Report on University of Reading Careers in Research On-Line Survey 2009

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Executive Summary

CROS 2009 was a national anonymous survey of 51 HEIs within the UK. The majority of the Russell and 1994 Group Universities participated. This report compares the results from the University of Reading with the Russell Group and the rest of the 1994 Group. This produces fresh data which supports the conclusions in the 2008 report on the University’s provision for Research Staff (RS) mapped onto the Concordat.\(^1\) It concludes that much of the University’s provision for RS is of a high standard, but that good practice in the recruitment and management of Research Staff needs to be spread further throughout the institution.

Response rate
This was 38% at Reading, 13% higher than the 1994 Group and 17% higher than the Russell Group.

Section 1 - Recruitment and Selection

- The documentation in Welcome Packs on their Contract and Probationary Procedure were welcomed by 60% or more Reading RS, significantly higher than in the comparator groups.
- Cross-institutional induction received positive ratings by significantly more RS at Reading than in the comparator groups.
- Information about training and development opportunities were rated highly by more RS at Reading than in the comparator groups.

Section 2 - Recognition and Value

Research Communities
More than 60 percent of Reading respondents felt integrated into the research communities in: the University; the wider research community; and their department. Over 70% of them stated that their work was stimulated by the University’s research community. In the first two categories Reading has a significant lead over its comparators, in the second two Reading is on a par with them.

Perception of being valued
A mean of 71% of Reading respondents felt valued for their contribution to:
- achieving the institution’s research strategy
- external collaborations
- research culture within the department
- world-class research
- publications.
These results were all significantly higher than in the comparator groups.

Perception of equality with lecturers:
A mean of 78% of respondents from Reading considered themselves treated equally with lecturers in the areas of:
- requests for flexible working;
- opportunities to attend conferences and external meetings;
- visibility on websites and staff directories
- and access to training and development opportunities.
In all of these areas Reading’s results were significantly higher than its comparators other than ‘requests for flexible working’. In the latter Reading’s response was only significantly better than the Russell Group.

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\(^1\) The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers was signed on 25th June 2008 by Universities UK, Research Councils UK, trusts, Government departments and funders of research.
Knowledge of national research staff issues
Fifty seven percent of the respondents at Reading had a good or partial knowledge of the Concordat, which was over 20% higher than results from the comparators. The 70% of Reading’s respondents who knew about the RAE/REF almost matched the 1994 Group and was significantly higher than the Russell Group.

Knowledge of University policy
A mean of over 75% of RS respondents at Reading had a good or partial understanding of the following policy areas: appraisal/performance review, fixed term contracts and Research Codes of Practice. All of these results were significantly higher than the comparator groups.

Section 3 - Support and Career Development
Career Planning
The results from Reading in the area of Career Planning were positive with 80% and higher stating that they had: reflected on their development needs; considered their career options; and felt encouraged to engage in personal and career development. In the first two categories Reading matched the comparator groups and in the last it exceeded them significantly.

Staff Review/Appraisal
Reading respondents indicated that 65% of them have had a Staff Development Review over the last two years which is the same as CROS 2005 and a significantly higher response than either comparators. Sixty percent of respondents at Reading also indicated that their SDR overall was useful or very useful, significantly higher than the comparators. A mean of 60% of respondents at Reading also stated that their SDR was useful or very useful in indentifying their strengths and achievements, highlighting issues for them and reviewing their personal progress. Apart from the latter issue where Reading only led the Russell Group, Reading’s results were significantly higher than the comparator groups.

Participation in internal institutional training activities
Seventy eight percent of respondents from Reading said that they had attended a training session in the last year. This indicated that the culture of training amongst RS at Reading was significantly higher than in its comparators.

Development opportunities available to RS as part of their role
Forty one percent of Reading respondents said that they had collaborated with industry in their current role, which was significantly higher than in the comparator groups.

Section 4 - Equality and Diversity
This section demonstrated that the University, like its comparator groups, is perceived as a work-place where there is little discrimination and equality and diversity are valued.

Section 5 - About Research Staff
The results of this indicate that the typical respondent to this survey was a scientist on their first contract funded from a Research Council grant who is working full time.

Section 6 - Reading Only Questions
The demand for a Research Staff Conference and an Association was quickly followed up with successful actions.

Section 7: Demographics
In the areas where they match up, Reading’s results were very close to its comparators apart from that of gender distribution. In this area Reading has more male than female Research Staff.
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<th>Proposed action</th>
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<td><strong>Recruitment and Selection</strong></td>
<td>- Recruitment &amp; Selection training for all potential recruitment panel members for Autumn 2010. Potential participants in recruitment panels will be identified and trained on arrival at the University. A form to sign up for the training is included in the Welcome Pack.</td>
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<td>Significant numbers were not interviewed by a departmental or cross institutional panel. This demonstrates that University policy on the recruitment and selection of new staff is often not followed.</td>
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<td><strong>Role Induction / Department Induction</strong></td>
<td>- Include CROS results in PI training and development activities. - Discuss with/brief senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators about the implication of the Concordat and CROS results. - Work with the School Administrators on local induction programmes, sharing good practice to improve induction at local level. - Investigate additional methods of notifying new Research staff of the central induction days such as targeted emails etc.</td>
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<td>Over 50% were negative about or not offered a “role” or “departmental” induction. This problem persists from earlier CROS Surveys.</td>
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<td><strong>Cross Institutional Induction</strong></td>
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<td>Positive response by attendees, significantly higher than comparators. However, 46% said they were not offered opportunity to attend.</td>
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<td><strong>RS Perception of being valued</strong></td>
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<td>A mean of only 43% considered that their work was valued by the University in 9 significant areas.</td>
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<td><strong>Probation</strong></td>
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<td>Only 43% said they had probation and 21% said they had discussed their progress towards probation with their PIs.</td>
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<td><strong>Induction Documentation</strong></td>
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<td>29% stated they did not receive a copy of the University’s Research Strategy.</td>
<td>- University’s Research Strategy to be included in Welcome Pack for RS and for Academics. Insert link to it on RS web-site.</td>
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<td><strong>Perception of equality with lecturers</strong></td>
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<td>A mean of 48% did not agree or didn’t know whether they were on equal terms with lecturers in 5 areas, such as job evaluation of role (pay and grading schemes).</td>
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<td><strong>Knowledge of University Policy</strong></td>
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<td>A mean of 50%+ have either never heard of or only know of the existence of 5 University policies such as institutional research strategy.</td>
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<td><strong>Staff Review/Appraisal</strong></td>
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<td>A mean of 40% thought the process was “not very or not at all useful in: finding solutions to problems; changing working practices or leading to training or development activities”.</td>
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<td><strong>Training and Development</strong></td>
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<td>- 41% wanted more training in research skills and techniques.</td>
<td>- Discuss with/brief senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators about the implication of the Concordat and CROS results. In particular the benefits of a</td>
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<td>- 30% find it difficult to attend training and 80% of those consider this to be because of lack of</td>
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</table>
- A mean of 26% took part in key training areas (Leadership & Management etc)
- Results indicate a variation in the provision of mentoring for RS throughout the University.
- Figures suggest that more development opportunities in key areas could be made available to RS in their daily work.
- Twenty eight percent or less have developed a personal development plan or maintain a professional development record. Fifteen percent had been involved in coaching, mentoring or action learning, but there was significant demand for these approaches to development.

