



**MEDICAL AND
HEALTH SCIENCES**



The FMHS Postdoctoral Society presents....

How to be a “SMART” Postdoc

**Service, Mentoring, Action, Research,
Teaching.**

This booklet contains useful information presented in a half-day series of seminars on **Friday the 8th July 2016.**

We hope that especially new but also established postdocs will find the information herein useful. We will endeavour to repeat this event on a regular basis and update the information enclosed.

The following presentations are summarised in this booklet:

Page 2 The acronyms you love to hate: APR (ADPR), PBRF and promotions and how they align - Karen Bishop

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Please contact the FMHS PDS if you wish to see other topics added to this event in the future.

The acronyms you love to hate: A(D)PR, PBRF and promotions and how they align

Acronym	In full	Processes	Frequency	Evidence range	Evidence
ADPR (from Nov 2016)	academic development and performance review	Internal	Annual (usually December – this may change)	1-3 years	Everything and anything research, teaching, service or outreach related. Populate from Research Outputs.
PBRF	performance based research fund	External (with internal support and grading)	Every 6 years (due Dec 2017)	6 years	Selective and comprehensive (demonstrate standing nationally and internationally) . Populate from Research Outputs.
Promotion	Promotion	Internal	One opportunity each year (August)	Entire career	Academic Career Portfolio (ACP) + supplementary info. Populate ACP from Research Outputs.

Preparing an ADPR can be time consuming, and preparing a PBRF even more so. However, if you update Research Outputs as you go, this time will be minimised. Take a quick look through the forms (now) and identify your strengths and weaknesses. Create a plan of how you are going to address some of these weaknesses.

The Academic Development and Performance Review - How does it work?

- Previously known as APR
- Carried out annually
- With HoD/S or delegate
- Complete ADPR form online (Careers Tools platform) -
- Submit early December (this may change)

- HoD/delegate will arrange a meeting – usually Dec/Jan
- Plan, set goals and identify support required for the year ahead – aligns with career development
- There is an opportunity to provide feedback on the ADPR
- We will all be using the template for the first time this year and hence it will be a learning experience for us all (be patient).

PBRF Where to begin?

- Start by populating or updating your Research Outputs – then keep it up to date (it will be crystal clear if you rush your PBRF)
- Focus on the past 6 years (from 1st Jan 2012)
- Due December 2017
- Read through what is required (see link at the bottom of the page)
- Need to select priority supervision/publications etc. Demonstrate impact and clearly state your contribution for the publications you select for your Nominated Research Outputs (book chapters and review articles will fall under Peer Esteem and not Research Outputs).
- Emphasis on demonstrating impact – don't just provide the stats. Remember, registering and uploading publications to ResearchGate and then linking to ORCID and other sites can increase exposure, and therefore impact, of your work.
- Use rhetoric to your advantage (this requires time and thought)!!!
- Plan your activities/outputs for the next 18 months (focus on the positive)
- Identify the weakest areas (those where you have little or nothing to write)
- Speak to senior academics (or Jane Harding and Andrew Shelling) about how you might enhance the weakest aspects of your PBRF (if you are short on ideas)
- Build on your strengths
- Plan your community outreach, even if it's only one "event" each year
- Keep evidence of Research Contributions (emails etc.)
- Our scores don't directly impact on us, but collectively they do make a difference to the funding received by the University. This money we see in the form of FRDF grants as well as

PBRF funding (for travel etc.) to departments (this differs amongst the schools). Also, some funding is filtered down to the PhD students we supervise in the form of PreSS accounts.

Don't worry if you only have a few publications and you received your PhD after the 1st January 2012. Institutions are rewarded for employing NE (New and Emerging) Researchers.

It's not about the individual even though it may feel that way.

We are provided with some feedback from the Faculty as to how to strengthen one's PBRF and/or develop ones career (depending on who reviews your application).

Ultimately you receive a score (NR, NE, C, B or A), with "A" being the most desirable and bringing in the greatest amount of funding for the University.

For templates, guidelines, tips and tricks, take a look at the following link:

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research/PBRF.html>

Promotions

Start thinking about promotion and plan towards it.

- The University provides guidelines but it also takes a holistic approach (assess your own suitability based on the standards)

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/the-university/how-university-works/policy-and-administration/human-resources1/academic-processes-and-standards/academic-standards/academic-standards-other.html>

- Contributions to research/teaching/university service are assessed (depending on your employment contract, teaching may or may not be relevant to your application)
- Complete HR08 (application form), HR94 (Academic Career Portfolio – the evidence) and HR97 (nominate a DSAC advisor) forms
- Populate the Academic Careers Portfolio from Research Outputs
- Even if it is not required for the promotion you are applying for (indicated by an "R"), if you have the evidence, include it – remember, it's a holistic approach
 - Teaching/Mentorship/Leadership in teaching
 - Supervision
 - Publications
 - Research grants and contracts

- Quality and Impact of publications and grants (takes time)
- Service and leadership

- Nominate a DSAC advisor and discuss your application with them (ensure they have the necessary info to support your application)
- Discuss your application with HoD before submission
- Submit in August (follow “Natural Sciences” guidelines – some exceptions)
- <https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/human-resources/career-development/performance-and-development-reviews/academic-promotions.html>
- The departmental staffing advisory committee (DSAC) considers applications and makes recommendation to the Faculty staffing committee (FSC)
- “Everything teaching” – can assist with useful tips to articulate teaching endeavours:
<https://www.everythingteaching.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/>
- No quota
- No stand-down
- Support available (HoD)
- If you are unsuccessful, and want to know why..... either email or make an appointment to see the Dean

Being a Visible Postdoc

Conferences, seminars & meetings

Part of the job, attend relevant meetings when you can. Overseas and local are both valuable. Plenty of opportunities for travel grants which is good practice for grant writing and something to put on CV. Great potential for being up-to-date with the work going on in your field as well as hobnobbing with potential future collaborators.

University website profile page

This is your official professional presence on the internet, make the most of it.

- From university intranet page, find University Directory search box.
- Clicking ‘search’ without a search term takes you to ‘Directory help’, which has useful info on editing your profile and how to look at both internal and external views of your profile page.
- Or, type in your name to get to your own profile page.

- Your publications are populated automatically from Research Outputs. Only the ones that you select as favorites (click on heart symbol).

University policy relating to your profile page: [University home/ABOUT/The University/How the university works/Policy Hub/University organisation and governance/General/University directory policy.](#)

Join networks, professional organisations and ECR societies

Reported benefits include getting advice and useful information about the nuances of the local university/faculty system, research techniques and local/available facilities, funding opportunities, career enhancing knowledge and making useful contacts. You might even make a friend or two and have someone to commiserate failure and celebrate successes with. Senior colleagues will know your face/name and opportunities may arise from this in the future.

Traditional media

We have a communications Team for External Media to contact in case you want to get your research publicized.

- **Suzy Phillips**
Media Relations Adviser, Medical and Health Sciences
Email: s.phillips@auckland.ac.nz
Ext: 87383
- **Anne Beston**
Media Relations Adviser Science, Maurice Wilkins Centre for Molecular Biodiscovery, Engineering, Auckland Bioengineering Institute
Email: a.beston@auckland.ac.nz
Ext: 83258

You can also contact the RSNZ's Science Media Centre to get advice and training on how to communicate effectively as well as managing your interaction with journalists (there is an art to it).

Professional use of social media:

- Linked In - The professional world outside of academia (maybe inside too) predominantly uses Linked In. Use this to grow networks with industry and keep it up to date just in case you need to find a new job/career at some point. Think of it as an online CV and professional networking tool.
- Research Gate - Academic/research version of Linked In. Post your papers or links to them and it provides some nice statistics. Also great for contacting authors directly to ask about methods etc.
- Twitter - Can be utilised in a professional way. Keep your connections (who you follow) professional/science related. Use it to keep in touch with a community of science

communicators and commentators. You can be quite passive (reading posts), semi active (re-tweeting things that interest you), or an active tweeter. Many organisations have their own accounts (Maurice Wilkins, FMHS, Postdoc Society, RSNZ ECR group etc.).

- Facebook – Usually a more personal social networking tool, but professional organisations do have their own pages and post useful information on here. Make sure your privacy settings are correct so you can interact with professional organisations without them seeing your personal posts containing bad language/photos of you after a few too many ciders etc.
- Blogs – The ultimate way to publish your research and opinions in an independent way in which you have complete control. May never be read by anyone except your mum though.

How the library can help you publish

What you may not know..... The library is a fantastic resource..... with wonderfully helpful, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff

What do they offer:

- Courses for you and your Post-grad students (Lit Review, Databases, Managing references, ResearchGate, Research Outputs, amongst others)
- The Research Support Services team in the library have created some useful web pages including info and options regarding article processing charges (APC):
<http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/guides/open-access#=2>
- Also they have online info about impact and workshops on how to increase the impact of our publications:
<http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/guides/track-your-impact>

There are a variety of ways to measure impact (useful when applying for grants and promotions)

- Citations
- H-index (e.g. an H-index of 12 means you have published at least 12 articles that have each been cited a minimum of 12 times).
- Cited in review articles and editorials
- Altmetrics – activity on social media
- From the web link above go to MYRI (developed by Irish Universities) for a guide on how best to measure impact.

How to increase the accessibility of your work

- Publish in an open access journal
- Subject to the journal guidelines, upload a version of your published article to the University repository, your personal website, and others such as ResearchGate.

When choosing an open access journal, consider the following:

- Cost.
- Who retains copyright?
- Index (ensure the journal is well indexed otherwise your work will be hard to find and therefore won't be read or cited).
- Consider the turnaround time for peer review. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.
- A list of websites that can assist you with the selection of a suitable journal can be found on the library webpages.

How to reduce Open Access Charges:

- Some journals offer reduced fees if you peer-review one or more articles for them.
- Some journals provide discounts if you are a member of their affiliated society – check if this applies to you or one of your co-authors.
- BioMed Central offers the UoA a 15% discount (the article has to be submitted from within the Uni's IP address)
- The UoA has vouchers to cover the cost of publication within the Royal Society of Chemistry suite of journals. This includes a large number of chemistry journals as well as *Molecular Biosystems*, *Lab on a Chip*, and *Integrative Biology*, amongst others.

Grants and the Research Office

Being awarded grant funding is an important step in a postdocs life, as it provides evidence of being able to act independently and support your own research ideas, but there are a number of important points to consider

What grants do I apply for and when?

Most people will tell you that you should apply for everything you can, whenever you can, and there is a large element of truth in this. The research funding environment in NZ is incredibly difficult, with success rates of national grants ranging from approximately 7% - 20% (no actual facts to back up this statement, but have heard this is true), so to be in with a chance you really have to go for whatever grants you are eligible for. Even if you have funding already, there is no harm applying for extra consumables, technical

staff to help you, or even student stipends. What you don't want to happen is to come to the last 6 months of your contract and suddenly be wondering where to look for money to continue, chances are you'll be too late.

For a comprehensive list of research funding opportunities, and application dates, go to:

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research/grant-calendar-and-research-professional.html>

It's also worth checking out the research professional website which includes many international funding opportunities too:

<https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/academic-heads/research-resources-and-services-for-academic-heads/research-grants-funding-module-and-research-professional/research-professional.html>

<https://www.researchprofessional.com/sso/login?service=https://www.researchprofessional.com/0/>

If you are in any doubt about eligibility, get in touch with the research office:

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research/useful-contacts.html>

How to prepare a grant application

You will find many courses available on this run by the research office, but essentially it comes down to a few key points:

- **Read the guidelines of the grant you are applying for** – the funding bodies know what they want, and how they want it, better than anyone else, so spend some time reading through the guidelines as they “should” have all the information you need there
- **Attend workshops and panels run by the university** – these guys will have read the guidelines and have experience from past applications. They are a great source of information, BUT, they should not be taken as the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. These guys will have made their own conclusions from what they read, and from how they “felt” things went from previous years. They are not the funding bodies and will not be the ones deciding whether

you get money or not, so while they are incredibly useful, still go back to the guidelines and trusty in your own opinions.

- **Prepare drafts early (proof read, proof read, proof read)** – No matter how much time you spend doing something, it can always be improved. The more chances you have to read over what you have done, the more you will find simpler ways to describe your work. You will also have more chance to get it read by others, which is imperative!! Get as many people to read your work as you can, and in this order: your PI/supervisor, your group members, faculty members from other groups, your Mum. Each will be able to point out things that you have missed. The postdoc society can help find people to peer review your grants, if given enough time, so don't hesitate to get in touch.
- **Check the budget** – We're scientists, not accountants, but we still have to have an understanding of how much it will cost to fund a research project, and make sure we deliver our project with the amount we have requested. Therefore, don't under sell yourself. Don't try to look like you are good value for money. And don't inflate prices so you can do some work on the side. Reviewers will know how much things cost and will pull you up on this. You should run your budget past lab heads and your department accountant.
- **Ethics** – It goes without saying, I hope, that you consider ethical approval before writing a grant. If you have approval in place, the grant looks much stronger, but even if you haven't gotten to that stage yet make sure you have considered what will be required – ethics applications are often more hassle than the grant writing itself.

Selecting your research team?

It's your grant should be PI, plus you'll be doing all the work, so why should you name senior people? Well, sometimes you have to be tactical about these things. Often reviewers will judge grants by the project team and the likelihood that they will deliver a successful project. At the end of the day a granting body is accountable for all the money it spends, so it's not going to back something if they are unsure whether it will get done on time. Having a senior name, with a proven track record of grant success on a grant is therefore a great way to enhance your funding chances. I personally have put senior people as PI and myself as an associate investigator, as I knew this was the only way to get it funded, and it worked. Obviously this is not ideal, but if you need salary sometimes you cannot be choosy. If you are in this situation, hopefully you can have senior partner who is supportive and with whom you can discuss these issues with. Some grants allow co-PIs

which means you get the best of both worlds. It's sad, but politics definitely exist when it comes to grant funding.

Research Funding Module

All research proposals need to be uploaded to Research Funding Module (RFM) a week before the funding body's application deadline. This allows the research office to check that your application is compliant, and get the necessary internal checks completed, including sign off from the faculty departments, HODs and deanery. It can sometimes be the bane of your life, but it still needs to be navigated. A link to the RFM is below, if you are having problems then the research office are usually very good at helping.

<https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/research/research-services-overview/support-outreach-inreach-new-researcher-induction/how-to-guides/research-funding-module.html>

Resources available

There is a wealth of information available to help support your grant writing efforts, and there are a number of links below which I suggest checking out. Probably the most beneficial source of support (other than your postdoc society), are the faculty research office contacts. I do not have the superlatives available to praise these guys enough for the work they have done in helping me get grants in over the line. They are here for you, so use them. At the end of the day, the university wants you to be successful with your grant writing, so remember that.

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research/useful-contacts.html>

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research.html>

<https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/staffonly/research/submitting-a-grant-application.html>

Teaching and Supervision

Undergrad teaching for postdocs on a 100% research contract is optional. Some teaching experience may be beneficial though not crucial to your professional development especially if you plan to seek a lectureship. Many people get enjoyment from teaching; it can be very rewarding on a personal level. Be aware it can be very time consuming, so a balance needs to be struck between benefits and pitfalls. Supervision of postgrad students is very beneficial to your research and career, opportunities should be sought and taken-up when available. Opportunities can be limited by short-term contracts.

