CEDARS

Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey

2023 Aggregate results

www.**vitae**.ac.uk/cedars

Background

▲ **CEDARS is the Culture, Employment and Development of Academic Researchers Survey.** It gathers individuals' views on their experiences of their employment, professional development support and working culture within the academic research ecosystem. The question set is designed to support institutions' evaluation of their progress in implementing the Principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

▲ **CEDARS 2023 was open between 1 March and 16 June 2023** with institutions choosing when to run their surveys within this period. There were 9,351 responses from 66 institutions.

▲ **Respondents self-identified their career stage** from doctoral researcher, research support role (typically research assistant (without doctoral degree), research or technical support), early career researcher, established researcher (mid-career), senior researcher and other (typically professional and technical occupations). This analysis focuses on two main comparator groups:

  – **Research staff (RS):** Early career staff: researcher, not yet fully independent, (typically research staff, postdoctoral researcher, research fellow); 2,538 respondents

  – **Other academic staff (OAS):** Established staff: mid-career researcher (typically assistant professor, lecturer, senior research fellow); and Senior staff: senior researcher (typically research group leader, research director, reader, full professor head of department); 5,946 respondents.

▲ **Respondents also self-identified whether they had contractual responsibility for line managing staff.** These 3135 respondents answered a sub-set of questions relating to their line management responsibilities.

▲ The profile of 66 institutions participating in CEDARS 2023 is different from the 48 institutions who participated in 2021 so it is not appropriate to do a direct comparison of the two datasets. Nevertheless, despite this difference, the CEDARS 2023 results are extraordinarily similar to CEDARS 2021, except for the employment profile where the participation of many smaller institutions comes through in the types of employment contracts.

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Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

Employment of researchers

Recognition and value

Management of researchers

Professional and career development

Environment and culture

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What does CEDARS tell us about research culture?

🌲 Around two-thirds of staff have good job satisfaction (68%), with female research staff having the highest levels (75%) and mid-career staff having the lowest levels (63%). Similar proportions of staff feel included in their immediate research environment (71%), with male senior and research staff feeling most included (80%) and mid-career staff (all genders) least included (66%). Slightly lower proportions of staff feel valued at work (61%), with male senior and research staff feeling most included (69%) and mid-career staff (all genders) least included (53%). Conversely, there is a significant proportion of respondents across all career stages who don't have good job satisfaction (29%), and don't feel included in their research environment (24%) or valued at work (36%). Mid-career staff are more likely to fall into this group (34%, 29%, 43%, respectively). Generally, mid-career staff express more dissatisfaction across a range of job satisfaction and wellbeing indicators which is worthy of further exploration.

🌲 Only half of staff (45%) agree their working environment supports their wellbeing and mental health (WBMH), with 49% disagreeing (21% strongly disagreeing). Mid-career staff are most likely to disagree (57%). Considerably more staff agree that their institution actively promotes good MHWB of staff (58%) with 36% disagreeing, rising to 42% of mid-career staff. Similarly, 53% of staff agree they are encouraged to take positive action to maintain their MHWB, with higher levels of research staff agreeing (61%) and lower levels of mid-career staff (47%)

🌲 72% of staff believe their institution is committed to equality and diversity, however 19% report that they have been discriminated against at work in the last two years. Female researchers more likely to have felt discriminated against, with 27% of female other academic staff and 16% of female research staff feeling discriminated against. Female staff are less likely to believe that staff are treated fairly, irrespective of any protected characteristics (61% compared to 69% of men), with female mid-career staff least likely to agree (57%). Female staff are also less likely to trust that their institution will investigate reported incidents of discrimination (41% compared to 34% of men), with 45% of female mid-career staff disagreeing or not knowing compared with 29% of male senior staff. 77% of research staff agree their manager communicates clear expectations regarding behaviours and/or culture in their local working environment.

🌲 A fifth of staff (21%) have felt bullied or harassed in the last two years. Female staff are more likely to have experienced bullying and harassment, with 24% of female other academic staff and 17% of female research staff reporting being bullied or harassed in the last two years compared to 18% and 13% of men, respectively.

🌲 Less than 10% of all respondents have felt pressurised into compromising their research standards or integrity, with less than 5% reporting incidents of research misconduct. Around two-thirds feel comfortable reporting incidents of misconduct, with female staff feeling less comfortable than male staff at all career levels. Female researchers are also less likely than male researchers to trust their institution to investigate reported incidents fairly and take appropriate action.

🌲 There are high levels of interest or engagement in a range of current initiatives relating to research culture, with 78% of all staff interested in improving research culture and around two-thirds of research staff interested in making research more open, increasing the diversity of the research workforce and improving levels of research integrity. Other academic staff generally report even higher levels of interest. However, 47% of research staff have not heard of the Researcher Development Concordat, while 54% do not know the Research Integrity Concordat, compared to 33% and 39% of other academic staff, respectively.

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What does CEDARS tell us about how researchers are supported in their professional development?

▲ 70% of research staff aspire to an academic career, with 63% expecting to achieve this, even though very few will do so. 91% of other academic staff say they are confident in actively supporting staff to work towards their career aspirations, with 70% of research staff agreeing that their manager supports their broader career aspirations. However, only a half of research staff are encouraged by their managers to consider career options beyond academia; female research staff (48%) less so than male (54%). Very few research staff have experience of working (16%) or have had a placement (7%) in other sectors, while 56% would like to have these experiences. Similarly, low levels of research staff (14%) have discussed their career options with a careers professional. 37% of research staff have a regular career development review with their manager, with 79% finding these useful.

▲ Engagement in professional development activities is low with only 16% of research staff spending the ten or more days recommended in the Researcher Development Concordat. A quarter of research staff (and a similar proportion of other academic staff) report spending less than one day a year on professional development activities. Around half of research staff do not have time to invest in professional development, with female research staff more likely to report they have no time to develop their research identity (47% compared to 37% male) or their leadership capabilities (51% female; 44% male).

▲ Conversely, there are high levels of interest in a wide range of training and development activities, including leadership (66%), managing others (67%), career management (64%) and interdisciplinary research (62%). Half of research staff would like training in open research (54%), personal motivation and effectiveness (51%), and communication and dissemination (51%).

▲ Similarly, two-thirds of research staff want to engage in wider activities within the research system, e.g. knowledge exchange (65%), citizen science, public policy development (63%) and institutional policy/ decision making (62%). Half of research staff have no interest in the commercialisation of research, with female research staff (59%) expressing less interest than male research staff (42%). Male research staff (44%) are more likely to have a career development plan than female research staff (33%).

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What does CEDARS tell us about the employment of researchers?

- Respondents are fairly evenly split between research staff (27%), mid-career (35%) and senior staff (29%) (the later groups two combined and reported as 'other academic staff'). 79% of other academic staff are employed on research and teaching contracts, while 65% of research staff are on research only contracts. Included in this research staff group are a fairly substantial group of early career staff employed on research and teaching contracts (28%), representing an ongoing trend in widening the promotion of CEDARS to other staff engaged in research. 66% of research staff have 80-100% of their time contracted to research, although only 46% report spending this amount of time doing research. Small proportions of teaching only staff (4%) and professional staff (7%) responded to CEDARS: their results are not reported here.

- Research staff are predominately employed (68%) on fixed term or open contracts ' limited by funding': this compares to 91% of other academic staff employed on open contracts. 50% of research staff have had two or more contracts with their current institution and 23% are employed on fixed-term contracts of 12 months or less. Research staff believe they are treated fairly in relation to requests for flexible working (79%) and research outputs expectations (75%), but less so on contracted workload (66%), allocation of additional work (56%) and maternity and parental leave (56%). Other academic staff are least likely to feel fairly treated in relation to contracted workload (44%) and allocation of additional work (37%).