**Communication**
- 39% of respondents were unaware of the Research Staff Website

**About Research Staff**
The number of RS on second contracts at Reading is proportionately less than in the comparator groups which may indicate that we are not retaining our RS as well as other institutions.

**Equality and Diversity**
Significantly more RS from Reading considered that people were treated unfairly due to their gender and ethnicity than any other area (i.e. religion).

**Demographics**
The gender breakdown of the University’s RS is the reverse of both the comparator groups with more men than women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mentoring scheme for RS.</th>
<th>Research the provision of mentoring within Schools (currently underway as part of Concordat Implementation Strategy)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give personal development a higher profile via RS Induction, a higher profile on RS web-site and in Staff Development Review.</td>
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<td>Offering Action learning Sets as a development tool for RS.</td>
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<td>Target PIs for coaching sessions.</td>
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<td>The development of termly email newsletters and regular updates to the web-site coupled with email notifications.</td>
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<td>Use of social networking software to instigate discussion group for RS at the University.</td>
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<td>Therefore exit data for RS at Reading for the recent years is being compared to figures obtained from another 1994 institution. To investigate this disparity further a series of 3 focus groups per annum of RS at Reading should be initiated to discuss their experience of employment at the University and their reasons for leaving.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Further work and publicity around the University’s pursuit of Swan Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>The perception of people being treated unfairly based on their ethnicity may bear further investigation by the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The reasons behind this may bear further investigation by the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office.</td>
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Introduction

The questions in CROS 2009 have been re-written since the previous survey to aid the benchmarking of the HE sector against the principles laid out in the Concordat for the Development of Researchers 2008. The report will cover the issues raised in the Survey according to its different sections.

- Recruitment and Selection
- Recognition and Value
- Support and Career Development
- Equality and Diversity
- About you
- Institutional Questions
- Demographics

The responses to the questions have been compared to the collective responses of the 1994 Group and the Russell Group Institutions that participated in the Survey. Due to changes in how the Survey is conducted comparisons against individual institutions and rankings are no longer available. Comparisons over time with preceding surveys are difficult to make.

The CROS 2009 Survey was conducted in May 2009 and obtained a very high participation rate of 38%. This equated to responses from 158 research staff (RS) out of 412 potential participants. This compared well with the rest of the 1994 Group and Russell Group who achieved 25% and 20% respectively.
Section 1: Recruitment and Selection

This section covers the time period from when participants found out about their post being available through to the end of the induction process. There were sixteen questions, those answers are highlighted where the responses given are significantly different from the comparator groups and where the questions have major implications for University policy.

The first three questions concerned: how participants found out about their post, the details they received during the application process and how they were interviewed for their position. None of these questions are directly comparable to the 1994 and Russell Groups as participants could choose more than one response. Nevertheless some comparison is possible.

How participants found out about their post
It is interesting to note that the two most popular responses at Reading, the 1994 Group and the Russell Group are the same. Researchers say that they found out about their job firstly by word of mouth and secondly by jobs.ac.uk. Therefore there is a strong informal element to how research staff found out about their posts.

The details participants received during the application process
From the survey sixteen participants from Reading stated that they did not receive details of the post during the recruitment process. In the comparator groups significant numbers also did not receive post details.

How were participants interviewed for their position
This data could be problematical as research staff who are on successive contracts may not have had interviews beyond their initial contracts for justifiable reasons. Therefore this is only an analysis of those RS respondents on their first contract with their institutions. Reading and the comparator groups all have the same top two responses to this question:

1st By face-to-face interview with PI,
2nd By an interview panel made up of representatives from within the department,

However those who responded could give more than one answer so it is difficult to come to exact conclusions. This is a summary of the responses from those on their first contract at Reading:
There are significant numbers of research staff who did not receive an interview by a departmental or cross institutional panel which the University would consider to be good practice in recruitment and selection.

**The Nature of Research Staff Employment Contracts**

This chart indicates that Reading, as a proportion, have significantly less Research Staff on open ended contracts than the 1994 Group, and the Russell Group. However when these statistics were compared with HR data for the period it showed that the survey under represented the
staff on open ended contracts. In fact Reading had the same percentage of RS on open ended contracts as the rest of the 1994 Group.

**Induction (Documentation)**
The first part of question five concerns the different information that RS received on arrival at the University and how useful they found it. The documents asked about were:

- employment contract,
- probationary information,
- institutional policies and procedures (e.g. complaints procedures),
- rights and responsibilities statement,
- and the institutions research strategy.

Significantly more Reading respondents were positive about their employment contract and probationary information than at the comparator institutions.
In the other three categories Reading was only marginally ahead of the comparator groups. However the most significant statistic was the percentage of staff who considered that they had not been offered these documents. Reading was marginally better than all its competitors in these areas however the figures are still not good.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading respondents who did not receive documentation</th>
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<tr>
<td>5.e. Copy of the institution’s research strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.d. Statement of your rights and responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.c. Copies of institutional policies and procedures (e.g. complaints procedures)</td>
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</table>

**Induction Process**

This part of question 5 was split into three sections asking the respondents about inductions to: their role; their department; and to the institution.

The high level of respondents who considered that they were not offered this type of induction is the same in Reading and the comparator groups. If the negative and the not offered categories are combined then they amount to over 50% of the respondents in all cases.
This report assumes that respondents have transposed School for Department where relevant. The noticeable feature of these results is the high level of respondents who state they were not offered an induction at departmental level. Combining the not offered and the negative categories they amount to over 60% of the respondents in all cases.

This set of data is distinguished from the others by the positive feedback concerning central induction provision for Research Staff at Reading. This is significantly higher than in the comparator institutions. The not offered category is also significantly lower as well. However at 45.8% it is still too high, especially when details of the induction programme are provided in the Welcome Pack sent to all new starters.
Respondents at Reading were significantly more positive about the information they received than the comparator groups. Less of them also stated that they had not been offered information.
**Conclusion**

**Positive Results**
Documentation in Welcome Packs on their Contract and Probationary Procedure were welcomed by 60% or more Reading respondents which was significantly higher than in the comparator groups.

Cross-institutional induction received positive ratings by significantly more RS at Reading than in the comparator groups.

Information about training and development opportunities were rated highly by more RS at Reading than in the comparator groups.

