HREiR Action plan template for institutions (2023-2026)

Details

Institution name:	Nottingham Trent University
Cohort number:	8
Date of submission:	May 2023

Institutional context:

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) is a modern university with a strategic ambition to 'create the university of the future'. Our 'University, re-imagined' strategy is articulated under five strategic themes, including 'Valuing Ideas' which focuses on research, innovation, and impact. At NTU we champion a Research Inclusive approach: inclusive in engaging with local communities and organisations to identify the topics to be explored; inclusive in diversifying the backgrounds of colleagues who lead that exploration; and, inclusive in the ways our findings are shared with our partners.

Our focus for the Concordat is individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed for this purpose: Research Assistants, Research Associates, Research Fellows, and Senior Research Fellows. Managers and leaders of research have responsibilities under the Concordat and play a significant role in the research culture and environment and are also included. Research active academic colleagues on the Teaching and Research academic pathway are also key stakeholders and beneficiaries.

NTU recognises that a thriving research environment and culture depends on a network of interrelated, interconnected roles and responsibilities and the actions, have benefits for our wider research community of research. Appropriate links will be made with the Technicians Commitment and other Quality Assurance initiatives including Athena SWAN, The Race Equality Charter, and The Mental Health Charter

The institutional audience for this action plan includes

Audience (direct beneficiaries of the action plan)	Number of	Comments
Research staff	175	Primary responsibility is to conduct research.
Postgraduate Researchers		
Research and Teaching staff	470	Undertaking significant research
Teaching-only staff		
Technicians		
Clinicians		
Professional support staff		
Other (provide numbers and details):		

	Obligation	Action	Carried over from previous action plan?	Deadline	Responsibility	The targeted impact of the action (success measure)	Comments (optional)	Progress update	The actual impact of the action (reporting against the success measure)	Outcome (ongoing/carried forward/no further action)
			Complete for submission						*To be completed only when reporting on action plan*	
Environment and Culture										
Awareness and engagement										
The aims of these obligations are to work towards an open and inclusive research culture, and to ensure broad understanding and awareness of this amongst researchers.										
ECI1	Ensure all relevant staff are aware of the Concordat.	Continue to include the Concordat (and HREiR) in the Researcher Induction. Revise the Researcher Induction Checklist. Integrate the Concordat themes into our annual Researcher Conference and Researcher Network programme.	New	May 2024	Researcher Development Consultant	We will improve awareness of the Concordat from 30.3% (2021) to over 50% (2026) of researchers saying they are aware of the Concordat by 2026 (CEDARS).		A1	I1	
ECI2	Ensure institutional policies and practices relevant to researchers are inclusive, equitable and transparent, and are well-communicated to researchers and their managers.	Ensure NTU policies and practices are communicated to researchers in the Researcher Induction for researchers and their managers. Create supporting resources on the Thrive platform.	Yes		Researcher Development Consultant Organisational Development Consultant	Over 80% of researchers at NTU will indicate NTU is committed to equality and diversity by 2026 (CEDARS).				
ECI6	Regularly review and report on the quality of the research environment and culture, including seeking feedback from researchers, and using the outcomes to improve institutional practices.	Continue to participate in the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey to seek feedback from researchers. This will include an internal benchmarking report in 2023 and 2026.	Yes	September 2023 September 2026	Researcher Development Consultant Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation	NTU will participate in the Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey twice (2023 and 2025) before 2026 (CEDARS).				
ECR1	Encourage researchers to actively contribute to the development and maintenance of a supportive, fair and inclusive research culture and be a supportive colleague, particularly to newer researchers and students.	Introduce a process of consultation for the Individual Research Development Plan to ensure development for people at different career stages as part of our supportive, fair and inclusive research culture. Colleagues on the T&R pathway already use an Individual Research Plan.	New	November 2023	Researcher Development Consultant Head of HR Strategic Projects	We will deliver an Individual Research Development Plan for individuals whose primary responsibility is to conduct research and who are employed for this purpose. At our next Researcher				

