

Item 4d: Early Career Academics

ECA Special Interest Group (SIG)

1. Mentoring scheme

The ECA Support Network has had a promising first term and now has 59 mentors on its database across 6 language areas, with particularly strong representation in French and German, and in the 20-21st centuries, gender studies, and memory studies. We have been able to respond to six one-off support requests and to establish seven year-long mentoring partnerships, and hope to be able to continue increasing the reach of our support provision as, first, more mentors from a greater range of specialisms join the network and, secondly, as the ECA community becomes more aware that our schemes exist. We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who has volunteered to help - and especially to those who have already actively provided mentoring - in this more-than-usually demanding year. Mentoring partnerships will run Jan-Sept 2021, thereafter from Sept-Sept each year.

2. Resource Kit for ECAs

The development of a centralised space on UCML website for ML resource sharing on job applications, grants, and book proposals etc. This could also be useful for communicating changes in the ECA environment to established academic staff. A symposium on similar themes is being planned.

Actions:

- Posting information on ECA area of UCML website.

3. ECA Charter

The creation of a charter to be shared among UCML HE members which will adopt its principles, modelled on Vitae career development framework. Including definition of scholarship, parity of access to research training/support, training for health & safety issues, and standard of training for PGRs. ECA Charter will consider both REF and TEF implications.

Actions:

- A survey underpinning the charter is being created aimed at three distinct groups: ECAs, undergraduates, and permanent staff members.
- Liam to organise canvassing of opinion across the discipline for ECA views and experiences.
- The ECA team plans to send surveys to UG, PGT, ECA, and established academic staff communities to gather data on the impact of short-term, fixed-contract placements and turnover.

Equality and Diversity

As UCML ECA rep, Liam is keen to sustain equal and diverse representation of the ECA community among the ECA SIG. He is currently developing ideas for this and welcomes the support of UCML colleagues.