

Making a Good First Impression: Lessons from designing a Research Integrity Focused Induction

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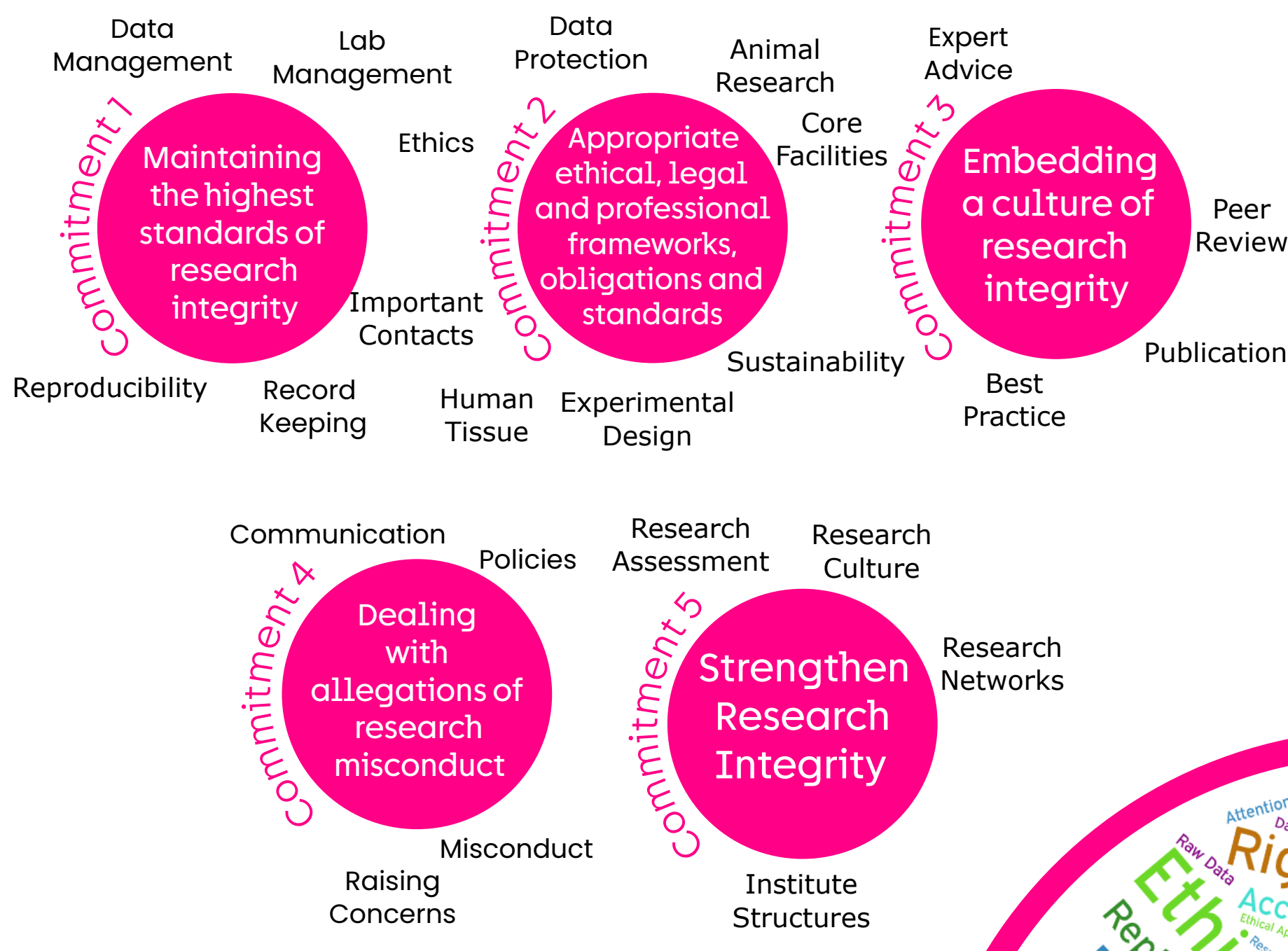
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Introduction: Designing a new induction

They say you never get a second chance to make a first impression, so how can we create a good first impression of research integrity? When researchers begin a new position, they understandably want to start experiments as soon as possible. Induction processes - while necessary - can appear an impediment to 'actual' research. Since 2021 I've been running a Research integrity specific induction at the Cancer Research UK Manchester Institute, shaped around the UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity. This poster is about how that induction is structured to be as relevant, engaging and interactive as possible.

Mapping Induction elements onto the 5 Concordat Commitments



Mentimeter encourages engagement, works online & in-person. I include a low-risk warm-up question ("What's something you've watched recently?") to get the session going!

First things first: What is Research Integrity?

Start with Positive Principles:
Honesty in all aspects of research
Accountability in the conduct of research
Professional courtesy and fairness in working with others
Good stewardship of research on behalf of others

Why research integrity is important:
 - Public trust in science
 - Reliability of research record
 - Good use of resources
 - Benefits of Open Research

Problems in research
 - Fake data & paper mills
 - "Replication Crisis"
 - Ethical issues

How can we support good research practice?

Spending 2 hours in person with attendees is a great opportunity make my role visible, allowing me to act as a signpost for information. They may not remember all the details, but hopefully they will know who to contact and where to go when they need help and support.

Commitment 1: Maintaining the highest standards

Researchers are responsible for "understanding...(and) maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in their work". But what are the "highest standards"? We focus on three things:



Case studies: A problem shared...

The Induction includes two case studies. These give opportunity for small group discussion, hearing different viewpoints and exploring ethical issues in a safe space. They also help develop an 'immunity' to poor practice, letting attendees think how they would respond in scenarios they may encounter in the future.

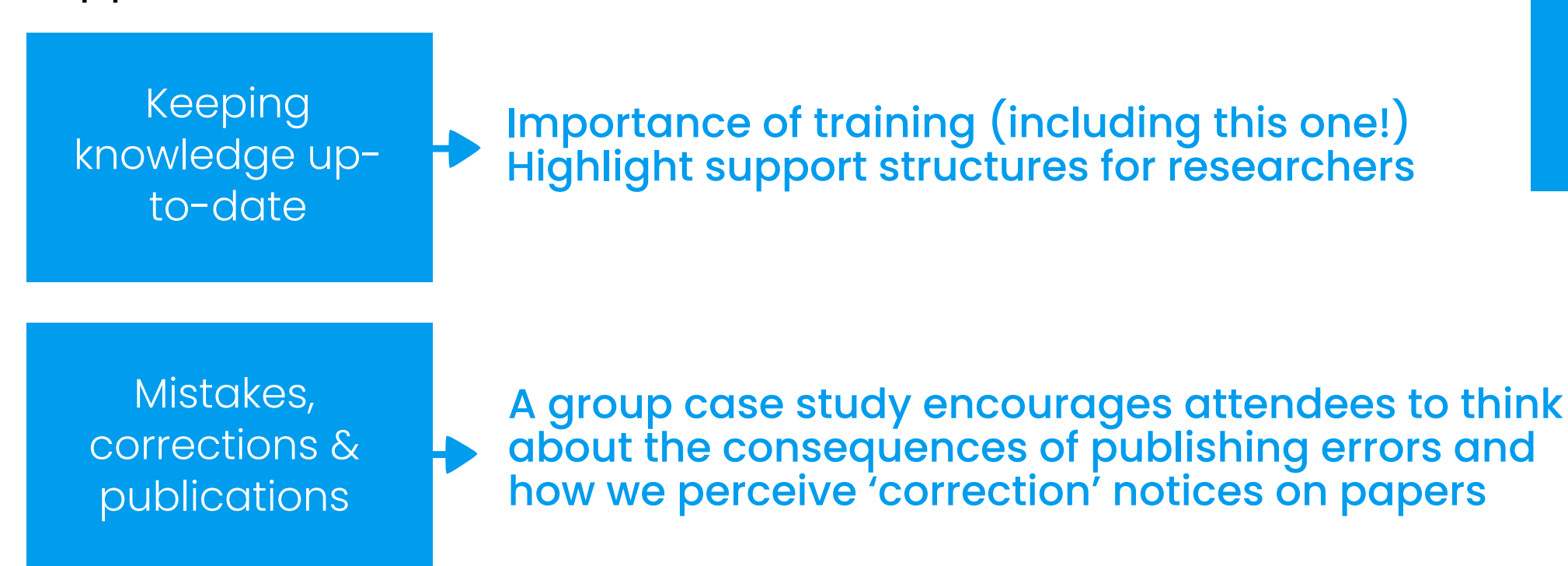
Case studies from "On Being A Scientist": detailed enough for multiple angles of discussion, and 'subject adjacent' to encourage thinking about principles