**Areas for improvement and recommendations for action**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Areas for Improvement</th>
<th>Proposed action.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment and Selection</strong></td>
<td>The strategy used thus far to address these issues has largely been based on increased communication with RS from the centre of the University. The limited success indicates that it is necessary to embed the management of these issues at a School and Department level. To this end the data and conclusions of this report will be used when executing the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Concordat, passed by Staffing Committee in 2009. i.e.:</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are significant numbers of research staff who did not receive an interview by a departmental or cross institutional panel which the University would consider to be good practice in recruitment and selection.</td>
<td>• Recruitment &amp; Selection training for all potential recruitment panel members by School for Autumn 2010. Potential participants in recruitment panels will be identified and trained on arrival at the University.</td>
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<td><strong>Role Induction</strong></td>
<td>• Discuss with/brief senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators about the implication of the Concordat and CROS results.</td>
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<td>This issue was covered in the CROS 2003 and 2005 survey and although the question has changed, responses continue to be poor. However it is also true that Reading’s responses on this issue almost exactly match those of both comparator groups. One other possible mitigating factor is that informal inductions may have been carried out but they have not been recognized as such by the respondents. However the uniformity of responses from Reading and the comparator groups concerning the issue would count against that. Other factors that may be taken into account are the number of Ph.D students who transfer from doctoral studies through to post-doctoral research with their supervisor becoming their PI. In this situation both parties may consider that there is no need for a role induction. Nevertheless there still is a significant change in roles which needs to be addressed. Reading has introduced a range of support mechanisms for role induction for RS, and yet the problem remains.²</td>
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<td><strong>School/Department Induction</strong></td>
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<td>In CROS 2005 the response on this issue had improved from 2003, however this survey indicates that it is still a problem that the Reading has not solved. 2009 results show that there are significantly less Reading RS happy with their induction against</td>
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² For details of provision see Appendix
the comparator groups. At the same time there is a very high level (50%) of RS who were not offered departmental induction. A number of approaches to support this process are already in place and yet this indicates that further work is necessary.³

**Cross Institutional Induction**

Although there was a positive response to this provision by those who attended it, nevertheless there was still large numbers who stated that they were not offered the opportunity (46%). A range of approaches to encourage RS to attend this have been introduced, however as yet they appear to have had little impact.⁴

**Induction Documentation**

These figures may indicate the numbers of Research Staff who do not read or have forgotten about the contents of their Welcome Pack where they will find the staff rules and contract of employment.

The dissemination of the Local Concordat which details RS rights and responsibilities has been enhanced greatly since the instigation of the Concordat Implementation Strategy in the Summer of 2009. For further details of this see Appendix

³ Ibid
⁴ Ibid

Currently the University's Research Strategy, though available on the institutional web-site, is not part of the Welcome Pack for RS (or for academics for that matter). This omission should be corrected.
Section 2: Recognition & Value

Question 7 asks how participants rate their knowledge of sixteen different University policies, processes and initiatives in relation to research staff. This section will highlight where Reading does well and where there are problems.

This shows a significantly better result for Reading in comparison with the Russell Group. Reading’s result on its own indicates a good engagement with Staff Development Review, but with room for improvement, nevertheless.

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5 Appraisal/performance review, bullying and harassment policies and procedures, complaints process, departmental decision-making structures, equality and diversity policies, fixed-term contracts, institutional decision making structures, institutional research career pathways, institutional research strategy, internal funding sources, job evaluation processes, probation processes, promotions criteria and processes, redundancy and redeployment, research codes of practice (e.g. research integrity/academic conduct/ethics), and conditions of employment.
The response concerning fixed term contracts from Reading demonstrated significantly better understanding of this issue than in the comparator groups. Also the figure itself indicates that a high proportion of RS at Reading are aware of the policy and procedure surrounding fixed term contracts.

![Research codes of practice (e.g., Research integrity/academic conduct/ethics)]

Although not significantly higher than the results from comparator groups the above demonstrates that a good percentage of Reading respondents are knowledgeable about research codes of practice.

The following are results that should be matters of concern even though Reading leads the comparators. The percentage of respondents who claim to have a good or partial understanding of these issues is worryingly low. These are:

- departmental decision-making structures,
- institutional research career pathways,
- institutional research strategy,
- internal funding sources and
- promotions criteria and processes.

Reading’s results showed a mean of 47.5% who were positive about their understanding of these issues. Therefore a mean of over 50% only knew the above policies or procedures exist, but don’t know their detail or have never heard of them.

This indicates that there are significant gaps in the way these Research Staff have been integrated into the University of Reading. The fact that similar or larger gaps appear in the comparator groups demonstrates that, whilst Reading is not unusual, there is significant work to be done in communicating with researchers over these issues.

Question 8 asks about the extent of understanding RS have of the following areas:

- the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers;
- the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)/Research Excellence Framework (REF);
- the 'Roberts' Agenda;
- Vitae (incorporating UK GRAD Programme & UK HERD).
The first two questions impinge directly on the life of Researchers at Reading, whilst the second two do have an effect they may not be known to Research Staff by these terms. Reading’s response on the latter showed a poor knowledge of these subjects. The survey at Reading showed significantly less understanding of the “Roberts Agenda” than in either comparator groups. Their knowledge of Vitae was as poor as the Russell Group and the ’94 Group.

Over the issue of the RAE/REF respondents at Reading demonstrated a good knowledge, as did the comparators.

![Understanding of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)/Research Excellence Framework (REF)]

In the case of the Concordat, Reading’s survey showed a level of knowledge ahead of the comparator groups.

![Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers]

Question 9 addresses the issue of how Research Staff perceive their equality of treatment with lecturers within their institution.
A mean of 78% of respondents from Reading considered themselves treated equally with lecturers in the areas of:
- requests for flexible working;
- opportunities to attend conferences and external meetings;
- visibility on websites and staff directories
- and access to training and development opportunities.

In all of these areas Reading was significantly higher than in its comparators other than in requests for flexible working. In the latter Reading’s response was marginally better than the 1994 Group but significantly better than the Russell Group.

However significant numbers of research staff at Reading disagree or don’t know whether they have equality with lecturers over the above issues.
The results of how Research Staff at Reading perceive their opportunities in comparison with lecturers for: promotion and progression; participation in departmental and cross-institutional decision-making processes all show that there is a significant percentage who feel that they are not equally treated.

**Question ten** addresses the issue of whether Research Staff feel valued for their contribution in various areas of University activity. In the following areas there was a mean of 71% of Reading respondents who felt valued for their contribution to:

- achieving the institution’s research strategy
- external collaborations
- research culture within the department
- world-class research
- publications.

These results were all significantly higher than in the comparator groups.

In the following areas there was a mean of 43% who considered that their work was valued by the University in the following areas.

