

Principal Investigators Career Conversations

Resources and Support.

It is important to have a Career Development Review annually with your researchers to support their career planning and development. Managers of Researchers and the University have obligations around supporting research staff career development, through the [Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers](#), which the University of Edinburgh are now a signatory. The Concordat is an important document, beneficial for researchers at any stage of their career. While the main responsibility for career development lies with the researcher, it's also useful as a manager to support them with this. To do this, Principal Investigators (PIs) need to provide an environment in which career development and project productivity are both highly valued. They must encourage individual researchers to spend adequate time on professional development as well as on the project. Ultimately, engagement in skills training and development activities will commonly benefit both the individual researcher and the project itself.

PIs are not expected to be career advisors!

Principal Investigators (PIs) are not expected to act as a Careers Advisers and have knowledge on all the roles available to researchers. However, it is important to recognise that career conversations are an important part of a researcher's development. Many researchers will not stay within academia (shortage of roles and increased competition) so will need to seek employment in other sectors. PI's need to support their researchers in having open discussions about future opportunities. PI's need to encourage researchers' to take on extra responsibilities to try and broaden their skills set. By way of example, getting involved in teaching and assessments. The revised Concordat (2019) highlights that researchers have [10 days for professional development](#) so discussing and sharing ideas on how to best use these days, will be helpful.



PIs are expected to support their researchers by:



Creating time for open conversations in a safe space



Discussing different networks for researchers to engage in



Signposting to relevant resources and support

Further Resources:

1:1 Careers Development Consultations: <https://edin.ac/2PTKK7B>

Career Workshops: <https://edin.ac/2Tqrl2h>

Career Case Studies: <https://edin.ac/2PUZCSS>

Career Resources: <https://edin.ac/38phsrx>

Mentoring Resources: <https://edin.ac/3LDfN4Y>

IAD4Researchers Blog: <https://blogs.ed.ac.uk/iad4researchers/>





Example questions to prompt discussions with your researchers:

Prompt questions	Follow-up questions
What are your career plans?	How will your current contract help you achieve your plans?
Where will you find development opportunities?	
What skills will you need to be successful in your career?	
What skills will you need to develop to improve your employability at the end of your postdoc contract?	
What achievements or experience will you need in your CV to secure a job with your preferred employer/s?	What will you have achieved by the time we meet for the next review?
Have you identified courses or opportunities that will help you achieve your career development goals?	
Who would it be helpful to talk to?	
What are your skills development goals over the next 3/6/12 months?	
When will you attend training?	
When do you want to meet again to review your career plan?	
Could training or support help overcome challenges?	
Have you achieved the personal goals you set for this period of your project?	If not, what has stopped you?
What are you finding difficult about the work at the moment	What will you do to address this?
What do you want to achieve by our next review?	
What are your deadlines and planned outcomes?	
What can I do to help?	



[IAD Career Management Webpages](#)

[Research Staff Hub - Career Development](#)

If you need this in another format please email: iad.researchers@ed.ac.uk