Enhancing the capacity of early career researchers to deliver impact

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Presentation

- Early career researchers and impacts
- Enhancing capacity:
  - The Researcher Development Framework
  - Concordat implementation
    - Career development
    - Leadership
- Discussion: challenges and opportunities in building capacity

Vitae vision and aims

The UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers

Policy and strategy

- Build human capital by influencing the development and implementation of effective policy relating to researcher development

Implementation

- Enhance higher education provision to train and develop researchers

Engagement

- Empower researchers to make an impact in their careers

Evidence

- Evidence the impact of professional and career development for researchers

Early career researchers

REF

- Independent researchers, started careers on/after 1 August 2009
  - 0.2 FTE contract, primary function undertaking research/teaching and research
  - Leading or acting as PI (or equivalent)

European

- A researcher whose career spans less than 10 years (including doctoral programme)

REF environment

People: staffing strategy and staff development

- evidence of how the staffing strategy relates to the unit's research strategy and physical infrastructure
- implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers
- evidence of how the submitting unit supports equalities and diversity
- sustainable staff structure
- arrangements for the effective development and support of the research work of staff
- a description of how the unit has been developing the research of early career researchers and support for integrating them into a wider, supportive research culture
- research career development of both non-clinical and clinical researchers

People: research students:

- effective and sustainable doctoral research training
- evidence of a strong and integrated research student culture
- evidence of CASE awards and application of technology generated by research students.

Impacts

REF: Impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia

- Impact **includes**, but is not limited to, an effect on, change or benefit to:
- the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
- of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals
- in any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

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Impacts

RCUK Pathways to impact:

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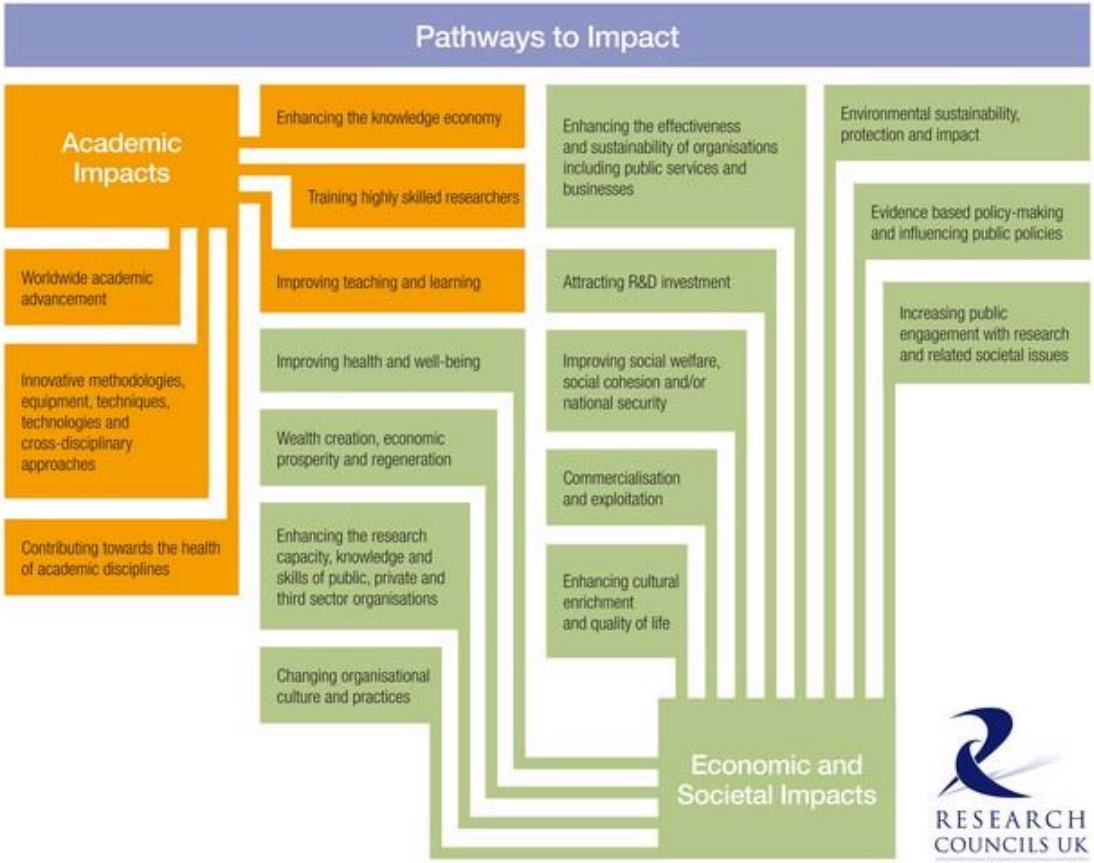

Equipping doctoral researchers and research staff to deliver impact

- **Research outcomes**
- **Employability outcomes**
- **Engaging with the public**
- **Enhancing knowledge exchange**
- **Evidence based policy**
- **Commercialisation and exploitation**
- **Innovation**
- **Attractive research base**

- the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding

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PIRLS 2011

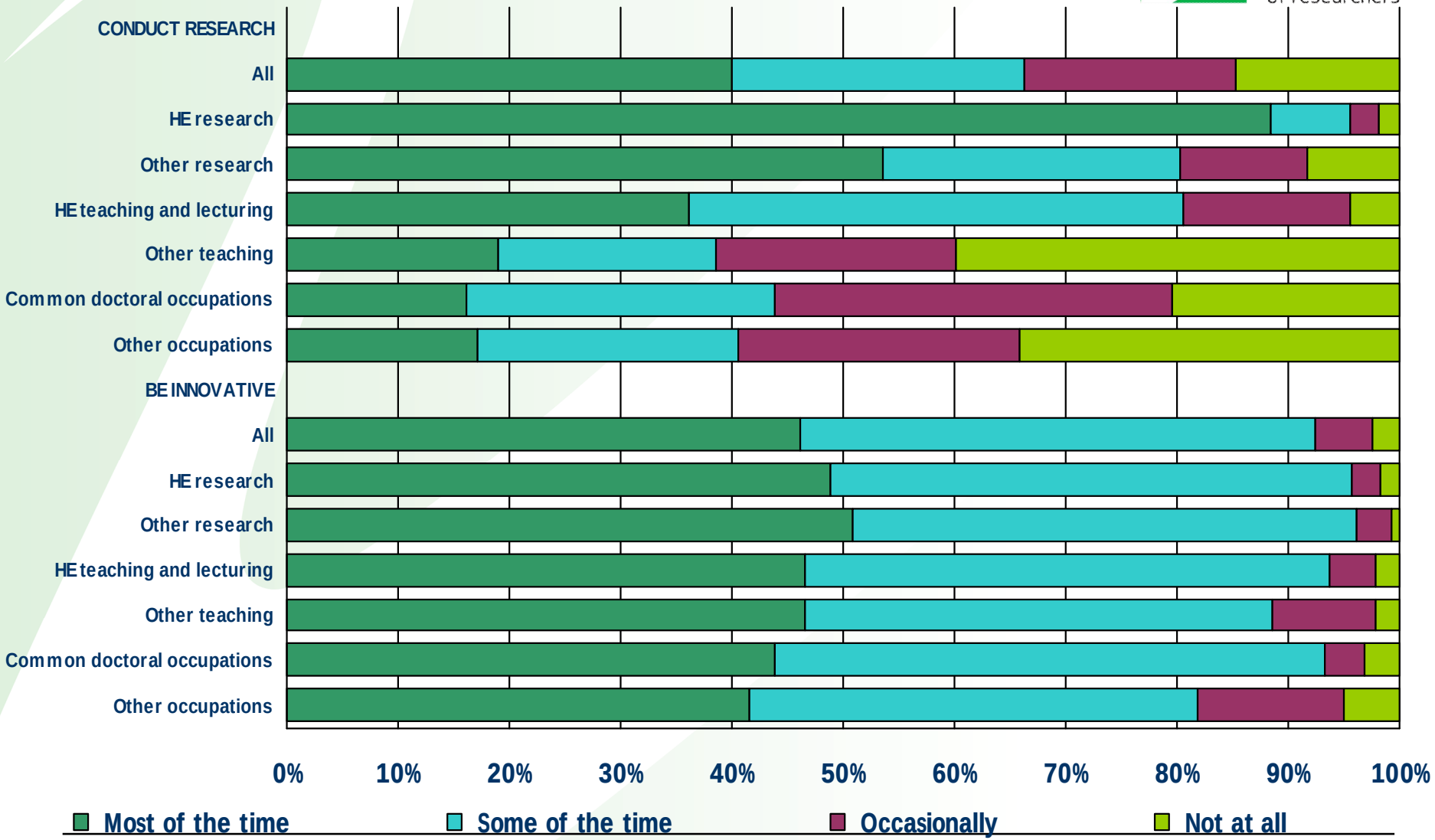
- Targeted at those:
  "principally responsible for setting the intellectual direction of the research and personally responsible for the management/ supervision of research staff and/or postgraduate researchers"
- Parallel online surveys by HEIs in May-June 2011, using core question set
- Guided by CROS/PIRLS Steering Group
- 33 institutions, 2500+ responses

