



'Researcher development' programme 2008-12

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# EE Hub News

## Spring 2008

Hello and welcome to the spring edition of EE Hub news.

Since joining the programme in November I have spent the last few months settling into my new role as Hub Manager and time has flown by!

I hope you find this edition interesting and it includes both national and regional news. If you wish to contribute an article for a future newsletter or want to be added to our mailing list please do contact us as we would love to hear from you.

Thanks to all those who sent in articles for this edition.

**Joanne Warner**  
East of England Hub Manager  
[eehub@grad.ac.uk](mailto:eehub@grad.ac.uk)

## EE Hub Good Practice Meeting

**Engaging Research Staff with the Research Development Agenda**

**24<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford**

This event is aimed at all academic or support staff across the region involved with the development of researchers. The purpose of this meeting is to share ideas and tips on how to generate interest in the new researcher development agenda amongst researchers.

The proposed topics for discussion are: view point of early career researchers, motivation for the new agenda and career development needs of research staff, "how to crack the egg" and encourage researchers to engage in career development initiatives.

There is no charge to attend this meeting and I will soon be posting more details on the EE Hub web pages along with the programme. For more information please contact Joanne Warner at [eehub@grad.ac.uk](mailto:eehub@grad.ac.uk)

## The new 'researcher development' programme will be launched in September 2008

This year signals a transition year from the current UK GRAD Programme, in a partnership with Higher Education Researcher Development (UKHERD), to a new programme that will support postgraduate researchers and research staff. The official launch will take place at the annual researcher development conference that will be held this year in London at the Novotel London West Hotel on 8 and 9 September 2008. For future updates coming soon about the Conference, please visit our website at [www.grad.ac.uk](http://www.grad.ac.uk).

The new contract, which runs from 2008 to 2012, is funded by the Research Councils UK (RCUK), and is managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation. CRAC will work in partnership with Dr Janet Metcalfe, the director of the current UK GRAD Programme, the host institutions for the UK GRAD Regional Hubs (the universities of Cardiff, Edinburgh, Hertfordshire, Leeds, Manchester, Sussex, Warwick and Kings College, London), and with UKHERD.

Currently the team is busy setting up the new programme, creating the name and brand and a new website to reflect the new programme and its broader remit. In order to keep everyone in the loop with the latest developments, we have set up a web page at [www.grad.ac.uk/newcontract](http://www.grad.ac.uk/newcontract) featuring updates related to the new programme. We will continue to post further updates on this page throughout the year as developments related unfold.

During the next few months there will be a number of ways for stakeholders and practitioners to engage in the development of the new programme. If you would like to get involved, please contact your regional Hub for further information.

*News from Jane Sugars*

*CRAC University Networks Manager, Centre for Excellence, UK GRAD Programme®*

### Hub host HEIs - March 08

Kings College London and the University of Manchester are confirmed as host institutions for the London and North West Hubs respectively.

Fiona Denney has taken over from Norman Staines as Co-ordinator in London, and in the North West Judy Williams will be taking on the role from Jane Ratchford. Both appointments followed an open process and we were delighted at the level of interest from regional institutions in each case.

## Careers in Focus: Academia

**Apply Now!**

### Event dates and locations

- Monday 28 April 2008, Bristol
- Monday 6 October 2008, Manchester

If you want to explore what a career in the academic environment is really like, book onto one of our *Careers in Academia* events. Following the success of last year's programme, UK GRAD has confirmed a further two one-day events for 2008 in Bristol (28 April) and Manchester (6 October).

Like most careers, there are many elements that make up a career in academia, and you need specific skills to succeed in what can be a very competitive environment. Here's your chance to find out what really is involved, what skills and strengths it will take to succeed and to decide if this is the career for you.

For further information please visit [www.grad.ac.uk](http://www.grad.ac.uk) and click on the careers in focus link or email [jonathan.roberts@grad.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.roberts@grad.ac.uk) to register your interest.

## Date for your diary: Annual researcher development conference 2008

*8-9 September 2008*

We are pleased to confirm the date of our annual conference which will be held in London at the [Novotel London West Hotel](#). Marking the official launch of the new 'researcher development programme', this two day conference will reflect the broader remit of the new contract. Building on the success of our previous UK GRAD and UKHERD conferences, the programme will bring together both agendas in relation to the personal and professional development of postgraduate researchers and research staff. Further information and booking details will be available in the coming months. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Launch of the new Concordat RCUK

RCUK and Universities UK (UUK) have been working with the UK Higher Education sector working group to analyse the responses to the consultation on the draft revised Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.

The Concordat is now being redrafted taking into account all the responses received and when finalised, the proposed signatories will be formally agreeing the Concordat. RCUK will also be asking a number of organisations to formally agree to support the Concordat; if your organisation would like to formally support the Concordat please contact Rosie Beales to discuss the process, [rosie.beales@rcuk.ac.uk](mailto:rosie.beales@rcuk.ac.uk).

An Implementation plan is being prepared which will detail how the Concordat will provide a framework for future progress by the actions of the sector as a whole which should ensure that the revised concordat will have a higher and more sustained profile than the 1996 concordat.

The formal agreement process may take some time but the signatories are planning to publish the Concordat and hold a formal launch in June.

Please visit [www.rcuk.ac.uk/news](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/news) for more information.

## EUA create a Council for Doctoral Education (January 2008)

The EUA have formed the Council for Doctoral Education (EUA-CDE) in response to the growing demand from universities in Europe for a more structured approach to promote cooperation and exchange of good practice between doctoral schools and programmes in Europe.

The objectives of the new Council include:

- Enhancing the quality of doctoral education in Europe by fostering debate and promoting the exchange and dissemination of good practice.
- Encouraging and supporting the development of institutional policies and strategies as well as the introduction of effective leadership and management practices.
- Strengthening the international dimension of doctoral programmes and research training through improved cooperation among its members and by establishing dialogue with partner organisations in other world regions
- Identifying and monitoring emerging trends in doctoral education inside and outside Europe
- Promoting the doctorate as a key professional qualification and underlining the importance of young researchers for a knowledge-based society.

Mary Ritter, Pro Rector at Imperial College London, and chair of the UK GRAD Programme Steering Group, has been elected Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee.

Membership will be open to EUA full members and also to universities awarding doctoral degrees that are not members. For more information on the [EUA-CDE](#) please contact Sandra Bitusikova at [alexandra.bitusikova@eua.be](mailto:alexandra.bitusikova@eua.be)

## Roberts' Policy Forum 2008

The UK GRAD Programme hosted the fifth Roberts' policy in Birmingham on 9-10 January 2008. This annual event provides a strategic review of the implementation of the Roberts' recommendation on training requirements and updates on the latest policy relating to researcher development and the implications for their institutions.



Coffee Break

The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to input to and influence the direction of the skills agenda. Individuals attending the Forum included

those responsible for institutional policy on postgraduate researchers and research staff and those implementing the Roberts' recommendations for researchers.

Firstly, the Forum explored the strategic importance for institutions of engaging with the Government's impact agenda and identifying sector priorities in developing an evidence base to inform national and institutional policy and enhance provision. In addition, building on the Rugby Team Impact Framework, the Forum identified existing and potential tools and mechanisms to increase the evidence base. Participants heard inputs from Randal Richards, Chief Executive, RCUK Strategic Delivery; David Gani, Director of Research Policy and Strategy, Scottish Funding Council and Wendy Hall, Council for Science and Technology and University of Southampton.

Speaking on *Attracting, training and supporting world-class researchers*, Randal Richards gave an incisive overview of the changed climate for UK research and the efforts needed to maintain the UK's global economic position. There is an increased need to ensure:

- International visibility and respect for the UK research base and its 'products'.
- A greater willingness of the research base to engage with business – and vice versa.

