



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow

MPhil Professional Development

Your Professional Development

As an MPhil student, you will need to gain 20 credits of professional development training before graduation.

Professional and personal development is a fundamental part of your experience as a postgraduate researcher at Strathclyde.

Your professional development will provide you with core skills to undertake your research and can help you meet your future career aspirations. Whether you need to learn about protocols in managing research data in the open access world or you want to establish yourself as a leader of a project or group you should be looking for opportunities to learn and develop the skills to achieve your ambitions.



Planning your professional development



With so many opportunities in front of you, it can be difficult to know where to start. Knowing where you are going is half the battle in finding some focus. Think about your research project but also think about your life beyond your research degree – where do you want to be, what do you want to do when you are there? Planning how you will get there will make the journey smoother and the first step is a training needs analysis (TNA).

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF)*, developed by Universities and research stakeholders across the UK, sets out the skills, knowledge and behaviours of a successful researcher and you can use this to identify areas for training and development. Use the TNA to identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours you want to gain during your studies:

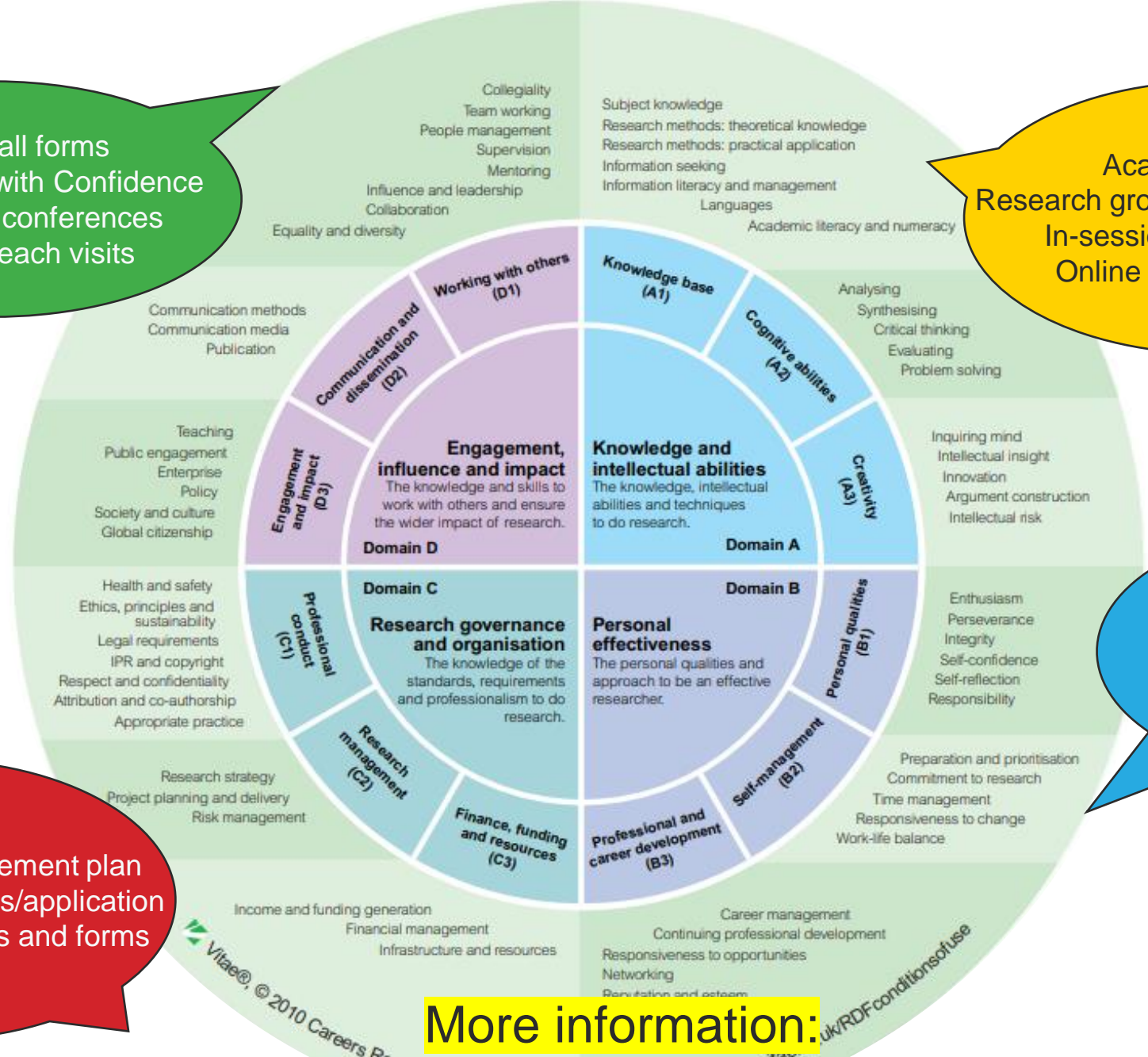
https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/documents/PGCertRPD_training_needs_analysis.xlsx

Writing – all forms
 Communicating with Confidence
 Presenting at conferences
 School/outreach visits

Academic writing
 Research group meeting attendance
 In-sessional English class
 Online software courses

Training needs analysis
 Induction attendance
 Time management

Research data management plan
 Ethics & integrity courses/application
 Health & safety courses and forms



More information:

www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/

Your development

Anything you can extract meaningful learning from can count towards your credits. Activities can fall into three categories:

Informal activities

With a defined structure and content, but no formal examination. Can be offered by any provider within the University, or any external provider. Examples include:

- a workshop delivered through the Researcher Development Programme
- participation in a faculty research presentation day
- engagement with a departmental seminar series

Formal activities

A postgraduate taught class offered by your department.

Experiential activities

Any other activities you do that enhance your professional skill set, is an experiential activity. Examples include: conference attendance, public engagement, committee membership, and the list goes on!



Recording your development



You are required to record your development activities in the PGR monitoring system - either Neptune or Spider, depending on your department - by uploading evidence and recording credits into class RD906. User guides* for Neptune and Spider give you a step-by-step process for recording activities.

Neptune student guide: https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/documentation/PGCertRPD_NEPTUNE_guide.pdf

Spider student guide: https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/documentation/PGCertRPD_SPIDER_guide.pdf

*Please note, these guides make reference to the PG Cert RPD, this can be ignored, the process remains the same and you will be recording all activities in the RD906 class.

Evidence

The portfolio of evidence is your way of demonstrating that you undertook the development activities - attendance records, completion certificates, academic transcripts, copies of posters or presentations email chains, etc. are all valid evidence.

Ask yourself: does my evidence show that I was involved, and how long I was involved for? If the answer is yes, it's good enough!

Credits

For credits, the basic rule is that 1 credit equals 10 hours of active engagement, or 1 full working day. This includes and preparation or follow-up time, and time spent practicing or implementing something learned from the activity. If you do activities that are less than 1 day/10 hours, you can combine them with other similar activities to make up a minimum of 1 credit.

Assessing your development



Once you have 20 credits recorded, you will complete an assessment in the form of a reflective essay. The assessment submission page will only become available once you have recorded the required number of credits in RD906. This page has full instructions and the assessment criteria.

The reflective essay should take the reader through your development journey, from your training needs analysis to how you have put what you learned into practice. You should also consider how you can translate from the specifics of what you have learned to a general learning approach that you can apply to any situation.

When it comes to reflecting on your professional development journey, we recommend using this suite of materials to guide you: <https://libguides.hull.ac.uk/reflectivewriting/index>

You can contact us by email or come to a drop-in session to speak to the team about identifying your skills and training needs, planning your professional development and how to make the most of your activities.

Email: pgcertrpd-enquiry@strath.ac.uk

Weekly Drop In Sessions via Zoom:
<https://bookings.strath.ac.uk/Home/Course/5312>