



Incorporating the UK GRAD Programme and UKHERD



UK Researcher development framework (RDF)

www.vitae.ac.uk

**Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK),
managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation
and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities**

Researcher development framework

- ✔ Aims
- ✔ Scope
- ✔ Development process
- ✔ Structure
- ✔ Example
- ✔ Next steps

RDF project aims

- Tool for planning, promoting, supporting personal, professional and career development
- Describes knowledge, skills, behaviours and personal qualities of researchers
- Encourages researchers to aspire to excellence
- Builds on the Joint skills statement to cover full career continuum
- Primarily for researchers and those supporting researchers

Scope of RDF

- ✔ Descriptors common to researchers in HE at different stages of being a researcher
- ✔ Aspirational, but realistic; identifying descriptors relevant to good researcher at each stage and those pertinent to the next level
- ✔ Recognises individual difference and different career paths (in and out of HE)
- ✔ Based on current environment but also anticipates change
- ✔ Couched in accessible language but providing a lexicon for communicating research qualities
- ✔ NOT intended for job descriptions, person specs or appraisal systems

Development process

- ✔ Literature survey – focus on definitions of research and research roles
- ✔ Literature review- focus on competency frameworks – academic and related occupations
- ✔ Empirical data from analysis of audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews with experienced researchers
- ✔ Representative sample >100: range of experiences, institution types, geographical context, disciplines and demographics
- ✔ Results: >1000 characteristics and variants, clustered into common groups

Structure of RDF: stages

- ✔ **New researcher**
 - researcher in training
- ✔ **Researcher**
 - early career, postdoctorate
- ✔ **Established researcher**
 - level of independence, national reputation
- ✔ **Advanced researcher**
 - research leader, international reputation
- ✔ **Eminent researcher**
 - international leader, world expert

Structure of RDF: domains

- ✔ **Professional and intellectual attributes**
 - knowledge base
 - cognitive skills
 - creativity

- ✔ **Personal effectiveness**
 - personal qualities
 - self-organisation
 - career development skills

- ✔ **Research organisation and governance**
 - professional conduct
 - project management
 - finance, funding and resources

- ✔ **Impact and influence**
 - Communicating effectively
 - working with others and leadership
 - relating to the broader context
 - application of research and knowledge exchange

Example

Proficiency level Descriptors	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
<i>Time Management</i>	Manages own time effectively to complete research project; sticks to clear plan	Makes timely decisions. Delivers a project on time; quick and efficient; responds flexibly.	Manages multiple or complex projects to time; balancing constraints		
<i>Response to change</i>	Adapts approach with guidance when required to	Adapts to changes	Engages with change; expects change and is prepared for it	Finds change stimulating; anticipates change	Finds change stimulating; drives change
<i>Self-reliance (D7)</i>	Accepts guidance and help when required	Recognises boundaries and draws upon and use sources of support as appropriate (D6)	Builds and uses own support structures effectively; contributes to others' support	Maintains a range and variety of support structures	Exploits focussed and targeted support mechanisms

Next steps

- ✔ Sector-wide consultation (Nov-Dec)
- ✔ Discussions with the research councils
- ✔ Focus groups with researchers and other stakeholders
- ✔ Present at Policy Forum (Jan)
- ✔ Launch final framework (Mar)
- ✔ Reflection period (Apr-Oct)



Consultation

The consultation will allow you to comment on any or all of the following aspects of the framework:

- ✔ as a national framework for researcher development
- ✔ meeting the development needs of individual researchers and organisations
- ✔ the current and future skill needs of researchers

Responding to consultation

- ✔ Consultation is open until 11 December 2009
- ✔ Options of a full response or shorter alternative for researchers
- ✔ Consultation documents can be found at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfconsultation

For discussion

- ✔ Your thoughts on the aims, concept and structure of the RDF to feed into the consultation process
- ✔ What recommendations do you have for how the RDF will be used? For institutions? For individuals?