

STATEMENT ON CONCORDAT FOR RESEARCH STAFF DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

It is widely acknowledged that, in addition to advanced research training, the acquisition of further skills and training for research staff is essential towards securing future employment. One of the primary ways of obtaining some of these skills is through taking part in departmental activities of interest and taking charge of one's professional development based on personal career aspirations.

The direct involvement of research staff in research, teaching and engagement tasks would have mutual benefits to both the researcher and the department, we are committed to creating and fostering a positive environment, in which researchers play an integral role and are able to reach their potential. We aim to ensure that all research staff, are regularly kept informed about, and are able to readily participate in, activities and professional development opportunities taking place both internally and externally.

[This Concordat for Research Staff](#) briefly sets out some of the expectations between the researcher and the department in relation to research, teaching and administration, identifies the key routes through which staff can make a direct contribution to the department, and lays out the opportunities for professional development and ways of accessing it.

We believe that research staff should be able to take part in activities outside of their direct research project. The department is committed to providing all research staff up to 10 development days (pro rata) to undertake activities that link to your professional development plan and career aspirations. However, these activities need to be permitted both by the rules of the funding body of the research and by the PI of the project. If the PI refuses a development request, they will need to justify why proposed activity will negatively impact the research project(s). The department expects that a dialogue is held between the researcher and the PI in all cases prior to undertaking such activities. Any development days undertaken should be recorded in PeopleXD - please speak with the Departmental Administrator if you are unsure how to do this.

In order to have the best start to your researcher post at Lancaster, make sure that you complete the departmental Induction Checklist (available on the departmental website) within three months of your start date, which in itself will give you some insight into the opportunities available to you within the department and the wider University. All new staff members should meet with the EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Director as part of the induction process. This meeting will introduce the individual to the EDI committee and introduce the individual to some of the EDI processes and policies we have within the department. It is also an opportunity for the new starter to ask any questions or raise any concerns they might have. All new research staff are also offered a mentor as part of our departmental induction process. The mentor who is usually a separate individual to the line manager, is there to offer an alternative line of support and guidance to the line manager.

Research

- The department holds an annual Research Conference, aimed at giving an opportunity for our researcher community to showcase their work to other researchers, academics and students in the department. Exact details will be disseminated annually.

- Would you like to incorporate the principles of your research into our outreach/engagement activities? Such activities require enthusiastic engagement, which is highly rewarding and can enhance your skills in communicating science to the general public of all ages. Outreach work of this type is an important impact activity as part of the Research Excellent Framework (REF), and therefore a great addition to your CV, particularly if you are interested in pursuing an academic career. There are many different activities that you could help to engage with such as providing a talk as part of the department's schools outreach activities, helping with our departmental masterclasses which offer students in years 12 and 13 the chance to visit the department and undertake some chemistry within our labs, or you could help in one of the department's public outreach events such as light up Lancaster or campus in the city. Contact our Director of Engagement for more details.
- As an expert in their field, your PI is likely to be asked to peer-review manuscripts for scientific journals on a regular basis. Enquire with your PI whether you could make a contribution to the peer-review process. For more senior staff, consider whether the PI could recommend you to a journal editor as an expert in that field of research, which would enable you to become an independent reviewer?
- Join the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC). You will be able to take part in local area activities and apply for funding and training, such as travel grants and conference bursaries. The RSC also provides numerous opportunities for networking, career support and continued professional development. You are strongly encouraged to consider applying for the Chartered Chemist (CChem) status. <http://www.rsc.org/>
- Join the Society of Chemical Industry (SCI), which offers scientists and engineers in the early stages of their careers a range of options to share knowledge and experience with others across the UK and beyond. SCI offers travel bursaries, scholarships and grants to Early Career Scientists to enable them to attend or present at conferences and events in the UK and overseas. <http://www.soci.org/>
- Research staff have a rep that sits on the departmental research committee. Please speak to the rep if you have anything that you would like to raise with the committee. Please speak with the departmental administrator if you are unsure who the Research staff rep on the research committee is.

