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Regional News

Good Practice Event

The fifth Good Practice event: Researcher Development: Opportunities and Challenges was held on Wednesday 27 February at the Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff Bay and attracted 71 participants from across the region. Dr Janet Metcalfe, Director of UK GRAD, opened the event and described the new contract (an update appears on page 2). Participants were able to attend a range of workshops covering topics such as: the Rugby team impact framework, diploma supplements, leadership development for research team leaders and more. Presentations will be on the website shortly.

The New SWW Hub

In preparation for the expanded remit of the new Hub, under the new 'researcher development' programme, the Hub held a joint meeting in November of current SWW Hub Steering Group members and those in the SWW Region who support Research Staff. The purpose of the day was to: clarify the remit of new contract; begin to build relationships; allay fears and identify aspirations; identify priority areas for 2008; and discuss enabling structures. Details of the day, along with a list of those attending can be found on www.grad.ac.uk/swwhub under the News and Events page.

A further meeting will be held in April to consider in more detail what structures could support the new Hub.

If you have any views on this, please email us at swwhub@grad.ac.uk, speak to your HEI representative, or post your opinions on the SWW Hub

forum on the UK GRAD bulletin board www.grad.ac.uk/bulletinboard (You will have to register to post, but this is very quick and easy!)

UWE GRADschool

UWE will once again be running its residential GRADschool (now in its sixth year) from 13-16 May at the Buckland Hall Conference and Retreat Centre, Bwlch, Powys, Wales. For further information, contact Dr Paul Spencer paul.spencer@uwe.ac.uk Tel: 0117 32 83974.

Positive Futures – Bristol Research Staff Conference

The 2008 Bristol Research Staff Conference takes place on 17 April at the Victoria Rooms, Clifton, Bristol.

A range of career development sessions are available for research staff and there are also items of interest to policy makers, many of whom travel from all over the UK to attend this event.

The conference is free for University of Bristol staff, with a small charge for external delegates. See www.bris.ac.uk/researchstaff/conference for more details.

Doctoral Track at Bournemouth University

An innovative scheme to encourage and support academic staff in their career development has been launched by Bournemouth University. The Doctoral Track, created and coordinated jointly by BU's Graduate School and Staff Development, gives existing staff greater opportunity to pursue a doctoral qualification. Under the scheme, senior academics will mentor and coach their colleagues and advise on the most appropriate pathway, based on the individual's experience and capabilities - such as a PhD, Professional Doctorate or PhD by Publication.

In addition, BU have also launched their Releasing Research - Enterprise Potential programme which is aimed at new staff members who have just embarked on a research career and those in mid-career who wish to become research active and who have the potential to develop their research-enterprise capability. For details of both schemes see www.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/graduate_school/index.html

New Secretary for UKCGE

Our congratulations to Professor Mick Fuller, Head of the Graduate School at the University of Plymouth, who has been elected as Honorary Secretary to the UKCGE. Professor Fuller has been a member of the Hub's Steering Group for a number of years.

Award for Exeter Thesis

Nasser Mansour, a research fellow at Exeter University who recently completed his PhD from the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, has been awarded the European Educational Research Association (EERA) Best Paper Award for Postgraduate and Young Researchers.

This prestigious award is for his thesis *Religious beliefs: A hidden variable in the performance of science teachers in the classroom*. The award includes fees to the Educational Conference on Educational Research, an official certificate and publication of the paper in the EERA's official journal, the European Educational Research Journal. A travel budget is also offered by the EERA which the School of Education will match fund, so continuing to promote and support doctoral students.

UK GRAD National News

Launch of New 'researcher development' programme

As reported in the last Newsletter, 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 8 - 9 September.

Currently the team is busy creating the name and brand and a new website to reflect the new programme and its broader remit. To keep up with the latest developments, go to www.grad.ac.uk/newcontract. Further updates will be posted on this page throughout the year.

New Hubs

Two Hub co-ordinators have recently stepped down – Professor Norman Staines in London and Jane Ratchford in Manchester. Regional institutions were invited to express interest in hosting these Hubs and UK GRAD was delighted at the level of interest received. After this process, it has been confirmed that Kings College London and the University of Manchester are to be the host institutions for the London and North West Hubs respectively, with Fiona Denney, Head of Graduate Development, the Graduate School as Co-ordinator in London, and Judy Williams, Postgraduate Trainer, Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences in the North West.

