

How to use the employability lens

Employers may wish to use this lens to:

- identify the knowledge, behaviours and attributes that researchers can bring to their organisation as researchers are a key talent pool for recruitment and selection
- support the full breadth of professional and career development for researchers working on collaborative doctoral programmes, research projects, secondments or placements
- compare the Vitae Researcher Development Framework to the organisation's competency framework's underpinning placements, recruitment and staff development.

Researchers may wish to use this lens to:

- understand the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes typically developed during their research that are most frequently required by a wide range of employers
- identify knowledge, behaviours and attributes that might be of interest to employers and accentuate development of these skills and competencies as an integral part of their career development
- provide evidence of the transferability of their knowledge, behaviours and attributes in their CV, in job applications and at interviews
- explore how to present themselves in a job interview by providing real examples of relevant transferable knowledge, behaviours and attributes developed as researchers, or acquired through professional secondments, placements or work experience.

For further information on researchers' employability visit: www.vitae.ac.uk/employers

“The Society of Biology welcomes the employability lens, focusing on the Researcher Development Framework. The lens mirrors our 2010 Industry Survey in highlighting many of the same key abilities. We hope prospective researchers will use the lens to realise the breadth of skills they hold and define the areas in which they may need further development.”

Dr Mark Downs FSB, Chief Executive, Society of Biology

“The lens fits well with an overall researcher competency framework, and could help employers when devising interview strategies in order to tease out the right behaviours/knowledge/attributes they require of a successful researcher.”

Joanne McCawley, HR Advisor, TATA Steel

“The terminology of ‘competences’ is used throughout the Royal Bank of Scotland framework, and is in line with the Researcher Development Framework. It is easy to map the content of the Researcher Development Framework with the Royal Bank of Scotland competence framework.”

Royal Bank of Scotland

To protect and maintain the integrity of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and the Researcher Development Statement (RDS)¹ and to ensure a consistent approach to the development of lenses on the RDF anyone wishing to create a lens on the RDF should seek permission from Vitae, and must adhere to the RDF conditions of use². Enquiries regarding the development of a lens on the RDF can be directed to: rdf@vitae.ac.uk

Vitae welcomes enquiries about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. If you are an employer outside the UK higher education sector and are interested in using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework please contact: rdf@vitae.ac.uk

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

Lens development

The employability lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework has been developed by Vitae based on a wide range of employers' views of researchers' knowledge, behaviours and attributes. Vitae brought together published research into the skills that are most frequently desired by employers, and consultations with professional organisations and employers who have an interest in researchers' employability.

Surveys of employers views on researchers' knowledge, behaviours and attributes:

- ‘Employers’ views of researchers’ skills: A comprehensive review of the existing literature into employers’ views of the skills of early career researchers’, The Rugby Team, September 2007
- ‘EMPRESS – Employers’ Perceptions of Recruiting’, Research Staff and Students, University of Leeds, November 2005
- ‘Recruiting researchers: survey of employer practice 2009’, Vitae, February 2010
- ‘Survey of employer attitudes to postgraduate researchers’, The University of Sheffield, August 2006
- ‘Skills and competencies needed in the research field. Objectives 2020’, APEC/Deloitte study, November 2010
- ‘Talent Fishing: What Businesses Want from Postgraduates’, CIHE report for Department of Business Innovation and Skills, March 2010
- ‘The Value of PhDs: the Impact of Doctoral Education in Research Intensive Employers’, DTZ report for Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), July 2011

The knowledge, behaviours and attributes identified in this lens are a foundation for building ‘commercial awareness’ in combination with, for example, general knowledge of the economic impact of research, experience of business culture gained through work experiences, professional placements and training, and an enterprising approach to work.

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



Researcher Development Framework

Employability lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework for careers outside academia

Overview

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) underpins a major new approach to developing world-class researchers. The framework has been developed by and for researchers working in higher education as an aid to planning, promoting and enhancing professional and career development.

It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages all researchers to realise their potential.

This is one of a series of lenses on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

For further information about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework visit: www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

Supporting materials relating to this lens are available at: www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf/lenses

“It took me a while to realise the call for my PhD wasn’t just the technical knowledge that I picked up, but it was also the transferable skills which you don’t really see at the time. But it’s things like problem solving, taking on a challenge, getting it down to, sort of, the nitty gritty and working out a step by step method of solving a problem.”

Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE, Space Scientist

Purpose of the employability lens

The employability lens provides an overview of the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes typically developed by researchers that are most frequently desired by employers. At a glance the lens highlights key skills for current and prospective employers when attracting and recruiting researchers to enhance their business. Depending on the business' needs, employers might look for additional role specific skills. This lens focuses on the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes of researchers that can be applied or acquired working outside of higher education research.

Context

In a rapidly changing global business environment, research, innovation and highly skilled employees are key to maintaining competitive advantage.

Researchers' expertise is critical to economic success, addressing major global challenges and building a leading knowledge economy.

Describing employability

Within this lens, employability is defined as:

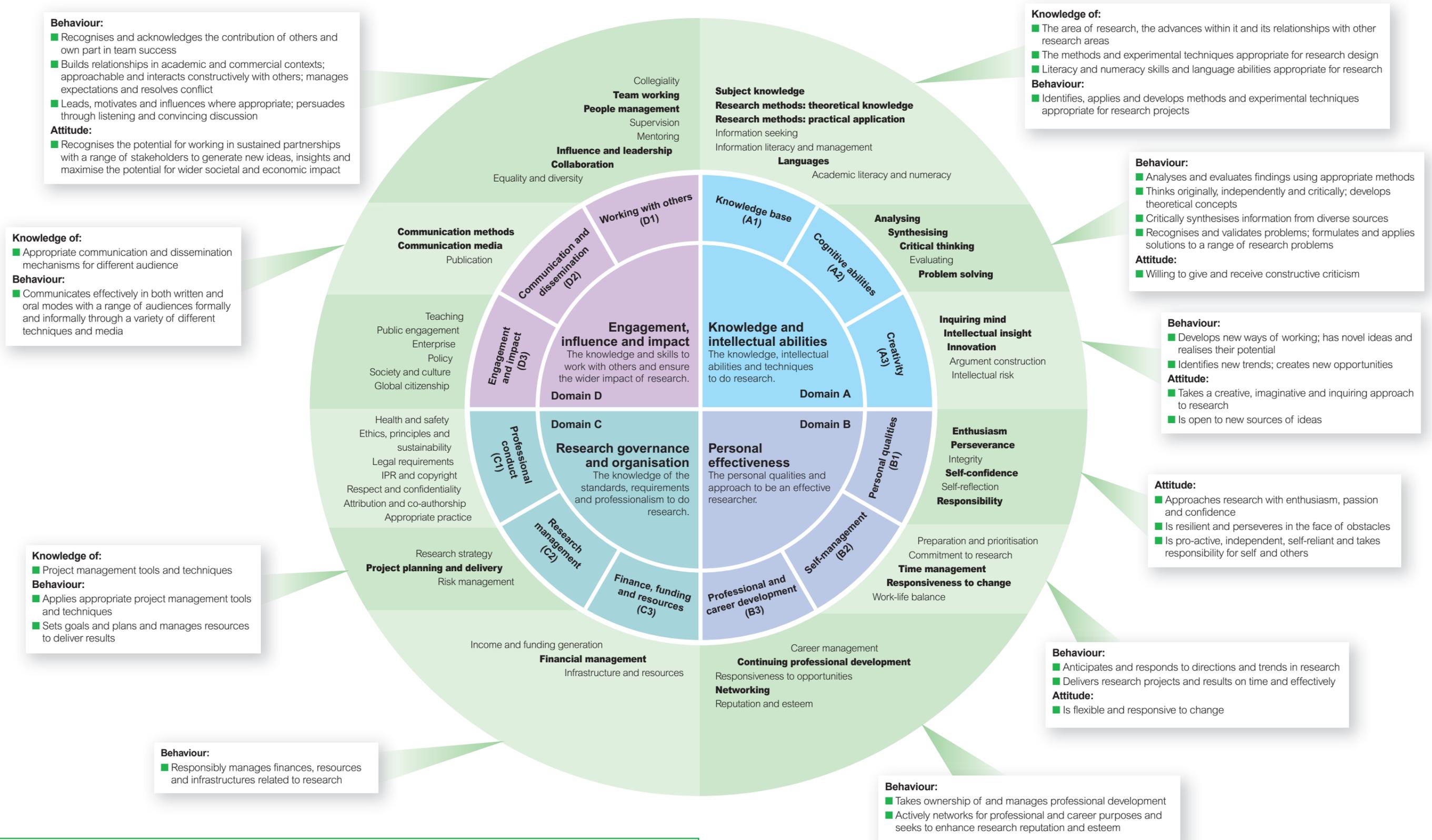
“A set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.”

Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

¹ www.vitae.ac.uk/rds

² www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf/conditionsofuse

Employability lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework for careers outside academia



Bold text in outer circle – key RDF descriptors that relate to employability and vice versa
Boxed text – summary statements from the Vitae Researcher Development Statement that relate to employability for careers outside academia. www.vitae.ac.uk/rds