



University of
St Andrews

CEDARS 2023 – Institutional Overview

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Introduction and context

CEDARS (Culture, Employment, and Development in Academic Research Survey) explores the views and experiences of researchers about their employment and career and professional development. It is designed to reflect the principles of the Researcher Development Concordat and the results provide evidence that to use to assess our progress in relation to implementation of the Concordat's principles and the requirements for the European HR Excellence in Research Award (HREiR) and environment considerations within Research Excellence Framework (REF) submissions.

The report compares St Andrews's responses with the aggregated responses from all 66 participating HE institutions, which comprised 9,061 responses from employees (doctoral researchers have been excluded). The report aims to focus on St Andrews results that are on key topics and/or appear distinctive compared with the aggregate results, and where possible to provide some deeper insights for certain key groups of employees.

Participation, respondent profile, and key groups

69 St Andrews researchers responded to the survey (**5%** response rate), which limits, and potentially skews, some of the analysis with respect to sub-groups (e.g., analysis by career stage). The response rate is half that of CEDARS 2021, which is due to an increase in the eligible population size (~1,000 in 2021, 1,375 in 2023) and a reduction in the number of responses to the survey (100 in 2021).

In terms of 'personal' demographics, St Andrews aligns with those observed in the UK aggregate data for age and gender. However, a higher proportion of St Andrew respondents:

- are **EU member nationals** (+5ppt above CEDAR UK)
- are of **other White background** (+13ppt above CEDARS UK)
- are more likely to have **declared a disability** (+10ppt above CEDARS UK)
- self-identify as '**senior researcher**' (+8ppt above CEDARS UK)
- have **more than ten years of experience** in research (+15ppt above CEDARS UK)
- for **fixed-term contract respondent, 67%** are on their **first contract** (+17ppt above CEDARS UK)

For early career respondents:

- are **men** (+18ppt above CEDAR UK)
- on **fixed-term contract** (+21ppt above CEDARS UK)
- on **research-only contracts** (+17ppt above CEDARS UK)
- are allocated **81%-100% to research** (+27ppt above national figure)

It is a potential cause for concern that the 'early career respondents' cohort contains almost a third of relatively experienced researchers who still identify as early career. **21%** have **more than four fixed-term contracts or extensions**, and **29%** have **5+ years of research experience**.

Employment

Recruitment and appointment

Researchers had **below average** agreement that their recruitment, selection, and appointment process was fair (-11ppt under CEDARS UK). While in line with the average regarding the recruitment process was merit based, 53% (-28ppt under CEDARS UK) perceived it as inclusive, and 59% (-21ppt under CEDARS UK) perceived it as transparent. These findings contrast with the 90% of managers who indicated that they were either fully confident or confident in using inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment processes. In terms of induction, St Andrews results are in line with what is observed in other UK institutions. The induction local to respondent's current role was found most beneficial.

Appraisal, promotion, and progression

St Andrews is in line with UK aggregate for percentage appraisal participation for researchers in the last two years, as well as ambivalence regarding perceived benefits (58% found them useful, 40% did not). 20% of managers did not feel they had the skills to conduct effective appraisals (+10ppt above CEDAR UK), 47% were not confident in dealing with poor performance (+10ppt above CEDAR UK), and 26% felt capable of providing effective feedback (-10ppt under CEDARS UK). Notably, St Andrews's respondents had lower levels of engagement in continuing professional development (CPD) relating to appraisals and development reviews (-25ppt under CEDARS UK); and 42% of managers reported that they would benefit from further training in this area.

In line with CEDARS UK results, half of researchers perceived promotion pathways and processes were clear, with early career researchers less likely to agree (29%). 47% of early career respondents felt that opportunities for career advancement are not equitable (+9ppt above CEDARS UK) and 41% of early career respondents did not know whether promotions were merit-based.

Recognition and value

St Andrews is in line with UK aggregate for feeling appropriately recognised for their contributions to the institution; 65% of respondents felt valued for publications and research outputs, and 58% felt valued for teaching activities. However, St Andrews is below the UK aggregate regarding recognition of public and media dissemination (-7%).

Management of researchers

Experience of being managed

St Andrews is in line with UK aggregate in two-thirds of statements regarding support by immediate management. However, 42% of mid-career and senior staff disagreed that their immediate manager articulated clear role and performance expectations (+14% above CEDARS UK).

Pastoral support

St Andrews is weaker than the UK aggregate in managing employee wellbeing and responding to incidents of bullying and harassment. **63%** of respondents are **confident in responding issues relate to health and wellbeing** (-19ppt under CEDARS UK), **58%** of respondents are confident in their skills in dealing with bullying and harassment (-13ppt under CEDARS UK), and **16%** do not know how to respond to bullying and harassment issues (+14ppt above CEDARS UK).

Developing line management capabilities

For manager of researchers, St Andrews has **significantly higher engagement** in training and development, across a range of managerial topics, than the UK aggregate. These include supervising postgraduate researchers (**95%**), recruitment and selection (**84%**), and research integrity (**79%**). However, there is less engagement with CPD in conducting appraisals (**42%**), and mental health and wellbeing (**47%**), but an above UK aggregate interest in development in these topics (**53%** and **37%** respectively).

Professional and career development

Career thinking and support

St Andrews is in line with the UK aggregate with respect to the academic career aspirations of early career researchers (**69%**), however only **50% expect to achieve this** (-14ppt under CEDARS UK). While **90%** of managers were confident in actively supporting their employees in working towards their career aspirations, **62%** of early career respondents felt that their immediate manager supports them in this manner, and **75%** felt that their manager encouraged them in career development activities. Mid-career and senior researchers are less likely to agree (**42% disagree**, +12ppt above CEDARS UK) that their manager encouraged them to engage in personal and career development activities.

Engagement in training and professional development

St Andrews is in line with the UK aggregate with respect to time spent on CPD, range of CPD, and level of development. St Andrews respondents were more likely to be aware of the support the institution provides for their career and professional development and to have discussed their career options with a career specialist (**62%**, +8ppt above CEDARS UK). However, there is a disconnect between knowledge of the available support and time spent on CPD. For time spent on CPD, **1-2 days** was the most common (**32%**), however only **9%** (-4ppt under CEDARS UK) reported spending the **Concordat recommended 10 or more days on CPD**. St Andrews respondents participated in higher levels of EDI training (**70%**, +8ppt above CEDARS UK) and training regarding interdisciplinary research (**42%**, +9ppt above CEDARS UK), as well time spent on developing their research identity (**63%**, +14ppt above CEDARS UK).

Other developmental experiences

St Andrews is in line with the UK aggregate with respect engagement in additional activities related to research, such as commercialisation and public engagement.

Knowledge exchange (**40%**) and public engagement (**40%**) are most common activities to have been undertaken. **64%** of respondents would like to engage in public policy development, and **56%** of respondents were interested in participation in institution policy and decision-making, and to engage in citizen science or co-creation of research with society. St Andrews stands out from the UK aggregate in topics of disinterest from researchers. **70%** of respondents, and **63% of early career researchers**, were **not interested in commercialisation**; **52%** of respondents had **no interest** in experience of **other employment sectors** or **60%** in a secondment in another employment sector.

Environment and culture

Views of the research environment

St Andrews is in line with the UK aggregate with respect to sense of belonging, feeling valued at work, job satisfaction, and being included in their immediate research group, however **20%** of respondents **strongly disagreed** (**+6ppt** above CEDARS UK) with being felt valued at work, and those that strongly disagree are most likely to be early career researchers. St Andrews is also in line with the UK aggregate for respondents feeling that St Andrews promotes the importance of good mental health and wellbeing, that their working environment supports their wellbeing, and that they felt encouraged to take positive action to maintain their wellbeing, however this is lower than average in early career researchers (**38%**, **-22ppt** under CEDARS UK). St Andrews stands out positively compared to the UK aggregate is the percentage of respondents (**78%**, **+9ppt** above CEDARS UK) who agreed that their institution promotes the highest standard of research integrity and conduct.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

While the overall results for St Andrews in terms of experiences around equity, diversity and inclusion are in line what we observe in other UK institutions, there are differences between career stages, with early career researchers less likely to agree (**53%**) than mid-career and senior respondents (**62%**) and CEDARS UK early career respondents (**65%**). St Andrews stands out strongly with respondents' familiarity with institutional reporting mechanisms for bullying and harassment (**28%**, **+13ppt** above CEDARS UK), with correspondingly higher rate of reporting incidents.