- Grant applications
- Knowledge transfer and commercialisation activities
- Managing resources
- Managing staff
- Promoting the institution
- Public engagement with research
- Supervising students
- Supporting others (e.g. informal mentoring)
- Teaching and lecturing

Whilst the majority of these answers given by Reading respondents put them higher than their comparator groups the results themselves indicate that a significant number of Research Staff at Reading do not feel or do not know that their work in these areas is appreciated. Of particular note are Grant Applications where 40% did not know or didn’t agree that their contribution was appreciated.
Also 51% of Research Staff at Reading who were asked if their contribution to Managing Resources was appreciated disagreed or said they didn’t know. This was 13% higher than those who agreed with the proposition.

Question 11 dealt with the extent that Researchers felt integrated into and motivated by the various communities that they were part of. The questions were as follows:

To what extent do you agree that...

- The research culture of the institution stimulates your work?
- You are integrated into your department’s research community?
- You are integrated into your institution’s research community?
- You are integrated into your wider disciplinary community?

On the first two of these questions the respondents at Reading matched their comparators and gave a mean positive response of 76%. In the second two Reading’s results were significantly higher than their comparators:
Question 12 asked respondents to provide any additional comments on how they are recognised and valued by their institution, or what more it could do to recognise and value their contributions? There were two positive comments about recognition, five neutral and fourteen critical comments. There was no overall theme in the critical comments, other than for a variety of reasons these research staff did not feel valued by the institution.

Conclusion

Positive Results

Research Communities
Over 70% of Reading respondents stated that their work was stimulated by the University’s research community. More than 60 percent of them felt integrated into the research community in their department. The same percentage felt integrated into the research communities in the University and the wider research community. On the first two of these questions the respondents at Reading matched their comparators, in the second two Reading’s results were significantly higher than their comparators

Perception of being valued
A mean of 71% of Reading respondents felt valued for their contribution to:

- achieving the institution’s research strategy
- external collaborations
- research culture within the department
- world-class research
- publications.

Perception of equality with lecturers:
A mean of 78% of respondents from Reading considered themselves treated equally with lecturers in the areas of:

- requests for flexible working;
- opportunities to attend conferences and external meetings;
- visibility on websites and staff directories
- and access to training and development opportunities.

In all of these areas Reading was significantly higher than in its comparators other than in requests for flexible working. In the latter Reading’s response was marginally better than the 1994 Group but significantly better than the Russell Group.

Knowledge of national research staff issues
Fifty seven percent of the respondents at Reading had a good or partial knowledge of the Concordat, which was over 20% higher than the results from the comparator groups. The percentage of Reading’s respondents who knew about the RAE/REF at 70% was almost the same as the result of the 1994 Group and significantly higher than that of the Russell Group.

Knowledge of University policy
A mean of over 75% of RS respondents at Reading had a good or partial understanding of the following policy areas: appraisal/performance review, fixed term contracts and Research Codes of Practice. All of these results were significantly higher than the comparator groups.
## Areas for improvement and actions

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<tr>
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<td>Using this data</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mean of 48% of Reading respondents did not agree or didn’t know whether they were on equal terms with lecturers in these areas:</td>
<td>- Discuss with/brief senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators about the implication of the Concordat and CROS results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opportunities for promotion and progression?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opportunities to participate in Departmental decision-making processes (e.g. committees)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Opportunities to participate in cross-institutional decision-making processes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Terms and conditions of employment (excl. any fixed-term nature of contract)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The job evaluation of your role (pay and grading schemes)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of University Policy</td>
<td>Communicate with RS through:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mean of over 50% of respondents from Reading only know of the existence of these policies or have never heard of them:</td>
<td>- Research Staff Committee/Association,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- departmental decision-making structures,</td>
<td>- School Meetings with RS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- institutional research career pathways,</td>
<td>- Launch page on HR issues on RS web-site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- institutional research strategy,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- internal funding sources and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- promotions criteria and processes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding section of RS web-site though all contacts with RS (email, RS Induction, RS Committee/Association etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Launch HR page on RS web site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: Support and Career Development

The first set of questions (question 13) asked in this section was about the extent of RS career planning. The questions were:

To what extent do you agree that

1. You have reflected on your development needs?
2. You have considered your career options?
3. You have a clear career development plan?
4. You are encouraged to engage in personal and career development?

In answer to the first two questions RS at Reading gave similar responses to those in the comparator groups. These were very high positive responses of just over 90%.

Reading’s survey response to the third question indicated that there were significantly more RS at Reading with a clear career development plan than in comparator groups. However 43% of the Reading respondents had not got a clear career development plan. This is a high figure considering the uncertainty that exists for people on a research contract.

Another area where the Reading survey significantly led its comparators was in the 81% of RS that felt encouraged to be involved in personal and career development.
Question 14 asked: Over the past two years (or since taking up your current position if that is more recent) have you participated in probation? These were the responses:

**RS Participation in probation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994 Group excl. Reading</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Group</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst Reading’s response showed significantly higher participation in probation than the comparator groups, it is nevertheless a low percentage in its own right. This indicates that the management of probation amongst research staff has significant room for improvement.

Question 15 asked: Over the past two years (or since taking up your current position if that is more recent) have you participated in staff appraisal/review? These were the results:
Reading’s result on staff appraisal/review is significantly higher than its competitors, and although the question has been changed, the result is similar to that it obtained in the CROS 2005 survey. The survey then goes on to explore the reasons for those who had not had an appraisal/review.

From the explanations outlined above the only responses at Reading that might be of concern are those RS who state that they have not been invited to participate. However, this only amounts to 14 RS out of the 158 who responded to the survey.

The overall usefulness of the staff appraisal/review was rated by the participants as follows:
Reading did particularly well in this as it did in a number of the other questions related to staff appraisal concerning:

1. identifying RS strengths and achievements;
2. highlighting issues for RS;
3. reviewing RS personal progress.

In these areas a mean of 60% of respondents felt that staff appraisal was useful or very useful. In all of these areas Reading achieved significantly better results than both comparators apart from number 3 where it was only significantly ahead of the Russell Group comparator.

There were three further areas where Reading was either significantly better than its comparators or equal to them but nevertheless has room for improvement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff appraisal usefulness in leading to</th>
<th>Useful or very useful</th>
<th>Not very or not at all useful</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finding solutions to problems</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes to work practices</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training or development opportunities</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Career Aspirations

Question 17 asked about this subject giving two broad directions inside and outside higher education and two time frames, now and in five year. Initially it asked about career directions within academia.

