

Response to proposed actions from EMCR taskforce

Ranking	Action	Response
1	Create a new position of Research Facilitator, to support grant applications and particularly fellowship applications (a model used in other departments within MSD & in multiple gold Athena Swan applications)	<p>This action will not be taken forward.</p> <p>DSC spent some time considering this option. Our view is that writing high quality applications is a core skill for academics and our preference is to provide support to EMCR's in their skills development.</p> <p>At present we provide support for research applications in terms of science (proposed supervisor for fellowships or collaborators for grants), personnel issues (HR), and budgeting (pre-award finance team). In terms of science support, we are a broad based and methodologically diverse department and our aim is to encourage applicants to seek support from expertise within the department.</p> <p>So we recognise the importance of support for grant and fellowship applications for the development of EMCRs. Support is already available from several sources and we are taking further action to ensure that this is best utilised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary responsibility for career development support, including Fellowship or grant applications rests with supervisors/line managers. Having direct support from supervisor or line manager is most beneficial because these people are best placed to understand the skills of individuals and to match these to the opportunities available in a particular field. • Training Lead (Paul Aveyard) can arrange early feedback on Fellowship applications and arrange mock interviews. This will be better promoted so it's available to all EMCRs • Administrative support is available via group administrative assistants/PAs. • Pre-award team available to discuss financial planning. Every team has a dedicated grants officer and additionally a bi-monthly surgery will be arranged open to everyone to discuss an application. • We are rolling out application timetables for major fellowship funding rounds to help EMCR's in their journey • We are increasing networking opportunities (seminars, away-day) to encourage EMCR's to broaden their connections.

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2	Move people on repeated fixed-term contracts to open-ended contracts; agree threshold number of fixed-term contracts and/or length of employment before progression on to open-ended.	<p>This action is complete.</p> <p>The department policy has been reviewed and agreed by the People & EDI Committee and has been published on the intranet. This brings clarity to everyone on the system already in place to review the contractual arrangements for everyone who has 4 years' service at the point of their contract renewal.</p> <p>View here</p> <p>AS Actions 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4</p>
3	Create a new pump priming scheme for small grants for EMCRs	<p>This action will not be taken forward at present.</p> <p>At present the economic climate means that the department is restricted in its use of funds since the implementation of the Financial White Paper. However DSC does consider it important that EMCR's gain experience in making robust applications to competitive schemes and recommends the use of existing schemes to support small grants within the department eg. SPCR and ad-hoc opportunities through other infrastructure awards (eg. ARC, RCGP), or through the Division or University schemes which are advertised in the newsletter. There is sometimes support available from PIs within teams that can benefit EMCRs to fund pilot work that is strategic to the team, within the rules of the funding used, or where the EMCR can develop a strong case for limited support. Setting out such proposals is a useful process for EMCRs to master.</p>

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4	Move to a 'promotion as default' culture: Facilitate annual, central review of everyone eligible for regrading and titles, instead of reliance on self-nomination through line managers	<p>This action is being taken forward under Athena Swan.</p> <p>DSC fully support a growth culture and putting in place processes and opportunities to support individuals in their development. We believe it is important that EMCRs actively curate their careers and take advantage of opportunities available both in the department and in the University.</p> <p>The current PDR form points both individuals and their line managers to the guidance around grading and regrading and asks if the current JD is appropriate. Regrading, or other promotions or titles, will always need to be a specific process related to changes in the job description or in recognition of the acquisition of particular skills and experience.</p> <p>The department policy is that every individual should have the opportunity for an annual PDR (see also response to 10).</p> <p>AS Action 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5</p>
5	Create departmental fellowship scheme with multiple levels (as per that offered by NDPH)	<p>This action will be taken forward when funding allows.</p> <p>This will be considered further by the Department Strategy Committee, alongside provision of department funded DPhil positions. Most departments within MSD do not offer such a scheme. If a scheme were developed it would probably need to complement EMCR applications and progression in national fellowship schemes.</p> <p>The department is actively seeking development funding to enable such a scheme.</p>

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6	Provide salary funding for EMCR PIs who have been awarded project grants but whose salaries are not included in those grants	<p>This action will be partially taken forward.</p> <p>DSC recognises that the transitional leap to independent status is not always straight forward and that on occasion transitional support may be required.</p> <p>The Department Strategy Committee will review requests for modest salary top-ups, but this will be by exception and cannot be a guarantee of support. Requests for support will require a business case.</p> <p>EMCRs seeking to develop independent research careers should be supported to apply for awards which provide all, or a substantial proportion, of their own funding.</p> <p>Contributing to other projects which cover only a small proportion of time provides valuable career development opportunities but is not a substitute for a substantively funded role. Applying for research grants that do not cover any PI time is not sensible unless the EMCR time is already substantially funded elsewhere or the project is strategic to the department (in which case the DSC might exceptionally support)</p>
7	Create a permanent post (or multiple permanent posts) for EMCRs whose skills are relevant across multiple groups and projects in the department (as per 'staff scientist' roles at US NIH)	<p>This action is already in place and specific posts have been made permanent.</p> <p>The department already has some staff, particularly methodologists, on open-ended contracts on this basis. The need is reviewed and agreed by DSC on the basis of a business case. Whether EMCRs offer methodological support to others in the department is a personal decision based upon their interest and career planning, and should be accompanied by appropriate recognition and funding. EMCRs should not feel any obligation to support work outside their post, other than the modest fair contribution to departmental "citizenship" duties expected of all academic staff.</p> <p>A Policy for transfer from fixed term to open-ended has been agreed by the People & EDI Committee and has been published on the intranet (see also point 2 above)</p>

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8	At fixed-term contract renewal, all staff to be considered against transparent criteria for transition on to an open-ended contract. Staff to be told they are being reviewed for such a transition. If a decision is made not to transition someone from a fixed-term to an open-ended contract at this point, the reason for this should be transparently communicated to staff member.	This action has been implemented Transparent criteria has been made available in the Open-Ended Contract policy which can be viewed here .
9	Put in place process for learning from unsuccessful grant applications, including review of peer review reports and panel feedback from within teams	This action is will be implemented through AS It is the responsibility of line managers to provide career development advice and support, including feedback on unsuccessful applications, or to facilitate an introduction to another suitably qualified colleague to undertake this role. We will continue to promote training for line managers to facilitate good practice. AS 1.11
10	Move to a 'promotion as default' culture: Invite everyone eligible for regrading and/or titles to have an individual conversation about applying	See point 4. The department is at the early stages of establishing a career development review process and a career development review panel as part of the Research Concordat which will aim to make this process more transparent and provide central oversight and assurance. We aim to have this in place within the next 18 months.
11	HR review of criteria for moving people on to open-ended contracts, with clear details of departmental policy available on intranet	See points 7 and 10
12	Move to a 'promotion as default' culture: Train line managers to consider all staff who are eligible for regrading annually, and for those judged not ready, line manager to consider what they will do to get the employee ready for regrading the following year	This action is supported through Athena Swan and annual review by the Head of People and EDI. These discussions should feature as part of annual appraisal meetings. See also points 4, 7 and 10.

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13	Increase transparency regarding promotions and titles (e.g. associate professor): increase availability of information on intranet and publicise this information	<p>This action is supported.</p> <p>We will continue to ensure that information is transparently available. These are university processes. Information is already available on the MSD webpages: Honorary Titles and the department intranet: Department pages on AP title</p> <p>This includes information and deadlines for conferment of title when announced by the university. These will also continue to be promoted in the weekly news</p> <p>The weekly department newsletter has become the constant method that publicises such information but considered suggestions on alternative routes are welcome. We have tried several approaches to regularly updating staff before settling on the newsletter.</p> <p>The announcements for the annual exercises are also circulated to SAC as group leads.</p> <p>AS 1.2, 1.3</p>
14	Increase transparency regarding promotions and titles (e.g. associate professor): provide annual workshops for staff	<p>This action is supported and will be implemented through AS actions.</p> <p>Presentation to EMCR group to discuss promotion procedures to be repeated regularly (eg. biennial).</p> <p>Recent briefing for senior academic committee on process for conferment of title and internal promotions with encouragement to raise in PDR meetings.</p> <p>AS 1.3, 1.9</p>

