

Leadership

Sequence, 6 sessions, one week

Students benefit from collective discussion, important reading, and guidance from you and other facilitators as well as their peers as they look ahead to their post-PhD lives. They revisit their plans, identify their values and develop a conscious philosophy and ethics of leadership, and consider their future responsibilities and career options.

Download [the curriculum](#) for this sequence.

Steps

Timetable

Use or adapt this timetable to hold these integrated sessions over one week.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Professional development plan (Session 1)	Qualities and Philosophy of a Leader (Session 2)	Academic Citizenship and Plagiarism (Session 4)	Career Planning (Session 5)	Work-Life Balance (Session 6)
Leading academic institutions	Hubs, Collaborations, and Partnerships (Session 3)			

Session 1. Professional Development Plan (Post-grad) | 2-4 hours

Towards the end of their PhD journey, each student creates a professional development plan (PDP) – or re-visits the one they developed earlier. The PDP documents the student's goals, the skills and competencies they must develop to achieve these goals, and steps along path to continuous improvement and career development after graduation.

This session is an opportunity for each student to:

- Reflect on their long-term career ambitions post-graduation.
- Re-visit, review, and refine the professional development plan they developed at the start of their PhD journey (OR to develop one for the first time).
- Consider progress, challenges, and necessary modifications of this plan.
- Learn to use material on the web for professional development.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can:

- Identify long-term ambitions and ways to pursue them
- Use a template to develop their professional development plans

Preparation

Facilitators

Source and distribute a template for professional development plans.

Resources

[Interactive CPD Toolkit](#)

Varlejs, J. (2016). [Shape your career](#) – design your professional development plan: rationale and workshop template.

NHS (UK) Professional Support Unit. [E-learning, Support and Self-Review Modules](#).

Students

Review the [professional development plan](#) that they developed early on the PhD journey.

Assessment

Students submit their professional development plans for assessment

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Explain the purpose of a PDP and mentor	Facilitator
As needed	2. Develop individual PDPs	Individuals, pairs, plenary

Step 1. Explain the purpose of a PDP and mentor

30 minutes

Give a short explanation of:

- The form and purpose of a professional development plan.
- The idea of a mentor to support personal development.

Invite students to discuss the difference in roles between mentors and supervisors

Step 2. Develop individual professional development plans

30 minutes

Working individually with the template, students note their long-term ambitions and the knowledge and experience they will need to achieve them.

Those who developed PDPs earlier modify them:

- What has changed, for example in your ambitions for the future?
- What additional skills and experience do you now realise that you will need?
- What has proved, with time and experience, to be unnecessary?

In pairs, students describe their ambitions to each other, outlining what they need in order to achieve them. In plenary, students take turns to describe their discussion partner's plan.

Session 2. Qualities and Philosophy of a Leader | 2–4 hours

Students reflect on their values and develop a conceptual understanding of the ways in which these values affect their career development. The session challenges students to adopt professional principles that sustain successful careers as leaders in the academic environment. They reflect on the key qualities of a good research leader and discuss how leadership differs from management.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can:

- Discuss their values and motivation for accepting leadership responsibilities.
- Understand how values of equity and equality affect the role of a leader
- Appreciate the differences between a leader and manager.

Preparation

Read and share with students:

- Fletcher KA, Friedman A, Piedimonte G. (2019) [Transformational and Transactional Leadership in Healthcare Seen Through the Lens of Pediatrics. J Pediatr.](#) 2019 Jan; 204:7-9.e1. doi: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2018.10.007
- Roberts, C. (2023) [Checklist for Personal Values.](#)

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Introduce the qualities of a leader	Facilitator, groups
As needed	2. Understand how equality and equity affect leadership	Facilitator, groups

Step 1. Introduce the qualities of a leader

As needed

Introduce leadership qualities, identifying key features of a good leader and, conversely, a good manager.

To discuss in groups of four, ask students:

- Consider an example of a good leader in your professional life.
- Are they a transactional or a transformational leader?
- What values guide them?
- How did they acquire these values?
- Have they been able to lead positive development in the university/institution, and if so, how?

Step 2. Explain the research process

As needed

Introduce a discussion about how values of equity and equality affect the role of a leader. Distinguish between a leader and a manager.

Pose these questions for students to discuss in groups of four:

- What are the differences between a leader and a manager?
- What outcomes would you expect from good leadership?
- How would you acquire the essential capacities of good leadership?
- What is the role of leadership in your professional development plans?
- Is there a difference between male and female leadership?
- How do the values of equity and equality affect leadership?

Session 3. Hubs, Collaborations, and Partnerships | 2–4 hours

This session uses a case-study approach to engage students in exploring how to build and sustain research hubs. As a future research leader post-PhD, a student needs skills in developing collaborations and networks. By forging and supporting such networks, research hubs can provide the critical mass to solve research question and translate research into public use.

Outcomes

After this session, a student should be able to establish a network of equal parties in research.

Preparation

As facilitator

Prepare an introductory presentation. Identify a suitable call for proposals or research question as an example on which to focus discussion. Distribute the call for proposals to students, together with links to resources:

- Sharma M. and Razzaque B. [Research capacity strengthening in South Asia](#): based on the experience of South Asian Hub for Advocacy, Research and Education on Mental Health (SHARE)
- Shaik, A. [A brief guide to research collaboration for the young scholar](#). Working with other scholars can boost your profile, but some arrangements are more likely to lead to publication

Students

Read the call for proposals/ research question

Read the resource articles

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Introduce the topic and terms	Facilitator
As needed	2. Discuss the pros and cons of research collaboration	Small groups

Step 1. Introduce the topic and terms

As needed

Give an overview of the topic, including a definition of terms.

- In academic research, the term collaboration implies an equal interaction between researchers who are pursuing and testing common research questions. Those parties need to agree on the conditions for the collaboration, as reflected in publications, grants, and responsibilities. Common types of collaboration include networks, coalitions, strategic alliances, and public–private partnerships.
- The term partnership usually implies that the partners are not equal. For example, one partner may provide the knowledge to sustain the policy impact by the other partner. A process of knowledge translation may be necessary to use the knowledge developed through the research. Many collaborations and partnerships involve researchers of differing stature, funding status, and types of home institution.

Ask participants about their own experiences of establishing a research hub or participating in one.

Introduce the call for proposals or research question, as the basis for discussion

Step 2. Discuss the pros and cons of research collaboration

As needed

In groups of four or five, with one as rapporteur, students reflect on the call or research question and discuss:

- What would you expect from a research collaboration?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of collaborating compared to working as a single researcher?
- What caveats would you make about establishing a research partnership?
- What would a scientist and a partner from another field expect from working together?
- What do geographic integration and idea integration mean for the establishment of a research hub?

In plenary, rapporteurs share the main points from their groups.

Draw out the main points from the discussion, as you conclude the session.

Session 4. Academic Citizenship and Plagiarism | 2–4 hours

What knowledge and skills does a research leader need in order to counteract scientific misconduct and plagiarism both in research and in education?

The university, plays a unique role in society by creating, developing, and conveying knowledge through research and education. Many universities have signed the [Magna Charta Universitatum](#) and/or joined of the International Association of Universities, aligning themselves with values including the selection of research questions and course content that will equip graduates to meet societal needs. As an academic citizen, one takes responsibility for quality in research and education – which also means the responsibility to counteract scientific misconduct and plagiarism both in research and education.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can:

- Identify scientific misconduct and plagiarism in research and education.
- Describe the freedom and responsibilities associated with the academic citizenship.

Preparation

Print copies and/or share links:

- [The Magna Charta Universitatum](#)
- [International Association of Universities](#), vision and mission

Additional reading

- Horbach and Halffman, (2019). [The extent and causes of academic text recycling or 'self-plagiarism'](#), Research Policy, vol48, no2, 492-502, March2019, (open access)

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Identify scientific misconduct	Facilitator, groups, plenary
As needed	2. Define freedoms and responsibilities	Facilitator, groups

Step 1. Identify scientific misconduct

As needed

Introduce common, global views of academic citizenship, within the scientific community and in society in general. Provide examples and draw on your own experience to give advice on how to handle misconduct, including plagiarism.

Divide students into groups of four or five people, with one as rapporteur, to discuss:

- How do you as a (relatively) young scientist avoid scientific misconduct and plagiarism?
- How do you introduce your own undergraduate students to the consequences of plagiarism?

Group rapporteurs share main points from discussions in the plenary for further exchange.