<https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/12192/on-being-a-scientist-a-guide-to-responsible-conduct-in>

Commitment 3: Supporting Research Integrity

This Commitment allows us to think about ways to "embed integrity and ethical practice" across the Institute, and how researchers are supported in this.

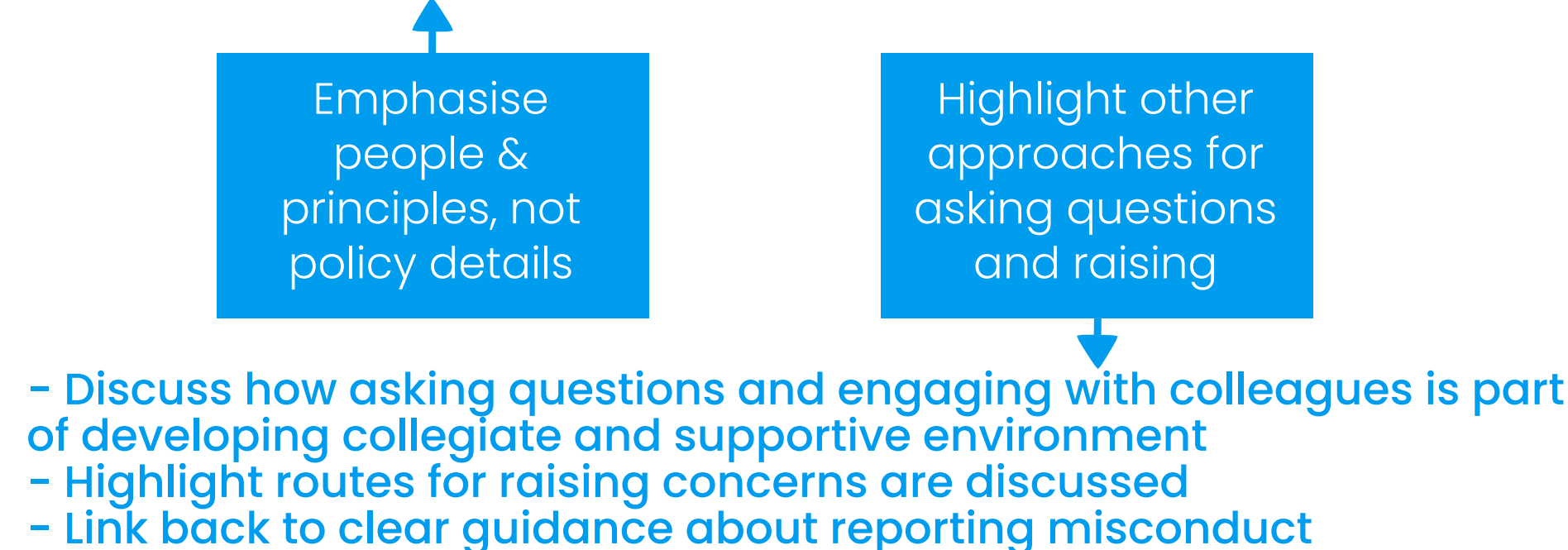


Include breaks! We take a break at the halfway point, and I tell people ahead of time that it's coming!

Commitment 4: Reporting Misconduct

Commitment 4 requires "transparent, timely, robust and fair processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct". This provides an opportunity to think about the spectrum of research conduct, including misconduct, University reporting procedures, and the responsibilities we all have for raising concerns.

- Summarise processes
- Clear links to all the documents and policies covering misconduct
- Attendees know where to find the information if and when required



- Discuss how asking questions and engaging with colleagues is part of developing collegiate and supportive environment
- Highlight routes for raising concerns are discussed
- Link back to clear guidance about reporting misconduct

Misconduct definitions vary between countries; the induction helps ensure researchers are familiar with host institution standards

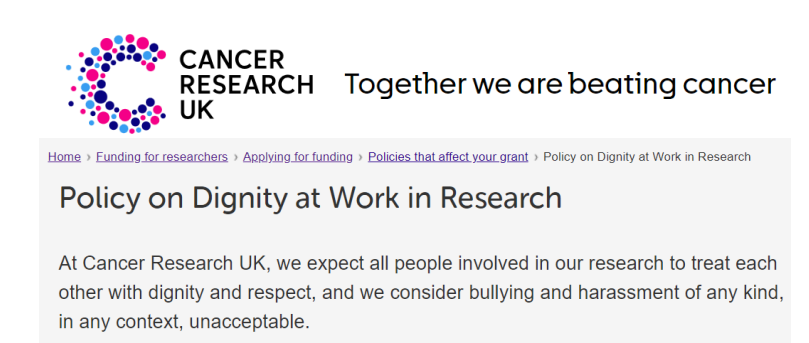
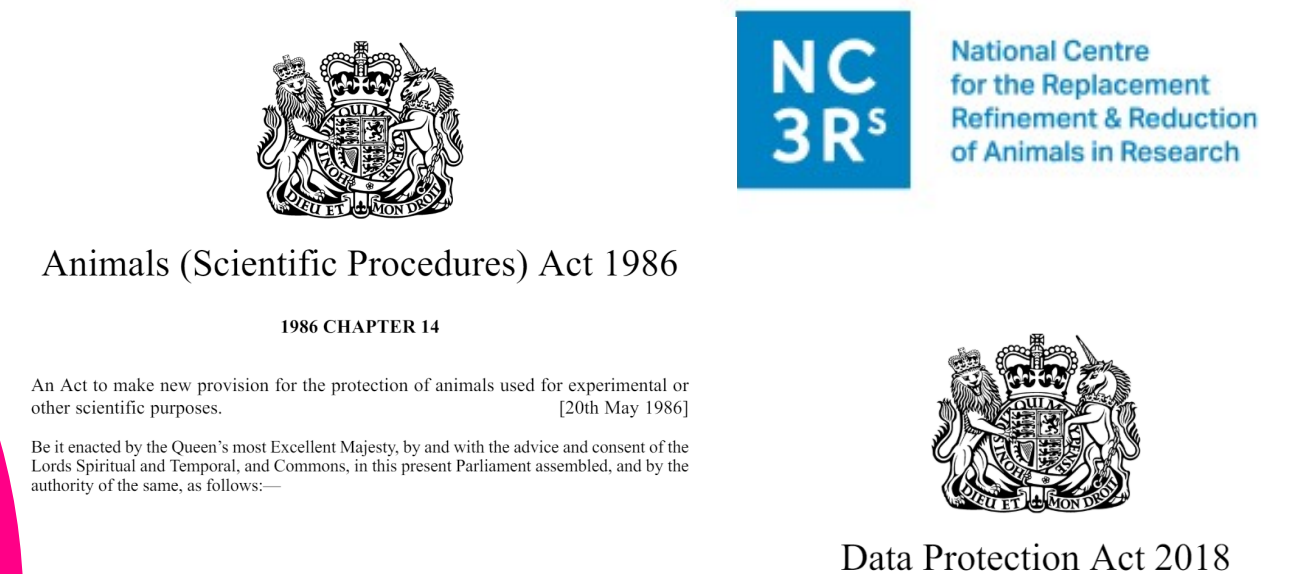
The spectrum of research conduct



Commitment 2: Regulatory Compliance

Researchers must "comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards" and "ensure that all their research is subject to active and appropriate consideration of ethical issues".

