



BEING AN EARLY
CAREER RESEARCHER
AT SURREY

The Unofficial Guide

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WELCOME

Welcome to the University of Surrey.
We want to make your time at Surrey as enjoyable and productive as possible for your future career. That means support with your core research (and sometimes teaching) activity as well as building your portfolio of skills and experiences. The

Doctoral College (DC) has been established to provide a framework to make this happen. Please take the opportunity to shape the DC's provision to fit your needs. I look forward to working with you.

Professor Chris France
Director of the Doctoral College



HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TIME AT SURREY

Welcome to Surrey from the Researcher Development Programme (RDP) team! The Researcher Development Programme is an integral part of the Doctoral College and is committed to supporting and enabling Surrey's Early Career Researchers to do great things. This means that we want to help you to be the best you can in the work you do here, and to be in a strong position to apply for the next step in your career, at Surrey or elsewhere.

If you are a researcher on a fixed-term contract, this definitely includes you. There are a wide variety of opportunities to develop your research and professional skills

sets, and to help you secure another position following the end of your contract with Surrey. This position may be with Surrey, in Higher Education, in industry, or other sectors; all researchers will be supported in the transition to the next step in their career.

Many opportunities are available, but it is up to you to take them. All that we ask is that you make an active decision. We want to make sure that every early career researcher is aware of the support and opportunities available, and is encouraged to engage with development activities that are relevant and useful to them.



WHAT IS AVAILABLE? THEMES FOR DEVELOPMENT

What should I be doing? / What could I be doing?

There are a wide variety of opportunities for your personal and professional development as members of staff at the University of Surrey. The Learning and Development pages on SurreyNet detail the courses and support provided by different teams across the university that are open to staff members. These teams include the Researcher Development Programme (RDP), Staff Development team, Department for Higher Education, and the Health and Safety team; you are also entitled to support and help from the Doctoral College. Additionally, there will be opportunities within your department and Faculty, and general opportunities for: Public Engagement activities, supporting Widening Participation

events, teaching, becoming a mentor, learning and developing language skills, being a member of a university committee, media coverage.

If you are new to your role and/or the University of Surrey please check the induction resources which can be found here: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/learning-and-development/new-staff-induction-resources

If you would like to meet for a one-to-one chat about your personal and professional development with a member of the RDP team email rdp@surrey.ac.uk, we can discuss your own requirements and help guide you through the available options to tailor a plan for you.



In the meantime, here are some ideas of things you could do or find out about:

Funding – how to get it

- For funding news sign up for alerts: researchprofessional.com
- Visit the Euraxess website for information on travel grants or fellowships: euraxessfunds.britishcouncil.org
- Offer to be a reviewer for funding bodies
- Read the weekly funding bulletin sent by your Faculty's Research Facilitation Officer
- Find out about the "Researcher Routes: First Funding Programme" which offers guidance and support for those submitting their first funding bid

Publishing – write compelling papers

- Start to review papers for journals in your field
- Develop a publication plan with your Principal Investigator (PI)
- Organise a journal club or reading group

Networking and building your profile

- Attend conferences
- Take on a role in a local research staff association or forum
- Attend workshop on networking and action planning
- Organise an external speaker to visit your department
- Speak at conferences and give presentations in departments at other universities
- Volunteer for a position on a departmental committee or working group. The positions open to research staff may be representational (e.g. to be the 'voice' for other research staff) or have a specific remit (e.g. Health & Safety representative)
- Get involved with blogs in your field, make considered comments on blogs you have an interest in and network with the online community

- Make sure you are a member of your relevant societies
- Check the Learning and Development webpages for relevant sessions: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/learning-and-development

Career planning (and see page 15)

- Identify the wide range of career and job opportunities available to you
- Identify the balance you want between the various aspects of your life (work, leisure, family etc.)
- Produce lists of jobs/careers/organisations to investigate further and plan how to do this
- Find out about the range of activities involved in specific careers/jobs that interest you
- Improve your CV – attend a workshop on CV writing, or book a one-to-one coaching session
- Evaluate your suitability for specific careers and jobs and gain impartial feedback on how realistic your career plans are
- Set targets for future action to take in order to increase your knowledge, skills and experience
- Identify useful sources/lists of individual contacts in career areas that interest you – producing lists of individuals to contact for further advice
- Make an appointment to discuss your options with a Careers Adviser
- Make sure your annual appraisal takes place
- Consider your plan A and your plan B

