



# REFLECTIONS ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

WHAT DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORK IS APPROPRIATE?

# My context

I was an SL (LJMU) -13 years

FT academic, one foot in practice in HP sport.

Spent 12 years in HE in Professional Services role

FT non-academic in HP sport position

5 years as consultant – fully in practice

Completed a Professional Doctorate

I am now PT SL (UoD, 0.5) – Creating a DProf in S&E

Consultant - supporting DProf in military (NATO)

**Practitioner-Researcher**

# The start point ...

Academic perspectives on L8 thinking are evolving.  
The interface between research and practice is changing.

Motivations for undertaking L8 study are widening as new opportunities emerge.

Professional doctorates attract a different kind of person to engage with L8 study

I did not do a professional doctorate to become a researcher.  
My contemporaries didn't undertake DProfs to enter academia.

## What does the research say ....?

- Gaps in literature around doctoral training and development
- Limited understanding of 'influence and impact' dimensions
- Gaps in understanding the transition of post-docs in to academia and non-academic careers
- Too much reliance on personal knowledge & experience in mentoring of doctoral candidates
- <50% traditional PhD grads continue in academia (Vitae 2016 )

So what of Professional Doctorate candidates?

What are we developing them for and why?

*Bromley & Warnock (2021) Researcher development frameworks*

## Personal experience ...

The only reference point used for my development was the Vitae RDF

Too often there an unchallenged assumption that doctoral study is about 'creating researchers'?

Teaching staff & supervisors often have limited experience or knowledge of being practitioners and/or the practice/research interface.

The student has the best understanding of the world in which they want their 'voice' to be heard

# Framework challenges ...

Sub-domains  
and descriptors

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Phase 4

Phase 5

## A1 Knowledge base

### 1. Subject knowledge

Has, at least, core knowledge and basic understanding of key concepts, issues and history of thought.

Knows of recent advances within own research area and in related areas. (A3)\*

Is working towards making an original contribution to knowledge.

Is developing a broader awareness of international and non-academic aspects of knowledge creation.

Knows of recent advances within their professional area ...

Is developing a broader awareness of professional knowledge in varied contexts

Develops detailed and thorough knowledge/understanding of own and related subject areas – and becomes familiar with associated areas in other disciplines/research areas.

Demonstrates link between own research and real world affairs.

Situates knowledge in international context.

Situates knowledge in a professional context

Situates professional knowledge in an academic context

Stimulates new knowledge; may make outstanding breakthroughs. Considers multiple perspectives.

Has deep and holistic understanding of strategic direction and intellectual developments of discipline/research area and its inter-relatedness with other disciplines/research areas. Uses this knowledge to enrich own discipline/research area.

Contributes to the integrity and future vibrancy of the discipline/research area. Exercises international influence.

Contributes to industry wide discussions relating to the discipline/research area.

Uses their own knowledge to enrich their profession.

**D3 Engagement and impact****1. Teaching**

Contributes to teaching at undergraduate level.

Assists in the supervision of undergraduate projects.

Participates in research meetings (seminars, workshops, conferences, etc). Has a developing awareness of the ways research influences/interacts with teaching.

Has a developing awareness of own teaching style and techniques. Is involved with the assessment of student knowledge and supervision of projects.

Assists in the development of student research skills.

Willing to co-supervise postgraduate research projects.

Recognises the significance of translating research into other educational outputs; seeks ways for own research to influence teaching.

Organises research meetings; seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.

Improves own approach and develops wider repertoire of teaching styles and techniques.

Contributes to and manages the teaching and learning programmes in the department and contributes to the development of the curriculum in own area.

Values the teaching-learning-research connection and interactions.

Educates, advises, guides and manages less experienced researchers.

Builds supervisory experiences; supervises postgraduate researchers; acts as external examiner at doctoral level.

Attracts new postgraduate researchers.

Leads teaching programmes and their evaluation/quality assurance procedures.

Pursues opportunities to develop research-informed teaching. Actively encourages and promotes a culture that links research and teaching.

Mentors supervisors of postgraduate researchers.

Where are the links to professional development in an industry context?

**2. Public engagement**

Understands and appreciates the value of engaging with the public, willingly participates.

Open to influence of public interactions on own work.

Responds to local opportunities and existing activities; presents aspects of research at public events.

Contributes to promoting the public understanding of own research area. (E4)\*

Actively seeks ways to realise opportunities for public engagement.

Facilitates engagement with others, leads on local opportunities, is involved with national programmes; makes appropriate use of external support for these activities.

Recognises the mutual benefit of engagement to research, researchers and the public.

Facilitates opportunities for public dialogue, connects with users of research and beneficiaries; leads major public engagement projects and funding applications.

Helps to shape the public's conception of research. Facilitates a dialogue between the public and researchers; educates, advises and guides less experienced researchers about the importance of public engagement.

Initiates activities; building track record of public engagement.

Creates a climate where engagement activity is valued.

Establishes public engagement reputation, gives strategic support, promotes projects and supports funding applications.

Is known advocate for public engagement in discipline/research area; Occupies specific public engagement post(s) or personal chair.

Where are the links to academic engagement from within a professional context?

## Current questions...

How does academia better meet the development needs of the practitioner-researcher?

Does academia understand the development needs of professional doctoral students?

What is required to create appropriate development frameworks to address the requirements for being an effective practitioner-researcher?

How can academia confront the issue that it might not have the knowledge or skill sets in programme staff or supervision teams to meet the development needs of practitioner-researchers?