ESF Member Organisation Forum

'European Alliance on Research Career Development'

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Dr Janet Metcalfe, Vitae

www.vitae.ac.uk

Researcher Development Framework

- Vitae
- Researcher careers
- Researcher Development Framework
- Development process
- Structure
- Next steps

Vitae vision and aims

"For the UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers"

- **Building human capital** by influencing the development and implementation of effective policy relating to researcher development

- **Enhancing higher education provision** to train and develop researchers

- **Empowering researchers** to make an impact in their careers

- **Evidencing the impact** of professional and career development support for researchers

Researchers careers

- **Mapping researchers careers**
  - What do researchers do?
  - Career stories portal
  - Labour market information

- **Developing researchers**
  - Professional development opportunities
  - Self-reflection framework
  - Articulating competencies and experience

- **Engaging employers**
  - recruiting researchers
  - researchers' skills and competencies

Employers' expectation of researchers' performance
(high and very high)

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Data analysis	100%	100%	91%	91%
Problem Solving	100%	88%	89%	83%
Drive and Motivation	100%	84%	59%	74%
Project Management	83%	36%	70%	39%
Interpersonal Skills	67%	56%	39%	26%
Leadership	67%	28%	24%	17%
Commercial awareness	50%	20%	28%	22%
Overall	**81%**	**59%**	**57%**	**50%**

Employer categories

Group 1: actively target doctorates

Group 2: strong interest

Group 3: some interest, occasionally recruit

Group 4: no interest

Recruiting researchers, 2009, 104 employers

Researcher Development Framework project aims

- Tool for planning, promoting, supporting personal, professional and career development of researchers

- Describes knowledge, skills, behaviours and personal qualities of researchers

- Primarily for researchers and those supporting researchers

- Encourages researchers to aspire to excellence: aspirational, but realistic

- Builds on the UK Joint Skills Statement

- Based on current environment, but also anticipates change

- Couched in accessible language, but providing a lexicon for communicating research qualities

- Recognises individual difference and different career paths (in and out of HE)

- NOT intended for job descriptions or appraisal systems

Development process

- Literature survey – focus on definitions of research and research roles

- Literature review - focus on competency frameworks – academic and related occupations

- *Phenomenographic* method; empirical data from analysis of audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews with experienced researchers
  - >100 interviews: range of experiences, institution types, geographical context, disciplines and demographics
  - >1000 characteristics and variants, clustered into common groups

- HE Sector project group

- Broad consultation - 242 responses
  - workshops and presentations
  - external advisory group
  - non-HE employer validation
  - academic validation
  - endorsed by 26 keystakeholder organisations including RCUK, UUK, FCs, QAA

