

## Researcher Development Framework: Glossary of terms

### [General terms](#)

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#### General terms

**Researcher Development Framework (RDF):** The Researcher Development Framework describes the knowledge, behaviours and attitudes of excellent researchers. It is structured in four [domains](#) with associated [sub-domains](#).

**Researcher Development Statement (RDS):** This is the strategic statement of the Researcher Development Framework. The RDS is the key policy reference document for researchers' skills and attributes and has been endorsed by RCUK, other key funders, Universities UK and the quality Assurance Agency.

**Domains:** These are the four main sections in the Researcher Development Framework describing different aspects of researchers' knowledge, skills and attributes. There are:  
Domain A: Knowledge and intellectual abilities  
Domain B: Personal effectiveness  
Domain C: Research governance and organisation  
Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact.

**Sub-domains:** Each Researcher Development Framework [domain](#) consists of three sub-domains representing different aspects of the domain topic. For example Domain D: Engagement, influence and impact contains the sub-domains of D1: Working with others, D2: Communication and dissemination, and D3: Engagement and impact.

**Descriptors:** The 63 descriptors in the Researcher Development Framework describe different characteristics of excellent researchers in terms of knowledge, behaviours and attitudes. Related descriptors are clustered into [domains](#) and [sub-domains](#).

**Phases:** Each [descriptor](#) has up to five phases of development. The phases are additive and illustrate the development of a higher level of performance within a particular descriptor.

**Professional Development Planner:** A downloadable Excel programme that incorporates the Researcher Development Framework to help researchers identify how they want to develop further as a researcher and create an action plan.

**Lenses:** A lens looks at the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) from a specific perspective or emphasises a sub-set of the RDF [descriptors](#) for a particular purpose. For example, highlighting how to use the RDF to develop in areas such as teaching, public engagement, enterprise, leadership, etc.

**QAA Code of Practice:** The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (the Code of practice) provides guidance on maintaining quality and standards. There is a section within the Code of Practice that relates to research degree programmes. The QAA has endorsed the [Researcher Development Statement](#). [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

**Joint Skills Statement (JSS):** The Joint Skills Statement, known more formally as the 'Joint Statement of the Research Councils' Skills Training Requirements for Research Students', 2001, sets out a joint statement of the skills that doctoral researchers funded by the Research Councils would be expected to develop during their research training. The [Researcher Development Statement](#) is an evolution of the JSS and replaces the JSS as the key reference statement for the development of postgraduate researchers' skills and attributes.

[www.vitae.ac.uk/jss](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/jss)

**Research Councils UK (RCUK):** This is the strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils, responsible for investing public funds in research. Vitae is funded through RCUK.

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk>

**Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (Concordat):** The Concordat sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders. It aims to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK and to improve the quantity, quality and impact of research for the benefit of UK society and the economy. [www.researchconcordat.ac.uk](http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk)

### **Specific terms within the Researcher Development Framework:**

**Attitude:** A person's perspective, judgement or response to a specified aspect or object.

**Attribute:** A quality or characteristic of an individual.

**Attribution:** (C1.6: Attribution and co-authorship). The requirement that an author be given due credit for their work in any context in which it is used.

**Behaviour:** A way of behaving, doing something in a certain way. Behaviours can be innate or learned.

**Collegiality:** (D1.1 Collegiality). The cooperative relationship of colleagues and respect for each other's abilities to work towards a common purpose. The concept of collegiality is traditionally strong in academia where individual independence of thought and mutual respect are necessary.

**Creative commons licenses:** (C1.4: IPR and copyright, phase 2). These allow individuals and organisations to retain global copyright and gain credit for their work while granting copyright permissions allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some uses of their work (usually non-commercially). They are becoming increasingly common in the academic environment. (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>)

**Currency:** (A1.4: Information seeking, phase 1). Up-to-date, current or contemporary (information sources).

**Entrepreneurship** (D3.3: Enterprise, phase 2). Entrepreneurship is the act of being an [entrepreneur](#), e.g. someone who transform innovations into economic benefit. It is often linked with starting a new business or organisation.

**Enterprise:** (D3.3 Enterprise). Enterprising skills are knowledge and abilities that can be used to create, contribute to or run a business or organisation. In a university it is often related to the process of commercialising a research process or product for sale, sometimes via a 'spin out' company. It is also related to the [transfer of knowledge](#) from universities to industry and the public sector.

**Integrity:** (B1.4 Integrity). This is the consistency of values, principles and actions. In ethics, it is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions.

**Intrapreneurship:** (D3.3: Enterprise, phase 2). Describes the application of an entrepreneurial spirit to improve the way that an organisation operates. Within the university environment researchers can reconfigure ideas and recognise novel opportunities to benefit the university and themselves. University intrapreneurship can be found in teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer.

[www.vitae.ac.uk/entrepreneurshipandintrapreneurship](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/entrepreneurshipandintrapreneurship)

**IT literate:** (A1.7: Academic literacy and numeracy, phase1). Well informed, knowledgeable about and skilled in the use of information technology.

**Knowledge exchange:** (D2.1 Communication methods; D3.3 Enterprise). Knowledge exchange in the research environment is about how knowledge, ideas and expertise can be exchanged between researchers and the users of research to stimulate innovation in businesses, enterprises and public services to contribute to the economy, society and culture.

**Languages:** (A 1.6 Languages). In the Researcher Development Framework with applies to the languages appropriate to doing research, including foreign languages and technical languages.

**Public engagement:** (D.2 Public engagement). Public engagement describes how researchers connect and share their work with the public to build trust, understanding and collaboration, and increase the relevance and impact of research on society.

[www.vitae.ac.uk/pe](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/pe)

**Rhetoric:** (D2.1: Communication methods, phase1). The art or study of using language effectively and persuasively in verbal communication. This is particularly important in the academic environment.

**Social Enterprise:** (D3.3: Enterprise, phase 2). The application of [enterprising skills](#) or [entrepreneurship](#) for a common good and realise philanthropic goals rather than offering benefits to investors.