						Conference in 2024 we will review the effectiveness of the development document.			
Wellbeing and mental health									
The aims of these obligations are to champion positive wellbeing amongst researchers, both through appropriate training and enabling new ways of working.									
ECI3	Promote good mental health and wellbeing through the effective management of workloads and people.	NTU will continue to promote good mental health and wellbeing, aligned to our Mental Health Charter commitments. Should new actions flow from this commitment, they will be integrated into the plan.	New	November 2024	Head of HR Strategic Projects Researcher Development Consultant	NTU will commit to the Mental Health Charter by 2024, with 70% of researchers saying NTU promotes good mental health and wellbeing. (CEDARS 2025)			
ECI4	Ensure managers of researchers are effectively trained in relation to wellbeing and mental health.	This is not a priority for this action plan as CEDARS data shows that this is embedded and working effectively.							
ECM3	Ensure managers promote a healthy working environment that supports researchers' wellbeing and mental health.	This is not a priority for this action plan as CEDARS data shows that this is embedded and working effectively.							
ECM4	Ensure managers consider fully flexible working requests and other appropriate arrangements to support researchers.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this plan as the University has adopted more flexible working arrangements post-pandemic with greater autonomy at team and department level.							
ECR3	Ensure researchers take positive action towards maintaining their wellbeing and mental health.	This obligation is not an area of focus for the next action plan as CEDARS data indicates this is already embedded.							

	Bullying and harassment									
	The aims of these obligations are to eliminate bullying and harassment in the research system, tackled through progressive policies and secure mechanisms to address incidents.									
ECI3	Promote a healthy working environment through effective policies and practice for tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, including providing appropriate support for those reporting issues.	NTU will continue to promote a healthy working environment, and this will be aligned to external commitments, including Athena SWAN; the Race Equality Charter; and the Mental Health Charter. Specific actions include embedding a 'Report and Support' Initiative. We will monitor staff surveys to identify changing patterns and improvements in trust and reporting by 2026.	Continue	May 2023 May 2025	Head of Researcher Development Head of HR Strategic Projects	In 2025 70% of researchers will trust NTU to investigate any reported incident of bullying or harassment fairly, improving from 64.2% in 2021 (CEDARS).				
ECM3	Ensure managers encourage reporting and addressing incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment.	Actions above will flow through to managers and therefore this obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to discrimination, harassment, and bullying.	NTU will continue to promote a healthy working environment. The 'Report and Support' Initiative will be rolled out with emphasis on support.	New	November 2023 November 2025	Researcher Development Consultant	In 2025 70% of researchers will feel comfortable reporting and incident of bullying or harassment, improving from 63.3% in 2021 (CEDARS).				
	Equality, diversity and inclusion									
	The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in-, aware of- and adopt practices enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion.									
ECI4 / ECM1	Ensure managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities related to equality, diversity and inclusion, and put this into practice in their work.	Provide relevant training for researcher managers in distinct areas of equality, diversity, and inclusion, including neurodiversity. We will investigate how neurodiversity impacts on researchers' experience of everyday research activities through a pilot with at least 1 School and take action to make those activities more inclusive and accessible by 2025.	New	September 2026	Chair of School Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee Head of Researcher Development	Evaluate results of the neurodiversity pilot and its impact by 2025. Over 80% of researchers at NTU will indicate NTU is committed to equality and diversity by 2026 (CEDARS).				

ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to equality, diversity and inclusion.	NTU will apply for the Athena SWAN Silver Award in 2024, which will include a targeted area for researcher development at the early-mid career stages.	New	May 2024	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Manager	NTU Athena SWAN action plan to be reviewed.				

Research Integrity

The aims of these obligations are to ensure managers and researchers are trained in, aware of, and maintain high standards of research integrity, and are able to report infringements or misconduct.

ECI5 / ECM2	Ensure researchers and their managers are aware of, and act in accordance with, the highest standards of research integrity and professional conduct.	A Researcher Development Consultant to join the University Research Integrity Committee to maintain awareness of standards and the inclusion of researcher development in the annual published statement on research integrity.	New	May 2023	Researcher Development Consultant Chair of University Open Research and Research Integrity Committee	In CEDARS 2025 maintain and increase to 78% the number of researchers that indicate that NTU promotes the highest standards of research integrity and conduct, improving from 74.2% in 2021 (CEDARS).				
ECM3	Ensure managers report and address incidents of poor research integrity.	This obligation is not an area of focus for the next action plan as CEDARS data indicates this is already embedded.								
ECR2	Ensure researchers act in accordance with employer and funder policies related to research integrity.	Develop "The Only Way is Ethics" on Thrive as a digital learning pathway.	New	September 2023	Researcher Development Consultant Chair of University Open Research and Integrity Committee.	60% of researchers at NTU will have undertaken The Only Way is Ethics programme by 2026.				
ECR4	Ensure researchers use available mechanisms to report staff who fail to meet the expected standards of behaviour in relation to research misconduct.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan as CEDARS shows it is embedded.								

