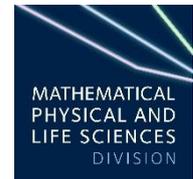


Divisional Advocate for Research Staff (Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences)



Call for expressions of interest

This is a new role which will be the strategic lead for the Division on promoting and realising the University's vision to provide a world-leading environment for research staff. It represents an opportunity to play an influential and visible part in developing and implementing strategy and action to enhance the research environment in the Division through provision of enhanced support for the development of a staff cohort which is central to our research success and ambitions.

The Divisional Advocate will report to the Associate Head of Division (Research) and work with University Advocate for Research Staff Development (Prof David Gavaghan) to:

- provide academic leadership for the implementation of Oxford's Research Staff Development Strategy (the principles of which are attached), which was approved by the University's Research & Innovation Committee in July 2018 and supports Priority 8 of the University's Strategic Plan 2018-2023 ('*To enhance the opportunities and support for early career researchers.*');
- drive the ongoing development and implementation of the Strategy, strengthening and making more visible the Division's commitment to research staff and their development;
- pay close attention to activities in this area which enhance demonstrably the research environment sections of the Division's REF 2021 submission;
- support the Division's commitments to the *Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers* and provide academic leadership to Oxford's response and planning in light of the anticipated updated Concordat requirements¹;
- work with Advocates for Research Staff Development appointed by each division to ensure that the provision of support for research staff is consistent between and within the four divisions (whilst taking into account differences in local research culture);
- collaborate with the forthcoming forum for college-only research staff paying particular regard to initiatives of mutual benefit;
- sit on the newly formed Research Staff Steering Committee (the remit, membership, and mode of operation are attached);
- establish and co-chair an MPLS Division Research Staff Forum (see attached for further information) which will contribute to our strategy to underpin the professional and career development of research staff. The Forum is pivotal for good communication with researchers across the Division and will inform the Research Staff Steering Committee on initiatives, progress and major issues relating to research staff development.
- Work with the University's Professional Development Advisor for Researchers to promote and coordinate the appointment of Department Research Staff Advocates and to establish Department research staff forums.
- continue the exploration of the feasibility of holistic research staff support within a University-wide Researcher Development Centre.

¹ The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers has been subject a 10-year review (<https://www.vitae.ac.uk/news/vitae-press-releases/concordat-strategy-group-welcomes-independent-review-of-the-concordat-to-support-the-career-development-of-researchers>)

The role will be supported by the MPLS Training Team, which is led by Dr Justin Hutchence (Researcher Training and Development Manager). The appointed candidate will be expected to dedicate between 0.1 and 0.2 FTE to the role, on average. Candidates should establish that they have in-principle support from their Head of Department before submitting an expression of interest.

The appointment would last for up to three years in the first instance.

Further information is available from Prof David Gavaghan or Dr Justin Hutchence.

If you wish to be considered for this role, please send an EOI* to Dr Tracy Gale (MPLS Divisional Registrar) by noon on Monday 16 September 2019.

* This should summarise the reasons for your interest in the role, your experience of research staff development to date, and why you feel you would be suitable for the role; and confirm that you have in-principle support from your Head of Department.

