Code of practice for the employment and management of research staff

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1.5	Review date extended to allow review of policy to take place.	Published	Louise Milne HR	04/01/2024

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1. Introduction

1.1 The University of St Andrews is one of the leading research-intensive universities in the world. Our researchers make a huge and valuable contribution to the international reputation and standing of the University. St Andrews attracts outstanding scholars from around the world who continually enhance the reputation of the institution by conducting ground-breaking research across all disciplines within the Faculties of Arts & Divinity, Medicine and Science. In order for the University to continue to have an international standing and reputation there is a requirement to have the highest quality of leadership, management and development for researchers.

2. Purpose

2.1 This document sets out the expectations for the employment and management of research staff at the University. It was agreed between the University Court and the St Andrews branch of the UCU; it is important that Principal Investigators, Heads of School and researchers familiarise themselves with its principles.

2.2 It was also drawn up to aid Principal Investigators and Heads of School to meet the employment expectations of funding bodies such as Research Councils UK and the Welcome Trust etc. who have signed up to the principles expressed in the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

2.3 This code of practice applies equally to researchers on fixed term and open-ended contracts, who are funded from both external and internal sources.

3. Recruitment

3.1 Recruitment of researchers must conform to the University's commitment to equality. Age, race, gender, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation should play no part in assessing an individual's suitability for employment.

3.2 The University is sensitive to the need to provide career opportunities for research staff wherever possible. There is also a general wish to retain skills and expertise in appropriate circumstances. In order to meet these two aims all research posts are advertised internally (along with the details of all other job opportunities in the University). Current vacancies are available on the Human Resource website.

3.3 Where a Principal Investigator has received an extension of funding for an existing area of research there is no requirement to re-advertise the post. An extension of appointment may be offered to the current researcher. The length of any contract extension will be dependent on the funding available and also any visa expiry dates (where applicable).

3.4 Good practice suggests that, unless timetable difficulties preclude, external adverts should not be placed until the position of internal candidates has been considered including those at risk of redundancy or expiry of fixed term contract. A procedure is in place for individuals who wish to be redeployed to ensure that they are considered for posts before they are advertised. Researchers who are coming to the end of contracts and wish to be redeployed, should contact their HR Business Partner.

3.5 When a Principal Investigator has a researcher who is explicitly named on a grant application, no recruitment process will be necessary. Appointment of named researchers

is subject to UK immigration laws and the University being granted permission to employ the researcher.

3.6   The requirement for advertising posts can be waived by Human Resources for appointments of less than six months subject to an alternative selection procedure approved by the Head of School and Human Resources and provided there are no visa issues.

4.   Non-EEA workers

4.1   There is a [Points-Based System (PBS)](#) in operation for all migrants wishing to come to the UK. Under this system, migrants have to achieve a certain number of points under a specific tier before they are granted permission to enter the UK. Migrants seeking to work in the UK will be assessed predominantly on qualifications; future expected earnings; sponsorship; English language skills; and available maintenance funds.

4.2   The UK Border Agency will have the final say on entrance to the UK and will need to be satisfied that an open selection process has taken place which allowed people from within the EEA an equal opportunity to apply for the vacancy and none of the EEA applicants had the necessary skills for the vacancy.

4.3   The ability of the migrant to earn points should not affect the Principal Investigator's decision in the recruitment process and there should be no questions asked to a migrant during the interview on their ability to earn points under the PBS. The recruitment process should solely be based on the person's ability to do the job as detailed in the further particulars. During pre-employment checks it will be necessary to make sure the candidate can satisfy the necessary points threshold. If the migrant cannot meet the required points then this will be a justifiable reason to refuse them an offer of employment but advice should always be sought from Human Resources at this advanced stage.

4.4   If a researcher is explicitly named on a grant then the University will still have to get permission from the UK Border Agency; however, there is no requirement to show that there were no resident workers suitable for the post. The researcher will still have to score enough points to enter and work in the UK.

4.5   More information can be obtained from [Human Resources Immigration team](#) or via the [UK Border Agency website](#).

5.   Grading of jobs/Posts for new grants and extensions to existing grants

5.1   When applying for grants, Principal Investigators can use the [generic role descriptors](#) for researchers in the first instance (available from Human Resources and Finance Advice and Support) to determine what grade and salary level they require to put into the grant application.

5.2   When a grant is awarded, Human Resources will confirm that the grade and salary level for the researcher vacancy is correct and any anomalies can be rectified through discussion with Human Resources and the Principal Investigator.

5.3   When extensions are awarded to existing grants with enough money to pay researchers on a higher grade than they are currently on, the higher grade can only be applied to the researcher if they successfully go through the grading review process.

5.4   Employment and managerial practices

5.4.1   Appointments

- Staff will receive a letter of appointment from Human Resources enclosing the standard terms and conditions of service. National pay rises and incremental progression will normally apply. An offer of employment is not valid unless issued by Human Resources on behalf of the University Court.

- In line with good HR practice and in support of the University's commitment to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, all salary offers must be made within the standard incremental points of the grade at which the role has been evaluated. In addition, and in line with the University's Starting Salary Policy, employees should normally be appointed on the first incremental point of the designated grade.

- Authorisation to appoint above the bottom point of the grade must be sought from Human Resources before confirming a salary offer with a prospective employee. No 'non-standard' salary offers should be made without the above approval. Where justification for this increase relates to the appointee's current/previous salary, any agreement made will be subject to verification of the stated current salary.

- The University's Starting Salary policy can be obtained from the Human Resources website.

5.4.2   Length of contract

- The period of appointment should be as long as is reasonably practicable. Contracts are normally offered for the relevant period of guaranteed external funding although, in special cases and after consultation with Human Resources, an initial shorter period of appointment may be made. If funds for a contract are extended with little or no variation in the nature of the work, the contract of employment should normally be renewed.

- In line with the Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 and the University's agreement on the use of fixed term contracts, all individuals on fixed term contracts with 4 years continuous service will be reviewed to determine whether they should receive an open-ended contract. As well as this the University will monitor extensions to contracts to limit the use of fixed term contracts when it deems them unnecessary.

5.4.3   Induction

- A structured induction into the University is important for all new employees to help them settle into their new role. OSDS co-ordinates the induction process for new staff.

- When researchers receive their offer of employment, a New Staff Information Pack should be enclosed. In addition, there are on-line induction resources that can be accessed immediately, even before arriving at the University. These resources contain information about relocating to St Andrews, the town and the University, transport options, social activities and the details of some key University staff.

- On the researcher's first day, the Principal Investigator should meet with the researcher and carry out the induction checklist. The Principal Investigator should also clarify the

researcher's role and duties within the research project/group and any wider research programme; clarify other roles within the research team/laboratory including expected interactions within the group and expected collaborations out with the group.

- Principal Investigators are expected to encourage researchers to attend one of the induction days organised by OSDS. The main University induction day is a full day event which gives staff the opportunity to meet other new colleagues from different parts of the University; representatives from the Office of the Principal and other key staff; and to learn more about the University and the town.

- There is also 'New Staff Essentials' workshops which run monthly and introduce essential information such as key University policies to new staff. It is designed to complement the full induction day.

- All staff including researchers must complete the mandatory training that can be done either as part of the induction or online at https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/osds/essentials/mandatory-training-for-employees/.

- For more information about induction please contact OSDS directly.

5.4.4 End of Fixed Term/Open Ended Contract and Redundancy

- Principal Investigators and Heads of Schools are notified by Human Resources when a researcher's fixed term contract is due to expire. Principal Investigators will be contacted approximately five months before the end of the fixed term contract or when any funding is due to run out for those employed on open ended/standard contracts.

- The researcher is also notified that their contract is due to expire, or funding is coming to an end and that they will be directly contacted by their Principal Investigator to discuss the situation. Principal Investigators should give those employed on their grants the earliest possible notice if a grant is not likely to be renewed or their continued employment on an extension of the grant is in doubt.

- The end of the contract is legally a redundancy and accordingly the Principal Investigator, Head of School/Unit and Human Resources will offer the employee consultation over ways of mitigating the effects of the impending redundancy. The Principal Investigator should ensure that the individual concerned is given adequate paid time off and access to resources to look for alternative employment and that the possibility of redeployment within the School and also across the University is seriously considered.

- Redundancy pay is calculated in line with current legislation and the researcher has to have two years continuous employment to be eligible for statutory redundancy pay.

- Researchers are expected to keep the Principal Investigators informed of their career interests and the type of post for which they might wish to apply at the end of their contracts.

- In cases of doubt employees and/or Principal Investigators should contact Human Resources for advice.

5.4.5 Bridging Funds

- Where appropriate, bridging funds will be provided for up to 3 months in the first instance to support an appointment for a short period, pending the commencement of new funding arrangements. The bridging period will be paid from School central funds.

5.4.6 Probation and development

- All staff appointed to the University are required to complete a probationary period. The length of the probationary period is linked to the grading of the post and is set down in the contract of employment. The length of any probation period may be reduced or waived with the agreement of Human Resources on the recommendation of the Principal Investigator and Head of School.

- Management of probation will usually be delegated to the Principal Investigator. Where this is in operation, the Head of School must be kept informed of progress or issues and have sight of all agreed probation documentation. Refer to the Probation webpage for guidance on the management of probation.

- Human Resources will contact the Head of School at the necessary intervals during the probationary period to assess how the probationer is progressing.

- The probation process should be highlighted to the researcher during their School induction and this is a good forum to discuss on-going development. Research Councils have made it clear in the Concordat that they expect Principal Investigators to appraise staff who are funded from their grants.

5.4.7 Mentoring

- Research staff can apply to join the University's Early career academics' mentoring scheme which is run in conjunction with the University of Dundee. Participants are matched with an experienced academic who acts as a mentor for a 12-month period and can opt to have a mentor from either institution. Typically, mentees seek advice about career paths, current research and goal setting. For more information on the mentoring scheme, contact osds@st-andrews.ac.uk.

5.4.8 Promotion and regrading

- All staff on research contracts are eligible to have their post regraded or apply for promotion. Regrading applies for employees on grades 1 to 7; anyone wishing to move to grades 8 or 9 must apply for promotion. Further information can be obtained from the Grading Review Process page located on the Human Resource website.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Key responsibilities of researchers

6.1.1 The researcher should do the following during their employment at the University:

- Comply with all policies and procedures that apply to them and participate in managerial practices as determined by Principal Investigator or Head of School or appropriate delegate.

- Adhere to the terms and conditions of employment as stated in their contract and offer letter sent by Human Resources.
- Seek regular feedback on progress in the project.
- Clarify their own role and responsibilities within the research project(s).
- Raise any problems with their PI or immediate line manager.
- Take responsibility for planning and managing the development of their own career.
- Set goals for career progression.
- Take up appropriate career development and training and career opportunities both within and out with the University.
- Develop the key skills that will maximise progression opportunities not only within academia, but to increase their employability as researchers or give them the flexibility to change career if required.

6.2 Key responsibilities of the Principal Investigator

6.2.1 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.

6.2.2 The Principal Investigator has the following responsibilities during the researcher's employment:

- Ensure the researcher is aware of how the project will be monitored and any specific deadlines/targets for the research project.
- Inform the researcher of the expected working practices within the School.
- Provide an environment in which career development and project productivity are both highly valued.
- Encourage individual researchers to spend adequate time on professional development in addition to the project.
- Ensure there is an opportunity to engage in skills training and development activities which will benefit both the researcher and the project.
- Ensure that the researcher is successfully integrated into the local and wider academic community.
- If the researcher desires and it is appropriate, provide opportunities for the researcher to undertake teaching and/or supervision within their area of expertise.
- Ensure that there are good management practices in place that support the goals of the project and also provide support for the researcher's career development whatever direction that may take. This should include regular review and development meetings in line with the Probation and ARDS process.

6.3 Key responsibilities of the University

6.3.1 The University is responsible for establishing an environment in which researchers are supported and encouraged in the planning and development of their careers.

6.3.2 The University will:

- Promote and encourage good management practices by the Principal Investigator to ensure compliance with employment law, equality, diversity and family-friendly policies.
- Provide support for Principal Investigators in their management role, including training and development support where appropriate.

- Provide forums or other routes that allow researchers' views to be heard on all aspects of University life.
- Ensure that the University fulfils their duty of care as employer for the personal health and safety of the researcher. This duty is discharged through delegation to Heads of School to adopt those reasonably practicable measures which secure the health and safety at work of all staff.
- Provide the necessary legal framework in cases of redundancy, should it arise.

7. Conditions of employment

7.1 Working hours, leave provision and pensions

7.1.1 There are no fixed hours of work specified for research posts, but normal working hours are 36.25 hours per week. However, the employee will be expected to work such hours and such days as are required for the proper discharge of the duties within reason. To calculate part-time hours, a pro-rata equivalent of 36.25 hours is used. It is important that a work life balance is maintained. CRAC has produced a document called the 'The balanced researcher: Strategies for busy researchers'.

7.1.2 The holiday entitlement is as specified in the contract of employment (i.e. 34 days for research staff plus 5 statutory days). This should be budgeted for in the grant application/period of appointment. Principal Investigators/immediate supervisors should act reasonably in agreeing the timing of the employee's leave and all leave should be recorded. All annual leave should be taken before the end of the contract.

7.1.3 Staff are eligible to join a pension scheme, (grades 1-5, S&LAS or grade 6 and upwards, USS). Staff may also choose to make their own arrangements. The costs of this should be budgeted for in the grant application. Where a private pension arrangement is made the University will not normally make any contributions. Further details of S&LAS and USS are available from Human Resources and all staff will be appropriately informed on appointment.

7.1.4 For more information on University's Pension scheme, visit the pension website on the Human Resources web page or contact the Pensions Administrator.

7.2 Absence for medical reasons

7.2.1 The University's procedure for reporting sickness apply to research staff and a copy of the policy is included in the new employee pack sent by Human Resources. The Research Councils have agreed that for periods of paid sick leave exceeding three months which, are likely to affect the outcome of the project, the Principal Investigator may apply to the Research Council to discuss the possibility of funding a temporary appointment to safeguard the work of the project, or an extension for the duration of the grant where the period of leave can be predicted. The University may not provide paid sick leave unless its reporting procedures are adhered to by the staff member. Information on the University Sickness Procedures is detailed in the Sickness Absence Policy.

7.3 Family leave

7.3.1 All researchers are entitled to take family leave provided they meet the qualifying period as stated in the University policies. These policies can be obtained on the Human Resources website.

7.3.2   Each research grant has different terms and conditions, but all Research Council grants cover maternity, paternity and adoption payments in line with institutional terms and conditions of employment. The Financial Support and Advice team will either check the terms and conditions of the grant award or contact the grant body for clarification on payment of costs. Where a research grant will not meet either maternity or adoption payments the University will fund the payments due to the employee. Researchers will be entitled to maternity leave and pay regardless of whether their fixed-term contract expires during or after maternity leave, provided they meet the qualifying periods stated in the University Policy.

7.4   Grievance and discipline

7.4.1   All University staff are subject to the appropriate grievance and discipline procedures. Principal Investigators/immediate supervisors are responsible to Heads of Schools for the conduct of their staff. Wherever possible, attempts should be made to resolve difficulties without recourse to formal grievance or discipline procedures.

7.4.2   The University recognises that from time to time, researchers may have problems or concerns regarding their work or relationships with colleagues which they wish to raise or address. The purpose of the grievance procedure is to provide a formal mechanism for addressing such issues. It is only advisable to invoke this procedure once less formal mechanisms for resolution have been explored. Advice can be sought from Human Resources.

7.4.3   When Principal Investigators/supervisors have a disciplinary matter that they have attempted to deal with informally but unsuccessfully, or it is serious enough to warrant immediate action under the University's disciplinary procedure e.g. infringements of health and safety rules; repeated failure to follow instructions, the PI will refer the matter to Human Resources who may then initiate the disciplinary procedure.

7.5   Dignity & respect at work

7.5.1   The University's Dignity and Respect at work policy aims to encourage a culture where harassment/bullying will not be tolerated and outlines the steps that can be taken to deal with any issues of harassment/bullying that arise and also prevent their recurrence.

7.5.2   As described in the policy, the University is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind.

7.5.4   As with grievances, the preferred route for dealing with issues of harassment and bullying is an informal one unless the issue is too serious or there is a criminal act involved.

7.6   Equality and diversity

7.6.1   The University works hard to ensure that staff and students are not discriminated against, unfairly excluded, marginalised or disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010 e.g. age, race, sex/gender, disability, sexual orientation etc. If a researcher feels that they have been subjected to discrimination, advice can be obtained from the University's Equality and Diversity Officer.

8. Participation of researchers

8.1 University wide

8.1.1 Research staff may participate in School committees as set out in each School's constitution. Similarly staff may participate in other University bodies subject to the ordinances and regulations governing membership, such as the Research and Teaching Staff Forum.

8.1.2 Research staff have full access to normal facilities required to carry out their research work and enhance the quality of their working lives within the limits of the resources available. Research staff also have the full benefit of the University's occupational health and safety services.

8.2 Trades Union

8.2.1 The UCU is the recognised body for negotiation and consultation on academic and related staffing matters. The Union receives notification of new appointments and researchers are free to join a trade union.

9. Career development

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Researchers on fixed-term and open-ended contracts are either seeking to develop their careers in higher education or see it as a first step on a path that may take them outside the higher education sector altogether. Either way, the University and the Principal Investigator, as immediate manager should provide opportunities and encourage researchers to actively develop their careers.

9.2 Access to the Careers Centre: One-to-One Support

9.2.1 All researchers have the right to consult and use the resources of the Careers Centre. Appointments can be made to see appropriate Careers Advisors or to use the resources of the career's libraries etc.

9.3 Staff development: Rights to participate

9.3.1 All members of staff are encouraged to make use of the development opportunities provided by OSDS.

9.3.2 Places on courses are usually allocated on a first come first served basis. Staff are encouraged to contact OSDS to highlight any areas of interest that are not included in the OSDS development programmes. In addition to attending general staff development activities, research staff have a right to two days' time off per year to attend careers seminars and reasonable time should be made available for them to consult Careers Advisors.

9.3.3 Schools are also encouraged to run their own training seminars for the benefit of all researchers. Advice and support on this is available from OSDS. Funding is available for research staff in each school to support networking and professional development activities.

9.4   Research Futures Passport

9.4.1   OSDS provides excellent development opportunities specifically for research staff which are informed by the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

9.4.2   The 'Passport to Research Futures' is a structured development programme for early career researchers designed to focus thinking about career planning, professional development and employability. It has been recognised and accredited by the ILM (Institute for Leadership and Management).

9.4.3   Further information on development for research staff can be found on the OSDS website.

10.   Research roles and environment

10.1   Non-research duties

10.1.1   Unless indicated in the terms and conditions of service, there is no requirement for those with specific research contracts to participate in non-research duties. However, the University permits researchers to undertake up to 12 hours teaching per semester without pay, provided that these hours and all associated preparation and follow-up (e.g. marking) are contained within the normal working week (36.25 hours) subject to any restrictions set by the funding body. In line with Research Council guidance, no more than 6 hours teaching in a week should be undertaken by researchers.

10.1.2   When a researcher exceeds the 12 hours of teaching detailed above, they should be remunerated in line with the pay rates of casual staff.

10.1.3   The relevant Head of School is responsible for approving teaching arrangements which are subject to the individual's voluntary agreement. Teaching experience is an important element of career development for research staff and Heads of Schools should ensure that an appropriate range of teaching is made available.

10.1.4   For research staff who have never taught before or who have never attended courses on teaching skills, it is considered essential that they attend the core teaching workshops on the Academic Staff Development Programme run by OSDS.

10.1.5   The employee may undertake external work with the prior consent of their Head of School/Unit or equivalent. When considering and agreeing external work, the following policies should be consulted and adhered to: Consultancy; Declaration of Interests; Intellectual Property. These policies can be accessed on the HR Policy Page under "External Work".

10.2   Access to research proposals submitted to funding agencies

10.2.1   Research staff should be kept aware of funding proposals likely to affect their posts and they should, where possible, participate in the preparation of funding applications relevant to the continuation of their employment. Research staff with a successful record of achievement who are eligible to become Principal Investigators may be applicants/joint applicants for external research funding. All grant applications are subject to approval by the Head of School.

10.3   Degree of independence of fixed-term research staff

10.3.1 The Principal Investigator is responsible for the overall direction of the research project/programme. Research staff should be made aware of the nature and extent of the supervision they will be given.

10.3.2 The Principal Investigator may delegate specific responsibilities to research staff providing that such responsibilities are appropriate for their level of expertise and experience. Good practice suggests that where possible written confirmation of such responsibilities should be given if they have not been made explicit in the further particulars for the post.

10.4   Association of Principal Investigator(s) and research staff in Publication and Commercial Exploitation

10.4.1 Intellectual property rights reside with the University unless otherwise assigned under contracts with funding bodies.

10.4.2 The production of research reports, the publication of research findings in scholarly journals and the wider dissemination of results to potential users and other interested parties is a formal part of the research process. The contribution of research staff must be fully recognised. Principal Investigators are required to encourage co-authorship on an agreed basis. If research staff wish to use the research, they should get permission from the Principal Investigator.

10.4.3   Principal Investigators are required to ensure that all project staff operate within the rules for confidentiality, patents, commercial exploitation and publication relevant to that project.

10.5   Funding agency policy on research support

10.5.1   Copies of the conditions of award for the Research Councils and other major funding bodies are available for reference in the Financial Advice and Support Office. The Principal Investigator is responsible for keeping research staff informed of any changes in policy related to possible extensions of the current grant. The University should ensure that any limitation that is placed on a contract by the funding agency does not interfere with its statutory or contractual responsibilities towards its employees.

10.6   Good research practice

10.6.1 The University's policy and procedure on Good Research Practice was developed to emphasise the importance of integrity and vigour in all research carried out at, and in partnership with, the University; and that it is accomplished responsibly in conformity with the law and in accordance with current best practice, irrespective of the source of funding. It applies to all staff involved in research.

11.   Other information

11.1   Other useful information for Research Staff can be found on the Research and Teaching Staff Forum.

12.   Review

12.1   This Code of Practice was adopted by the University Court with effect from 1 October 1998 and is reviewed regularly by the Research and Teaching Staff Forum.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.0	Migration of policy to the Governance Zone.	Published	Louise Milne Human Resources	03/07/2019
1.1	Changed classification from internal to public	Published	Lisa Stewart Human Resources	23/10/2019
1.2	Removal of CAPOD and replaced with OSDS weblinks and contacts.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	31/12/2020
1.3	Minor change to wording @ 10.1.5	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	23/02/2021
1.4	Change to review date only.	Published	Lisa Stewart HR	08/12/2022
1.5	Review date extended to allow review of policy to take place.	Published	Louise Milne HR	04/01/2024