- A demonstrable commitment from all parties involved to ensure a sustainable and attractive research career available to all with the capabilities and commitment needed.

David Gani called for the extension of the collaborative model, including greater co-ordination between research and funding councils, to strengthen the UK's competitive position in the years ahead. He highlighted examples of Scotland's significant strategic investments in the research base and researchers, such as funding 'research pooling' of research facilities and training provision and the SFC's researcher development grant and called on other funding councils to consider similar initiatives.

The UK has to constantly compete against the established OECD countries and 'fiercely driven' newcomers China and India. The EU plays an increasing funding role that the UK must capitalise upon as funding crucially influences international investments and inward talent flow.

Wendy Hall then discussed the findings of the Council for Science and Technology's report *Pathways to the Future* (October 2007), which recommended a national framework to support research careers and greater independence and more responsibility for researchers much earlier in their careers. The report called for universities to treat research staff on an equal footing with other staff.

The report identified the continuing need to increase the attractiveness of academic careers for the best students, while also giving equal value to non-academic careers. Excellent research was pan-global: the UK must forge strong international links and encourage interchange of people and ideas.

Giving researchers greater independence and more responsibility early on would make a research career more attractive. Fellowships were an excellent method of achieving this. Controversially, she suggested there was scope for universities to use overhead creatively to create fellowships.

Researchers also have a responsibility to take control of their careers. They need effective representation and to have a voice. Funding bodies should employ more 'carrots and sticks': for example career development should be embedded in assessment of proposals and evaluation of outcomes.



David Gani, Wendy Hall, and Janet Metcalfe

The panel of speakers further explored the challenges of persuading academics that it was in everyone's best interests to manage researchers and projects differently. Culture change

would depend on academics' perception of drivers, and a key one for principal investigators was the successor to the RAE, the Research Excellence Framework (REF). The panel identified a number of 'unintended consequences' of the REF and lack of joined-up thinking, including difficulties for inter-disciplinary collaborations where the disciplines involved were subject to different forms of assessment, and citation-based assessment of 'mature' papers militating against universities prioritising support for early career researchers.

Participants agreed with many of the messages coming from the speakers. The subsequent work groups exploring the key drivers influencing researcher development over the next five years produced a series of recommendations to various stakeholders, including the Funders' Forum, funding and research councils, HEIs, Rugby Team and the new researcher development programme.

The day's final presentation *Building the evidence base for policy decisions* saw Mark Beatson, Head of Science and Innovation Analysis, DIUS, give valuable insights into evidence that Government was seeking when assessing return on investment in the science base. He stressed that the impact agenda was here to stay, but also acknowledged that persuasive evidence takes time to build. It is possible to get good data on outputs, long term outcomes were more difficult, but some measures should be possible. The government also emphasises quantification, but agreed that qualitative information has its place.

Day two began with Chris Park, Rugby Team Chair, giving an update on Rugby Team (RT) 2007 activities. He recommended that the ongoing research projects, Skills Training and Research Supervision Survey (StarSS), researcher career profiles, and the Impact Framework should all be progressed.

He also proposed that the Rugby Team, or a similar group, should be reconstituted with a five-year mission.

The final speaker, Tony Bromley, a member of the Rugby Team, introduced the Impact Framework, designed to review the existing evidence base, identify knowledge gaps, and identify priorities over the next five years for building our understanding of the impact of researcher skills development.

The subsequent workshops produced a range of ambitious recommendations to build the evidence base.

These included:

- Developing the Impact Framework to include existing sources of information, identifying and prioritising gaps, and how best these might be filled.
- Creating a competency framework for researchers, based on the Joint Skills Statement, from postgraduate researcher through to senior academic.
- Bringing together the various national surveys (CROS, PRES, STaRSS and the research leaders survey) to create an integrated feedback mechanism for the sector.
- Developing a national dataset to better understand researcher careers and their impact, including sharing career profile data on a national basis.
- Build an evidence base on non-UK researchers in the UK to ensure that we stay internationally competitive, including longitudinal surveys of the benefit of studying in the UK.

These recommendations, and the proposal for the future of the Rugby Team, were circulated to participants after the Policy Forum for more considered comment. The Rugby Team will review the results of this consultation at its meeting in April.

A report of proceedings from the Roberts Policy Forum 2008, including the full list of recommendations, will be available in April online at the UK GRAD website [www.grad.ac.uk](http://www.grad.ac.uk) and hard copies upon request at [orders@grad.ac.uk](mailto:orders@grad.ac.uk).

**Karen Haynes, The Professional and Higher Partnership and Dr Janet Metcalfe, Director of the UK GRAD Programme**

## Local GRADschool, University of Essex 2-4 July 2008



Following the success of the first local GRADschool run at Essex in 2007, there will be a further GRADschool at Essex this year. Once again the University would welcome PhD students from other

Eastern region universities and research institutes to the GRADschool. It was evident that the diversity of last year's cohort added a great deal to the experience for everyone.

The feedback from participants on the GRADschool was very positive. Here is just one example: "Fantastic programme...really useful....made me look at myself in a different way...will definitely use some of the skills and will explore further some of the points raised."



Further details are available at:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/ltu/events/PGresearch/gradschool.htm>

Research Council-funded students can attend the GRADschool at no cost to themselves or their parent institution- apart from travel costs- as UKGRAD will meet the cost. The cost for non RC-funded students is £300, which includes 3 nights accommodation on campus and all meals and refreshments.

## THE Awards 2008

Launched on 13 March

RCUK & UK GRAD are sponsoring a THE Higher Award 2008 that will acknowledge outstanding support for personal, professional and career development of early career researchers who may be postgraduate researchers or research staff. The award will be given to individuals or teams working either within a single higher education institution or working between institutions.

The type of support to be awarded may include training, events, strategy development, mentoring, feedback mechanisms, appraisal systems or career guidance. The Award provides a chance to raise the profile of all the hard work that everyone is doing in this area. To enter, detail your principal achievement in no more than 500 words **by 12 June 2008**. For criteria and further information the THE Higher Awards, visit

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/>

## GRADBritain

Read the spring 2008 issue of GRADBritain, written by and for postgraduate researchers and register your details to start receiving the magazine by email in the future! Please go to [www.grad.ac.uk/gradbritain](http://www.grad.ac.uk/gradbritain) for further information on how to register.

Issue Four: Spring 2008

Here's a taster of what's in the fourth issue:

- Researchers in Residence
- Dr Flo (regular)
- Geoffrey Thickett (regular)
- On the benefits of blogging
- Why not for: A Start Up?
- Doing a PhD long distance

## Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference 2008: Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century University of Cambridge 6 June 2008

### CALL FOR PAPERS

**What are the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and how can your research provide insight and possible solutions to these varied areas of concern?**

The 2008 Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference (IGC) aims to bring together postgraduate researchers across the sciences, humanities and social sciences in order to explore the varied challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Organised by the School of Physical Sciences and the School of the Humanities & Social Sciences, we invite abstract proposals from postgraduates across Cambridge University and beyond.

Papers can be presented on any subject relating to the conference theme. Possible topics include:

- Climate (Global warming, energy...)
- Information Technology (privacy, social networking, data mining, communication, image overload...)
- Medicine (stem cell research, cancer, Aids, cloning, bio ethics...)
- Terrorism
- Demographic change (aging populations, immigration/migration...)
- Globalisation (changing conceptions of citizenship, identity, transnational corporations...)
- Space Technology (the future of space exploration, nanotube space elevators...)

By encouraging interdisciplinary exchange, the IGC hopes to provide fresh insight into these topical areas of debate.

Keynote speakers to be announced.