Teaching

- Before undertaking teaching duties, you are responsible for checking with your funding source, e.g. a research council or industrial partner, how much teaching you are allowed to undertake. In the absence of such rules, the department recommends that, provided that teaching is related to the research project on which you are currently working, you may undertake teaching and demonstrating work, for up to an average of 4 hours a week (pro rata for part-time staff). The teaching that research staff would be allocated would be 1st year tutorials. There may be occasions where individuals possess skills and experience that would benefit teaching at other years. In these occasions the research staff member alongside their line manager must put in a case for approval to the departmental teaching committee.

- If you wish to gain further teaching experience, you may be interested in taking up a limited amount of marking of undergraduate Year 1 practical scripts, coursework assignments or examination questions. Express your interest to your PI in the first instance. You will need to have completed the Introduction to Teaching at Lancaster workshop prior to undertaking such activities.
- If you wish to gain further teaching experience, you may be interested in taking up a limited amount of undergraduate laboratory demonstrating. Express your interest to your PI in the first instance. You will need to have completed the Introduction to Teaching at Lancaster workshop prior to undertaking demonstrating activities.
- If you are interested in further developing your teaching methods and approaches, you are encouraged to formally observe the teaching of other staff members and engage in reflective dialogue. This could be a lecture, a workshop or a practical class. If you have a particular colleague or topic you wish to observe in mind, then simply contact the relevant member of teaching staff.
 - Subject to funding and PI approval, research staff can undertake:
 - The [Introduction to Teaching for Lancaster](#) Workshop. This course is designed to help individuals involved in modest amounts of demonstrating or teaching to address some of the basic skills and understanding they will need for their work. It assumes that participants have little or no previous teaching experience
 - [Associate Teaching Programme \(ATP\)](#) to enhance their teaching related skills. This programme is offered twice yearly, in Michaelmas and Lent terms. The core attendance requirement of the programme comprises two core workshops and three collaborative workshops.

The aims of the programme are:

- To support individuals in their professional activities and development aspirations
- To recognise individual professional achievements
- To advance professional practice
- To enhance the experience of students participating in higher education
- To encourage the development of learning communities with shared values.

Successful completion of the ATP leads to recognition as an Advance HE Associate Fellow. Participants will need a minimum of 10 hours of teaching and/or supporting student learning activities in Higher Education during the term in which they participate in ATP

If you would like a mentor to support you through your ATP programme please speak with the Departmental Administrator or Student Programmes Officer to arrange this.

Departmental Administration

- If you are keen on pursuing an academic career, you may be interested to shadow a member of staff undertaking a particular departmental administrative role, e.g. Directors of Research or Teaching, UG Year Directors, PGR Director, ED&D Officer etc. With approval from your line manager contact the relevant member of staff to discuss shadowing possibilities – see [Academic Admin roles document](#) for details.

- If you are keen on pursuing an academic career, you may be interested in observing the work of a departmental committee, finding out more about its remit, goals, actions and outcomes. Express your interest to your PI in the first instance, who will be able to direct you to the appropriate committee chair.
- Research Staff have a rep that sits on the departmental EDI committee. Please speak to the rep if you have anything that you would like to raise with the committee. Please speak with the departmental administrator if you are unsure who the Research staff rep on the research committee is.

Professional Development

[Organisation and Educational Development \(OED\)](#) supports the professional and career development of Lancaster staff. OED supports teaching and learning enhancement, leadership and management training, researcher development, job skills development and personal effectiveness in work roles and has an extensive range of opportunities which are specifically designed for research staff. All of these training opportunities are available free of charge to Lancaster staff, and you are, therefore, strongly encouraged to make use of these opportunities based on personal interests, experience, role and career opportunities.

The Faculty has a [Researcher Career Development Group](#) (RCAD). This group was created to support the development of research staff within the faculty by the running of events, networking, circulation of relevant information and raising attention/addressing any challenges to the progression/development of research staff. Luis Pinho and Abigail Frith are currently co-chairs to the Faculty's Researcher Career Development Group. Please speak with them for any further information needed

Did you know you could be a mentor to PhD students in the department? This is an informal scheme, which enables PhD students to meet with you to discuss any aspects of PhD life. If you are keen to become a volunteer, please contact Georgina Edwards, the PGR Administrator, to express your interest.

To find out more about what the University is doing for in terms of Researcher development see this link - [Researcher Development - Lancaster University](#)

And in terms of research culture see here - [Research Culture - Lancaster University](#)