

Every Researcher Counts

Resource C

Using the Vitae Research Development Framework

C1 – Programme leader's manual

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As institutions review their policies to support a diverse research workforce, this may open up opportunities for research staff to benefit more from practices such as flexible working, career breaks and increased support with issues such as working with a disability and working in a second language. The provision of these resources can contribute to training Principal Investigators (PIs) in the diversity and equality principle of the Concordat (Principle 6), encouraging them to work with a diverse range of researcher staff within their group, where every researcher counts.

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This session requires you to have copies of the Researcher Development Framework available for participants to use, downloadable from www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

Overview of the programme

This programme is one of three workshops in the series Every Researcher Counts, supporting the understanding of equality and diversity issues amongst those who manage research staff within higher education institutions (HEIs).

The series includes.

Resource A – Team management: important conversations

Resource B – Career Conversations

Resource C – Using the Vitae Researcher Development Framework

The materials for each workshop are separate and standalone. They can be used to run one workshop or a series of three workshops and can be incorporated into other, longer, programmes for principal investigator development.

Why should participants come on this course? What's in it for them?

This course is aimed at existing (or potential) principal investigators with responsibility for the management of research grants and research staff. The reasons for attending are to:

- raise awareness of equality and diversity requirements in their role
- have the opportunity to discuss equality and diversity issues in the context of managing their teams
- share people management good practice with peers
- prepare for and enable discussions with research staff about wider work issues.

This course has been designed to help principal investigators navigate their responsibilities towards their research staff with regard to equality and diversity. More generally, the course is part of the overall development of the principal investigator as a manager of others, looking at the attendant responsibilities and opportunities of the role.

Participants are likely to be extremely busy individuals so every activity chosen needs to be engaging and worthwhile. In order to tailor this material to their needs, you need to have a broad understanding of the daily life of a principal investigator in the specific institutional setting.

Learning objectives

There are three learning objectives from this session:

- Building awareness of the different needs of different individuals in relation to equality and diversity issues
- Understanding the elements of equality and diversity in practice
- Using the Researcher Development Framework for conversations

concerning development for individual researchers

Programme outline

This is a 60 minute workshop comprising three sections. It is designed for a group of 12-24 participants, working in smaller groups of three to six people.

The three sessions cover the following themes:

- What is the Researcher Development Framework?
- Thinking practically.
- What can I be doing in my group or team to enhance the development of the researchers I am responsible for, using the Researcher Development Framework?

Resources

Paper and pen for each participant

Flipchart stand, minimum of one, and ideally one flipchart stand per four participants

Flipchart paper

Flipchart pens x 12

Handouts C2

One copy of the Researcher Development Statement per person.

One copy of the Researcher Development Framework per person.

(Both available to download from www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf)

Copies of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers may be an optional extra to hand out to participants, although they are not essential (www.researchconcordat.ac.uk).

Room and layout

Room

A room that will:

- comfortably take the number of participants when seated in cabaret style, roughly double the space required for lecture style
- permit flexible working – pairs, fours, sixes, the whole course.

Layout

When participants arrive:

- tables with four to six chairs, to encourage discussion as people arrive.

During the course:

- ideally a very large room with fixed or heavy tables, or a smaller room with movable tables.

Timetable

Timings are indicative and can be changed by the programme leader to accommodate participant learning.

Programme aim:

To provide participants with an overview of equality and diversity issues involved in managing research staff and to examine ways in which the Researcher Development Framework can be used by both principal investigators and researchers to manage their development as individuals

TIME	ACTIVITY	FORMAT	CONTENT
Pre-course	Programme leader preparation		
Prior to T0	Participant arrival Tea and coffee available (as appropriate to the institution)		
T0 – T20	Introduction to the session	Plenary pairs	Personal Introductions. Setting the context. 'What do I need to consider?' activity.
T20 – T40	What is the Researcher Development Framework?	Four groups of two to six people	Read. Digest. Summarise.
T40 – T55	Researcher Development Framework: equality and diversity – how do the two relate?	Groups of three	Applying it to the research environment activity
T55 – T60	Reflect and plan	Individually and in pairs	An opportunity to reflect on three things: 1. What do I need to be better informed about and do differently? 2. What do I need to do differently in the management of my team/group? 3. How am I going to take this learning back to my work?
T60	Closing the course	Plenary	Recap of the programme and the main learning points.

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Purpose

- To help participants settle in
- To give time for latecomers to join
- To get the course started

Process

- Led by the programme leader
- Discussion activities in pairs

Structure

Outline the purpose of the session 5 minutes

- Welcome and set the scene for what the course is and is not
- Introduce self and establish credibility

Individual introductions in pairs 10 minutes

- Activity: What do I need to consider?

Group debrief 5 minutes

Resources

- No resources required at this stage.

Detail

Outline the purpose of the session 5 minutes

Start the course by introducing yourself and your experience in relation to career development with researchers, equality and diversity.

If you have some statistics from your institution relating to equality and diversity, you could show them as part of your introduction and use them to frame the themes of the course. It would be useful for you to explain your involvement and use of the Researcher Development Framework, particularly if you are from an institution which contributed to its development.

The purpose of the session is to meet with other principal investigators in a similar situation, to discuss a range of issues related to helping research staff to develop their capabilities and skills in an environment that supports equality and diversity amongst its permanent and contract employees.

Reinforce the confidential nature of the discussions that you might have over the next 60 minutes.

Individual introductions and first activity 10 minutes

You may have a preference for introductions, otherwise ask participants to introduce themselves to each other at the start of each new group activity or, depending upon the group size, as the whole group to introduce themselves at the start of the activity. Whichever method of introduction you prefer, ask the group to split into pairs to undertake the first activity.

First activity: What do I need to consider?

Ask each participant to take three to four minutes to think about their own experience of managing and developing others and to make a written list of the areas they need to consider when thinking about the development of a member of their team. The brief for this needs to be clear that this is about the broad areas of personal development (suggested list in the debrief section below) rather than a description of the individuals within their team.

For a further five to six minutes ask individuals to pair with another participant and to share the items on their list and have a brief discussion about their experience of developing others.

Debrief 5 minutes

Capture examples from the discussion on a flipchart to refer to later in the process. The list may include (but is not exhaustive):

- How much development the individual has had so far in their career and how they have managed it
- The individual's development needs to do this job and prepare them for future roles
- The needs of individuals depending upon the stage they are in their career and their previous experience
- How a discussion about development is facilitated and where it sits within the work-based conversations principal investigators have with their team
- The range of ways in which skills can be developed
- The timing and length of training courses available within the institution and how this provision fits with the individual's and the team's needs
- The accessibility of training and development for the individual
- How an individual might make best use of what is on offer within the institution

Session 2: What is the Vitae Researcher Development Framework?

(20 minutes)

Purpose

The aim of this session is to provide the group with (greater) familiarity of the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and think about the practical applications.

Process

Led by the programme leader.

Participants work in small groups.

After a brief introduction (supported by Vitae researcher development material), participants work in groups of four to summarise different parts of the Researcher Development Framework so that they come up with a briefing 'by principal investigators, for principal investigators' explaining the Researcher Development Framework.

The session ends with each group sharing their outputs.

Structure

Introduction 1 minute

Main discussion in groups 15 minutes

Debrief of activity and draw out learning points 5 minutes

Resources

Researcher Development Statement and Researcher Development Framework (one per person).

Flipchart paper and pens.

Detail

Introduction 1 minute

Introduce the session by handing out a copy of the Researcher Development Statement and highlighting the twelve key areas of the Researcher Development Framework.

You may like to quote from the Researcher Development Framework consultation response:

'The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) has been incorporated into a downloadable professional development tool that enables researchers to identify their development areas, create an action plan and record evidence of their progress.'

www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

And highlight the individual areas:

- Knowledge base (A1)
- Cognitive abilities (A2)
- Creativity (A3)
- Personal qualities (B1)
- Self-management (B2)
- Professional and career development (B3)
- Professional conduct (C1)
- Research management (C2)
- Finance, funding and resources (C3)
- Working with others (D1)
- Communication and dissemination (D2)
- Engagement and impact (D3)

Main discussion in groups 15 minutes

Divide the group up so that they tackle up to three individual sections of the framework and hand out a copy of the Researcher Development Framework.

Give the group up to 15 minutes to read, digest and summarise their sections for the benefit of the rest of the group. Their summary should be one minute long and should summarise their section in 'principal investigator to principal investigator' language.

Debrief of activity and draw out learning points 5 minutes

Ask each group to present their summary. Field any questions that arise, or record to answer at a later stage.

Highlight the key points after each summary.

This might be the first time participants have seen the Researcher Development Framework so it may feel like a large task to do in the time available and you may want to extend this session to allow for a longer time spent directly on this section.

Mention further links and resources available at your institution which make the Researcher Development Framework institution-specific or aimed particularly at principal investigator audiences.

What you are looking for from this session is for participants to gain a broad overview of:

- the Vitae Researcher Development Framework
- the places where principal investigators can go to find out more information to be able to use with their research staff
- the importance of the Researcher Development Framework for holistic researcher development.

This is the first of two activities in this workshop that uses the Researcher Development Framework so there will be an opportunity to revisit it in the context of researcher development in the next section.

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Session 3: Researcher Development Framework: equality and diversity – how do the two relate?

(15 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this short session is to encourage participants to think about how they would apply the Researcher Development Framework in a diverse environment. It is a taster session considering both the Researcher Development Framework and the issues of equality and diversity.

Process

Led by the programme leader this session allows for discussion between participants around practical application of the Researcher Development Framework.

Participants work in groups of three to share their experiences and plans for a case study individual (handout C2). It may be useful to refer to the flipchart you created from the debrief to activity 1 (What do I need to consider?)

The session ends with each group sharing their outputs and a short debrief.

Structure

Introduction 1 minute

Main discussion in groups 9 minutes

Debrief 5 minutes

Resources

Researcher Development Statement and Researcher Development Framework (one per person). Flipchart paper and pens.

