

# UCD SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

## Policy and Guidelines on Postdoctoral Research Fellowships



### **UCD School of Archaeology College of Social Sciences and Law**

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 UCD School of Archaeology values the presence, and contribution, of Postdoctoral Research Fellows to the academic life, research and teaching culture of the School. Postdoctoral Fellows bring high-impact, academic excellence to the School, in that they are research-intensive, have developed expertise in their fields and publish in leading international peer-reviewed journals, all contributing to the ambitions of the School to be a centre of excellence in archaeological research.

1.2 The School recognises the prestige that Postdoctoral Fellows bring to the School, through their previous and intended academic achievements and when they have been awarded a highly competitive international research grant or when they are joining a research team through an appointment. The School therefore appreciates that Postdoctoral Fellows are advanced researchers and will support them accordingly.

## 2. Project Mentorship, Design and Co-ordination

2.1 UCD School of Archaeology will assign a **Project Mentor** to the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship; the Mentor will always be a permanent member of School academic staff. This staff member will be responsible for guiding and mentoring the Fellow through all stages of Fellowship application (if appropriate), through the research itself and will likely manage project finances and advise on such aspects as career development, publication strategies, conference attendance and teaching.

2.2 Postdoctoral Fellowships are a significant first step in an academic career, so they require planning and project management from the start. All Fellowships should involve a careful Project Design phase, which will begin at the initial grant application phase or at the time of the Fellowship interview/application stage, continuing on into the first 3 months of the project. The project specifications should be discussed and agreed between the Head of School, the Project Mentor and the Postdoctoral Fellow, specifically relating to each person's responsibilities (teaching, financial management, publication).

2.3 Each Fellowship should begin with the preparation of a short, written project overview, to be prepared by each Postdoctoral Fellow within a specified period following the start of their contract, to be included in the Fellow's personnel file in UCD School of Archaeology.

2.4 The Postdoctoral Fellow and their Project Mentor will meet within the first three months of the project to discuss and agree development for the duration of the Fellow's time in UCD. The Fellow will complete a self-assessment planning document in advance of the first planning meeting, which is available at: <http://www.ucd.ie/researchcareers/planningyourdevelopment/>

2.5 The School encourages its Postdoctoral Fellows to avail themselves of opportunities for Career Development and Training that UCD offers. The University has recently implemented a new **UCD Career Development Programme Profile** that helps Postdoctoral Fellows to structure their career development in order to acquire the experience, skills and expert knowledge that will make them attractive and effective when applying for academic and non-academic jobs. Through UCD Research Skills & Career Development (RS&CD) the University establishes a structured and supportive skills and early career development model, offering different resources, from individual coaching sessions and orientation events to a variety of Training and Development courses, oriented to enable career progression. Postdoctoral Fellows are entitled to at least three days development per year. The School encourages its Postdoctoral Fellows to make use of these tools and to attend courses that are

pertinent to their career objectives and their research projects. Postdoctoral Fellows can find full information about upcoming events, book courses, and manage their progress, including tracking their meetings with their Mentor, through their personal profile, which can be accessed from the beginning of their contract through InfoHub (<http://www.ucd.ie/connect/>). The system also allows to generate a Career Certificate specifying the development activities completed during the fellowship. Further information about Training and Development opportunities is available at the UCD Research Skills and Career Development website (<http://www.ucd.ie/researchcareers/>). In addition, UCD also offers a wide variety of Learning and Development courses for their staff that can be accessed through <http://www.ucd.ie/learninganddevelopment/>.

2.6 Incoming international postdocs might find useful information in relation to visa, tax, accommodation, and initial paperwork at the website of the UCD Conway Institute (<http://www.ucd.ie/conway/research/researchers/postdoctoralresearchfellows/>).

2.7 The Fellows should inform themselves, through meetings with the Project Mentor and the Research Fellows Co-ordinator about the School management structure (i.e. the roles/responsibilities, including officer roles and administrative functions, of the School). This will be of particular assistance to new Fellows with no prior experience of UCD/Ireland. The Fellow can then ascertain which issues are dealt with by the School, and which issues are dealt with by the University.

### **3. Research facilities and contract arrangements at start of employment**

3.1 The Postdoctoral Fellow will typically be involved in a one to three-year project, during which time they will be working hard to achieve their project aims and outputs. The School staff will work closely with each Postdoctoral Fellow and with the university administration to establish the following by start of employment at UCD: contract of employment, staff card and personnel number (which enables library access) and access to IT facilities (i.e. UCD network). Normally, the School would expect that communications between Fellows and staff use their UCD email addresses.

3.2 While recognising that the School is limited in its own space and facilities, the School will endeavour to ensure that Postdoctoral Fellows will be assigned office space appropriate to quiet study, a computer and access to printing facilities. If changes to existing facilities are proposed by the School (e.g. introduction of a new person to a shared research room; changes to computing facilities), consultation with the relevant Fellow must take place in a timely manner. Where a defined research team exists, the School will aim to provide office space shared by Postdoctoral members of the same research team.