Impact and public engagement

- Visit The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) webpages to find out about public engagement: publicengagement.ac.uk
- Find out about the Beacons for Public Engagement programme (funded by Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust)
- Join the Public Engagement Forum: peforum@surrey.ac.uk
- Talk with the Impact Officer within the University of Surrey: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/research-and-innovation-services/impact
- If you have an idea or discovery then speak to Technology Transfer: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/technology-transfer
techtransfer@surrey.ac.uk

Teaching and supervising

- Volunteer for some teaching experience for undergraduates or taught masters courses
- Take on a mentoring role
- Provide one-to-one teaching or coaching on specific skills and techniques
- Enquire about the Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching offered by the Department of Higher Education at the University of Surrey

Management

- Take on the management of research staff or technicians
- Gain experience of negotiation
- Volunteer/ Intern in a relevant position
- Join the ECR reps forum (email rdp@surrey.ac.uk for further details)
- Check the Learning and Development pages for courses and workshops under the theme of leadership and management: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/learning-and-development

It's a long list... and there are lots more things that you could add.

There is also a national framework produced by Vitae called the **Researcher Development Framework** that "describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers". Take a look if you would like to think about areas for development: vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework

WHAT / WHO CAN HELP?

Get a Mentor

RDP has established a mentoring programme which has been highlighted in the HR Excellence in Research Award (Vitae) as an example of best practice. As an ECR you may be seeking to establish your research profile to develop your academic career or you may be seeking opportunities in industry or business. Whatever your individual position, a mentor can support you in your current position and your next career steps, e.g.

- Personalised support to develop your 5 year career plan
- Strategic side of research – applying for funding, outputs, impact
- Practical side of research – research skills, study design
- Increasing your network

At Surrey there are two mentoring schemes that you may be interested in.

1. Early career researcher mentoring

In this scheme you will be matched with a member of academic staff. We ask you some questions to establish what you would like your mentor for and even if you have a member of staff in mind. We then work to set up the relationship and let you take it from there.

2. Employer mentoring

If you would like a mentor from the world of work outside academia then we will endeavor to find you a suitable mentor. This mentor could be helpful if you are exploring career options and increasing your network outside of the usual academic circles.

Please email s.hopkins@surrey.ac.uk or rdp@surrey.ac.uk with any queries about these mentoring schemes

Reps Forum

This group represents the views and ideas of early career researchers from across the university. There are two reps per department / school or centre who meet 3 times per year with members of the RDP and the Doctoral College leaders along with representatives of the HR Excellence in Research working group and Athena Swan implementation group.

The forum is chaired by Dr Carol Spencely, Researcher Development Programme, and reports into the Doctoral College Board and university research committees.

To make sure that the voice of ECRs is heard. Email rdp@surrey.ac.uk to get involved.

Surrey Research Staff Association (SuRSA)

What is this?

A society for postdoctoral research staff and early career academics working at the University of Surrey. If you're trying to make your way in the world of research but feel like you're still finding your feet, then this is the place to be.

What is it doing?

The society aims to build a community of early career scholars by running regular activities and events to get people together across departments, faculties and disciplines. It's nice to know where to go to find a few kindred spirits. Being an early career scholar can get lonely sometimes, and a casual chat can often be the answer to a problem, or the start of something exciting.

How can I get involved?

You already are! There's no membership fee, and all early career scholars are considered to be members and have a say in how things run. Why not attend one of our planned events? Follow our social media pages to stay up to date.

Twitter: [@SRSA_surrey](https://twitter.com/SRSA_surrey)

Facebook: facebook.com/groups/srsaus

Making the Most of Your Appraisal

Every member of staff should have an annual appraisal. For the forms and guidance on how to get the most out of your appraisal please visit:

surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/human-resources/probation-appraisal-promotion



RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

Altmetrics and Bibliometrics – You want your research to carry as much impact as possible. At Surrey there are people who can make sure that you achieve this. For information on what you should be thinking about see the website: surrey.ac.uk/library/research/managingpublications Or speak to Abigail McBirnie: SRloopenaccess@surrey.ac.uk

Business cards – Appleseed Print (formerly Surrey Design and Print): surrey.ac.uk/appleseed

Department for Higher Education - The Department provides a framework for the teaching qualifications of academics, ensuring consistency of standards across the University, and offers certificated programmes and academic development opportunities. There are lots of ways for research staff and ECRs to get involved either through courses and qualifications or conferences and workshops. For details on all of these please see the website: surrey.ac.uk/dhe

Department of Technology Enhanced Learning - supports and promotes the innovative use of educational technology across the disciplines: surrey.ac.uk/tel/index.htm

Doctoral College – The Doctoral College's vision is to support researcher excellence and employability across the doctoral and early career stages of the researcher journey. In particular, the Doctoral College is dedicated to building a cohesive community and research environment, providing first class training, facilitating excellent supervision, and enhancing employability skills. surrey.ac.uk/doctoral-college

Emergency numbers - In an emergency who do you call?