These results indicate that the majority of research staff at Reading have the ambition to be either lecturers or readers. Outside higher education RS at Reading continue to prefer the option of a career in research although there are other options being considered in the long term.
Question 18 addressed who research staff consult about training and development issues and probation. It also asked about attendance at internal and external training and development activities. Seventy nine percent of the survey respondents at Reading and similar numbers in the comparator groups discussed their training and development needs with their Principal Investigator. However, more respondents from Reading indicated that they had sought advice from elsewhere than in the comparator groups. Significantly more Reading respondents had consulted a mentor or a staff developer on these matters than in comparator groups:

The response concerning consulting Careers Advisors was low with Reading and the comparator groups indicating that 15% or less had done this in the last year. Reading was on a par with the Russell Group comparator and significantly ahead of the 1994 Group on this issue.
The question about the discussion of probationary arrangements showed that this issue is discussed by a minority of eligible respondents at Reading and in the comparator groups. This may indicate that RS probation is not being managed very well across the sector.

The results of the question about external training showed that Reading respondents matched their comparators with 46% attending such courses. In the area of internal training Reading had a significantly better result than its competitors with 78% attending such courses in the last year:
Question 19 asked within the last year approximately how many days have RS spent on their continuing professional development (e.g. training, conference attendance, individual reflection, mentoring)? The results showed that RS at Reading were very similar to those in the comparator groups. Approximately 50% of RS spent between 3 and 10 days on continuous professional development over a 12 month period.

Question 20 focused on the areas in which research staff have either undertaken training and development or would like to. In the section Undertaken and found useful, Reading’s respondents have significant lead over their comparators in five of the nine areas and in the rest they are on a par with them.
A mean of 26.1% of the respondents at Reading undertook training and development in these areas. Although this is significantly higher than the comparator groups it demonstrates that there is further room for the growth of a culture of training and development amongst Research Staff at the University.

Of interest is the request that 41% of the Reading respondents would like to do training in research skills and techniques. Whilst this result is almost identical to the comparator groups it does raise further questions. Are a large proportion of RS insufficiently trained in research techniques? If so, how should the University address this situation? This issue may call for further investigation.
Question 21 asked about RS reaction to different approaches to delivering training and development. Reading’s responses were in-line with the comparator groups. The response to the question concerning mentoring and coaching indicated for 27% of the respondents this was not applicable or they had no experience of this approach.

Question 22 asked who research staff had or would consult about their careers. Reading’s results matched their comparator groups.
This demonstrates that the Reading respondents’ preference for talking to their Principal Investigator and those close to them at home and work about their careers. Whilst Careers Advisors are top of the others that they consult it appears there is work to do for them to have more of an impact with this group of staff. However there is a structural issue that they have to overcome. Research Staff have already made an initial choice to pursue an academic career and therefore they are likely to consult those who they perceive know most about this subject.

The results to question 23 reinforce the above argument as it asks about which areas RS would like assistance in career decision-making. The responses from Reading demonstrate that advice on an academic career is what is wanted primarily, although there is also significant demand for information about jobs outside academia.  

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6 Respondents could give multiple answers to this question so there is no direct comparability with other groups completing the survey.
Question 24 asked Research Staff about their response to a range of development opportunities available to them as part of their role. Reading’s responses were mirrored those in the comparator groups other than in the area of ‘Collaborating with industry’. Significantly more of Reading respondents had experience in this area.

Which of the following have you done, or would you like to do as part of your current role to acquire experience outside your immediate area?

- Collaborate with colleagues outside the UK
  - I have done this: 61%
  - I would like to do this: 37%
  - I currently have no interest in this: 2%

- Work as part of a cross-disciplinary team
  - I have done this: 49%
  - I would like to do this: 43%
  - I currently have no interest in this: 9%

- Collaborate with industry
  - I have done this: 41%
  - I would like to do this: 35%
  - I currently have no interest in this: 25%

- Undertake a secondment to another institution
  - I have done this: 7%
  - I would like to do this: 55%
  - I currently have no interest in this: 38%

- Undertake a placement in another sector
  - I have done this: 4%
  - I would like to do this: 43%
  - I currently have no interest in this: 53%
Question 25 discussed the opportunities for RS to develop management experience by being involved in a variety of activities. The question addresses the issue from three angles, ‘have you had experience’, ‘would you like to and I have no interest in this’. In all areas there was considerable demand to be involved in these activities from Reading and the comparator groups. Therefore the graph below just compares those who have had experience in these areas. It is noticeable that Reading is significantly behind at least one comparator if not both in three out of four of these areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have RS developed their management experience or expertise by</th>
<th>Russell Group</th>
<th>1994 Group excl. Reading</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and managing a project</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing a budget</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in departmental decision making processes and committees</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in institutional decision making processes and committees</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 26 focused on the extent to which RS have developed a broader experience of research functions by participating in various activities. It is noticeable that only in two of these categories does Reading match all its comparators: writing up research for publication; and explaining work to people outside your field. In two further areas Reading’s results are significantly lower than the Russell Group although matching the rest of the 1994 Group: developing specialist research skills and techniques; and supervising a doctoral or masters student. Reading’s results are significantly lower than both comparators in the areas of: applying for a fellowship; and knowledge transfer.
Question 2 addressed the development activities that Research Staff have undertaken to improve their communication and engagement skills. Reading’s results match those of the comparator groups, therefore the chart below only shows Reading. Whilst there is little demand by Research Staff to be involved in demonstrating, there are large numbers who would like to do public engagement and lecturing activities.

Question 27 asked about personal development activities, focusing on personal development plans, records, and the use of coaching, mentoring and action learning. Significantly more RS at Reading had developed a personal development plan than in the comparator groups. Nevertheless it was only 25% of the respondents at Reading who had done this. There was significant demand to do this activity but also a worryingly large percentage of RS (21%) who were not interested. This indicates that there is still work to do on persuading RS of the importance of active career management.
Similar results were obtained for maintaining a professional development record. Reading has a significant lead over the comparator groups for engaging in this, with considerable demand for it but also sizeable numbers who are not interested in this activity.

The response to the next question about mentoring, coaching and action learning may reflect on the implementation of the mentoring scheme for RS at Reading. There are a number of possible conclusions, one that mentoring has occurred for a significant number of new RS, but it has not touched on issues of personal and professional development, or it has only been implemented at a very low level at Reading. The rest of the responses to the questions once again indicate considerable demand for this type of development, and a substantial percentage who are not interested.
Question twenty nine asks about the training and career development RS have undertaken and any suggestions that they have for other training & development. In response to this there were two positive comments about the training and development received four negative comments and five neutral or mixed responses. Of note within these were two responses, one which claimed there was no training in teaching available and the other which said the same about career management. This indicates that there is still room for improvement in advertising the range of staff development courses at the University. The two purely positive comments were in praise of the Leadership and Management Programme provided for the Science Faculties and the Certificate in Research Career Management. The latter also got a positive mention in one of the neutral or mixed responses.

Conclusion

Positive Results
Career Planning
The results from Reading in the area of Career Planning were largely positive with 80% and higher stating that they had: reflected on their development needs, considered their career options and felt encouraged to engage in personal and career development. In the first two categories Reading matched the comparator groups and in the last it exceeded them significantly.

