

January 2008 UK GRAD Policy Forum

Rugby Team update

Chris Park

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Chair, Rugby Team



The Rugby Team

Sector working group on the evaluation of skills development of early career researcher

- Mission – to propose meaningful and workable ways of evaluating skills development in early career researchers [PGR + research staff]

- Annual Reports to Policy Forum
 - RT05 - “Great Expectations meets Mission Impossible”
 - RT06 - “Catch-22 meets Don’t Look Back in Anger”
 - RT07 - “The Long and Winding Road”

Rugby Team projects: completed

1. Employers' views
 - Rugby Team report [Sept 2007]
 - *Employers' views of researchers' skills: a comprehensive review of the existing literature into employers' views of the skills of early career researchers*
2. Sharing good practice
 - QAA/UKCGE workshop
 - University of Warwick [6 Dec 2007]
3. Research staff
 - Rugby Team report [Sept 2007]
 - *What are HEI research staff for?*

Rugby Team projects: completed

4. PRES

- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
- Joint initiative with Higher Education Academy
 - 56 HEIs; 10,500 students; PRES Report [Dec 2007]

5. Evaluating impacts

- Framework of ways in which HEIs can evaluate the impact of skills development of researchers
 - RT Impact Framework Report, Appendix 2 [Jan 2008]

6. Database of practice

- UK GRAD DoP restructured and re-launched [Sept 2007]

Rugby Team projects: ongoing

1. STaRSS [Skills Training and Research Supervision Survey]
 - Objective: develop a tool which can be used to measure the extent of awareness and cultural acceptance of the skills agenda by academics
 - **RT07 Recommendation 1:** the STaRS Survey should be set up as a national survey on the lines of CROS and PRES
2. Researcher career profiles
 - Objective: devise a template for the development of researcher career profiles, which all agencies and institutions could use for both qualitative evaluation and in developing tools for supporting individual researchers' career development
 - **RT07 Recommendation 3:** the Rugby Team should progress the project

Ongoing projects

3. Changing nature of the doctorate
 - Joint initiative with Higher Education Academy
 - HEA Discussion Paper Redefining the doctorate [Jan 2007]
 - National conference, London [Nov 2008]
4. Impact framework
 - Objective: produce a framework of possible impacts of the skills agenda for different groups of stakeholders (including research students, supervisors, departments, disciplines, institutions, and funding bodies)
 - **RT07 Recommendation 2**: the Rugby Team should complete the framework

Future of the Rugby Team

RT07 Recommendation 4: that the Rugby Team should continue

- 5 year mission, starting Jan 2008
- Revised membership
 - Similar balance to RT07, but add ...
 - individuals with expertise and experience in evaluation
 - people from outside the HE sector, e.g. from employer organisations or professional bodies
 - equal balance between PGR and research staff interests
 - more people from the post-92 HE sector
- Projects
 - Scope and steer small-scale pilots
 - Support and advice in search for major project funding
- Administration
 - Funded by the new 'researcher development' programme

Functions

- **Provide sector input** on shaping a programme to build the evidence base
- **Inform national and agency policies** and practices relating to the evaluation of skills development
- **Disseminate information** and inform the sector about existing good practice in evaluating skills development
- **Provide advice** to the new researcher development programme
- **Harmonise the strategic direction** of the main surveys relating to early career researchers (ie STaRRS, CROS, PRES and Research Leaders)
- **Identify future projects** and potential funding sources for evaluating skills development

January 2008 UK GRAD Policy Forum Rugby Team Impact Framework

Tony Bromley
University of Leeds
Member, Rugby Team



Drivers

1. Demonstrate appropriateness of emphasis on skills development
2. Inform enhancement of researcher experience
3. Assess impact of initiatives (esp Roberts Funding) on employability of researchers
4. Provide feedback to funding bodies to help them evaluate effectiveness and impact of investment

