Research Staff Career Planner

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The University of Bristol has signed up to the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

The Concordat encourages researchers to:

- Take ownership of their career, identifying opportunities to work towards career goals.

- Explore and prepare for a range of employment options across different sectors, by making use of mentors, careers professionals, training, and secondments.

- Maintain an up-to-date professional career development plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their experience, that can be used to support job applications.

To support you to do this, this Career Planner provides you with a set of tools to carry out a self-assessment of the skills you have developed and where you might want your career to go next. A framework for analysing the skills you will need for future roles and assessing where your gaps are and a template career development plan to help you to plan how you will go about filling any gaps you might have with development activities.

Within the Concordat there is also the principle that the University of Bristol will 'Provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors.'

To support you to do this we have a wide range of activities on our Develop platform which you can access here: https://develop.bristol.ac.uk/. We also have useful resources on our Bristol Clear website which includes a career planning toolkit and resources pages that have been developed to support early career researchers who want to reflect on their career progress to date and begin to develop an ongoing career strategy.

It provides a roadmap that enables you to:

- feel purposeful and in control.

- make informed choices.

- continue to learn and develop yourself proactively.

- notice and create career-building opportunities.

- be more assertive in asking for and seeking what you want.

We hope you find these tools useful and that they help you to plan your next steps.

Bristol Clear Team

University of BRISTOL

Academic Staff Development

Self Assessment

A good way to begin your career planning is with a self-assessment. This will help you to analyse what you like about what you do now, what you are good at, what skills you have developed and where you might want your career to go next.

Self-Awareness – where are you now?

What do I enjoy about my current role?	What do I dislike about my current role?

What skills have I developed?	What have been my main achievements?

What are my wider interests?	What are the core values I live my life by?

"if we do not develop our own self-awareness... we empower other people and circumstances to shape our lives by default"

Stephen Covey The 7 habits of Highly effective people (ed.2015)

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Self Assessment

Another self-assessment tool is to consider your career values:
consider the values listed below, circle all the values that resonate with you then pick your top 6 then reduce that to 3 and then to the one value that is the most important.
This will help when selecting future roles as you can check how closely they match your career values. You can also add values that are important to you that might be missing from this list.

Recognition Positive feedback for achievements	**Knowledge** Generating knowledge or research	**Variety** Frequent change of routine and tasks	**Supervision** Directly responsible for work done by others
Influence Control over people, situations, problems	**Security** Permanent contract and job security	**Excitement** High degree of stimulation and novelty	**Pressure** Time pressure and small margin for error
Calm A tranquil environment without pressure	**Creativity** Not following a format developed by others	**Status** Impress and gain admiration for work	**Advancement** Be able to gain promotions readily
Autonomy Control over nature and structure of work	**Financial Rewards** Large salary, bonus payments	**Precision** Detailed tasks requiring accuracy	**Work-life balance** Have adequate time for priorities outside of work
Problem Solving Tackle complex issues and trouble-shoot	**Competition** Opportunities to pit abilities against others	**Location** Allows choice as to where to live	**Meaning/ Purpose** The value your work adds to the community
Relationships Have close relationships at work, with trust	**Teams** Work towards a team (not individual) goal	**Authority** Power and authority over work of others	**Practicality** Work which results in useful outcome
Work Alone Lone working on projects	**Intellectual Status** Be an 'expert' in your field	**Adventure** Job frequently involves taking risks	**Aesthetics** Involves appreciation of beauty of things or ideas

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Consider the positions you'd like to hold throughout your career and find out now what skills and knowledge are required to carry them out. This will help you develop what you need for the future. If you don't know look at job descriptions for similar, advertised roles, talk to the individuals who are currently in these roles and talk to those recruiting to these roles.
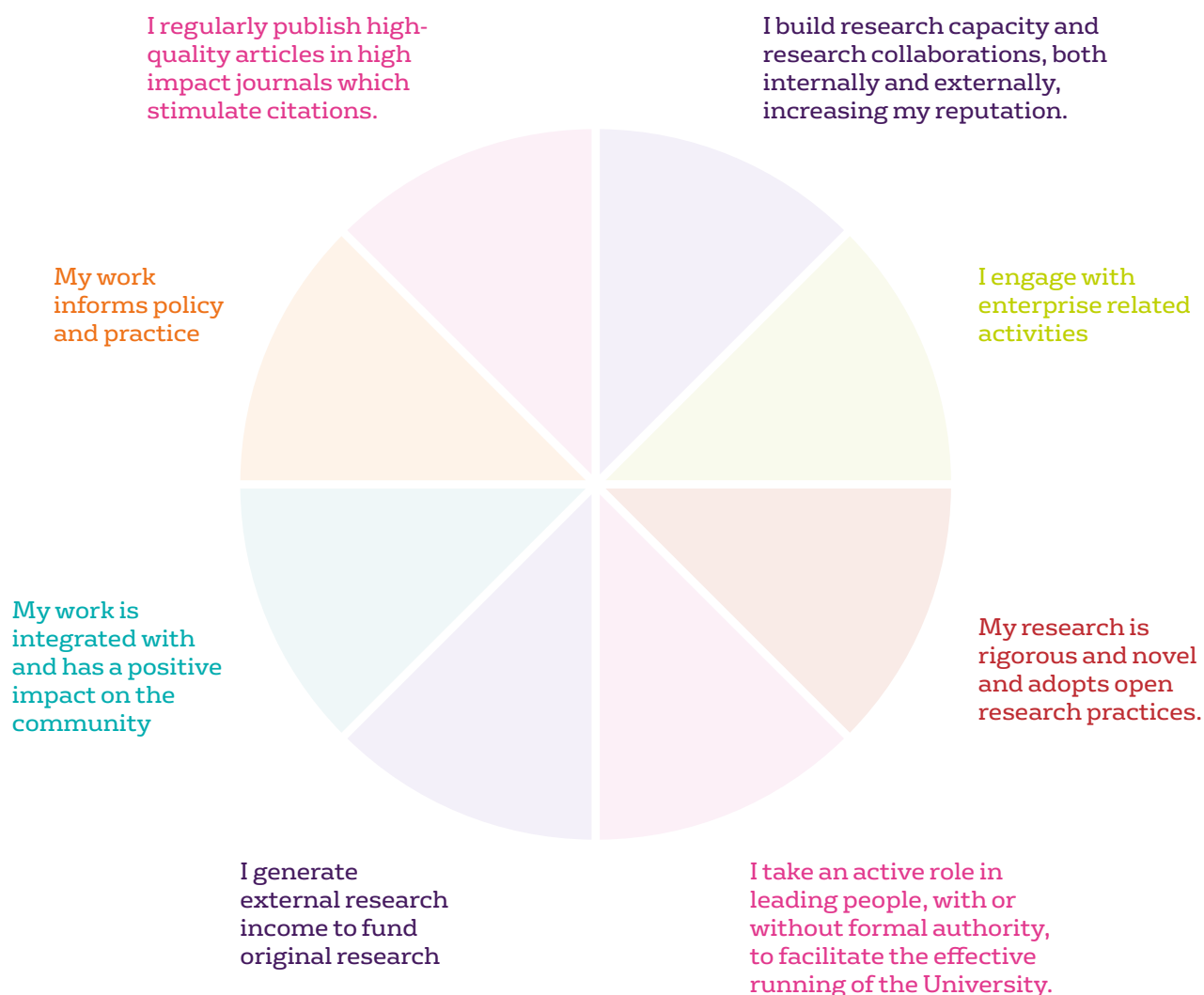
5-year Career Path Plan

Current Role	Position:	Required skills and Knowledge:
	Job description:	

Role I want in 6 months	Position:	Required skills and Knowledge:
	Job description:	

Role I want in 1 year	Position:	Required skills and Knowledge:
	Job description:	

Role I want in 3 years	Position:	Required skills and Knowledge:
	Job description:	

Role I want in 5 years	Position:	Required skills and Knowledge:
	Job description:	

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Academic skills gap analysis – an example that can be adjusted for any role

Focusing on your next career move (having identified the skills and knowledge you need to develop for that role) it's now important to assess where your skills gaps are. The wheel below is a tool to analyse this to help you to be competitive. You can use the format for roles in or outside academia by changing the sections to reflect the relevant skills required.

