Early Career Researcher Handbook
Welcome Note

Welcome to SOAS, and may I wish you a fantastic time during your stay with us. SOAS is a great place to do research, being the world’s leading institution for the study of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Our research expertise in languages, political and social sciences, arts and humanities provides the resources and knowledge to equip people for a global economy and a multicultural world.

SOAS is committed to supporting and developing its research staff (postdoctoral researchers, research assistants and independently funded research fellows). We recognise the important role that staff in those roles play in helping us to achieve our research goals – both people at the beginning of their career, as well as those at more advanced stages.

We have designed this Handbook to support you when you start at SOAS, putting together all the information you will need to hit the ground running as a researcher! Included are things you need to know about SOAS, about beginning work here and about living in London. It will help you understand what you are entitled to and who to contact for further support, information and advice.

Many thanks to Harmanjit Sidhu for her work in pulling this document together.

Serena Yeo
Staff Learning & Development Manager
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Key SOAS Policies

These are the general policies that as a member of staff at SOAS you need to adhere to. It is recommended that you take some time read these as soon as you join, this handbook will give you the key contacts at SOAS which will help you with the practicalities of meeting the policies.

Equality and Diversity Statement

Respect at SOAS

Finance Regulations and Procedures

Health and Safety Policy

IT policies

Information Compliance

SOAS Vision and Strategy 2016-2020

When you join you will receive an automatic invitation to to attend the Equality and Diversity Overview and the Information Compliance training which are courses you need to attend and are a great chance to meet other new staff members from across SOAS.
Finding Your Way Around

SOAS recently extended its Russell Square campus to include a great new space in Senate House North Block in addition to the main building and Brunei Gallery.

Maps of the SOAS campus are available online here

Getting Your SOAS Staff ID Card

When you join you should collect or be given a purple authorisation form from your administrative Department contact, or from the HR team. All you need to do is take this form to the Library Membership Desk, where you will have a photo taken and be given your staff ID card, which is also your Library Card. Your ID card will give you access to SOAS campus buildings for as long as you are employed at SOAS. You may want to arrange for access out of regular SOAS Opening times e.g. so you can come in early morning if you feel like it.
IT Access and Support

Your SOAS Staff IT Account
Your Department administration team will make arrangements for your staff IT account to be setup and you will get an email about this. Your user ID is in the format of your initials, followed by a number (e.g. xy10). Once you have been issued your user ID and password, you should log in and change your password to something personal.

The IT support desk can be contacted on extension 4950 or at itservicedesk@soas.ac.uk.

Your SOAS Staff email account
Your user ID is also your email address (e.g. xy10@soas.ac.uk), and is hosted by Google webmail, so is easy to use. You will probably get a lot of emails from around the school so do check your account regularly.

You can change the way that your email address appears (i.e. changing it to your initial and surname) by completing an online request.

IT Support at SOAS
If you have any problems with IT equipment, software, internet access or printing, then please report this to the IT Service Desk email helpdesk@soas.ac.uk

Enquiries can also be directed to the LIS Service Desk, located on Floor E of the Library. They are open term time from 9am-7pm Monday to Friday, and from 9-5pm outside term time. They are open every Saturday between 11am-4pm.

Getting a Workspace

Your assigned Line Manager/ the Principal Investigator on your project should have made arrangements for an appropriate working space for you, prior to your joining SOAS. Specific needs should also have been catered to, however, if any needs arise that require work space adjustments then please get in touch with your line manager.
Your SOAS Web Profile

A web profile is a great way of boosting your profile as an Early Career Researcher. It gives you the opportunity to:

- Outline your current area of Research
- Highlight your Research interests
- Summarise previous experience
- List previous publications
- List your teaching roles within your department (if applicable)

Check this link to see who is responsible for creating web profiles in your department and contact them to ensure your web profile is being set up. You can also give them any extra information you want to add beyond the essentials.

For your publications you should add details (and where possible texts) to SOAS Research Online, and your publications will automatically display on the publication page of your web profile. There is more information about SOAS Research Online in our Research Essential Sheets in the handbook.

Getting a SOAS Business Card

To get a SOAS business card printed you can submit a printing form to the Print Room.

Communications at SOAS

Mailing Lists
E-mails are the key form of communication at SOAS, and often mailing lists circulate important information relevant to you, or your work.
You will automatically be added to some mailing lists. You can view the mailing lists you have been subscribed to here.

If you are not subscribed to a mailing list you think you should have access to, then please contact your Departmental Manager. You should find their contact details on your Department’s page on the SOAS website.

There is also a dedicated Early Career Researcher mailing list, this is a useful tool to network with colleagues and share ideas, events and news. If you aren’t receiving messages from this list then please contact Helen Porter (hp7@soas.ac.uk) to make sure you are subscribed.

SOAS Staff Bulletin
You will automatically be subscribed to receiving this on a weekly basis. The Bulletin compiles information and news from across the School and is a useful tool of communication.

If you would like to publicise an event you are hosting, or would like to share news or information you feel will be useful to the School community, you can submit the information to comms@soas.ac.uk The bulletin goes out on a Tuesday and the Comms Team like to get the information on the Friday before so they have time to include it.

MySOAS Intranet
Accessed via: https://mysoas.sharepoint.com/Pages/home.aspx
This is our internal gateway for information and links to services you will use as a member of staff. It also lists key contacts across Departments at SOAS and is a useful source of information if you can’t find what you need on the SOAS Website

Through MySOAS you can also find MS Office applications e.g. OneDrive with 5TB of secure cloud storage, MS Excel and MS Word as well as Yammer for online messaging and group chats. For help with MySOAS write to helpdesk@soas.ac.uk and a trainer will get back to you.
SOAS Moodle
Accessed via https://ble.soas.ac.uk/login/index.php
This is an online, interactive learning environment designed for both students and staff. Your login details for this are the same as your institutional details.

If you take on some teaching during your time here, you may well find this an essential and useful platform. Training sessions and guidance notes are available for all staff, and as these types of systems are now commonly used at Higher Education institutions worldwide, it is great to get some training - even if you aren’t teaching while at SOAS.

We have also developed a new space for Researchers, entitled, ‘Researcher Toolkit’. Simply search ‘Researcher Toolkit’ in the main search bar for access.

Facilities

The Post Room
Internal and posted mail for all permanent and part-time academic staff is distributed to designated rooms once a day. Larger parcels may be placed on the ledge below your pigeonhole. Pigeonholes are located in rooms: 234 (SFM, ECO, Politics, Dev Studies), Room S121 (Law), Room 317 (History, Religions & Philosophies, Music) Room 586 (Anthropology), Room B307 (Arts), Room 357 (Linguistics).

Printing, Photocopying and Scanners
When you send your items to print you can collect them from any printer at SOAS using your SOAS ID Card. Printers can be found across SOAS in Department Offices, equipment rooms and SOAS Library. The printers can also be used to scan and email documents to yourself and also for photocopying. You will have been allocated credit for your printing and photocopying by your Department. Printers and photocopiers are shared by a number of staff so please take account of others’ needs when using them. Please ask your administrative Department contact for the location of your nearest printer.

Print Room - Faber Building
Large print jobs can be handled much more efficiently and professionally by the SOAS print room. This is where you can also get a poster printed e.g. for a conference presentation or if you need some nice flyers for an event you are running. Please contact your administrative Faculty in the first place to find out what you need to do to get support for printing jobs. Information on the Print Room’s services is available online.

**Room Booking and Timetabling**

You can book rooms to host academic events, social gathering or to facilitate meetings with colleagues. You can view the timetable of the whole school online. Room Booking requests can be submitted via an online form.

If you are hosting external guests for an event, you will need to ensure they have been signed in at reception. Catering can also be ordered for these events by submitting a request to the Conference Office team.

**Room Booking and Timetabling**

Stationery items are available from Departments. Please contact your Department Manager for more information, contact details can be found on your Department page on the SOAS website.
Key HR Information

Contracts and Letters
Your contract of employment, and any subsequent additional contracts or variation letters will be sent to you via an email directing you to VT2000 a secure online application that will allow you to review your contract details and approve them online.

Pre-employment Checks
Before commencing employment you must provide proof of your right to work in the UK, along with your personal information (a completed Personal Information & Starter Declaration Form) and your signed contract or variation letter. If you do not provide these prior to starting work, you may not receive payment for your work.

Proof of right to work in the UK
A list of acceptable documents that prove that you have the right to work in the UK can be found online.

The most common types of proof of right to work are:

UK/EEA Nationals: A passport or national identity card.

Non-UK/EEA Nationals: A current passport, endorsed with limited leave to work and remain in the UK (such as a dependent visa, Tier 4 visa etc) or a current biometric residence permit endorsed with limited leave to work and remain in the UK.

Your employment will not be confirmed until evidence of your proof of right to work in the UK has been seen, copied and provided to HR.
International Staff
It is a requirement for all staff to have a UK based bank account to allow payment of a monthly salary. We will need this information before the cut-off date for payroll, which is currently at the 14th of the month, to ensure you receive your funds at the normal date.

In most cases, you will need to secure an appointment with your chosen bank. This can be done over the phone. The rules and regulations on opening bank accounts tend to vary greatly between countries. Regulations in the UK are quite strict, so please do ensure you take along the correct documentation.

Generally banks require:
1. One document to prove your ID
2. One document to prove your address

It is recommended to choose a Bank with a local branch, which will be more convenient if you require additional assistance or services.

Please contact the bank to clarify the documentation you will need to bring. Contact HR if you require any more information.

Payslips
All payslips and P60 tax forms are held on MyView, the secure online system.

You can log-on to MyView using your SOAS user ID and password. The first time that you log-in, you will need to set up your own security questions.

You can print off your payslips and tax forms direct from MyView, or just view them online.

MyView can be accessed here.

Guidance notes for using MyView are online here.

Changing Your Personal Details
You can change your personal details, such as your address, bank information etc, via the MyView system. This will automatically update your employment record.
Pay Day
Your salary will be credited to your bank account on the last working day of each month.

Payroll deadlines
Payroll deadline is usually the 14th of the month. Variations or contract requests submitted after this date will therefore not be actioned until the following payroll month.

Tax
To avoid paying emergency or an incorrect amount of tax, please ensure that you provide a P45 tax form (if you have one) to Payroll or HR prior to starting employment. If you do not have a P45 tax form, you should complete the tax question on the Personal Information & Starter Declaration Form, which will allow HMRC to assign you the correct tax code. Information on the relevant Tax Office and tax office reference number for SOAS is online here.

Pensions
All new starters with appointments longer than 3 months are automatically entered into the appropriate Pension scheme.

If you do not wish to be auto-enrolled into the Pension scheme, you must contact Payroll to request an opt-out form.

You can find further information, including FAQs, on the Payroll and Pensions website

Annual leave
Annual leave entitlement for all full time staff is 30 days, pro rata for part time and hourly paid staff, in each leave year. This will be in addition to 8 days bank holiday and agreed School closure days.

You can apply for annual leave via SOAS MyView: https://www.soas.ac.uk/hr/myview/

Claiming Back Expenses
You will often find you will need to claim back expenses from travels to conferences and other costs associated with your work at SOAS. If you wish to claim back an expense from SOAS, it must be done through the online system, called Agresso.

This request must be in line with the SOAS Expenses Policy, which can be found via [this link](#).

Guidance on this system and how to submit a request are available to view on ‘MySOAS’.

**Reporting Sickness**

Sickness should be reported in the first instance to your line manager. If you are unwell for a period longer than 7 days, you will require a note from your doctor. You will also need to report yourself as been on sick leave to Payroll. This should be done via MyView.

To report sickness absence, log in to MyView and select “My Absence” from the left-hand menu. Click on “request absence”, and request a new sickness absence. This will automatically inform Payroll of your absence.

