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Table 1: Researcher Skill Development Framework

A conceptual framework for the explicit, coherent, incremental and cyclic development of the skills associated with researching. © Willison & O’Regan, August 2008/October 2015

Prescribed Research Level 1
Highly structured directions and modelling from supervisor prompt the researcher(s) to:

- Respond to questions/tasks provided explicitly. Use a provided approach to clarify questions, expectations and ECST issues.

- Collect and record required information/data using a prescribed methodology from a prescribed source where the information/data is clearly evident.

- Evaluate sources/information/data using simple prescribed criteria to specify credibility and to reflect on the research process.

- Organize information/data using prescribed structure. Manage linear process provided (with pre-specified team roles).

- Interpret given information/data and synthesize knowledge into prescriptive formats. Ask emergent question.

- Use prescribed genre to develop and demonstrate understanding from a specified perspective. Apply to a similar context the knowledge developed. Follow prompts on ECST issues.

- Interpret several sources of information/data and synthesize to integrate knowledge into standard formats. Ask relevant, researchable questions.

- Analyze trends in information/data and synthesize to fully integrate components specified. Ask rigorous, researchable questions.

- Analyzes information/data and synthesizes to fully integrate components, consistent with parameters set. Fill knowledge gaps that are stated by others.

- Analyze and create information/data to fill researcher-identified gaps or extend knowledge.

- Use discipline-specific language and concepts to develop an understanding for a specified audience. Apply to different contexts. Specify ECST issues that emerge.

- Use discipline-specific language and genres to develop understanding for a specified audience. Apply to diverse contexts. Specify ECST issues that emerge.

- Use appropriate language and genre to address gaps of a self-selected audience. Apply innovatively the knowledge developed to the specific context. Probe and specify ECST issues in each relevant context.

- Use appropriate language and genre to extend the knowledge of a range of audiences. Apply innovatively the knowledge developed to multiple contexts. Probe and specify ECST issues that emerge broadly.

- Constructive

- Creative

- Harmonizing

- Discerning

- Determined

- Curious

- Adopted Research Level 6
Researcher(s) inform others’ agendas.

- Generate previously unstated gaps in literature and articulate research directions and ECST issues in response to gaps.

- Synthesize others’ methods to formulate novel methods/methodologies or apply existing methods to novel applications.

- Generate substantial research outcomes, so that ideas, practices or interpretations are cited/implemented by others.

- Form a research team or a team of community-based practitioners.

- Enlarging Research Level 7
Researcher(s) enlarge the field of inquiry.

- Articulate research directions that expand or direct the field and anticipate the corresponding ECST issues.

- Generate new methods/methodologies that are used widely.

- Generate substantial research outcomes, so that ideas, practices or interpretations become foundational in field or discipline.

- Form and develop research networks/communities.

- Level 2

- Level 3

- Level 4

- Level 5

- Level 6

- Level 7