1. Consider the skills in the wheel below, the eight sections in this example represent the typical skills needed in an academic career and match to the UoB role profiles and current promotion criteria.

2. With the centre as 0 and the outer edge as 10, rate your current level of skill or experience in each area by drawing a straight or curved line to create a new outer edge.

3. Now give each section a written score of 0-10 according to how much time you are currently spending on each area. What do you notice about your balance? What has this highlighted as your priorities for development?

Examples of activities in each area can be found on the next page.

I regularly publish high-quality articles in high impact journals which stimulate citations.

I build research capacity and research collaborations, both internally and externally, increasing my reputation.

My work informs policy and practice

I engage with enterprise related activities

My work is integrated with and has a positive impact on the community

My research is rigorous and novel and adopts open research practices.

I generate external research income to fund original research

I take an active role in leading people, with or without formal authority, to facilitate the effective running of the University.

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Academic skill	Examples could include:
I regularly publish high-quality articles in high impact journals which stimulate citations.	1. Publishing high-quality peer-reviewed articles, monographs, creative works or other demonstrated scholarly activity. 2. Building a regular output of publications with a frequency appropriate to your discipline that balances quality and quantity. 3. Co-authoring publications resulting in collaborative work and networks.
I build research capacity and research collaborations, both internally and externally, increasing my reputation.	1. Presenting at national or international conferences or at seminars. 2. Co-authoring publications resulting in collaborative work and networks. 3. Contributing ideas to the research project, including enhancements to the technical or methodological aspects of the study, thus providing substantial 'added value'. 4. Referee papers for external bodies. 5. Play an active part in research networks, develop contacts with external bodies including funding bodies, and actively seek out and develop opportunities for interdisciplinary research.
I engage with enterprise-related activities.	1. Where the research is apposite, begin to develop entrepreneurial or collaborative links either with external organisations or with in-house companies. 2. Where appropriate, register patents to protect intellectual property.
My research is rigorous and novel and adopts open research practices.	1. Ensure intellectual rigour and adherence to ethical standards in the projects you are involved in. 2. Identify novel personal research objectives, develop a plan for personal research and initiate research that leads to the development of knowledge and theoretical understanding. 3. Producing open research outputs as appropriate by adopting good practice in, for example, sharing data and code, sharing materials, sharing digital outputs, publishing preprints and pre-registering study protocols.

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else."

Yogi Berra

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Academic skill	Examples could include:
I generate external research income to fund original research.	1. Develop full awareness of sources of research funding. 2. Contribute to grant applications submitted by others. 3. Assess research findings for the need/scope for further investigations. 4. Write short bids for individual research funding or where funders do not permit this, contribute to the writing of collective bids.
My work is integrated with and has a positive impact on the community.	1. Participate effectively in activities to achieve engagement with research, and/or impact beyond academia.
I take an active role in leading people, with or without formal authority, to facilitate the effective running of the University.	1. Contribute to the teaching of students in the School, as appropriate, examples could be giving lectures, taking small group classes and participating in short courses or workshops to develop teaching skills. 2. Supervising final year undergraduate projects and doctoral students. 3. Play an effective role in mentoring colleagues at an earlier career stage. 4. Help colleagues to interpret data, to manage competing priorities, and to develop their research skills. 5. Consistently act as a good citizen, actively taking on administrative duties and participating fully in the life of the School, behaving as a role model for others. 6. Develop an awareness of University, Faculty and School strategy and objectives, including how your role contributes to these. 7. Develop an understanding of relevant issues in the higher education, research, social and political environment.
My work informs policy and practice.	1. Where appropriate begin to develop professional links with individuals or organisations working in policy and practice development. 2. Participate effectively in activities to achieve engagement with or impact related to policy and practice.

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Career Development Plan

Look at your current skills and knowledge and the skills and knowledge required for your next role, where are your gaps, what skills or experience do you need to develop to fill those gaps?

Example:

Overall Goal	To become a senior research associate within a year				
Development need	**Actions or activities to address need**	**Timescale – when will I do action/activity by?**	**How competent do I currently feel in this area on a scale of 1- 5**	**Level of competency I feel after completion of action on a scale of 1- 5**	**Learning outcomes**
Experience presenting at conferences	1. Attend Presenting with Confidence course 2. Shadow those more experienced at conferences 3. Get accepted to present at a conference 4: Get feedback on my presentation from xx	1. Signed up to next session on xx/xx/xx 2. Will have talked to xx in my research group by xx/xx/xx to arrange to shadow them 3. Present at next conference on xx/xx/xx 4. Ask xx to provide feedback at conference	1	**Action 1:** 4 **Action 2:** 2 **Action 3:** 4 **Action 4:** 4	• Better understanding of my personal presenting style. • Know how to prepare before presentations. • In a position to approach presenting with greater confidence • Have a more pragmatic approach to presenting. • Know my presenting strengths and weaknesses.

A template to complete your own Career Development Plan can be found on the next page.

"A goal without a plan is just a wish"

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

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Career Development Plan Template:

Overall Goal	

Development need	Actions or activities to address need	Timescale – when will I do action/activity by?	How competent do I currently feel in this area on a scale of 1- 5	Level of competency I feel after completion of action on a scale of 1- 5	Learning outcomes

Examples of development activities you could do to fill these gaps can be found on the next page.

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Development activities to build your portfolio of evidence:

Ask for feedback: Requesting and obtaining insight on personal performance from different perspectives. Be sure you're ready to receive feedback but note that often it is the critical and challenging feedback that helps us develop most.

Reflect: Creating space and time to reflect on your actions and reactions to events can help you to understand where you need to develop, increasing self-awareness and critical thought. You could document your reflections in a journal using notes, drawings, diagrams, or mind-maps. Other ways to reflect could include meditation and mindfulness.

Experience: Asking to be part of a new piece of work, project or helping to write a new grant application are all excellent opportunities to learn new skills and then apply what has been learnt and gain critical experience.

Workshops: Learning topics of interest and gaining knowledge and skills through in person or virtual training courses and tools such as linked-in learning and Knowhow – both of which you can access in your own time.

Keeping up to date: Being up to date with current research and dedicating time to reading journals, within or wider than your field is another way to start to develop new research ideas and develop publication writing skills.

Coaching and Mentoring: Finding a mentor or coach can help you to work through your own issue or situation, gain a new perspective on a research idea or get guidance from someone who has had similar experiences.

Peer support: Asking peers for their help and developing a set of informal, supportive relationships is an opportunity to share and compare approaches and experiences with others. Typically, this is to provide mutual support is a safe environment.

Shadowing: Asking to gain insight from observing others, usually on a temporary basis is an effective way to learn new skills, it is useful when considering a new role to see what it is like and can help you to develop particular expertise.

Secondment: Seeking out opportunities to gain experience in new environments either internally or externally. This will help you to see how other teams tackle research problems, collaborate and work as a team. It can introduce you to new ways of working and new methodologies. These can be informal or formal arrangements.

Communities of practice: Joining and participating in communities or groups of people who share a common interest or are tackling the same problems creates a space for the group to share their experience, knowledge, skills, and learning.

Professional body membership: Participating in your wider profession by belonging to a professional body. This provides access to policy makers, researchers, and a network of contacts. Membership also provides recognition of your knowledge.

Professional body qualification: Gaining formal qualifications or accreditations demonstrates your skill and commitment, increases your value, and enhances your career prospects.

Citizenship opportunities: Investing time and energy to contribute to initiatives outside or within your immediate area and remit, are opportunities for networking and contributing to the wider university.

Networking: Interacting with others to exchange information and develop professional contacts. This broadens your horizons, and increases your exposure to different experiences, people and ways of working.

Conferences and seminars: Attending events exposes you to new offerings and thinking. You can hear a variety of practitioners and researchers, as well as taking the opportunity to present your own research.

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