

**AHRC and British Academy**

**Support for Arts and Humanities  
Researchers Post-PhD**

**Vitae Conference**

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# Overview...

- Introduction to the report
- Key findings
- Workshop discussion

# Introduction

- Commissioned Oakleigh Consulting Ltd
- Early career researchers (ECRs) - 8 years post-PhD
- Focus on those wishing to pursue an academic career
- Section on AHRC-funded postdocs
- Survey and interviews

# Respondents

- ECR survey:
  - ECRs not in the HE sector (97)
  - ECRs on fixed-term contracts (544)
  - ECRs on permanent contracts (241)
- 32 responses from 23 Universities

# Key findings – contract type

- Just over 20% on fixed-term contract less than 12m
- 30% on contracts of 36m; 25% of 24m
- 70% on permanent contract had previously held fixed-term
- Almost 40% on permanent have held a fractional contract. For fixed-term this is 50%.
- Quarter in HE are ‘portfolio workers’

Range of roles and job titles.

# Key findings – support

- 61% of permanent sought advice prior to PhD; 43% on fixed-term
- Most beneficial support:
  - Advice with preparing grant applications
  - Time to publish
  - Mentorship
- Support may not reach those most in need
- Issue of time to take up support

# Key findings – Concordat

- Implementation cross-institutional
- Academic group less well informed than Career advisers and staff developers
- ECR perceptions do not match university assertions
- ECRs on fixed-term and teaching-only contracts least likely to feel valued, recognised and supported

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# Key findings – main concerns

- About 92% of ECRs on fixed-term contracts expressed concern about their careers. Compares to 60% on permanent
- Concern about skill development
- Succession of short-term posts seen negatively



# Good practice

- Advice and support is made available at an early stage
- A broad based approach to identifying ECRs
- Advice is provided on a broad range of possible careers
- ECRs' requirements lead and inform the advice and support made available
- Senior academics are informed of support available and are enabled to provide this
- Mentors are relevant to the needs of the individual
- Networks are in place to share experience

# Workshop

- How might ECRs wishing to pursue an academic career be supported effectively?
- Is there best practice we can draw from the EU or internationally?
- How might you ensure that all ECRs who might benefit from support gain access to it?
- How might the gap in perception of the Concordat delivery be bridged?
- How should academics be supported to enable them to give effective advice to ECRs?