3.3. Financial arrangements of any Fellowship will normally be the responsibility of the Project Mentor (the 'Principal Investigator' under whose name the Research Account will be established). Where Project expenses are provided within a project, the Mentor will need to raise purchase orders and confirm them through the UCD Research Grant Management system. In the case of Postdoctoral Fellows who do not have access to project expenses, consideration should be given by the School to sourcing funding for conference travel expenses etc. Attention should also be drawn to competitive funding opportunities within UCD, such as Seed Funding (<http://www.ucd.ie/research/about/internalfundingschemes/>).

### **4. Teaching**

4.1 Postdoctoral Fellows will generally be expected to contribute to the School's teaching activities, as teaching to undergraduates and postgraduates should be regarded as integral to the daily life of a university department/unit, but also an important aspect of research and career development. At the beginning of the fellowship application or of an appointment to an existing research team, the Project Mentor and Fellow will discuss clearly, in consultation with the School's Teaching and Learning Officer,

what teaching the Fellow will be involved in. Teaching duties should not be excessive and should not prevent researchers from carrying out their research activities. The terms and conditions of the research grant held by the Fellow should be taken into consideration when discussing teaching duties. Where appropriate, Fellows will be encouraged to attend teacher training sessions provided by UCD Teaching and Learning.

4.2 Depending on whether it is a 1, 2 or 3 year project, and depending on the Postdoctoral Fellow's previous career (e.g. the Fellow may already have previous extensive teaching experience), the Fellow may be expected to do one or more of the following: a) design, teach and assess a Level 1-3 Undergraduate module or a Level 4 MA module or an Adult Education module; b) contribute lectures to a module; c) contribute to fieldtrips; d) in some instances, provide co-supervision to an MA student's thesis or provide some level of mentoring to a PhD scholar. Supplementary payment is provided by some universities to Postdoctoral Fellows engaged in teaching. Although finances are challenging at UCD, such a scheme should be considered by the School in future.

## **5. Career development and integration of Postdoctoral Fellow into the academic life of the School**

5.1 UCD School of Archaeology regards a Postdoctoral Fellowship as an important stage in the ongoing and future research career of the Fellow. To that end, both the School and the Research Fellow should regard the Fellow as a fully active and engaged member of the UCD School of Archaeology academic community.

5.2 UCD School of Archaeology will, through the Head of School, appoint a **Research Fellows Co-ordinator**, (Professor Aidan O'Sullivan, for 2015/16) who will provide general advice and support to the entire group, will organise and chair regular meetings of the Research Fellows, and will be available to discuss any issues and concerns of the Research Fellow throughout their time in UCD.

5.3 UCD School of Archaeology will also appoint a **Research Fellows Representative**, (Dr Álvaro Carvajal Castro, for 2015/16) which person will attend School Business meetings and will work with the School, staff and Postdoctoral Fellows to more fully engage with the Postdoctoral Fellows. The Postdoctoral Fellows Representative will attend the School's monthly business meetings, where he or she will be able to raise any issues relating to the Postdoctoral Fellows. Importantly, the Fellow should recognise that all documents distributed are confidential and be treated as such (and only discarded through the shredding system in the School Administrator's office, K004). The School will also organise formal and regular in-semester meetings between the Head of School, the Postdoctoral Research Fellows coordinator and all the School's Research Fellows. This will enable Research Fellows to gain insights into how the School is organised, its approach to teaching and learning, graduate studies, research and internationalisation.

5.4 The Postdoctoral Fellow's personal profile – with photograph, research interests, publications, etc. – will be placed on (i.e. linked to) the School's website within one month of their arrival, but Fellows will be responsible for maintenance of their own RMS Profile (accessed through their own UCD Connect page). The School's social media platforms (e.g. Facebook) will also be used to highlight the new appointment to a wider international audience.

5.5 The School expects that Fellows will participate in all the research activities held in the School, including weekly research seminars, lectures, etc. The Postdoctoral Fellow will also be expected to discuss their research at various events associated with the School, such as conferences, and to thereby enhance and promote the research culture of the School.

5.6 The School will organise a Postdoctoral Fellowship welcome event at the start of semester to welcome all new and ongoing Fellows to the School. Key academic and administrative staff within the

School should attend this event. At an informal level, Fellows should regard themselves as members of the School academic and research staff, and so are very welcome to attend at lunch-time (usually 1pm) in the UCD Staff Common Room, where most the staff gather (we would advise that Fellows will have to join the UCD Staff Common Room to obtain a key, enquiries therein).

5.7 Postdoctoral Research Fellows are encouraged to offer ideas and innovations, so as to enhance and support the experience of current and future Postdoctoral Research Fellows at UCD School of Archaeology.

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