Research Staff Development Forum Strategic Themes 2018-21

1.	<p>COORDINATING, promoting and making best use of existing support for all research staff, sharing existing good practice both across the Collegiate University and in collaboration with other leading research-intensive Universities. Providing a forum for sharing and developing policy and practice, offering advice and making appropriate input to the REF environment requirements as agreed with Research and Innovation Committee with reference to all researcher development issues at Oxford.</p>
2.	<p>Lobbying for a physical Researcher Development CENTRE, which showcases what is on offer to research staff, provides meeting, development and collaboration space, and is backed up by an enhanced virtual space that signposts our existing and emerging provision across the Collegiate University and Oxford city and enables research staff to access the range of provision and support on offer. We aspire to broaden our signposting to mirror that available through the welcome service so that it incorporates existing community information available on schools, housing, medical services and advice and guidance agencies. We will seek to learn from the experience of other institutions and will begin by mapping provision for research staff at Oxford and comparable institutions.</p>
3.	<p>Lobbying for an academic ADVOCATE for research staff. This person would build on our achievements to date and lead our policy work to leverage resources for agreed priorities including the Researcher Development Centre, enabling best use of existing resources, providing wider support for the careers of partners, re-exploring college affiliation for research staff, and alumnus status for research staff. We will also support the initiative to create affordable housing for staff to influence the development to ensure that it will meet the needs of research staff.</p>
4.	<p>A CHARTER implementation plan which will take the work of the revised Concordat forward across the Collegiate University, seeking to map and consolidate resources where appropriate. This implementation plan will build on the work of the previous Concordat Implementation Plan. We will pay significant attention to the support and training of PIs in the management of research staff. We will consider the development of research staff through the entire employee life cycle from effective induction to independent researcher. We will endeavour to ensure that the University's wellbeing strategy addresses issues specific to research staff.</p>
5.	<p>Enhanced COMMUNICATIONS across the Collegiate University and externally. Working with internal communications, the Public Affairs directorate, OxRSS and other representative groups at University, Divisional and Departmental level to ensure that the research staff voice is heard. Ensuring that provision is signposted and accessible and supporting effective collaboration among all contributors to the research staff environment. Providing a single point within the University for communication to external organisations on career and professional development of research staff.</p>
6.	<p>DIVISIONAL ACADEMIC ADVOCATES to support the above at Divisional level including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establishing formal DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH STAFF ADVOCATES to support research staff and their societies, providing continuity and a voice on the departmental management committee; b. Ensuring every member of research staff has an annual PDR and a separate CDR (the latter with a senior academic of their choice), ideally mandated by Division; c. Supporting academic staff and research staff in conducting CDRs, and supporting research staff to appoint an alternative reviewer for their CDR if requested.

7.	Continuing COMMITMENT to a high-quality experience for research staff by ensuring these activities are properly and fully implemented and that there is sufficient resource to enable this to happen, and that the RSWG develop effective metrics and processes to assess and evaluate the effect of these activities on the experience of researchers.

Structure of the Research Staff Development Forum

The Research Staff Development Forum (RSDF) is a specially constituted group convened on behalf of Research & Innovation Committee to provide the strategic direction of the University with respect to enhancing the opportunities and support for research staff, in accordance with Priority 8 of the University's Strategic Plan 2018-23 and the forthcoming revised Concordat on Research Staff Development.

The Tripartite structure of the RSDF

The RSDF is made up of three interlinking groups: The Research Staff Steering Committee (RSSC); the Research Staff Working Group (RSWG), and the Research Staff Consultative Group (RSCG).

Research Staff Steering Committee (RSSC)

The newly formed Steering Committee will be a decision-making group responsible for agreeing and coordinating strategy and planning, to drive the University's agenda on enhancing opportunities for research staff. The Committee will work in collaboration with the RSWG and the RSCG. More specifically, the purpose and role of this group is to:

- raise the profile of research staff development at the University, within the HEI sector, and externally.
- provide strategic academic leadership to ensure that the University maximises the opportunities and support for research staff.
- contribute to the University's response to the general framework for assessment in the 2021 REF, paying particular regard to the environment template and sections on staffing strategy, research staff development, and equality and diversity in research careers.
- ensure engagement across the interests of the Collegiate University and facilitate dialogue with stakeholders.
- steer and monitor implementation of the forthcoming Concordat on Research Staff Development, to which the University will be a signatory.
- consider and advise upon policies and initiatives proposed by RSWG and RSCG to help form objectives, priorities and actions to be included in the RSDF action plan, ensuring that these are informed by, and responsive to, policies, priorities and other developments in the University and colleges, and externally.
- approve and coordinate effective implementation of RSWG action plans and initiatives with a view to championing these within their respective divisions, faculty, colleges, and other internal and external bodies.
- RSSC will be accountable to the University Research & Innovation Committee and will contribute to progress reports and updates as necessary. RSSC will have a reporting line to Personnel Committee.

Membership

- Four divisional Academic Advocates for Research Staff, to be appointed by Divisions. These members will have knowledge of and experience in research staff development and associated research activity within their Division, and will report to the Associate Head (Research) in each Division.

- University Advocate for Research Staff Development.
- One representative from the Conference of Colleges.
- Four members of UAS: Directors of the Careers Service, Human Resources, and Research Services, and Head of Equality & Diversity Unit.
- Chair (Voice) of the OxRSS, Chair of the RSWG, and Chair of the RSCG.

Mode of Operation

The group will meet termly and be chaired by the University Advocate for Research Staff Development.

Research Staff Consultation Group (RSCG)

The Research Staff Consultation Group (RSCG) will provide a forum for research staff to identify and prioritise themes and measures which will advise and inform the strategy, initiatives and priorities of RSWG and RSSC. Specifically, the purpose and role of RSCG is to:

- provide a focus for effective communication within and across the research staff community, seeking out and bringing to the group perspectives, priorities, insight and issues from research staff across the Collegiate University.
- identify and prioritize initiatives, and work with RSWG in identifying priority themes and corresponding actions in order to inform and mutually agree the RSWG action plan.
- encourage two-way communication regarding RSWG activity with the Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS) members and the research community more broadly.
- augment the work of the OxRSS and to promote the interests of OxRSS to the RSCG and RSWG, and within the Collegiate University.
- work with OxRSS to coordinate the representation of research staff on key University, divisional, departmental and Conference of Colleges committees so that views expressed in those committees are representative of the views of the research staff community as a whole.

Membership

The RSCG will consist of:

- The Voice Chair and Events Chair of OxRSS
- Two research staff representatives from each of the four academic divisions
- Two representatives of research staff from the colleges.

The Professional Development Adviser for Researchers will act as the meeting convenor and to ensure continuity. The RSCG may invite the University Advocate for Research Staff Development and the Divisional Advocates for Research Staff to attend its meetings at its discretion.

Mode of Operation

The group will meet termly and will be chaired by the Chair of OxRSS (Voice).

Divisional Research Staff Forum and Department Research Staff Forum

The structure of the RSCG will be mirrored at Divisional and Departmental level (and is based on that which has already been successfully put in place in the MPLS and Medical Sciences Divisions and mirrors the representative structure for the University's 6000 D.Phil students).

Department Research Staff Forum

Each department will establish a representative research staff forum which will be co-chaired by a member of research staff and a member of academic staff and will report to and be consulted by the MPLS Division Research Staff Forum. Best current practice in supporting these forums provides administrative support and a small annual budget to allow research staff to (self-)organise networking and career and professional development activities. The research staff co-chair (or their nominee) of each department forum will also act as the OxRSS Voice Rep for that department. The nomination and (where necessary) election of research staff representatives will be coordinated by OxRSS, independently of departments, divisions and colleges. OxRSS will be supported in this activity by the University's Professional Development Adviser for Researchers.

MPLS Division Research Staff Forum

The co-chairs (academic lead and research staff member) of each department forum will form the Divisional Research Staff Forum which will be co-chaired by the Divisional Research Staff Advocate and a member of research staff. One of the research staff members of this Forum will also be the research staff representative on Divisional Board. The research staff co-chair of the Divisional Forum and the research staff representative on Divisional Board will be the Divisional Research Staff Representatives on the University Level RSCG. (It is proposed that these individuals will receive University Research Staff Representation Fellowships in recognition of their support of the Research Staff Community.)

Research Staff Working Group

RSWG is an established Forum, and an executive group responsible for leadership, management and implementation of RSDF initiatives. RSWG will work collaboratively with both RSSC and RSCG. Specifically, the role of RSWG is to:

- identify, develop, and prioritise the policy objectives and actions to be included in the RSWG action plan, which will ensure that initiatives focus on the strategic objectives of RSWG.
- take collective responsibility for leadership in implementing the initiatives prioritized in the action plan and to champion the University-wide initiatives, improvement programmes, and projects.
- keep delivery of the RSDF action plan under regular review, highlighting where progress is not in line with the plan in order to identify barriers and propose solutions, reprioritising activity or introducing new priorities as the need arises.
- prepare papers for consideration, comment, and, if relevant, approval by RSSC, Research & Innovation Committee, Personnel Committee, and/or other groups as appropriate.
- monitor and report on progress and outcomes, for consideration by RSSC, Research & Innovation Committee, and other university committees, where required.
- work collaboratively and in partnership with researchers, faculty, divisions, other professional services and external organisations, to ensure good communication and to realise the aspirations the group.