Staff Review/Appraisal
Reading respondents indicate that 65% of them have had a Staff Development Review over the last two years which is the same as CROS 2005 and a significantly higher response than either comparators. Sixty percent of respondents at Reading also indicated that their SDR overall was useful or very useful, significantly higher than the comparators. A mean of 60% of respondents at Reading also stated that their SDR was useful or very useful in indentifying their strengths and achievements, highlighting issues for them and reviewing their personal progress. Apart from the latter issue where Reading only led the Russell Group, Reading’s results were significantly higher than all the comparator groups.

Participation in internal institutional training activities
Seventy eight percent of respondents from Reading said that they had attended a training session in the last year. This was significantly higher than the comparator groups and indicates that there is a positive attitude towards training by RS at Reading.
Development opportunities available to RS as part of their role
Forty one percent of Reading respondents said that they had collaborated with industry in their current role, which was significantly higher than in the comparator groups. This demonstrates the strength that the University has in this area.

Areas for improvement and actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There were two questions concerning probation; one concerning participation, and the second about discussing progress towards probationary requirements. Reading’s response concerning the first was higher than comparators but still lower than it should be (43%). The response to the second question was the same as the comparators, 21% of the eligible respondents from Reading discussed their progress towards probation with their PIs. Neither of these indicate that the probation of RS is being adequately managed within Reading or across the sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include this data in the following meetings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Discuss with/brief senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators about the implication of the Concordat and CROS results.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Review/Appraisal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whilst much of the feedback about Staff Development Review was positive. There was a mean of 40% of respondents at Reading who thought the process was “not very or not at all useful” in: finding solutions to problems; changing working practices or leading to training or development opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including Careers Staff as presenters in the above briefing sessions to explain the range of information and services they have on offer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Aspirations and Seeking Advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The results concerning career aspirations indicate that the research staff respondents at Reading primarily wish to pursue research careers within academia. Therefore they primarily seek careers advice from their Principal Investigator and colleagues. Very few of them actually seek advice from Careers Advisers (14%). From the perspective of the number of job opportunities within academic research that are available this would seem unwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate the data about the likelihood of RS achieving an open ended contract as an academic through all means. This should be accompanied by the Local Concordat message that, “these figures should not deter Research Staff from pursuing an academic career, but emphasize the importance of them acquiring transferable skills to keep their options open.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Key areas of development and training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mean of 26% of Reading respondents took part in these. Of specific concern was that 41% of respondents from this University wanted further training in research skills and techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, 2 &amp; 3 Communicate figures about training and development needs in School briefing meetings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Management Development
Reading respondents are significantly behind the Russell Group with respect to the experience of planning and managing a project. They are significantly lower than 1994 Group in having the experience of managing a budget. They are lower than both comparators in participating in departmental decision making processes and committees.

3. Broader Research Functions
Reading’s results are significantly lower than the Russell Group’s in RS developing specialist research skills and techniques and getting experience of supervising a doctoral or masters student. Reading is also significantly lower than its comparator groups in fellowship applications and knowledge transfer. Further results also indicate significant demand by Reading respondents to improve their communication skills via teaching and public engagement activities.

4. Personal Development
28% and below of the respondents from Reading have developed a personal development plan or maintain a professional development record. This is higher than the comparators, but considering the current career opportunities inside and outside of academia more active career management is necessary to give RS a better chance in the job market. However there was a high level of demand to take up these tools. Only 15% of the Reading respondents have been involved in coaching, mentoring or action learning as part of their personal development. Once again there was significant demand for these approaches.

3 Communicate figures about supervision experience, teaching and public engagement as part of School Briefings. Communicate figures about fellowship applications to RES as well as within School briefings, and through the Research Staff Committee and suggest as session for Research Staff Conference. Discuss knowledge transfer figures with KTP Centre.

4 Promote PDP and Professional Development Records via the RS web-site and through other channels, such as RS induction and School Briefings. Promote the use of Personal Learning Account section of Employee Self-Service as a place to store personal development records.
Section 4: Equality and Diversity

Question 30 addresses two issues: research staff satisfaction with their work life balance and their view of their institution’s commitment to equality and diversity. The comparator groups gave very similar results except for the 1994 Group’s response to work life balance where it was significantly more positive than Reading’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. 30: Equality &amp; Diversity and Work Life Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my work-life balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76% Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24% Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe my institution is committed to equality and diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92% Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8% Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 31 discusses fair treatment in relation to work practices. In the area of career progression and promotion the results from Reading are significantly higher than comparator institutions. In all the other areas Reading’s results are only marginally different from its comparators. It is notable that the three lowest results (career progression/promotion, reward & participation in decision making) are areas identified elsewhere in the Survey.  

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7 See questions 25 & 9.
In question 32 Reading’s results matched their comparators. Nevertheless it is noticeable that the perception of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and gender are significantly higher than the other areas.

Question 33 asks respondents about their perception of being discriminated against. Reading’s results are significantly better than the Russell Group. The details of the perceived discrimination are outlined below.
If YES, please explain in what way you felt discriminated against?

Because my PI is very controlling and restricts my engagement with the project. She does not place any importance on my long-term career development. The only focus is on quick wins like papers— as we jointly author, she gains from this too. I don't think she thinks of me more than as a resource for her use.

But no comment as it is not clearly specified.

Contract status: little investment in me because it is believed I will leave soon.

Sexist jokes and comments, lack of sensitivity towards health problems

Yes, PI and her bullying/harassment behaviour

Question 34 asked respondents to provide any additional comments about diversity and equality. There were two positive comments; one about the lack of age discrimination and the other about the support given to someone on maternity leave.

In the neutral or mixed category there were three comments, two who said they couldn’t form an opinion without data but that things appeared to be OK and one who said that though the University did not appear to discriminate against women more than others that “on the whole it is much harder for women to maintain a career in academia, particularly if they want to have, or do have children”. They went on to discuss the problems of planning families and grant applications and the lack of flexible working in Universities in comparison to non-academic public or private sectors.

There were five purely critical comments: two complaining about discrimination against women, one concerning disability, another about the unequal treatment of research staff to permanent staff, and one about excessive workload. Finally there was a comment about there being too much emphasis on equality.
Conclusion

Positive Results
In general terms this section demonstrates that the University, like its comparator groups, is perceived as a work-place where there is little discrimination and equality and diversity are valued. In one or two areas Reading’s results are ahead of the comparators.

Areas for improvement and actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career progression/promotion</th>
<th>See page 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in decision making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of fair treatment of staff in relation to ethnicity and gender</td>
<td>Further work and publicity around the University’s pursuit of Swan Awards. The perception of people being treated unfairly based on their ethnicity may bear further investigation by the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 5: About Research Staff

The first question of this section asks about the length of time RS have been researchers in a variety of situations and roles:

- the years and months as a doctoral student;
- years and months as a member of research staff at current institution;
- years and months as a member of research staff at other institutions/organisations in the UK;
- years and months as a member of research staff at other institutions/organisations in Europe;
- and years and months as a member of research staff at other institutions/organisations elsewhere.