Policy development									
The aims of these obligations are to encourage all researchers to actively contribute to the development of policies driving positive change at their institution.									
EI7	Consider researchers and their managers as key stakeholders within the institution and provide them with formal opportunities to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision-making.	Review the early career researcher membership of School and University committees to ensure there are formal opportunities for researchers to engage with relevant organisational policy and decision making.	New	November 2023 Annual	Head of Research Policy and Governance Head of Researcher Development	Contract researchers actively engaged on NTU committees by 2026 and increased awareness of research leadership opportunities identified at annual Researcher Conference.			
ECM5	Encourage managers to engage with opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	Leadership Programmes, including the Vice Chancellor's Future Research Leaders Programme, Next Generation Research Leaders and Leading as PI, will highlight opportunities to broaden participants perspectives from Leading Researchers to Research Leaders.	New	November 2023	Head of Researcher Development Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation	College for Leadership Engagement and Research Leadership programmes will review impact either at School or Department Level.			
EM5	Engage with opportunities to contribute to relevant policy development within their institution.	Continue to monitor researcher engagement with opportunities to contribute to policy development at NTU. Create opportunities for researchers on University committees, where they can contribute to policy development.	Continue	November 2023 November 2025	Researcher Development Consultant	60% of researchers indicate NTU values their contributions to policy development, improving from 33% in 2021 (CEDARS).			
ECR5	Encourage researchers to consider opportunities to contribute to policy development aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within their institution.	Create a process to identify candidates for committees with Head of Research Policy and Governance.	New	May 2024	Researcher Development Consultant Head of Research Policy and Governance	Review process annually and review committee membership with terms of reference annually in September.			
ER4	Recognise and act on their role as key stakeholders within their institution and the wider academic community.	Make the Researcher Conference an annual stakeholder engagement event.	Continue	May 2024	Researcher Development Consultant Early Career Researcher				

Employment										
Recruitment and induction										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure recruitment of researchers is open and fair and researchers receive effective inductions into the organisation.										
EI1	Ensure open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, which attracts excellent researchers, using fair and inclusive selection and appointment practices.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan as CEDARS shows it is embedded								
EI2	Provide an effective induction, ensuring that researchers are integrated into the community and are aware of policies and practices relevant to their position.	A25 Introduce a revised Researcher Induction Checklist in 2023 to support Researcher Induction and ensure integration into a community of colleagues, including relevant policy and practice.	New	September 2023	Researcher Development Consultant Organisational Development Consultant	80% of identified new researchers at NTU who attend the Researcher Induction indicate they are satisfied it is useful by 2026.				
Recognition, reward and promotion										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure the fair and inclusive recognition of researchers as part of their career progression.										
EI3	Provide clear and transparent merit-based recognition, reward and promotion pathways that recognise the full range of researchers' contributions and the diversity of personal circumstances.	A26 Introduce narrative CVs to promote the wider contribution of researchers.	New	September 2024	Researcher Development Consultant	M26 60% of researchers indicate that promotion pathways and career progression are clear, equitable and merit-based, improving from 44.8% average (3) in 2021 (CEDARS).				
EM3	Managers commit to, and evidence, the inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment, promotion and reward of researchers.	Continue to include support for researchers in planning for promotion in leadership programmes and raise awareness of narrative CVs.	Continue	May 2023 May 2026	Researcher Development Consultant Head of HR Strategic Projects	60% of researchers indicate that their manager supports them in promotion opportunities, improving from 57% in 2021 (CEDARS).				

