with colleges and universities on this issue. We will scope out an action plan to tackle gender inequality aligning actions between the sectors where appropriate (first stage focused on governing bodies to be developed by October 2014).</p> <p>Following each pilot we will consider what role we may play in supporting the new Charters to tackle under-representation of certain groups in research (End of 2015).</p>	<p>Scottish Aurora programme with participants attending from a number of Scottish universities, as well as seven participants from SFC in 14/15 and a further 6 supported in 15/16.</p> <p>On track. SFC published its interim Gender Action Plan in 2016.</p> <p>SFC actively encourages Scottish HEIs to take up of Athena Swan charter awards through our strong support of the expanded Charter within our Outcome Agreement discussions.</p>		

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		<p>Working with ECU on development of similar schemes for other under-represented groups (December 2013).</p> <p>Identify how data collection and monitoring</p>	<p>methodology of the Athena Swan. The Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow are two of the thirty institutions taking part (The pilot is due for completion in October 2014).</p> <p>ECU is also recruiting for members for its pilot to develop a race equality charter mark. (The pilot is due to complete in June 2015).</p> <p>Delayed and ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing. Partially achieved with ongoing enhancements as the Outcome Agreement process improves and develops. The introduction of Outcome Agreements has resulted in a better understanding of institutional ambitions in this area, but there is additional work to ensure consistency of outcome for all students and staff.</p> <p>Amended. Our focus has been on working with universities to identify</p>	<p>Ensure enhanced impact and alignment of SFC funded equality and diversity related activity (November 2015).</p> <p>Ongoing (monitoring through self-evaluations in October each year, statistical returns and Outcome Agreement dialogue throughout the year and refreshed expectations published in Outcome Agreement guidance by September each year),</p> <p>Ensure enhanced impact and alignment of SFC funded equality and</p>	<p>SFC actively encourages Scottish HEIs to apply for the Race Equality Charter mark through our strong support of this within our Outcome Agreement discussions.</p>		<p>Abertay University became the first Scottish HEI in July 2016 to be awarded the Race Equality Charter Mark (bronze award). SFC continues to use the Outcome Agreement process and its support for Advance HE to encourage all Scottish HEIs to seek to take up this award.</p>

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		<p>of both SFC formulaic research grants and strategic research funding can be enhanced, to facilitate potential development of gender focused outcomes for both types of grant (September 2013).</p> <p>SFC to consider how the issues noted regarding male and female participation and retention across the sector can be addressed through the Outcome Agreements (September 2012).</p>	<p>their gender related equality outcomes and to embed gender equality within Outcome Agreements.</p> <p>Complete.</p>	<p>diversity related activity (November 2015).</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>			

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		<p>Development and implementation of SFC Occupational Segregation Strategy Development (June 2012).</p> <p>Through all this work, and initially through Athena Swan and Every Researcher Counts, SFC will seek to work with the sector to drive the shift in research culture that is required to ensure that every individual with the potential and desire to be an excellent researcher is recognised and adequately supported to realise that potential (Ongoing).</p>					

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	REF Equality and Diversity Panel and Group(EDAG) and Equalities and Diversity Advisory Panel (EDAP)	SFC to provide Secretariat support to EDAP through 2012 (September 2012). EDAP to give advice to SFC which will promote equality and diversity within universities through the REF (September 2014).	On track, with SFC Board representation on the EDAP ensuring continuity with policy at SFC.			Engagement with next REF Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel to ensure appropriate steps are taken to ensure equality and diversity agenda upheld in future discussions of next REF and REF recommendations from REF 2014 EDAP report are implemented.	On track and ongoing. SFC is currently contributing to the work of the REF 2021 Equality and Diversity Advisory Panel to ensure appropriate steps are taken to ensure equality and diversity issues are considered in future REF discussions/decisions and recommendations from the REF 2014 EDAP report are implemented.
7	Improved Data collection	Work (in partnership with HESA, RCUK, other funding bodies) to improve data collection on researcher careers (Ongoing).	Ongoing. The HESA staff record has been updated from AY12/13. There are now additional fields to help improve our understanding of researchers and their careers, these include more protected characteristics covered, institutional staff identification numbers, staff with zero full-time equivalence, current academic subject area, reasons for leaving and destinations as well as early career researchers and research assistants.	Continue to work (in partnership with HESA, RCUK, other funding bodies) to improve data collection on researcher careers (Ongoing) and consider how to use the data more effectively (November 2015).	In 2015, SFC published its Mainstreaming Equalities report in which we outlined our ambition to deepen our understanding and action on equality with equality considerations to be central to policy development, decision making and delivery in order to realise the potential of staff, students and supporting equality in college and university careers. A large element of this going forward will consider how to use the data we hold more effectively. We also	Work (in partnership with HESA, RCUK, other funding bodies) to improve data collection on researcher careers.	Ongoing. As part of SFC's Equality and Diversity Outcomes and Gender Action Plan 2016, SFC is engaged in activity that is intended to enhance its understanding of research staff and their careers.

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		<p>Work (in partnership with institutions) to encourage wider participation in surveys tracking progress in implementation (egg. CROS and PIRLS) (Ongoing).</p> <p>In line with CROS 2011 recommendations to institutions, SFC to explore further analysis of CROS and PIRLS results at a Scottish level (September 2013).</p>	<p>In May 2014 SFC agreed to fund a Scottish level analysis of both the 2013 CROS and PIRLS results. Through this we hope to identify and evidence Scottish strengths and weaknesses. This will help to promote the Scottish researcher environment and experience and lead to improved awareness of Scottish wide areas for improvement which can then be targeted by SFC, Universities Scotland and individual Scottish institutions.</p>	<p>Discuss Scottish level analysis with key stakeholders and use results to target areas for improvement, amending action plan where appropriate (December 2014).</p>	<p>continue to work with HESA and ECU to ensure data collection on researcher careers continues to improve.</p>	<p>Working in partnership with Vitae, Universities Scotland et al, encourage increased participation in the Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) and the Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) in 2017 from Scottish institutions.</p>	<p>SFC has considered the findings of the 2017 CROS and PIRLS report, <i>Five Steps Forward</i>. The actions detailed in the SFC's 2018 HR Excellence in Research Action Plan are informed by this.</p>

The Concordat's key principles:

1. Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.
2. Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation's human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.
3. Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.
4. The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.
5. Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.
6. Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.
7. The sector and all stakeholders will undertake regular and collective review of their progress in strengthening the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK.