

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH STAFF



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FORMS FOR REVIEW MEETINGS (see page 7) are available at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/code-of-practice/forms-and-guidance>

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The Code of Practice for the Management of Research Staff is also available online at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/code-of-practice>

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FOREWORD

The University of Edinburgh is a world class, internationally competitive research intensive University. Our research staff make a huge contribution to the University’s international standing and reputation. They are a crucial and highly valued part of the dynamic and thriving research environment at Edinburgh.

Our excellence in research across a huge breadth of disciplines in Science and Engineering, in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, and in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences enables us to attract world class researchers. In order to remain attractive and competitive the university recognises it needs to have the highest quality leadership, management and development for this key group of staff.

The introduction of this Code of Practice for the Management of Research Staff demonstrates the University’s commitment to, and encouragement of, the provision of timely and effective support to research staff and their chosen career paths. The Code of Practice also encourages research staff themselves to take responsibility for the management of their own careers.

The new, national “Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers” has been launched, however, we felt we needed guidelines that had a clear fit with the needs and aspirations of our own researchers and the culture of the University of Edinburgh. They build on many excellent examples of good practice already in existence at Edinburgh, but also include expertise from across the Higher Education sector.

This Code of Practice has been developed by our research community for the research community. Our thanks go to the team from all three Colleges, research managers, research staff and those involved in staff development, who have worked hard to develop it. The Code of Practice is not envisaged to be a prescriptive, ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, but rather an impetus and encouragement to Schools and Research Centres to use it in active discussions, and to adapt it for local use and the specific needs of their researchers.

In warmly welcoming and commending this Code of Practice to the University’s research community, we hope that it, as intended, helps to improve the career paths of our research staff.

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers are key members of academic staff. They are central to the University's status as a world class research institution. Moreover, the University recognises that researchers make many important contributions to university life, not only by performing world class research, but also in undertaking valuable research support, teaching and supervision duties.

The University has high expectations of how researchers are supported, managed and developed. "Excellence in Research" is one of the three core strategic goals identified in the University of Edinburgh Strategic Plan 2008-2012.¹ Specific strategies within this goal include, "Recruiting and retaining excellent researchers", and "Supporting the professional and career development of staff engaged in research".

The management of research staff career and professional development is vitally important to both the individual and the University, and the fact that research funders are increasingly asking for evidence of this means that such management must be actively pursued and documented. The management of research staff has historically been seen to fall between two stools: on the one hand, postgraduate students have a sophisticated supervision system; on the other lecturing staff have a clear system of career progression and development.

The Code of Practice aims to fill this gap by setting out the specific responsibilities in the management process that fall to the researcher, to his/her manager (usually the PI, or occasionally another designated mentor or advisor), and to the institution (usually the School). These responsibilities are not new: much of what is recommended below merely formalises and clarifies good practice as currently performed informally by many researchers and their managers around the University.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Key responsibilities of the Researcher

The researcher is responsible for planning and managing the development of his/her own career, and for ensuring that he/she is clear about his/her role and responsibilities within the research project(s).

Researchers should take active control of this process, for instance 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).

Researchers will be aware that not everyone undertaking academic research can secure a long-term career in academia. It is important, therefore, that researchers not only develop the key skills 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.

Key responsibilities of the Principal Investigator 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.

¹ http://www.planning.ed.ac.uk/Strategic_Planning/SP2008-12/index.htm

PIs are responsible for ensuring that the researcher is successfully integrated into the local and wider academic community. If the researcher desires, the PI should provide opportunities for the researcher to undertake teaching and/or supervision within his/her area of expertise.

The relationship between PI and researcher is central to the successful completion of the project, the delivery of the research goals, and to the researcher's effective career development. Much of the stress and uncertainty accompanying successive research projects can be reduced by timely good management that includes support for the researcher's career development whatever direction that may take.

Key responsibilities of the Institution

The institution is responsible for establishing an appropriate 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 School or Research Centre in which a researcher is based. It will be the relevant Head of School or Head of Research Centre/Unit, as appropriate, who takes on this responsibility. They may devolve this responsibility to a senior member of academic staff with a specific remit to oversee researcher affairs.

CAREER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR RESEARCH STAFF

As members of University staff, researchers are entitled to access the training and development support available to all staff from a number of providers across the University, and in most cases this is at 'no cost' to individuals, projects or Schools.

