

# Responsibilities of a Postdoctoral Researcher

As a postdoctoral researcher, you are responsible for the design, conduct, collection and reporting of research data, material, information or production. Your approach towards research practice and teammates will influence the health of the culture within your local environment.

## 1 Research and Career Success

- Develop yourself professionally and personally through education, training and a continuous process of self-reflection and improvement.
- Gain independence and be proactive in establishing good collaborations, building your network and securing funding.
- Broaden your mind to a wide range of possibilities or career paths.
- Develop and keep a record of your transferable skills (e.g., a narrative CV).



## 2 Research Integrity, Quality, Ethics and Culture

- Promote ethical conduct in research and ensure honesty, care and respect.
- Guard against questionable research practices through education, training and adhering to guidance on good practice.
- Record negative/null results and failed methodologies or theories as these contribute to knowledge. For example, publish via platforms that promote open research practices such as Octopus or COS (registered reports).
- Regularly assess whether your research design and methodology are appropriate, beneficial and, if relevant, compliant with legal and ethical agreements.
- Foster trust and transparency by adopting open research practices (see discipline-specific guidance from UKRN).
- Critically review all research data, materials, creative contents or information.

## 3 Transitioning to Leadership and Building Trust with Others

- Your supervisor will expect many things from you and thereby indirectly acknowledge your expertise. However, some of these may not be feasible. Openly discuss and agree on mutually beneficial activities rather than accepting or rejecting every request/demand.
- Gaining trust and respect is a long-term commitment that is necessary for any aspiring leader. Start by being reliable and building rapport with others to gain credibility.
- Critically reflect on your own behaviour and continuously develop your interpersonal skills, mentorship and leadership abilities.
- When supervising others, be supportive, understanding and open to feedback.
- Seek leadership and supervision training, and find a mentor.



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<https://www.wheelofwellbeing.org/>

## 4 Wellbeing

- Maintain a healthy work-life balance. Don’t overburden yourself with extra work if it negatively affects your performance. Learn to prioritise and say no when required.
- Seek psychosocial support from your supervisor, colleagues or institutional support network if you are struggling to cope during difficult times.
- Do not dwell on rejection and disappointment - acknowledge and move on!
- Celebrate success with colleagues even if the progress is small.

### Research Design and Conduct

Follow guidance from your organisation or UKRIO’s Code of Practice for Research.

Create a dissemination plan in accordance with open research practice and trusted research guidelines.

Do not commence research until all legal agreements and/or ethical opinions are in place for the project.

### Questionable Research Practices

These are breaches in good research practice that are very common and often unconsciously accepted by research communities. Be aware of and avoid questionable research practices as they can act as stepping stones to research misconduct.

Learn more about questionable research practices and how to report concerns about research misconduct on our website.

### Using generative AI in research

There are advantages and disadvantages to using AI in research.

Whatever your discipline, apply good research practices when using generative AI. Improper use can result in breaches in research integrity or even research misconduct.

Check out our website for resources on AI in Research.