

**Institute of Education (IOE), University of London**  
**Application for “European Commission ‘HR excellence in research’ badge”**

The Institute of Education (IOE) specialises in research, consultancy and teaching in education and related areas of social science and professional practice, and is one of the world’s leading schools for education and social sciences. In the 2008 RAE it had the highest proportion of world-leading research activity in the field of education. The IOE undertakes around a quarter of all funded education research carried out in UK universities and is consistently ranked first or second for social science research funding among higher education institutions.

Our Research, Consultancy and Knowledge Transfer (RCKT) Strategy 2010-2015 states “We recognise the importance of providing targeted development opportunities for [researchers] and ensuring they are enabled to take the time to undertake such training and to gain experience, including of teaching, to benefit their future career progression.”

There are two key documents that have been produced to support good practice for research staff:

- Code of Practice for Research Staff (CoPRS) – last updated 2011
- Good practice in leading and supporting a research team: A guide for research staff and project managers (GPLSRT) – last updated 2009

The CoPRS begins by stating that

*As part of its mission the Institute of Education is committed to excellence in education and related areas of social science and professional practice. It seeks to engage in research and scholarship of national and international significance to make a positive contribution to the development of individuals. This Code of Practice is designed to contribute to that mission by fostering good practice within research project teams, including active support for the development of high quality transferable research skills through appropriate career development. This code is underpinned by the principles outlined in the [2008 BERA Charter for Research Staff](#), and the revised [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) - a framework for the management of research staff developed by a UK HE sector working group co-ordinated by Research Councils UK. Copies of these documents are available from Research Services. It is intended that the Code should be incorporated into Faculty level policy and should form the basis for discussion between Project Directors and their project team at any project's inception. In this way, implementation of the Code is designed to ensure that the quality of research at the Institute is optimised.*

Extracts from the CoPRS are included where appropriate in our action plan.

In addition, since spring 2000, the IOE has had a “Research Careers Advisory Committee” with the following Terms of Reference:

- To advise on the development of institutional policy in relation to research staff, oversee its implementation and monitor and review its operation.
- To monitor internal and external developments in relation to the management of research staff, including contract research staff, and advise on appropriate action.
- To ensure that the Institute is aware of, and responding to, the requirements of national programmes such as the Research Careers Initiative, and to advise on resourcing issues arising from such programmes.

- To ensure that the Institute is aware of, and responding to, the requirements of legislative changes such as the European Directive on Fixed Term Working, and to advise on resourcing issues arising from such changes.
- To develop links with those within and outside the Institute who have an interest in research staff issues.
- To advise on the development of appropriate career support mechanisms for research staff at the Institute.

The Advisory Committee meets termly and reports through the Research and Consultancy Board to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC).

Reflecting the importance of the RCAC, it is chaired by Professor Michael Reiss, Pro-Director: Research and Development (PDRD). The other members are:

- Representative from the Doctoral School
- RCKT Director from each Faculty (2)
- Faculty RCKT Manager
- Member of Research Staff from each Faculty (2)
- Human Resources Manager
- Head of Staff Development
- Programme Leader for Researcher Development (PLRD)
- Trade Union representative
- Research student
- Chair of Students Union or their nominee

### **IOE Action Plan**

The Action Plan was produced in summer 2011 following a gap analysis performed by:

- Dr Richard Freeman, Programme Leader for Researcher Development
- Sophie Covey-Crump, Research Policy Manager
- Fran Setter, Head of Human Resources (HR)

The gap analysis made use of existing documents, previous minutes of the RCAC and previous surveys of research staff (e.g. CROS, internal research staff surveys and Staff Development surveys). The Action Plan was considered at the October 2011 meeting of the RCAC, which will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Action Plan.

## A. Recruitment and Selection

**PRINCIPLE 1:** Recognition of the importance of recruiting, selecting and retaining researchers with the highest potential to achieve excellence in research.