The data that this gives is not comparative to other institutions, and responses cannot be traced question to question. Therefore it has not been included in this report.

Question 36 asks about the number of individual contracts of employment researcher staff have had at the University. The results show that the Reading response has significantly more research staff on first contracts than either of the comparator groups. Because the percentage of Reading RS on second contracts is the same as the comparator groups it may indicate that our retention of researchers after their first contract may not be as good as the comparator groups.

![No. of individual contracts as a Researcher with your current institution?](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of individual contracts</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>1994 Group exl. Reading</th>
<th>Russell Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 to 9</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from Reading against the comparator groups show that the ratio of full-time to part-time research staff is not significantly different.
The distribution of the respondents from Reading according to subject were as follows:

The funding for the respondents positions were from the following sources:
Conclusion
The results of this indicate that the typical respondent to this survey was a scientist on their first contract funded from a Research Council grant who is working full time.

Areas for improvement and actions
The number of RS on second contracts at Reading is proportionately less than in the comparator groups which may indicate that we are not retaining our RS as well as other institutions. This could be due to a variety of reasons. There is no data on the success of follow-on bids for funding so this explanation cannot be pursued.

Therefore exit data for RS at Reading for the recent years is being examined, and compared to figures obtained from another 1994 institution. To investigate this disparity further a series of 3 focus groups per annum of RS at Reading could be initiated to discuss their experience of employment at the University and their reasons for leaving.
Section 6: University of Reading’s questions

Mentoring

There were three questions asked of Reading’s research staff about mentoring:

Does your School operate a mentoring scheme for research staff? Were you offered a mentor when you started your contract? If no, would you have found a mentor useful at that time?

The response to the first question was that 45% of respondents said that they had a mentoring scheme. When cross referenced to RS subject areas there is no correlation (on the assumption that the subject areas broadly equate to Schools). This result indicates that the success of School mentoring schemes is unclear. Where schemes exist it appears that not all research staff know about them.

The results to the second question were that 25% of RS were offered a mentor on commencing their post. When cross referenced against the number of contracts RS had held at Reading this was the result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Induction offered to staff at beginning of contract cross referenced with number of contracts RS have had at Reading</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst this shows that more RS on their first contract at Reading had a mentor offered them than those on a later contract, it does not necessarily mean that there is an upturn in mentoring being offered to new RS. What it does reflect is the larger number of RS who are on their first contract at the University. It is notable that the proportion of those not offered to those offered mentors remains similar as the number of contracts rise. This may indicate that the numbers offered mentoring on arrival have stayed the same for some time.

For those researchers who did not get offered a mentor at the start of their contract 59% said they would have found one useful.

Research Staff Conference

Question 41 gauged how many participants would be interested in a one day conference for research staff at the University covering issues relevant to research staff. Seventy one percent of the participants said they would be and this level of popularity was confirmed by the turnout of over a hundred at the conference in November 2009.
Research Staff web-site
Sixty one percent of the Reading participants were aware of the Research Staff website. This means further work needs to be done on advertising the site and keeping it regularly updated and developing its contents.

Research Staff Association
Sixty percent of the respondents at Reading were interested in being part of a Research Staff Association at the University. This has since been launched at the Research Staff Conference in November 2009.

Training and development culture
As a follow-up to a question previously asked in CROS 2005 the University included in its section a further question about whether research staff found it difficult to attend training at the University and if so why.

| Do you find it difficult to attend training sessions at the University |
|---|---|
| Reading 2009 | Reading 2005 |
| 32% Yes | 30% Yes |
| 68% No | 70% No |

There is no significant statistical differences in these results, which is disappointing. When those who found it difficult to attend the training were asked why: in 2005 82.9% said it was because of “lack of time”; and in 2009 80% gave the same answer. This indicates that there has been little change in the culture of training and development amongst RS within the University.

Certificate in Research Career Management
45% of the survey respondents at Reading had heard of the University’s Certificate in Research Career Management which demonstrates the need for further internal publicity about the University’s development provision for Research Staff.

Training and Development Delivery
There were two further questions about how research staff would like their training delivered, both questions got a majority of just under sixty percent in favour of the propositions. Firstly they were asked if they would like more development delivered within their Schools in response to issues identified in Staff Development Reviews and secondly they were asked whether they would like a two day career development session made available to them six months before the end of their contract. Whilst this is not overwhelming support for either it does suggest that having further options in the delivery of development programmes might increase their take up.
Working conditions
The final question asked in this section gave the respondents the opportunity to comment on their working conditions at the University? Of the sixteen responses to this question seven were mixed or neutral in their comments, five negative, and four positive. There were no clear themes amongst these comments.
Conclusion

Positive Results
The demand for a Research Staff Conference and an Association was quickly followed up with successful actions.

Areas for improvement and actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring</th>
<th>This confirms the need for the review of the implementation of University policy which is taking place as part of the Concordat implementation strategy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The University introduced policy on the mentoring of RS in 2006. These results demonstrate the actual provision of mentoring for research staff is varied throughout the University.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and development culture</td>
<td>The local concordat has been amended to allow RS a minimum of five days a year training as part of the Concordat implementation strategy. Further aspects of the strategy include the briefing of senior staff in Schools and Principal Investigators. All of these approaches should challenge the negative training and development culture that exists in parts of the University. Further approaches to delivery of RS training and development, such as School based sessions and programmes delivered ahead of the end of contract may also contribute to further change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39% of respondents were unaware of the Research Staff Web-site. Having said this the question itself will have made people more aware.</td>
<td>Regular advertising of the site and what it has to offer. Regular updating of site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 7: Demographics

The following outline the demographics of those research staff who responded to the CROS survey in 2009.

The gender distribution of Research Staff at Reading in the Survey matched the distribution in reality.
Reading Respondents Qualifications

- Doctorate or equivalent professional qualification: 124
- Undergraduate degree: 111
- Taught postgraduate qualification: 40
- Research masters: 29
- None of the above: 0
Ethnic group and cultural background?

- **Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese English, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh**
  - Russell Group: 20.9%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 19.9%
  - Reading: 20.6%

- **Any other Black background (please specify below)**
  - Russell Group: 0.1%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.0%
  - Reading: 0.0%

- **Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, or Black Welsh African**
  - Russell Group: 0.3%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.2%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, or Black Welsh Caribbean**
  - Russell Group: 0.4%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.5%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Any other Asian background (please specify below)**
  - Russell Group: 0.3%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.3%
  - Reading: 0.5%

- **Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh Bangladeshi**
  - Russell Group: 0.3%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.5%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh Pakistani**
  - Russell Group: 0.4%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.3%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh Indian**
  - Russell Group: 1.1%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 1.0%
  - Reading: 5.5%

- **Any other Mixed background (please specify below)**
  - Russell Group: 0.2%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.0%
  - Reading: 0.0%

- **Mixed White and Asian**
  - Russell Group: 0.7%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.6%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Mixed White and Black African**
  - Russell Group: 0.2%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.2%
  - Reading: 0.6%

- **Mixed White and Black Caribbean**
  - Russell Group: 11.9%
  - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 10.3%
  - Reading: 6.5%

- **Any other White background (please specify below)**
  - **White Irish**
    - Russell Group: 5.8%
    - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 1.7%
    - Reading: 1.9%
  - **White Welsh**
    - Russell Group: 1.6%
    - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 0.8%
    - Reading: 0.8%
  - **White Scottish**
    - Russell Group: 2.1%
    - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 2.0%
    - Reading: 0.6%
  - **White English**
    - Russell Group: 19.9%
    - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 11.5%
    - Reading: 14.8%
  - **White British**
    - Russell Group: 39.0%
    - 1994 Group excl. Reading: 39.0%
    - Reading: 43.3%
## RS Nationality at Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealander</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iranian</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlander</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Irish</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguayan</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### English First Language?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994 Group excl. Reading</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Group</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

Areas for improvement and actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple disabilities</th>
<th>Unseen disability</th>
<th>Autistic spectrum disorder</th>
<th>Mental health difficulties</th>
<th>Wheelchair-user/mobility impairments</th>
<th>Deaf/hard of hearing</th>
<th>Blind/visually impaired</th>
<th>Dyslexia</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender breakdown of the University’s RS is the reverse of both the comparator groups. The reasons behind this may bear further investigation by the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office.
Existing Provision for Research Staff

Recruitment and Selection
- All chairs of interview panels receive training in recruitment and selection. All panel members will be trained by October 2010.
- A framework for local induction is sent out to the line manager of every newly appointed member of staff as part of the recruitment process.
- There is a section of the *Good Practice for the Management of Research Staff* devoted to the importance of induction, giving tips on how to do it. This is available to download from the Research Leaders website ([http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/ResearchLeaders/rl-home.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/ResearchLeaders/rl-home.aspx)) which was launched in 2009.
- All RS receive their own dedicated Welcome Pack with a high quality section devoted to their issues. The pack for RS was upgraded in Autumn 2009 using a new eye catching design. All staff are sent institutional policies and procedures including complaints procedures on arrival at the University. These can be found within their contract of employment and the copy of the staff rules included in the Welcome Pack.
- Mentoring policy for new Research Staff to support their induction.
  - Centrally administered mentoring scheme.
  - School provision of mentoring for Research Staff.
- CSTD New Staff Induction.
- CSTD Research Staff Induction.
- Email to new Research Staff and Principal Investigators to support role induction.
- Induction section on Research Staff website.
- Induction website
- Induction is also covered in the annual introductory course for PIs: the *Essential Guide for Principal Investigators*.
- There was a session on induction run for School Administrators in the Autumn of 2009 discussing good practice, using the example of the School of Maths, Meteorology and Physics.

Recognition and Value
- Pay levels for RS have been put on the same level as equivalent staff through the implementation of the Framework Agreement and Equal Value Audit.
- Human Resources strategy point 39: “We will instigate particular measures to develop our ability to manage and develop Research Staff and RCUK Fellows, to enhance our reputation for research quality”.
- Implementation of the Fixed Term Employees Regulations.
- The Local Concordat for Research Staff states
  
  “Research Staff should have equal status with Lecturers and attend Research Group, Departmental, School & Faculty meetings as appropriate. Their views can also be represented through the Research Staff Working Group (or successor committee) which reports to the University Board for Research and the Staffing Committee”

The Local Concordat has been distributed across the institution widely and launched at the Research Staff Conference in November 2009. It is given to new members of staff, and it is included in the Research Staff Development Brochure. Principal Investigators have also been sent copies.
Appendix

The Research Staff Working Group was instrumental in enabling the establishment of a Research Staff Association at the University which represents the views of RS within the institution.

- The provision of a dedicated “one stop shop” web-site for Research Staff.
  http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/researchstaff/rstaff-home.asp

**Support and Career Development**

- Twenty specific courses for Research Staff including courses on leadership and management, communication and entrepreneurship as part of the wider provision of 400 + courses available to staff. A staff development brochure for RS was published in 2009 advertising these courses which was sent to every RS in the institution.
- There are a wide range of development opportunities for Research Staff outlined on the Research Staff web-site.
- A Staff Educational Development Association accredited course in research career management is offered to Research Staff. The Certificate in Research Career Management introduces Research Staff to reflective practice and uses a Professional Development Record (PDR) to map their skills and enable them to think about their career direction. The PDR is available on the RS web-site to download for all Research Staff to use.
- Courses for RS range in level, from those aimed at new RS such as Peer Reviewing Papers, through to high level courses on Leadership and Management.
- A research project to map the career paths of Research Staff at Reading was conducted in 2009 and the results published. The experiences of RS will be published during 2010 on the careers section of the RS web site and publicized to current RS.
- The Careers Advisory Service has a dedicated member of staff whose specialism is careers advice to post-graduates and Research Staff.
- Research Staff are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development via:
  - The Local Concordat which is included in their Welcome Folder when they arrive at the University.
  - The Local Concordat is one of the items discussed at Research Staff Induction.
  - The Staff Development Review should encourage RS to discuss this issue.
  - Communicating to RS their own responsibility for their development is one of the key aims of the Certificate in Research Career Management.

**Equality and Diversity**

- Training of chairs and members of interview panels.
- The University policies on Equal Opportunities & Diversity apply to Research Staff.
- The Athena Swan Bronze Award.
- The introduction of a Career Development Planning workshop for women Research Staff.

**Benchmarking Provision**

The University participates in the Careers in Research On-line Survey and is contributing to the process of developing the contents of the next version via the Research Staff Development Advisory Group (RSDAG) of Vitae where the University is represented.²

**CSTD provision for developing Principal Investigators as leaders and managers**

- There are two Institute of Leadership and Management accredited programmes plus five one off courses.

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² Justin Hutchence represents the University and the Vitae South East Hub on Research Staff matters.
Appendix

- There are a further two courses aimed at the specific needs of PIs: Leading Research Groups and the Essential Guide for New Principal Investigators.
- CSTD also provide School based briefings on request for Principal Investigators on management and policy issues relating to Research Staff.
- Publication and distribution of *Good practice for the management of Research Staff* to all Principal Investigators in 2007. This is now available to download from web-site described below.
- There is a “one stop shop” web-site for Principal Investigators to enhance their skills as research managers and leaders and develop their own careers  
  [http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/ResearchLeaders/rl-home.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/ResearchLeaders/rl-home.aspx)