Research experience/skills

	Confident %	Would like to be more %	Satisfied with support %
Demonstrating impact	55	44	57
*Participation in CPD**	*54*	*26*	*57*
Public engagement	47	47	55
External collaborations	47	45	50
Knowledge exchange	46	47	58
Securing funding	54	26	57

* *21% "not relevant"*

Conducting research and being innovative in the workplace



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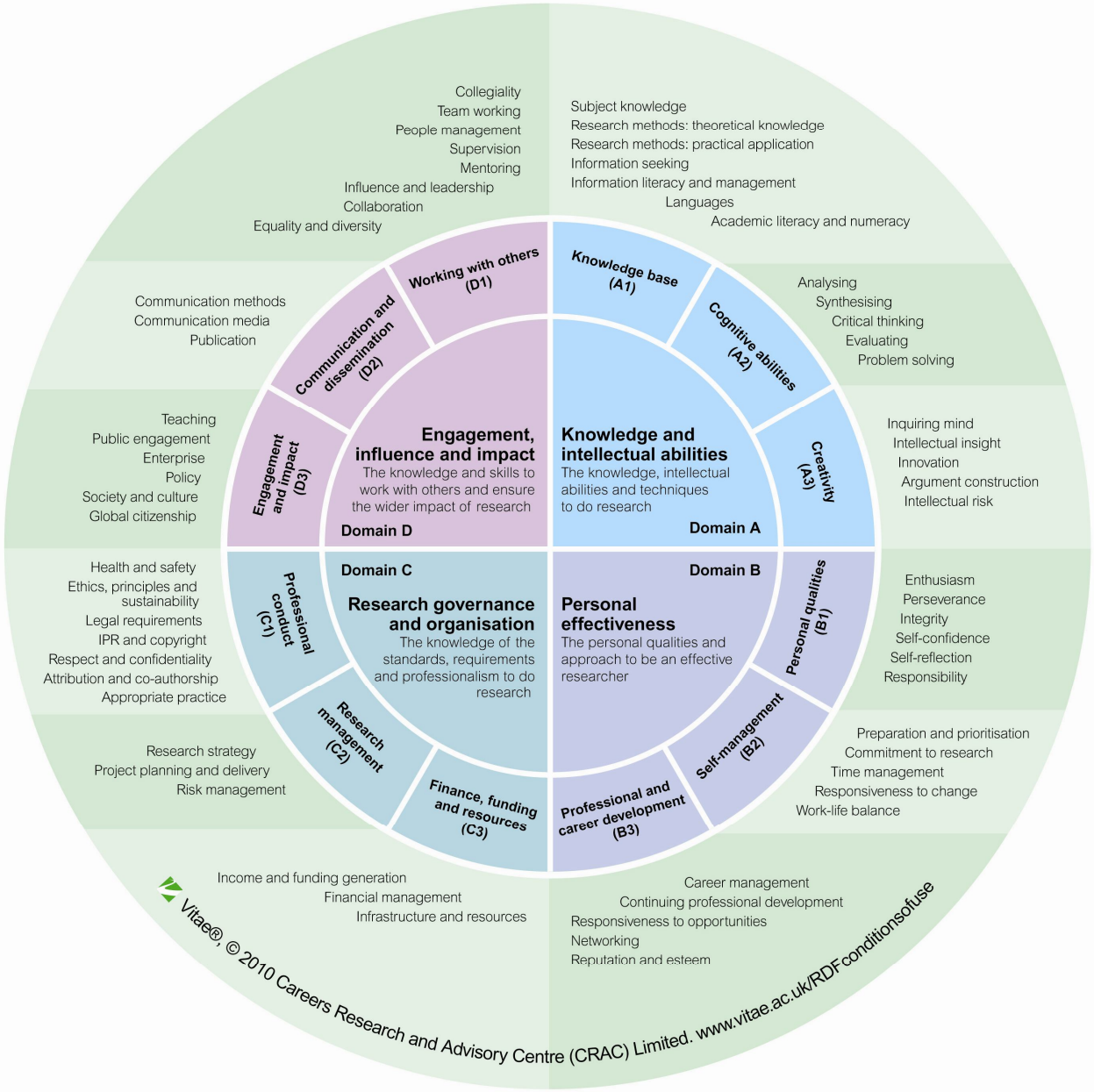
The new UK Researcher Development Framework

- The UK professional development framework to realise the potential of researchers to:
  - build and strengthen the UK research base
  - develop world-class researchers
- Knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers
- Common framework across institutions in the UK
- Universal language for understanding researcher capabilities
- Developed by researchers for researchers



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realising the potential of researchers

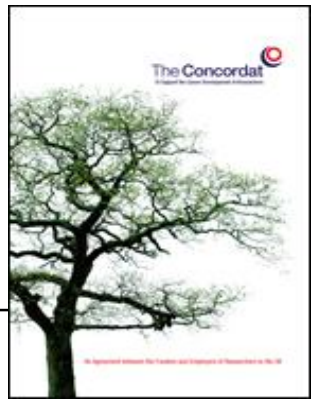
The UK Researcher Development Framework

- 4 domains
- 12 sub-domains
- 63 descriptors

Strategies to build capacity

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

- The future for researcher careers in universities
- Sets out expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders
- 7 key principles for support and management of research careers
- Endorsed by Universities UK, Research Councils and other stakeholders
- Consistent with EC Charter and Code
- Increase attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK
- Improve quantity, quality and impact of research
- Benefit of UK society and the economy.



Strategies to build capacity

- Concordat implementation linked to EC HR strategy
- Institutions undertake gap analysis and commit to implementation strategy and plans to gain HR Excellence in Research award
- Coordinated timescales for Concordat and HR Excellence in Research award
  - HEI survey in 2012/13
  - External evaluation 2014/15
  - Researcher surveys to run 2011 and 2013
    - Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS)
    - Principle Investigator and Research Leaders survey (PIRLS)

Recognition and value:

Undertake reviews and appraisal

All eligible should have regular review/appraisal – which most should report as useful; should address work practices and problem-solving

Q20&21. …have you participated in staff appraisal/review?

55% have had appraisal in last 2 years [2009: 50%]

Higher amongst those with open-ended contract (75% vs. 49% FTC); also higher (65%) for those not *on first contract*

Some improvement in usefulness (i.e. some aspects):

63% found it useful overall	[2009: 62%]
58% useful for career development	[50%]
36% led to changed work practices	[32%]
51% to highlight issues	[48%]

NB. 20% [23%] still claim not invited to appraisal/review ✓✓

Recommendations – Support /career development

(Even) more RS feel encouraged to engage, but no increase in formal career plans or PDPs. Little evidence for change in demand for CPD or take-up:

- Recommend HEIs consider how to foster more engagement with careers advisors and staff developers
- Recommend using RDF planner to record development

No progress on uptake of placement/secondment opportunities – there is still very limited availability:

- Recommend exploration of how to increase opportunities, in line with recent initiatives for postgraduate researchers

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers

vitae realising the potential of researchers

Preparing future research leaders: important (but not very)

	Very important %	Quite important %	Not very or not at all %
Demonstrating impact	47	41	11
Managing performance	44	46	8
Collaborations outside HE	31	44	22
Knowledge exchange	25	48	23
Budget management	21	57	20

PIRLS 2011

Preparing future research leaders: least important

	Very important %	Quite important %	Not very or not at all %
Participating in CPD	14	41	41
Induction, probation and appraisal	14	49	35
Conditions of employment for RS	22	46	29
Providing career development advice	21	53	25
Public engagement and outreach	21	50	27

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Importance for RS

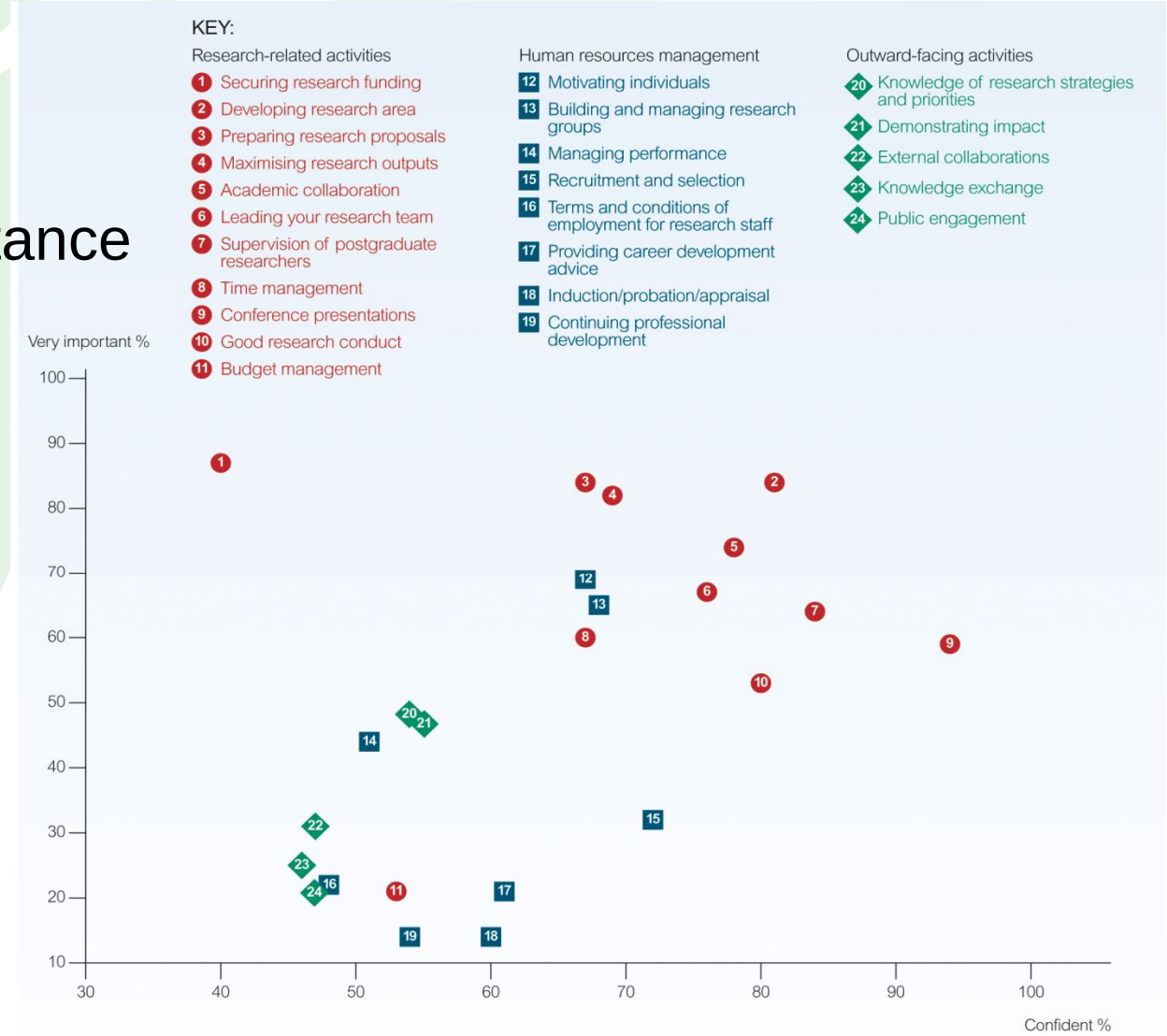

Figure 3 Respondents' perception of importance of activities and functions for development of research leaders, against their own confidence in those activities

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PI/RL confidence

Challenges/opportunities

- Building capability in domain 4 of RDF
  - Increasing the importance to PIs of appraising/developing researchers, building the ‘people management’ capacity
  - Increasing understanding of the impact agenda
  - Public engagement
  - Engaging and preparing future leaders
  - Enterprise
  - Policy

- Better tracking of employment outcomes