

# Local Concordat for Research Staff

Research Staff are central to the success of the University and are valued members of staff. This document is one component of Research Staff support and development at the University of Reading.

## Recruitment

1. Research Staff should be recruited in line with the University's procedures which have equality of opportunity at their centre. The University aims to have all staff on interview panels trained in recruitment and selection procedures by October 2010.

## Induction

2. At the outset of each project the Principal Investigator (PI) will establish a clear statement of objectives and responsibilities. The PI and researcher will discuss these and agree the demarcation of responsibilities, which will be recorded.
3. There should be, as appropriate, quarterly meetings between the PI and researcher. Progress towards the target tasks will be reviewed and changes in the targets agreed and recorded.
4. Research Staff should be provided with a mentor by their School when their contract starts. This person should be different from their PI. The 'Guidelines for Mentoring of Academic Staff' will help establish this relationship.<sup>1</sup> Mentors are encouraged to attend a briefing session on mentoring.
5. Clear targets for research outputs or impact should be agreed initially, and revised annually. Normally these will be specified by the agreement with the funder.
6. Both Principal Investigator and researcher should act in line with the authorship requirements of the University's Code of Good Practice in Research. It must be clearly established at the outset of the project (subject to revision) the extent to which the researcher is able to present papers on the project's output as principal (or sole) author.
7. The School's expectations of Research Staff must be clearly stated at the outset of the project. Researchers are encouraged to teach and supervise students at levels appropriate to their own qualification. Postdoctoral researchers may co-supervise PhD students with an established member of the academic staff. The amount of this additional activity should be in proportion to the priorities of the research project. Research Staff teaching & supervision must be supported by compulsory attendance at relevant training and development events.

## Research Staff Development & Career Progression

8. Research Staff should recognise that they have primary responsibility for developing and managing their career. They should ensure that their career development is regularly discussed and evaluated with their PI and Mentor. Research Staff are urged to view a research contract as an opportunity to develop experience and skills as a precursor for employment within academia or elsewhere. Research Staff must consider if contracts beyond two consecutive 3-year projects are appropriate for their career progression.
9. Research Staff should be aware that the likelihood of gaining an open ended contract as a lecturer is not high. The Institute of Physics reports a 1 in 5 chance of this happening in the subject area.<sup>2</sup> HEFCE's 2006 figures demonstrate that 6000 new lecturers a year are needed in England from a pool of approximately 40,000 Research Staff. **These figures should not deter Research Staff from pursuing an academic career, but emphasize the importance of them acquiring transferable skills to keep their options open.**
10. Research Staff should actively participate in the induction and training programmes provided by the Centre for Staff Training and Development, which includes support in career management and development. Full records of Research Staff participation in these courses are kept by CSTD. PIs should expect that Research Staff will spend a minimum of 5 days each year on such professional and personal development.
11. All Research Staff should participate in the University's Performance and Development Review. The review should be conducted by their Principal Investigator. Research Staff have the right to an alternative reviewer who will be appointed by their Head of School or his/her nominee.

## Research Staff Representation

12. Research Staff should have equal status with Lecturers and attend Research Group, Departmental, School & Faculty meetings as appropriate. Their views can also be represented through the Research Staff Working Group (or successor committee) which reports to the University Board for Research and the Staffing Committee.

## End of Contract

13. If further research is to be proposed beyond a current contract then Research Staff should be involved in the preparation and submission of a further grant application. In such an application they would be clearly identified as a co-author/co-investigator (precise term dependent upon prospective sponsor's rules).

Amended by Staffing Committee March 2014

<sup>1</sup> Guide to policies and procedures for teaching and learning: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/qualitysupport/guide/qualguidehome.asp>

<sup>2</sup> Career Paths of Physics Post Doctoral Research Staff: A Report for the Institute of Physics by DTZ Pleda Consulting London July 1999