Detail

Introduction 1 minute

Set the scene for this activity and then let participants develop their discussions.

This is where the issues and thoughts raised by a wider understanding of diversity can be combined with the framework available for development of all research staff within academia. Ensure that participants understand that it is this combination of aims and objectives that is central to this session and that they should think as widely as possible regarding individual development.

Main discussion in groups: applying it to the research environment 9 minutes

Ask participants to work in groups of three and (as appropriate) mix the groups up to increase participants' experience of working with each other.

Provide each group with one case study (handout C2) and ask them to consider what a development plan for this individual may include and the wider considerations regarding development they may need to think about. This is a short and high-level discussion and it is recognised that participants don't have significant information about the individual; the case study is stimulus material for discussion and wider thinking.

More than one group can work on each case study depending upon the number of participants or other additional case studies can be used (see notes below).

Each group's development plan for the researcher(s) should be summarised on one piece of flipchart paper.

Summary of case studies

Case study 1

Carolyn is in her first postdoctoral position in your team. She was born with hypermobility in all of her limbs and her muscle development took longer as a child and young adult. In her working life she needs to allow longer times to develop written documents and needs to limit time spent at the keyboard.

Case Study 3

Tim has returned to work in your team after a five year career break as a full-time carer to his two sons. He is covering the maternity leave of another member of your team and works 22 hours per week between Monday and Thursday.

Case Study 2

Em is a 43 year-old research assistant in your team. He is completing his doctorate part-time and has worked flexibly over the last four years to be able to manage work and the doctorate. He is currently in his final year and starting to prepare his thesis.

Case study 4

Naomi is in her second postdoctoral position in your team. You are aware that she has bipolar disorder. She has openly disclosed this to you and you are aware that she shared it with a group she was working with on a recent residential course. She manages her condition through a mixture of medication, therapy, careful lifestyle management and the support of her family.

Session 3: Researcher Development Framework: equality and diversity – how do the two relate?

(15 minutes)

Key things to think about:

- These four case studies are provided for use during this activity but they can also be used for guidance/as an example to write institution specific examples that you feel better suit the needs of the participants. Alternatively, any case study from the 'Don't put me in a box' resource (Resource D) could be used instead or to supplement these cases.
- The four case studies cover limited examples of diversity protected characteristics:
 - Physical Disability/impairment
 - Mental Health
 - Gender
 - Flexible working/return to work after parental leave
- It may be necessary/appropriate to use different examples/case studies if the participants want to discuss or need to consider/learn about using the Researcher Development Framework in your institution in different situations.
- Participants may discuss individuals that they manage or know in the context of this exercise and it is useful to remind the group about the confidential nature of such discussions.
- You may be called on to provide expertise in equality and diversity issues and in how the Researcher Development Framework can be applied; you may want to push a certain group to think about the equality and diversity issues involved for a particular individual if the group is focusing on other issues; or you may need to help groups in getting started.
- Emphasise the Every Researcher Counts element of using the Researcher Development Framework.
- Assist the groups in developing plans as participants may have limited experience in managing the development of researcher staff in their teams.

Debrief of activity and draw out learning points 5 minutes

Gather back into one larger group and ask each group of six to feed back their learning points to the whole group in one minute.

Ask the group to comment on each other's development plans and to consider the range of development opportunities available within the institution. This might be a good opportunity to illustrate where in the institution principal investigators might go to for helping knowing what is available and the different modes of delivery for training and development.

Use the opportunity to emphasise that:

- managing diversity means being able to consider individual needs and differences and that all research staff are entitled to development
- development does not have to mean relying solely on training courses or attendance at physical conferences. One to one teaching/coaching within the workplace, peer mentoring, providing new work related opportunities with support for learning and feedback and virtual or e-learning opportunities can all contribute to an individual's overall development
- the Researcher Development Framework is a tool that becomes easier to use with greater familiarity. This session is about equality and diversity and the Researcher Development Framework and is adding another dimension to it, rather than being a training course directly about using the Researcher Development Framework with researchers.

Session 4: Action planning

(5 minutes)

This part of the course provides participants with the opportunity to consider the 'so what?' part of the training.

Ask participants to work individually or in pairs to think about and write down for themselves three actions that they would like to implement from the course in the next four weeks.

The actions should be specific with an anticipated outcome and should be time-bound to complete within one day, one week or one month of the course.

Emphasise the need to write the actions down so that they become a reality and suggest that participants work in pairs to exchange details of their goals and to reinforce them as practical next steps.

Three questions to stimulate action planning are:

1. What do I need to be better informed about in relation to the researcher development framework in my environment?
2. What do I need to do differently in the management of my team and group – particularly relating to their development?
3. How am I going to take this learning back to my work?

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Closing the course

Bring the course to a close by recapping the main themes of the session:

- What is the Researcher Development Framework for?
- How can principal investigators contribute to the development of their research staff careers by use of the Researcher Development Framework?
- What equality and diversity issues do they need to keep in mind when using the Researcher Development Framework?

Additionally, summarise a few of the key points from the discussions, pointing participants in the direction of the institution's equality and diversity resources and those from Vitae. www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf