**Preface**

A research degree is highly regarded by employers and academics. The essential purpose of a research degree is a period of training in research. A second purpose is the development of a range of personal and professional skills. These skills are not only necessary for undertaking the research itself, but also form the basis for the development of future careers. Employers and employer organisations, the UK Research Councils and other funding bodies, and regulatory organisations assuring the quality and standards of postgraduate research degree programmes all expect those in possession of a UK postgraduate research degree to have demonstrated that they have acquired a wider range of knowledge, behaviours and attitudes. This *Postgraduate Skills Record* is therefore designed to help postgraduate researchers develop and record some of these skills during their research degree programme.

Whatever career postgraduate researchers choose, the range of skills included in the *Postgraduate Skills Record* will prove invaluable. Research has become increasingly multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary and the need for communication and team-working skills is more vital than ever. Careers outside research and development also require a range of skills, and the need to continually learn and develop skills is an essential part of all jobs.

Postgraduate research students are therefore required to use the *Postgraduate Skills Record* to assist them throughout their research programme, and as a basis for their continuing professional development throughout their careers. Many of the skills mentioned in the *Record* will be developed through undertaking your research, by engaging with the research community, in following your supervisors’ direction and guidance, and from specialised courses, workshops, seminars and conferences.

The *Researcher Development Framework* (*RDF*) described in subsequent pages extends and broadens the concept of the *Postgraduate Skills Record* to help engage you in more effective personal and professional development and empower you as a researcher. The *RDF* provides an ideal complement to the *Postgraduate Skills Record* designed for use in your own personal and professional development and career planning.

Some of the skills in the *Postgraduate Skills Record* are specifically supported by the *Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Skills Development Programme*, which runs on-campus at Bolton on Friday mornings during the first two terms of each academic year. The syllabus and calendar for the *Programme*, together with the supporting materials, are available as a Moodle course at: <https://www.bolton.ac.uk/elearning/#gsc.tab=0> You will be shown how to access and use this course as part of the *Programme*.

The regulations governing your registration as a postgraduate research student require you to develop your wider research skills so, whether or not you can physically attend the *Programme*, you are expected to use the Moodle course to work through the syllabus week by week and explore the relevant materials. You are reminded that student access to the Moodle course is automatically logged so that your engagement (and non-engagement) can be monitored.