

PGR Tips on information handling

This month Vitae focuses on information handling, as interacting with information is at the very heart of your research, whatever the subject of your doctorate. We launch a 'lens' on the [Researcher Development Framework](#) (to highlight which of your knowledge, behaviours and attributes as a researcher are relevant to information literacy and vice versa). This is accompanied by a new issue in our popular series of practical researcher booklets: [The Informed researcher](#), which contains these tips:

Consult librarians and other information professionals

Meeting your specialist research librarian and asking for their advice on sources for your specific needs will improve your information literacy and can save a lot of time later.

Use information resources critically and know which are most appropriate for you

Find out if there are courses you can attend to help you get the best from the library's and other available resources.

Save time by scoping and planning an effective search strategy

This can help prevent you from duplicating your efforts or looking in the wrong places (or more likely, using the wrong search terms).

Develop good information management techniques

This will allow you to have facts and figures at your fingertips. It is worth making sure your techniques are robust and will last you a long time or can be adapted.

Drawing evidence from a variety of information sources together to create arguments

Developing the skills to combine evidence from various sources, including your own original research, to create new and persuasive arguments is at the heart of the doctoral process.

Be responsible about copyright and plagiarism

Implications of copyright and plagiarism are worth considering and discussing with your supervisor when preparing any dissemination of your work.

Sign non-exclusive copyright licences with publishers

It is natural to be so pleased to get a paper accepted for publication that copyright is not at the top of your priority list. However, find out more about your Intellectual Property Rights and consider whether you are signing over the right to use your work (it is not uncommon for researchers to have to request permission- and pay- to reproduce their own figures in review articles).

Consider publishing in open access journals and digital repositories

Become familiar with the debate around open access so you can make informed choices about whether to publish in an open access or traditional journal.

Learn how to evaluate and measure impact of publications

This will be motivating and will inform how to disseminate your research most effectively in the future.

www.vitae.ac.uk/pgrtips