With the help of the Roberts Initiative, the University has put in place extensive resources to support the professional and career development of individual researchers. There is a well-established Researcher Development Programme² providing support, training and resources to all research staff across the University. Examples of this support are signposted in this document with relevant web links for ease of reference.

The Roberts Report recommends that research staff development should focus on career development and planning:

"The Review therefore recommends that HEIs take responsibility for ensuring that all their postdoctoral researchers have a clear career development plan and have access to appropriate training opportunities - for example, of at least two weeks per year".³

Research Councils UK launched "The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers" in June 2008. This new Concordat provides a framework of good practice for the management of all researchers and their careers through 7 key principles, including:

"The importance of researchers personal and career development, and life long learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career".⁴

They further state:

"Employers should also ensure that research managers provide effective research environments for the training and development of researchers and encourage them to maintain or start their continuous professional development".⁴

² <http://www.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development>

³ Roberts Report 'Set For Success' 2002 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ent_res_roberts.htm

⁴ <http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/>

DEFINITIONS

Definitions of research staff to target for management goal setting

The diversity of research staff experience and expertise makes the formalisation of appropriate guidance challenging. It is impossible to treat all researchers generically, and researchers and their managers should be prepared to adapt to their specific situation and needs. This Code of Practice focuses on two key groups:

Early-career research staff

Such researchers will probably be in their first or second research post; they may have recently gained an undergraduate or postgraduate degree, and are essentially undergoing research training and skills development (although they are also expected to be “productive”, unlike a graduate student perhaps). This training may facilitate many possible career goals. Most early-career research staff will be working on a project as part of a research group led by a PI. The “early-career” stage would typically last up to 5 years. (See page 8 for more detail).

Long-term research staff

These are researchers who have actively chosen a long-term research career within a research group irrespective of how their work is funded. (See page 16 for more detail).

The needs of these two groups are distinct and a detailed set of guidelines is provided for each on the following pages.

Additionally, overlapping with the above two groups there is a third group of researchers:

Independent researchers

Such researchers will be funded from grants or fellowships that they obtained themselves, and may often be regarded as PIs themselves. They will direct and develop their research largely or completely independently of other academic staff members, and may be directly responsible for the research activities of other staff members and postgraduate students.

No separate guidelines are provided for such researchers - some of their needs will be covered by the tables that follow, while others will be more appropriately addressed in line with the management of other senior academic staff.

Most importantly, each independent researcher should be assigned a mentor or advisor who is an experienced senior staff member. As well as adapting the following guidance to the needs of the independent researcher, the mentor will be available to advise on paper/grant submissions, long term career prospects within and outwith the University, and on the financial and administrative responsibilities that come with supervising a research group.

Definitions of formal progress meetings for research staff

Like other staff members, **researchers should have regular formal progress and review meetings**, often referred to as appraisal. Appraisal arrangements for researchers must cover two distinct sets of goals and, given the particular needs of research staff, this Code of Practice recommends two distinct types of formal review meeting to discuss the research project and personal development.

Two distinct meetings are recommended since:

- (a) compared with the enormous short-term pressures of the project, development and career plans for life beyond the research project can seem of low priority and become neglected, and
- (b) development needs for future career plans (such as teaching experience) may be seen as conflicting with project needs (e.g. more time in the lab/library).

The two meetings recommended are:

- A **Project Review Meeting** that concentrates on progress towards the goals of the **specific research project**, and
- A **Development Review Meeting** which focuses on the wider career and personal development of the researcher **beyond the current project**.

Project Review Meeting

This meeting will involve a discussion between the project manager (normally the PI) and the research staff member of **project progress**, as well as **performance** and training issues directly connected to the research project. It will most likely take the form of a series of regular meetings (weekly, quarterly, monthly) in which the PI and the researcher take time to judge progress measured against agreed milestones (as set by the funded research contract), and their expectations on the likely outcomes of the particular research project. These regular meetings may be informal, although a more formal **annual project review meeting** is recommended.

The primary purpose of the project review meeting is to ensure that both the PI and the researcher are clear about their responsibilities and expectations, and have the opportunity to focus on and deal with any **problems** arising during the project. The need for **project-related training** will be discussed. Moreover, as with any other category of staff, in exceptional cases where there is a serious shortfall in performance that cannot be addressed through informal counselling or skills training, the PI will need to consider the use of the University's Capability Policy, in consultation with their local HR team.

Development Review Meeting

Whilst it is tempting to focus exclusively on the current research project, researchers must have an opportunity, at least annually, to consider their **longer term career development**. The role of this meeting is to enable the researcher to pause and consider his/her future, including the specific skills he/she may wish to acquire for his/her future career. The PI/mentor assists with this review by providing encouragement and the opportunity to discuss the range of career options available, and to discuss opportunities for acquiring the skills and experience that might be appropriate, such as teaching or supervision roles. This must be balanced with a realistic assessment of the usefulness of such experience. It must be formal so that a record is developed, and also to encourage the researcher to think beyond the immediate research project on which he/she is employed.

Although project success is a high priority for researcher and PI, it is vital that the PI takes his/her management responsibilities seriously to be able to advise the researcher beyond the project. In many cases, therefore, the PI will be able and willing to act as advisor/mentor in the Development Review Meeting. The institution and PI should however also allow the researcher the opportunity of having another mutually agreeable academic mentor for these review meetings.

The PI, in turn, may wish to consult his or her Head of School / Head of Research Unit or College HR team for further information and advice to inform their knowledge of issues/topics to cover in the Development Review Meeting. They may also wish to familiarise themselves with the development resources available to research staff, for example from the HR Researcher Development Programme, from Edinburgh Research and Innovation (ERI), and from other University providers such as Information Services, the Library, Finance Department, etc.

If formal, annual Project Review Meetings and Development Review Meetings are being carried out, further guidance and adapted appraisal forms are provided on the web at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/code-of-practice/forms-and-guidance>

and can be used to help structure and record these meetings.

EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS

This group will include research staff who are in their first research positions. Each individual's experiences and development needs are different, but **for most this early career stage will be a period of no more than 5 years.**

Management of researchers begins **prior to the appointment being made.** Recruitment, selection and appointment processes must be in line with University guidelines and the recruiter should seek advice from the College Human Resources team at an early stage regarding the suitability of the contract, the length of likely requirement for such a post, etc.

Early-career researchers are in a transitional phase: they are gaining experience and developing knowledge and skills to move further towards independent research activity. They will often be focused on short-term project goals, but, crucially, they must also make a personal assessment, preferably with the aid and support of a mentor or other advisor, about what career paths, both inside and outside academia, are open to them. This is vital, since beyond this stage in a career, choices can become more limited.

It is in the best interests of the researcher to take personal responsibility for his/her development and career management, and not to "drift" from project to project through this formative stage. Flexibility and mobility are choices the researcher may need to consider in order to gain appropriate experience. The aim is that by the end of this stage, researchers will have a realistic and clear view of their own abilities, the options open to them, and the career choices they need to make to pursue their chosen direction. Development Review Meetings will assist in this.

For early-career researchers the following major career options may be discussed in the Development Review Meeting:

- (i) a move directly to an **independent academic position** (either a university teaching/research position, or an independent research fellowship) if (s)he has already built up the appropriate publication record, reputation, experience and research independence; in most disciplines, the researcher is unlikely to be in this position after his/her first research post;
- (ii) a move to **another researcher position** within a research group in order to develop further skills, publication record, and experience, with a mid to longer-term view to a further move into an independent academic position, or a research post in the commercial or not-for-profit sectors; frequently this will entail a change of research group and/or institutions;
- (iii) a move to a research staff **position at a similar level** and with similar responsibilities, with a view, where possible, to continuing in the same type of work in the longer-term;
- (iv) the identification of **alternative career paths** that make use of the valuable research and transferable skills gained.

The PI/mentor should, where possible, support the researcher in exploring and aspiring to any of these career routes. He/she should advise appropriately on the prospects and requirements for success, and on the development activities that may help the career goal. They may need to encourage the researcher to seek further information and support from, for example, the Researcher Development Programme, wider networks and former colleagues.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EARLY-CAREER RESEARCH STAFF

The tables that follow detail the responsibilities of the researcher, the PI and the School/College during the course of a research project. This guidance is not meant to be rigid - indeed Schools and individual researchers should use it as a framework that can be adapted to meet local circumstances and specific needs.

