


Vitae annual report 2009



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



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Executive summary

Vitae works with UK higher education institutions to provide professional and career development for researchers to meet UK and European policies to build global competitiveness through research, innovation and knowledge. Vitae leads the improvement of the employability and impact of researchers to help meet global challenges, such as food security, energy and climate change, and enhance our economic, social and cultural capital.

‘Ensuring that the UK remains a world leader in researcher career development and transferable skills training will be crucial in optimising the efficacy of our researchers and in maintaining the UK’s global position.’

Professor Mary Ritter,
Pro-rector postgraduate and international affairs,
Imperial College Chair, Vitae External Advisory Board



Key successes in 2009:

- Vitae was **recognised internationally** by key stakeholders for its contribution to the UK and as a world leader in developing and training researchers
- Vitae **worked with all UK institutions** to **embed enhanced professional and career development for researchers** leading to demonstrable improvements in researchers' successful grant applications, fellowships and employability¹. The **Vitae Hubs have developed regional collaborations** to extend the range of development opportunities for researchers
- **Vitae Innovate** to promote new approaches to researcher development, **masterclasses for staff** and a range of **activities for researchers around creativity and leadership**
- Vitae facilitated dialogue between the Research Councils and the HE sector to explore **sustainable strategies for maintaining support for researcher development** ensuring that researchers continue to play a key role in building the UK economy
- Vitae played a crucial role in the **implementation of the 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers'**
- Vitae provided **leading research into the careers of researchers and their experiences of the research environment**, including a major survey of employers
- Vitae developed and consulted on a new **UK Researcher Development Framework** to support the implementation of the Concordat and ensure researchers are prepared for future careers

¹ The Rugby Team Impact Framework (RTIF). Rugby Team is now known as the Impact and Evaluation Group: researcher skills and careers (IEG) www.vitae.ac.uk/rugbyteam



Vitae policy forum 2010

'As result of the policy forum I will review the strategy of my university'

Vitae policy forum participant 2010

'Vitae is a very important initiative within a EU member state... it is pioneering in organising on a national level a framework of policy development addressing the future of the training and careers of researchers.'

John Smith, European Universities Association, Brussels

'...this has been the best course I have attended during my postgraduate study. I would recommend it to anyone looking to take their first steps in leadership, and to experienced leaders looking to expand their perspectives!'

Leadership in action participant 2009

'...the links that have been forged through (the Vitae Hub) have been useful for us in putting together our bid for the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre as we're going for a collaborative bid and the fact that networks had already been built up has been very helpful in doing that.'

Geraint Johnes, Lancaster University

'Vitae works with HEIs and Public Sector Research Exploitation Funds (PSREs) to provide specific support for doctoral researchers and research staff. It also champions the common needs and interests of all researchers; supports their development needs; and undertakes research to build the evidence base necessary for policy development in this area.'

BIS UK National Action Plan, December 2009

'The RDF provides a comprehensive range of descriptors for researchers to think through and map out the research elements necessary to support the progression of their academic careers and to articulate their competencies to non-academic stakeholders or employers.'

Comment by a respondent to the Researcher Development Framework consultation 2009

Key statistics

During 2009 Vitae:

- ran an annual conference and policy forum for 550 staff with a stake in developing researchers
- ran 45 regional events to enhance training and development within HEIs for researchers
- ran courses for 600 researchers to improve their employability
- had over 30 HEIs using our Effective researcher training programme
- had around 20,000 unique visitors to the Vitae website every month
- was invited to over 10 international events
- was cited in two major government policy documents relating to researcher careers: 'The UK National Action Plan' and 'One Step Beyond'

1. Background and context

2009 was an important year for researchers in the UK. Economic downturn has brought an increase in competition for jobs in all sectors, pressure on government funding and a widespread sense of uncertainty about the future. Higher education institutions are also facing financial pressures related to the recession, pay increases and international and undergraduate recruitment.

The new government, formed in May 2010, has indicated a strong commitment to science and research but is committed to reducing the UK deficit through public spending cuts. Just before the general election was called, the review of postgraduate education in Britain², led by Professor Adrian Smith, Director General, Science and Research, was published.

The 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers'³, launched in June 2008, has prompted institutional reviews of provision and conditions for research staff. Seven years after the Roberts review, institutions are providing a broad range of opportunities to enhance researchers' skills and their employability. A growing body of evidence highlights the importance and impact of researcher development.

In December 2009 the Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS) launched a UK action plan for researcher careers⁴ which highlighted UK practice in meeting four priority areas identified by the European Commission: open recruitment, pensions and social security, attractive working conditions and skills. It also identified future actions to build on good practice and for the UK to remain an important destination for top quality research. The report cites a wide range of Vitae activities and case studies related to the researcher development agenda and the implementation of the Concordat.

'The Vitae report of the 2009 Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) provides evidence of researchers' job satisfaction, how valued they feel and whether their contributions are recognised. It explores researchers' views of institutions' approach to equality and diversity policies and practice.'...

An example of a Vitae case study, National Action Plan, BIS, December 2009

During 2009, Vitae particularly focused on three strategic priorities: supporting the implementation of the Concordat principles; exploring the sustainability of researcher development within the HE sector into the future; and research and innovation into the effectiveness and new approaches in developing researchers.

In order to ensure that researchers are accomplished in delivering their research outputs and are able to contribute fully to the UK economy, culture and society throughout their careers we continued to work closely with a range of stakeholders, including all research-active institutions in the UK.

2. Vitae's key achievements in 2009

Set up in 2008, Vitae's vision is for the UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers.

2.1 The UK is recognised internationally for its leading approach to developing and training researchers

The work of Vitae⁵ has provided leadership and coherence to a UK-wide approach to researchers' professional development which is now well recognised across the world.

'From my point of view, as somebody who was trying to do a comparison ... of the US and the UK graduate experience, I felt that the UK was a light year ahead of us in terms of having a formal mechanism for supporting, promoting and professional training activities.'

Alwin Kirwan, University of Washington, Seattle

During 2009 the UK agreed with the European Commission a UK-wide approach for implementation of the European Charter and Code for researchers⁶, the only approach of this kind in Europe. This will enable UK institutions to demonstrate their commitment to the good management of researchers and gain recognition from the Commission.

'...due to the role of Vitae... (the) UK is at the front of the European move on these issues.'

Jean Chambaz, Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris⁷

² The Postgraduate Review, Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS), www.bis.gov.uk/postgraduate-review

³ The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/

⁴ UK National Action Plan, Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS), December 2009 www.bis.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/publications/Researcher-UK-National-Action-Plan.pdf

⁵ And previously the UK GRAD Programme® funded between 2003-7 to support the personal and career development of doctoral researchers

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CFE_EN_E4.pdf

⁷ Quotes from a review of 27 stakeholders with international perspectives on researcher development

2.2 Enhancing doctoral education

During 2009 Vitae continued to provide both strategic and practical leadership in enhancing doctoral education.

Vitae was commissioned by Universities UK to produce their research briefing 'Promoting the UK doctorate' for Vice-Chancellors and Members of Parliament. The report, launched in parliament in October, has been widely commended and was used by Professor Adrian Smith, Director General Science and Research, Department of Business, Innovation and Skills in his review of postgraduate education in the UK⁸.

Vitae provides leading research into the destinations and careers paths of researchers; our latest 'What do researchers do?' publications were launched in June 2009 and were also used as a key input to the Postgraduate Review.

'On the ground', the eight Vitae Hubs work with staff in all research-active institutions in the UK to enhance training and development opportunities for doctoral researchers. Running 45 regional events the Hubs facilitated strategic discussions on future strategies for researcher development, built collaborative activities, enabled the transfer of local practice, and provided training and development opportunities for researchers.

2.3 Leading and supporting the effective implementation of the UK Concordat

The **UK National Action Plan** on researcher careers and mobility, published by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) in December 2009, cites Vitae's work as an integral aspect of the research landscape in the UK critical for implementing the Concordat.

Vitae's work 'on the ground' with staff in HEIs has provided leadership and resources to support the quick implementation of the Concordat principles. Vitae's Concordat briefings stakeholder groups provided a translation of policy into practice at all levels. Alongside this, the regional Hubs played a major role in raising the profile of the Concordat in local institutions and facilitating events and conversations to support its implementation.

The **Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)** is a major survey of the views of almost 6,000 research staff in 51 UK universities and institutes⁹. It was redeveloped during 2009 to link with the new Concordat. In September, Vitae published the analysis of aggregated UK results¹⁰, which will provide bench-line data for reviewing the progress of the implementation of the Concordat in 2012.

2.4 Creating a vision for sustainable researcher development activities and future strategy

Since 2003, a dedicated fund, named after Sir Gareth Roberts and provided to institutions by the Research Councils, has provided over £20m of funding for the development of researchers' high-level skills and careers¹¹. Funding is currently confirmed until March 2011.

During 2009 Vitae has played a key role in exploring the implications of a changing future framework of support in the UK, including at our major annual conference (September), at regional events run by the Vitae Hubs and at our Policy forum in January 2010.

'As a result of the policy forum I will review the strategy of my university and rethink how we can show that training is important.'

Vitae policy forum participant 2010

In many regions the Hubs are facilitating collaborations between institutions to enable capacity for providing opportunities for researcher development to be maintained.

