

**Researcher Development Certificate**

**February 2016**

1. **Introduction**

The purpose of the Researcher Development Certificate (RDC) is to enable students to evidence that, in addition to completing the requirements of their doctorate, they have undertaken training and career development in order to widen their skills and enhance their employability in and beyond higher education.

Whilst the RDC is not compulsory, all TECHNE students are expected to undertake training and development which will lead to the award of a RDC where the criteria are fulfilled. TECHNE Associates may pursue the award of a RDC but are not obliged to. TECHNE requires that full-time doctoral students undertake an average of 10 days training per academic year, (five days for a part-time student), and the RDC is a way of formally accrediting this. Some TECHNE institutions also have their own institutional training requirements. TECHNE intends the RDC to be more than a ‘tick box’ exercise and encourages students and supervisors to regard skills development as a positive and enjoyable process in its own right, and one that may give students advantages when applying for jobs. TECHNE Partners have asked students to be made aware that as prospective employers they value the RDC.

1. **Identifying Learning and Development Needs**

It is important that any training or development you undertake is meaningfully related to your development as a researcher, or to your career goals. TECHNE does not want students attending workshops merely to fulfil their training requirement. In your meetings with your supervisory team you will discuss your learning needs. You have already identified some in your application for a TECHNE scholarship and these will be built upon as your studies progress. Your institution is likely to have a Needs Analysis template to structure conversations about learning needs or you can use the TECHNE Learning and Development Needs Analysis template (available on the TECHNE website).

1. **Vitae Researcher Development Framework**

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) [ [www.vitae.ac.uk/RDF](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/RDF) ] is recognised by TECHNE institutions as the framework which can be used by researchers at any stage in their careers to identify skills and strengths and plan their career development. The RDF is organised around four main attributes:

* Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities
* Domain B: Personal effectiveness
* Domain C: Research governance and organisation
* Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact

You should ensure that the conversations with your Supervisor about learning needs include training and development that relates to your broader development as a researcher and your ultimate career goals as well as the immediate and specific needs of your PhD. TECHNE provides such a template (the Learning and Development Needs Analysis) but you can use your institution’s if you prefer.

1. **Training/Learning/Development Logs**

In order to qualify for the RDC you will need to keep a record of the activities you undertake. Most TECHNE member institutions have a Training Log or an e-portfolio such as Mahara which enables you to record development activities, but TECHNE also provides a Learning and Development Log (available on the TECHNE website) which can be used if you prefer. Your Log should include all training and development activities, not just those which fulfil the 10 days requirement for the RDC, and it should be signed off by your Supervisor at least annually.

**It is very important that you maintain a training/learning/development log in some form. Aside from its benefits to you, it will be assessed by your Supervisory team in order to determine whether you have met the requirements of the RDC. A copy of your Training Log should be sent to** [**techne@rhul.ac.uk**](mailto:techne@rhul.ac.uk) **at the end of each academic year because TECHNE is required to report to the AHRC on student training and development activities.**

**What Counts towards the Ten Days?**

Training does not have to be provided by TECHNE in order to ‘count’. Courses or activities can be taken at any location or institution (i.e. not restricted to TECHNE institutions) and in any mode e.g. in person or online. The most important consideration of whether an activity is eligible is that:

* It is developmental i.e. adds to your existing portfolio of skills, knowledge or understanding
* It goes beyond the specific requirements of your PhD and provides wider skills, knowledge or understanding that might be applied beyond your course of study. The AHRC has a list of wider skills on pages 5 to 7 of its *Research Training Framework for Doctoral Students* Oct 2014 available at <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/projects-programmes-and-initiatives/ahrc-research-training-framework-for-doctoral-students/>

For example, any course on teaching, writing research proposals or using social media clearly adds to your wider professional development and would be eligible. Attending a subject-specific conference for a day *would not* be eligible, but the time giving a poster or paper at the conference *would* be eligible since it helps you to develop presentation skills.

The ten days are counted in a minimum unit of a half-day, rather than in hours.

The TECHNE Welcome Event and Student Congresses should be included in your Training Log, **but do not count towards your 10 days** since these are additional development opportunities for TECHNE students.

**Eligible activities**

The list below is not exhaustive and other activities may be eligible too. Please check with your supervisory team or with TECHNE administration. The column headed ‘Maximum value in one year’ is there to ensure some variety in the activities you undertake, i.e. doing only a 10 day language course would not fulfil the RDC requirement.

| **Activity** | **Example** | **Value** | **Maximum value in one year** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Generic skills courses | Writing skills, presentation skills, project management, negotiating | A course lasting 3 hours or more counts as 1 day; less than 3 hours a half day | Any one course cannot count for more than 3 days |
| Academic skills courses | Teaching, making conference presentations, writing grant applications | A course lasting 3 hours or more counts as 1 day; less than 3 hours a half day | Any one course cannot count for more than 3 days |
| Research-related courses | Research methods, theory, conducting literature reviews | A course lasting 3 hours or more counts as 1 day; less than 3 hours a half day | Any one course cannot count for more than 3 days |
| Language courses | 3 week intensive course in Spanish | Number of days on course | 3 days |
| Conference/exhibition/performance attendance only |  | 0 days (not eligible) |  |
| Conference/Exhibition/Performance – assisting on the day | Helping with conference registration or setting up exhibition | 0.5 or 1 day as appropriate | 2 days |
| Conference/Exhibition/Performance – organiser | Membership of conference organising committee | 2 days | 4 days |
| Conference/Exhibition/Performance – submission of abstract or proposal |  | Half-day | 2 days |
| Conferences /Exhibition/Performance presentation | Presentation of conference paper or poster or participation in performance | 1 day | 3 days |
| Publications (or equivalent practice-related output) – submission of paper or book chapter |  | 2 days | 4 days |
| Work placements or work-related projects | Helping a TECHNE Partner organisation over a 6 month period with research for an exhibition | Number of days of placement | 5 days |
| Shadowing | Shadowing a member of staff at a TECHNE Partner organisation | Number of days of shadowing | 3 days |
| Volunteering/Impact/Social Engagement | Giving a talk on research area at local school or local radio | 1 day | 3 days |
| Undergraduate teaching |  | Number of days | 4 days |
| Committee membership | Representing students on TECHNE Management Group or PGR students on University Committee | Half day per meeting | 3 days |