

Briefing for research staff

“I’ve always thought of myself as being quite ambitious, driven and focused on what I want, but the framework made me realise I can have much larger visions.”

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Background

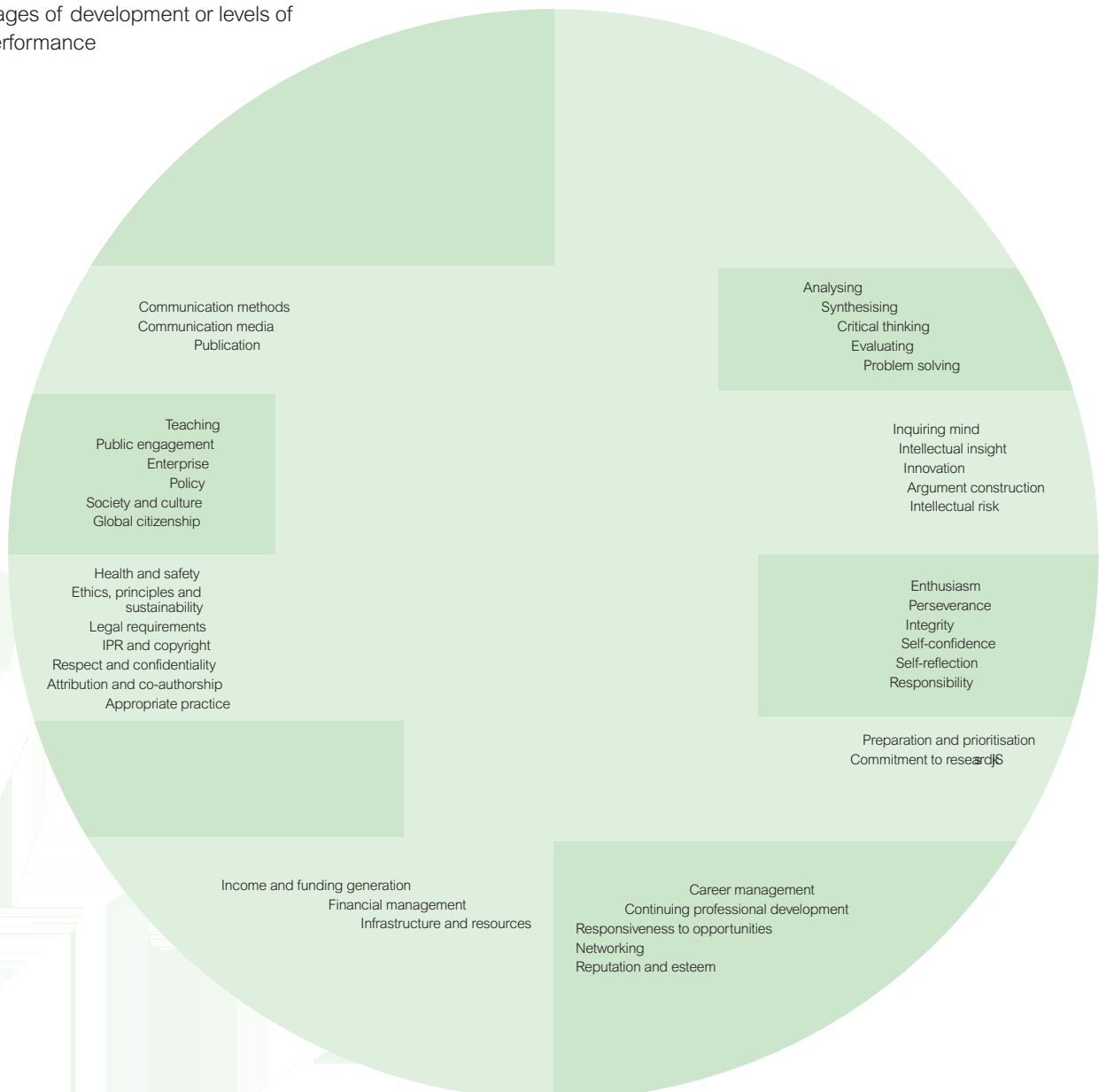
The Researcher Development Framework and Researcher Development Statement underpin policies for supporting the professional and career development of researchers. Institution-wide implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, the QAA Code of Practice for research degree programmes and the Roberts recommendations for postgraduate researchers and research staff are enhanced and strengthened by use of the Researcher Development Framework and Statement.

Structure

- The Researcher Development Framework and Statement were created through interviews with researchers and empirical data leading to the identification of the characteristics of excellent researchers
- Characteristics, expressed in the framework as 'descriptors', are structured into four domains and twelve sub-domains, encompassing the knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research
- Three to five phases for each descriptor present stages of development or levels of performance

Who is the Researcher Development Framework for?

- Researchers – to evaluate and plan their professional development
- Principal investigators and supervisors of researchers – in their role supporting the development of researchers
- Researcher developers, trainers, human resources specialists, careers advisors, senior managers and others – in planning and providing support to researchers
- Policy makers, funders and other organisations – to inform and reinforce policy and strategy relating to researchers
- Employers – to provide insight into the unique blend of researchers' skills and to enable exploration of researchers' potential benefits to the company as employees



Research staff who have used the Researcher Development Framework say:

The Researcher Development Framework

“Identified areas for me that needed to hone and really made me think about my career development. The highlighted things now that I know need to do.”

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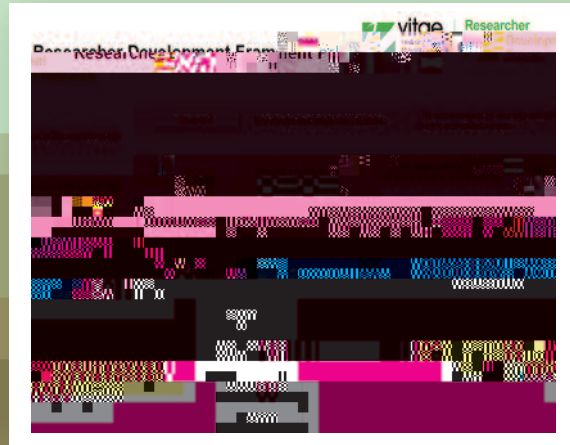
“As a researcher it's easy to get stuck into only thinking about the knowledge and skills that are specific to your research field. The Researcher Development framework is great for broadening your horizons and identifying your strengths and the skills that you want to develop to become a better researcher.”

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“Embrace the opportunity it really does make you think. It may take some time but it really will aid you and help you create, if nothing else, a mental map of where you are and where you want to go.”

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The Researcher Development framework for professional development planner



“The Researcher Development framework provides an excellent resource both for managing my own career development and for helping my staff identify particular training needs at key points in their research careers.”

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Relevant organisations say:

“The UKR promote the Researcher Development framework for professional development planner as a useful tool to help focus researchers on their career development. UKR encourage local research staff associations in organising sessions for researchers to share their own experiences using the professional development planner. It provides an excellent basis for identifying shared needs for careers and professional development whilst providing the basis for seeking additional support.”

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“The Researcher Development statement offers a valuable framework of knowledge and skills that research staff will need to meet a variety of career challenges. It assists institutions in their implementation of the principles of the concordat and will help them continue to develop their research staff at all levels.”

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“As researchers move on in their careers, whether they remain in academia or move into other employment areas, they need to be able to analyse the experience they have gained in order to consider their career direction and to work towards achieving their goals. This self-knowledge can help them in a number of different ways: it can provide a focus for guidance discussions with a careers adviser, provide material for effective written applications and assist in interview preparation.”

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Research Councils UK have fully endorsed the Researcher Development Statement.

In their Statement of Expectation, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) have referred to the Researcher Development Statement: Researchers will be expected.

“to develop the higher-level capabilities as outlined in the Researcher Development statement.”

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) acknowledge the Researcher Development Statement in their Doctoral Training Partnerships call for proposals:

“R also supports the development by itate of the Researcher Development statement, which outlines the areas of professional development that research organisations should be addressing in their training programmes.”

“The Researcher Development framework provides a fantastic way for research staff to consider their professional and career development alongside other performance criteria. Individual research staff will find using the framework to review strengths and priorities really useful as preparation for conversations about career opportunities.”

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“The Researcher Development framework provides researchers with a tool to use to help identify their transferable skills, strengths and capabilities and how to develop them. It is which are relevant to a range of careers and is highly valued by employers.”

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About Vitae

Vitae is the UK organisation championing the professional and career development of postgraduate researchers and research staff in UK higher education institutions and research institutes. We play a major role in the drive for high-level skills and innovation and in meeting the UK's goal to produce world class researchers.

Vitae works with institutions to embed professional and career development for researchers into the research environment. It plays a leading role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing the capability of the higher education sector to provide support for researchers in this area.

For further information about Vitae visit www.vitae.ac.uk