

Top 10 tips from researchers on using the Researcher Development Framework (RDF):

- 1. You might choose to use the RDF for short term as well as long term development.**
The RDF can be used in planning for your long term career ambitions but also to make a feasible short term plan. It can be useful to imagine your long term ambitions in order to focus your career path however the reality of progressing through to the higher phases may be more difficult to plan. In the short term, making decisions about how to progress to the next phase or what sub-domains are most important for you will be easier. Try to be realistic when setting these short term goals.
- 2. Use the RDF to highlight your strengths and areas for development** and how these might be used to benefit/influence your personal, professional and career development.
- 3. Use the RDF to highlight your applicable and transferable skills.** This is important for career progression within or outside academia.
- 4. Prioritise those areas which are most relevant.** You don't have to try to develop in all the areas of the RDF at once. There may be some sub-domains/descriptors where there is less relevance in progressing through the phases for you.
- 5. Draw on experiences outside of work to evidence your capabilities.**
- 6. Progression to the highest phase in a descriptor will not be applicable to everyone** but being aware of the possibilities can aid personal and career development.
- 7. Talk to others to get their views about your strengths and capabilities.** Your supervisor, manager, peers, family and friends are a great source of information to find out more about yourself. Talk to them about how they perceive your capabilities. By understanding how others view you, you will be able to make more informed choices about your future.
- 8. To move from one phase to the next why not explore attending courses.** These courses may be run at a local level (within your University) or may only be run nationally or internationally so awareness of opportunities for training is important. Vitae also run a wide range of courses which address many aspects of personal and career development.
- 9. Some phases may only be reached through experience and practice** however good self-awareness and professional development planning will aid the process.
- 10. Networking is likely to enable you to reach more experienced phases.** You might want to try networking with local, national and international colleagues and collaborators. Try to make the most of opportunities at conferences and workshops, gain experience sitting on committees and maintain contacts within and beyond academia to enhance your reputation.