

	Last Updated: 25/06/2026		
Job Title	Researcher Careers & Employability Consultant		
Faculty/ Department	Doctoral College	Legal Entity	University of Surrey
Job Family	Professional Services	Job Level	4
Reports To	Dean Doctoral College	Line Manages (role title(s))	n/a

Job Statement

Located within the University of Surrey's Doctoral College, this post is part of the Researcher Development and Employability (RDE) team, which supports the transferable skills and career development of postgraduate researchers (PGRs) across the whole institution. Within this team, the post-holder will provide specialist career advice, support and coaching to enable PGRs and Doctoral College alumni to make effective career choices and successful transitions. The post holder will utilise their existing knowledge and expertise in the area of careers, employability and skills, and contribute to the further development of employability-focused initiatives, workshops and events. The post holder will also undertake management and administrative duties, leading on specific development of programmes/initiatives and participating in appropriate faculty and university committees and boards where input on employability and careers development for PGRs is addressed. This role supports the transition to employment either within or outside academia, including self-employment and business start-up for PGRs and ensures opportunities for them to build and enhance their knowledge and abilities across the full range of skills identified within the Researcher Development Framework.

Key Responsibilities This is not designed to be a list of all tasks undertaken but the main responsibilities (5 to 8 maximum)

1. Identify and design careers and employability content for the Researcher Development and Employability Programme, including workshops, e-learning and other modes of delivery such as webinars and podcasts to enable participants to meet these learning outcomes.
2. Empower PGRs through one-to-one careers advice, workshops and presentations to stimulate early consideration of career options and employability skills and to enable them to take responsibility for their own professional development. Successfully supporting them in making effective and appropriate career choices and making successful transitions.
3. Facilitate specific professional skills events and activities, including co-ordinating events with alumni and employers.
4. Liaise with employers to understand their requirements and selection procedures and to promote Surrey Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers to them.
5. Contribute to the development of appropriate careers and employability information resources to enhance the Doctoral College's website and SharePoint.
6. Keep abreast of appropriate career pathways for PGRs, including self-employment and business start-up, as well as keeping up to date with developments within the skills and employability agendas.
7. Undertake administrative/leadership duties across the University, such as sitting on Faculty Research Degree Committees and other relevant bodies and groups. Working with colleagues across academic and professional departments (including Library and Learning Services, Human Resources, Student Enterprise, Careers, Research and Innovation) to coordinate support for researchers and to ensure that researcher development is working strategically with all our University partners.

N.B. The above list is not exhaustive.

Role Scope and Impact This is a summary of the post holder's role in delivering outcomes, making decisions, and the complexity of problem-solving involved in the role.

Accountability

The post holder should understand the importance of providing timely and professional career development support to PGRs in terms of supporting their personal and professional development and future employability. Failure to successfully manage our interactions with employers could result in less favourable employment outcomes, fewer opportunities for PGR career progression and affect the reputation of the University with our research partners.

Errors in managing relationships, poor project management and difficulties in managing highly demanding workloads have the potential to impact on financial and reputational issues for the University. The post holder is required to have knowledge of career development support and coaching for PGRs, events and project management, stakeholder engagement and customer relations and will operate within the policies and practices of the Doctoral College and any operational guidelines set by their line manager.

While this post is directly line managed by the Dean Doctoral College, it is expected that the post holder will be able to work fairly independently, and importantly, work collaboratively and cooperatively with other team members. The RDE team is a small and supportive team, which depends on clear communication and high levels of teamwork. At the same time, the post holder will be expected to use their own experience, expertise and initiative to add value to the researcher support provided by the RDE team.

The quality of the training and support provided through the RDE programme is the direct responsibility of the Dean Doctoral College. The RDE programme is continuously evaluated for quality and impact on researcher experience and employability outcomes, with the expectation of excellence, growth and innovation in researcher development. The quality and satisfaction of researchers with this service are measured through national experience surveys, such as the PRES. Furthermore, this provision is an important component of our HR Excellence in Research Action Plan.

Problem solving

The post holder is expected to use their own initiative and have a significant degree of autonomy. When dealing with routine situations and problems, the post holder is expected to apply appropriate internal policies and their acquired knowledge and judgement to resolve them. The post holder is expected to use initiative and judgement to address and resolve more complicated problems and refer more complex problems or those issues outside the remit of their role to their line manager.

Significant elements of the role will require some degree of analytical, critical and evaluative thinking, under the overall direction of the Dean Doctoral College. However, due to the degree of individuality within the research context, the post holder must operate flexibly and at times creatively in a variety of situations, with the support of the RDE team and the Dean Doctoral College.

The post holder must also be able to work in an adaptable manner and respond positively to changing circumstances and requirements, as the area of researcher development is a rapidly changing field and is critical to a number of University strategic policies.

Supplementary Information

The aspiration is that a doctorate at the University of Surrey is an 'Employability Doctorate', opening doors for our graduates across sectors, and this post aims to support the increase in the employability of Surrey's Postgraduate Researchers.

Person Specification This section describes the knowledge, experience & competence required by the post holder that is necessary for standard acceptable performance in carrying out this role.

Qualifications and Professional Memberships		
Degree, HND, NVQ 4 qualified or equivalent in relevant subject/relevant formal training, plus a number of years' experience in similar or related roles.		E
Or: Significant vocational experience, demonstrating development through involvement in a series of progressively more demanding relevant work/roles, and the acquisition of appropriate professional or specialist knowledge		
Qualification in Careers Guidance (QCG) or equivalent		E
Doctoral degree (e.g. PhD, DPhil, EdD EngD, PsychD, etc)		D
Technical Competencies (Experience and Knowledge) This section contains the level of competency required to carry out the role (please refer to the Competency Framework for clarification where needed and the Job Matching Guidance). Level 1: basic level of understanding/experience and can apply it with guidance. Level 2: good level of understanding/experience and can apply it with little or no guidance. Level 3: expert level of understanding/experience and can apply, develop it and guide others.	Essential/Desirable	Level 1-3
A proactive approach, with the ability to use initiative in dealing with issues, as well as a flexible approach to work, able to multitask, satisfying the needs of different groups	E	3

Experience and understanding of innovative and flexible approaches to professional skills and careers delivery, including online, webinars and podcasts	E	3
Significant experience in workshop design, facilitation, giving presentations and event co-ordination	E	3
Significant experience in career counselling/guidance, interviewing skills	E	3
A clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities PGRs face when transitioning from academia to other sectors, and an awareness of the external influencing factors concerning employment options and career choices.	E	3
Experience of engaging with external stakeholders, including employers, and an understanding of their needs and drivers, particularly related to recruitment	E	3
Previous work experience in an HE careers setting or similar	D	n/a
Previous experience of working with PGRs	D	n/a
Experience using social media, including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc. and an understanding of the importance of social media in promoting a professional profile	D	n/a
Special Requirements This may include a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, regular overseas travel, driving licence, shift work.		Essential/Desirable
Some weekend/evening work may be required as directed by your line manager		E
Annual leave may be restricted at key times during the year		E
Core Competencies This section contains the level of competency required to carry out this role. (Please refer to the competency framework for clarification where needed). n/a (not applicable) should be placed, where the competency is not a requirement of the grade.		Level 1-3
Communication		3
Adaptability and Flexibility		3
Customer, Client service and support		3
Planning and Organising		3
Continuous Improvement		3
Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills		3
Managing and Developing Performance		2
Creative and Analytical Thinking		3
Influencing, Persuasion and Negotiation Skills		2
Strategic Thinking and Leadership		2
This Job Purpose outlines the core activities of the role. As the Department/Faculty and the post holder evolve, the duties and focus of the role may change. The University expects the post holder to adopt a flexible approach to work, including undertaking relevant training when necessary. If significant changes to the Job Purpose are required, the post holder will be consulted, and the changes will be reflected in a revised Job Purpose. All staff are expected to: - Positively support equality of opportunity and equity of treatment to colleagues and students in accordance with the University of Surrey Equal Opportunities Policy. - Work to achieve the aims of our Environmental Policy and promote awareness to colleagues and students. - Follow University/departmental policies and working practices in ensuring that no breaches of information security result from their actions. - Contribute towards broader university initiatives that have a positive impact on student experience, recruitment and campus operations. This may include participation in cross-functional activities such as open days, confirmation and clearing, welcome week, graduation. - Ensure they are aware of and abide by all relevant University Regulations and Policies relevant to the role. - Undertake such other duties within the scope of the post as may be requested by your Manager. - Work supportively with colleagues, operating in a collegiate manner at all times. Help maintain a safe working environment by: - All staff have a statutory responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others and to prevent harm by their acts or omissions. All staff are, therefore, required to adhere to the University's Our Safety Policy Statement and associated Procedures.		

Organisational/Departmental Information & Key Relationships

Background Information

Researcher Development and Employability at the University of Surrey was established in 2005 as part of the national 'Robert's Funding' initiative. It is now fully embedded within the lifecycle of Surrey PGRs. In December 2016, the University launched a new Doctoral College bringing together researcher support, administrative and development infrastructure to enhance the experience and success of the University's PGRs and academic supervisors.

Department Structure Chart