Sick notes should be sent directly to Payroll, either in hard copy, or scanned and emailed.

**Families**

Childcare Allowance and Vouchers schemes are available for application on the SOAS website.

If you have relocated and are looking to secure a school place for your child, [this link is useful](#).

[SOAS maternity policy and procedure](#)
**Health and Safety Information**
In the event of an emergency/fire, you should notify Reception by calling 555.

A list of first aiders is available [here](#).

A list of fire wardens can be viewed [here](#).

Information on what to do in the event of a fire can be read [here](#). Please contact your Department Office for details of your local fire warden and fire exit routes.

Further information related to Health and Safety, along with an incident report form, is [online](#).

**Equality and Diversity Information**
SOAS welcomes a diverse population both students and staff and this very diversity is one of the institution’s greatest strengths. The School is also committed to promoting and developing equality of opportunity in all its functions.

[Access more information, including information on the SOAS strategy in this area](#).

As a member of staff you can get involved by:
- Requesting training on specific areas e.g. age, disability, gender, religion and belief, sexuality and race/ethnicity
- Volunteering your time to support initiatives to deliver this strategy e.g. BME Mentoring

Contact details can be found on the Equality and Diversity pages, via the link above.
Staff Benefits

SOAS offers a range of exciting and rewarding staff benefits, including:
- Generous parental leave entitlements
- Childcare Allowance and Voucher schemes
- Interest-free travel season ticket loans
- Flexible working
- 24/7 confidential support to promote wellbeing
- Eye tests funded by the school

View a full list of staff benefits online

The university is also committed to the development and training of all staff. Regular workshops and training sessions are delivered, free of charge, throughout the year by the Staff Development department.

A calendar of upcoming events can be accessed online.

Staff Development also offer:
- Contributions to team ‘Away Days’
- Support in organising ‘Work Shadowing’
- Opportunity to access funding for external courses and training, provided these are linked in some way to your development as a researcher.
- Consultancy service to discuss how your individual training needs can be met

Further details of this are available on the Staff Development area of the website

Reviewing Your Progress

SOAS aims to make your time here as productive and successful as possible. In order to ensure this, a framework of performance and development measures is in place.
Probation

All staff at SOAS are subject to a six month probationary period. During this period you will have three formal probation review/interviews with your line manager. The first one will take place during the first week of your appointment and the second one will take place around the twelfth week mark. The final review takes place at the beginning of the final month of your probationary period.

During this review you will have the chance to reflect on your achievements, agree on training needs and gain constructive feedback to further enhance your performance. The review meetings also provide an environment within which problems can be explored and guidance sought.

At each of these meetings, your line manager will submit a probation form, where agreed objectives and review dates will be marked. You can view these forms and more details on the SOAS probation policy online.

Pay Scales

Your salary will be dependent on your Grade, pay scales can be consulted at this link.

It is possible to move up the Pay Scale in increments annually, the date for this is 1st of August. Details of this, and your eligibility, can be clarified by consulting your terms of employment.

SOAS also has a ‘Reward & Recognition Procedure’.
Support, Training and Development

**HR Excellence in Research Award**

SOAS is committed to the training and development of Early Career Researchers. We recognise the central role researchers play in helping to achieve goals, and believe it is our responsibility to support the progress of staff in return.

In recognition of this commitment, SOAS achieved the HR Excellence in Research Award in the 2012 round. The award identifies organisations as providers and supporters of a stimulating and favourable working environment for researchers.

In light of this award, researchers at SOAS can expect:

- their rights as a professional will be recognised and enhanced
- their mobility experience will be valued
- their work-life balance will be respected
- their recruitment will follow a transparent process
- they will join a truly pan-European network consisting of research organisations and researchers.

An ‘Action Plan’ outlining the plans for further development in the provision of support for Early Career Researchers can be viewed online.

**Gaining Teaching Experience**

Teaching experience is invaluable for researchers looking for a career in Academia, and is another feature of the support provided by SOAS to early career researchers.

This opportunity will depend heavily on your Department’s capacity and needs. If you are interested in learning more about this, you should get in touch with your line manager. It
is often the case that you can register your interest with the Department, who can then notify you should a position become available.

If you are successful in obtaining a teaching role within your department, you will need to complete three days of ‘core units’ training from the Professional Development in Higher Education course. If you have relevant experience or have a teaching qualification, then you may be eligible to begin teaching without undertaking the course. These core units are optionally available for all research staff, regardless of whether you have teaching responsibilities.

**Support Within Your Department**

Below are a list of key roles and responsibilities within your Academic department, and how they can help you during your time at SOAS

**Heads of Departments**
- Promote and encourage good management practice within Departments
- Ensure research staff are included in departmental email lists, meetings etc. and feel part of the life of the Department generally

**Principal Investigators**
If you are here at SOAS as part of a funded research project your Principal Investigator should help with the following: (where this is not applicable, these responsibilities will fall on the HoD, or their nominee)
- ensuring that research staff have a proper induction at SOAS, the departments, research projects;
- ensuring researchers on a project are given a mentor to support their work and discuss career development opportunities;
- ensuring clarity about their role and responsibilities within a research project;
Support, Training and Development

- managing researchers in a way that encourages engagement, maximises the research performance of the School and allows researchers to reach their full potential. This includes managing the probation process and ensuring research staff have SDR meetings;
- agreeing leave, holding return to work interviews after sickness absence and other such duties relating to the management of researchers.

Mentors

- As a SOAS staff member, you will have access to the Mentoring scheme. If you want to arrange a mentor then you can request this from your line manager or PI of your project.
- Mentors provide support to the researcher independent of day-to-day line management for the development of research-related knowledge, skills, expertise and networks particularly in the probation period.
- At least 3 meetings should normally be held during the six month probation period, with the first meeting within the first month

What is Mentoring?

- Mentoring is often about helping someone work effectively within an organisation.
- A mentor is often described as a "critical friend" or "supportive challenger". They can help you to identify your strengths and weaknesses, and offer assistance in addressing areas that need further development.
- As a new staff member, they have the potential to be a valuable source of advice as you complete your probation period.

Some benefits of Having a Mentor

- Uses skills and experiences of colleagues which may otherwise be untapped
- It helps create informal networks. By setting up mentoring relationships across units, departments and/or faculties it will create relationships which might not otherwise exist and so help the staff involved to see the University from a different perspective.
- It helps mentors reflect. Discussing issues with a mentee can force the mentor to think about their own issues and ways of working
It helps both the mentor and the mentee develop their communication skills such as listening, questioning, problem solving skills, etc.

More information on this opportunity can be found here.

Research Mentoring

- Depending on arrangements in your individual Department, you may also be given the opportunity to request a Research Mentor. This will be someone who can offer you advice in developing your research, and your research career, at SOAS.
- You may select your own mentor, by approaching them in advance and gaining their approval. In September of each year, every member of staff will be asked to identify their mentor.
- This mentor can belong to any Department at SOAS, but should be at least one level above the Mentee in terms of career seniority e.g. a mentor for a Lecturer would be a Senior Lecturer/Reader etc.
- Meetings are suggested to take place twice a year, although this can be adjusted according to the availability of the Mentor.

Other Support For You at SOAS

Staff Learning and Development

- Provide workshops covering a range of training including: equality and diversity, project management and Moodle skills. A calendar of courses and a booking form (where relevant) is available online.
- Can offer support to access relevant external training or accredited courses

Learn more here.

Research and Enterprise Office

- Provides support to academic staff making external research grant applications
Support, Training and Development

- Offers advice on funders’ terms and conditions, managing the funds of awarded grants and costing projects
- Run workshops the whole year round on the Research Excellence Framework (REF), Open Access, winning Grants and dealing issues around Impact, Ethics and Research Data Management.

Details can be found online

Library
- Helps in the development and management of research collections and one to one advice on subject enquiries
- Provides support with developing reading lists for courses
- Undertake the management and support of our Open Access repository SOAS Research Online
- Delivers a series of workshops on research and special collections, information skills, scholarly communication

Details can be found here

Careers Office
- Personal advice and guidance sessions held every Thursday morning, by appointment, with a specialist careers consultant for researchers. During these sessions the office can provide practical help with application forms or offer general guidance on next career steps, whether Academic or other.
- Practise interviews if you have an upcoming interview.
- Workshops covering topics such as career planning, academic applications and CVs and interview skills for academic jobs. These workshops can be booked online.

You can read more about these services here

Academic Development Directorate
- If you have the opportunity to take on some teaching during your time at SOAS, the directorate can help by providing workshops on developing your lecturing skills, assessment and feedback skills and support in using technology while teaching.
The Department also offers the Professional Development in Higher Education Programme (PDHEP) which is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). It is mandatory that all research staff planning on undertaking some teaching responsibilities attend three days worth of core units.

- The full course is made up of two course modules, which once completed can accredit you with Fellowship of the HEA. These courses are designed to allow you to develop your own teaching style whilst learning key pedagogical strategies.
- In order to complete the full, accredited course, some teaching practice is necessary. However, staff are also welcome to attend workshops for their own personal development, without committing to undertaking the entire course.
- This is facilitated by Mehmet Izbudak.

More information, including a PDHEP course handbook, can be accessed here.

Building Your Networks at SOAS

Networking can be a useful exercise in allowing you to both broaden and share your knowledge as a researcher. It can also encourage peer-to-peer support and learning. Your colleagues can also assist in providing information about other roles you may be interested in, or allowing you to hear about opportunities before they become more widely available.

The social aspect of networking is also very important in making your time at SOAS an enjoyable experience.

You are also encouraged to attend Department meetings and seminars, this will allow you a greater understanding of the department as a whole whilst ensuring you are up to date with latest research developments.

We also host regular ‘Post-Doc’ lunches, allowing you to meet and interact with colleagues, and would encourage you to attend and benefit from this opportunity. Details of this event will be sent directly to you via e-mail.
SOAS plays host to a number of fascinating events and speakers throughout the year. You are welcome to attend any of these; details are available on the SOAS Events Page.

**Key External Resources**

**Career Development**

- [The Essential Guide to Moving Up the Academic Career Ladder](#) ebook
- [Vitae](#) - a large collection of career stories from doctoral graduates (Please note: you will need to register for the Vitae website)
- [University Researchers and the Job Market](#) - this is a practical career development resource for research staff by AGCAS (Please note: you will need to login with your username and password to access Careers Tagged)
- [An Academic Career](#) – a good general resource related to academic careers
- [Getting the first lecturing job (2014)](#) - an AGCAS survey. Experience, skills, personal attributes etc. expected from candidates for first lecturing positions
- [University Researchers & the Jobs Market](#) - a practical career development resource for researchers who are considering their next career move, either inside or outside of academia; by AGCAS 2009
- [Career Development Toolkit for Researchers](#) – an ebook from Jobs.ac.uk aimed at post-doctoral researchers who have gained one to two year’s experience in academic research
- [Preparing for Academic Consultancy](#) - ebook
- [Great jobs for bright people](#) - the essential career organisation toolkit
- [The 5 minute career action plan](#)
- [Options for PhDs and Early Career Researchers outside academia](#) – Careers Group handout
- [Early Career Researchers – 20 tips for career development](#) Blog post from the British Educational Research Association
Support, Training and Development

Job Hunting for Researchers

- Jobs.ac.uk
- Academic, Research and Science Jobs in the UK
- FindaPostDoc.com
- Jobs in Research in Higher Education
- Times Educational Supplement Jobs
- Times Higher Education Jobs
- Guardian Jobs
- Researchiscool.com

Networking for Researchers

- Academia
- Piirus
- researchiscool.com
- LinkedIn

Advice on Academic Careers Outside the UK

- LERU - academic career maps for a number of European countries by LERU. The maps show the different research positions available in an institution, the levels of responsibility, how they are funded at each stage and how a researcher may progress from one level to the next.
- Careers by Country - European University Institute (EUI) provides information about conditions for recruitment and career advancement and information on the number of positions, salaries, access to non-nationals and gender issues in 40 countries.
- EURAXESS - researchers in Motion portal; provides a range of information and support services for European and non-European researchers wishing to pursue research careers in Europe
- The Global Academic Careers Guide ebook
Support, Training and Development

Funding Issues: Contacts and Further Information

- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Economics and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
- Leverhulme Trust
- British Academy
- Research Professional - a database of funding sources for researchers

Early Career Fellowships:

- Leadership Fellows
- NERC Independent Research Fellows
- Early Career Fellowships
- British Academy PostDoctoral Fellowships
- Overview of UK & International Funding Sources from Vitae
- How to write a good research grant application

Teaching Experience

- WouldLikeToTeach - a portal created by UCL Institute of Education to help doctoral researchers and research staff find opportunities to get teaching experience in Higher Education
- Brilliant Club - its primary activity is to recruit, train and place doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in non-selective state schools and sixth form colleges serving low participation communities to deliver programmes of university-style tutorials to small groups of outstanding pupils, which develop the knowledge, skills and ambition that help those pupils to secure places at top universities
Key SOAS Contacts

Serena Yeo: Staff learning and development Manager
Contact for: External training queries, professional development courses at SOAS, work shadowing, mentoring scheme
E-mail address: sy3@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: 020 7898 4128

Research Office
Contact for: Information on funding bodies, submitting grants
E-mail address: research@soas.ac.uk (pre-award) and post_award@soas.ac.uk (post-award)
Telephone: 020 7898 4021

Research Funding Officers
Contact for: information, support and guidance on managing funding grants
Find the name and contact details of the RFO designated to your department by checking this page.

Research Excellence Manager
Contact for: advice about the REF process at SOAS
E-mail address: rex@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: 020 7898 4716

Helen Porter: Digital Services Support Officer
Contact for: Information on Open Access, Research Data Management, Research Champions scheme, workshops on social media, networking for Early Career Researchers
E-mail address: outputs@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: 020 7898 4179
Kathy Williams: Careers Consultant
Contact for: Career Development, Interview advice, application support, available opportunities, volunteering
E-mail address: kw29@soas.ac.uk
Telephone: 020 7898 4119

Departmental Research Coordinator
Contact for: Advice about publishing and research strategies
The name and contact details can be found on your department’s page on the SOAS website. In the first instance, please refer enquiries to the most appropriate contact, as listed above.

This is our dedicated space for researchers on Moodle, allowing you to access a range of resources covering key topics like: Research Funding, Impact, Ethics, REF, Data Management, Open Access and Publications and Worktribe.

This space also contains external resources which you may find useful, as well as copies of the ‘Researcher Essentials’ sheets, which are short guides covering key points on important topics. The course can be accessed via this link, or by searching ‘Researcher Toolkit’ on Moodle.
Key Research Policies

SOAS expects its research staff to maintain the highest ethical standards, and to foster openess, honesty, tolerance, fairness and responsibility in accordance with the core values on SOAS’s Vision and Strategy for the Centenary.

Please ensure you are familiar with the School’s policy on each of these key areas.

Research Ethics Policy

Open Access Policy

Research Leave Policy

Research Data Management Policy

Policy on the Employment of Fixed Term Staff

Expenses Policy

Intellectual Property Rights Policy
Food and Drink

There are a number of facilities available for Staff to access:

- The Staff Common Room (SCR) is located on the first floor of the main building. Membership is free of charge and includes all SOAS staff and research students. Coffee and tea are available to purchase.
- The Refectory is located on the lower ground floor in the Main Building and serves food to SOAS staff and students at subsidised rates. A cafe and dining area is also located on the lower ground floor of the Paul Webley Wing, Senate House.
- A unique feature of working at SOAS is access to Hare Krishna’s free lunch, offered outside the main building every lunchtime, starting from around 1pm.

Brunei Gallery and Japanese Roof Garden

- The Brunei Gallery plays host to a variety of exhibitions covering the institution’s areas of interest across Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Entrance is free of charge. [Details of current and forthcoming exhibitions can be found here](#).
- The Japanese Roof Garden is an oasis of tranquility amongst the noise and bustle of London life. It was formally opened in 2001, during the Japan celebrations.

Faith and Prayer Rooms

Individuals at SOAS are free to live out their faith in an open and encouraging environment. This [page](#) contains details of Prayer Rooms in SOAS and information on nearby places of worship.
Making the Most of London

SOAS is located at the heart of Central London, in historic Bloomsbury, with easy access to a range of world famous landmarks, museums, theatre shows and galleries. Bloomsbury is an area renowned for its green spaces, book stores, fashionable cafes and restaurants.

Check out this map, made by a student, of some of the ‘Gems’ located within easy reach of SOAS. View the full-sized version of the map here.

The TimeOut London guide also provides a good selection of ideas of things to do and places to visit in London.
Finding Accommodation

If you need to find accommodation then you may find the following links useful:

http://www.rightmove.co.uk/
https://www.gumtree.com/
http://www.housing.lon.ac.uk/
One Side Guides

These are one page guides, offering essential information on key areas of research at SOAS in succinct way. The guides also contain links to where you can find more information and support across the SOAS website, MySOAS and Moodle, as well as the key policies you will need to follow in each area.
Research Excellence Framework (REF)

What do I need to know?