- Half of research staff (57%) were recruited in the last two years and the large majority (80% or more) believe their recruitment was fair, inclusive, transparent and merit-based. However, only a third of research staff (33%) believe promotion processes are based on merit. 61% of research staff report finding their departmental induction useful, although 18% were not offered any induction.

- The majority of research staff report being well managed, with 80% agreeing their manager clearly articulates the expectations with respect to their role; 72% agree their manager sets expectations and objective appropriate to their role; and 63% agree they support them in working towards promotion opportunities. However, female research staff are generally less positive than male research staff about their line management experiences. 69% of research staff have participated in an appraisal in the last two years, compared to 88% of other academic staff, but were more likely to find it useful (61% compared with 52%, respectively).

- More than 95% of managers are confident in acknowledging good performance and providing effective feedback. Conversely, almost a half of managers are not confident (42%) dealing with poor performance and would like training in leading groups (49%) and managing staff performance (45%). Almost half of managers report not feeling valued for managing staff performance (44%), appraising staff (42%), developing researchers (49%) and supervision of doctoral researchers (39%).

- Around a half of research staff feel valued for their contributions to their institution (48%), but many do not agree or not know if they are valued for their wider contributions, such as management and administration (71%), knowledge exchange activities (60%), teaching (46%) or grant applications (39%).

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Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

Employment of researchers

Recognition and value

Management of researchers

Professional and career development

Environment and culture

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Culture, Employment and Development in Academic Research Survey
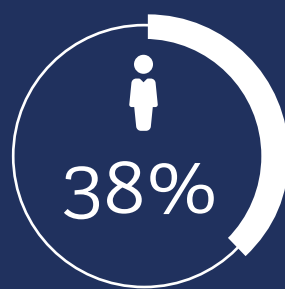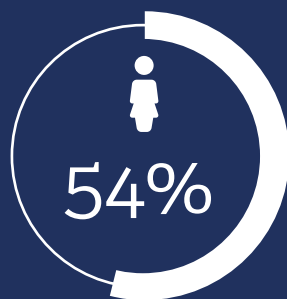
Profile of respondents

66 Institutions participated

9,351 Total responses

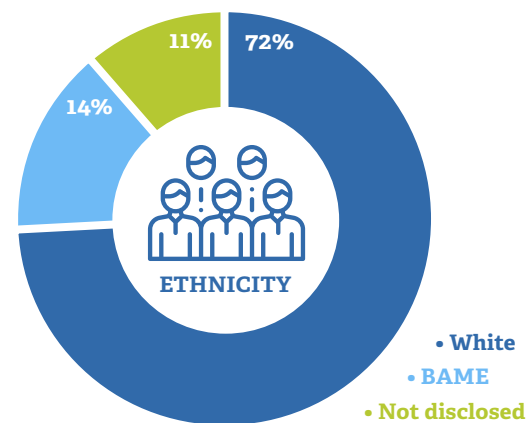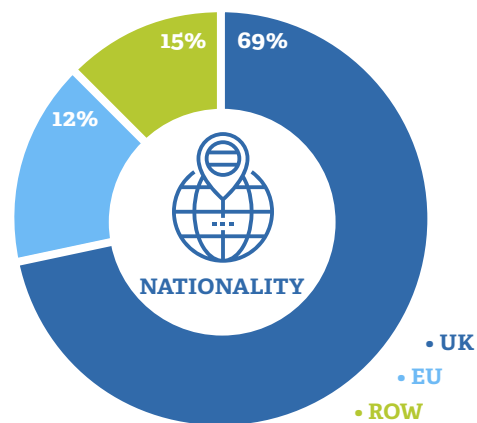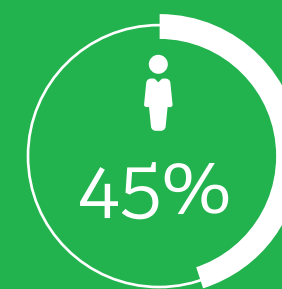**From this point only research staff and other academic staff (mid-career and senior) data reported (N=8484)**
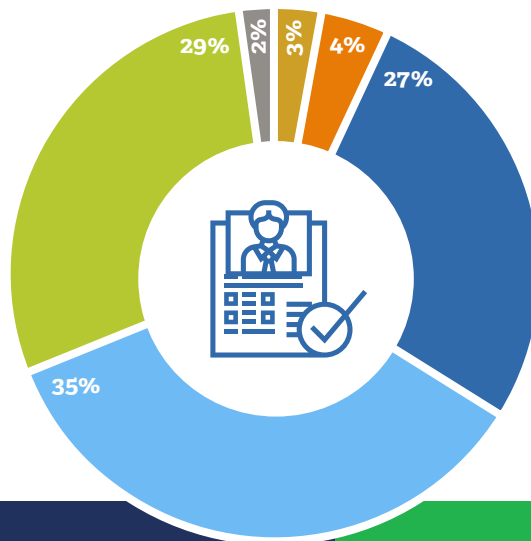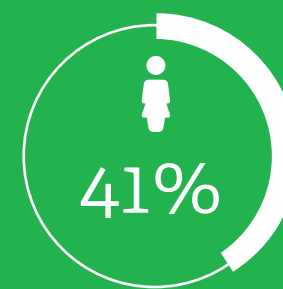
- **Postgraduate researcher** — 27%
- **Research support role** — 4%
- **Research staff** — 3%
- **Mid-career staff** — 35%
- **Senior staff** — 29%
- **Other** (primarily technicians and professional staff) — 2%

Donut chart values: 29%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 27%, 35%

Research Staff

54% 38%

Other Academic Staff
(Est and Senior)

41% 45%

NATIONALITY

69% — UK
12% — EU
15% — ROW

ETHNICITY

72% — White
14% — BAME
11% — Not disclosed

Caring responsibilities:

39% with caring responsibilities

Disability:

21% disclosed an impairment or health condition

*Ethnicity data is for UK nationals only. Ethnic minorities have been collated as BAME due to very small numbers. No analysis was undertaken by ethnicity.

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Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

Employment of researchers
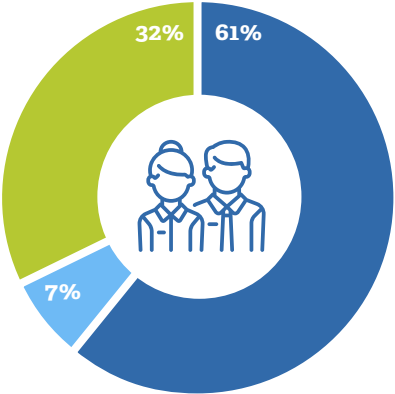
Recognition and value

Management of researchers

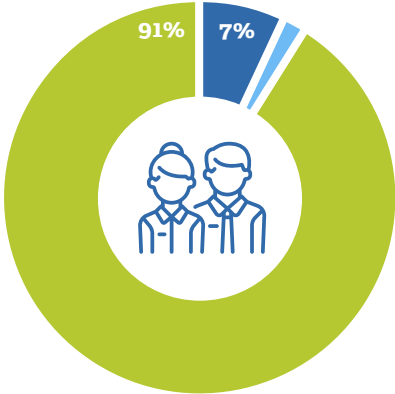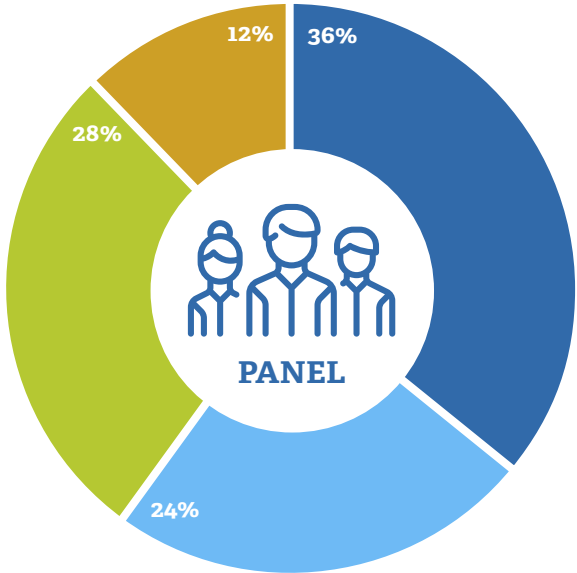Professional and career development