	<i>Clause</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Time</i>
1	All members of the UK research community should understand that researchers are chosen primarily for their ability to advance research at an institution.	Research is central to the mission of IOE. Selection panel members must attend a mandatory “Recruitment and selection workshop”, which ensures appointees to research posts are chosen primarily on their ability to do research.	Monitor	PDRD/HR	-
2	Employers should strive to attract excellence and respect diversity (see Principle 6). Recruitment and selection procedures should be informative, transparent and open to all qualified applicants regardless of background. Person and vacancy specifications must clearly identify the skills required for the post and these requirements should be relevant to the role.	All research posts require the PI to produce an explicit job description and person specification; HR ensures those are appropriate for the role and level of appointment. Shortlisting of candidates is achieved by the selection panel independently scoring candidates against objective criteria.	Monitor	HR	-
3	Research posts should only be advertised as a fixed-term post where there is a recorded and justifiable reason.	“The Institute endeavours to employ as many staff as possible on indefinite (permanent) contracts and faculties regularly monitor staffing requirements against research income.” CoPRS Posts are only advertised as fixed-term when funding is limited.	Monitor	Faculties/HR	-
4	To assure fairness, consistency and the best assessment of the candidates’ potential, recruitment and progression panels should reflect diversity as well as a range of experience and expertise. In order to promote these values, individuals who are members of recruitment and promotion panels should have received relevant recent training. Unsuccessful applicants should be given appropriate feedback if requested as this may be of assistance to the researcher in considering their further career development.	Selection panel members have mandatory training on the shortlisting process and interviewing and panel membership is selected to reflect diversity (as far as possible) as well as experience and expertise. Feedback is available to all shortlisted candidates on request from the Chair of the Interview Panel. Promotion panels are regularly held and any unsuccessful candidates are given feedback to support them in making further applications.	Monitor	HR	-
5	The level of pay or grade for researchers should be determined according to the requirements of the post, consistent with the pay and grading arrangements of the research organisation.	All new posts are job evaluated using the Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA) scheme	Monitor	HR	-

## B. Recognition and Value

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Researchers are recognised and valued by their employing organisation as an essential part of their organisation’s human resources and a key component of their overall strategy to develop and deliver world-class research.

	<i>Clause</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Time</i>
1	Employers are encouraged to value and afford equal treatment to all researchers, regardless of whether they are employed on a fixed term or similar contract. In particular, employers should ensure that the development of researchers is not undermined by instability of employment contracts. This approach should be embedded throughout all departmental structures and systems.	Terms of Reference of RCAC address all these issues. All researchers are encouraged to make use of the extensive Staff Development programme and to feedback any desired provision in the annual Staff Development survey.	Monitor via SD survey and CROS	RCAC SD	-
2	Commitment by everyone involved to improving the stability of employment conditions for researchers and implementing and abiding by the principles and terms laid down in the Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations (2002) and Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) guidance on the use of fixed-term contracts will provide benefits for researchers, research managers, and their organisations.	IOE complies with all relevant legislation and “where possible, projects should try to include existing research staff as named researchers in future proposals” CoPRS.	Monitor	RCAC	-
3	Research managers should be required to participate in active performance management, including career development guidance, and supervision of those who work in their teams. Employers should ensure that research managers are made aware of, and understand their responsibilities for the management of researchers and should provide training opportunities, including equality and diversity training, to support research managers in doing this. Institutions will wish to consider how research managers’ performance in these areas is developed, assessed and rewarded, and how effectively this supports good research management.	“All research staff... are included in the Institute’s staff review and development scheme. The scheme aims to support and facilitate the professional development of all staff and is usually [but not necessarily] conducted by the staff member’s Line Manger. It is designed to be a supportive process rather than a monitoring scheme” CoPRS. Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all staff	Monitor	RCAC	-
4	Organisational systems must be capable of supporting continuity of employment for researchers, such as funding between grants, other schemes for supporting time between grant funding, or systems for redeploying researchers within organisations where resources allow. Funders are expected to make it a priority to consider how their policies, guidance and funding can be enhanced to help employers to achieve this objective.	“Where possible, projects should try to include existing research staff as named researchers in future proposals...There is a redeployment procedure for any employee identified as being at risk of redundancy” CoPRS	Monitor	RCAC	-
5	Pay progression for researchers should be transparent and in accordance with procedures agreed between the relevant trade unions and the employers nationally and locally. In HEIs, pay progression will be in accordance with the Framework Agreement, though recognising the flexibility that institutions have in implementing the Framework.	Pay progression is in line with the Framework Agreement and information is readily available on the intranet	Monitor	RCAC	-
6	Researchers need to be offered opportunities to develop their own careers as well as having access to additional pay progression. Promotion opportunities should be transparent, effectively communicated and open to all staff. It is helpful if clear career frameworks for early stage researchers are outlined in organisational HR strategies.	There is an explicit statement on the HR section of the IOE intranet of the type of work and competences expected at each grade. The annual promotions round is open to all staff, with notification sent by email.	Monitor	RCAC	-

## C. Support and Career Development

**PRINCIPLE 3:** Researchers are equipped and supported to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse, mobile, global research environment.

	<i>Clause</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Time</i>
1	It is recognised that positions of permanent employment are limited in the UK research and academic communities and that not all researchers will be able to obtain such a position. It is, therefore, imperative that researcher positions in the UK are attractive in themselves (and not, for example, solely as potential stepping stones to permanent academic positions). This requires that they provide career development which is comparable to, and competitive with, other employment sectors.	Role profiles enable all staff to locate themselves in the academic community. All staff participate in the Staff Review and Development (SRD) process, which is supported by extensive training provision and support by Staff Development. "Research staff are entitled to apply for up to one term's study leave after a period of continuous service of five years."	Monitor	HR	-
2	A wide variety of career paths is open to researchers, and the ability to move between different paths is key to a successful career. It is recognised that this mobility brings great benefit to the UK economy and organisations will, therefore, wish to be confident that their culture supports a broad-minded approach to researcher careers and that all career paths are valued equally.	The IOE's focus is on Education and related areas of social science and professional practice and there is inevitably much movement between Education as research, practice and teaching so this is part of the institutional culture. All staff have access to the University of London Careers Service, should staff wish to explore different career paths.	Monitor	RCAC	-
3	Employers, funders and researchers recognise that researchers need to develop transferable skills, delivered through embedded training, in order to stay competitive in both internal and external job markets. Therefore, as well as the necessary training and appropriate skills, competencies and understanding to carry out a funded project, researchers also need support to develop the communication and other professional skills that they will need to be both effective researchers and highly-skilled professionals in whatever field they choose to enter.	The SRD process identifies "Development needed to achieve the agreed objectives (training, learning and professional support)" with the Staff Development programme providing all staff with suitable opportunities, e.g. Summer School in Writing. Some research staff are responsible for teaching and leading programmes.	Monitor	HR SD	-
4	All employers will wish to review how their staff can access professional, independent advice on career management in general, particularly the prospect of employment beyond their immediate discipline base, or offering training and placements to broaden awareness of other fields and sectors.	All staff have access to the University of London Careers Service.	Piloting a workshadowing scheme (Outside Insight) with seven other London universities to facilitate broadening of knowledge base and skills. Originally aimed at professional staff, if successful it will be extended to research staff	SD	July 2013