For the researcher and PI, the responsibilities take the form of questions to promote clarity in the relationship. Some of these questions will also be useful in helping to set the agenda of the Project Review Meetings and the Development Review Meetings.

To make this more manageable, the project is divided into three phases which are set out over the three double pages that follow:

“Start of Project”

This refers to the period of the project in which the researcher settles into his/her new role and starts the project work. Nevertheless, long term project and career goals must be considered from the outset.

“Mid Stage of Project”

This refers to the central part of the project during which the researcher is established in post and performing the bulk of the necessary project work.

“End of Project”

This refers to the final part of the project when all the necessary steps are taken to complete it on time.

The duration of these phases will vary given the diversity of research areas and typical lengths of projects across the university. A project may entail 2-5 years of research, but some may have a very short timescale (e.g. 3 months). In many cases, issues identified in the ‘Mid’ or ‘End’ phases may well need to be tackled earlier in the project.

Responsibilities for the Management of Early-Career Researchers

Start of Project

At the outset, the research staff member needs to be inducted into his/her role, team/group and the wider School, College and University. As the project starts, there are many parameters to be worked out between the researcher and the PI for the conduct of the project.

School Responsibilities

The School in which an individual is working should appoint a clearly designated **manager** or **advisor**. This will usually be the PI, but for independent researchers another suitable member of the academic staff should be identified and assigned to the researcher.

- It will provide a copy of this **Code of Practice** document to both parties.
- It will provide an **induction process** that takes into account the needs of research staff, and which links into the existing University-wide Induction activities.[1]
- It will ensure a good **working environment** in which the separate 'Code of Good Practice in Research [2] and equalities legislation are adhered to consistently.
- It will ensure that a system for **Review Meetings** is in place and is adhered to consistently.
- It will ensure that there is a good system for **communicating opportunities** for researchers throughout the School.
- It will monitor the outcomes of processes for obtaining views of researchers and PIs, such as the Careers in Research Online Surveys (CROS)
- It will promote the **Researcher Development Programme** amongst its staff [3].
- It will encourage the delivery of **local transferable skills training** (perhaps organised by researchers themselves, such as career seminars) that will complement the more general training offered at University level.
- It will encourage the organisation of local '**Researcher Societies**' that will provide a forum for researchers to discuss their experiences and needs.

PI (or mentor/advisor) Responsibilities

The Research Project

- Have the School, College and University **induction** processes [1] been explained and has time been made available for participation in them?
- Have I introduced and explained **this Code of Practice** and the Code of Good Practice in Research? [2]
- Have I explained the researcher staff member's **entitlement to appraisals, training and development opportunities, and career guidance support**?
- Have I clarified the job description and my expectations of the **researcher's role** within the research project, or research group, and any wider research programme?
- Have I clarified the roles within the research team/research laboratory, including the expected **interactions** with the group and the expected collaborations out with the group?
- Have we discussed the **regulations/requirements/conditions** of the sponsor/funder of the research?
- Have I clarified the arrangements for the **management of the project** and the research staff working on the project, e.g. the expected working practices, timescales, the monitoring of project progress, the frequency of meetings between project members, the arrangements for communication, the dissemination of project outcomes, publications, etc.
- Have I made arrangements for regular **Project Review Meetings**?
- Does the researcher know what **resources** are available - and, if not, how to find out - in terms of library, computing, facilities and materials, and technical assistance?
- Have I explained (or arranged the explanation of) **health and safety procedures** within the School?
- Have I arranged any **mandatory training** that may be required?

Development

- Have **I myself** undertaken appropriate training for the researcher management role, including appraisal training?
- Have I given the researcher the opportunity to discuss his/her immediate **training needs**?
- Have I encouraged the researcher to take **responsibility** for developing his/her own career, in whatever direction that might be?
- What opportunities have I offered for the researcher to **explain his/her own needs and aspirations**, and to bring out any skills he/she may have that could contribute to the project, the group or the department?
- Have I made arrangements for **Development Review Meetings**?
- Have I directed the researcher to the information on local and **university-wide research staff training and support**? [3]

Even at this early stage, thought should also be given to where the researcher wants to be by the end of the project in terms of development and career objectives, with time set aside to talk about these, as appropriate. *The numbered references in the text in the first three columns are given to direct you to the resources listed in the column on the far right.*