Researcher Development Framework

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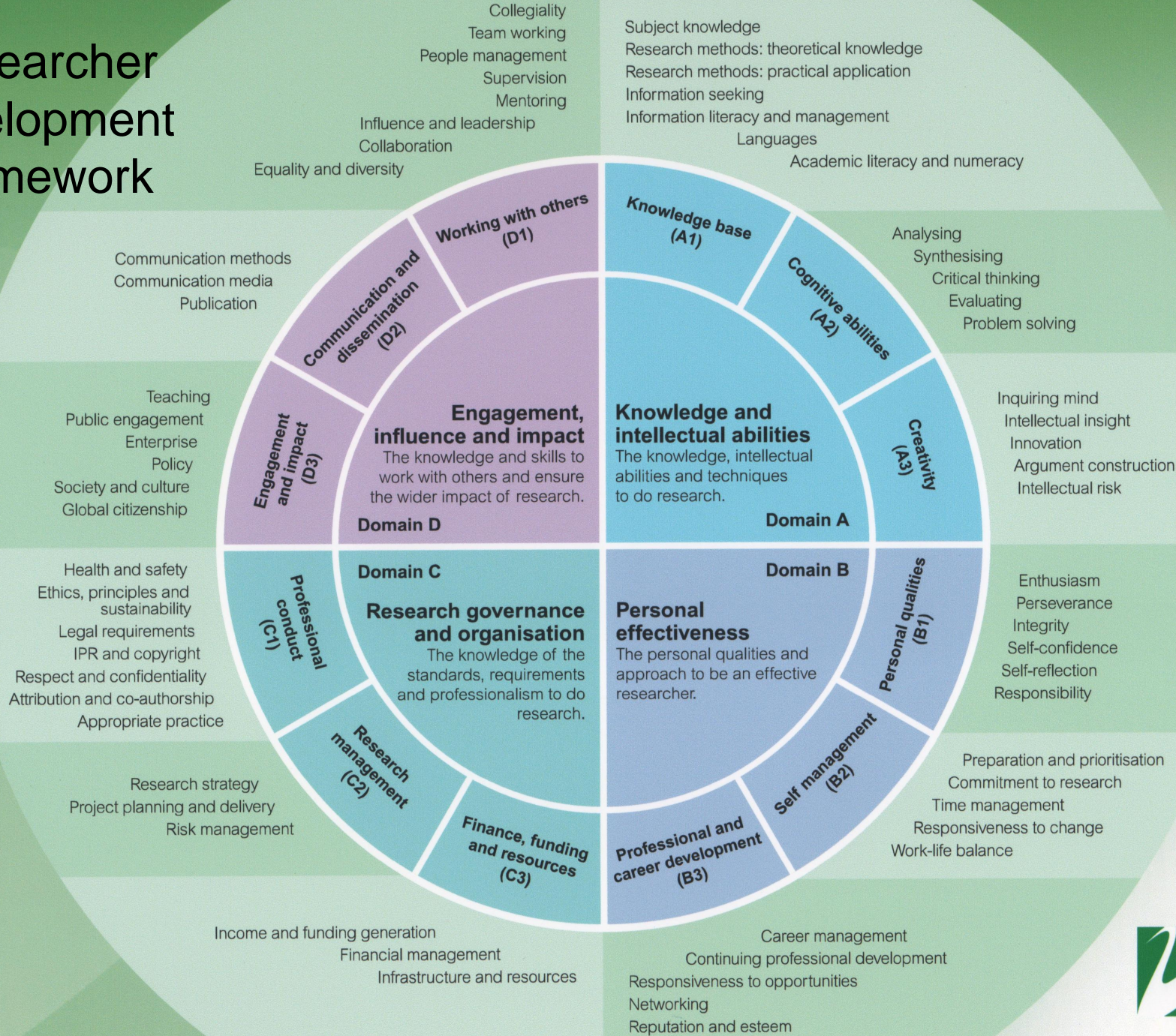
Domain B

Personal effectiveness
The personal qualities and approach to be an effective researcher.

Personal qualities (B1)
- Enthusiasm
- Perseverance
- Integrity
- Self-confidence
- Self-reflection
- Responsibility

Self management (B2)
- Preparation and prioritisation
- Commitment to research
- Time management
- Responsiveness to change
- Work-life balance

Professional and career development (B3)
- Career management
- Continuing professional development
- Responsiveness to opportunities
- Networking
- Reputation and esteem

Integrity

vitae
realising
the potential
of researchers

Sample: descriptors & phases

Domain B: *Personal effectiveness*
Sub-domain B1: *Personal qualities*
Descriptor 3: *Integrity*

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Demonstrates appreciation of standards of good research practice in the institution and/or discipline/ research area. (B3)* Seeks guidance as necessary.	Acts with professional integrity and humility at all times and is honest in all aspects of research; takes especial care in information/data handling and dissemination and engagement with others.	Acts as exemplar to and advises peers and less experienced members of staff; respecting their views and engaging effectively in discussion.	Sets expectations and standard of conduct. Advises all staff and contributes to institutional and disciplinary policy/practice.	Shapes policy and procedures of good practice in research in the HE sector, professional associations and bodies.

Researcher Development Framework: CPD tool

HOMEPAGE

Researcher Development Framework

Domain A — Knowledge and intellectual abilities — This domain contains the knowledge and intellectual abilities needed to be able to carry out excellent research.

Domain B — Personal effectiveness — This domain contains the personal qualities, career and self-management skills required to take ownership for and control of professional development.

Domain C — Research organisation and governance — This domain contains the knowledge of the standards, requirements and professional conduct that are needed for the effective management of research.

Domain D — Communication, influence and impact — This domain contains the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage with, influence and impact on the academic, social, cultural, economic and broader context.

Report

Guidance notes

Useful Resources

Select your domain

Several researchers used the tool to create development plans. Here are some of their thoughts...

"Set aside a lot of time, read it carefully and be honest about where you are. Don't worry about the phases – you don't always have to aim for phase 5 but maybe take a look at the other phases and identify shorter term goals that are more achievable than always aiming for the top."
Margaret Dellett, early career researcher, Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology, Queen's University Belfast

"The RDF will encourage me to be more proactive about my career development as it provides me with a framework (list of milestones) that I can judge my current progress in relation to what I want to achieve with my career."
Joe Viana, PhD student in the School of Management, University of Southampton

"I now have a path that I would like to follow"
Maria Sharmina, PhD student, Sustainable Consumption Institute (SCI), University of Manchester

The RDF "...identified areas for me that I needed to hone and really made me think about my career development. I've highlighted things now that I know I need to do."
Lynn McCallum, senior postdoctoral research fellow, School of Pharmacy, Queen's University Belfast

"I would see this [RDF] as a barometer...to give me a bit more clarity about what areas I could develop and what might be most important. It's something I could keep returning too."
Anja Dalton, PhD student, Centre for Transport & Society, University of the West of England

"I have a good idea of what's involved with the job I do so it was quite easy mapping that to the descriptors. What we've always tried to do with the postdocs here is say 'look this is your career and it's your responsibility'. As a new postdoc your emphasis is on working in the lab and getting results and it's easy for career and personal development to fall by the wayside."
Paddy Hadoke, tenure-tracked Senior Academic Fellow in Pharmacology, University of Edinburgh

DESCRIPTOR SELECTION

Select your descriptors of interest

A1 - Knowledge base
A2 - Cognitive abilities
A3 - Creativity

PHASE SELECTION

Select where you are

Select where you would like to be

RDF personal CPD tool

The RDF personal CPD tool is a fully downloadable and portable self reflection tool to support the continuing professional development of researchers.

It uses Microsoft Excel as a platform and provides guidance notes and useful resources so that researchers can use it flexibly. Users can save their individual versions at different timepoints to track their own progress and development.

Please use post-it notes to add your comments about the RDF CPD tool:

Record evidence of your current phase

Complete an action plan

REPORT

Save and print your report

Domain D - Engagment, influen...

1. Working with others

2. Communication and dissem...

3. Engagement and impact

'I have always though of myself as being quite ambitious, driven and focussed on what I want, but the framework made me realise I can have a much larger vision'

'I found it very user friendly. It was useful to reflect on it because it helps to identify your skills and think about them in a more reflective manner'

'I thought I didn't have the time to fill in the RDF but it is really important to get a sense of what it is I want to achieve and why I'm doing all the other things and what my ultimately goal is'

Dr Kristina Hultgren, postdoctoral researcher in Sociolinguistics
University of Copenhagen and Edge Hill University, UK

Future Vitae RDF activities

- Validate the RDF with:
  - non HE employers
  - other research systems

- Provide examples of 'lenses' on the RDF, eg:
  - public engagement, teaching and learning, intrapreneurship, information management

- Engagement strategies for key stakeholder groups, including:
  - embedding in HEIs policy and provision
  - engaging PIs, supervisors and researchers

- Demonstrate the unique value of researchers to non-HE employers

- Set up a long term evaluation project

References

- Vitae www.vitae.ac.uk

- Researcher Development Framework w[ww.vitae.ac.uk/rdf](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf)

- What do researchers do? www.vitae.ac.uk/wdrd

- Career stories portal www.vitae.ac.uk/careerstoriesportal

- Careers in Research Online Survey www.vitae.uk/cros

- Vitae employers www.vitae.ac.uk/employers

- Vitae impact and evaluation www.vitae.ac.uk/impact

- Concordat www.researchconcordat.ac.uk