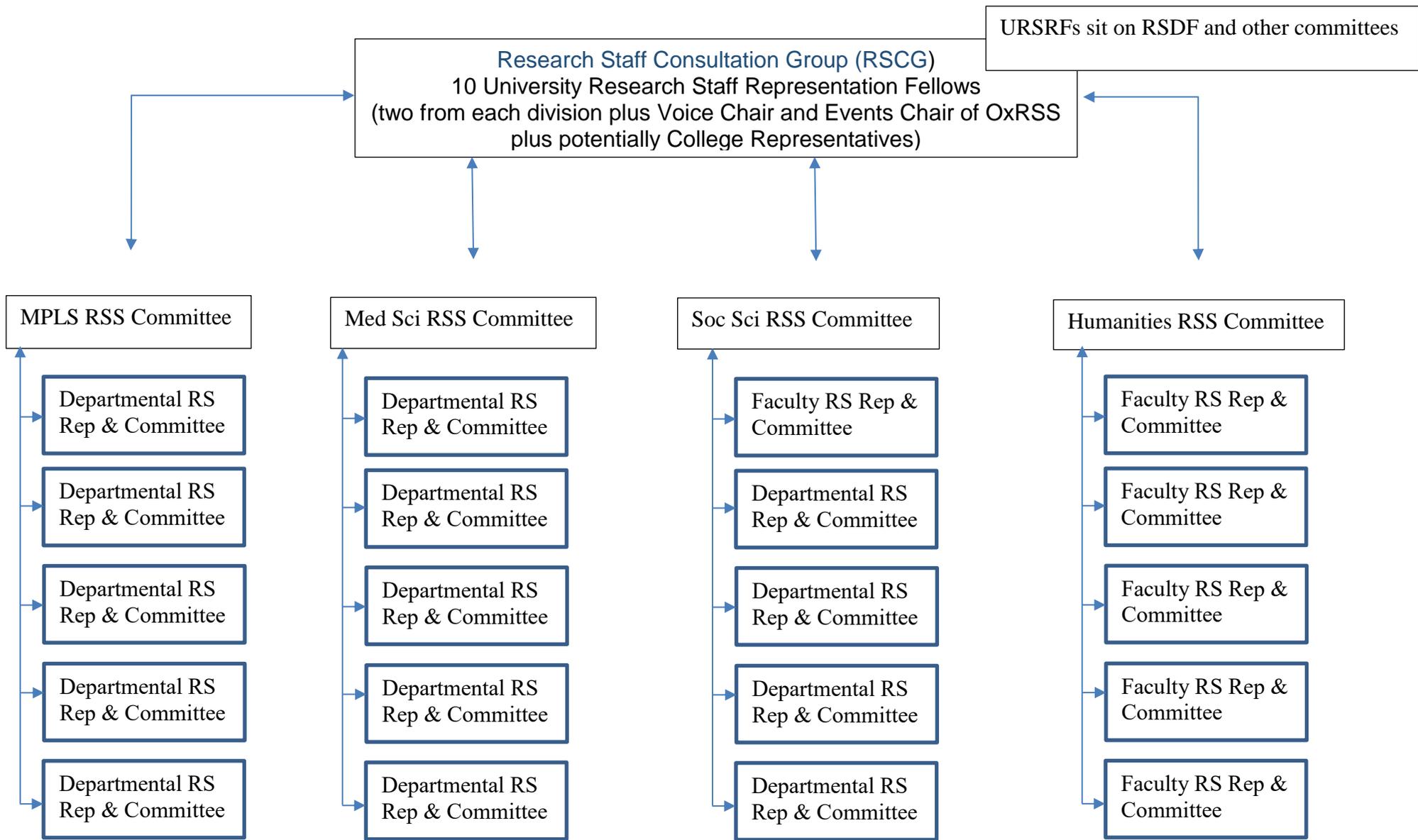
RSWG is accountable to the University Research & Innovation Committee, via the Steering Committee.

Membership

- Four divisional staff responsible for researcher development and training, to be nominated by Divisions.
- Five/Six members of UAS; one/two each from the Careers Service, Equality & Diversity, Oxford Learning Institute, Personnel, and Research Services.
- One/Two members of the RSCG
- The Divisional Advocates, the University Advocate, and the Chair of OxRSS can be invited to attend at the RSWG's discretion

Mode of Operation

The Forum will meet once/ twice per term will be chaired by one of the members [TBD].



Note the number of faculty/departments are indicative and do not reflect the actual numbers within each division as they vary considerably