Responsibilities and reporting										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers and their managers understand and act on their obligations and responsibilities.										
EM2	Managers familiarise themselves, and work in accordance with, relevant employment legislation and codes of practice, institutional policies, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
ER1	Researchers ensure that they work in accordance with, institutional policies, procedures and employment legislation, as well as the requirements of their funder.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
ER2	Researchers understand their reporting obligations and responsibilities.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
People management										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure that researchers are well-managed and have effective and timely performance reviews.										
EI4	Provide effective line and project management training opportunities for managers of researchers, heads of department and equivalent.	We will develop managers of researchers by expanding the research leadership and management portfolio to all career stages through an expanded portfolio of leadership programmes.	New	Annual: May	Researcher Development Consultant	By 2026, 60% of identified research managers will have completed a leadership or management programme, recorded in Thrive.				
EI5	Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation and embedded in institutional culture, through annual appraisals, transparent promotion criteria, and workload allocation.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan as CEDARS shows it is embedded.								
EM1	Managers undertake relevant training and development opportunities so that they can manage researchers effectively and fulfil their duty of care.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan								

EM4	Managers actively engage in regular constructive performance management with their researchers.	We will continue to include performance management in our research leadership programmes.	Continue	November 2023 November 2025	Researcher Development Consultant	60% of researchers indicate the performance review with their manager is useful, improving from 76.3% in 2021 (CEDARS).			
ER3	Researchers positively engage with performance management discussions and reviews with their managers.	We will encourage researchers to maintain formal records and demonstrate how their personal record is maintained in Thrive.	New	Annual	Researcher Development Consultant Organisational Development Consultant	60% of researchers indicate they maintain a formal record of their career development, improving from 58.8% in 2021. (CEDARS).			
Job security									
The aim of this obligation is to improve the job security of researchers.									
EI6	Seek to improve job security for researchers, for example through more effective redeployment processes and greater use of open-ended contracts, and report on progress.	We will create greater awareness of a wider range of career paths for those on fixed term contracts supported by additional professional development.	New	Annual	Researcher Development Consultant Head of Knowledge Exchange	Review at stakeholder engagement events such as annual Researcher Conference and Researcher Network.			
Professional and Career Development									
Championing professional development									
The aims of these obligations are to promote the importance of professional development and ensure researchers have the time to engage in it.									
PCDI1	Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement, and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.	We will launch the NTU Researcher Network in 2023 to provide structured support and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days of professional development. The Network will include a series of one-hour lunchtime and afternoon events.	New	July 2023 Annual	Researcher Development Consultant	60% of researchers will have completed an hour of professional development through the Researcher Network in each 12-month period by 2026.			
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with professional development activities.	We will monitor and report on engagement using data recorded in Thrive.	New	Annual	Researcher Development Consultant	80% of identified researchers will have engaged in professional development activities recorded on			

						Thrive each year by 2026.				
PCDM3	Managers allocate a minimum of 10 days pro rata per year, for their researchers to engage with professional development, supporting researchers to balance the delivery of their research and their own professional development.	The Researcher Development Team will review and revise the Researcher Induction Checklist to support managers in allocating 10 days of professional development.	New	September 2023	Researcher Development Consultant

Organisational Development Consultant | The Researcher Induction Checklist is revised and available on Thrive for managers to use as part of the School or Individual induction for new researchers at NTU. It will have been downloaded by 60% of new researchers in each 12-month period. | | | | |
PCDR1	Researchers take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals, including engaging in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year.	Introduce a Researcher Bulletin in 2023 to support researchers in taking ownership of their career development by improving the visibility of opportunities to researchers.	New	September 2023	Head of Researcher Development	50% of identified researchers will have accessed the Researcher Bulletin on Thrive by 2026 in each 12-month period.				
Career development reviews										
The aims of these obligations are to ensure researchers and their managers are engaging in productive career development reviews.										
PCDI2	Provide training, structured support, and time for managers to engage in meaningful career development reviews with their researchers.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
PCDI6	Monitor, and report on, the engagement of researchers and their managers with researcher career development reviews.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
PCDM1	Managers engage in regular career development discussions with their researchers, including holding a career development review at least annually.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
PCDR4	Researchers positively engage in career development reviews with their managers.	Introduce narrative CVs and Individual Research Development Plan document to facilitate this process.	New	November 2023	Researcher Development Consultant	60% of researchers maintain a formal record of their career development, improving from 58.8% in 2021. (CEDARS).				

