

What is research culture and how can you make it better as a PhD student?

Rachel Norman,
University of Stirling

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BE THE DIFFERENCE

Research Culture

Royal society:

Research culture encompasses the behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and norms of our **research** communities. It influences **researchers'** career paths and determines the way that **research** is conducted and communicated.

Problem:

“Funding environment is competitive and definition of success is narrow”

Part of the solution:

We need to provide a collaborative, supportive environment in which staff can achieve their potential and that we recognise broad definitions of success in research- reward good practice and communicate clearly what that looks like.

Outcomes of UKRI commissioned Research Integrity landscape survey (June 2020)

Personal integrity, local culture and good management are key to research integrity, and bullying and harassment is the single biggest negative influence

The top five incentives with the strongest positive perceived impact: data sharing policies and requirements; open access publishing; interdisciplinary research; professional development and training opportunities; research leadership and management.

Top five incentives with the strongest negative perceived impact: incidents of bullying and harassment; use of journal impact factors, h-index and other metrics; league tables of institutions; institutional workload models; how researchers are assessed for promotion during their careers.

Research Culture

Integrity
and
ethics

Environment
and
resources



Expectations and
support:
leadership and
role models

Communication
and
collaboration.

Shift Insight Report

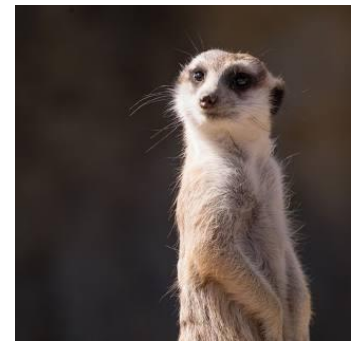
<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/UKRI-180124-ResearchCultureInitiativesInTheUK.pdf>



Themes- Shift insight report

- How is Research Managed and Undertaken
 - Governance and management; Integrity; sustainability
- How Research ensures value
 - Open approach (supporting open, collaborative, interdisciplinary and team approaches to research); communicating research; realising impact
- How people are supported
 - Employment conditions; recognition and assessment; career development; inclusive and healthy working environments
- How individuals engage with others
 - Effective leadership and management; empowering individuals; building collegiality

REF- People culture and environment 25%



- This will be assessed at both institutional and disciplinary levels.
- The Institutional level assessment will focus on the institution's policies, strategies and priorities with evidence of their impact on the whole institution. This will constitute at least 20% of the quality sub-profile.
- Disciplinary-level assessment will focus on areas of specific disciplinary relevance.

BUT also woven into “contribution to knowledge and understanding” narrative and “engagement and impact” narrative

So closer to 35% of total.

Things your institution may have signed up to

- Athena SWAN/ race equality act and other EDI initiatives
- Concordat for Research integrity
- DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment)
- Concordat for researcher development (10 days CPD)
- COARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment)
- More than our Rank
- *Concordat for sustainable research on its way*

Research culture ecosystem within most institutions

Institutional level- Academic and Professional Services

Ethics and integrity

training and CPD

recording of activity and engagement

employment and promotion conditions eg parental leave, sick leave, leaves of absence.....

Faculty/school level

More subject specific training and infrastructure

Local level

This is the research culture you experience most frequently and can influence most easily

Good	Bad
Collaborative	Competitiveness
supportive	Long hours culture
Transparent processes	Bullying/harassment
Trust/ safe spaces for communication	Lack of transparency around decisions
Good leadership and role models	Poor leadership

Deliberate vs not deliberate?

What we found from research culture award nominations

Teamwork

not surprisingly activities and actions that helped people to feel more included and developed a sense of teamwork and community were particularly important (regular meetings, informal check-ins and cake!)

Collegiality

Kindness, good humour and the ability to make time to see people (despite busy diaries) came up across several categories so the human / empathetic/ social aspects of our interactions are really important to people.

Expertise

Sharing experience, knowledge and networks, and the ability to see the big picture were also valued.

Support

Amongst the best mentor nominations, the ability to listen came up several times.

Walking the talk

Overall, it is clear that good research culture comes from good role models and many of them emerge naturally and can come from any career stage.

Specific areas of relevance for PGRs

- Ethics and integrity
- Good supervision
- Appropriate and useful training- generic and specific
- Mentoring
- Career planning
- Appropriate authorship
- Open data/code
- Peer support/community
- Work life balance