5	Researchers benefit from clear systems that help them to plan their career development. Employers and funding bodies should assist researchers to make informed choices about their career progression by ensuring that their own policies and processes for promotion and reward are transparent and clearly stated and that all researchers are aware of local and national career development strategies.	Promotion criteria are explicit and on the IOE intranet. PLRD on steering group for London Hub & attends Vitae events	RCAC to monitor and disseminate information up to funders and down to Faculties.	RCAC	-
6	Employers should provide a planned induction programme for researchers, on appointment to a research post, to ensure early effectiveness through the understanding of the organisation and its policies and procedures. They should also ensure that research managers provide effective research environments for the training and development of researchers and encourage them to maintain or start their continuous professional development.	All new staff are invited to attend an induction event; these are offered twice during every term. All managers are required to participate in the SRD process for their research staff.	Staff Development Committee to monitor	SD	-
7	Employers and funders will wish to consider articulating the skills that should be developed at each stage of their staff development frameworks and should encourage researchers to acquire and practise those skills. For example, researchers may be given the opportunity to manage part of the budget for a project, or to act as a mentor or advisor to other researchers and students.	The readily available role profiles make explicit what is required for each grade. Research staff can supervise masters and doctoral students.	Develop mentor scheme opportunities	SD	Oct 2012
8	Employers also should provide a specific career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, which should include the availability of mentors involved in providing support and guidance for the personal and professional development of researchers. All researchers should be familiar with such provisions and arrangements.	Need for a formal mentoring scheme that is widely advertised.	Currently developing a formal mentoring scheme so any new member of staff will be able to request a mentor during their first year of employment	SD	Oct 2012
9	Research managers should actively encourage researchers to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity, so far as is possible within the project. It should be stressed that developmental activity can often have a direct impact on the success of the project, by distributing work, taking advantage of individual strengths and talents, and increasing the skill and effectiveness of researchers in key areas such as writing for publication or communicating with a wider audience. Funding bodies acknowledge that the training of researchers is a significant contribution to research output and they encourage employers and mentors to adopt these practices.	The SRD process explicitly facilitates discussion on CPD. "In addition, all academic staff should have time for their own professional and personal development. Consequently, an allocation of time should be agreed with individuals' managers of up to 0.05 FTE in respect of such service and development activities" Workload Management Scheme (WMS)	Implementation of WMS	RCAC	Oct 2012

**PRINCIPLE 4: The importance of researchers' personal and career development, and lifelong learning, is clearly recognised and promoted at all stages of their career.**

	<i>Clause</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Time</i>
10	Researchers should be empowered by having a realistic understanding of, and information about, their own career development and career direction options as well as taking personal responsibility for their choices at the appropriate times. Employers should introduce appraisal systems for all researchers for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner. It is important that researchers have access to honest and transparent advice on their prospects for success in their preferred career.	The mandatory annual Staff Review and Development (SRD) scheme "is designed to be a supportive process rather than a monitoring scheme." CoPRS. Training for reviewers is available to help in communicating difficult advice.	Monitor	HR	-
11	Employers will wish to ensure that developmental activities open to researchers include preparation for academic practice. Employers should take measures to ensure broad recognition of CPD schemes from other employing organisations as far as possible, so that researchers are not unduly disadvantaged when moving from one employer to another.	Research staff can attend various Masters courses (e.g. Teaching and Learning in Higher and Professional Education) at the IOE with fee remission calculated <i>pro rata</i> of time worked. "New staff who do not hold a higher qualification and who have an FTE equivalent of at least 0.4 are encouraged to register for a research degree and are entitled to have their fees remitted up to a maximum period of six years after which period they will be required to pay their own fees." CoPRS	Monitor participation	SD	-
12	Employers will ensure that where researchers are provided with teaching and demonstrating opportunities as part of their career development, suitable training and support is provided.	"Research staff are encouraged, for career development reasons, to do a small amount of teaching if they wish. Staff wishing to do so should discuss this with their Project Director or Head of Department. Training for teaching is available to research staff and could form part of their professional development – for details contact Staff Development." CoPRS	Monitor participation	Faculties SD	-
13	Employers and researchers can often benefit if researchers have an input into policy and practice through appropriate representation at staff meetings and on organisation or management committees.	All research staff are eligible to participate in all IOE committees with many having places reserved for research staff. The RCAC focuses on research staff concerns.	Monitor	RCAC	-
14	Mentoring arrangements should be supported by employers as a key mechanism for career development and enhancement.	Recognised in CoPRS as an important development	Currently developing a formal mentoring scheme so any new member of staff will be able to request a mentor during their first year of employment	SD	Oct 2012

## D. Researchers' Responsibilities

**PRINCIPLE 5:** Individual researchers share the responsibility for and need to pro-actively engage in their own personal and career development, and lifelong learning.