- The REF is the UK’s system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education (HE) institutions. It first took place in 2014. The next exercise will be conducted in 2021.
- HEFCE states that the aim of research assessment is to secure the continuation of a world-class research base within UK HE. This is expected to be achieved through the threefold purpose of the REF:
  - To provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment.
  - To provide benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks, for use within the HE sector and for public information.
  - To inform the selective allocation of funding for research.
- The REF is a process of expert review, carried out by expert panels for each of the 34 subject-based units of assessment (UOAs), under the guidance of four main panels.
- For each submission, three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of outputs (e.g. publications, performances, and exhibitions), their impact beyond academia, and the environment that supports research.
- In REF 2021, the profile weightings are: Outputs 60%; Impact 25%; Environment 15%.
- Submissions to REF 2021 will be made in Nov 2020, and outcomes published in Dec 2021.
- The assessment period for outputs runs from 1 Jan 2014 to 31 Dec 2020 whereas for research income, PhD completions and impacts it runs from 1 Aug 2013 to 31 Jul 2020.

What do I need to do?

- If you are employed on a contract which includes responsibility for research of 0.2 FTE or greater, and continue to be employed until the REF census date of 31 July 2020, you will need at least one high quality publication (preferably more).
- You will need to ensure that you comply with the REF Open Access requirements and the School’s Policy for Open Access Publication.
- If your research is likely to result in a change / benefit beyond academia, contact our Impact Officer for help and guidance.

Where can I find key information?

- REF Website for information from HEFCE on REF 2021
- Our REF pages on the SOAS website
- MySOAS REF Area for important internal updates about REF 2021

What policies do I need to follow?

- HEFCE Policy on Open Access for the next REF our SOAS pages provide the key information and support to ensure all SOAS authors meet REF Open Access requirements
- HEFCE Initial Decisions on the Research Excellence Framework 2021 sets out the first set of decisions
- HEFCE Decision on Staff and Outputs sets out decisions on the submission of staff and outputs in the exercise, and further related aspects

Where can I get support?

- Email: rex@soas.ac.uk (for general information and support on REF)
What do I need to know?

- **Research impact** is about making a difference and although this idea underpins most research activity. However, in recent years the academic world has undergone a paradigm shift insofar as the emphasis on impact as an *implicit* outcome of research has changed to one where researchers are required to incorporate impact *explicitly* into their research to justify and secure funding.

- **Academic impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes in shifting understanding and advancing scientific, method, theory and application across and within disciplines; **Economic and societal impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes to society and the economy, and its benefits to individuals, organisations and/or nations.

- Many funders – in the UK and internationally – include dedicated impact sections in the application process. Applicants need to explain what impact their research will have within and beyond academia, who will benefit, and what they will be doing to generate and promote impact underpinned by the research conducted.

- From 2014 institutions are required to submit Impact Case Studies (ICSs) to the REF assess the impact of research beyond academia. A REF Impact case study is a brief 4-page document which describes how research, conducted during a specific time-frame at a named institution, resulted in a change as per the REF definition of impact. Each claim has to be backed up with qualitative and quantitative evidence.

- **RCUK** defines impact as “the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy” and **REF** defines impact as ‘an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia’

What do I need to do?

- **Think of impact ... from the very beginning!** As you develop a research project, think of what impact your research could have within academia and beyond. Try to address the following questions:

  - **What?** The problem, event or idea your research will address – and therefore the change you want to contribute to; **Who?** The people, institutions or organisations involved – stakeholders; **Why?** The underpinning reasons/causes; **When?** The timeline – include activities in the research activities plan/Gantt chart; **Where?** The places involved

- **Monitor and gather evidence of impact.** As you implement your research, keep track of any impact you are having and make sure you gather and store evidence of it.

- Think about resources around you that could help you understand, generate and celebrate impact at SOAS and don’t hesitate to make use of them. Do not be afraid to ask!

Where can I find key information?

- [Research Impact Page on SOAS website](https://www.soas.ac.uk/impact)  [Impact in the REF](https://www.ukresearchandinnovation.org.uk/impact)
- [Pathways to Impact UKRC guidance](https://www.ukresearchandinnovation.org.uk/impact)  [ESRC impact toolkit](https://www.esrc.ac.uk/)  [AHRC guidance on Impact](https://www.aahr.org.uk/)

Where can I get support?

- From the SOAS Impact Officer: [impact@soas.ac.uk](mailto:impact@soas.ac.uk) for training and discussions
- Other relevant SOAS contacts that could help you to engage audiences outside academia and disseminate your research include the [Communications Office](https://www.soas.ac.uk/communications), [the Development, Alumni and External Engagement Directorate](https://www.soas.ac.uk/development) and [the Brunei Gallery](https://www.soas.ac.uk/brunei-gallery)
What do I need to know?

- SOAS fully supports Open Access so that SOAS research is accessible to researchers and the public freely across the world
- Open Access is mandated for journal articles, if they are to be eligible for the next REF in 2021
- External funders of research e.g. RCUK or EU support Open Access and often place requirements on recipients of funding
- SOAS expects researchers to make the ‘accepted version’ of papers Open Access in our institutional repository SOAS Research Online wherever possible in line with publisher policies
- Researchers can add records to SOAS Research Online quickly and easily

What do I need to do?

- Before you submit your research check your target publishers Open Access policy before you submit research so you know how you can share it more widely and in line with REF and funder requirements
- Ensure you always add a record to SOAS Research Online as soon as your research is accepted for publication including the accepted version of your paper
- Regularly check your publications in SOAS Research Online / SOAS website are up to date and let us know if not
- If you want more information about Open Access contact us or come to one of our dedicated workshops about publishing and Open Access
- Come to get advice or attend a training session if you need to know more about Research Data Management

Where can I find key information?

- SOAS Open Access Webpages
- SOAS REF Open Access Guidance links to our 2-Page Guide, 3 min video and more via the Scholarly Communications website.
- External Funder Open Access Policy Summaries via the Scholarly Communications Website
- SOAS Research Online links to our guidance on adding records and full-text of your research

What policies do I need to follow?

- SOAS Policy for Open Access Publication lays out responsibilities of SOAS authors
- HEFCE Policy on Open Access for the next REF, our SOAS pages provide the key information and support to ensure all SOAS authors meet REF Open Access requirements
- External Funder Policies on Open Access check our webpage for links to major funder requirements to help you apply for or manage external grants

Where can I get support?