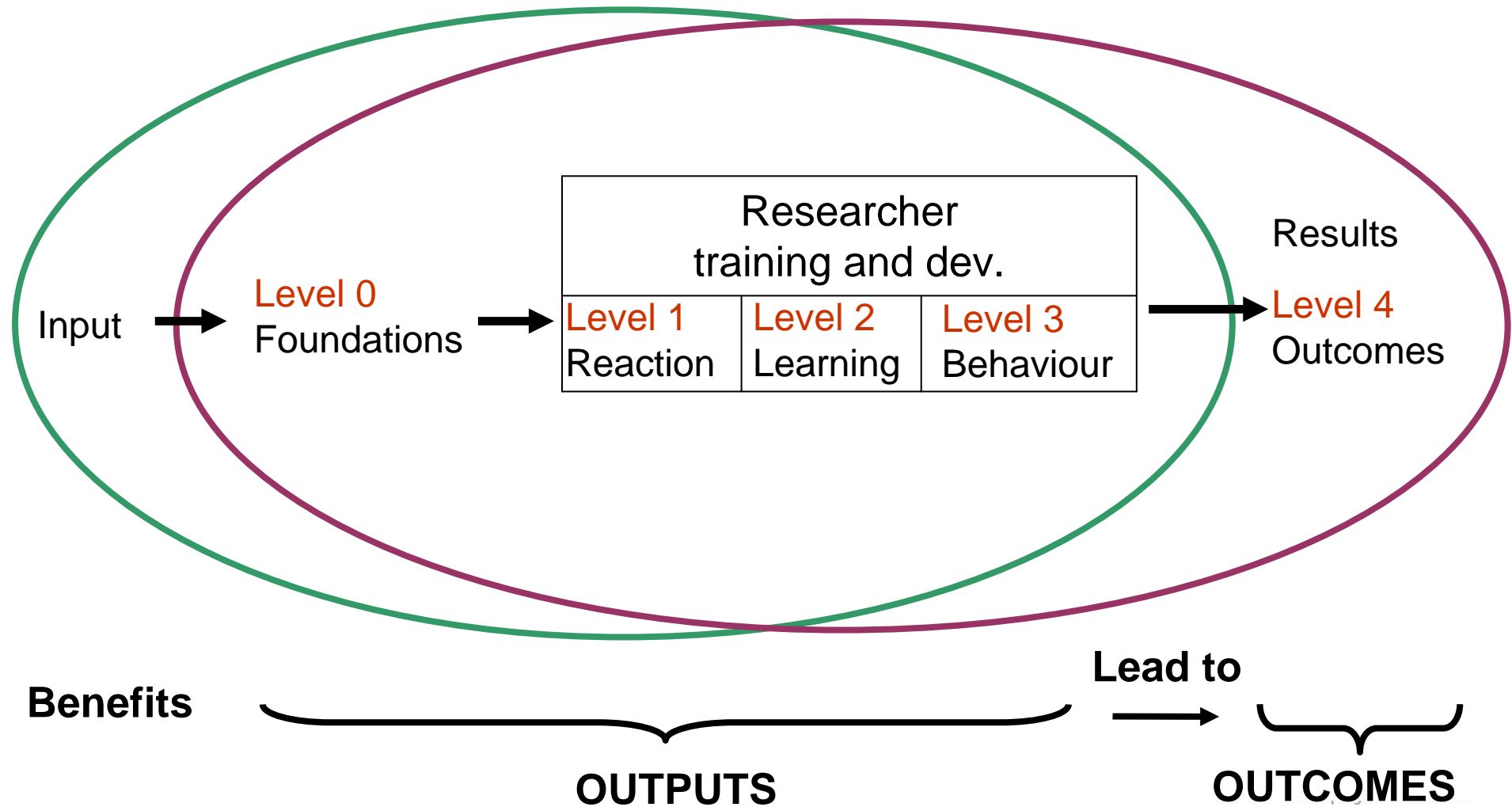
Questions

1. What are the potential benefits?
2. How do we evaluate them?

Pathway approach - IMPACT levels (levels 0 - 4)

