







Early Career Academic Development Programme FAQ's

The following Frequently Asked Questions have been created to support the launch, implementation and embedding on the Early Career Academic Development Programme. The FAQs should be read in conjunction with the [Early Career Academic Development Programme Brochure](#) and the [Early Career Academic Onboarding Guide](#).

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The Development Programme

<p>Why has the programme been developed?</p>	<p>In 2021 a project group was established to develop a programme of support for our Early Career Academics, as it was identified that this group was at the most vulnerable stage of their career, when it can be difficult to balance developing into your first academic role while also taking part in all the elements within teaching, research and other scholarly activities. While there were a number of development activities available to those joining the University, a consistent and structured approach was lacking. Therefore implementing a consistent programme of support would not only enable new academics to develop into their role, it would also enable the University to maintain teaching standards and student experience, while working towards our aim of 400 submissions into REF2027.</p>
<p>Who was involved in developing the programme?</p>	<p>A project group was established in June 2021, led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor / Vice Principal Research & Innovation, which consisted of a mixture of academics from across all Schools, including Deans, Head of Learning & Teaching, Heads of Research and colleagues from DLTE, HR and RIE.</p> <p>Surveys and focus groups took place across current groups of Early Career Academics to understand their experiences of joining the University and also to gain feedback on the proposed solution.</p>
<p>What is the development Programme and how long does it run for?</p>	<p>The programme is a structured development plan, normally spread over a 2-year period, with the aim of supporting eligible Early Career Academics work towards achieving a set of defined expectations aligned to their Academic Pathway. To do so a commitment has been given that individuals on the programme will have their time split between 50% teaching, learning and associated activities and 50% towards development and the achievement of the pre-defined expectations.</p> <p>To support this, and to ensure all new academics have clarity of the expectations within their role, a set of clear expectations across each Academic Pathway has been created in addition to detailing the available development opportunities, all of which are outlined within the Early Career Academic Development Programme Brochure. An Onboarding Guide has also been developed to ensure all new academics joining the University have access to all the relevant information to successfully carry out their role.</p>
<p>Why are the expectations different across the different pathways?</p>	<p>While there are many expectations that will be standard across all pathways it was felt that more direction was needed, specifically for those new to the University and the Academic Framework, so a set of indicative expectations have been agreed to support Early Career Academic focus on what they should be working toward.</p>
<p>How will the 50/50 split work in practice?</p>	<p>The 50/50 split is intended to be spread throughout the entire academic year and not on a week-to-week basis, meaning that some weeks or trimester may have heavier teaching commitments, or more development time than others, however over the balance of the year a 50 / 50 split should be achieved.</p>
<p>What is included within the 50% teaching and associated activities?</p>	<p>This will include preparation and the facilitation of teaching, marking and assessment, engagement with quality framework processes and curriculum design activities and regularly seeking feedback from students. It will also</p>



	include undertaking the Personal Development Tutor role and the pastoral care and supervision of students.
What is included within the 50% development time and achievement of expectations?	This will vary by person based on the stage of someone career, identified skill gaps and areas of focus, however may include support in achieving your PgCert, support in developing research skills and applying for funding, mentorship, CPD activities in learning and teaching practices, module leadership etc.
What happens if I don't meet the set expectations within the first 2 years?	The expectations agreed when you join are indicative and seen as indicators that you are progressing within your academic career, however for many reasons, including those outwith your control some of the indicative expectations may not be met. In these instances, your Line Manager will discuss with you any additional support you may need.
What happens if I need to take time away from the University while I am on the programme?	If you need to take time away, potentially for caring responsibilities, maternity etc. You should speak to your Line Manager to review the expectations that were agreed at the start of the programme. Depending on the length of time away from the University, it may mean that the expectations are altered, or in exceptional circumstances it may mean that the duration of the programme is extended.
What is the purpose of the onboarding guide?	It was identified through engaging with current Early Career Academics that while there is a lot of information available, it can be difficult navigating the information relevant for your role and there was also a lack of consistency on what was shared and when. The guide has therefore been created so that all relevant information is held in one place, helping you understand about the University, the systems and support available to you in addition to understanding about the other Schools and Professional Service departments across the University.
Eligibility	
Who is eligible to join the Early Career Academic Development Programme?	Permanent Grade 6 lecturers who are appointed to the University on or after 01 September 2022 and who have either joined the University in their first academic post or have less than 2 years' experience at other institutions
If I have 1 years' experience at another University, does this mean that I will only be on the programme for 1 year instead of 2?	Not necessarily, it has been envisioned that most people on the programme will be on it for a period of 2 years. However if upon carrying out the Development Needs Analysis it is clear that you are already close to achieving the agreed expectations that would have been set at the start of the programme, a shorter period of time may be agreed, however this should be the exception as opposed to the norm as it will still be important for you to develop your knowledge within Edinburgh Napier University.
Why can't I join the programme if I was appointed before 01 September 2022?	A starting point for the programme had to be decided as part of the project and as September was the start of the new academic year this was seen as a pragmatic date. Individuals appointed prior to this date are likely to already have had their workload assigned for the academic year ahead so would not be possible to assign the 50/50 split to this group
What support will individuals get who join the University prior to this date?	As this is a 2-year programme it has been decided that all permanent Grade 6 Lecturers appointed between September 2020 and September 2022 and who would have been deemed eligible for the programme will be reviewed to determine developmental needs. While the individuals will not be eligible for the full programme, their outputs against the expectations within their pathway as outlined within the programme will be assessed to determine if any skills gaps exist and what support can be put in place. As a minimum all will receive

planned support for completion of PgCert (if not already complete), support on how to successfully apply for external funding, allocation of a mentor and the opportunity to participate in supervision activities.

Academic Pathway Advisor and Development Planning

<p>What is the purpose of an Academic Pathway Advisor?</p>	<p>The role of the Academic Pathway Advisor has been developed to act as an independent expert within the Academic Framework and someone who can help you to create a suitable development plan to support you work towards achieving the agreed expectations over your first 2 years in post.</p> <p>To do so they will complete a development needs analysis with each new permanent Grade 6 lecturer, appointed after 01 September 2022 and who have been deemed eligible for the programme.</p>
<p>What is the Development Needs Analysis</p>	<p>A Development Needs Analysis is a review of your current skills and development areas upon joining the University. The Academic Pathway Advisor will arrange to meet with you prior to you joining the University to discuss the expectations against your assigned Academic Pathway and determine how your current outputs match these. They will then help to create a development plan aligned with any identified gaps, which will be implemented when you join the University. The development plan will be revisited within the first 6 months of you joining the University to determine if any changes are required.</p>
<p>Where should I track my development plan?</p>	<p>You should record and track progress against your development plan within the My Contribution system. You should create one personal development objective entitled 'Early Career Academic Development Programme' and outline the key development activities planned throughout your first 2 years in post. Your development plan will evolve through time, so if changes need to be made these can be updated directly into the My Contribution system.</p>
<p>Who decides what development activities I should focus on?</p>	<p>The development activities are agreed based on the output from the Development Needs Analysis. Your assigned Academic Pathway Advisor will suggest development activities, however these may change when your development plan is reviewed, based on the expectations you are working towards.</p>
<p>Does this mean that there is no development activities after the first 2 years?</p>	<p>No, continual development is important regardless of what stage of career someone is at, the programme is simply designed to ensure you have the right start in your academic career with Edinburgh Napier University. Development opportunities will be available throughout your career and will be agreed with your Line Manager and in line with the My Contribution process.</p>
<p>Who has overall responsibility for my development plan?</p>	<p>You will have overall responsibility for your own development however support is available from individuals such as your Line Manager, Academic Pathway Advisor, Mentor, Head of Subject etc.</p>

Governance and Monitoring

<p>What is the Oversight Committee?</p>	<p>An oversight Committee Board has been created to support the implementation and embedding of the development programme. The board will review individuals progress on the programme at 6 monthly intervals, aligned with the My Contribution mid-year and end of year process. Through discussion with the</p>
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	Deans of School they will help to share best practice across the schools while also helping to remove any challenges or barriers for those on the programme.
Can I feed my views into the Oversight Committee?	We will seek the views of those participating in the programme prior to each board meeting. This may be in the form of pulse surveys or focus groups. Your views will be vital in ensuring the implementation of the programme is successful.
How else will the programme be monitored?	The implementation and embedding of the programme will also be discussed during School Board meetings which take place every 2 months with the Dean of School, the School leadership team and the University Leadership Team.