



Incorporating the UK GRAD Programme and UKHERD

# Research training and Vitae

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[www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)

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Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK),  
managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation  
and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities

# In this presentation...

- ✔ Landscape
- ✔ Vitae vision and aims
- ✔ Trends and future developments
  - Policy development
  - HEI provision
  - Supporting researchers
  - Evidencing impact

2004

Quality Assurance Agency



90,000 doctoral researchers



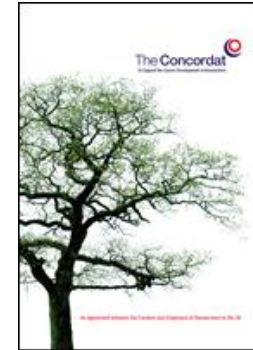
National organisations:  
Funding Councils,  
Research Councils,  
Universities UK, British  
Council, Vitae and others

Roberts funding  
£20m+ per year for  
skills and career  
development



2008

Research funders and  
universities



40,000 research staff

Maximising investment  
Networks, information,  
policy and practice

120 research-active institutions



Demonstrating change: Feedback and evaluation

# 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

# About Vitae



- ✔ Five-year contract, led by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation in partnership with eight Hub host institutions
- ✔ Formally launched in June 2008, alongside the Concordat
- ✔ Now all researchers in HE (UK GRAD was PGRs)
- ✔ Focus on innovations, research, impacts (UK GRAD had more direct delivery of training)
- ✔ Scale of activities:
  - Work will all research active UK institutions
  - Annual conference attracts over 400 participants
  - Annual Policy Forum a major input to developing policy – always oversubscribed
  - 34 regional events in 2008
  - >750 database of practice entries
  - 8 training courses reaching 520 PGRs, and 29 local GRADschools
  - Resources for researchers, orders for >20,000 PhD planners

# 1. Building human capital: influencing policy development



## Trends

- ✔ Impact and application of skills – enterprise, public engagement and policy making
- ✔ Sustainability of Roberts agenda for skills and careers of researchers

## Future developments

- ✔ Opportunities for HEIs/Vitae in responses to REF, PG review
- ✔ Responses to changing RC funding strategy; links between Roberts and DTC provision
- ✔ New Researcher development framework

# UK Researcher development framework (RDF)



# RDF project aims



- Tool for planning, promoting, supporting personal, professional and career development
- Describes knowledge, skills, behaviours and personal qualities of researchers
- Encourages researchers to aspire to excellence
- Builds on the Joint skills statement to cover full career continuum
- Primarily for researchers and those supporting researchers

# Scope of RDF

- ✔ Descriptors common to researchers in HE at different stages of being a researcher
- ✔ Aspirational, but realistic; identifying descriptors relevant to good researcher at each stage and those pertinent to the next level
- ✔ Recognises individual difference and different career paths (in and out of HE)
- ✔ Based on current environment but also anticipates change
- ✔ Couched in accessible language but providing a lexicon for communicating research qualities
- ✔ NOT intended for job descriptions, person specs 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
- ✔ Empirical data from analysis of audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews with experienced researchers
- ✔ Representative sample >100: range of experiences, institution types, geographical context, disciplines and demographics
- ✔ Results: >1000 characteristics and variants, clustered into common groups

# Structure of RDF: stages

- ✔ **New researcher**
  - researcher in training
- ✔ **Researcher**
  - early career, postdoctorate
- ✔ **Established researcher**
  - level of independence, national reputation
- ✔ **Advanced researcher**
  - research leader, international reputation
- ✔ **Eminent researcher**
  - international leader, world expert

# Structure of RDF: domains

- ✔ **Professional and intellectual attributes**
  - knowledge base
  - cognitive skills
  - creativity
- ✔ **Personal effectiveness**
  - personal qualities
  - self-organisation
  - career development
- ✔ **Research organisation and governance**
  - professional conduct
  - project management
  - finance, funding and resources
- ✔ **Impact and influence**
  - communication
  - working with others and leadership
  - relating to the broader context
  - application of research and knowledge exchange

# Example

Proficiency level Descriptors	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
<i>Time Management</i>	Manages own time effectively to complete research project; sticks to clear plan	Makes timely decisions. Delivers a project on time; quick and efficient; responds flexibly.	Manages multiple or complex projects to time; balancing constraints		
<i>Response to change</i>	Adapts approach with guidance when required to	Adapts to changes	Engages with change; expects change and is prepared for it	Finds change stimulating; anticipates change	Finds change stimulating; drives change
<i>Self-reliance (D7)</i>	Accepts guidance and help when required	Recognises boundaries and draws upon and use sources of support as appropriate (D6)	Builds and uses own support structures effectively; contributes to others' support	Maintains a range and variety of support structures	Exploits focussed and targeted support mechanisms

# Next steps

- ✔ Sector-wide consultation (Nov-Dec)
- ✔ Discussions with the research councils
- ✔ Focus groups with researchers and other stakeholders
- ✔ Present at Policy Forum (Jan)
- ✔ Launch final framework (Mar)
- ✔ Reflection period (Apr-Oct)
- ✔ [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfconsultation](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfconsultation)
- ✔ Expect responses from RCs, CBI, QAA, Wellcome Trust, international perspectives



## 2. Enhancing HE provision



### Trends

- ✔ Scoping, coordinating, main-streaming, capacity building
- ✔ Themes from the Database of practice [750+ entries]

[www.vitae.ac.uk/dop](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop)

#### – Evaluation activities

- eg University of Nottingham of Roberts activities <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/985.html>
- University of Birmingham volunteer activities  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/968.html>
- UCL on career planning and management skills provision  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/953.html>
- University of Exeter, institution-wide evaluation of skills training programme  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/923.html>
- University of Bath, strategy for evaluation of PGR skills training provision  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/886.html>

## 2. Enhancing HE provision

### ▣ Themes from the Database of practice [750+ entries]

[www.vitae.ac.uk/dop](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop)

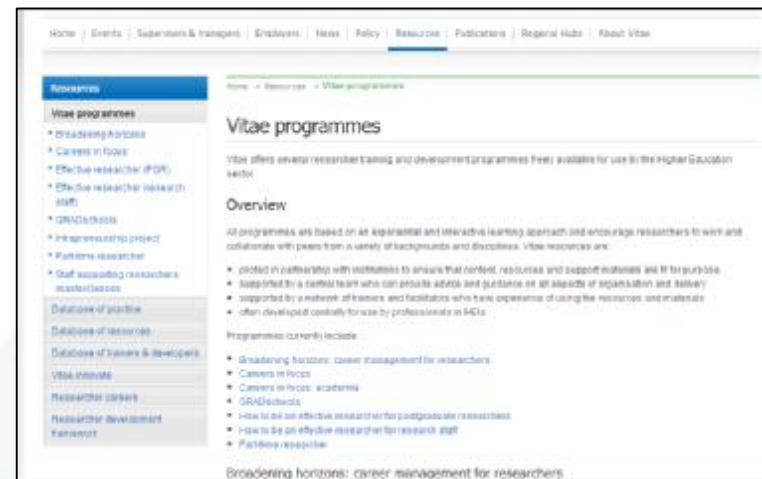
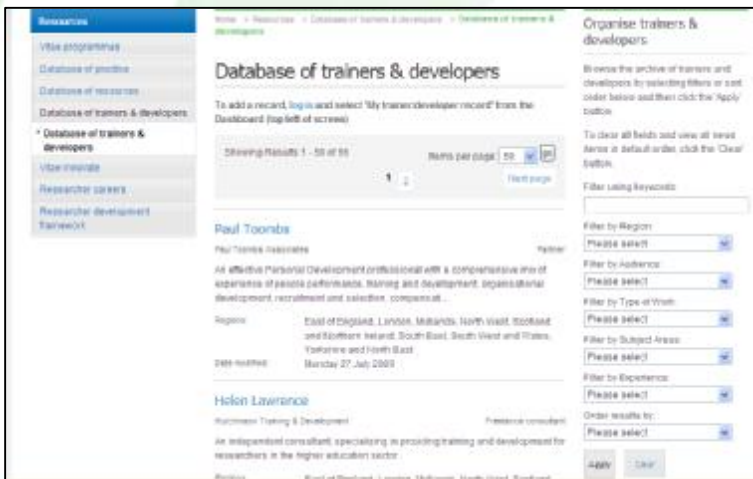
- Enterprise related activities
  - Eg University of the West of England, initiating social enterprise resources  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/930.html>
  - University of Southampton, entrepreneurial interns scheme  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/902.html>
- Working in a digital age
  - Eg University of Leeds, exploiting the digital age  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/936.html>

## 2. Enhancing HE provision



### Trends

- ✓ Vitae strategy: materials, people, innovation
  - [www.vitae.ac.uk/trainers](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/trainers)
  - [www.vitae.ac.uk/innovate](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/innovate)



# 2. Enhancing HEI provision

- Developed and launched four models to impact the effectiveness of researchers



**How to be an effective researcher**  
for research staff

**Building on the success of 'How to be an effective researcher' for postgraduate researchers, this programme has been developed to address the needs of research staff in research manager positions.**

The programme is freely available to UK higher education institutions and has been developed by Vitae as a resource for staff learning researcher development programmes.

**14** Make the most of the skills I have as a researcher and make a mark in my discipline (15 pages)

**15** Research, research, research! (10 pages)

Further information about developing the new Vitae 'How to be an effective researcher' programme for research staff can be found at [www.vitae.ac.uk/ResearchStaff](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/ResearchStaff)



**How to be an effective researcher**  
for postgraduate researchers

**The Vitae 'How to be an effective researcher' programme for postgraduate researchers is a freely available resource for UK higher education institutions. The programme has been developed by Vitae as a resource for organisations' researcher development programmes.**

**11** I was awarded a PhD for a reason. But when it comes to my research, I'm not really a PhD student. (10 pages)

**12** I want to be a research manager. How do I get there? (10 pages)

**13** I want to be a research manager. How do I get there? (10 pages)

Further information about developing the new Vitae 'How to be an effective researcher' programme for postgraduate researchers can be found at [www.vitae.ac.uk/Postgraduate](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/Postgraduate)



**Part-time researchers training package**  
for postgraduate researchers

**14** I feel great. This isn't a good opportunity to discuss my PhD problems and look at how to solve them right. (15 pages)

**The part-time researchers training package is a freely available resource for UK higher education institutions. The training package has been developed by Vitae as a resource for organisations' researcher development programmes.**

**Overview**

The part-time researchers training package is a freely available resource for UK higher education institutions. The training package has been developed by Vitae as a resource for organisations' researcher development programmes.



**Broadening horizons: career management**  
for researchers

**14** I want to be a research manager. How do I get there? (10 pages)

**15** Research, research, research! (10 pages)

**The 'Broadening horizons' programme is a freely available resource for UK higher education institutions. The training package has been developed by Vitae as a resource for organisations' researcher development programmes.**

**Overview**

The 'Broadening horizons' programme is a freely available resource for UK higher education institutions. The training package has been developed by Vitae as a resource for organisations' researcher development programmes.

## 2. Enhancing HE provision



### Future developments

- ✔ Focus on impact and application
  - Eg Building impact into social science research  
University of Leeds
  - The research impact agenda and early career development for historians  
History Research Wales
- ✔ Themes from Vitae connections event
  - Efficiencies and cost effectiveness
  - Collaboration
  - Online provision

# 3. Empowering researchers



## Trends

- ❑ Changing models of careers guidance
  - serendipity, creating opportunities
- ❑ Self-organisation; researcher-led activities
  - Eg Loughborough University, RS development project bidding

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/dop/891.html>
- ❑ Increasing role of NUS
  - Innovate project: generating frameworks for postgraduate researchers to have a stake in researcher development

# 3. Empowering researchers



## Future developments

### ✔ Vitae resources

- Researcher booklet series: Balanced researcher, creative researcher

### ✔ Vitae programmes:

- Leadership in action
- 3 GRADschools in 2010
- Careers in focus programme
- One-day events, eg Creativity

## 4. Evidencing the impact

### Trends

- ✔ An increasing priority as provision matures
- ✔ Rugby Team Impact Framework launched September 2008
- ✔ RTIF: one year on report September 2009
  - 27 evaluation projects
  - Demonstrable links to successes in
    - Grant applications, fellowship applications, employability
- ✔ PRES – increases in skills scales





## 4. Evidencing the impact



### Future developments

- Building the case for continued investment
  - Next report on the implementation of the impact framework at the Vitae conference, 6/7 September 2010
  - Summary of outcomes of HEI evaluation projects
  - RCUK independent review of the impact of the Roberts funding to inform CSR process
  - UKCGE survey of Graduate Schools; analysis of question relating to Roberts funding

# Next steps

## ▣ Responses to

### – PG review, 6 new themes announced

- International
- Value of PG
- Business, employment and skills
- Participation
- Fees and funding
- Student experience
- <http://www.bis.gov.uk/pgreview>

### – RDF consultation

- [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfconsultation](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfconsultation)