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FAO Chair of the Concordat Strategy Group

Letter of Commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers


I confirm our commitment to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The University of Exeter welcomes and fully supports the Principles of this revised Concordat and we intend to uphold our obligations and responsibilities as a signatory.

The University of Exeter has been a strong supporter of the Concordat and has recently been re-accredited through our eight-year review under the European HR Excellence in Research Award. We have put 'people and ideas' centrally in our new, emerging Research and Impact Strategy 2020-2025 and are committed to a nurturing, inclusive and sustainable environment based on individual mentoring and support, and supporting the highest ethical standards and principles of research integrity, responsibility, rewarding effort, openness, collaboration and collegiality as well as success.

I have initiated a Fair Employment For All working group which will focus on developing solutions for three key priorities, one of which is a commitment to "*Significantly increasing our use of open-ended contracts of employment, recognising that fixed term contracts will be appropriate in a limited range of circumstances, such as cover for study leave, family leave and specific institutional projects.*". We are already making substantive progress on this.

We agree to work collectively and engage with initiatives to address systemic challenges in progressing towards a UK research system where researchers work in healthy and supportive environments. We agree that researchers should be recognised and valued for their contributions in research and beyond, supported in their professional and career development, and equipped and empowered to succeed in their chosen careers.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sir Steve Smith
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive