

CROS/PIRLS Results 2019

The Concordat was launched in 2008 and is an agreement between research funders and UK Universities which sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, principle investigators, employers and funders in relation to principles of researchers' career development. A revised, updated [Concordat](#) was published in September 2019.

The Careers in Research Online Survey (**CROS**) gathers the anonymous views of research staff in UK higher education institutions about their experiences, career aspirations and career development opportunities. The Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (**PIRLS**) gathers anonymous views and experiences from principal investigators in relation to their role as managers and leaders of researchers and research groups.

Collectively these data aim to indicate progress on implementation of the UK Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. To demonstrate their commitment to the Concordat, Universities report on their progress and develop action plans to outline how they support and develop their researchers. Institutions who demonstrate their progress are awarded the European HR Excellence in Research Award. Bangor has held an award since 2012; it has to be renewed every two years.

These surveys are run by Vitae across UK Universities every two years, allowing us to compare the results with previous results to identify where progress has been made and where gaps still exist in provision. We are also able to compare Bangor's results with the UK HE sector responses in order to measure progress and levels of satisfaction against the UK. As an institution, we welcome these survey results as they help us identify issues and improve our support for researchers and research leaders.

There were 72 responses to the CROS survey and 33 responses to PIRLS. The responses account for approximately 18% of the research/academic staff surveyed at Bangor University (down from 22% in 2017).

The Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) 2019

Recognition & Value

The percentage of those agreeing that the University recognises and values the contributions made to different areas (grant applications, managing staff and budgets, publishing, peer reviewing etc) was generally lower than in CROS 2017.

- The areas where staff feel most valued are publications 68% (2017: 77%; UK 2019: 74%) and grant funding 50% (2017: 61%; UK 2019: 48%)
- The areas where staff feel least valued are supervising and managing staff 27% (2017: 36%; UK 2019: 35.5%) and peer reviewing 18% (2017: 35%; UK 2019: 29%).

Performance Development Review

- 67 % noted that they had **participated in the PDR process** during the last two years (down from 88% in 2017; UK 2019: 72%).
- only 40% of those who had participated believe that the process is useful– this is down from 51% in 2017, and lower than the UK-wide 2019 result (59%)

Support and Career Development

- 70% agreed that they had been encouraged to engage with career development (2017: 71%), this is compared to 76% of UK-wide responses.
- 90% of respondents take 'ownership of your career development' (2017: 88%; UK 2019: 87%)
- Only 49% noted they have a clear development plan, compared to 64% in 2017 (UK 2019: 53%)
- 24% of Bangor respondents have spent less than one day on CPD activities in the last 12 months, 50% have spent between 1-5 days and 27% more than 6 days. These numbers are comparable to the 2017 results (20% < 1 day, 53% 1-5 days, 27% more than 6 days) and to UK-wide 2019 results (21% < 1 day, 54% 1-5 days, 24% more than 6 days).

CROS 2019 cont.

Respondents to CROS indicated they would like more training in the following areas:

- Career management – 57% (2017: 53.5%; UK 2019: 59%)
- Leadership and management – 51% (2017: 49%; UK 2019: 55%)
- Being mentored – 47% (2017: 30%; UK 2019: 46%)
- Research Impact – 46% (2017: 37%; UK 2019: 58%)

Key points from qualitative responses to CROS:

- Respondents do not currently feel sufficiently valued or supported by Bangor University.
- Respondents are feeling the effects of research support being cut, particularly RIIO grant support and school-level admin support.
- Respondents on fixed-term contracts do not feel that they have the same opportunities and support as permanent members of staff, particularly in regard to applying for external research grants.

The Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (PIRLS) 2019

Recognition & Value

The percentage of respondents agreeing that the University **recognises and values their contributions as PIs** was generally lower than in 2015*:

- Securing research funding 73% (compared to 85% in 2015; UK 2019: 85%)
- Academic collaborations 64% (compared to 72% in 2015; UK 2019: 76%),
- Demonstrating the impact of research 61% (compared to 73% in 2015; UK 2019: 77%)
- Management and administration within the University 49% (compared to 63% in 2015; UK 2019: 58%)

58% noted they felt valued for developing research staff, compared to 48% in 2015 (UK 2019: 55%).

Performance Development Review

- 85% noted that they had **participated in the PDR process** during the last two years (no change from 2015) compared to 93% UK-wide.
- 64% of those who had participated found the process useful overall; this has increased from 56% in 2015 (UK 2019: 57.5%)

Organisational Issues

- 39% of respondents noted that they are satisfied with their work–life balance, compared to 48% in 2015 (UK 2019: 44%)
- 27% agreed that that they are well led by institutional management, compared to 38% in 2015 (UK 2019: 43%)
- 58% indicate a good level of job satisfaction - lower than in 2015 (83%) and UK-wide (2019: 74%)

Key points from qualitative responses to PIRLS:

- Respondents expressed difficulty answering questions about “the institution” when work culture, value and recognition etc are largely school based.
- Respondents reported that there is too much pressure to do everything well, staff feel overloaded.
- PI respondents felt that recent restructuring/job cuts in the research support services have made it very difficult to carry out research effectively. Workloads have increased because researchers are now doing work of administrative and support staff.

* BU did not take part in PIRLS 2017. The results are therefore compared to PIRLS 2015

“You said, we did”

- Academic mentoring schemes were launched in September 2019
- Three Research Leadership programmes are running in 19/20 – these are open to researchers who wish to progress to leadership roles within the University
- Careers programme for ECRs (including “careers outside academia”) to be run in March 2020
- HR and UCU have established a Casualisation Task and End group
- The use of PDRs is being reviewed to ensure they are offered consistently across the institution and staff feel they are valuable
- Working groups have been established to look at “People First” initiatives, and health and well-being across the University