

New Staff Career Development Timeline

A career planning guide for new
research staff



INSTITUTE FOR
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Starting a new role can be a daunting process. It can take some time to feel established, not only within your individual team, but also within the wider University.

The University of Edinburgh is a large, well resourced University and as such there are lots of training and development activities to take advantage of.

This guide is intended to raise your awareness of some of the key resources central to your career planning and professional development right from the outset.

Career planning is a complex process so it pays to plan ahead and make the most of the resources available to you in order to get ahead of the competition.

How to use this guide:

The guide has been structured to provide support to research staff at different stages, including:

- Initial arrival (Page 2-3)
- 3 months into role (Page 4)
- 6 months into role (Page 5)
- 1 year and beyond (Page 6-7)
- 2 years plus (Page 8)

We have provided information and support at each stage, followed by links to the relevant resources.

Initial Arrival

At the beginning of your journey at the University of Edinburgh, it is important to become familiar with key resources such as the Research Staff Hub web pages.

These web pages aim to bring together key information for researchers from sources across the University. Topics cover a wide range of issues such as research, funding, community and networking as well as career and professional development.

●●● **Research Staff Hub**

Beginning your research position in Edinburgh is for research staff starting at the University of Edinburgh and includes relocation advice and highlights inductions available from around the wider University.

●●● **Beginning your Research Position**

Within your initial settling in period, get familiar with the Research Staff section of the IAD webpages. In particular, the Career Management section and Researcher training offerings. Within the Career Management section there are handouts on many key topics that researchers have concerns about. For example, writing CV's, Careers within Academia and researching alternative career paths.

●●● **IAD Research Staff Support**

●●● **IAD Career Management Support**

A key guide to become familiar with is Thriving in your Research Position. This is an excellent resource that highlights the skills and awareness needed to succeed in your role. The guide covers ways to develop and use your skills, with practical advice and case studies.

●●● **Thriving in your Research Position**

Initial Arrival

At this point in your journey you might find it useful to refresh your career planning goals. Consider what are your short to mid-term goals? What skills and experience do you need to build upon during your time at Edinburgh? A useful tool is the Research Careers Tool, which is designed to help researchers be strategic and selective about the responsibilities they take on.

●●● **Research Careers Tool**

The IAD Researchers blog has many useful articles on topics of concern for research staff so have a browse here.

●●● **IAD4Researchers Blog**

It may also be useful to book a 1:1 Career Development Consultation with the IAD's dedicated Research Staff Career Consultant to map out your plans in more detail.

●●● **1:1 Career Development Consultation**

3 Months into role

By now you will have become more familiar with your new colleagues and the campus and City of Edinburgh. The initial feelings of newness should be starting to wear off and you will be becoming more comfortable with your day to day working routine.

This can be a good time to begin exploring the possibilities of becoming involved with Research Staff Societies. A useful way to develop further contacts around the University as well as giving you an opportunity to potentially shape the research experience and culture within your department and/or the wider University.

● ● ● **Research Staff Societies**

You may now be in a position to further explore the training opportunities offered by IAD. The current Research Staff brochure and the IAD monthly newsletter highlight the offerings available for researchers.

● ● ● **Research Staff Brochure**

● ● ● **IAD Newsletter**

6 Months into role

You should now be feeling even more familiar regarding the day to day expectations of your role and your colleagues. This may leave some time to focus on expanding your network of contacts. Initially, this will probably focus on colleagues within the University but it might grow to include those in other institutions and sectors.

So how can you expand your network?

Try to attend events and committee meetings within your department so that you can identify more academics to make contact with.

Another way to expand your academic network is to attend conferences within your field and consider too industry events that may also have a cross over with your area of work.

The Research Staff Hub has a Community and Networking section that has information on societies, networks and organisations at the University and beyond

For further support regarding networking and how to do it well read Networking Tips and Making connections available on the IAD Researchers blog.

- ● ● **Community & Networking**
- ● ● **Networking Tips - IAD4Researchers Blog**
- ● ● **Making Connections - IAD4Researchers Blog**

It may also be useful to consider sourcing a Mentor that can support you with your Career Development Goals. For further information see the Mentoring section on the IAD website. For those considering alternative roles beyond academia developing a network of industry contacts is a must.

- ● ● **Mentoring Resources and Support**

Developing such contacts can be crucial to your understanding of the new role and field. Read more about developing your online profile and approaching contacts through the main Career Services resources: 'Using social media to stand out' and 'Informational Interviews'

- ● ● **Using social media to stand out**
- ● ● **Informational Interviews**

1 year & beyond

At this mid stage point, you will be familiar with the workings of the university and the requirements of your role. This is the point to begin thinking about possible next steps after your contract ends.

Are you seeking a fellowship?

Are you considering alternative options outside of research?

Aim to put some time into thinking about what the right direction for you is. If you are keen to pursue Fellowship options then make use of support offered by Edinburgh Research Office (depending upon your school you will have access to a dedicated funding specialist within ERO – ease account needed to access the details).

- **Edinburgh Research Office**

- **A Comprehensive Guide to Fellowship Applications**

If you are thinking about pursuing an 'Alternative' role outside of academia then the handout Careers beyond Academia is your first port of call. This handout aims to layout the key resources to look at in order to help you make an informed decision. You may also wish to attend both 'Changing Careers' workshops run by IAD or you can listen to a recording of previous session and the relevant handbooks on the IAD Researchers blog. The IAD have a range of Career Conversation videos, which provide an insight from researchers who have transitioned to different roles within and beyond the University. It can be useful to hear about other researchers "why", why they chose to leave research and the strategies that helped them in their next steps.

- **Careers Beyond Academia**

- **Careers Workshops**

- **Career Conversations Videos**

If you require further support or an individual action plan then it is advisable to book a 1:1 Career Development Consultation to discuss your ideas further with the IAD Research Staff Careers Consultant.

- **Career Development Consultation**

Lastly make sure that you keep your CV up to date and identify any gaps that you might need to plug. Use the training and careers resources offered by IAD to do this i.e. 1:1 career Development Consultation, Micro workshops to help benchmark yourself against the competition and increase your employability, identify possible career paths, Career Direction workshops and CV briefings to understand how to present a well – matched and tailored CV for job applications.

- ● ● **Micro Career Workshops**

- ● ● **CV Workshops**

At the last stage of a contract, you should have a clearer idea of the direction that you plan to take and whether this involves staying within academia or moving on to a new role.

For those considering a new role or sector it is important to become familiar with what employers look for within applications. It is advisable to look at job descriptions and person specifications ahead of time so that you have a clear sense of what is required when it comes to making applications.

Review the Micro workshop Creating CVs for Careers beyond Academia.

Review the guidance on Interviews available on the Career Management section of the IAD website.

If you do secure an interview for a new role then be sure to book a mock interview with the IAD Research Staff Careers Consultant so that you can practice answering questions and perfect your interview technique.

If you are intending to stay within academia then the following handouts are great sources of information: 'Careers within Academia', Academic CV Checklist and 'How to prepare for Academic Interviews'.

If you are actively seeking redeployment within the University, make sure to add your details to the Redeployment Register.

●●● **Reviewing Job Descriptions/Person Specifications:**

- www.ed.ac.uk/jobs
- Jobs.ac.uk
- Prospects.ac.uk

●●● **Micro Workshop – Creating CVs for Careers Beyond Academia**

●●● **IAD Career Management Section**

●●● **Mock Interview – 1:1 Consultation with Research Staff Careers Consultant**

●●● **Careers within Academia**

●●● **Academic CV Checklist**

●●● **How to prepare for Academic Interviews**

●●● **Redeployment Register**

**Make
Contact &
Keep up to
date**



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