	Career development support and planning									
	The aims of these obligations are to promote researchers' career development planning through tailored support and gathering evidence of professional experience.									
PCDI3	Ensure that researchers have access to professional advice on career management, across a breadth of careers.	This obligation is not an area of focus for this action plan.								
PCDR3	Researchers maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.	We will encourage contract researchers to maintain a career development plan to support job applications through the Researcher Network, supported by a Narrative CVs pathway on Thrive.	New	November 2023 November 2025	Researcher Development Consultant Head of Knowledge Exchange	60% of contract researchers report having a career development plan, improving from 42.7% in 2021 (CEDARS).				
	Research identity and leadership									
	The aims of these obligations are to provide researchers with opportunity to progress in their careers by developing their research identity and leadership capabilities.									
PCDI4	Provide researchers with opportunities, and time, to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills.	We will expand the opportunities for researchers at all career stages to develop their research identify and research skills through new early career leadership programmes.		Annual	Researcher Development Consultant	80% of researchers will have completed an hour of training recorded on Thrive on research identity or leadership skills by 2026.				
PCDM4	Managers identify opportunities and allow time (in addition to the 10 days professional development allowance), for their researchers to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills and provide appropriate credit and recognition for their endeavours.	Introduce a new Success Measure) to go beyond 10 days of professional development for contract researchers, who will be supported through the Researcher Network, Researcher Conference, and online learning pathways through Thrive.	New		Researcher Development Researcher Development Strategy Group Valuing Ideas Board	60% of contract researchers will have completed 10 days of professional development or structured support activities recorded on Thrive in the previous 12 months by 2026.				
PCDM5	Managers engage in leadership and management training to enhance their personal effectiveness, and to promote a positive attitude to professional development.	Continue to support managers to engage in leadership and management engagement through leadership programmes, with a focus on the professional development of researcher identity.	Continue	May 2023 May 2025	Researcher Development Researcher Development Strategy Group	60% of researchers indicate they have time to develop their leadership skills, improving from 39.6% in 2021 (CEDARS).				

PCDR5	Seek out, and engage with, opportunities to develop their research identity and broader leadership skills	We will provide new opportunities through the NTU Researcher Network.	Continue	November 2025 November 2026	Researcher Development Consultant Early Career Researcher Network Lead	60% of researchers indicate they have time to develop their research identity, improving from 45.9% in 2021 (CEDARS).			
Diverse careers									
The aims of these obligations are to recognise, value and prepare researchers for the wide range of career options available to them within and beyond research.									
PCDI5	Recognise that moving between, and working across, employment sectors can bring benefits to research and researchers, and support opportunities for researchers to experience this.	We will encourage researchers to work across employment sectors, such as through strategic and knowledge transfer partnerships focused on engagement with business.	New	Annual	Researcher Development Consultant	Qualitative feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness of management support and development events. We want evidence of researcher development: when researchers attend one of our events, we want evidence of positive impact on learning; when researchers establish strategic partnerships, we want to show a trajectory to our events; when researchers have been promoted, we want evidence that this was linked to learning.			
PCDM2	Managers support researchers in exploring and preparing for a diversity of careers, for example, through the use of mentors and careers professionals, training, and secondments.	Every researcher participating in leadership programmes will have mentoring opportunities.	Continue	Annual	Head of Researcher Development	Qualitative feedback from leadership programmes will be used to assess the effectiveness of management support and mentoring. We want evidence of researcher development. when researchers attend one of our events, we want evidence of positive impact on learning; when researchers establish			

						strategic partnerships, we want to show a trajectory to our events; when researchers have been promoted, we want evidence that this was linked to learning.				
PCDR2	Researchers explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, such as by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training and secondments.	We will deliver high profile events with a focus on quality mentoring.	New	July 2026 Annual	Researcher Development Consultant Organisational Development Consultant	Qualitative feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness of management support and mentoring.				
PCDR6	Researchers consider opportunities to develop their awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement, and commercialisation.	Continue to provide opportunities for researchers to develop awareness and experiences, such as through the Institute for Knowledge Exchange Practice and its Annual Conference.	New	Annual	Head of Knowledge Exchange	50% of researchers will have attended an event on the wider research system in each year by 2026.				