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15	Dedicated, ring-fenced time and funds for training and development for EMCRs, with allocation and use of allocation reviewed annually at PDR	<p>This action is complete</p> <p>Research concordat sets out clear expectations for training and development for EMCRs and should be self-reported and reviewed as part of PDR. This has been included as part of the department training policy (recently approved)</p> <p>See links below for details of expectations: https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat/managers-of-researchers https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat/researchers/Professional-development Researcher Training Information on MSD webpages</p> <p>People who feel that they are being denied the opportunity to dedicate time for training are encouraged to discuss this with the HR team.</p>
16	Creation of deputy roles to facilitate capacity and CV building for EMCRs (for example, St Andrew's created Deputy roles for Centre Directors, Directors of Research, and Directors of Teaching, allowing individuals to build leadership experience)	<p>This action is supported</p> <p>DSC agrees that deputy roles, or shadowing, can be a valuable development opportunity - to consider further in collaboration with EMCR group. Deputy roles should be based on ability and willingness to deliver the role - eligibility to be considered should be open to EMCRs.</p>
17	Increase transparency regarding promotions and titles (e.g. associate professor): share examples of successful applications	<p>This action is partially supported.</p> <p>This is a central university process and guidance for people considering applying for these posts is already available (see 13 above).</p> <p>Successful applications are publicised in department weekly news. Applicants who are unsuccessful are routinely offered the opportunity for personal feedback.</p> <p>Previous applications are sensitive and contain personal information so can only be shared with the explicit permission of the named individual.</p>

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18	Have senior EDI lead (Catherine Pope) provide a session on regrading and job roles at Senior Academic Committee	<p>This action is complete.</p> <p>A session for the senior academic committee on regrading and conferment of title was held in summer 2022. We will continue to use the SAC meetings to refresh or update the senior team on aspects of HR policy.</p>
19	Enhance EMCR opportunities for DPhil supervision; e.g. by stipulating a set proportion of department DPhil offers go to someone who is co-supervised by an EMCR., or suggest every DPhil should be co-supervised by an EMCR on grade 7-8	<p>This action is supported</p> <p>DGS to explicitly ask all supervisory teams that do not include an EMCR member to consider doing so, with an emphasis on opportunities for staff at G8 or above.</p>
20	Clear awareness and support for EMCRs undertaking the PGDip/PGCert leading to Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) status (this qualification is required by many other Universities for lecturer roles and above, and hence yields transferable skills)	<p>This action is supported</p> <p>The department is forming a career development working group who will be asked to consider this.</p>
21	Introduce Promotions Coaching Scheme (at Leeds, the scheme is open to all staff and involves an initial 'chemistry' conversation, a 'contract' to clarify roles and responsibilities, and four meetings over a 12-month period)	<p>No further action is supported.</p> <p>The university has an established coaching and mentoring schemes, open to EMCRs.</p> <p>University coaching and mentoring support</p>
22	Match male promotion nominations with those from women or non-binary people (e.g. if 5 men are being put forward for promotion, 5 women or non-binary people should be put forward as well)	<p>This action is not supported</p> <p>Promotion is based on skills and merit. The Athena Swan Data Monitoring Group reviews all data of this nature to check for bias in recruitment or promotion. This issue is not specific to EMCRs and will continue to be considered as part of the department wider EDI agenda</p>
22	Department/line managers to proactively broker mentorship relationships with strategic external parties	<p>This action is supported at line manager level.</p> <p>This support will be personal to individual needs and is best discussed with line managers or other individual members of the senior team</p>

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24	All EMCRs who want to progress should be supported through explicit discussions about relevance to internal and external positions	<p>This action will be supported by implementation of CDR's</p> <p>We want to encourage career development discussions and considering internal and external positions is a part of this. From 2024 all researchers will be able to have a Career Development Review, as an outcome of the concordat. Further details will be provided as this scheme is developed.</p> <p>General discussions about career development opportunities should also feature as part of annual personal development meetings with line managers. All job vacancies are advertised on the department website and open to any internal candidate who is suitably qualified.</p> <p>Ultimate responsibility for seeking positions elsewhere is for individuals to pursue independently.</p>
25	Direct people to courses on how to write grant applications as leads, rather than as co-applicants	<p>This action is in place already.</p> <p>The university, NIHR and some other funders offer courses on grant writing. Many of these are advertised in the weekly newsletter. MS & HERG has provides a writing qualitative research grants workshop annually.</p>