Getting into teaching:

- The Associate Dean (Academic) in the faculty is A/P Mark Barrow, m.barrow@auckland.ac.nz
- **Contact the course co-ordinators.** Find them online:
 - For SBS, <http://www.sbs.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/course-coordinators.html>
 - FMHS do not have a simple accessible list so you need to view the courses one by one here (needs UOA login), <http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty/about/programmes-and-courses.html>
- **FMHS Teaching Hub** - <https://www.fmhshub.auckland.ac.nz>
 - Anuj Bhargava may be a point of call to see if courses need lecturers
- **FMHS PDS Teaching Expertise Link** adds your information and we can send it on to the Teaching hub. Please contact them yourself as a first stop:
<http://goo.gl/forms/UbgTPUZphsrMmEcS2>

Evaluation of your teaching:

- **Peer Review** -ask lecturers, peers, teaching award winners to sit in your lectures. Meet with them beforehand and pick out points for them to assess. Discuss afterwards and get a written letter detailing your performance form them for your teaching portfolio.
- **SET Summative Evaluation Tool** is set up by your course coordinator. If they do not set this up for your lecture you can ask for it.
<https://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/evaluate/index.html>

- **Student Review** Informal questionnaires can track your teaching and help you improve. If a student emails you with a positive comment, file it away for your teaching portfolio.
- Join the **FMHS Teaching and Learning Community**, they meet twice a month for half an hour lunch meetings - contact Jenny Sim for details j.sim@auckland.ac.nz

Teaching resources at the UoA:

- See '**FMHS Everything Teaching**' (needs UOA login) <https://www.everythingteaching.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz> and **FMHS Teaching+** <https://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/teachingplus/>
- **Maintain a teaching portfolio** (needs UOA login) – <https://www.coursebuilder.cad.auckland.ac.nz/flexicourses/3175/publish/1/index.html> - this has been replaced by the 'Academic Career Portfolio' for the promotion process, similar data is needed for both
- **CLear training – Teaching Catalyst** is a 3 day course plus 3 half day follow ups offered twice a year <https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en/na-staff.html>
- **Post Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCert)** is a 24 month part time via CLear, bursaries are available to teaching staff. <https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en/pgcert.html>
- **Post Graduate Courses in Clinical Education** via the Centre for Medical and Health Sciences Education (CMHSE)

Supervision:

- The Associate Dean of postgraduate is A/P Trevor Sherwin, t.sherwin@auckland.ac.nz and The Associate Dean of Research is P Andrew Shelling, a.shelling@auckland.ac.nz
- **Findathesis** to submit your PhD, MSc and Honours projects <https://www.findathesis.auckland.ac.nz/#/>
- **Honours projects:** <https://mhsfaculty.auckland.ac.nz/pgprojects/projects.html>
- **Summer students:** <https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty/about/research/summer-research-scholarships.html>
- **CLear training courses** <https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en/supervision.html>

- Orientation to Doctoral Education (ORIDOC) Policy and Process at UoA = 2 hours (all academics who want to supervise or co-supervise a MSc or PhD student - required every 5 years, even if you already supervise)
- The Art of Graduate research supervision = 3.5 hours (for all people who have not supervised a doctoral student to completion before)

CLear have many more courses so have a look on their website for details.

- **Supervision guidelines and policy/procedures link** (staff intranet), This link has a wealth of information on it:
<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-current-pg/cs-current-pg-policies/cs-pg-supervision-tools.html>

Professional Development and CleaR

Development programmes specifically targeting researchers are offered by:

- Human Resources People and Organisational Development (POD)
- Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education (CLear)
- Research Office
- Library

Please follow the links and explore the options available from these resources..

CLear - The Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education

- <https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en.html>

Most courses are focussed on teaching, and are highlighted in the teaching section of this document.

e.g.

- Orientation to Doctoral Education Policy and Process at UoA & The Art of Graduate Research Supervision - 'ORIDOC' a course required for those wishing to supervise of postgrad students.
- PGCert in academic practice - an accredited tertiary teaching qualification designed to provide a solid theoretical and practical grounding in higher education teaching, research productivity and academic citizenship for university lecturers

The FMHS Postdoc Society Presents: How to be a SMART Postdoc

Finding courses targeted at researchers – good link from the Clear webpage

<https://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/en/developing-your-research.html>

The library also offer useful courses including open access, writing and referencing, literature review, intellectual property and tracking your impact as well as how to use research outputs. See the section in this booklet on library services.

<http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/study-skills>

<https://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/workshops/>