	<i>Clause</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Time</i>
1	Researchers are employed to advance knowledge and should exercise and develop increased capacity for independent, honest and critical thought throughout their careers.	Our Mission states "The Institute of Education's mission is to pursue excellence in education and related areas of social science and professional practice. In undertaking this mission the Institute will adhere to the highest standards of academic rigour in all its work, be guided by a concern for truth and justice, and make a positive contribution to the development of individuals, institutions and societies facing the challenges of change"	None		
2	Researchers should develop their ability to transfer and exploit knowledge where appropriate and facilitate its use in policy making and the commercialisation of research for the benefit of their employing organisation, as well as the wider society and economy as a whole.	Knowledge transfer activity is strongly encouraged for all staff with support from a Faculty Research, Consultancy & Knowledge Transfer Manager who is available to provide advice. In addition, there is a leaflet on costing such activity.	Monitor	PDRD	-
3	Researchers should recognise their responsibility to conduct and disseminate research results in an honest and ethical manner and to contribute to the wider body of knowledge.	Ethics training is provided across IOE and within Faculties. Staff research at the Institute of Education is normally reviewed by one of the Institute's Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FRECs). These report to the Research Ethics and Governance Committee (REGC) and are constituted so as to be independent of Faculty reporting structures.	Monitor	REGC FRECs	-
4	Researchers should also be aware that the skills and achievements required to move on from a research position may not be the same as the skills and achievements which they displayed to reach that position.	The role profiles provide suitable guidance	None	HR	-
5	Researchers should recognise that the primary responsibility for managing and pursuing their career is theirs. Accordingly, they should identify training needs and actively seek out opportunities for learning and development in order to further that career and take personal responsibility for their choices. Research managers and employers also have a responsibility to provide honest advice and appropriate structures, and to equip researchers with the tools to manage their own careers. Research managers should encourage research staff under their supervision to attend appropriate training and career development courses and events.	The Staff Review and Development process assists in the identification of training needs with a requirement to state "professional development activity undertaken in the previous 12 months (this should not be restricted to training courses and may include secondments, coaching, working with technologies or other activities designed to enhance skills, knowledge and competence.)" All staff have access to the "Good Practice Online Toolkit for Leadership and Management". Research active staff are required to log their publications on our research management information system (PRECIS), which supports CVs	Monitor	RCAC	-
6	Researchers should ensure that their career development requirements and activities are regularly discussed, monitored and evaluated throughout the year in discussion with their research manager and mentor, and that they commit themselves fully to all such activities. Researchers are encouraged to record their Personal Development Planning (PDP) and CPD activities, a log of which may be presented to current and future employers as appropriate.	"All research staff... are included in the Institute's staff review and development scheme. The scheme aims to support and facilitate the professional development of all staff and is usually conducted by the staff member's Line Manger. It is designed to be a supportive process rather than a monitoring scheme" CoPRS. As part of the process, staff produce a log of their achievements and CPD activities.	Monitor	RCAC	-

## E. Diversity and Equality

**PRINCIPLE 6:** Diversity and equality must be promoted in all aspects of the recruitment and career management of researchers.

	Clause	Evidence	Actions	Lead	Time
1	The UK legislative framework outlaws discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, race or religion. It also requires public bodies to take positive steps to promote equality, based on evidence and priorities, and to develop specific schemes and action plans related to gender, race and disability to address specific issues of underrepresentation or lack of progression.	Equality & Diversity is embedded in IOE with an E&D statement which commits IOE “[t]o advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations by: Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by staff and students and taking steps to meet their needs. Tackling prejudice and promoting understanding within the Institute.” IOE’s Equalities and Diversity Committee (EDC), which monitors policy and practice, is chaired by the Director of IOE. An Equality and Diversity Forum is being established that will meet each term to provide the opportunity for wide discussion of equality issues and enable staff and student views to be fed through to the Equality and Diversity Committee	Monitor	Director and EDC	-
2	As is the case for society as a whole, UK research will benefit from increasing equality and diversity in the recruitment and retention of researchers. The Concordat encourages the recruitment and retention of researchers from the widest pool of available talent, including those from diverse backgrounds.	The mandatory Recruitment and selection workshop includes the Recruitment and selection policy that explicitly promotes equality and diversity	Monitor	HR	-
3	It should be emphasised that the demanding nature of research careers has a disproportionate effect on certain groups. We strongly recommend that all members of the UK research community actively address the disincentives and indirect obstacles to retention and progression in research careers which may disproportionately impact on some groups more than others.	IOE is participating in an Equalities Challenge Unit pilot of systemic change to advance race equality	Monitor pilot	HR	Oct 2013
4	Employers should ensure that the working conditions for researchers provide the flexibility necessary for successful research performance in line with legal requirements. Employers should recognise that for parents and others who have taken career breaks, including parental leave, have worked part-time, or have taken atypical routes into research, the “early career” period may be prolonged, and this may be a time where the risk of attrition from the research path is most acute. Working conditions should allow both female and male researchers to combine family and work, children and career.	There is a flexible working policy for all staff	RCAC to review policy and practice. Refer to EDC if necessary	RCAC	Feb 2012

