Flourish
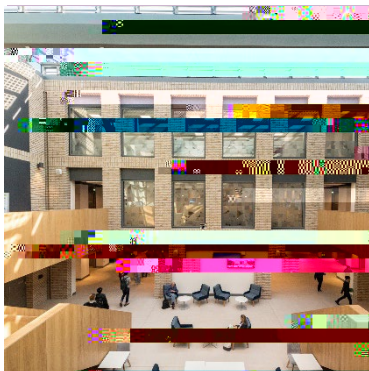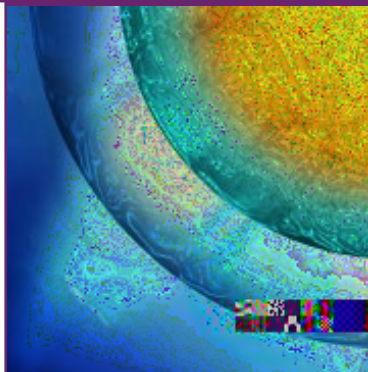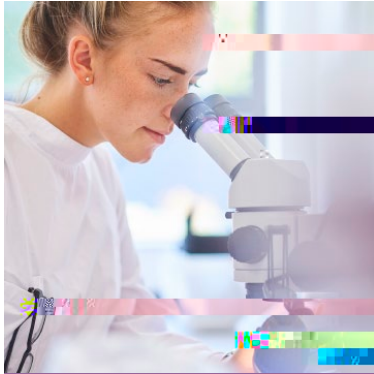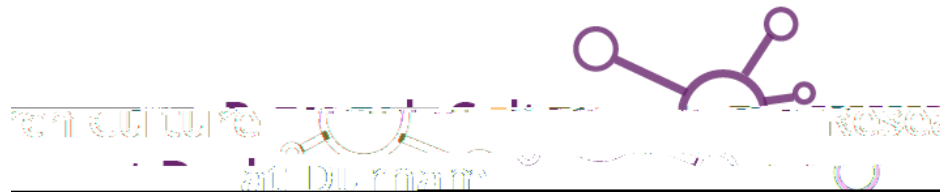
Cultivating research culture at Durham University

Context to the Flourish Programme

The culture within which we operate as a research community at Durham

In response, the Russell Group produced a Research Culture Toolkit with approaches that universities might consider in making improvements.[6]

Their suggestions address both Universities and Funders and cover the following:

Career stability and progression

- x Addressing precarity and lack of diverse opportunity

Recognition and Reward

- x Looking at recruitment and promotion criteria – considering the use of the 'Resume for Researchers' and Narrative CVs
- x Aligning with the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) principles
- x and adopting the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT)

Wellbeing, management and support

- x Improving leadership and management training, especially with respect to career development, mentoring and appraisal
- x Reducing bureaucracy

Equality, diversity and inclusion

- x Respecting diversity of career paths
- x Specific training for underrepresented groups

Preventing and addressing bullying and harassment.

Research culture at Durham

The CEDARS survey and the Respect Commission both point to problems with research culture at Durham. Some issues align with the conclusions above, but there are adjustments and additions:

Career progression

    x

Building a flourishing research culture involves not just addressing, but also influencing, these specific challenges to ensure that the way we achieve them supports our ambitions for research culture change.

We know that developing a positive, supportive research culture is **all about quality**

Vision, Values, Commitments

Proposed draft Vision:

Flourish@Durham is committed to the cultivation of a research culture that is characterised by respect and care; where diversity of person, career track and role are valued, encouraged, and supported and collaboration and interdisciplinarity are cherished. Flourish@Durham seeks to ensure research is carried out in an atmosphere of creativity, excitement and fun where individuals and teams are dedicated to and enabled to do their best work.

Progress on this needs to be **led from the front but also requires pe oui**

Key values

In order to Flourish@Durham we are committed to creating

x   a culture of **Belonging**
we want people to recognise Durham as place that includes them, whatever their gender, background or ethnicity, whether they are here already or thinking about joining us.

x   a culture of **Collaboration**
collaboration is central to a healthy research culture from individual projects to cross-institutional work.

x   a culture of **Kindness** and Care
our best work can only be done in in an environment that feels safe and mutually supportive:
building on our Health and Wellbeing strategy, positive health and wellbeing are a priority at Durham.

x   a culture of **Honesty and Integrity**
people who access and use our research must rely on its truth and integrity.

x   a culture of **Creativity**
researchers need space and time to think, collaborate and develop innovative, creative research ideas that can change things for the better.

x   a culture of **Success**
a flourishing research culture entails that people feel they can do their best work, feel fulfilled and successful.

x   a culture of **Trust**
Trust is a value central to any healthy intuitional culture and will be at the heart of what we strive to achieve.
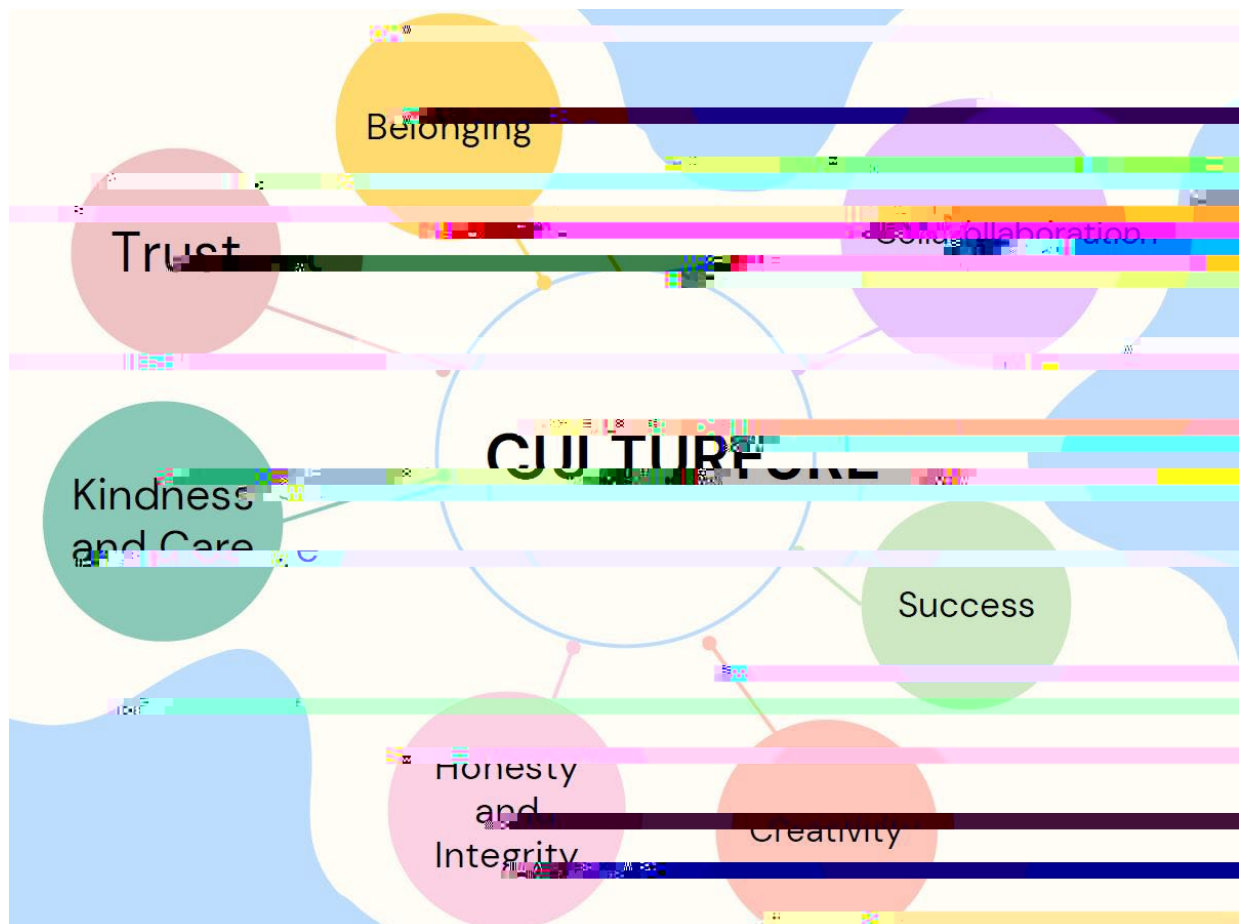
5. **Supporting the researcher community** to feel confident that their problems will be heard and addressed; ensuring they have opportunities to explore (and potentially experience) a diversity of career directions.[8]

6. **Supporting the researcher community** by recognising that high quality research takes time to develop. We need to address workloads and examine the expected

[2] Wellcome (2020), What Researchers Think About the Culture They Work In.
https://wellcome.org/reports/what-researchers-think-about-research-culture
[3] The Royal Society, Research Culture Policy Reports. https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/research-culture/
[4] ARMA (2021). https://arma.ac.uk/arma-research-culture-survey-report/
[5] UK Government (2021) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-and-development-rd-people-and-culture-strategy
[6] Russell Group (2020) https://russellgroup.ac.uk/media/5924/rce-toolkit-final-compressed.pdf