At the University – the first line of support is the Security Team – available on **01483 683333** or extension **3333**

The Security Team are fully trained and equipped to manage many types of incident. If the General Emergency Services are required, the Security Team can quickly respond and direct these Services to the incident site efficiently and more effectively than if you call 999 direct.

Put this Emergency Number on your Mobile Phone, and in any emergency while on Campus, call: **01483 683333**

surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-safety/faqs/Emergency_response_and_Incident_reporting

Employability and Careers Centre - Dr Hayley Cordingley and Fiona Thie are the career advisors dedicated to supporting postgraduate and early career researchers. They are available for one-to-one careers advice sessions, and run a programme of workshops in the Doctoral College covering topics such as: career planning and management, practical job hunting, identifying your skills, career options, interviews and making the transition into a new role/out of academia.

One to one sessions: Please call **01483 68 9001** or pop into the Employability & Careers Centre to book your appointment: surrey.ac.uk/careers

EURAXESS - is a unique pan-European initiative providing access to a complete range of information and support services to researchers wishing to pursue their research careers in Europe or stay connected to it: ec.europa.eu/euraxess

Faculty Engagement Librarians – There is a librarian for each faculty who can help staff with their enquiries. To find out who yours is visit the library staff website: surrey.ac.uk/library/help/library_staff.htm and search for the faculty engagement librarian for your faculty.

Faculty Research Facilitation Officers – each Faculty has a research facilitation officer who will send research information bulletins. They are also a great source of information about research-related opportunities.

- FASS - Tamsin Woodward-Smith
- FEPS - Jess Guennewich
- FHMS - Marcela Acuna-Rivera

Fixed-term contracts – help with navigating – many early career research staff will be on a fixed-term contract

The HR policy relating to fixed-term contracts is within the Management of Change policy: surrey.ac.uk/policies/management_of_change.htm

Procedure for leaving the university: surrey.ac.uk/policies/procedure_for_leaving_the_university_of_surrey.htm

Please also see further information the section on p16, “Moving on: Ending of a fixed-term contract”, and see Human Resources below.

Health and Safety team - The Health and Safety team support the strategic development and implementation of health and safety across all areas of the University. A team of faculty-based advisers provide ‘on the ground’ advice and support. In addition, there is a rolling programme of health and safety workshops: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/health-safety

Human Resources – The Human Resources team aims to provide an efficient, effective and supportive HR service to the University community. For more information about what they do please visit their website: surrey.ac.uk/surreynet/departments/human_resources

Who is your Human Resources (HR) representative? Please see here to find out: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/human-resources/who-we-are

Intranet: SurreyNet – This is a useful place to find out what is happening (news, announcements and events) as well as links to departments, learning and development pages, and key information for staff (e.g. semester dates and university closure days). surreynet.surrey.ac.uk

IT support - The IT Service Desk will be your port of call for any IT issues. There are a number of ways to contact the IT Service Desk:

Telephone: extension **9898**

Off campus: **01483 689898**

Email: usersupport@surrey.ac.uk

Self-Service Portal:
itsupport.surrey.ac.uk/sw/selfservice

In Person: Library, Level 1. Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm

Media relations - The Media Relations Team is part of communications and PR. They encourage researchers to chat with them about any aspect of your research that you feel may be newsworthy. The team act as the first point of contact for regional, national, international and specialist media enquiries:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/marketing-and-communications/communication-media-relations-and-events

Pensions – As a member of staff you are entitled to a pension. For more information please see the Pensions website surrey.ac.uk/surreynet/departments/pensions or speak to the team who are always happy to answer questions.

Principal Investigators (PIs) – Your PI or line manager may be a good source of information and guidance for your development while you are in post and for your next steps when your contract ends.