Please send **300 word** abstract proposals (making clear whether you are applying to present a 15 minute talk or a poster) to [soc-igc@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto:soc-igc@lists.cam.ac.uk)

We also welcome post-doctoral proposals.

The deadline for applications is **April 4, 2008**.

For more information please contact [soc-igc@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto:soc-igc@lists.cam.ac.uk) or visit: <http://groups.pwf.cam.ac.uk/CGRADC/contact.htm>  
!

## Researchers in Residence

Researchers in Residence is open to all PhD and post-doctoral researchers who are funded by RCUK (e.g. BBSRC/NERC) or the Wellcome Trust and offers you the chance to really develop your transferable skills, particularly your communication skills, by engaging with young people studying your subject in local secondary schools. The scheme targets both science and non-science researchers and can be a truly rewarding experience for all those involved - researcher, teacher and pupil. The scheme is a National one but run locally in the East of England by the regional coordinator Dr. Phil Smith (himself an ex researcher).

If you've ever thought about engaging with young people this is an ideal opportunity because the hard-work of making links with the schools is done for you. Take a look at the website which includes case studies exemplifying what researchers do on their placement and look out awareness seminars in the region.

**([www.researchersinresidence.ac.uk](http://www.researchersinresidence.ac.uk))**

## AHRC Student-Led Initiative Scheme

Details of the Student-Led Initiative strand of the AHRC's Collaborative Research Training scheme have now been announced.

The aim of the Student-Led Initiative scheme is to provide supportive funding to Arts and Humanities Postgraduates in establishing their own training provision and actively being involved in the organisation and dissemination of training. With this in mind the AHRC has decided to launch the Student Led Initiative as a strand wholly dedicated to training initiatives run by research students for research students. The Student-Led Initiative is part of the Collaborative Research Training Scheme and provides awards of up to £2,000 for specific projects, activities, and/or events.

The AHRC believes that the experience of organising, developing and administering these initiatives is an excellent opportunity for students to enhance the development of both specialist, research-related skills and broader organisational and networking skills. Research students are invited to submit their proposals through their HEI, which should support and endorse each proposal. **The initiative is open to any postgraduate students in the arts and humanities.**

Proposals should address the main priorities for the Collaborative Research Training Scheme, and eligible activities can include (as examples):

- Conferences (as long as these are student-led and student organised)
- Career Development Initiatives
- Networks or Research Forums
- Journals or on-line web resources, which could include students both submitting, reviewing and editing papers, as well as students organising and administering the journal
- On-line video resources
- Roundtable events with academics and practitioners in the relevant field to discuss career pathways and career development issues
- Showcase/Demonstration Events, where students can present their research to local or national employers, government bodies, community organisations, media, primary and secondary educational pupils, etc
- Knowledge Transfer Activities, involving interaction between students and non-academic organisations.

Full details of the scheme and the application procedures can be found on our website: [http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/university\\_staff/postgrad/collaborative\\_research\\_training\\_Scheme.asp](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/university_staff/postgrad/collaborative_research_training_Scheme.asp)

**Applications are invited throughout the year on a rolling deadline.**

We would be grateful if you could disseminate this information to any postgraduate students or colleagues at your institution that may be interested in the scheme.

If you have any questions in regards to the scheme please do not hesitate to contact us. The contacts for the scheme are Ben Spratt, 0117 987 6534, [b.spratt@ahrc.ac.uk](mailto:b.spratt@ahrc.ac.uk) and Gavin Buckley, 0117 987 6522, [g.buckley@ahrc.ac.uk](mailto:g.buckley@ahrc.ac.uk).

## GRADschools 2008

Days	Dates	Course Length	Course Title	Venue
Tue - Fri	1 - 4 April 2008	4 day residential	Edinburgh Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University</a>
Tue - Thur	1 - 3 April 2008	3 day non-residential	Developing the Postgraduate Manager (Local GRADschool)	<a href="#">Samuel Armstrong Building, The University of Manchester</a>
Wed - Fri	2 - 4 April 2008	3 days non-residential	The University of Liverpool	<a href="#">Graduate Suite, University of Liverpool</a>
Fri - Mon	18 - 21 April 2008	4 day residential	Cambridge Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Cambridge Wyboston Lakes</a>
Tue - Thur	22 - 24 April 2008	3 day non-residential	Birmingham Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Birmingham Business School</a>
Mon - Fri	12 - 16 May 2008	4 day residential	UWE Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Buckland Hall Retreat Centre</a>
Mon - Wed	19 - 21 May 2008	3 days residential	UCL Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Oxon Hoath, Kent</a>
Tue - Thur	27 - 29 May 2008	3 day non-residential	Loughborough Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Beaumanor Hall Conference Centre, Loughborough University</a>
Tue - Sat	17 - 21 June 2008	4 day residential	Windermere 2 National GRADschool	<a href="#">Brathay Hall</a>
Tue - Thur	17 - 19 June 2008	3 day non-residential	Developing the Postgraduate Manager (Local GRADschool)	<a href="#">Samuel Armstrong Building, The University of Manchester</a>
Tue - Fri	24 - 27 June 2008	4 day residential	Edinburgh Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University</a>
Tue - Thur	24 - 26 June 2008	3 days non-residential	London Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Prideaux Lecture Theatre, St Thomas's Hospital</a>
Wed - Fri	2 - 4 July 2008	3 day non-residential	Essex Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Essex University, Colchester</a>
Mon - Thur	28 - 31 July 2008	4 day residential	North East Local GRADschool	<a href="#">St Aidans College, University of Durham</a>
Mon - Wed	11 - 13 August 2008	3 days residential	UCL Local GRADschool	<a href="#">Oxon Hoath, Kent</a>
Tue - Sat	28 October - 1 November 2008	4 day residential	Bournemouth 2 National GRADschool	<a href="#">The Carrington House Hotel, Bournemouth</a>

**For further information on GRADschools please visit [www.grad.ac.uk](http://www.grad.ac.uk) or contact [courses@grad.ac.uk](mailto:courses@grad.ac.uk), Tel 01223 448545**

## Diary Dates

Upcoming conferences, events and training opportunities

For further details go to [www.grad.ac.uk/diary](http://www.grad.ac.uk/diary)

### What's on...?

#### April 2008

- 1-3, [Developing the Postgraduate Manager](#), University of Manchester
- 1-4, [Local GRADschool](#), Edinburgh
- 17-18, [2008 Quality in Postgraduate Research](#), Adelaide, South Australia
- 18, [Midlands Hub part-time researcher event](#), University of Leicester
- 18-21, [Local GRADschool](#), Cambridge
- 22-24, [Local GRADschool](#), Birmingham

#### May 2008

- 12-16, [Local GRADschool](#), UWE
- 13-16, [National GRADschool](#), Windermere
- 27-29, [Local GRADschool](#), Loughborough

#### June 2008

- 13, [Midlands Hub part-time researcher event](#), Loughborough University
- 17-19, [Developing the Postgraduate Manager](#), University of Manchester
- 17-21, [National GRADschool](#), Windermere
- 24-27, [Local GRADschool](#), Edinburgh

#### July 2008

- 2-4, [Local GRADschool](#), Essex
- 16, [Midlands Hub part-time researcher event](#), University of Birmingham
- 22-25, [National GRADschool](#), Bournemouth
- 28-31, [Local GRADschool](#), Durham

#### September 2008

- 8-9, [Researcher development conference](#), London

#### October 2008

- 28-1 November, [National GRADschool](#), Bournemouth

#### November 2008

- 18-22, [National GRADschool](#), Windermere

Do you want to join the EE Hub network mailing list?  
Would you like to contribute an article for *EE Hub News*?  
Email Joanne Warner at [eehub@grad.ac.uk](mailto:eehub@grad.ac.uk)