This provides a framework to look at a set of issues requiring particular care and attention, with reflections from one area reinforcing the learning from others



This induction takes a 'researcher-centric' view. The aim is to showcase the structures and processes available to support the attendees in conducting research that aligns with their own strong values and personal integrity. I'm conscious of adding to their workloads, so try to make the information accessible and relevant.

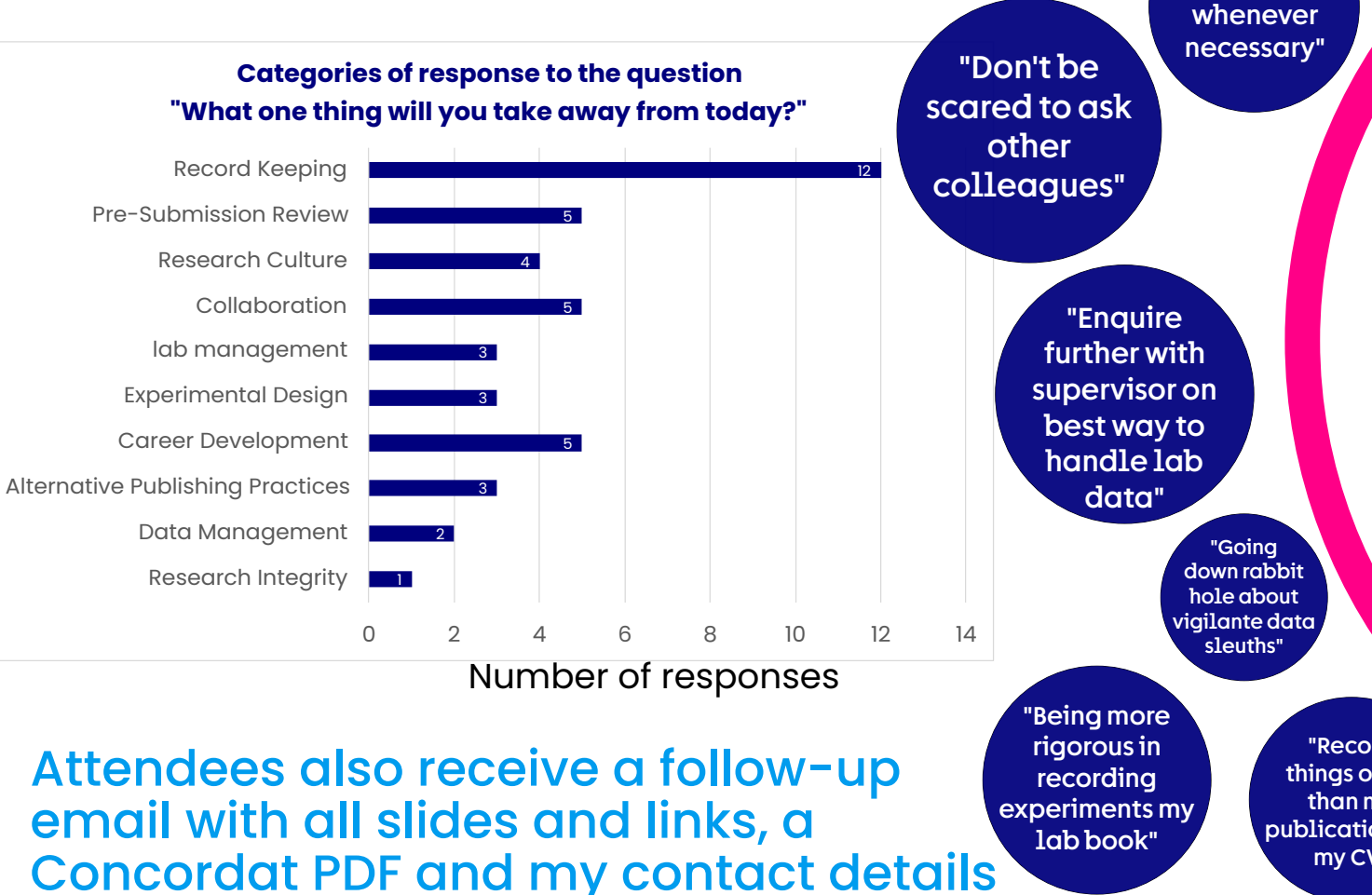
Generative AI

This section provides an opportunity to communicate the latest guidance and policy related to Generative AI in the wider context of good research practice, honesty, transparency, care and respect (including environmental costs)

Read more on the CRUK Research Integrity Blog



What attendees take away from the induction



Conclusion

1. Tell a story
2. Find links to help group content
3. Share principles, not details
4. Make it interactive
5. Use local, relevant examples
6. Emphasise people over policies
7. Be realistic about difficulties, hopeful about opportunities

Commitment 5: A Culture of Continuous Improvement

Commitment 5 says "We are committed to working together to strengthen the integrity of research". Here we explore the link between research environment, culture and incentives and research integrity.

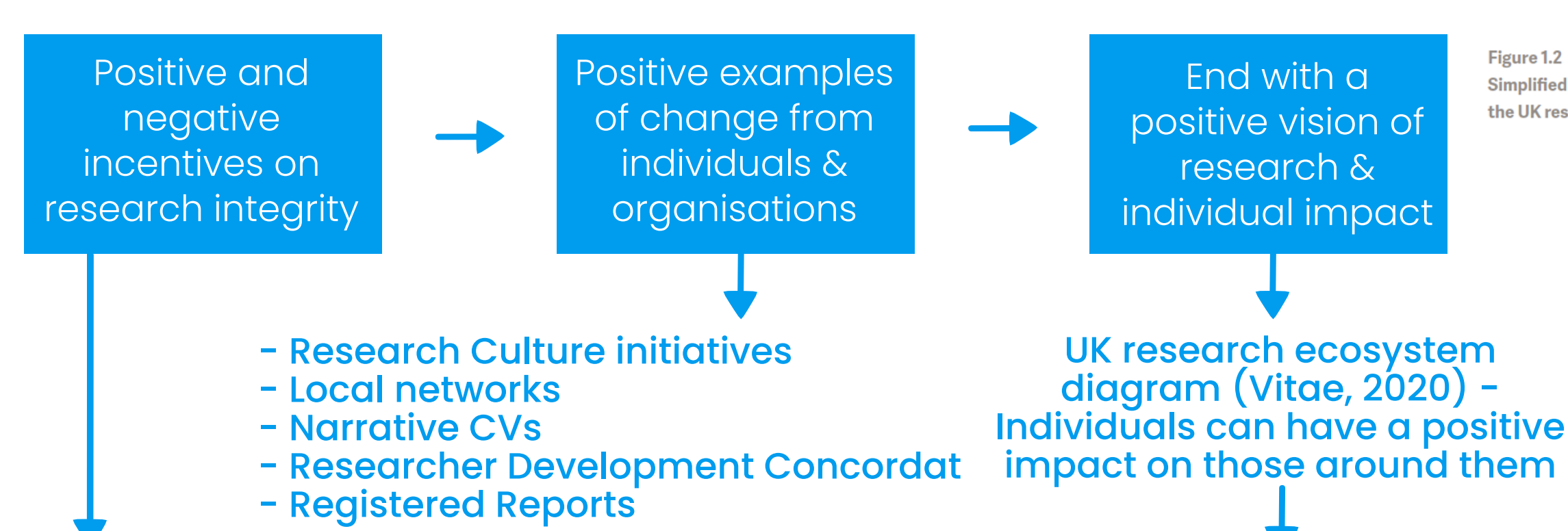


Figure 1.2 Simplified depiction of the 'layers' in the UK research ecosystem

