Hello and welcome to the Liverpool Doctoral College (or LDC) I’m Dr Shirley Cooper. In this short video I will provide an introduction to the professional development opportunities in the Liverpool Doctoral College Development Programme, which are available for all postgraduate researchers in the University.

As a new researcher, your first focus may be on your doctoral thesis. However, a thesis is just one of the outcomes of a research degree - the most significant output is you as a professional researcher.

Consider what skills you will need to become a successful researcher.

While subject knowledge is important, you will also require skills to manage in your research, solve problems and communicate your findings to the wider academic community,

These skills are also essential for your future career whether inside or outside Academia.

This wide range of research-related skills is captured in the Researcher Development Framework, or RDF, developed by the national organisation, Vitae.

The RDF wheel, shown here, outlines the skills and behaviours demonstrated by all researchers from a first year student to experienced professor.
The LDC Development programme is shaped by the RDF and satisfies the UK Research and Innovation Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training.

Our programme is divided into 7 key themes that are relevant for all disciplines. In 2020-21 our programme will be mainly online, through zoom-based workshops that will include opportunities for online networking.

The Taking Ownership of your PhD theme is for those new to a research degree and includes a series of online workshops with this umbrella title, to help you start your research journey and identify the tools and skills you will need to progress.

Life as a researcher can pose many challenges and our programme includes advice and support and to help you build your resilience.

You will also need skills to communicate your research. Our sessions can help you develop good writing practices whether writing for your thesis and for research publications.
You will also need good presentation skills. We offer both highly practical sessions and advice to help you deliver convincing presentations, create academic posters and prepare for conferences.

Other sessions will help you identify and practise techniques to improve your work productivity and learn project management skills.

Skills in problem solving, innovation and critical thinking are also essential to research and we offer innovative sessions to help you find new techniques.

Our programme will help you take control of your own career planning early, start your career networking and prepare for applications later on when you are ready to the next step in your career.

We also provide online resources, with videos and podcasts, to provide additional support and which can be accessed in your own time from our website or in Liverpool Life.
Liverpool Life includes the PGR Portfolio of Activity that allows you to record all your training and professional development during your research degree, including conferences and teaching experience and so on.

Online help and webinars are available to help you start.

You will need to plan your professional development at the start of your degree using the Development Needs Analysis form.

Together you and your supervisor should agree on a training plan that combines subject related training, with support from the LDC Development programme and from other University areas.

Your training and development is carried out over the year and is reviewed on an annual basis.

The LDC Development website provides further information on the topics discussed here, and has contact details for all the team.

Further information on our programme will be announced in the LDC Newsletter, in our blog PGR news at Liverpool and Liverpool Life.

We look forward to meeting you, virtually, at our upcoming events! Thank you.