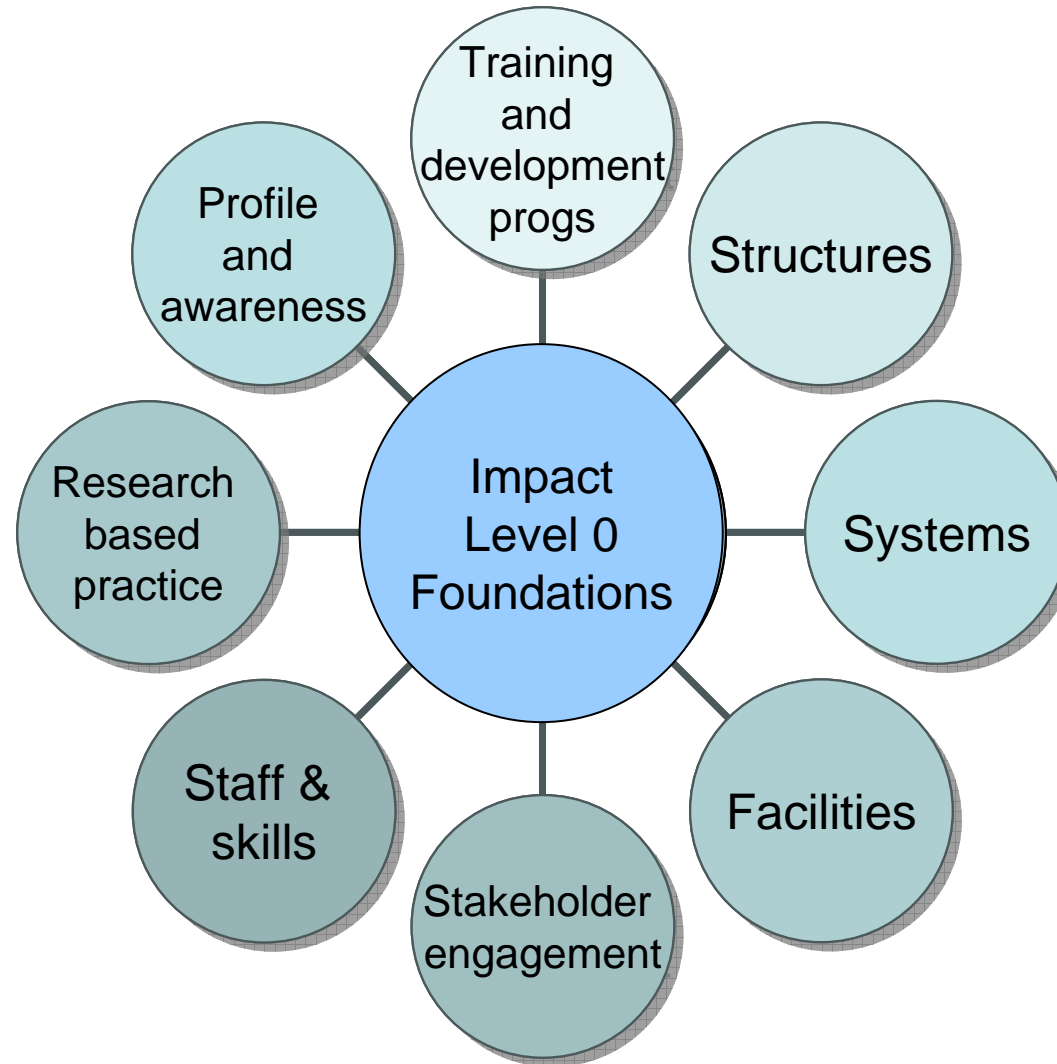
Cause

Effect



IMPACT Level 0 Foundations

Investment that leads to development of infrastructure for training and development activities



IMPACT level 1 Reaction

Reaction to any aspect of provision and/or the framework

- Reaction of participants to training and development activities
 - E.g. their view of a particular workshop, or of the programme as a whole

Evaluation possibilities

‘Happy Sheets’, PRES

IMPACT level 2 and 3 Learning and Behaviour

Impact Level 2 Learning

- Extent to which participants change attitude, improve knowledge, and/or increase skill as a result of attending the programme