Environment and culture

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Employment circumstances

Research staff:
- 61% Fixed term contract
- 7% Open-ended limited contract
- 32% Open contract

Other academic staff:
- 7% Fixed term contract
- Open-ended limited contract
- 91% Open contract

REF Panel (all staff):
- 36% Panel A
- 24% Panel B
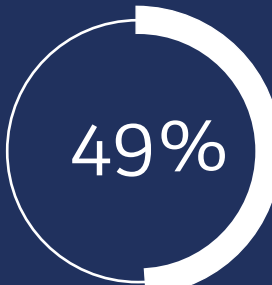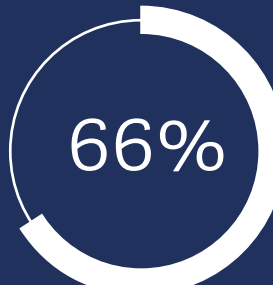- 28% Panel C
- 12% Panel D

PANEL

Research staff

23% on fixed term contracts of less than 12 months

16% employed part-time

49% have had two or more fixed-term contracts at their institution

66% have 80-100% of their time contracted to research: only 46% spend this amount of time on research

57% of research staff recruited within the last two years . . .

. . . compared with only 18% of other academic staff respondents

Large majority of these research staff believe their recruitment was:

87% Fair
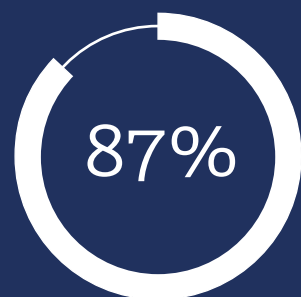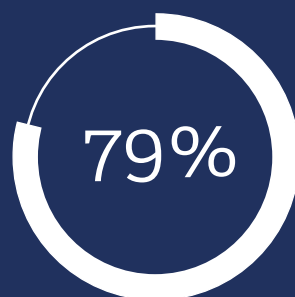
79% Inclusive
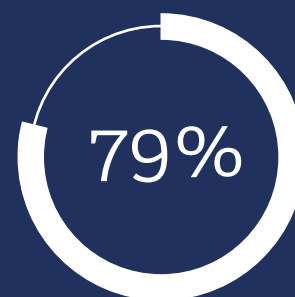
79% Transparent
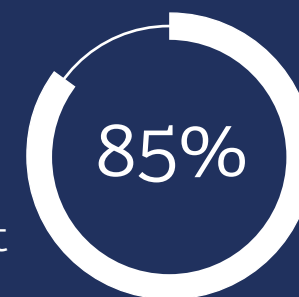
85% Merit-based
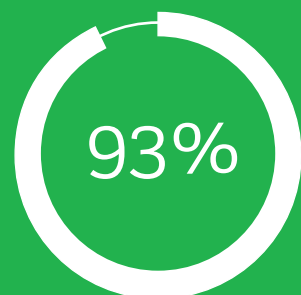
93% of OAS staff are confident in using inclusive, equitable and transparent recruitment processes

13% of OAS staff and **26%** of research staff would like training in recruitment and selection
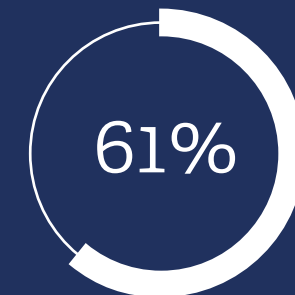
61% research staff found their departmental induction useful

16% not offered any induction

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Research staff are less likely to participate in **appraisal,** but more likely to find this useful
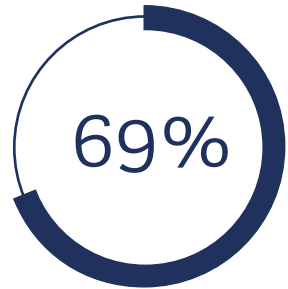
69% of research staff participated in appraisal. Compared to **88% of other academic staff**
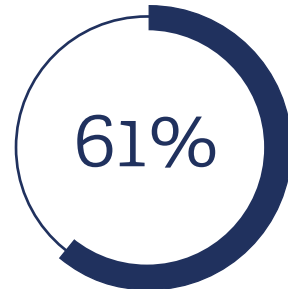
61% of research staff found their appraisal useful. Compared to **52% of other academic staff**
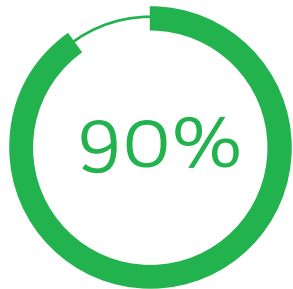
90% of OAS are confident managing appraisal processes effectively
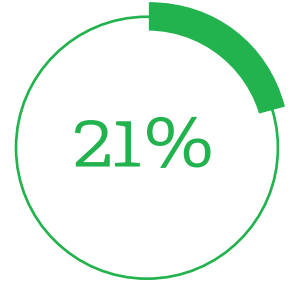
21% of OAS would like to undertake training in conducting appraisals
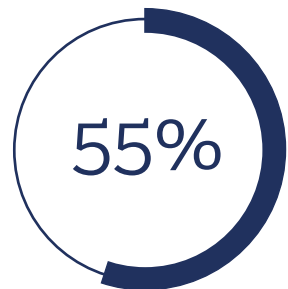
55% of research staff also involved in appraisal of staff. **62% don't know** or do not feel recognised for this activity
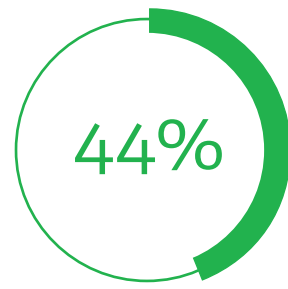
44% of OAS do not feel recognised for conducting appraisals, and **10% don't know** (excludes not applicable)
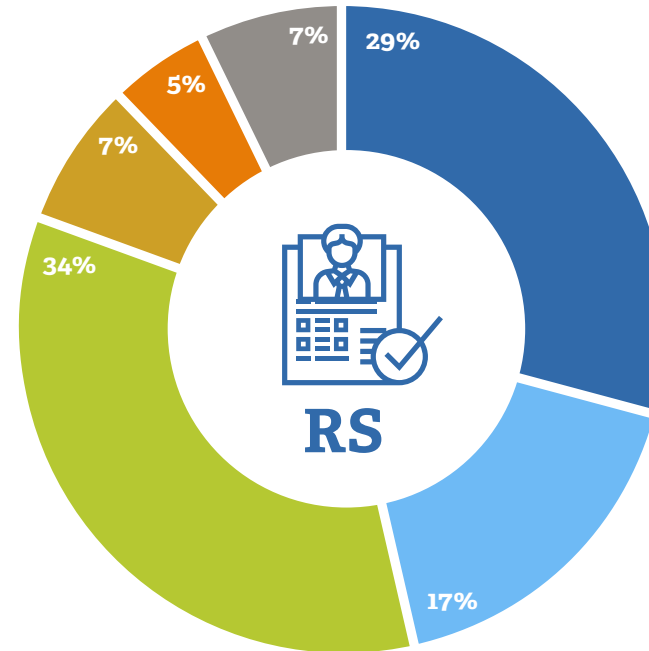
Research staff reasons for non-participation

- **Recent recruit** — 29%
- **On probation** — 17%
- **Not invited** — 34%
- **Not arranged** — 7%
- **Not eligible** — 5%
- **Other** — 7%

RS

Research staff are much less likely to believe that **promotion and progression** processes are fair

My institution has equitable opportunities for career progression

Research staff: 7 | 31 | 24 | 15 | 23

Other academic staff: 10 | 36 | 25 | 19 | 9

Promotions at my institution are made on merit

Research staff: 6 | 27 | 15 | 11 | 39

Other academic staff: 9 | 35 | 23 | 19 | 14

The promotion pathways and processes at my institution are clear to me

Research staff: 6 | 29 | 34 | 22 | 7

Other academic staff: 14 | 44 | 22 | 17

My institution's redundancy processes are clear to me

Research staff: 4 | 16 | 27 | 20 | 28 | 4

Other academic staff: 5 | 18 | 25 | 19 | 27 | 6

Research staff

Other academic staff

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Don't know
- Not applicable

% axis: 0   20   40   60   80   100

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Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

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Research staff and other academic staff have different views on whether they are **treated fairly**

Less research staff believe that are treated fairly in relation to:

51% / 61% — Participation in decision-making processes

57% / 69% — Maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave, excluding not applicable

- Research staff
- Other academic staff

More research staff believe they are treated fairly in relation to:

79% / 69% — Requests for flexible working

75% / 68% — Research outputs expectations

66% / 44% — Contracted workload

56% / 37% — Allocation of additional work
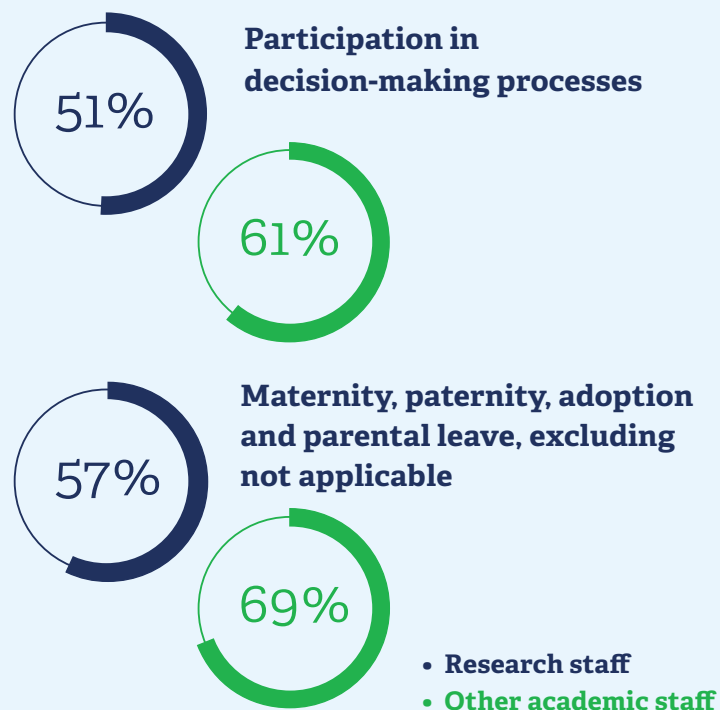
There is little difference in relation to access to training and development (71%); salary and benefits (54%); career advancement opportunities (~50%)

Around a half of research staff and other academic staff **feel valued** for their contributions to their institution

RESEARCH STAFF

- 8%
- 40%
- 26%
- 12%
- 13%
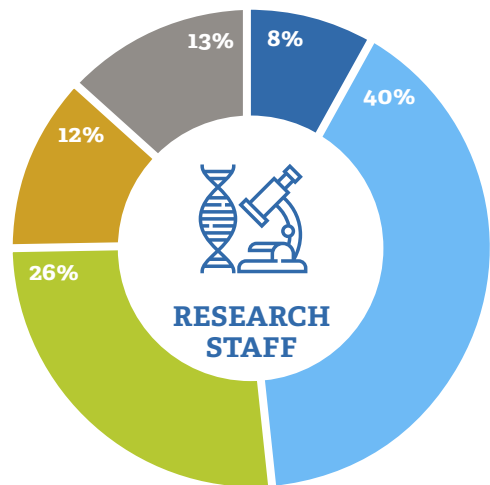
Appropriately recognised for contributions to institution

OTHER ACADEMIC STAFF

- 10%
- 38%
- 28%
- 18%
- 5%
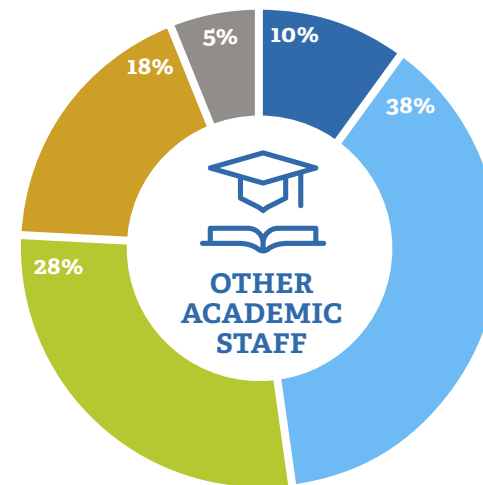
- **Agree strongly**
- **Agree**
- **Disagree**
- **Disagree strongly**
- **Don't know**

However, research staff are less likely to feel recognised for their wider contributions . . .

. . . Proportion of research staff <u>not agreeing</u> or <u>not knowing</u> whether their contributions are valued in relation to:
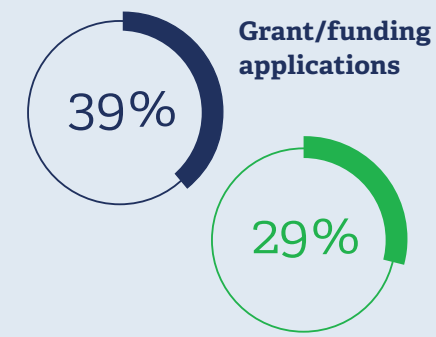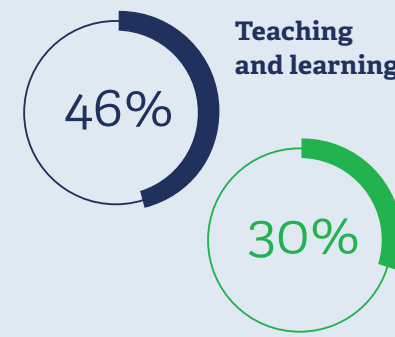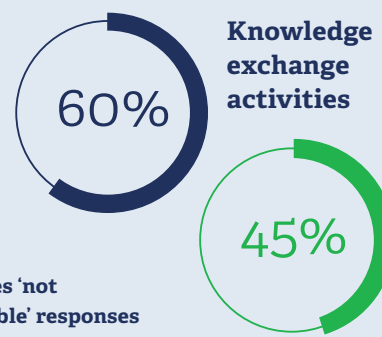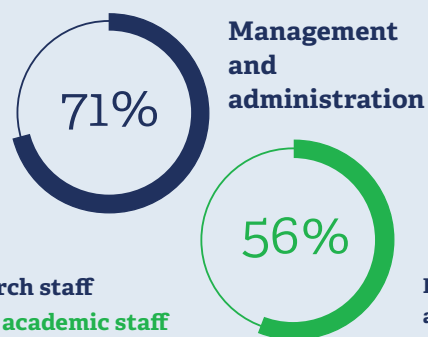
| 73% | Peer reviewing and grant evaluation | 71% | Management and administration | 60% | Knowledge exchange activities | 46% | Teaching and learning | 39% | Grant/funding applications |
| 72% | | 56% | | 45% | | 30% | | 29% | |

