Code of Practice for the Management and Career Development of Research Staff

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

INSTITUTE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

Foreword

The University of Edinburgh is a world class, internationally competitive, research intensive University. Our research staff are a crucial and highly valued part of the dynamic and thriving research environment at Edinburgh, contributing to the University's international standing and reputation. In order to remain attractive and competitive the University recognises the need to have the highest quality leadership, management and development for this key group of staff, and have put in place strategic policies and provision to ensure that researchers are supported, managed and developed. This Code of Practice focuses on the management and career development of research staff and aligns with other University strategic policies.

The Code of Practice encourages research staff themselves to take responsibility for the management of their own careers, and while the main responsibility lies with the researcher it also highlights the responsibilities the PI and institution have in supporting their career development. This is recognised in the University's People Strategy 2012-2016 that "effective governance, leadership and management of people issues takes place across the University's Colleges, Schools and Support Groups, at all levels of activity". The People Strategy has identified five people themes and the Code of Practice is one way to ensure their successful implementation.

The Code of Practice supports the national Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, with guidelines that have a clear fit with the needs and aspirations of our own researchers and the culture of the University of Edinburgh. It also aligns with the Athena SWAN Charter and the HR Excellence in Research Award which the University has obtained in demonstration of its commitment and value to delivering effective support to research staff and their chosen career paths.

This document is a revised version of the Code of Practice developed by a working group of research managers, research staff and those involved in staff development from all three Colleges, which was first published in 2008. We hope this updated version continues to improve the career paths of our research staff and support their managers in this role.

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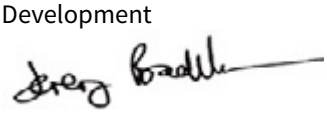

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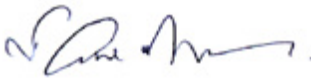

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Introduction

The Code of Practice aims to identify the specific responsibilities in the management process that fall to the researcher, to their manager (usually referred to as the Principal Investigator or PI), and to the Institution (usually the School but could be the College, a functional unit or central services). This document is designed to be used by researchers and their managers in prompting useful discussions and by Schools in adapting it for local use. It is not envisaged to be a prescriptive 'one-size-fits-all' approach but rather an impetus and encouragement for active discussion. It has been split into sections reflecting key themes for a new member of research staff and their manager: Regulations and Procedures; Formal Meetings; Training and Development; and Career Progression. Further information, resources and links to training and support is provided on the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) Code of Practice webpage at www.ed.ac.uk/iad/research-staff-code-of-practice

Responsibilities of the Researcher

The researcher is responsible for planning and managing the development of their own career, and for ensuring they are clear about their role and responsibilities within the research project(s). Researchers should take active control of this process by setting and regularly reviewing long and short-term goals for career progression, and by seeking out and taking up appropriate development, training and career guidance opportunities. They should seek regular feedback on progress in the project, and raise any problems with their PI (or other designated advisor/mentor in cases where the researcher is an independent researcher). It is important that researchers not only develop the key skills and experience that will maximise their chances of progressing within academia, but also develop a range of skills that will increase their employability as researchers or give them the flexibility to change career.

Responsibilities of the PI or Mentor

The PI is responsible not only for the direction and active management of research projects, but also for facilitating and actively supporting the career development of the individual researcher engaged on a project. PIs need to provide an environment in which career development and project productivity are both highly valued, and they must encourage individual researchers to spend adequate time on professional development as well as on the project. Furthermore, engagement in skills training and development activities will commonly benefit both the individual researcher and the project itself. PIs themselves should ensure that they are prepared for their role by taking up opportunities for training and development, as appropriate, they must know and understand the requirements of the University Health and Safety Policy as well as the School Health and Safety Policy and procedures. PIs are responsible for ensuring that the researcher is successfully integrated into the local and wider academic community through effective induction. The PI will endeavour to support researchers who desire to undertake teaching and/or supervision within their area of expertise, subject to the availability of suitable opportunities.

Responsibilities of the Institution

The institution is responsible for establishing an appropriate working environment and conditions as well as a framework under which researchers are supported and encouraged in the planning and development of their careers. It will promote and encourage PI good management practice, including compliance with equality and diversity and family-friendly policies. It will provide support for PIs in their management role, including training and development support where appropriate. Examples of good practice within Schools include the assignment of a senior academic to promote and monitor the management of researchers. In cases where a researcher does not have a PI (for example, if the researcher has an independent fellowship or is a PI in his/her own right), the Institution will ensure the appointment of a mutually agreeable mentor or advisor, who will provide the management and development advice normally associated with the PI role.

The responsibilities of the Institution will typically fall to the College, School or Research Centre/Institute in which a researcher is based. Training is provided by central services (e.g. IAD, University HR Services (UHRS) Learning and Development and the Research Office) as well as at College and School level.

Regulations and Procedures

There are a set of University wide regulations which researchers and their managers should be aware of. We have included a brief summary of some key areas and links to the full policies and processes are available on the IAD Code of Practice webpage www.ed.ac.uk/iad/research-staff-code-of-practice. To ensure that research of the highest quality is carried out at the University and to value, support, develop and utilise the full potential of our staff, sets of principles and standards of good research practice need to be adhered to.

Research Integrity

The University has formally adopted the UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research: Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct and is a signatory to the Concordat to Support Research Integrity.

Data Management

The University has a Research Data Management Policy that specifies the responsibility of the institution and the responsibility of the researcher so that research data is accessible into the future.

Research Publications

Researchers are required to deposit their research outputs in the University's publications repository, PURE, within 3 months of acceptance in order to be eligible for submission to the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF). Research outputs should be made open access as early as possible after publication, in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) policy on Open Access in the post-2014 REF.

Health and Safety

The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document (Organisation and Arrangements) which details the University's organisation and arrangements for implementing and monitoring the Policy. Training is also provided by the Health and Safety Department (some of which may be mandatory for your work). Principal Investigators (and senior reserachers) are responsible for the planning, organisation and successful outcome of their particular research project, and as such, they bear the day to day responsiblity for the health and safety management relating to the project.

Student Supervision

The IAD runs compulsory sessions at College and School level for those new to the role of supervising PhD students, and for those who need to renew their training after 5 years.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity is about being treated and treating others fairly and equally, and recognising, respecting and valuing differences. Help, support and advice is available from your College HR team and there is both face-to-face and on-line training available. The University is a member of the Athena SWAN Charter which recognises the advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

This is an agreement between funders and employers of research staff to improve the employment and support for researchers and research careers in UK higher education. The University is committed to the implementation of the 7 principles of this concordat and was one of the first 10 UK Universities to be awarded and retain the HR Excellence in Research Award in recognition of this.

Funder

There may be specific requirements to be met as a condition of your funding in terms of public engagement activities, open-access publications and data management.

HR Policies and Procedures relating to the Management of Research Staff

In addition to regular project and career development meetings, there are some core HR policies, processes and guidance you should make time to understand and engage with. These are listed on the UHRS website, and include: Induction; Conditions of Service; Leave and Absence; Pay, Grading and Promotions; Organisational Change; Redundancy and Career Transition; and Retirement.

Actions

Schools should provide this Code of Practice and any additional information about any relevant local policies or regulations to PIs and research staff.

Schools should ensure there is a system for review meetings and establish suitable procedures to allow the researcher to be adequately prepared for the end of a funded contract.

PIs and research staff should ensure they are aware of and comply with the relevant regulations and procedures and make time to discuss them together.

Formal Meetings

Like other staff members, researchers should have formal progress and review meetings each year, often referred to as Annual Review, Performance and Development Review (PandDR) or Appraisal. Annual Review arrangements for researchers must cover two distinct sets of goals, those related to the progress of the research project and those which focus on the wider career and personal development of the researcher beyond the current project. It is also important to schedule regular progress meetings.

Initial meetings

At the start of the project, it is important to make time to discuss and clarify expectations for the project, and also career development. The table below suggests key points to cover.

	Principal Investigator	Research Staff
Project Review	☐ Review the researcher's job description and how their role fits into the wider team and research field ☐ Clarify arrangements for work practices, timescales and flexible working ☐ Clarify how project progress should be reported and agree timescales for this ☐ Clarify if a suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be completed to ensure all Health and Safety issues are identified and appropriate controls introduced ☐ Highlight support available within the group/department, School and University ☐ Ensure the researcher is included on any relevant mailing lists and is aware of appropriate networks and potential collaborators	☐ Clarify your role within the project and the research team, and the arrangements for completing the project within agreed timescales ☐ Ascertain the level of research freedom open to you and scope to take initiative within the project ☐ Be aware of when and how to provide progress updates
Development Review	☐ Discover the researcher's interests and career aspirations and help them to explore relevant opportunities ☐ Discuss and identify training and development needs and priorities for the researcher ☐ Highlight university-wide and local mentoring schemes	☐ Discuss and identify training and development needs and priorities ☐ Engage in your overall career management by constructing a career plan ☐ Start a portfolio to record and review your training and development activities

Effective, high quality meetings

Once you have both agreed on a schedule for regular meetings, preparing in advance and allowing enough time for discussion can help to make the most of the time. The effectiveness of these meetings should be monitored so that there is a balance between project progress and development goals and their format and frequency can be adjusted as required. The table below suggests key points to cover.

Principal Investigator	Research Staff
☐ Give feedback on strengths and weaknesses of the researcher's contribution to the project and the group ☐ Discuss whether the research is on target or if goals/timescales need to be adjusted ☐ Encourage the take-up and review the outcomes of training and development where relevant ☐ Highlight and create opportunities for professional academic activities such as supervision, teaching, writing grant applications, knowledge exchange and demonstrating research impact	☐ Discuss progress in undertaking professional academic activities appropriate to this stage in the project and your career such as writing publications and attending conferences, as appropriate ☐ Discuss the opportunity for undertaking supervision or teaching where appropriate. ☐ Take the initiative to raise any problems or difficulties arising with the project

There is a wide range of career development support available, please see the Training and Development section for additional information.

End of a project

In the months leading up to the end of the project it is important to have a project review meeting to focus on outcomes, achievements and potential next steps. The table below suggests key points to cover.

Principal Investigator	Research Staff
☐ Offer to provide feedback on the researcher's CV and discuss their future career plans with them ☐ Provide support to the researcher in completing project outputs such as research papers ☐ Discuss with the researcher possibilities for any ongoing work ☐ Review the policies on redundancy and redeployment to check criteria. If applicable, discuss the option of adding the researcher to the talent register ☐ Make the researcher aware of career development consultations, which are available for all academic research staff at any time during their contract	☐ Take the opportunity to discuss your CV with your PI highlighting areas of expertise gained from the project ☐ Consider applying for research funding ☐ Write/co-write any papers from the project and provide all relevant documentation to the PI/ research team. ☐ Contribute to planning the continuation of the project where appropriate ☐ Discuss your possible ongoing requirement for work with your PI

Training and Development

The University offers a range of formal opportunities including face-to-face workshops, one-to-one consultations, online courses, mentoring and options for researcher-led development initiatives. There is often also scope to negotiate 'on-the-job' development opportunities.

When planning your development activities it is useful to start by considering your training needs and how they fit with both the project/role requirements and your individual needs, then be proactive in looking for and creating relevant opportunities. Schools should ensure that they are promoting training and development opportunities, highlighting any mandatory training requirements and encouraging the formation of relevant networks and communities such as research staff societies. The table below suggests development areas to consider

Principal Investigator	Research Staff
☐ Management training (UHRS and IAD) ☐ Mentoring from more experienced PIs ☐ Training on how to conduct Annual Reviews ☐ Creating appropriate 'on the job' training for research staff in research-specific and transferable skills ☐ Highlighting to the researcher career development opportunities ☐ Ensuring competence of all people involved in a project, not only to carry out risk assessments but to be proficient in the technical aspects of their particular areas of the proejct. This will involve providing, or ensuring the provision of suitable supervision, instruction and training.	☐ Complete mandatory training ☐ Be aware of mentoring and coaching opportunities ☐ Attend courses on the IAD Researcher Development programme ☐ Keep your CV and/or training log updated ☐ Join any relevant networks e.g. research staff societies ☐ Be aware of funding opportunities e.g. Researcher-Led Initiative Fund ☐ Participate in meetings, seminars and School committees where appropriate ☐ Attend relevant conferences ☐ Gain skills and experience in writing papers and grants and in public engagement

Career Progression

The researcher may want to think about how to gain relevant experience and develop knowledge and skills at the start of their research career. Although they will be working on short-term project goals, it's useful for them to actively consider the many options open both inside and outside academia to make an assessment early on about what career path to follow. By the end of the project they should have a clear view of their own abilities, the options open to them, and the career choices they need to make to pursue their chosen direction.

Career Options for the researcher

Independent Academic Position

Getting to this position requires building a profile of your work; creating a publication record, presenting your work, demonstrating impact, networking and securing funding.

A move to another researcher position within the same or another research group

A chance to develop further skills and experience in your research area and take on more responsibility to show progressive growth, with the longer-term view to move into an independent academic position, or a research post.

A move to another position with a learning and teaching role

A chance to broaden skills and experience by taking on learning, teaching and supervision responsibilities in higher education.

Research role outside academia

Using your research skills in a role in the public, voluntary, or industrial sector.

Other career paths

Another career option, based on your interest, where you may use your subject knowledge, research skills or other work related skills in a role unrelated to academic research.

Things to think about for a successful academic career:

Think strategically about the experience you need to build in order to progress your academic career. This includes ensuring that each new position demonstrates progression and allows you to build your profile as an independent researcher.

Consider appropriate funding streams either inside the Institution or externally that will allow you to demonstrate your ability to acquire funding.

Attend conferences, committee meetings and events to improve your knowledge and build your reputation in your field.

Get involved in knowledge exchange/public engagement work to communicate your research to the public, your research field and beyond.

Consider collaborations and interdisciplinary research to allow you to develop new networks and increase the impact of your research.

Gain experience in the areas of teaching and supervision.

Develop or become involved in relevant networks within your institution for example committees, research staff societies. This will give you experience of organisation and planning and communication.

Things to think about to make a successful transition into another career area:

Develop your networks in the career areas/industries that interest you, for example by attending appropriate events, conferences or through your presence on social media.

Explore your interests and possible career options by having career conversations with a career consultant, mentor or colleagues.

Consider how your skills and experience as a researcher can be applied in other job roles or career sectors.

Take advantage of training opportunities which will broaden your skills for research but can also be applied in other contexts.

www.ed.ac.uk/iad/research-staff-code-of-practice

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Photo page 10: IAD Writing Retreat, [Douglas Robertson]

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