



Semester 1 Review

August-December 2024

Prepared by:

Eleanor Hennige

Darcey Gillie

Nicola Cuthbert

(Researcher Development Team)

Careers Support Report: Semester 1 Review August – December 2024

Our strategic objectives:

[Research Cultures Delivery Plan](#)

14.1 The Careers Consultants for research staff (IAD), will undertake a review of existing career development support for early career researchers and develop a plan for future delivery

14.2 Roll out new career development support offer for early career researchers

We have successfully achieved this, and will continue to review and evolve the programme over time – new initiative and activities such as panel sessions and Quick Query outreach have been particularly successful in extending the breadth and depth of our impact

[Athena SWAN Action Plan](#)

[Concordat Action Plan](#)

We have made significant impact in delivering the careers support element in both of these plans.

We are on target with meeting all our objectives in current actions plans. The creation of a new Concordat action plan is in progress.

Workshop Stats:

148 researchers attended a Career Development workshop between September to December 2024.

The Careers Team (Eleanor Hennige EH; Darcey Gillie DG) have run 2 panel events this semester. One focussed on how Recruitment Consultants can help researchers pursuing new roles in other sectors and the other focussed on a panel of speakers with Academic Adjacent Careers. **68** researchers attended these two events.

Work is underway to secure a career panel for Researcher Realities event in March 2025 and to hold a further 2 panel sessions as part of June Careers month 2025.

Over the course of the semester, we facilitated **9** workshops on topics such as CV's, Academic Interviews, LinkedIn and Social Media, Career Anxiety and Squiggly Careers (Career Direction).

We facilitated a bespoke seminar for the Usher Institute – CMI “A Career Management Toolkit: Mindset and More” (**30+** participants), along with Quick Queries (**4/5** before and after the seminar in November). We attended the CMVM Postdoctoral Symposium where we had **40+** interactions with individual researchers at our stand and during the Symposium speed networking session.

Feedback:

"This was a really useful session. I arrived not knowing anything about narrative CVs, and the introduction communicated this information clearly and effectively." [Narrative CV Briefing]

"I had an academic interview later that week after this training and was able to use the information provided re preparing for questions and what to expect from the panel. There are so many things to be anxious about in preparing for a first academic interview and it really helped calm my nerves that i knew more about what to expect on the day. I got the job!" [Academic Interviews]

Learning from the workshop "To have a regular reflection practice, to identify anxiety triggers and work on them proactively, that I should seek help and support when needed." [Career Anxiety]

Options "I want to work on caging my confidence gremlins, and I have a networking opportunity tomorrow to try to put what I've learnt into action!" [Squiggly Careers and Your Options]

"Thank you to Darcey and Lowri for preparing and running a very useful workshop. It is really helpful to have advice from a professional directly involved in recruitment." [Recruitment Consultant Panel Session]

1:1 Career Development Consultations:

Between September and December 2024 the Research Staff Careers Consultants have conducted **136** individual consultations and a further **10** email guidance reviews.

Feedback:

"Eleanor was fantastic - she provided an overall review of my CV and specific feedback in relation to the particular position I was applying for. The session really helped me tailor my application materials for this particular post, but also gave me much more confidence in how to do this again in the future."

"Eleanor very generously offered to look through my updated CV after I implemented her feedback as well as my Cover Letter on a very tight turnaround. This was an incredibly helpful process and I really appreciated the detail with which she engaged with my application materials."

Eleanor also suggested key strategies for breaking down future applications, particularly printing off job specs and colour coding their requirements. This simple strategy made a huge difference! Thank you very much, Eleanor!"

"I felt [Darcey] was warm and supportive whilst being non-judgemental. I felt I could discuss openly and some of my fears were addressed as well."

"The 1:1 Career Development Consultation [with Darcey] aided my career planning and management by providing expert guidance in preparing my application for an assistant professor position."

"Having time to discuss questions [with Darcey], and getting important questions that made me think about my plans and needs."

Outreach:

Outreach activities for Postdoc societies have been a high priority / strong focal point this semester. We have been invited to **7** events this semester alone. Four of these events have focussed on delivering Quick Career Consultations and career-themed presentations, drop-in sessions and networking with employers. The other 3 events have been focussed on Narrative CVs as an emerging topic. A Postdoc champion, from the school of Engineering, invited us to come and run a joint workshop on Narrative CVs with input from ERO also for both postdocs and senior academics. The PODS Postdoc Research Society asked us to run a tailored Narrative CV briefing session for their members. EH collaborated in running a Narrative CV writing retreat (first pilot session held in November 2024) at the invitation of Academic Development lead for the IAD PI Programme. The second of these Narrative CV Writing retreats is scheduled to run in February 2025.

In terms of employer engagement, Darcey made connections with Rouken.Bio who are interested in contributing to the programme next year; Synechron an AI company looking to expand operations into Scotland; and Harvey Nash recruitment consultancy.

Blogs, Articles & More:

For the IAD 4Researchers Blog we have written **7** career themed blogs and **2** new articles within the "Diverse Career Pathways" blog series. In addition, EH wrote a collaborative article with a colleague from the University of Glasgow on Narrative CV's, which was published in [Researcher Matters, AGCAS](#).

Most visited career related blog posts:

- Diverse Career Paths- Transferable Skills of Writing - 117 views
- Medical writing internship - 64 views
- Dealing with Career Anxiety - 28 views

The Narrative CV webpage on the IAD website has also been updated to reflect sector developments. The IAD Careers Linked In pages have also taken a priority focus to drive up numbers of interactions and connections through the page.

We established a LinkedIn 'showcase page' which has enabled us to connect with researchers, employers, and other stake holders; promote events; cross-promote content from our blog; and generally raise the profile of the work and impact of the Careers Team. By the end of December, we achieved 350 followers.

DG presented a paper on "Failure – we're doing it Wrong" at the REDS conference hosted by the University of Leeds. This resulted in being featured in an episode of the University of Leeds Research Culture Uncovered Podcast on "Navigating Failure in Academia".

Along with Kate Murray of King's College, Darcey drafted the AGCAS position statement on Researcher Careers Support.

Further priority areas:

The Narrative CV remains a hot topic and EH is already scheduled to participate in a webinar in January 2025 hosted by AGCAS to increase sector knowledge as well as delivering a presentation as part of Good Research practice Week in February 2025 with ERO.

DG is planning a panel session on Careers in Life Sciences for Careers Month, and a panel session for next year on Careers in Policy.

We also have a confirmed date of Quick Query appointments to run on Wednesday 29th January 2025 for the BioQuarter Postdoc Society.

Stats in Summary:

Demonstrating that at least 403 research staff have engaged with our Career Support offer in many different ways during semester 1.

- 148 have attended a Career Development workshop
- 68 have attended an online panel event (two ran this semester)
- 136 have undertaken a Career Development Consultation
- 11 email consultations have also been delivered
- 40 interactions at the CMVM Postdoctoral Symposium