5	It is important for employers to respond flexibly to requests for changed work patterns and to resist instant refusals on the assumption that, because research has always been carried out in a particular way, it cannot be done differently.	There is a flexible working policy for all staff	RCAC to review policy and practice. Refer to EDC if necessary	RCAC	Feb 2012
6	Funders should continue to ensure that their funding mechanisms and policies are adapted to changing diversity and equality legislation and guidance, for example in their provision of additional funding and duration of grant to cover paternity and adoptive leave as well as maternity leave.	If appropriate funding is not provided by a funder, Faculties are required to cover the cost of m/paternity and adoptive leave.	Faculty RCKT managers to review	HR	July 2012
7	Employers should aim for a representative balance of gender, disability, ethnicity and age at all levels of staff, including at supervisory and managerial level. This should be achieved on the basis of a transparent equal opportunity policy at recruitment and at all subsequent career stages. Diversity should be reflected on selection and evaluation committees. What is 'representative' will vary according to the nature of the institution and the academic research subject, but institutions should aim to ensure that the percentage of applicants, and ultimately appointments, from a particular group to any given level should reflect the percentage in the available pool at the level immediately below.	HR monitor recruitment (applicants, shortlisted and successful) by gender, ethnicity and disability and that information is regularly reported for different grades of staff to EDC	monitor	EDC	-
8	Account should also be taken of the personal circumstances of groups of researchers. Examples would include researchers who have responsibility for young children or adult dependants, researchers for whom English is not a first language, older or younger researchers, or researchers with disabilities and long-term health issues. Employers and funders should change policies or practices that directly or indirectly disadvantage such groups.	Faculty Equality and Diversity Advisers provide advice and support staff on equalities matters in order to try and ensure that groups are not disadvantaged	monitor	EDC	-
9	All managers of research should ensure that measures exist at every institution through which discrimination, bullying or harassment can be reported and addressed without adversely affecting the careers of innocent parties.	IOE has a detailed "Disputes Resolution and Grievance Policy and Procedure". Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC) monitors the number of formal grievances and reviews the operation of the Institute's policy and practices on a regular basis. Information about formal grievances is also submitted to the EDC on an annual basis and detailed in equality reports.	monitor	FGPC & EDC	-
10	Employers should also consider participation in schemes such as the Athena SWAN Charter, the Juno Project and other initiatives aimed at promoting diversity in research careers.	IOE is participating in the Equalities Challenge Unit pilot of systemic change to advance race equality and is exploring whether participation in Athena SWAN is appropriate	Monitor pilot	RCAC EDC	Oct 2013

Abbreviations used:

CoPRS	Code of Practice for Research Staff
CROS	Career Researcher Online Survey
EDC	Equalities and Diversity Committee
FGPC	Finance and General Purposes Committee
FREC	Faculty Research Ethics Committee
HR	Human Resources
IOE	Institute of Education
PDRD	Pro-Director: Research and Development
PLRD	Programme Leader for Researcher Development
PI	Principal Investigator
RCAC	Research Careers Advisory Committee
REGC	Research Ethics and Governance Committee
RCKT	Research, Consultancy and Knowledge Transfer
SD	Staff Development
SRD	Staff Review and Development
WMS	Workload Management Scheme