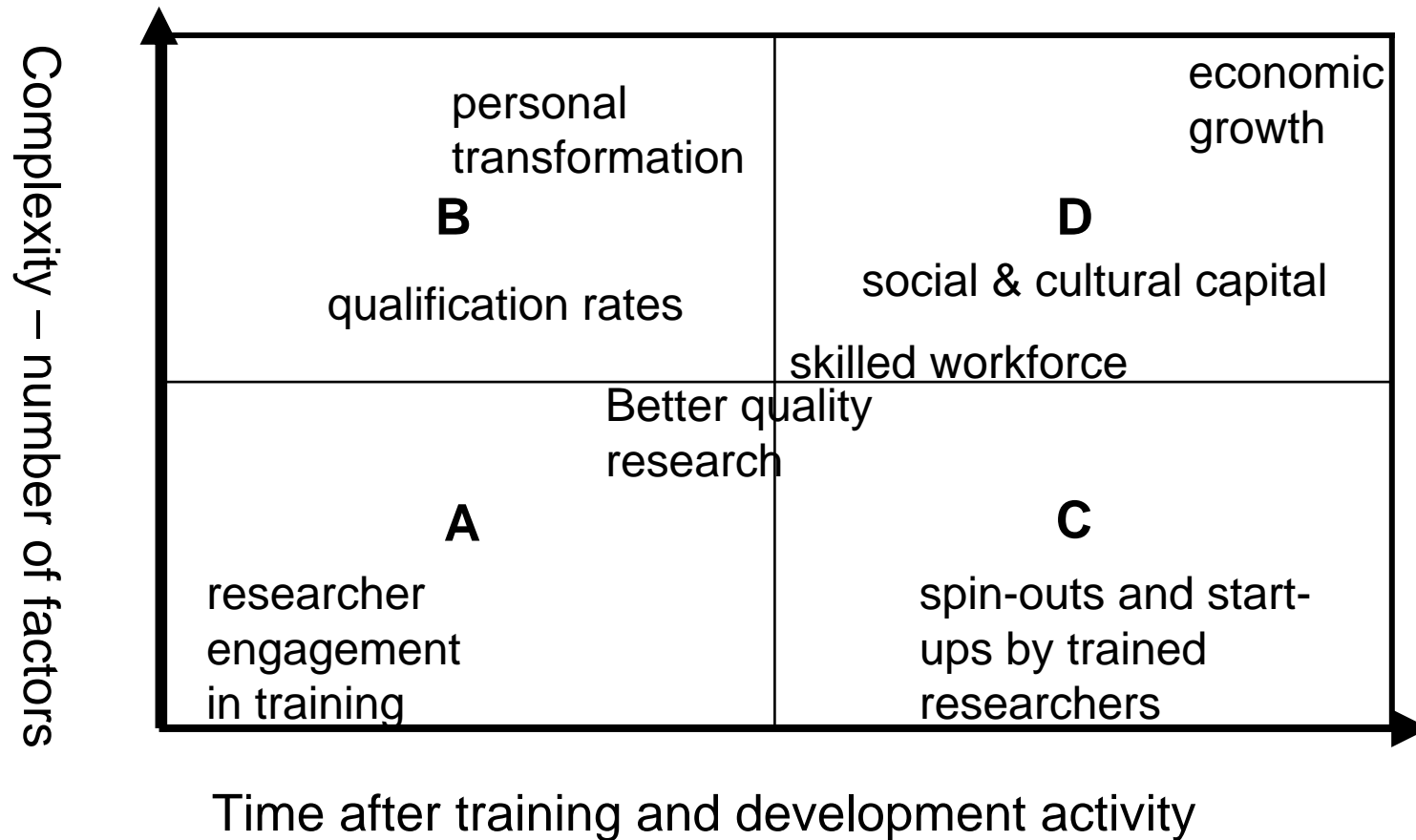
Impact Level 3 Behaviour

- Extent to which participants change behaviour as a result of attending the programme

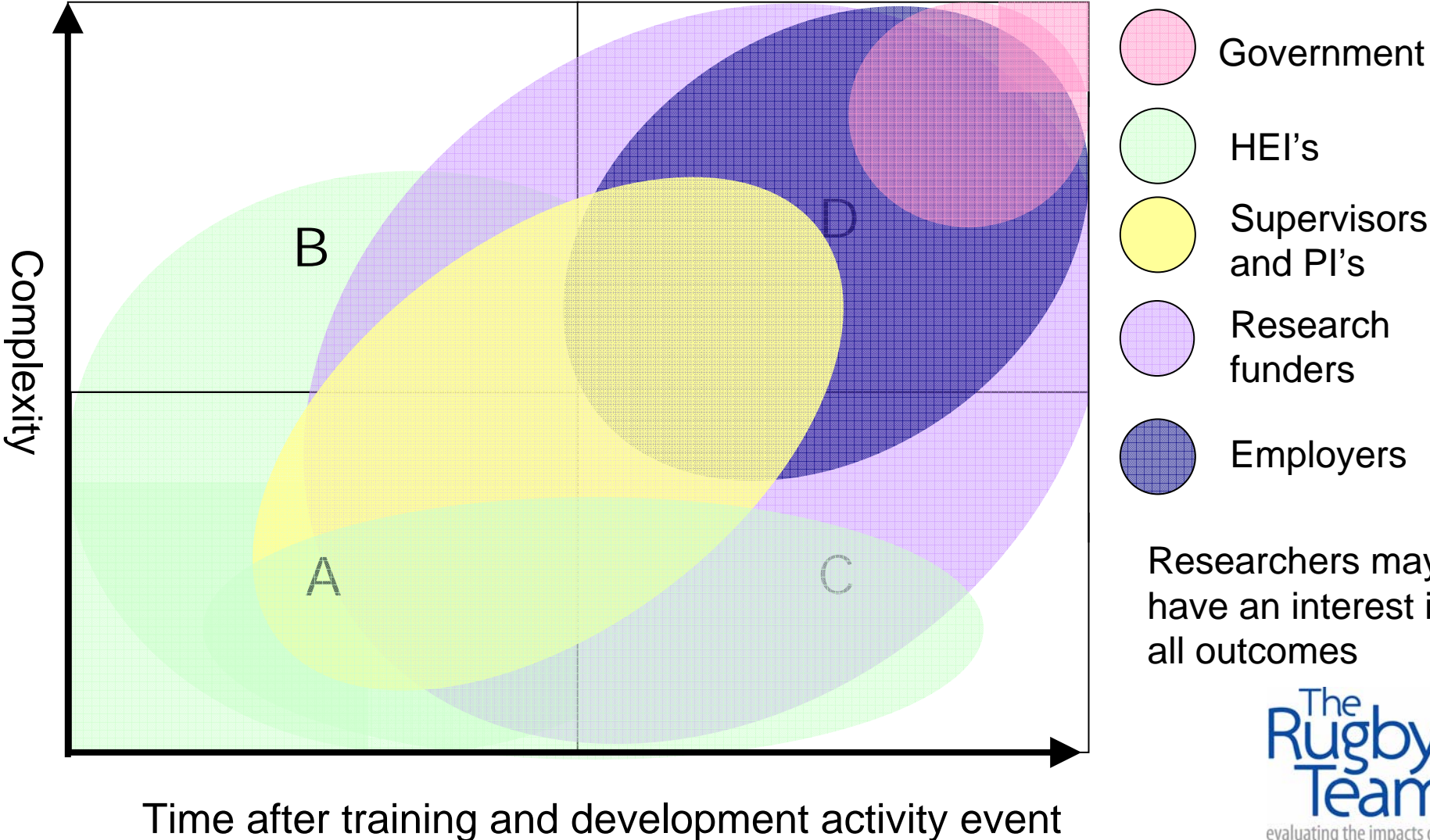
Framework – Competence Models

- Joint Skills Statement – Learning
- Behavioural Indicators - Behaviours

IMPACT Level 4 - Potential outcomes - Final results of the training and development activity



IMPACT Level 4 Outcomes – stakeholder interest



Next steps

- Prioritise areas to focus evaluation effort
- Gap analysis of the Impact Framework by mapping current ongoing evaluation practice against the framework
- Prioritise the findings of the gap analysis and explore possibilities for addressing identified gaps
- Develop a greater understanding of ongoing evaluation across the sector, e.g. by further sector contributions to the evaluation section of the UK GRAD Database of Practice
- Nurture and support academic research into effective evaluation of the impact of researcher training and development activity