Email: outputs@soas.ac.uk
- for advice and help with SOAS Research Online
- if you have questions about REF or other Funder Open Access requirements
- help checking publisher policies on Open Access
- Scholarly Communications Website for details of training relating to Open Access
- Research and Enterprise for dedicated sessions on the REF and Open Access relating to external funding
What do I need to know?

- **SOAS Research Online** is our institutional repository which is used to record a wide range of research outputs produced by SOAS researchers.
- SOAS Research Online supports our researchers meeting REF and other funder requirements for Open Access in ways that academia.edu or ResearchGate do not.
- Research in SOAS Research Online has been downloaded a total of 2 million times.
- When records are added to SOAS Research Online researchers publication information is automatically updated on SOAS web publication profiles.
- SOAS researchers can and should add new records to SOAS Research Online themselves with the support from the Library.
- Records and papers added are checked for accuracy as well as copyright and publisher permissions.
- When research is added to SOAS Research Online it is indexed in Google and Google Scholar. It is also connect with SOAS Library social media e.g. Facebook and Twitter.

What do I need to do?

- All SOAS researchers should enter information and accepted versions of their research as soon as it is formally accepted for publication.
- SOAS researchers should login to SOAS Research Online via: [https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/](https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/).
- Write to outputs@soas.ac.uk if you need to make changes and updates to your records in SOAS Research Online (researchers are not able to make edits themselves).
- Request help if you are having trouble using SOAS Research Online.
- If your publications list is not showing online contact the website administrator in your department to ask them to activate it. The publications in SOAS Research Online will them automatically show up.

Where can I find key information?

- **SOAS Research Online** pages via our Scholarly Communication website.
- **SHERPA Romeo** for information on publisher permissions for adding to SOAS Research Online.
- **Our REF Open Access Two Page Essential Guide and FAQs** for checking what you need to add to SOAS Research Online and when to meet the REF Open Access requirements.

What policies do I need to follow?

- **SOAS Research Online Policy** for information on what can be added to SOAS Research Online.
- **SOAS Policy for Open Access Publication** lays out responsibilities of SOAS authors.

Where can I get support?

Email: outputs@soas.ac.uk

- for advice and help with SOAS Research Online.
- for making updates to existing records in SOAS Research Online.
- help checking publisher policies for adding research to SOAS Research Online.
Research Data Management

What do I need to know?

- Research Data Management helps you to organise your research data before, during and after you collect it. It also helps you to meet any research data sharing requirements laid out by funders of your research.
- Major funders of research e.g. ERC and RCUK have strict requirements for research data management and sharing. When you apply for external funding most applications will now require you to complete a data management plan in your application and to share your research data wherever possible at the end of your project.
- SOAS has recently introduced a Research Data Management Policy which lays out the responsibilities of SOAS researchers for looking after and sharing their research data.
- Our Research Data Management web pages provide advice and guidance throughout the research life-cycle.

What do I need to do?

- Think about how you will organize and store your research data before you do your research or apply for external funding and seek advice if you need help.
- Ensure you are collecting and handling any research data inline with the School’s Code of Practice for Using Personal Data in Research and Ethics Policies and Procedures.
- Back-up and store your research data responsibly. Use SOAS supported MS OneDrive and not personal Dropbox accounts.
- Document contextual information about your research data as you collect or create it so that it is clear what your research data is to you and others.

Where can I find key information?

- [SOAS Research Data Management Webpages](#) for key guidance and advice.
- [SOAS Quick Guide for Managing Your Research Data](#) (organizing, backing-up, documenting).
- [SOAS Quick Guide for Costing and Resourcing Research Data Management](#)
- [SOAS Quick Guide for Working With Personal Data](#)

What policies do I need to follow?

- [SOAS Research Data Management Policy](#) lays out responsibilities of SOAS researchers.
- [SOAS Key External Funder Policies on Research Data Management and Sharing](#)
- [Using Personal Data in Research: Code of Practice for SOAS Staff and Students](#)
- [SOAS Ethics Policies and Procedures](#)

Where can I get support?

- [researchdata@soas.ac.uk](#) for advice with data management planning; research data archiving; sharing; funder policies on research data management.
- [dataprotection@soas.ac.uk](#) for advice about data protection legislation relating to research and informed consent etc.
- [Scholarly Communications Training and Events](#) for details of regular workshops on research data management and sharing, working with personal data etc.
What do I need to know?

- Worktribe, the SOAS Research Management System, can be used by anyone who is employed at SOAS on an academic research contract. If you're not sure if this applies to you please email research@soas.ac.uk
- You can access Worktribe from MYSOAS or from the relevant SOAS webpage
- Worktribe allows PIs to search for suitable funding opportunities and then work on their applications with the Research Office, creating a shared project area where the application budget, ethics and risks assessment forms can be completed and application documents stored.
- Worktribe is also used by Heads of Department and Pro-Directors to approve applications
- Worktribe contains personal confidential information, including HR data (salaries), and users must sign an agreement stating they will follow SOAS’ Data Protection and Records Management policies.
- Although Worktribe is used to manage the grant application process, approved applications must be submitted via funders’ online application systems.

What do I need to do?

- You should create a Worktribe project by completing some basic information about the opportunity you are applying for at least six weeks before the funder’s deadline.
- Remember to sign the user agreement when you first log into Worktribe (SOAS username / password).
- The research office will then be notified of your application and will work with you on it and help you complete the budget section.
- You should ensure that your HOD is happy to support your application at an early stage. You can do this via the Comments tab in Worktribe.
- You can ask colleagues to review your application using the Peer Review section of Worktribe. Please ensure that they are happy to review your application before you do this. Alternatively your RFO can request an anonymous review.
- Before you submit your application you should complete the Ethics Checklist and Risk Assessment forms on Worktribe.
- You should upload your final application and other relevant documents to the Documents section.