- Research staff
- **Other academic staff**

Excludes 'not applicable' responses

Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

Employment of researchers

Recognition and value

Management of researchers
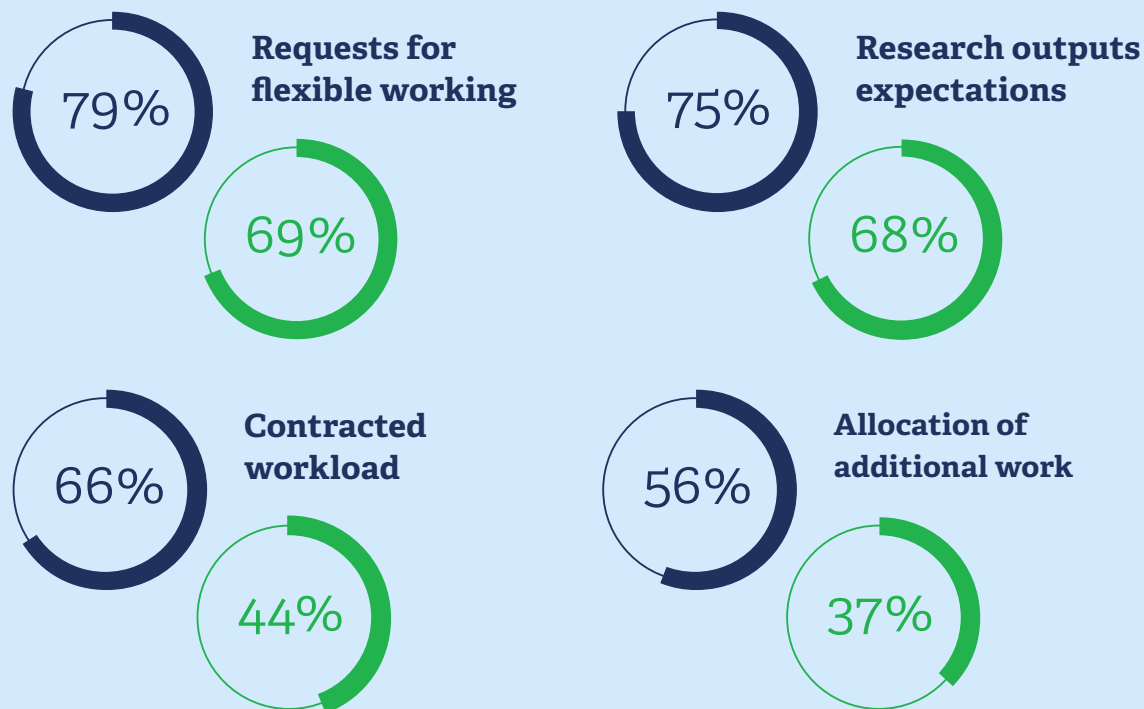
Professional and career development

Environment and culture

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Majority of research staff **well-managed**

| Clearly articulates their expectations of my role and performance | Set expectations and objectives appropriate to my role | Encourages me to engage in personal and career development activities | Provides clear, constructive and timely feedback on my performance | Supports me to develop my research identity | Supports me in my broader career aspirations | Supports me in working towards promotion opportunities | Encourages me to consider career options beyond academia |

Have regular formal career development review with manager: **35%** **41%**

Find these useful: **79%** **81%**

42% of managers of researchers not confident **dealing with poor performance**
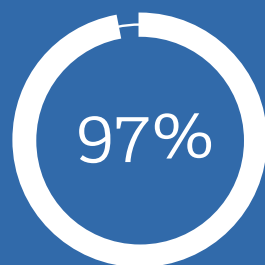
97% of research managers are confident in acknowledging good performance
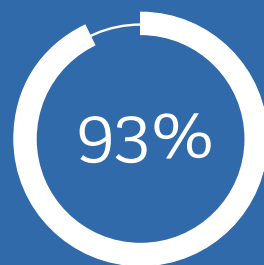
93% of research managers are confident providing effective feedback to individuals
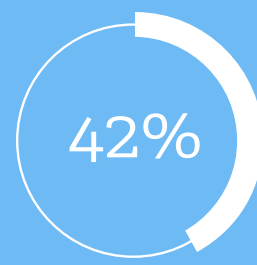
42% are <u>not</u> confident in dealing with poor performance
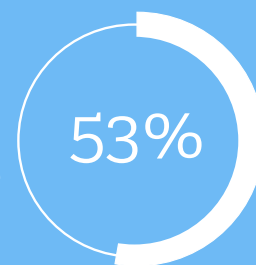
53% are <u>not</u> confident to provide guidance on redeployment processes
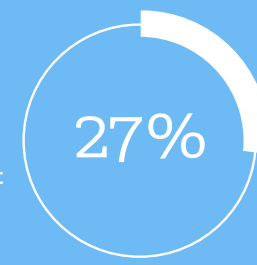
27% are <u>not</u> confident responding to issues of bullying and harassment

Almost half would like training in:

- Leading a research group **(38%)**
- Managing staff performance **(39%)**
- Mental health and wellbeing **(36%)**
- Leadership **(30%)**

3,135 academic staff are responsible for managing other researchers;
77% on teaching and research contracts;
74% with 10 or more years' research experience; **46%** female.
52% manage three or more doctoral researchers; **50%** three or more research staff and **42%** one or more professional staff.

(Excludes 'not applicable' responses)

Many managers of researchers don't feel valued for:

- Developing researchers **(49%)**
- Managing staff performance **(44%)**
- Appraisal/review of staff **(42%)**
- Supervising doctoral researchers **(39%)**

A quarter of other academic staff spend less than one day on their professional development; a half less than three days.

Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

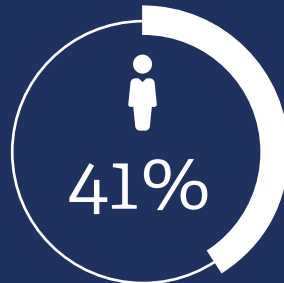Employment of researchers

Recognition and value

Management of researchers

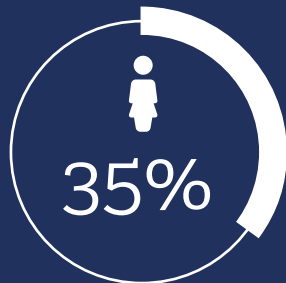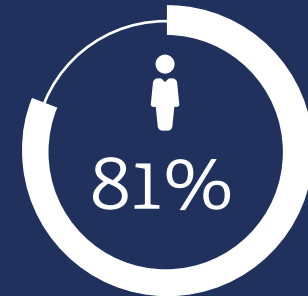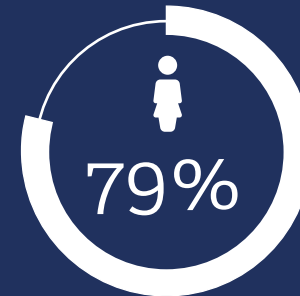**Professional and career development**

Environment and culture

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70% of research staff aspire to an academic career . . .

. . . 63% expect to achieve this

12% — Aspire to research career beyond academia

3% — Aspire to professional role in academia

2% — Aspire to self-employment / running own business
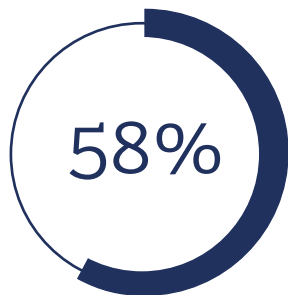
58% — Maintain a formal record of continuing professional development activities
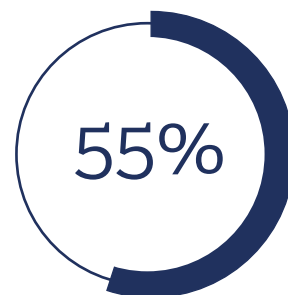
55% — Aware of the support provided for your career and professional development

Have a clear career development plan

Have discussed career options with a careers specialist

Only 16% of research staff have spent 10 or more days on **training** or **professional development activities**

25% of research staff have spent less than one day on CPD

48% do not have time to develop their research identity

42%

51% do not have time to develop their leadership capabilities

45%

However, there are high levels of interest in engaging in professional development.

Two-thirds would like training in:

- Career management **(67%)**
- Managing others **(67%)**
- Leadership **(66%)**
- Project management **(63%)**
- Interdisciplinary research **(62%)**

Half would like training in:

- Open research **(54%)**
- Communication and dissemination **(51%)**
- Personal motivation and effectiveness **(51%)**
- Collaboration and teamworking **(49%)**
- Mental health and wellbeing **(47%)**
- Teaching and lecturing **(44%)**

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Research staff are interested in **wider engagement** within the research system, but much less so in commercialisation

Almost two thirds of research staff would like to get involved in:

65% Knowledge exchange

63% Public policy development

62% Institutional policy / decision-making

61% Citizen science
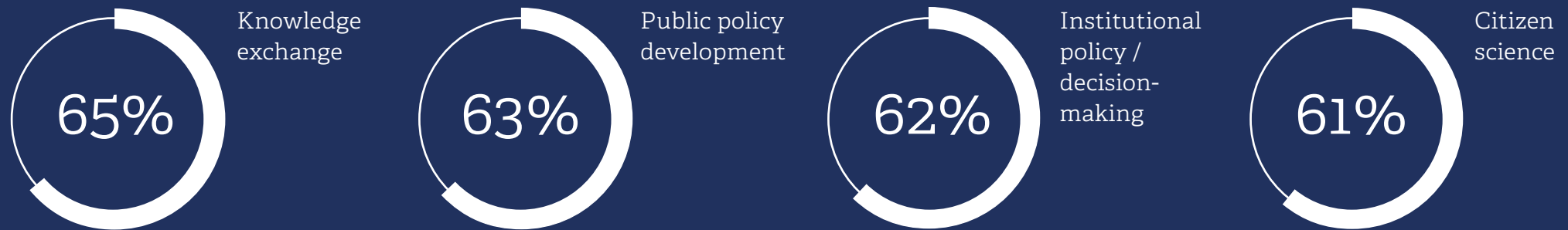
Few have experience of **other sectors (16%)** or had a **placement (7%)**

More than half would like to have these experiences **(56%)**

52% have no interest in the commercialisation of research **(59% Female; 42% Male)**

This gender difference persists across all REF Panels, except for Panel D **(56% Female; 64% Male)**

Key findings at a glance

Profile of respondents

Employment of researchers

Recognition and value

Management of researchers

Professional and career development

Environment and culture

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Only half of staff agree their working environment supports their wellbeing and mental health (WBMH) and a **quarter strongly disagrees**

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Research staff views of their working environment:

Working environment supports their mental health and wellbeing	Takes positive action to maintain mental health and wellbeing	Institution actively promotes good mental health and wellbeing of staff	Manager promotes a good work-life balance

Agree/
Strongly
agree

Working environment supports their mental health and wellbeing: 39, 41, 50

Takes positive action to maintain mental health and wellbeing: 61, 47, 51

Institution actively promotes good mental health and wellbeing of staff: 60, 52, 60

Manager promotes a good work-life balance: 75, 62, 60

■ Research staff
■ Mid-career staff
■ Senior staff

47% of research staff would like training in mental health and wellbeing

36% of OAS would like training in mental health and wellbeing

Female staff at all career stages are less likely than male staff to feel their working environment supports their WBMH

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Levels of **job satisfaction** and **feelings of inclusion** generally high

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Research staff views of their working environment:

Have a good level of job satisfaction	Feel included in your immediate research environment	Feel valued at work	Manager communicates clear expectations of behaviours and culture locally
75% 72%	75% 79%	60% 69%	77% 79%
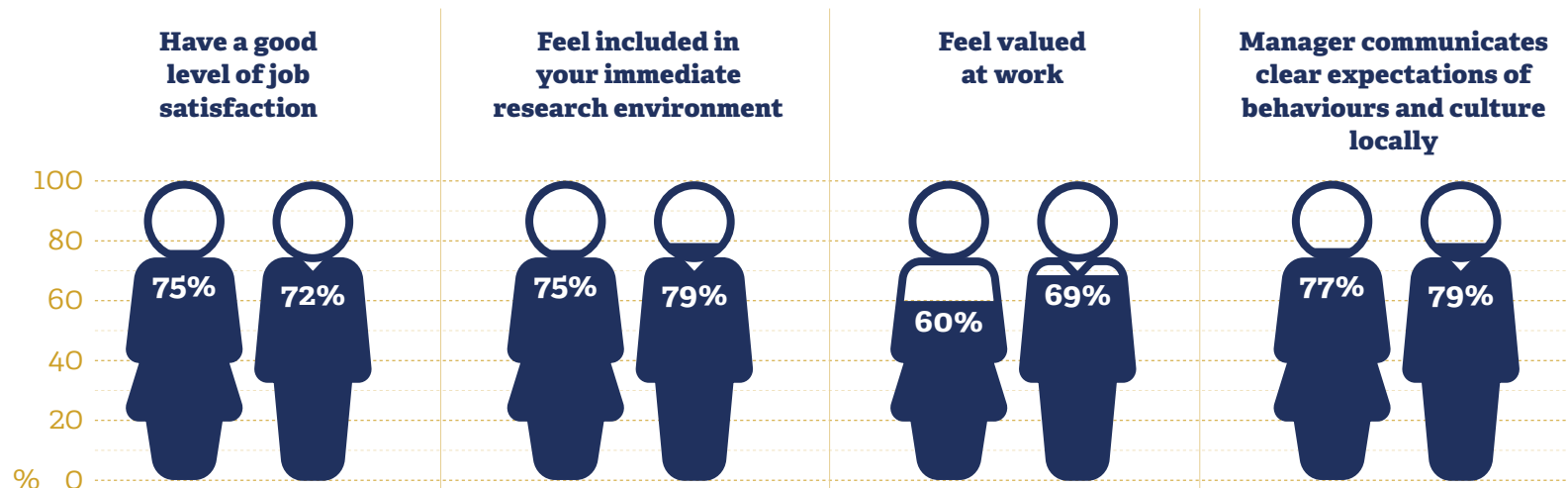
Other academic staff views of their working environment:

Have a good level of job satisfaction	Feel included in your immediate research environment	Feel valued at work	Manager communicates clear expectations of behaviours and culture locally
70% 70%	71% 75%	60% 62%	69% 72%
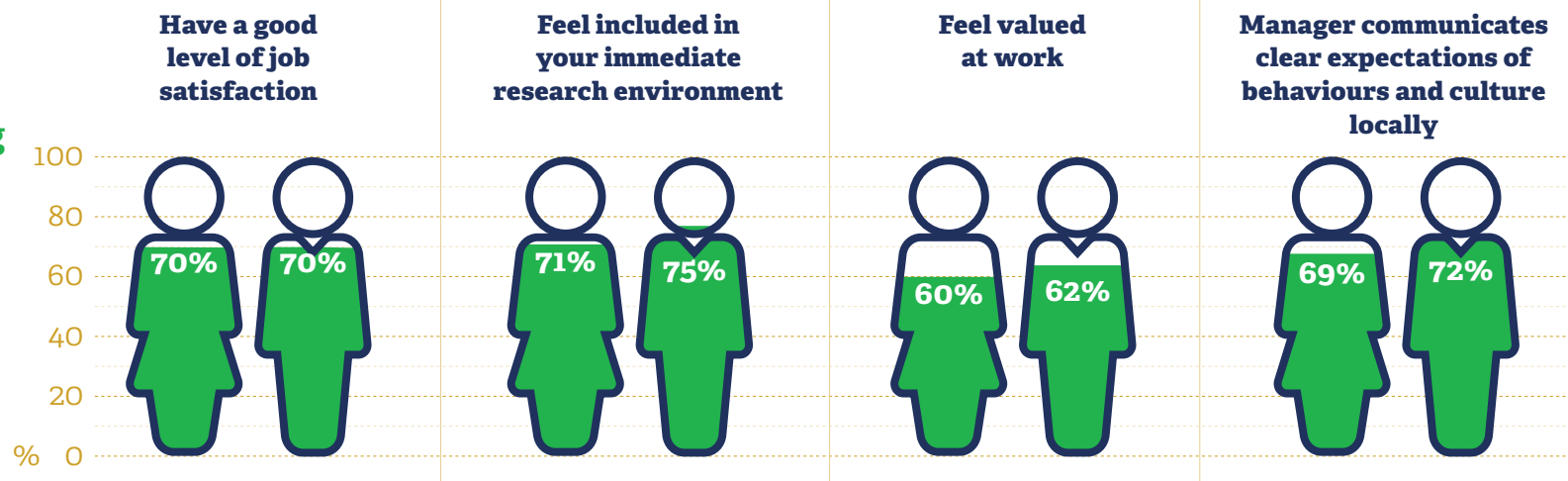
Mid-career staff have lowest levels of job satisfaction **(63%)**, sense of inclusion **(66%)** and feeling valued **(53%)**

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Interest in **initiatives relating to research culture** is high in contrast to low levels of knowledge of key policy documents

Active engagement or interest in current initiatives relating to research culture:

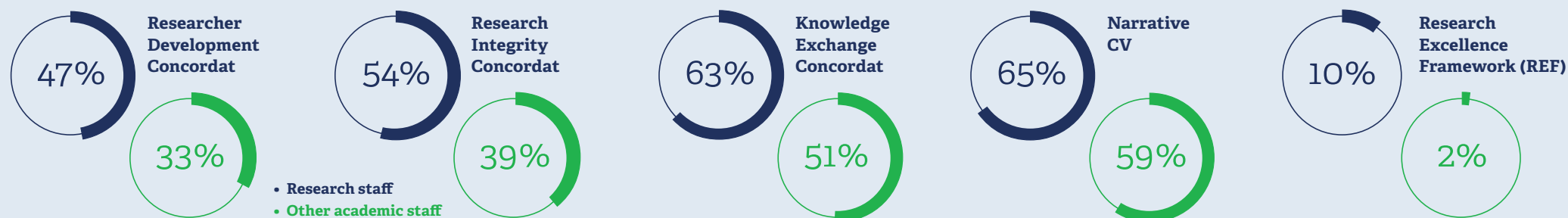| Improving research culture	Reforming research assessment processes	Increasing diversity of research workforce	Improving levels of research integrity	Making the process of research more open	Improving research culture	Reforming research assessment processes	Increasing diversity of research workforce	Improving levels of research integrity	Making the process of research more open
Engaged 24, Interested 45	7, 39	17, 49	16, 45	19, 49	Engaged 40, Interested 37	15, 42	28, 45	26, 43	27, 46

Senior staff consistently express more engagement or interest in these initiatives than mid-career and research staff.

Research staff
Other academic staff

Large proportions of staff have <u>not heard</u> of key UK policy documents and initiatives:

Researcher Development Concordat	Research Integrity Concordat	Knowledge Exchange Concordat	Narrative CV	Research Excellence Framework (REF)
47% / 33%	54% / 39%	63% / 51%	65% / 59%	10% / 2%

• Research staff
• Other academic staff

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Institutions committed to **equality** and **diversity**, but need to improve researchers' confidence in reporting discrimination
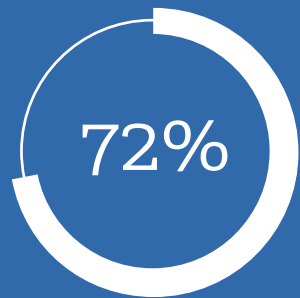
72% all staff agree institution is committed to EDI
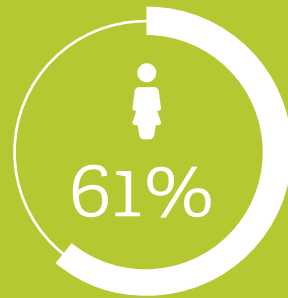
61% **69%** Women less likely to believe staff are treated fairly irrespective of protected characteristics

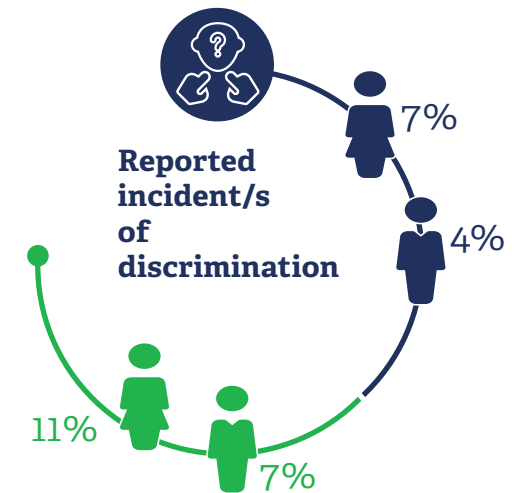Women less likely than men to trust their institution will investigate reported incidents of discrimination

Disagree/Don't Know **41%** Disagree/Don't Know **34%**
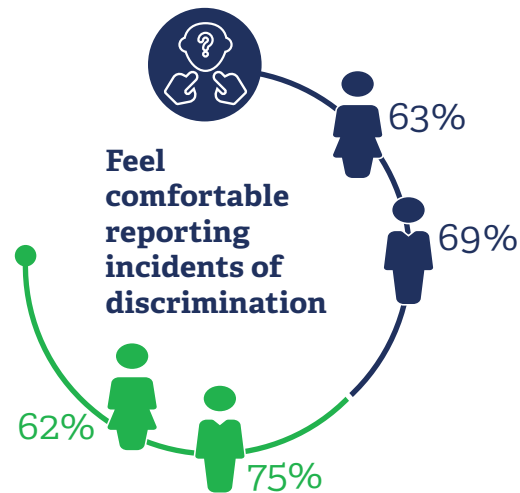
Incidents of discrimination (within the last two years):