Step 2. Define freedoms and responsibilities

As needed

Ask students to discuss, first in groups and then in plenary:

- How are academic citizenship and responsibilities handled at your institution: by the university leadership, among colleagues, and in PhD and postdoc programs?
- Did your institution introduce you to the freedom and responsibilities associated with the academic citizenship?
- How do you plan to address misconduct in research and education?

Session 5. Career Planning | 2-4 hours

From the basis of their updated professional development plans, students discuss options for their post-PhD career paths, both within and beyond academia and research. As facilitator, take a student-centred approach, responding to the plans and questions of the group, as well as referring to your own experience and that of your co-facilitators. Useful themes include:

- Interaction and possible integration between the roles of researcher, teacher, and manager.
- Raising funds for research.
- Sources of material and other forms of support and guidance.
- The importance of a mentor, and the differences between a mentor and a supervisor.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can analyse different career paths and opportunities post-PhD.

Preparation

Create or source a presentation about post-PhD career paths, opportunities, and funding – academic and non-academic.

For students

Jensen, D.G. (1999). [First Encounters with Behavioural Interviewing](#)

Vitae: Realising the Potential of Researchers. (undated). [Career Options for Researchers](#).

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Present career paths	Facilitator
As needed	2. Analyse post-PhD options	Small groups

Step 1. Present career paths

As needed

Give a short presentation to open discussion about post-PhD career paths, opportunities, and funding – academic and non-academic.

Step 2. Analyse post-PhD options

As needed

Ask students in small groups to share their thinking about their options after graduation. Key questions to consider:

- What career guidance does your university provide?
- Based on your personal development plan, what support do you need to pursue your ambitions?
- What career outside of academia could you consider?
- What support would you want to provide to the next generation of researchers?
- What are your experiences of applying for a job?

Session 6. Work–Life Balance | 2-4 hours

This session addresses work–life balance. Share strategies to improve workplace standards, safety, and well-being. Research shows that employees perform less effectively when they have trouble balancing work and personal life. Conflicts and tensions between the demands at work and tasks at home:

- Have a disheartening effect
- Increase the risk of health problems.
- May be associated with declining birth rates, continued discrimination against women in the labour market, and constraints on well-being and quality of life.

In a competitive, corporate culture, many of us tend to lead unbalanced lives. Harmonising one’s work and life is important for retaining good health and increasing work achievement and satisfaction.

“Work-life balance is the lack of opposition between work and other life roles. It is the state of equilibrium in which demands of personal life, professional life, and family life are equal.”

Outcomes

By the end of the session, students can:

- Appreciate the benefits of achieving a healthy work–life balance.
- Identify the signs and effects of an unbalanced life.
- Identify strategies and techniques to improve well-being and achieve better balance.
- Handle work and personal stress more effectively.

Preparation

Create or source a presentation on the benefits and necessity of life–work balance.

References

- O’Loughlin, James (2009). How to balance your life: Practical ways to achieve work-life Balance. Allen &Unwin. ISBN 10:1741756464. ISBN 13:9781741756463
- David J.McNeff (2021). The work-life Balance Myth. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Michal Stawicki (2014). Master your time in 10 minutes a Day: Time management tips for anyone struggling with Work-Life Balance. Createspace Independent Publishing platform. Volume: 4. ISBN 10:1500187739. ISBN 13:978150018773

Self-assessment

Steps

Time	Step	Who
As needed	1. Present the benefits of work–life balance	Facilitator
As needed	2. Identify the signs of imbalance	Plenary
As needed	3. Design strategies for well-being	Individuals, groups
As needed	4. Handle stress differently	Plenary

Step 1. Present the benefits of work–life balance

As needed

Introduce the necessity and benefits of a healthy work-life balance, and the risks of not achieving balance.

Step 2. Identify the signs of imbalance

As needed

Following on from your presentation and the reading for this session, invite students to discuss signs and effects of poor work–life balance.

Step 3. Design strategies for well-being

As needed

Each student develops strategies, grouped under headings such as:

- Employer resources.
- Tips in time management.
- Goal setting.
- Optional ways to work.

In small groups, they contribute to a joint PowerPoint deck on strategies for life–work balance.

Step 4. Handle stress differently

As needed

Groups present and discuss their PowerPoint slides.

Altogether, students discuss how people can try to handle work and personal stress differently. You might choose to guide the conversation to cover:

- Stress management
- Work in a physical work environment
- Work at home / in a home office

You might give feedback at the end.