Demonstrating value for money and exploring the effectiveness of researcher development activities has also been a key theme for 2009. In September at the Vitae conference, we launched a report of 27 evaluation activities across the HE sector. This was the culmination of work undertaken by the Rugby Team¹² to develop an impact framework tailored to researcher development. The report demonstrated improved successes in researchers' grant applications, fellowships and employability as a result of training.



Vitae policy forum 2010

⁸ The Postgraduate Review, Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS), www.bis.gov.uk/postgraduate-review

⁹ 16 of the 20 Russell Group universities and 12 of the 18 1994 Group of smaller research-intensive universities took part in CROS 2009

¹⁰ Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) 2009: Analysis of aggregated UK results www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/CROS_2009_October.pdf

¹¹ www.rcuk.ac.uk/default.htm

¹² The Rugby Team is supported by Vitae and was established as a cross-sector working group in 2005 to explore meaningful ways of evaluating the impact of researcher skills. The Rugby Team is now the Impact and Evaluation Group: researcher skills and careers (IEG)

2.5 Enhancing the employability of researchers in the UK

Vitae continued to provide information, courses, resources and events to enhance the employability of researchers in the UK.

The Vitae website is a key source of information for researchers with the researcher portal accounting for 36% of visitors to the Vitae site during 2009. Popular online activities have included a set of articles about 'research and the recession' and the Vitae staff research blog which attracted almost 400 comments in its first four months.

Almost 600 researchers participated in a range of courses run by Vitae to develop their skills and employability during 2009. Highlights included the Leadership in action programme where 100% of participants would recommend the course to other researchers.

'Although very intense, this course was fantastic in every respect. It helped us to build confidence in leading a team and its 'learning by doing' approach made the course applicable to leadership positions in the future.'

Leadership in action participant 2009

Understanding the views of employers outside higher education is critical to be able to train our researchers for what has been termed an 'unimaginable future'¹³. In 2009 we undertook a survey of over 100 non-HE employers to explore their views of recruiting doctoral researchers. Over 70% said they would welcome more applications from doctoral graduates.



Leadership in action 2010

3. Vitae achievements in 2009 by programme aim

Background

The UK has a long tradition of producing excellent researchers who contribute widely to the economic health and wealth of the UK. In recent years the UK government has increased investment in research in UK universities and research institutions, including in researchers' personal, professional and career development. With today's economic climate and a widespread sense of uncertainty about the future, our challenge now is to continue to attract the brightest and most creative minds to research and provide all the opportunities for them to realise their full potential.

Vitae vision, aims and stakeholders

Vitae is supported by the Research Councils UK (RCUK), managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation and delivered in partnership with eight regional Hub host universities. Vitae works with higher education institutions (HEIs) to embed professional and career development in the research environment. Vitae plays a major role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing the capability of the higher education sector to provide professional development and training of researchers.

Our vision is for the UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. To achieve our vision we have four aims:

- **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.

We work with five stakeholder groups via national activities and through eight regional Vitae Hubs:

- researchers (both postgraduate researchers and research staff)
- supervisors and research managers (ie principal investigators)
- staff supporting researchers (including career advisors, trainers, HR professionals and other related roles)
- employers (non-HE)
- policymakers (including national organisations and HEIs).

The Vitae programme provides targeted activity for each network in order to realise the potential of the UK's researchers.

Our annual report provides a summary of Vitae activities in 2009 highlighting our major achievements in each of the four key areas.

3.1 AIM ONE: Building human capital by influencing the development and implementation of effective policy relating to researcher development

Building capacity within the higher education sector to provide targeted professional development for doctoral researchers and research staff is essential in order to meet our ambition to 'train the next generation of world class researchers'. Recent evidence from an impact study across UK HEIs shows that training and development interventions have strengthened research outputs, grant writing success, fellowship success, and performance in research and skills training enhances the researcher and supervisor experience and employability.

3.1.1 UK initiatives

3.1.1.1 Review of postgraduate provision in the UK by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS)

In July a review of postgraduate provision in the UK, led by Professor Adrian Smith, was announced. The themes of the review were announced at the Vitae conference in September and the review team used Vitae research and publications to inform its initial thinking. Vitae's activities were well referenced in the responses of other organisations and we liaised with the Research Councils, Russell Group, UKCGE, NUS and others in our response. The Roberts funding and professional and career development of researchers were key themes in the responses.

'Ensuring that our researchers are equipped with high level skills for their future careers is essential in the UK's ability to emerge successfully from the economic downturn and to our continued economic prosperity.'

from Vitae response to BIS review¹⁴

A statement to Ministers was published in March 2010 in 'One Step Beyond: Making the most of postgraduate education.' The report included the recommendation that 'HEIs should work closely with Vitae, employers and other stakeholders to provide better information, advice and guidance on career choices for postgraduate research students'.

3.1.1.2 The 'UK National Action Plan'¹⁵ on researcher mobility and careers within the European Research Area

In response to the 'Partnership for researchers' initiative from the European Commission, member states are creating national action plans highlighting activities in relation to researcher careers in Europe.

The 'UK National Action Plan' was published by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) in December 2009. It provides a high-level summary of current UK practice in researcher development and case studies showcasing national and local practice. It cites a range of Vitae activities and case studies related to the implementation of the Concordat.

'Vitae works with HEIs and PSREs to provide specific support for doctoral researchers and research staff. It also champions the common needs and interests of all researchers; supports their development needs; and undertakes research to build the evidence base necessary for policy development in this area.'

BIS UK National Action Plan

3.1.1.3 Research Excellence Framework (REF)

In December 2009 Vitae responded to the consultation on the HE Funding Bodies' proposals for the '**Research Excellence Framework**'. This gives the new arrangements for the assessment and funding of research in UK higher education institutions that will replace the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The response was led by Vitae's Research Staff Development Advisory Group (ReSDAG) and it drew from a consultation of the Vitae research staff conference participants in November.

Vitae's response emphasised the need for the REF to measure, and to help shape, the management, sustainability and enhancement of the research base. In particular, there needs to be clearer links between the REF and the implementation of the principles of the Concordat. Vitae was subsequently asked by HEFCE to provide more input on how to make these links. The outcomes of the consultation were announced in March 2010.

3.1.1.4 Implementation of the principles of the Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers

Vitae was launched alongside the UK 'Concordat for the Career Development of Researchers' in June 2008. The Concordat aims to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of UK research careers and to improve the quantity, quality and impact of research for the benefit of UK society and the economy. Implementation of its principles in the UK also aligns with the requirements of the European Charter and Code for Researchers¹⁶.

'...Vitae will play a major role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing capability of the sector to implement aspects of the Concordat...'

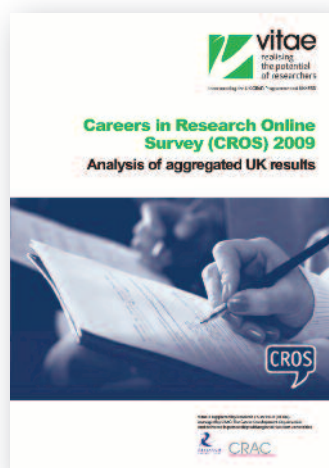
Ian Pearson, formerly Minister of State for Science and Innovation launching Vitae and the revised UK Concordat in June 2008

Vitae produced a suite of Concordat briefings for six stakeholder groups: senior managers, human resources specialists, staff developers, careers specialists, managers of researchers and research staff. Promoted through the Hubs, almost 2,000 were requested by HEIs and stakeholders.

The regional Hubs played a major role in raising the profile of the Concordat in local institutions and facilitating events and conversations to support its implementation. Regional activities included:

- Vitae South West and Wales Hub hosted, in collaboration with HEFCW, a seminar on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. 34 participants from across Wales, including PVCs and HR professionals, attended
- A collaborative Concordat implementation event, supported by the Scotland and Northern Ireland Hub, Universities Scotland and ScotHERD with sponsorship from the Scottish Funding Council, focused on examples of practice from HEIs. This enabled practitioners to discuss their respective implementation roles and exchange practice
- A joint event 'Implementing the Concordat – one year on' was hosted by the East of England and London Hubs to look at implementation and evaluate how well institutions have progressed. The event was well attended with 50 people from 24 institutions
- The London Hub Manager presented on the subject of the Concordat at a January career fair at St George's Hospital Medical School, and went on to facilitate a related away day for St George's University of London research staff in May
- As part of a SE Hub Concordat-focused event in Brighton, the Hub Manager arranged for Thomas Papworth, the new UUK Concordat Co-ordinator, to hold one-to-one meetings with senior staff from Brighton and Sussex universities

In 2009, Vitae led a number of initiatives as part of the work of the Concordat Strategy Group to benchmark the progress in the UK in implementing the principles.



The **Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)** is a major survey of the views of almost 6,000 research staff in UK universities and institutes¹⁷. It was redeveloped during 2009 to link with the new Concordat. In September, Vitae published the analysis of aggregated UK results, which showed that over 70% of researchers who responded took up training and development activities in their institution in 2009, double the proportion seen in CROS 2006. This reflects a sustained drive by government, national organisations and HEIs to improve the professional and career development support available to research staff in the UK. The report encourages even more research staff to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities available.

The Chair of the Concordat Strategy Group Sir Professor Ivor Crewe noted that

'the CROS findings will provide valuable information to those committed to the training and development of the next generation of researchers. Investment in researcher development ensures that our researchers are world-class and able to contribute fully to the UK economy, culture and society. The new Concordat launched in June 2008 is clearly beginning to have an impact.'

The Chair of the CROS Steering Group, Dr Andy Wilson noted that

'the CROS report provides enormously valuable insights into the experiences of researchers in UK universities. The real contribution of CROS, though, will come from institutions making comparisons with their own results and then both planning for improvements and sharing their good practice through Vitae.'

The CROS for 2010 ran in spring 2010.

A Vitae project **Researchers, Fixed-term Contracts and Universities: Understanding Law in Context** is nearing completion. It focuses on Russell Group and 94 Group institutions and explores how the legislation on fixed-term employment is implemented and experienced 'on the ground' by researchers within universities. Five case-study institutions were selected to capture a range of policy features and approaches. The report will be published in autumn 2010.

¹⁶ European Charter and Code for Researchers http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CEE_EN_E4.pdf

¹⁷ 16 of the 20 Russell Group universities and 12 of the 18 1994 Group of smaller research-intensive universities took part in CROS 2009

3.1.1.5 Building a vision for future provision of researcher development

The **Vitae researcher development conference 2009: realising the potential of researchers**¹⁸ took place on 8-9 September 2009 in Warwick. Over 400 people with a stake in developing researchers in higher education met to listen, challenge, discuss, create and debate the future and the immediate landscape through plenary sessions and workshops. The event also welcomed a number of international participants.

The conference addressed the strategic and practical implications of:

- sustaining the investment in our researchers in order to build research capacity and remain globally competitive
- research and evaluation relating to the impact of researcher development and of researcher careers
- the implementation of the Concordat, including the benchmarking process
- latest developments in policy relating to postgraduate researchers
- practices to support researcher skills and career development.



Vitae researcher development conference 2009

A key theme for the conference was the potential for changes in the 'Roberts funding'¹⁹ stream which has provided dedicated funds to institutions since 2003.

The conference speakers, workshops and discussions raised issues relating to the long term future, the medium term (say within the next year or so) and the immediate actions that needed to be taken.

Outcomes of the conference were:

- We need to be planning for what is currently an unimaginable future, therefore developing people with the skills to embrace, as a mindset and core skill, an unimaginable future – agility, imagination, curiosity, and excitement were all cited at the conference
- Speakers raised the importance of multidisciplinary research, and the implications for institutional structures, rewarding staff, the Research Excellence Framework, and the future skills set of researchers

- An immediate priority is the theme of evaluation, evidence and impact. As we enter a time of policy review, it has never been more important to be able to demonstrate the value of our work on research outputs, researcher careers, economic prosperity and society
- The future of the Roberts agenda was an important theme. It is clear that the ring-fenced funding and reporting has provided a huge drive and success to this agenda. The funding is currently confirmed until 2011. The Research Councils have been scoping an external evaluation of progress and future scenarios. Further information will be available during the autumn
- Information about the new Researcher Development Framework that is being developed by Vitae and the Rugby Team. This national framework will be a tool for planning, promoting and supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. Feedback via the workshops and exhibition was constructive and positive; the next version of the framework was available for consultation in November

Participants left the conference with a range of commitments for further action:

'evaluate the overall impact of our PGR training programme, rather than just individual courses'

'plan strategically for sustainability, post Roberts!'

'incorporate initiatives such as the Researcher Development Framework into developing our programme'

'seek to facilitate the embedding of career/ employability training into mainstream doctoral programmes, not retain a marginalised view that career progression is the preserve of careers services'

Vitae researcher development conference 2009, participant quotes

The **Vitae policy forum 2010**, which took place in Edinburgh on 6 and 7 January, enabled open discussion between the HE sector and funding organisations in relation to likely changes in the Roberts funding. This discussion explored the extent to which the skills agenda is embedded in the strategies, policy and operations of universities and the impact of a range of long term funding models.

Iain Cameron, on behalf of the Research Councils, confirmed that the Councils remain committed to this agenda and are keen to support a transition to a 'normal business' rather than 'ring-fenced' funding scenario. He also confirmed RCUK's intention to undertake an independent review of the progress of the Roberts transferable skills and career development agenda to date. The review panel will report its findings in summer 2010.

The discussions at the policy forum played an important role in shaping the Research Councils' next steps. The policy forum report outlining the outcomes of the discussions was available in spring 2010.

'It was an opportunity to participate in debate and contribute to the shaping and informing of future policy.'

¹⁸ www.vitae.ac.uk/vitaeconference2009

¹⁹ www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/rcdu/training.htm

The theme of ensuring that researcher development activities are sustained beyond the current Roberts funding period (to March 2011) was key in regional activities:

- East of England Hub ran a workshop for embedding and sustaining the Roberts agenda in July 2009 which contributed to developing the sharing of practice within the region
- London and South East Hubs ran Embedding and sustaining the Roberts agenda and Evaluating the impact of researcher development training workshops on 10 December 2009 (a joint event with South East England Hub and Institute of Physics, London).

27 representatives from 15 institutions within the London and South East England Hub participated in these two workshops

- Yorkshire North East Hub ran an event in December focusing on the changing skills agenda, with specific reference to how it is funded and how institutions can best manage the changing funding pattern

Working with the Research Councils

The Research Councils fund Vitae as part of their strategy to attract, train and manage the next generation of world class researchers who make a great contribution to improving the quantity, quality and impact of research to the benefit of UK society and the economy.

Throughout 2009, Vitae and the individual research councils have worked together to provide events for researchers, to provide consultations on projects, and to ensure that researchers in the UK are aware of the wide set of opportunities available to them.

Vitae and RCUK share information and remain up to date on each others activities. An example of this is through the Vitae news updates that are circulated on a regular basis to a large network, including key contacts at each research council. In April, RCUK and Vitae had an information sharing day in order to discuss priorities and work plans, identifying areas to join up.

Representatives from the Research Councils were involved in a number of Vitae's high profile activities throughout the year; including Dr Adam Webb from BBSRC joining the Innovate panel and Professor Ian Diamond as a keynote speaker at the Vitae researcher development conference.

Vitae have also worked with the Research Councils on various events for researchers, including the scoping of a Careers in focus event: pharmaceutical sector, that BBSRC endorsed, and conversations with NERC in the development of our Careers in focus: environment project. Representatives from the Research Councils continue to remain involved in various Vitae activities; including tutoring on GRADschools and our Leadership in action course.

Vitae has provided strategic input to the RCUK cohort study²⁰ which tracks researchers in their careers over time, and has disseminated key consultations for RCUK such as a consultation of Roberts funding in spring 2009.

Vitae has been asked to speak at various research council events throughout the year; including ESRC's postdoc conference and BBSRC's Biotech Yes event.

The individual research councils were represented at a range of Vitae hosted events and activities in 2009, with various members talking at Hub events and playing key roles in projects such as Innovate and researcher events. We also facilitated a research councils' event on implementation of the Concordat principles, attended and provided materials to a number of individual Research Council led events and shared information and knowledge online and through training bulletins.

In 2009 the Research Councils UK in association with Vitae sponsored, for the third year, the Times Higher Education Award for the Outstanding Support for Early Career Researchers. This award provides an opportunity to highlight some of the excellent ways in which researchers can develop the research, vocational and entrepreneurial skills that are matched to the demands of their future career paths. Durham University won with their research-skills training programme which builds on a culture of inclusiveness and interdisciplinary working. The programme provides generic and transferable skills training and support for all early-career researchers at Durham, including research students and research staff via a range of more than 300 events throughout the year ranging from one hour sessions to four-day residential events. As an important way of recognising outstanding practice in the UK HE sector, Research Councils UK and Vitae are supporting the Award in 2010.



2009
THE AWARDS
Times Higher Education
**Winner Outstanding Support
for Early Career Researchers**

²⁰ www.rcuk.ac.uk/default.htm

3.1.2 European initiatives

The **European Commission's Institutional HR Strategy Group** was formed in September 2009. It is a network of representatives from European institutions and funding organisations who are committed to implementing the **European Charter for Researchers** and **Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers Charter and Code**.

The first meeting of the group took place alongside the Vitae annual conference in Warwick in September. In the UK the QAA Code for Research Degree Programmes and implementation process for the Concordat align with the requirements of the European Charter and Code. UK HEIs will have an opportunity to demonstrate their alignment via the UK wide 'HEI Concordat strategies survey' which took place January-April 2010. HEIs who meet the requirements will be able to use the new European Commission 'HR Excellence in Research' logo.

Vitae staff were also invited to present Vitae and the UK's work at:

- European Charter and Code Promoters network meeting, Brussels, 21 April 09
- EUA-CDE conference, Lausanne, 3-4 June 09
- Working Together to Strengthen Research in Europe, European Commission, DG RTD, 21-23 October, Brussels
- EUA-Council for Doctoral Education international conference 'How to Assure Quality in New-Style Doctoral Studies?' workshop, Vienna University of Economics and Business, 29 October 2009
- CDE workshop 'Structuring Doctoral Programmes: a means for continuous improvement', hosted by the University of Zagreb, Croatia, 10-11 December 2009
- European Institutional HR Strategy Group, Heidelberg, Germany, 9 February 2010.

3.2 AIM TWO: Enhancing higher education provision to train and develop researchers

3.2.1 Vitae regional Hubs in 2009

The eight Vitae regional Hubs have established very strong levels of engagement across the UK's research active institutions. The Hubs make things happen through facilitating links, collaborations and opportunities for sharing and also acting as a two-way conduit between Vitae nationally and regional HEIs.

Building networks: Hubs actively seek relationships with contacts in key researcher support roles as well as interested colleagues attracted by regional or online activity. The London Hub Manager, for example, made individual visits to 13 regional institutions (plus one museum) during 2009.

Hubs also build relationships with other regional stakeholder organisations. The valuable relationships forged with SFC, QAA and Scottish Government continued to be supported by the Vitae Scotland and Northern Ireland Hub activities and events. This increasingly 'joined-up' approach to researcher development in Scotland and an increase in the demand for support from the Hub on collaborative training ventures is anticipated to be a key feature of activities in 2010. The coordination of maximising impact and minimising overlap in the work of the SFC, QAA and the Hub will allow the delivery a complementary series of events in Scotland in 2010 and beyond.

In addition to ever-growing contacts lists, Hubs increasingly support practice-sharing groups such as the Yorkshire and North East Staff Developers Forum (meets three times annually to discuss pre-agreed topics), the South West and Wales Careers Advisors Forum (meets annually to share practice), the Midlands Research Staff Developers Group and several groups associated with the London Hub steering group including the London Humanities and Social Sciences JISCmail group.

All Hubs informally surveyed regional network members during 2009 to gauge levels of brand recognition and of satisfaction with support from the Hubs. Results were extremely encouraging as levels of both were generally high.

'...the London Hub has actively supported the development of regional and/or specialism-based skills networks. The Hub is not prescriptive about how they are run nor their structure but the groups do have at least one representative who is a member of the main steering group and they are able to give feedback on a regular basis'

Kay Dorelli, London Hub Manager

Providing information: Networks are supported with relevant information from Hubs including quarterly newsletters and interim email bulletins. A range of other tools enhanced communications between network members, such as blogs and twitter feeds. This year the Hubs and national team have utilised online workspaces for close contacts. These workspaces have been used extensively to connect groups and add value to events by sharing data and continuing contact post event. They have also enabled those who have not been able to attend events/meetings to participate in discussion and contribute to the development of projects.

'2009 has been an extremely productive year for the (North West) Hub which saw a ten-fold increase in the contacts network and successful embedding of the Vitae brand within the region'.

Emma Gillaspay, NW Hub

Engaging local institutions: Engagement with institutions is critical to the success of Vitae. Hub staff give regular input on strategic programme planning both at Hubs meetings and via internal Vitae consultations. Hubs have contributed regional perspectives to a variety of national consultations, most often seeking direct input from key contacts or the wider network, whether the Hub role has been to mediate responses or to promote and encourage networks to respond directly.

Hubs and regional HEI staff have provided input to a range of initiatives and consultations in 2009 including: the Vitae employers survey, the 'Rugby Team Impact Framework: one year on' report, the review of postgraduate education, the Vitae Policy forum consultation, the RCUK Roberts funding consultation and the Researcher Development Framework (RDF).

For example, the South West and Wales Hub held a briefing and feedback session on the RDF in October and the East of England Hub held a regional consultation workshop in November with representatives from four institutions. Hubs used personal contacts to encourage uptake of CROS 2009 with a significant degree of success. All Hubs encouraged (and some supported) bids to the Vitae Innovate fund in 2009. Hubs contribute to the national impact and evaluation agendas by ensuring linkage between regional steering groups and national groups such as the Rugby Team, now known as Impact and Evaluation Group: researcher skills and careers (IEG).



The Researcher Development Framework at the Vitae researcher development conference 2009

Facilitating the use of Vitae training materials: As part of the development of new national training models, the Hubs ensure that institutions are aware of new learning materials and resources.

For example the SWW Hub ran an Effective researcher for research staff pilot in April, attended by 36 research staff from 13 institutions. In 2009 the Midlands Hub Manager worked with the Vitae national team to promote and implement the Part-time researcher training pack, presenting at three national events and one regional (YNE) event as well as providing support and advice to other Hub Managers. For several years the SWW Hub Manager has run a session at the student induction event at NERC's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and as a result of this the CEH is now running the Effective researcher programme for postgraduate researchers and will run a bespoke session for research staff in 2010.

Sharing practice: Access to opportunities to share experience and practice is one of the main benefits of belonging to a Hub network. The practice-sharing 'home' for many key contacts is either the Hub steering group or associated 'spin-off' practice-sharing groups. A standing agenda item for SWW network group meetings (Wales and South West networks) is institutional updates which are later circulated region-wide.

A year in focus: the South West and Wales Hub

In 2009 the SSW Hub enabled strategic regional conversations through the annual Good Practice Regional Conference, attracting participants from 22 institutions/organisations, and a joint Concordat seminar with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales in January. Views from the sector were solicited at a regional meeting focused on the Researcher Development Framework in October and researcher development staff were able to participate in influencing skills training, an Action Learning Sets workshop, a Broadening horizons taster session and training sessions for GRADschool directors, tutors and administrative staff. Regional provision for researchers was facilitated by collaborating with the Wales Resource Centre for Women to offer an event around 'Building and sustaining networks' and by providing Hub support to two collaborative local GRADschools in the region.

Practice-sharing opportunities are also created at open region-wide events; during 2009 the Hubs together ran 28 events to promote, share practice and embed excellent provision for the development of researcher careers. These addressed a wide variety of topics emanating both from our strategic themes and arising directly from regionally identified needs. Approaches include, for example at Midlands Hub Good Practice Takeaway events, participants are asked to bring one element of practice to 'swap' with a colleague. Practice-sharing frequently pays off in positive practical outcomes, for example the format and successes from the Manchester University 'Pathways' event informed the design of 'PhD futures' at Salford.

Sharing of expertise and resources: The London Hub established in 2009 a jointly owned website to share information about places on institutional training courses for researchers. The EE Hub has responded to a proposal from Cambridge University in establishing a group to work on a project to share resources for local GRADschools to reduce costs; five regional institutions were involved in an initial meeting.

2009 has seen much collaborative activity mediated regionally by Vitae Hubs. The NW Hub were overwhelmed with applicants when they collaborated with seven regional institutions to put on two half-day courses for researchers and research managers.

The Midlands Hub have set up network project groups for the organisation of the regional poster competition, part-time researcher workshops and a regional Concordat event.

'The sharing of practice on a regional basis is primarily achieved by the Trainer and Developers' Forums...this used to be achieved by the good practice workshop (which has now) taken on more of a strategic role'

Vicky Willett, Vitae Yorkshire and North East Hub Manager

Working behind the scenes: Much of the added-value from the Vitae Hubs can go unnoticed. Inter-institutional links, often between individuals, are forged at Hub events or through direct 'match-making' by Hub staff. For example, the EE Hub Co-ordinator met with a business strategist at Cambridge University, to discuss implementation of the Concordat. Using introductions made by the Hub, his team met with representatives from Oxford, Imperial, Exeter, Edinburgh and Manchester in December to share approaches. All concerned agreed on the value of continuing dialogue as a group and approaches are being made to additional institutions. The relationship built up between UEA and Essex University as a result of Hub involvement has resulted in practical exchanges, such as provision of a UEA tutor for the Essex GRADschool in return for free student places.

'Attendance at the steering group and ...network group meetings has been high with members often travelling long distances to attend, which we feel demonstrates the value that the institutions place on the Hub. The collaborative events... are just one part of the story. Personal contacts between staff in institutions have led to an effective support network, where experiences are shared and advice given'

Anne Goodman, SWW Hub Manager

3.2.2 Vitae Innovate

In 2009 Vitae launched a new scheme to promote innovative approaches in personal, professional and career development of researchers. Recognising the excellent work undertaken in this area to date, especially in response to the Roberts review of 2002 and the 2008 Concordat, Vitae Innovate aims to encourage the introduction of new approaches to researcher development.

In spring 2009 we invited bids to an open call for proposals from any individual, organisation or consortium with an interest in researcher development. We received bids from 78 HEIs and 26 other organisations. 64 bids were shortlisted for review by the panel.

The Vitae Innovate page on the website achieved 2,960 unique visitors in 2009, peaking in June with 1,635 visitors.



In 2009 Vitae awarded £75k of funding to seven projects:

Open research: the application of e-knowledge tools in researcher careers training and development, The Open University.

Advancing understanding of using online access multimedia tools to support researcher development alongside face-to-face approaches.

Essential business skills for the low carbon economy: a bespoke programme for researchers, University of East Anglia.

Researcher development that links enhancing business skills with the implications of climate change and the low carbon economy.

Researcher-led initiatives: generating frameworks for promoting a postgraduate researcher stake in researcher development, National Union of Students (NUS).

Explores supporting postgraduate researchers to operate as stakeholders in the intellectual culture of which they are a part; and the rationale, value and impact of supporting researcher-led initiatives.

Building impact into social science research, University of Leeds.

Providing practical training for social scientists to enable them to engage effectively with the impact agenda from the beginning of their research careers.

The research impact agenda and early career development for historians: a pilot study, History Research Wales.

Using virtual spaces, this project will develop the skills of postgraduate and early career researchers to enhance and demonstrate the impact of historical research in Wales and can serve as a model for researchers elsewhere and in other disciplines.

Facilitating research as a creative process, Imperial College London.

This project will investigate the role played by creativity in the work of early career researchers and the process of how originality is fostered and developed.

Win-Win: developing the transferable skills of research staff through mentoring, The University of Sussex.

Developing the transferable skills of research staff through being mentors for postgraduate researchers.

Outcomes from these projects will inform practice across the HE sector. The Vitae innovate 2010 call for proposals was launched in spring 2010.

3.2.3 Vitae programme models

Vitae provides several researcher training and development programmes available for use by the UK higher education sector. All programmes are based on an experiential and interactive learning approach.

Vitae resources are developed in partnership with institutions to ensure that content, resources and support materials are fit for purpose and are supported by a network of trainers and facilitators who have expertise in delivering the programmes. The Hubs play a key role in providing 'taster' sessions for institutions interested in using Vitae programmes.

The **Broadening horizons: career management for researchers** programme delivers an interactive and intensive two-day programme that provides research staff with the opportunity, skills and tools to help them proactively engage in their career development.

The programme was launched in April with a series of five regional Hub taster sessions to enable institutions to explore the Broadening horizons course and how it can be used as part of institutional provision.

'Broadening horizons offers research staff a reflective and supportive environment in which to take stock of their career so far and plan their next steps.

As a facilitator I witnessed many 'aha' moments throughout the two days – some people gaining more confidence in their ability to progress further in their chosen career path, others reaching a greater understanding of the range of options open to them, and some feeling reassured that they were already on the right career path.

Running this event as a Scotland and Northern Ireland wide event meant that it also provided an excellent opportunity for the researchers to network, and as it was far away from campus the temptation to sneak back to the office or lab was removed with all benefiting from seeing the course through to the very end. These are key value-added benefits that come out of running a region wide event rather than internal workshops that we could run at our own institutions. Thus it complements the services and activities that already exist at a local level, even at institutions where there is full access to the careers service and/or a comprehensive skills training programme for research staff.'

Katrina Gray (Careers Adviser – Research Staff and Students)
University of Glasgow



In May, Vitae launched a research report and a set of new learning materials for working with **Part-time researchers**. A collaboration of 19 Vitae Midlands Hub institutions developed a flexible training framework which recognises the diversity of part-time researchers from a range of institutions. The materials include a training resource pack for use by UK HEIs and a DVD providing tips and advice from successful part-time researchers. The model has received positive feedback with 12 institutions either hosting or co-hosting part-time researcher events in 2009 and 13 events already planned for 2010 in the Midlands region alone.



Part-time researcher course 2009

'This is a good opportunity for me to talk to people who are part-time researchers and who have the same situation as me. We can discuss and share the problems and how to make them right.'

'We covered how to structure your thesis and managing supervision. Both sessions were really informative, and I think what made the event all the more memorable was sharing PhD research experiences with other students who were studying part-time. Everyone had something to share, and year of study did not matter. The events are really worth attending whatever stage in the research process you are at.'

'This was by far the most useful training I've had'

Part-time researcher course participants 2009

'The Vitae part-timers workshop was my first experience of working with colleagues at Nottingham Trent University. From the start the partnership has been professional and operated extremely smoothly. This will be the third year that we have jointly delivered the part-time researcher workshop. Without a clear reason to engage, the development of this partnership may have remained a desirable action.'

'Part-time researchers are often one of the most difficult groups to reach. The University of Nottingham has learnt a lot about the concerns and the support that part-timers researchers need to complete on time and to the required quality level.'

Parmjit Dhugga, University of Nottingham

Vitae's **How to be an effective researcher for postgraduate researchers** programme focuses on building understanding, skills and confidence in communication, planning, time management, problem solving, leadership and assertiveness. Since it was launched in 2008, more than 1,500 postgraduate researchers have attended a course. In 2009 approximately 25 HEIs used the programme, and video resources were produced for facilitators who run the programme. Commissioned in 2009, an independent review will explore the impact and effectiveness of the programme for researchers, HEI views and potential future developments of the programme.

The Effective researcher course has also been a real force for collaboration across the SWW region and continues to be a success. Nine courses were run in 2009 (four of these ran through collaboration between Cardiff University, UWIC, Glamorgan and UW Newport). Consequently a large number of postgraduate researchers benefited from the course during the year and a growing number of tutors are now available in the region.

'I feel more confident as a result of the course, and I think I have skills that employers want. The course made me realise that a PhD is not just about the content of research – it comes with lots of skills attached.'

Effective researcher participant

'Effective researcher benefits in developing an earlier and improved student awareness that the challenges of research degree study are shared, providing them with an alternative perspective and skills to negotiate their research challenges'

HEI response to the Effective researcher evaluation survey

How to be an effective researcher for research staff

was developed to enable research staff to explore the practical skills required for successful project management and the further development of intellectual independence. Since its launch in 2008 over 25 HEIs have been involved in running the programme.

The North West Hub delivered Effective researcher taster sessions and three pilot regional Effective researcher courses during 2009. Three of the regional HEIs have since delivered further Effective researcher courses, either as single institutions or collaboratively.

The Scottish and Northern Ireland Hub participated in a two-day collaborative delivery of the Effective researcher for staff course. The Hub followed up participants after three months to determine the impact of the course and of those who responded the high levels of behavioural change and impact were encouraging.

The Midlands Hub also ran an Effective researcher taster event for trainers this year to build capacity to deliver the programme. Participants from five institutions attended.

'Careers in academia' is a one-day event, providing an opportunity for postgraduate researchers to gain a greater understanding of the roles and responsibilities integral to an academic career. The programme has been running nationally since 2005 and in early 2010 the programme model and resources were launched for use by UK higher education institutions. In December the Yorkshire and North East Hub ran a regional pilot of the programme for arts and humanities researchers. 100% of participants said they would recommend the programme to other researchers.

'The facilitators inspired me to want to pursue an academic career. They were interesting, informative, knowledgeable, fun and enthusiastic.'

'Best course I have attended. Met all my needs – excellent'

'Really explained the grey areas – honest and informative and has provoked changes'

Participants 2009

In November **we ran Vitae connections: using Vitae resources to develop the skills and careers of researchers** aimed at those who are using, or are considering using, Vitae programmes and resources.

Over 60 participants from 34 institutions and 13 organisations were able to share practice, understand latest developments of Vitae programmes and resources, build relationships and input into Vitae's future plans.

'Well organised and highly relevant to my work – an excellent event.'

'Very worthwhile – exhausting but an excellent use of time.'

'Thoroughly enjoyable. Good to learn about Vitae resources and discuss them with other users.'

Vitae connections 2009 participant quotes



Careers in academia 2009

3.2.4 Resources for HEIs

The **Vitae Database of practice** hosts examples of institutions' professional and career development opportunities for researchers. This is a major way that HEIs share practice. In December 2009 there were 790 published practices on the site, 202 more than the previous year, with 348 practices created or edited in 2009. Practices were viewed 11,703 times in 2009.

'The Database of practice is an excellent resource for sharing of ideas and information. I have recently used it when conducting a review of our entrepreneurship provision to compare our programme with provision elsewhere, and inform our new strategy in this area'.

Dr Donna Murray, Business and Enterprise Training Manager,
The University of Edinburgh

The **Database of resources** provides access to a range of resources designed for organisers of researcher training, ranging from skills sessions to career planning. It enables individuals in our networks to upload their own materials and resources. In 2009 41 resources were added and it currently contains 50 resources.

'I have found the Database of resources very useful. In particular it provided inspiration when structuring a programme for researchers and helped inform course development. It was helpful to have a wide range of resources focused on different elements of skills development and career management in one place which could easily be accessed'.

Dr John Copleton, Careers Advisor, Queen's University Belfast

In 2009, a new **Database of trainers** was launched and now includes 114 trainers and developers. This database has been set up to provide higher education institutions, and others who work with researchers, with access to experienced individuals working in the field of researcher training and development. To date 68 trainers and developers have chosen to display their details on the external section of the database and can be approached by institutions directly.

'The Database of trainers and developers enables me to maintain (and easily update) a professional presence, which has directly resulted in work with universities seeking facilitation or bespoke session design services. As well as the benefits of showcasing services to the immediate Vitae community, the profile also performs well in search engine results.'

Samantha Smith, Transition Tradition Limited

Masterclasses for staff supporting researchers

In 2009 we launched a programme of 'masterclasses'. These one-day courses are designed to enable staff supporting researchers to innovate and develop their training practice in specific areas. In 2009 courses covered advanced facilitation skills, coaching techniques within training programmes, design of effective development programmes for researchers, training needs analysis and personal development planning as well as evaluation and feedback.

'The staff supporting researchers masterclass workshops have been extremely useful. As a direct result of these workshops: I have a greater level of understanding of the national context in some areas (eg the Researcher Development Framework and evaluation) and a range of useful techniques that I use in the programme of workshops that I have developed. The quality of training that I provide for postgraduate research students has increased as a result.'

Dr Mark Proctor, Academic Development Officer (Research),
University of Sunderland

3.3 AIM THREE: Empowering researchers to make an impact in their careers

During 2009 Vitae continued to provide resources, advice, information and fora for postgraduate researchers and research staff to improve their employability and career options.

Vitae works with employers who are interested in recruiting researchers. In 2009 Vitae undertook a major survey of employer practice in recruiting researchers.

3.3.1 Researcher activities in 2009

Leadership in action

Vitae's new **Leadership in action** course ran in July for 60 postgraduate researchers and research staff with an interest in exploring and developing their leadership skills. This three-day experiential course was developed by a team of expert trainers. The vision for the course was to provide every participant with the chance to put their leadership skills into practice, whilst exploring the theory of leadership. The course was well received by participants:

'It helped us to build confidence in leading a team, recognising our strengths and weaknesses and our impact on the team and its 'learning by doing' approach made the course applicable to leadership positions in the future.'

'Hard and challenging, but so useful'

Participant quotes 2009

The course ran again in summer 2010 and the course resources will be launched for UK HEIs.

GRADschools and careers in focus events

GRADschools are designed to help postgraduate researchers reflect upon and develop the skills they have. The courses encourage them to consider how they can apply their skills now and in the future and aim to help them make more informed choices about the next step of their career.

Three national **GRADschools** were delivered by Vitae in 2009, for over 230 postgraduate researchers. Feedback from participants in 2009 included:

I am confident of my employability – 93%

I can see the relevance of my skills to different environments – 95%

I found this course a valuable use of time – 94%

I can identify ways to develop myself – 95%

As well as being run at a national level by Vitae, over the last few years the GRADschools programmes now make up an integral part of skills development programmes across the sector. Using the GRADschool model, trainers networks and learning materials, there were at least 23 institutional GRADschools run in 2009 involving 20 UK HEIs. Regional GRADschools are also being run with institutions collaborating to provide development opportunities for researchers and share best practice.

In order to support institutions interested in organising their own local GRADschool or in building their in-house course management expertise the Midlands and South West and Wales Hubs organised and delivered the first GRADschool manager training for new GRADschool managers and administrators in November 2009.

Last year regional members requested support from Vitae and the Hubs to train additional facilitators and directors, in order to sustain the local GRADschool programme in the region and build capacity. Therefore the SWW Hub Manager liaised with a Vitae associate and arranged a local GRADschool directors' training day for aspiring GRADschool directors, funded by Bath, Bristol and Exeter. Held in Bath in March, participants attended from eight institutions. In addition, the Hub hosted a tutor training day, held in May in Bristol for participants from 12 institutions.

During 2009 three **Careers in focus** events took place for over 200 postgraduate researchers. These included two **Careers in academia** events held in June and October which explored what a career in the academic environment is really like and provided an insight into the skills and strengths it will take to succeed in the academic environment.

A **Careers in focus – environment** event took place in November. Employers who provided input on career options in the environment included NERC, EON, The National Trust, Chester Zoo, The Learning and Skills Council, Halcrow and Student Force. The event was well received, with 100% of participants saying that they would recommend it to a colleague.

'Talking to professionals and peers – good to chat about opportunities and what others expect'

'Gaining different perspectives to view career paths in a different way'

'Opened one to useful ideas and some useful websites and student force as a resource'

Participants of Careers in focus: environment event 2009

'Provided honest information about academic life. I feel it was very informative and has given me a more definitive idea about whether it's the right thing for me.'

Careers in academia participant 2009

'I gained different perspectives of the environment sector and now view career paths in a different way'

Careers in focus: environment participant 2009



Masterclass 2009



Improving creativity in research

In December Vitae launched a booklet titled **'The creative researcher: tools and techniques to unleash your creativity'**. This provides practical information and advice for researchers on how to build creative thinking techniques into their research practice. In December, we ran a **Creativity** workshop examining ways to build creativity within the researcher community. The one-day course provided tools to enable postgraduate researchers to think more creatively. Events based on the booklet are also planned for 2010.

'Some interesting techniques of gaining new ideas and drawing connections between them, very interactive!'

'Chance to reflect via group activities on my own issues with research'

'Number of methods on encouraging creative thinking was very useful'

Creativity in research participants 2009

The researcher booklets have been well received by the HEIs and research institutes and widely distributed to the researcher and staff supporting researchers networks, totaling over 50,000 copies to date (including copies of 'The balanced researcher'). The next title in the series 'The engaging researcher' was published in summer 2010.

'These booklets make a great read while I'm commuting to work – in only ten minutes of a read I've been left inspired to action some of the tips provided in my day-to-day work, be it to better manage my time or ways to think more creatively in the research environment!'

Researcher, UCL

3.3.2 Working with research staff

UK research staff conference

Vitae's first UK-wide **research staff conference** took place on 5 November with over 60 research staff from over 40 institutions exploring some of the key issues faced by research staff in the current climate. Participants also discussed how to make their voice heard more effectively within institutions and by policymakers. There was a clear consensus for research staff to collaborate and build a collective voice on issues of career and personal development and that researcher issues were common across discipline and institutional boundaries.

'I brought back a lot of action points from the conference and have worked through them with colleagues here to good effect. The university has been really supportive, too, including giving us support from all the relevant bits of the university to go ahead and create a one-stop webpage for research staff which will be a big improvement. As part of that, we will create a web presence for our Research Staff Forum.'

Research staff conference participant 2009



UK research staff association (UKRSA)

Following the research staff conference, the **UK research staff association (UKRSA)** was established in early 2010 to provide a collective voice for research staff. Supported by Vitae, the UKRSA continues and extends the work of the National Research Staff Association. The committee consists of around 20 people from a wide disciplinary and geographical range.

Examples of the individual actions committed to by research staff conference participants:

- Find out what the university is doing to implement the Concordat
- Try to engage new researchers in understanding the benefits of CPD
- Contact the careers service, think more broadly about career options, find out more about any post-doc/research forums
- Will try to take more of an active role in engaging new research staff
- Develop networks with other researchers

Advancing in academia for research staff

In June 2009, Vitae ran a pilot programme Advancing in academia for research staff. This course addresses how to succeed in a competitive and complex research environment and enables the participant to consider the pros and cons of different career options. The event received excellent feedback from course participants, with 88% of them agreeing that the programme had met its objectives and that they were better able to:

- understand the balance required between skills, achievements and building their professional profile to advance their academic career
- review where they were in their career, where they want to be and how to get there
- develop an action plan to strategically manage their career.

The programme was run again in March 2010.

'The academic promotion activity showed me how important it is to sell myself and that decisions made while at work are important as they can have different impacts'

'It was good to relate to researchers from different subject areas and good to talk to people in the same position'

'All the exercises were great and really useful; loved the career paths and senior academic presentation as inspiring and offered lots of advice; liked demystification of expectations and difficulties in HE'

Participant quotes 2009

3.3.3 Online information and support for researchers

Vitae's **researchers portal** www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers continued to provide information and advice for postgraduate researchers and research staff.



The researchers portal represented 36% of website activity in 2009. The two most popular areas were the courses and events and the careers sections, these totalling over 11% of all visitors to the Vitae website in 2009.

In September, Vitae launched a **'research staff blog'** to enable research staff to discuss, share views and comment on topics relevant to the researcher community. Since its launch in late September, it has accounted for 43% of page views in the research staff section for the remainder of 2009, with 2,811 unique visitors viewing the blog. Nearly 400 comments have been made and over 60 people have contributed to the discussions. The blog has also been used to gather views, for example on a postdoctoral survey and the Researcher Development Framework (RDF); a tool for planning, promoting and supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers and the Research Excellence Framework (REF); the new system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) consultations.

In July 2009 Vitae hosted an online discussion about **'researcher careers and recession'**. During July this was the eighth most popular page on the Vitae site; achieving 1,449 page views – 15% of the total hits on the careers section of the site in that month. 1,037 different people visited this feature. It enabled researchers to read and discuss specially commissioned articles from a range of perspectives including:

'Research and recession', by Fiona Christie, Careers Co-ordinator for Postgraduate Researchers, University of Salford

'Challenges and perspectives for early career researchers during the current economic climate', by Professor Sarah O'Hara, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Professor Bob Webb, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, University of Nottingham

'Impact of the recession on research and research careers', by Aaron Porter, Vice-President (Higher Education), National Union of Students

'Universities, researchers and the recession – Dr Tristram Hooley trawls the web to find out how the recession is impacting on universities', by Tristram Hooley, Senior Programme Manager, Vitae

'Careers and recession – from the perspective of a head of postgraduate career development', by Elizabeth Wilkinson, Head of Postgraduate Career Development, University of Manchester

'How do recruiters make shortlisting decisions?', by Shiona Llewellyn

'Postgraduates and the recession', by Dr Charlie Ball, HECSU Deputy Director of Research

As well discussing a topical issue for researchers and providing lasting resources, this activity inspired local provision at Cambridge University in the development of a workshop for researchers on the topic of the recession (entitled 'Crunched? Academic Careers and the Recession').

3.3.4 Raising the profile of researchers with non-HE employers

In May 2009, Vitae published **'Employers briefing: targeting the postgraduate and researcher market'**, jointly written with the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and the Association of Graduate Recruiters. Aimed at employers, this briefing highlights the skills and experience of postgraduates and people with a background in academic research. The briefing was well received by career advisors and distributed widely by employer organisations.