Research Staff Responsibilities

The Research Project

- Have I actively taken up the opportunities for **induction** available to me? [1]
- Have I **clarified my role** within the project and the research team, and the arrangements for completing the project within agreed timescales?
- Have I familiarised myself with the **regulations/ requirements/conditions** of the sponsor/funder of the research?
- Have I clarified the arrangements for **reporting** on the project?
- Have I ascertained the degree of **research freedom** open to me within the project and project team?
- Have I participated in **Project Review Meetings**?
- Have I completed any **mandatory training** eg Health and Safety procedures?

Development

- Have I sought appropriate **access to information on entitlements** (i.e. appraisal, review, training courses, etc)?
- Am I taking **responsibility for my overall career planning** and considering how each job will help achieve long-term goals?
- Am I thinking about **'next steps'** at this early career stage rather than waiting for the end of the current project?
- Have I taken up **training opportunities** available to me in the Researcher Development Programme [3], including taking advantage of a Career Development Review [4], and from other University development providers? [5]
- Have I engaged in career management by constructing a **career plan**? [6]
- Have I asked for a **Development Review Meeting** if this has not been offered - at the end of the first year in post, and the end of the subsequent years?
- Am I **supporting my professional development** by joining appropriate mailing lists, professional associations, other networks, etc?
- Am I keeping a log, or have I opened a **portfolio**, of my development activities to provide an accurate record for future CV writing?

Pointers to Resources

1. **University-wide Induction** - "Welcome to the University" - for all staff

<http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/development/Inductions/inductindex.htm>

Induction Seminar for New Research Staff

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/training-development/courses-resources/training-directory/induction-seminar>

Induction Web Pages for New Research Staff

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/new-staff/induction>

2. **Code of Good Practice in Research**

<http://www.research-innovation.ed.ac.uk/information/goodresearchpractice.pdf>

3. **Researcher Development Programme** - programme of career and professional support for research staff at the University of Edinburgh:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development>

4. **Career Development Consultation** - a confidential interview with a careers adviser available to all research staff:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/career-consultation>

5. **University-wide development opportunities**

http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/development/Training/SDBook_SDOBook.htm

6. **Career Development Support and Resources for Research Staff** - web pages with links to resources available, including on-line resources:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development>

Responsibilities for the Management of Early-Career Researchers

Mid Stage of Project

This phase of the work is often extremely busy with data generation, presentation and interpretation consuming the entire working day and beyond. As a consequence, it is tempting to give personal development and career planning a low priority at this time. The researcher should not lose perspective during this stage of the project and should ensure that skills development and career planning are maintained. They should receive the support and encouragement of their PI (or mentor/advisor) in doing this.

School Responsibilities

The School should ensure (and assess) PI commitment in supporting the career planning and development of research staff and **promote good practice regarding their management and support**. This should be addressed at PIs' own review or appraisal meetings.

To aid this process PIs should be offered **support in their management role** through mentoring arrangements and the provision of appropriate training and development support.

Research staff should be **integrated into the day-to-day working of the School** (e.g. involvement in School meetings/seminars, etc.) and **represented on School committees**, as appropriate.

PI (or mentor/advisor) Responsibilities

The Research Project

- Are our **Project Review Meetings** working or do they need adjusting (e.g. increased frequency, different format)?
- Is the **research on target**, or do goals need to be adjusted? Have I adequately discussed this with the researcher?
- Has the researcher been **given positive feedback and constructive criticism** during Project Review Meetings?

Development

- Are our **Development Review Meeting** arrangements working or do they need adjusting? Are they allowing time for a discussion (as appropriate) on all the points listed here?
- Have I encouraged researchers **to take up opportunities for skills training** and career development [1], and where appropriate wider involvement in School activities?
- When the research staff member undertakes training activities do I discuss the specific learning objectives beforehand, and then review these with the researcher after the activity?
- Have I made sure that research staff have adequate time and support within their current project for **professional development and professional academic activities**, e.g. writing publications, involvement in writing grant applications, attending conferences and other development events, managing budgets, making formal presentations of their research etc?
- Have I made sure that research staff have opportunities for engaging in '**on-the-job**' training in **research-specific skills**, if appropriate (this will be training carried out within the School/department/discipline/research group/ profession)?
- Have I assisted with, and promoted, **opportunities for networking and collaborations** with colleagues/experts/other professionals in their field?
- Have I provided opportunities for researchers to undertake **supervision and/or teaching duties**, if so wished (this could be at undergraduate and/or postgraduate level)?

Both the researcher and their PI should identify, and build into the project, time for development activities. More detailed advice is provided below. For many researchers, publication will naturally be a decisive career booster, but management should involve more than simply recommending an accumulation of publications. *The numbered references in the text in the first three columns are given to direct you to the resources listed in the column on the far right.*

Research Staff Responsibilities

The Research Project

- Am I **maintaining satisfactory progress** with respect to the programme of work agreed with the PI and have I sought feedback on my progress through Project Review Meetings?
- Am I taking the initiative in **raising with the PI any problems** or difficulties arising with the project?

Development

- Have I taken the opportunity of having an **Development Review Meeting** with my PI, or other designated person, and if not, have I asked for one?
- Am I maintaining a **career plan**?
- Am I actively **considering the next/subsequent career stage** and considering how this fits with my overall career plan?
- Am I being proactive in seeking out and **taking up opportunities** for skills development [1], mentoring [2], Career Development Review [3] and networking?
- Am I **getting involved** in, or considering, writing publications, attending conferences, etc. as appropriate to this stage in the project and in my career?
- Have I considered taking on any **supervision and/or teaching duties** if appropriate?
- Have I given thought to the appropriate **balance** between **project progress and development goals** so that one is not detrimental to the other?
- Am I maintaining a **log** of my development activities and regularly updating my CV?
- Do I **discuss training activities** with my PI, eg the setting of learning objectives before a training activity and the review of these after the event?

Pointers to Resources

1. **Researcher Development Programme** - programme of career and professional support for research staff at the University of Edinburgh:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development>

University-wide development opportunities

http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/development/raining/SDBook_SDOBook.htm

2. **Mentoring Programme for Research Staff** - open to all researchers:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/mentoring>

3. **Careers Development Consultation** - a confidential interview with a careers adviser available to all research staff:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/career-consultation>

Responsibilities for the Management of Early-Career Researchers

End of Project

Ideally, this phase will include at least the final 6-12 months of a project. As the individual with most at stake, it is very important for the researcher to be in control of events, as far as is possible, during the completion of the project. This is often complicated by the need to consider factors such as securing future funding, alternatives if the favoured strategy and contingencies do not proceed, as well as the possible need to move house/department/institution/country.

School Responsibilities

The School should establish suitable procedures to allow the **researcher to be adequately prepared for the end of a funded project.**

The School needs to ensure that it follows the process of managing contracts in conjunction with their College HR team and the relevant College HR team should be consulted [1]. In particular, where it is known or expected that the requirement for specific work to be undertaken will cease or reduce at an identified point in time, **the process for redundancy consultation must be followed.**

As part of that process the School must ensure that the researcher is **provided with details of how to access careers development support** [2] [4] [5].

The School should explore opportunities for alternative funding and **redeployment** of researchers coming to the end of a particular project.

PI (or mentor/advisor) Responsibilities

The Research Project

- What are the **prospects for the researcher's continuing employment** on this (or a different) project? What discussions have I had with the researcher about this?
- Have I supported the researcher with the **writing of papers** from the project, where appropriate, including coaching in the techniques of paper writing?
- Have I **provided the researcher with feedback** on the strengths and weaknesses of his/her contribution to the project?
- Have I arranged an **end of project review meeting** with the researcher that allows time to review outcomes and achievements, and possible next steps, as appropriate?

Development and Progression

- What **communication have I had with the School** about other opportunities, e.g. work on other projects, other funding streams?
- Have I supported the researcher with his/her career planning and progression, and **reviewed with them what his/her plans are at least six months prior to the end of a project?**
- Have I made the researcher aware of **university procedures** relating to the reduction in the requirement for specific work to be undertaken and initiated the process through the School and College HR team?