Poster printing - Appleseed Print (formerly Surrey Design and Print)
surrey.ac.uk/appleseed/print

Research and Innovation Services (RIS) - RIS provide a range of services to support Research, Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer activities

across the University. Within RIS you will find support in:

- proposal development
- research integrity and governance

For more information see their website within SurreyNet:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/research-and-innovation-services

Research Integrity and Governance Office (RIGO; including Ethics):
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/research-and-innovation-services/research-integrity-and-governance-office

RIGO provides support to members of the University conducting research with human participants, for those who may need external approval (including from the NHS) and for those with studies that require ethical review by the University Ethics Committee.

Research Design Service South East - help people preparing research proposals for submission to peer-reviewed funding programmes in applied health and social care. They cover the counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Advice and support is provided free of charge and is available through research clinics, face-to-face, telephone and email
rds-se.nihr.ac.uk

Research Finance – If you are applying for funding or have any finance questions then see the research finance website:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/research-finance

Research Professional – Is a database of research funding and news to which the university pays an annual subscription. As a university member you are able to access this resource free of charge. Sign in from a computer on campus and then you will have a login anywhere. It is possible to set up searches and have the results emailed to you regularly. For information and to sign up visit: researchprofessional.com

Researcher Development Programme - To meet the development and training needs of early career researchers and research staff we offer a bespoke programme.

The programme has the following:

- on-demand one to ones
- expert sessions
- mentoring
- ECR reps forum

We will endeavor to meet all new research staff when they arrive at Surrey for a short chat about how we can best support you. If you are already at Surrey and would like that chat then please email rdp@surrey.ac.uk. For more information please visit our website:
surrey.ac.uk/researcher-development-programme

Staff Development – Staff development offer learning and development opportunities for all staff at the University of Surrey. To see what they offer please see the website:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/learning-and-development

Staff handbook – details the terms and conditions of employment for all staff
surrey.ac.uk/policies/staff_handbook.htm

Statistics Advice Centre - The statistical advice is provided on a one-to-one basis to postgraduates, researchers and staff members at the University of Surrey.
surrey.ac.uk/math/advice/statistics/

Surrey Research Insight (SRI) – SRI is the Universities open access repository which allows you to make your research publications freely available online. For more information about open access see the website: surrey.ac.uk/library/research/openaccess and if you have any questions about open access or the SRI please email: sriopenaccess@surrey.ac.uk

Technology Transfer help to create impact from your research through giving Intellectual Property advice and filing patent application where necessary, providing business support to create a company, finding proof-of-concept funding and commercial partners.

For more information see SurreyNet:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/technology-transfer

Vitae - Vitae is dedicated to realising the potential of researchers through transforming their professional and career development. Vitae created the researcher development framework (RDF) which identifies the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers. It can help individuals maximise their potential and get the most out of their careers. To download the RDF visit the website: vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/researcher-development-framework-rdf-vitae.pdf For more general information visit: vitae.ac.uk

The Centre for Wellbeing – The Centre offer counselling, health and wellbeing advice, workshops, guidance on the management of stress and work related pressures. For more information on their full range of services see their website:
surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/staff-wellbeing



PERSONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

♥♥ A key component for successful career progression is the development and execution of a detailed career plan. The plan must include clear sign posting with measurable and achievable goals. Working closely with your line manager and mentor will help to shape the plan. Careful planning will ensure that your career plan is achievable, but adequately stretching to help progress your career. ♥♥

Professor Roberto Marcello La Ragione
Head of the Department of Pathology and Infectious Diseases, University of Surrey

Think about the plan, goals and targets for your career and discuss it with your PI, your peers, and/or you are very welcome to chat with Carol or Sam in the RDP team (they will also provide tea/coffee and biscuits!)

Careers advice is available through the Employability and Careers Centre. Dr Hayley Cordingley and Fiona Thie are the career advisors dedicated to supporting postgraduate and early career researchers. They are available for one-to-one careers advice sessions, and run a programme of workshops in the Doctoral College covering topics such as: career planning and management, practical job hunting, identifying your skills, career options, interviews and making the transition into a new role/out of academia. Please call 01483 68 9001 or pop into the Employability & Careers Centre to book your appointment:
surrey.ac.uk/careers

There are many different tools available to use in planning, below are a couple that you may like to use; however, you are free to use which ever tool you prefer, even a pen and paper are sufficient.

Euraxess No Limits

EURAXESS have produced a “No Limits” tool which aims to help researchers review their professional development and career direction and find ideas for how to move forward. There are sections on values and motivations, skills, career options, and planning your development. It is an excellent resource designed for researchers that uses a simple, user-friendly interface allowing you to go into as much or as little depth as you want in each section. For example, in the career options section there are the following titles: an academic career, a research career outside academia, a non-research career in higher education, a non-research career outside higher education, running your own business, a portfolio career, a career break. Each section also directs you to multiple useful links and information.

This tool can be previewed at:
euraxess.masfak.ni.ac.rs/piperstool

Mindtools

SWOT, PEST and SMART explained

This website has a workbook that takes you through some personal development planning techniques that you may like to have a go at. It takes you through SWOT and PEST analysis with regard to your career, and then helps you create a mission statement and set SMART targets and goals. Finally, you can look into a skills audit and create the plan.

mindtools.com/courses/InV924x0/PersonalDevelopmentPlanning.pdf

MOVING ON: ENDING OF A FIXED-TERM CONTRACT

Many early career researchers / postdocs / fellows will be employed on a fixed-term contract linked to external funding for a research project. The University policy and guidance relating to this is contained within the Management of Change policy.

surrey.ac.uk/policies/management_of_change.htm

The parts that specifically relate to ending of fixed-term contracts are:

“For staff employed on fixed term contracts notice of dismissal is provided at the outset of the contract”.

This means that the end date of your contract is set out at the start of your employment with the university and you will not be sent a letter notifying you of this “dismissal”.

You may also wish to read through the Procedure for Leaving the University of Surrey surrey.ac.uk/about/corporate/policies/procedure_for_leaving_the_university_of_surrey.htm

If you have any questions about your contract then please contact your local HR representative. If you don't know who this is, please see:

surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/human-resources/who-we-are

The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 aims to prevent employers discriminating against staff on fixed term contracts.

This legislation states that the core terms and conditions of staff members on fixed term contracts are no less favourable than other employees, and you are entitled to the same employment protection arrangements

Additionally, fixed term employees who reach 4 years continuous service with the University (and have had at least one contract extension or will be entering into a new fixed term contract) should be given permanent contracts (unless there is objective justification for using a further fixed term contract)

Please note - If your contract is made permanent it can still be terminated due to redundancy, e.g. if your contract is funded from external sources or “grant money” and this money does not continue beyond the expected end date of your contract, then your position is at risk of redundancy. If you have any questions about this please contact your local HR representative.

The reality for postdocs

- Start applying for jobs around six months before the end date of your contract. Although, if your ideal job comes up before then, don't wait! – that job won't be available at the exact time you want it to be
- Make sure you take control and ask the relevant people in your team, department or Faculty for help
- Please bear in mind that securing research funding will often take at least one year

- Please do not rely on research funding bids that have been submitted but not yet funded. You will need real and solid back-up plans
- You must do what is best for you. It if means leaving a role early, this is not unusual, or even unexpected. Loyalty is a great quality, but not at the expense of finding the next job!
- You are encouraged to talk with colleagues, mentors or managers about your options and your professional development throughout your contract (don't wait until the final stages)
- Towards the end of your fixed-term contract you may wish to discuss with your line manager what other opportunities exist in your department, the use of office facilities and reasonable time off to seek alternative employment (e.g. attend interviews)
- Talk with your local HR rep about your contract and any entitlement you may have to redundancy payment

Further information

Contact your HR representative with any queries or for further information: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/human-resources/who-we-are

Support and advice

- The Trade Unions are able to provide assistance throughout the process (to members). The University recognises three Trade Unions: UCU (University and College Union), UNISON, and UNITE.
- For support with your professional and career development please contact the Researcher Development Programme (rdp@surrey.ac.uk), the Staff Development team, or the Employability and Careers Centre
- You may also wish to seek future careers advice from your PI or other academic staff over this period
- For additional support for your health and wellbeing please see: surreynet.surrey.ac.uk/staff-services/staff-wellbeing

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We are looking forward to working with you during your time at Surrey. We hope this guide is useful. Please do let us know if we have missed anything, or if you have any

constructive feedback on how to improve this guide or the support for Early Career Researchers at Surrey. Email: rdp@surrey.ac.uk

Carol and Sam
Dr Carol Spencely and Dr Sam Hopkins





8240-0617

University of Surrey
Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XH, UK

+44 (0)1483 68 3372

rdp@surrey.ac.uk

surrey.ac.uk/researcher-development-programme

We've made all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information in this publication was correct at the time of going to print on August 2017, but we can't accept any liability for any inaccuracies in the information published, and the information might change from time to time without notice. For the latest and most up-to-date information, please visit our website at surrey.ac.uk