'Vitae's 'Employers' briefing: targeting the postgraduate and researcher market' has been very useful for careers services when talking to employers when promoting the postgraduate and researcher market to them'

Careers advisor, University of Nottingham

In January 2010 we launched the results of a survey which took place during 2009 **'Recruiting researchers: survey of employer practice 2009'**.

The survey collected views of over 100 non-HE employers on recruiting doctoral researchers. The survey found that more than 70% of employers would welcome more applications from doctoral researchers and that they are keen to recruit researchers both for their technical skills and for their 'first class brains'. A Vitae seminar planned for September 2010 will showcase employer practice in recruiting doctoral researchers.



3.4 AIM FOUR: Evidencing the impact of professional and career development support for researchers

It has never been more important to be able to demonstrate the value of skills and careers development on research outputs, researcher careers, economic prosperity and society.

3.4.1 What do researchers do? The UK landscape of researchers' career destinations

In June, Vitae launched two major new **'What do researchers do?'** (WDRD) publications: an **'analysis of first destinations of doctoral graduates by subject'** and **'career profiles of doctoral graduates'** featuring 40 career stories. Attracting national media coverage, the over-subscribed launch event was attended by 80 representatives from national organisations and UK institutions. The findings presented in the WDRD publications have been used in a number of national events and conferences and informed the postgraduate review led by Professor Adrian Smith. Over 5,000 copies have been requested by staff across the HE sector and national and international colleagues.

Alongside these publications, a new **career stories portal** was launched to build a more comprehensive collection of career stories of doctoral graduates in the UK. A new **Database of career stories**²¹ currently links to 200 publicly available researcher stories and will shortly provide the facility for institutions and other organisations to upload stories.

In 2009 an internal review **'Career profiles – what works and for whom?'** explored how different approaches to collecting researchers' career profiles meet the needs of different stakeholders. This analysed three career story collections against the needs of five stakeholder groups. A second project **'career stories – demonstrating impact'** reviewed the Vitae 'What do researchers do?' career profiles collection to identify impacts mapped against the 5 levels in the Rugby Team Impact Framework. A short report will be finalised later in the year.

²¹ www.vitae.ac.uk/docs

3.4.2 Building the sector-wide evidence base

In 2008 the **Rugby Team Impact Framework (RTIF)** was launched at the Vitae researcher development conference. It was developed to provide the HE sector with an evaluation framework for evaluating the impact of researcher development.

The Rugby team is a sector-led group to 'propose a meaningful and workable way of evaluating the effectiveness of skills development in early career researchers'. Vitae provides management and resources to support the work of the group. The Rugby Team is now the Impact and Evaluation Group: researcher skills and careers (IEG) and its work will continue during 2010.

In 2009, the JISCmail 'Evaluating Impact' network group was set up and now has over 100 members. 2009 has also seen the publication of a new journal 'International Journal for Researcher Development'²² with an evaluation section and a guide to evaluating researcher training and development activity.

In September 2009, the 'Rugby Team Impact Framework: one year on' report was launched at the Vitae conference. This report contains the results of 27 evaluation projects carried out by 21 HEIs or organisations. It contains evidence of impacts in areas of key interest to a range of stakeholders, including researchers, higher education institutions and funding bodies.

'The report demonstrates the increasing engagement of higher education institutions in evaluating the impact of training and development of researchers and the collective commitment to building a more comprehensive evidence base. There is clear evidence of training and development activities improving research outputs, researcher employability and communicating research beyond higher education.'

Dr Tony Bromley, University of Leeds and author of the report

'... the Rugby Team, a sector-led group with an interest and expertise in this area, currently considers ways to evaluate the effectiveness of skills development in early career researchers on behalf of the UK HE sector

BIS National Action Plan December 2009

A major report on the impact of developing researchers will be launched at the Vitae conference in September 2010.

3.4.3 Providing tools to support and promote researcher development

Researcher Development Framework (RDF)

The Researcher Development Framework is being developed in response to a range of requests (including a recommendation from the Vitae policy forum in 2008) to extend and develop the Joint Skills Statement²³.

The RDF will be a tool for planning, promoting and supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. It describes the knowledge, skills, behaviours and personal qualities acquired by researchers at different stages in their careers. A Researcher development statement (RDS) was created in July 2010 as a reference document that summarises the knowledge, skills and behaviour of effective and highly skilled researchers in a useful format for policy makers.

Based on empirical data, the framework was developed through interviews with around 100 researchers to establish the skills and attributes they recognise in successful researchers. During the autumn, a major consultation took place to test the concept and detail of the RDF. The consultation received an excellent response with over 240 inputs representing a broad range of stakeholders. The respondents included 33 organisations, 65 HEIs, two Vitae Hub collaborative responses (representing an additional 16 HEIs) and 146 individual responses. Over half of the Russell Group and the 1994 Group institutions participated and responses were also received from the Europe Unit and European Commission. In addition to the main survey, 72 responses were provided to the researcher specific survey representing 38 HEIs. 3,635 people visited the RDF section of the website in 2009.

The results of the survey showed that for all main questions 60-80% of the responses were positive. The majority of respondents found the framework very useful or useful in supporting the professional development of researchers and agreed fully or mostly that the framework meets the need for a UK framework for researchers and those supporting researchers.

A revised version of the framework will be launched in Summer 2010. Further details about the development and next steps in the RDF project can be found at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

'The new framework enhances the portfolio of skills previously emphasised by the JSS and reflects the diversity of the contemporary researcher community more clearly. It also encourages doctoral researchers to look beyond doctoral proficiencies to prepare themselves for the next stages of their research career.'

Comment by a respondent to the Researcher Development Framework consultation 2009

²² International Journal for Researcher Development www.researcherdevelopmentjournal.org/index

²³ Joint Skills Statement (2001) sets out a joint statement of the skills that postgraduate researchers funded by the Research Councils would be expected to develop during their research training www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/RCUK-Joint-Skills-Statement-2001.pdf

4. Additional researcher development activities

4.1 UUK report

In October, a joint UUK/Vitae parliamentary launch of the 'promoting the UK doctorate' report²⁴, authored by Vitae, took place to an audience of MPs and VCs. This report, which shows how study at doctoral level will provide the high level skills needed to help drive our economy in a post-recession environment, provided a key input to the **postgraduate review** undertaken by Professor Adrian Smith during autumn 2009.

Professor Steve Smith, President of Universities UK, also highlighted their commitment to continue the importance of doctoral employability.

'We need to promote the attractiveness of the UK PhD to employers, as well as students. We also need to do more to encourage mobility between academia and business, and vice versa. Transferable employability skills for PhD graduates, allowing them to work effectively within industry as well as academia, are critical'

Professor Steve Smith, President, Universities UK, the UUK/Vitae parliamentary event on 28 October 2009



4.2 Enterprise at work: exploring intrapreneurship in researcher development

Vitae, CRAC and eight universities undertook a collaborative project to build a knowledge base of the intrapreneurial attributes that make an effective researcher and create resources to develop intrapreneurial capabilities. The project builds on a previous collaboration with CRAC, Vitae and HEIs which ran in 2008 and investigated intrapreneurship within a changing political landscape, links with institutional drivers and practice, and intrapreneurial behaviours.

The project group is developing an 'Intrapreneurial lens' which will help researchers to reflect on their intrapreneurial capabilities and opportunities to develop these important transferable skills. The intrapreneurial capabilities have been validated through interviews with postgraduate and early career researchers. The 'Intrapreneurial lens' is being designed to work with the Researcher Development Framework. A self-assessment questionnaire and a set of guides and resources to help trainers and developers to review and introduce intrapreneurial development opportunities into their training provision will be launched in autumn 2010.

4.3 European Doctors in Enterprise project

CRAC is part of a European collaboration financed by the European Commission Lifelong Learning Programme in partnership with organisations from Italy, Malta and Spain. During the next two years, the project will analyse the current European landscape in terms of both training in transferable skills for technical and scientific postgraduate researchers and career guidance services to support career paths for researchers outside academia. The output will be a set of resources and recommendations for better enabling the transition between academia and industry.

4.4 CRAC's work with other organisations

CRAC worked in partnership with the UK Energy and Research Centre (UKERC) to deliver their annual summer school in July for 100 postgraduates in their first or second year. As part of the event Vitae career and skills development activities were run in partnership with inputs from experts in the field.

CRAC also worked with Oxford University to deliver two GRADschool courses for their students in 2009, as well as supporting both Reading University and Oxford Brookes to deliver their first GRADschools. CRAC/Vitae also worked with the British Council to deliver two three-day workshops, in Bonn and Kuala Lumpur on 'building an international research career' for international early career researchers.

²⁴ www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/research_report_doctorate.pdf

5. Looking ahead – 2010 and beyond

Against a backdrop of political change, Vitae have four strategic priorities for 2010:

- to evaluate the progress, impact and embedding of the researcher development agenda and support discussions around its long-term sustainability
- to launch and support the implementation of a researcher development framework to promote professional development and career planning for researchers
- to expand our networks and strategic partners through targeted activities to embed researcher development within the wider HE landscape
- to promote the UK as a leader in the professional development of researchers.

A range of activities will take place to evaluate progress and impact, and support discussions around embedding and long-term sustainability of the researcher development agenda during 2010. These activities include:

- a 'survey of HEI strategies for implementing the Concordat²⁵' as part of the Concordat benchmarking process (responses from HEIs in April 2010)
- a high level strategy forum with Professor Adrian Smith in March 2010 focusing on visioning the research environment in the long-term and the implications on the development needs of researchers
- a major report on Rugby Team Impact Framework (now IEG) activity to the national Vitae conference.

In terms of the Researcher Development Framework, Vitae will respond to feedback from the consultation and publish the full framework by July 2010. Further implementation activities, including resources and online tools, will be developed later in 2010. Packaging resources for different audiences will support the accessibility and usability of the framework.

Vitae will be working to expand our networks and strategic partners to embed researcher development within the wider HE landscape particularly working with HR professionals in conjunction with UCEA and UHR.

Finally, in a competitive global environment and a time of political change in the UK it is more important than ever to continue to promote the UK research experience. A stakeholder review to better understand international colleagues' views of UK researcher development and Vitae will be published during 2010. Capitalising on the UK's leading work in the training and career development support for researchers will be a key focus for Vitae in 2010.

Want to get involved?

If you would like to receive further information or be on the mailing list of the Vitae programme or your local Hub to receive newsletters, email alerts and details of events, activities and resources available to you, contact Vitae central team or your regional Vitae Hub.

Information requests: enquiries@vitae.ac.uk

Publications information and orders: orders@vitae.ac.uk

For who's who in Vitae, visit www.vitae.ac.uk/contacts

²⁵ www.survey.bris.ac.uk/epsrc/hei_strategies

Appendix

Vitae website, publications, materials and media coverage in 2009:

Vitae website in 2009

The Vitae website remains the main source of information for all of Vitae's programmes and support materials for researchers, researcher development staff and stakeholders. 2009 was a period of unprecedented growth for the Vitae website with a 202% increase in average unique visitors per month (to 18,079)²⁶. The number of registered users on the site increased by 39% to 4,748. The site now holds over 5,000 pages (including databases and publications) and over 600 other websites link to Vitae.

Also, Vitae's profile on online communities has grown substantially during 2009, most notably with the amplification of the Vitae conference using Twitter. There were a total of over 800 referrals to the Vitae website from Twitter in 2009. In 2010 we will continue to broaden our reach through new social media and online provision development.

The introduction of three new blogs on the site as well as a growing Vitae network on the social networking site Twitter (with over 1,800 referrals to Vitae) demonstrate Vitae's active engagement with the sector online.

'Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS) 2009: analysis of aggregated UK results' www.vitae.ac.uk/cros

Concordat stakeholder briefings for higher education professionals involved in implementing the principles of the 2008 'Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers': for senior managers, human resources specialists, staff developers, careers specialists, managers of researchers and research staff. www.vitae.ac.uk/concordat

Completing your doctorate z-cards with tips and advice for postgraduate researchers

Creative researcher: tools and techniques to unleash your creativity booklet for both postgraduate researchers and research staff. www.vitae.ac.uk/researcherbooklets

Employer briefing developed by AGCAS, AGR and Vitae. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Employers%20Briefing_8pp_A4.pdf

GRADBritain online magazine by and for postgraduate researchers. www.vitae.ac.uk/gradbritain

Hubs newsletters were produced quarterly in 2009 and distributed to the Hub networks containing news and activities from Vitae. www.vitae.ac.uk/hubs

News update e-distributions to Vitae regional Hub, ReSDAG and staff supporting networks, research councils and others. www.vitae.ac.uk/news

overview bulletin for supervisors and principal investigators. www.vitae.ac.uk/overview

'PGR Tips' e-bulletin offering tips and advice for postgraduate researchers 12 issues produced in 2009.

www.vitae.ac.uk/pgrtips

Planning your doctorate: Schedule for success, for postgraduate researchers. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Schedule_for_success_planner_09_10.pdf

Promoting the UK doctorate: opportunities and challenges, a UUK report authored by Janet Metcalfe and Faye Emery of Vitae, available to download from: www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/publications

Recruiting researchers: survey of employer practice 2009 was developed in 2009 and launched officially at the Vitae policy forum in January 2010. www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/1393-205111/Recruiting-researchers.html

Research staff blog dedicated to research staff. www.vitae.ac.uk/rsblog

Researcher's skills and competencies at a glance leaflet. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitae_ResearchersSkills_Oct09.pdf

'Rugby Team Impact Framework: one year on'. www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/1271-142971/Rugby-Team-Impact-Framework-one-year-on.html

'Understanding the part-time researcher experience' report, a training resource pack and DVD providing tips and advice gathered from successful part-time (postgraduate) researchers. www.vitae.ac.uk/part-time_researcher

'UK GRAD 2003-07 final report'. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/UK_GRAD_03-07_final%20report.pdf

'Vitae annual report 2008'. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/1.Vitae_AnnualReport_May09.pdf

'Vitae researcher development conference 2008 report'. www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/375-60241/Vitae-Conference-2008-report-available-online.html

'Vitae researcher development conference 2009 report'. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitaeconference2009-Conference-Report.pdf

'Vitae Roberts policy forum 2009 report'. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/1.VRPF_Report_Feb09.pdf

Vitae Roberts policy forum consultation 2009 www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/VRPF_consultation_results_Jul09.pdf

Vitae September news update for our HEI networks of the resources, publications and activities Vitae is providing to support our collective vision. www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitae%20News_Sept09.pdf

'What do researchers do? First destinations of doctoral graduates by subject' (WDRDS) and **'What do researchers do? Career profiles of doctoral graduates' (WDRDCS)**. www.vitae.ac.uk/wdrd

²⁶ This is in part due to the closure of the UK GRAD Programme website at the beginning of 2008. It's clear that users transferred to the Vitae site.

Vitae in national media 2009

Prize night for unexpected delights and teachers. Serendipity, pedagogy and engineering are offered a chance to shine in new Awards categories, THE, 26 February.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=405518

'What's up, Doc: Are too many students sailing through the British PhD?' The Independent Newspaper, 14 May.
www.independent.co.uk/student/postgraduate/postgraduate-study/whats-up-doc-are-too-many-students-sailing-through-the-british-phd-1684291.html

Part-time PhD students need more support, THE, 1 June.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=406783&c=2

News in brief: Support for postdoctoral researchers, THE, 4 June. www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=406847

Where do Ph.D.s work? A blog on Vitae's 'What do researchers do?' publications, Science Careers, 25 June.
<http://blogs.sciencemag.org/sciencecareers/2009/06/where-do-phds-w.html>

Education is the destination news in brief on 'What do researchers do?' publication, THE, 25 June.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=407129&c=1

Report finds sharp differences in first jobs for doctoral graduates, published in 1 July 2009 issue of Research Fortnight <http://researchresearch.com> (available as PDF on www.vitae.ac.uk)

News in brief: Support for postdoctoral researchers, THE, 6 August. www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=407674

Doubts over Roberts cash 'damaging', says Vitae, Researchers fear for future of £20m careers funding, THE, 20 August.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=407862&c=2

Roberts cash helps research and researchers, Vitae report says, THE, 3 September.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=407965&c=1

Don't expect Roberts cash to last, warns RCUK, THE, 9 September.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=408109

Grant winners VITAE, THE, 10 September 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=408067

2009's front-runners are poised for October's revelations, The shortlist for Times Higher Education's fifth Awards ceremony has been unveiled, THE, 10 September 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=408071

Formal review to consider four key areas of postgraduate study, Vitae conference also told about the possibility of Roberts funding winding up, THE, 17 September 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=408210&c=2

Healthy Developments, Support for researchers' professional development is at an all-time high, two studies presented at the Vitae conference last week suggest, THE, 17 September 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=408212&c=1

To research or not to research, Research Fortnight, Issue 331 23 Sep 09.

Report Finds U.K. Postdocs Generally Satisfied with Their Lot, Science Careers Blog, 16 October 2009.
<http://blogs.sciencemag.org/sciencecareers/2009/10/new-report-look.html>

Winners of THE Awards 2009 announced (outstanding support for early career researchers), THE, 14 October 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/hybrid.asp?typeCode=365&pubCode=1&navcode=142

Better awareness of PhDs needed, says UUK, Research Fortnight Issue 334 04 November 09.

Who should pay for degrees? The review of postgraduate education will look at thorny issues, including concentration, The Independent newspaper, 12 November 2009.
www.independent.co.uk/student/postgraduate/postgraduate-study/who-should-pay-for-degrees-1818658.html

Vitae consults research staff on career development framework, Research Fortnight Issue 335, 18 November 2009.

Helping hand for researchers, THE, 26 November 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=409242

Research intelligence: Change of climate, THE, 3 December 2009.
www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=409295



Vitae builds on previous work by the UK GRAD Programme and UKHERD. Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK) and managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities.

The role of Vitae is to work with UK higher education institutions (HEIs) to embed professional and career development in the research environment. Vitae plays a major role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing the capability of the higher education sector to provide professional development and training of researchers.

Our vision is for the UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. Our key aims include:

- championing the development and implementation of effective policy
- enhancing higher education provision through sharing practice and resources
- providing access to development opportunities and resources
- building an evidence base to support the researcher development agenda.

For further information about the range of Vitae activities go to www.vitae.ac.uk or contact enquiries@vitae.ac.uk

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