It is essential that the PI or other advisor is aware of the extra stress experienced by the researcher as a project approaches its conclusion. By the end of a project the PI and researcher should both have a clear idea of the next steps planned by the researcher. The role of the PI towards the end of the project will vary depending upon the intended career path of the researcher. *The numbered references in the text in the first three columns are given to direct you to the resources listed in the column on the far right.*

Research Staff Responsibilities

The Research Project

- Have I ensured all work for the current **project can be finished** by the completion date?
- Have I **contributed to planning** the continuation of the project, where appropriate?
- Have I **provided all relevant documentation** to the PI/Research Team?
- Have I written/co-written any **papers** from this project, where appropriate?

Development and Progression

- Have I **made full use of all the careers resources** available to me (Career Development Review [2], web pages [3], CV advice [4], practice interviews [2], etc)?
- Have I discussed with my PI the possibility of **ongoing requirement for work, or redeployment**?
- Have I/we **identified and addressed all contingency options** well in advance?
- Have I taken advantage of **workshops and other support** available for paper and grant application writing? [5] [6]
- Do I have the opportunity to **write or co-write grant/fellowship applications** for securing my future funding?

Pointers to Resources

1. HR College Contacts

<http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/contact.htm>

2. Career Development Consultation - a confidential interview with a careers adviser available to all research staff (during which it is possible to have a practice interview):

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/career-consultation>

3. Career Development Support and Resources for Research Staff - web pages with links to resources available, including on-line resources:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development>

4. CV Briefing Session for Research Staff:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/training-development/courses-resources/training-directory/cv-briefing>

5. Workshops for Research Staff - including writing skills and making funding applications:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/training-development/courses-resources/training-directory/overview>

6. Edinburgh Research & Innovation (ERI) - support for locating and applying for research funding:

<http://www.eri.ed.ac.uk>

LONG-TERM RESEARCH STAFF

In general, the long-term researcher enhances the University's research strength, and often makes an important contribution to the further development of that research strength. They are often the unsung heroes of research. This group includes research staff who have committed to a long-term career as a researcher, often working within a research group.

The researcher has clearly developed skills and knowledge to work with minimal supervision in the delivery of research objectives, normally defined by a PI who has obtained funding for the position. His/her role is normally to support a PI, although this can take a variety of forms. His/her role may be as a PI's long-term research support worker, assisting in overseeing research projects, being delegated major parts of the research work. They may oversee the activities of early-career researchers also working to the PI, or manage specific research facilities if they are part of a large team. Alternatively they may simply be valued as proven highly skilled, experienced, and reliable researchers.

It may be in such situations that the researcher is employed on an open-ended contract, but his/her continued employment will still be subject to the ongoing requirement for that level of specific activity, which may in turn depend on future funding availability.

Management Objectives for Long-term Research Staff

Many of the recommendations given for early-career researchers can also be adapted for the management of long-term researchers during the course of their employment on a particular project.

The long-term researcher will no longer be in a "training phase". His/her development needs will be different, and the management strategy must take this into account. It is vital that the long-term researcher takes primary responsibility for his/her own development. However, the PI will need to guide the researcher through issues specifically relating to his/her particular circumstances through regular Project Review and Development Review Meetings. The need for two distinct meetings remains, since there is potential conflict between short-term project goals and long term development aspirations (such as training for a technique not required for the current project).

Some long-term researchers will wish to **continue in a role appropriate for their current grading**, often acting as a highly valued and reliable resource within the group, but not wishing to take on more senior tasks and responsibilities appropriate for a higher grade. If they remain in a similar role over an extended period, some researchers in this category may feel that their presence and contribution are taken for granted. The researcher should take advantage of professional development opportunities to develop skills further and maintain job satisfaction in the longer term.

Other long-term researchers may want to **progress to a more senior researcher role** taking on more responsibilities. In some cases this may involve securing research funding to establish a semi-independent research theme within a larger group. Opportunities for participating in the further development of research should be explored, including the possibility of becoming co-investigators on grant proposals. For such staff there should be a regular consideration in Development Review Meetings of development activities that may assist such a career goal in the current post or a future post.

Prospects for applying for **regrading** within the current post should be considered regularly. Research staff should, however, be aware that regrading is not automatic and does not depend on length of service, but instead depends on whether the nature of the current post changes. A review of grading is indicated when there has been a clear change to the role such that it better matches to a different grade profile from the current match. The change to the role will entail assuming higher level responsibilities, not just a change in duties. To this end, ongoing personal and professional development should better position the individual to be able to take on a higher level of responsibility.

Responsibilities for the Management of Long-Term Research Staff

The table that follows sets out the responsibilities of the School, PI and research staff member in the similar format to the earlier guidelines. It can be used in parallel with the earlier guidelines, which should be adapted to meet local circumstances and particular projects.

School Responsibilities

- The School should **establish a dialogue with PIs** (or mentor/advisor) regarding the development needs of their long-term research staff.
- It must ensure that **regular Project and Development Review Meetings** continue to be carried out for long-term researchers.
- An effective way of addressing this will be through explicitly monitoring a PI's **management record** during PI appraisal.
- It must ensure that any guidance on the **review of grading** is clear and in accordance with University policy [1].
- The School should review the opportunities available for long-term research staff to **contribute to wider University life**, such as becoming members of committees, taking on teaching, supervision and staff management duties, if sought by the researcher.

PI (or mentor/advisor) Responsibilities

- Am I holding **regular Project and Development Review Meetings** with the researcher?
- During these confidential Review Meetings, and more widely in any project team meetings, am I giving appropriate **acknowledgement of the researcher's contributions** to the project/research team/School?
- Do I consider the **development needs** of my long-term research staff members as distinct from early-career research staff?
- Have I discussed with the research staff member whether they wish to take on more **responsibilities**, or a more senior research role, and what **opportunities** for doing that currently exist within or out with the group?
- Have I considered opportunities for **expanding** the researcher's role in contributing to research planning, project management, the writing of grant applications, and the supervision/mentoring of junior researchers?
- Have I discussed **specific development needs** associated with an expansion of the researcher's role and/or the taking on of extra responsibilities?
- Have I discussed the prospects for the **promotion** of the research staff member in the future - both short and longer term, taking into consideration his/her aspirations, and experience, abilities and skills?
- Where appropriate, has there been any exploration of the possibilities of the research staff member seeking his/her own **research funding**?

The numbered references in the text in the first three columns are given to direct you to the resources listed in the column on the far right.

Research Staff Responsibilities

- Am I **taking primary responsibility** for my own development at the current stage of my career?
- Am I making sure that I have **regular Project and Development Review Meetings** with my PI (or equivalent)?
- Have I made an **honest personal assessment** of my contribution to the research project/team?
- Do I want to **review** my current contribution with my PI with a view to it changing or developing in the future?
- Am I taking advantage of professional and career **development opportunities** to further develop my skills and help maintain job satisfaction? [2] [3] [4]
- Am I keeping a **personal record/log/portfolio** of my ongoing skills development and my take-up of development opportunities? (It is easy to forget what has been done and it is a very useful tool for CVs).
- Am I keeping my **CV** up to date and have I sought any advice on its structure? [5]
- Am I keeping, and developing, useful **networks**, and attending conferences/seminars as appropriate?
- Have I considered opportunities for **expanding my role** (e.g. contributing to research planning, project management, writing grant applications, joining committees, teaching duties, assisting with staff management duties and/or the supervision of junior researchers, or acting as a mentor/advisor to research students)?
- Have I examined the criteria for **promotion** and considered my prospects and aspirations? [1]
- Have I looked at the possibilities of **seeking my own research funding**, if that is appropriate? [6]
- Have I considered acting as a **mentor** to early-career research staff? [7]

Pointers to Resources

1. Academic Grade Profiles:

http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/paymodernisation/All_profiles.pdf

2. Researcher Development Programme - programme of career and professional support for research staff at the University of Edinburgh:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/researcher-development>

University-wide development opportunities

http://www.humanresources.ed.ac.uk/development/Training/SDBook_SDOBook.htm

3. Career Development Support and Resources for Research Staff - web pages with links to resources available, including on-line resources:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development>

4. Career Development Consultation - a confidential interview with a careers adviser available to all research staff:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/career-consultation>

5. CV Briefing Session for Research Staff:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/training-development/courses-resources/training-directory/cv-briefing>

6. Edinburgh Research & Innovation (ERI) - support for locating and applying for research funding:

<http://www.eri.ed.ac.uk>

7. Mentoring Programme for Research Staff - open to all researchers:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/researcher-development/career-development/speak-to-someone/mentoring>