Roberts' Policy Forum 2008

The UK GRAD Programme hosted the fifth Roberts' policy forum in Birmingham on 9-10 January. This annual event provides a strategic

review of the implementation of the Roberts' recommendation on training requirements and updates on policy relating to researcher development and the implications for their institutions.

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. Participants heard presentations 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.

A brief report is available on www.grad.ac.uk/swwhub under News and Events and a full report of proceedings will be available later this month on the UK GRAD website www.grad.ac.uk.

OverVIEW

The latest edition of *overVIEW*, UK GRAD's bulletin for supervisors has been sent to our key contacts for onward distribution in institutions. Alternatively, you can download it from www.grad.ac.uk. This edition features articles on sharing good practice, the art of supervision, and reports of recent initiatives affecting the sector.

Other News

Launch of the New Concordat

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. A short overview of the responses is now

available on
www.rcuk.ac.uk/news/080131.htm

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 do so please contact Rosie Beales to discuss the process.
rosie.beales@rcuk.ac.uk.

An Implementation plan is being prepared detailing 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 its 1996 predecessor.

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

THE Awards 2008 Launched

RCUK & UK GRAD are again sponsoring a THE Higher Award 2008 to 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. For criteria and further information go to
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk

Beacons of Public Engagement

Beacons for Public Engagement are university-based collaborative centres to help support, recognise, reward and build capacity for public engagement work across the UK. RCUK, the UK funding councils and the Wellcome Trust are investing £9.2 million into this initiative in order to support a step-change in recognition for public engagement across the higher education sector. There are six Beacons around the UK, and one National Co-ordinating Centre.

The National Co-ordinating Centre is made up of the University of Bristol, University of the West of England and other partners. The Centre will build networks across the other Beacons and provide a single point of contact as well as an overview of their activities.

The Beacon for Wales will be a collaborative public engagement programme for Higher Education Institutions in Wales. Their plans include the establishment of a Wales Higher Education Engagement Network (WHEEN) to provide opportunities for HE staff and students to network and share ideas on public engagement. Partners include the University of Cardiff, University of Glamorgan /National Museum Wales, BBC Wales and Techniquist.
www.rcuk.ac.uk/sis/beacons.htm

EUA Council for Doctoral Education

The EUA-CDE which was established in early 2008 has announced its membership fees - €1000 for EUA member universities and €4000 for non-EUA member universities. For benefits of membership go to:
www.eua.be/index.php?id=611

News from the Research Councils

EPSRC and Roberts Payments

EPSRC plans to use numbers, as entered in the student/research data portal, for the pgr element of the career development and transferable skills training (Roberts') payments in 2008. Skills contacts and co-ordinators for EPSRC DTAs and CTAs have been informed that data should be complete by 1 May, and that this information will be used in the snapshot of numbers taken on 1 June, on which the 2008/09 payments for pgrs will be based.

A letter issued in November by EPSRC to Vice Chancellors said: 'We intend to audit the studentship records in May 2008 as part of the annual research coding exercise we undertake to classify our portfolio. We will take action on those organisations where the data quality remains questionable, either in terms of the numbers submitted or in terms of the content of those submissions. Where action is deemed appropriate, EPSRC will:

- Suspend the appropriate 2007 DTG and withhold the 2008 DTG until all data has been supplied
- Adjust downward the 2009 DTG award by a factor equivalent to the number of records still missing on 30 September 2008
- Base the Roberts' allocation on the actual returned studentships we receive rather than, as currently, using the numbers of notional studentships.

This will ensure resources are fully aligned in accordance with our obligations.'

EPSRC Doctoral Training Centres

EPSRC are planning to fund a series of Doctoral Training Centres (DTCs) and will be issuing a call for outline proposals in March 2008.

The aim of the centres is to build training environments which supply skilled people able to address research problems for the benefit of the UK economy. These centres should offer new and exciting opportunities for postgraduate training in areas of national need across research disciplines.

Each of the centres will recruit a cohort equivalent to 10 doctoral students per year, with four or five annual intakes depending on the precise type of centre. Each centre will be led by its own director. Students should receive a formal programme of taught coursework and undertake a challenging and original research project at PhD level. Go to www.epsrc.ac.uk for further information.

BBSRC Enterprise Fellowships

BBSRC and The Royal Society of Edinburgh seek proposals to the Enterprise Fellowships scheme to support researchers who wish to play a key role in the commercialisation of their research. The Fellowships provide salary and formal business training, allowing the Fellows to focus on developing the commercial potential of their research over a 12 month period.

