

Definition of researcher professional development

Researchers are expected to take ownership of their career and professional development. Professional development is the acquisition and/or development of skills and knowledge. In addition, it is the process of reflecting on, recording and reviewing this with a view to setting objectives to support the researchers' current role or future career. Professional development objectives and activities to support these outcomes will vary by career stage and future career aspirations, both within and beyond academia.

This process, which may include formal and informal learning opportunities, is led by the researcher and agreed and supported by the PI.

Every researcher is encouraged to spend up to the equivalent of 1 day/month undertaking development activities (which do not form part of their normal job description) to achieve these outcomes. Activities may take place at the University but also external to the University and could include, but is not limited to:

- attending a training course or workshop
- participating in a mentoring scheme (as mentor or mentee)
- activities that enable development of independent research identity and broader leadership skills including, but not limited to time to pursue independent research, consultancy, visits to other research centres or groups, organising seminars and networking events, joining editorial boards or peer reviewing for a journal etc
- developing an external profile including social media accounts and networks
- opportunities to develop awareness and experience of the wider research system through, for example, knowledge exchange, policy development, public engagement and commercialisation
- teaching and supervision (where not already part of their role)
- contributions as a key stakeholder to policy development and decision making including committee membership aimed at creating a more positive research environment and culture within or outside their institution
- on-the-job reflective practice, including reflections on career planning and building a development portfolio including gaining recognition e.g. for teaching or via TRAM (The Researcher as Manager)
- oral dialogues and/or 1:1 conversations on development with colleagues and line managers including peer observations of practice, shadowing roles and discussions during appraisal
- experience of other employment sectors including secondments/placements and employer engagement events
- developing a new research skill outside of the scope of the contracted research project
- engagement with relevant literature associated with areas for development of skills, knowledge and practice such as Think Further resources, LinkedIn learning and other online learning platforms