Where can I find key information?

- Quick guides to Worktribe are available on the Research Office pages of My SOAS. These provide information on how to complete and submit your Worktribe project. Guides for departmental and ethics approvers and also peer reviewers are also available here.
- Worktribe Document Repository (accessible from Help tab) contains useful information on various funders and aspects of grant writing.

What policies do I need to follow?

- Research Ethics Policy - for guidance when completing the Ethics Checklist
- Data Protection – when sharing or handling personal data

Where can I get support?

Research Office - support with your grant applications
Budgets and Approvals

What do I need to know?

- Applications for external research funding (as lead or Co-I, or in supporting an incoming fellow) need to be processed through the research office. You must ensure you get the approval from: The HoD for all projects, the Pro-Director for projects over £1 million and Research Manager for final checks and approval before submission.
- Please inform the research office and head of department as early as possible, and have a draft application and budget ready for checking at least 2 weeks before the application closing date.
- By developing your application early, you will ensure you get peer review, referrals to other specialists e.g. for data management, impact, HR and finance, ensuring the highest quality application possible.
- Approvals are required to ensure SOAS has adequate facilities resources to support the project and to see if it fits with SOAS and departmental strategic aims. Also, to ensure that teaching/admin is not adversely affected.
- Please ensure you do not overcommit your time, you should not exceed 1 FTE for both existing duties and time on research projects.
- Before your project starts: Complete recruitment training and Complete the research integrity course.

What do I need to do?

- When budgeting for research follow the funders’ guidance and always work with the research office who can check eligibility and accuracy of costs for: salaries; impact; dissemination; data management; travel; subsistence; equipment; inclusion of VAT (20%) if incurred
- Work with us to ensure your budget is balanced, accounts for inflation, taxes and partner costs.
- Get clearance from your HoD if project requires time away from duties or the recruitment of staff.
- If working with partners, assess risk and ensure they enter and understand the collaborative contract.

Where can I find key information?

- Worktribe – the SOAS web based approval system also used for peer review, ethics and risk checks. You must sign the user agreement before using it, as you have access to salary details.
- Funders’ website and guidance documents within the J-es system.
- SOAS Workshop Series and resources for a full range of proposal development processes.
- Examples of successful applications may be available from the research office.

What policies do I need to follow?

- SOAS Financial policy and procedures
- Your funders’ terms and conditions
- SOAS Research Ethics Policies and Procedures
- Research Approvals Process/How to apply
- Open Access and Data Management and Sharing Requirements

Where can I get support?

- Each Dept has an allocated Research Funding Officer who will support your application process.
- Additionally speak to your HoD and research coordinator for guidance (see your Department website).
- Ad-hoc queries can be made to research@soas.ac.uk.
- We have drop in sessions each Tuesday between 10 and 12 in Room 101 to discuss your project.
Research Contracts

What do I need to know?

- A contract is an agreement between parties creating mutual rights and obligations enforceable by law. A contract can be formed in writing, orally or by conduct.
- If you start performance/delivering the services as requested by the commissioner without a written agreement you could bind SOAS into onerous terms.
- Where relevant terms and conditions provided by the funder/commissioner should be reviewed before accepting them or submitting a proposal.
- The value of the contract is irrelevant. The terms are essential in identifying risks and allow SOAS to put in place actions to mitigate and manage the risks.

What do I need to do?

- If you are considering entering into a research or enterprise relationship with a UK or non-UK partner please do the following:
- Contact the relevant Research Funding Officer (RFO) for your department or the Enterprise team for support with costings and proposal;
- Ensure that a due diligence check has been carried out on the partner – speak to the relevant RFO for guidance and support.
- Where relevant complete procurement procedures. If you are unclear about the procedures contact our procurement manager.
- If engaging a UK based consultant please ensure that the IR35 is completed.
- Complete a contracts instruction form (CIF) which you can request from the contracts team.

Where can I find key information?

- Worktribe the research management system that helps you to create and manage grant applications.
- Our due diligence policy and partner questionnaire – please contact your RFO for a copy.
- Contracts instruction form (CIF) to be completed when you need the Contracts Managers to draft or review your contract.

What policies do I need to follow?

These are the key SOAS policies that you need to refer to when considering contracts for your research:

- Research Ethics Framework
- Anti-bribery policy
- Financial regulations
- Employment status checklist
- Data Protection

Where can I get support?

- research@soas.ac.uk - for support with your grant applications
- reocontracts@soas.ac.uk - for contract queries or support
- HR Department - to check employment status when engaging an individual
- dataprotection@soas.ac.uk for guidance on handling and sharing personal and sensitive data
- kate.price@soas.ac.uk for advice on procurement issues
What do I need to know?

- Prior to any research starting you must have had Ethical Review and clearance to start your research. This applies equally to funded and unfunded research.
- SOAS and its researchers are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards and to foster values of honesty, rigour, openness, care and respect.
- If your research involves human participants you must obtain their consent to be part of the research and keep records of such consent.
- If collecting personal data then you must handle this according to Data Protection Legislation and our the SOAS Code of Practice for Using Personal Data in Research.
- SOAS subscribes to the Epigeum Research Integrity Online Course. It is mandatory that you pass this prior to any externally funded research projects starting.

What do I need to do?

- Read the Research Ethics Policy
- Read the Procedure for the Ethical Review of Research Projects
- Read the Use of Personal Data in Research: Code of Practice for Staff and Students
- Complete the ethical review forms found in Worktribe for funded research projects and online for non-externally funded research.
- Complete the Epigeum Research Integrity Online course prior to starting any externally funded research projects. Download the certificate and send this to the Research Office when applying for externally funded research.

Where can I find key information?

- Ethics pages on the SOAS Website
- Concordat to Support Research Integrity
- First stage ethics review form
- Second stage ethics review form

Where can I get support?

- Contact the Research Office (research@soas.ac.uk) for support and advice