The Fellowships are available to academic staff, research staff and postgraduates with relevant experience employed by a UK Higher Education Institution or a BBSRC-sponsored Research Institute. The business idea may be in any area within BBSRC's remit provided the original research was largely funded through the Research Council.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on 4 April. Application forms and further details are available from: www.royalsoced.org.uk/research_fellowships/bbsrc.htm and www.bbsrc.ac.uk/business/commercialisation/enterprise_fellowships.html

or by contacting Dr Simon Cutler,
simon.cutler@bbsrc.ac.uk, Tel: 01793
41324

Events for You

Working to Support Researchers - effective collaboration and developing good practice 29 April University of Warwick

This conference, organised by the Research Staff Task Group of the Association of Graduate Careers Services (AGCAS), aims to provide a thought provoking day during which participants can develop their professional practice in delivering career management training, information, advice and guidance effectively to research staff who wish to continue their academic career and for those seeking alternative career options.

The conference is aimed at those involved in supporting the career development of early career researchers from careers services, staff development and training units and graduate schools and centres. It will also be of interest to academic staff interested in developing their understanding of providing careers support to early career researchers. You can view the programme and workshops and book your place at www.agcas.org.uk/events/70-Working-to-Support-Researchers-effective-collaboration-and-developing-good-practice-Warwick

Preparing for Academic Practice

The Oxford CETL for Academic Practice will be hosting a conference on *Preparing for Academic Practice – Disciplinary Perspectives* on April 8-9 at St Anne's College Oxford. There are a host of interesting workshops from the UK and overseas including those on supporting doctoral students to develop their teaching practice; and developing interdisciplinary postgraduate research training across

the Arts and Humanities and the Social Sciences. Go to www.learning.ox.ac.uk/cetl.php?page=54 for a full programme.

Conference for Research Administrators

Liverpool is the venue for the second congress of the International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) to be held on June 16-19. Hosted by the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA) the congress will provide an opportunity for research administrators from all over the world to explore the similarities in roles and activities, and identify the essential aspects of research management that cross national boundaries. Working sessions will cover nine themes.

- Research funding and funding opportunities
- Policy and strategy
- Research integrity, ethics and governance
- Systems and operations
- Management and organisation of research support
- Developing and supporting researchers
- Developing professional research managers and administrators
- Dissemination and translation of research
- Assessing research

For more information go to www.inorms2008.org/intro.html

Events & News for Your Researchers

Careers in Academia

Places are still available for this free one day event to be held in Bristol on April 28. Pgrs will have the opportunity to explore what a career in the academic environment is really like, meet with current academics from a range of disciplines and hear about their experiences, explore how to market themselves for a career in

academia, and look at how to write and win grant applications.

GRADBritain

The Spring edition of GRADBritain is now available. Topics covered include: the benefits of blogging; Why not work for a Start Up?; and doing a PhD long distance. Please encourage your pgrs to sign up for this entertaining and informative magazine. They can get paid for contributing too!

Speaking of Science 7 May, Cardiff University

Speaking of Science is a student led conference arranged by pgrs from Cardiff University, with support from the Graduate School in Biomedical & Life Sciences and the Graduate School in Physical Sciences & Engineering.

Postgraduate researchers in the sciences will be giving 10 minute talks and presenting posters across a wide range of subjects and disciplines. The conference subject area is kept deliberately broad – this makes for more interesting presentations and cross subject fertilisation of ideas. The conference will open with a guest speaker, Professor Andreas Gescher, Department of Cancer Studies and Molecular Medicine, University of Leicester, and close with a cheese and wine social event. Further information about the event can be found at www.cf.ac.uk/gradschools/sos/speaking-of-science.

Research students from neighbouring institutions are invited to submit a short presentation abstract for consideration by the student committee by Monday 7 April. Please e-mail

SpeakingofScience@Cardiff.ac.uk

The Body Conference - Call for Papers 19-20 June, Cardiff University

The principal aim of 'The Body' conference is to encourage doctoral researchers to consider how 'The

Body' may come to bear on their own subjects of research. 'The Body' is intended to encompass ideology and society, for example, the physical body used as an analogy or metaphor for the social body, as well as for a corpus of knowledge, legal person, 'person' of the state, the body politic, and the body as a site of contention in sexual politics. Proposals for panels and papers are invited from PhD researchers across Wales, the UK and overseas. The Body Conference is supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Cardiff University.

The deadline for proposals is 10 April. For further details please go to www.cardiff.ac.uk/gradschools or contact Rebecca Green at BodyConference@cf.ac.uk

Bioscience Futures Workshop 8-10 April Lancaster University

This workshop, organised and sponsored by the Society for Experimental Biology, BBSRC and NERC, is for postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers to enhance their career prospects for research in academia, industry or other non-research careers related to Bioscience. It will cover aspects such as:

- building collaborations with researchers and other partners,
- giving an insight into the research environment in the UK and Europe, funding and politics
- enhancing a proactive and strategic approach to a career

Due to sponsorship from BBSRC, SEB is able to offer the workshop at the following reduced rates:

Postgraduates - £30, Postdoctoral Researchers - £50

For more information about the programme, aims and how to get funding for the workshop go to www.sebiology.org/education/Careers_Workshop/Careers_Workshop.html

AHRC Student Led Initiative Scheme

Pgrs are invited to come up with their own ideas for training under a scheme recently established by the AHRC.

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. 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.

Full details of the scheme and the application procedures can be found on www.ahrc.ac.uk/university_staff/postgrad/collaborative_research_training_Scheme.asp

If you have any questions regarding the scheme please contact Ben Spratt, 0117 987 6534, b.spratt@ahrc.ac.uk and Gavin Buckley, 0117 987 6522, g.buckley@ahrc.ac.uk.

Biotechnology YES

The Biotechnology YES (Young Entrepreneurs Scheme) is an innovative competition to raise awareness of commercialisation of bioscience ideas among pgrs and early career researchers. The competition is run over three days and teams have to prepare a business plan for an imaginary biotech start up

company. Winners of the competition receive £1000. The deadline for entries is June 27. Go to www.biotechnologyyes.co.uk/index.html for more information.

L'Oréal Fellowships for Women in Science

The L'Oréal UK Fellowships for Women in Science have been created to promote, celebrate, enhance and encourage the role and achievements of UK women in the fields of the life and physical sciences. The National Fellowships are offered under the umbrella of the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Programme, which has promoted women in scientific research on a global scale since 1998. Four Fellowships will be awarded in 2008 to outstanding women scientists in the early stages of their career to enable and/or facilitate promising scientific research. The closing date deadline for the 2008 Fellowships is **Wednesday 2 April**. Further details can be found at www.unesco.org.uk/For_Women_In_Science.htm

Engineering scholarships from the Institution of Engineering and Technology

Engineering scholarships, ranging from £1,000 to £10,000 per annum, are available to postgraduate students carrying out research or postgraduate study in the UK in 2008.

The Leslie H Paddle Scholarship is for postgraduate research which will further the art, science or practice of electronic or radio engineering.

Hudswell International Research Scholarships assist IET members with advanced research work leading to the award of a doctorate at an internationally recognised university or research establishment with a high reputation for research in the field of electrical, electronic, manufacturing or information engineering. Further information available on www.theiet.org



Diary dates

Events

April

8-9, CETL Conference, Oxford
8-10, Bioscience Futures Workshop,
Lancaster University
17, Bristol Research Staff Conference
28, Careers in Academia, Bristol
29, AGCAS Conference, University of
Warwick

May

7, Speaking of Science, Cardiff
University

June

tbc, Launch of New Concordat
16-19, INORMS Conference Liverpool
19-20, The Body Conference, Cardiff
University

September

8-9, Researcher Development
Conference, London



Diary dates

GRADschools

April

1-4, Local GRADschool, Edinburgh
18-21, Local GRADschool, Cambridge
22-24, Local GRADschool,
Birmingham

May

12-16, Local GRADschool, UWE
13-16, National GRADschool,
Windermere
27-29, Local GRADschool,
Loughborough

June

17-19, Developing the Postgraduate
Manager, University of Manchester
17-21, National GRADschool,
Windermere
24-27, Local GRADschool, Edinburgh

July

2-4, Local GRADschool, Essex
22-25, National GRADschool,
Bournemouth
28-31, Local GRADschool, Durham

October

28-1, November, National
GRADschool, Bournemouth

November

18-22, National GRADschool,
Windermere

SWW Hub, Graduate Schools Office, Cardiff University, 60 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AU
Terri Delahunty, Hub Co-ordinator Tel: 029 2087 4606 DelahuntyTM@cardiff.ac.uk
Anne Goodman, Hub Manager Tel: 029 2087 9179 swwhub@grad.ac.uk
www.grad.ac.uk/swwhub