- Research staff
- Other academic staff

Familiar with institution's reporting process on discrimination
59%
63%
71%
73%

Feel comfortable reporting incidents of discrimination
63%
69%
62%
75%

Felt discriminated against at work
16%
10%
24%
14%

Reported incident/s of discrimination
7%
4%
11%
7%
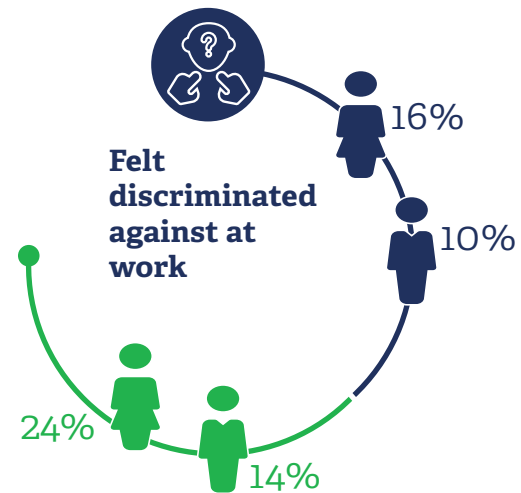
21% of researchers have **felt bullied** or **harassed** in the last two years

Incidents of bullying and harassment (within the last two years):

Felt bullied or harassed
17%
13%
24%
18%

Familiar with institution's reporting process
56%
60%
69%
71%

Feel comfortable reporting incidents
58%
70%
59%
71%

Reported incident/s of bullying or harassment
9%
6%
16%
11%

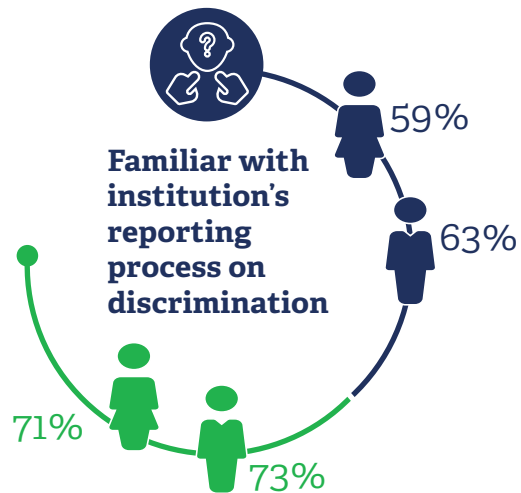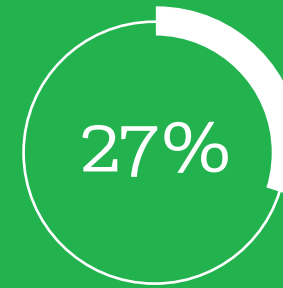Women less likely than men to trust their institution will investigate reported incidents of bullying and harassment

Disagree/Don't Know
45%

Disagree/Don't Know
37%

27% of managers of researchers not confident in responding to issues relating to bullying and harassment

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69% of researchers believe their institution **promotes the highest level** of research integrity

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- ● **Research staff**
- ● **Other academic staff**

Familiar with institution's process to report misconduct
- 48%
- 53%
- 57%
- 62%

Feel comfortable reporting incidents of misconduct
- 61%
- 72%
- 66%
- 75%

Felt pressured into compromising standards/integrity*
- 7%
- 6%
- 8%
- 7%

* (within last two years)

Reported incident/s of research misconduct*
- 2%
- 2%
- 5%
- 4%
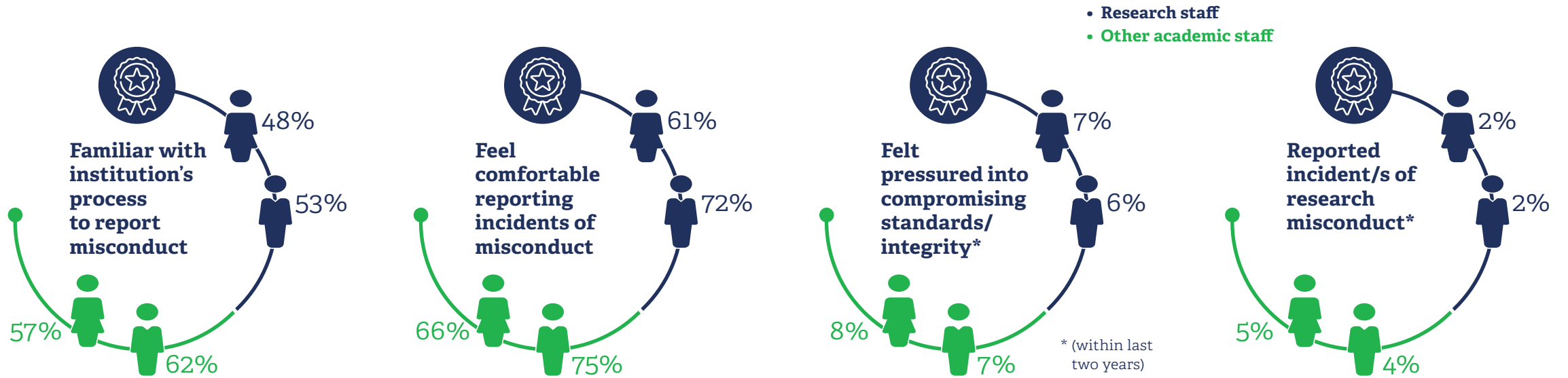
Interest in research integrity-related training:

- 41% / 27% **Research integrity**
- 62% / 47% **Inter-disciplinary research**
- 54% / 43% **Open research**
- 40% / 25% **Research methods**

- ● **Research staff**
- ● **Other academic staff**
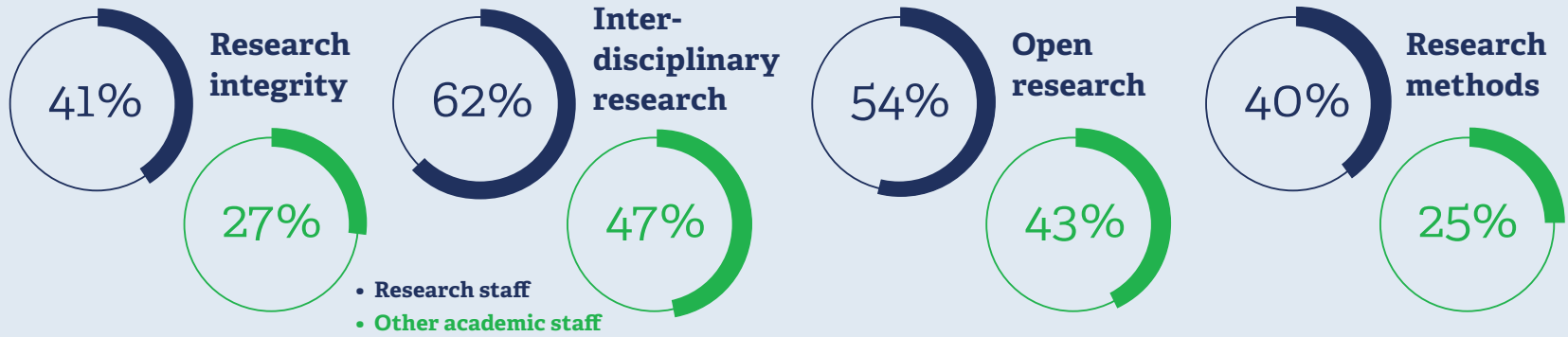
Disagree/Don't Know 36%

Disagree/Don't Know 31%

Women less likely than men to trust their institution to investigate reported incidents of research misconduct

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Participating in CEDARS

– Attend the **Getting the most out of CEDARS**, October 2023

– Use CEDARS to support your institutional strategy for improving research culture

– Use CEDARS to support your **Researcher Development Concordat** implementation and **HR Excellence in Research Award** submission

– Look out for **opportunities to engage** with the Vitae community to explore CEDARS 2023 findings and inform the ongoing development of CEDARS

– Upcoming events: **www.vitae.ac.uk/events**

– Register your interest in running CEDARS 2025 at your institution **cedars@vitae.ac.uk**