

RCSI StEP Project



Thriving in Research Careers: A Strength-Based Career Development Plan for Postgraduate Scholars

Jennifer Donnelly (PhD Scholar)

Bess McBride (School of Postgraduate Studies)



RCSI
UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

- As a PhD scholar, developing your career can be an isolating process!
- Identifying our strengths, and utilising them can lead to increase productivity, decrease burn out, and promote wellbeing and belonging in our careers.



- Having guidelines on a career development pathway may aid scholars with navigating this process
- This can also benefit supervisors, and reviewers, as we will have a **shared language** in how and what we want to develop (annual review process)
- Promotes awareness, which can improve wellbeing and belonging within the RCSI, and beyond.



The Process:



- Benchmark against other universities (Dublin City University, Technological University Dublin, Glasgow Caledonian University and Oxford University)
- Design a PDP template
- Articulate a plan for rolling out the PDP

Benchmarking

What do other universities do?

What resources do we already have?



RCSI STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT
+ PARTNERSHIP



The Vitae Researcher Development Framework



RCSI
UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

VIA Classification of Character Strengths

www.viacharacter.org



Creativity



Curiosity



Judgement



Perspective



Bravery



Perseverance



Zest



Honesty



Social Intelligence



Kindness



Love



Leadership



Fairness



Teamwork



Forgiveness



Love of Learning



Gratitude



Spirituality



Self-Regulation



Humility



Appreciation
of Beauty



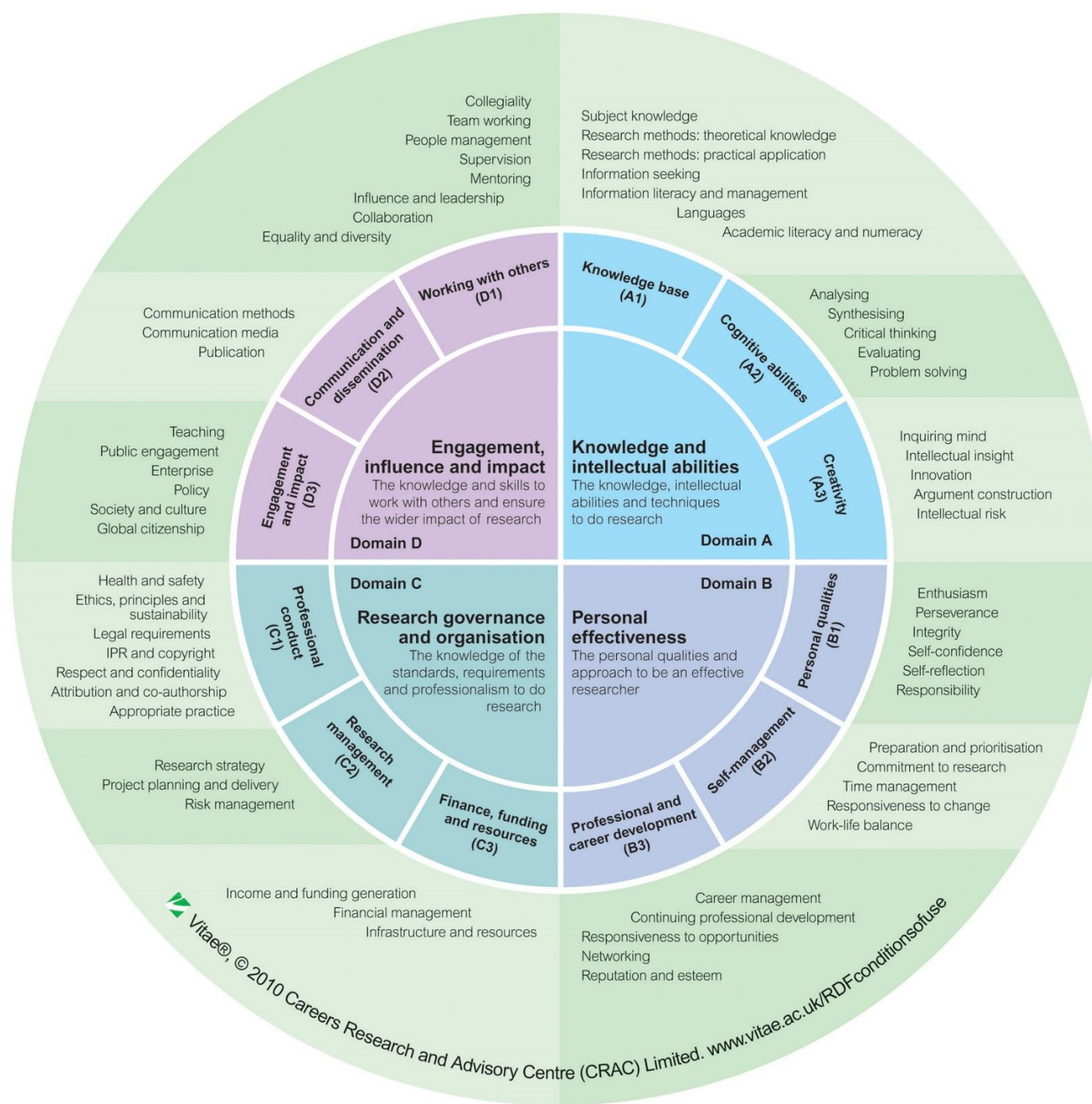
Prudence



Hope



Humor





RCSI STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT
+ PARTNERSHIP



RCSI
UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES



RCSI

Post Graduate Scholar Career Development Plan

Name: _____

Character Strengths and Learning Styles

Character Strengths have been developed from the discipline of Social Sciences. They are considered to be positive parts of our personality that everyone has, to varying degrees. When a person is utilizing and developing their character strengths, research suggests they will experience increased wellbeing, personal growth and a sense of fulfillment. For this reason, we consider identifying character strengths an important first step in a Career Development Plan.

Identify your own character strengths using the link below. This free survey takes approx. 10 minutes to complete and identifies 24 character strengths. Your top 5 are called *Signature Strengths* and your bottom 5 are called *Lesser Strengths*. Everything in between is called *Middle Strengths*!

<https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths>

Having identified your Signature Strengths and Lesser Strengths, you can use the sample table below to explore how they can play a role in enhancing your academic career development.

Example:

My strengths	How can I better develop this strength
Signature Strength: Love of learning	Signature Strength: Continue to expand my research, and attend conferences where I can learn about different subjects in my field.
Lesser Strength: Persistence	Lesser Strength: Be wary of this when things get difficult, and reach out to people who I trust for support and motivation to continue with projects.



The Wheel above is a visual representation of the VIA Character Strengths. To learn more about the science of character strengths, you may refer to <https://www.viacharacter.org/character-strengths-via>



Key messages:

- Combining our key strengths which actionable skills acquisition can aid in the development of a fulfilling career.
- A strength based approach can promote wellbeing, and belonging within the university, and into the world of academia.





RCSI STUDENT
ENGAGEMENT
+ PARTNERSHIP

Thank you for listening!



RCSI
UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES