Information literacy lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework using the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy

Overview
The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) underpins a major new approach to developing world-class researchers. The framework has been developed by and for researchers working in higher education as an aid to planning, promoting and enhancing professional and career development. It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages all researchers to realise their potential.

This is one of a series of lenses on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework. For further information about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework visit www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

Purpose of a lens
This lens provides a bridge between the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy, highlighting how information literacy is part of the professional development of researchers. The lens provides an overview of the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes that can be acquired through, or used in, information literacy activities.

Context
In our increasingly information based society, information literacy is a vital ability that is required to be able to make effective and efficient decisions. It enables researchers to find, analyse and evaluate information and become independent lifelong learners. Information literate researchers are ‘prepared for lifelong learning, because they can always find the information needed for any task or decision at hand.’

Describing information literacy
Information literacy is an umbrella term which encompasses concepts such as digital, visual and media literacies, academic literacy, information handling, information skills, data curation and data management.

“In the 21st century, information literacy is a key attribute for everyone, irrespective of age or experience. Information literacy is evidenced through understanding the ways in which information and data is created and handled, developing skills in its management and use and modifying attitudes, habits and behaviours to appreciate the role of information literacy in learning and research.”

The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy, a Research Lens for Higher Education (April 2011) 5

How to use the information literacy lens
Researchers may wish to use this lens to:
- identify how information literacy can contribute to their professional development as a researcher
- identify how the skills and attributes they have developed through research can contribute to, or underpin their development in information literacy
- select areas that they need to develop to be more effective in information literacy and use this to inform development reviews
- provide evidence of the transferability of their information literacy skills in their CV/ in job applications and at interviews.

Researcher developers may wish to use this lens to:
- demonstrate to researchers and other stakeholders how information literacy can contribute towards the overall professional development of researchers
- enable researchers to recognise the learning they have acquired through information literacy related activities and highlight the transferability of these abilities
- explore how the Vitae Researcher Development Framework relates to the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy
- strategically align information literacy learning and development provision around the lens.

The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy

The Seven Pillars of Information Literacy model defines the core abilities and understanding at the heart of information literacy development in higher education.

The model is conceived as a three dimensional circular ‘building’, founded on an information landscape which comprises the information world as it is perceived by an individual at that point in time. Each pillar is further described by a series of statements relating to a set of skills/competencies and a set of attitudes/understandings and mapped against the RDF overhead. The model is not a linear process and a person can be developing with within several pillars simultaneously and independently, although in practice they are often closely linked. It is expected that as a person becomes more information literate they will demonstrate more of the attributes in each pillar and so move towards the top of the pillar.

For further information about the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy visit www.sconul.ac.uk

To protect and maintain the integrity of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and the Researcher Development Statement (RDS1) and to ensure a consistent approach to the development of lenses on the RDF, anyone wishing to create a lens on the RDF should seek permission from Vitae, and must adhere to the RDF conditions of use6. Enquiries regarding the development of a lens on the RDF should be directed to rd@vitae.ac.uk

For further information about the range of Vitae activities go to www.vitae.ac.uk or contact website@vitae.ac.uk

For further information about the Research Information Network and SCONUL please visit www.researchinfn.et.org www.sconul.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

1 www.vitae.ac.uk/rd/s
2 www.vitae.ac.uk/conditionsofuse
3 www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/coremodel.pdf
4 www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/researchlens.pdf
5 American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy (ALA, 1989) www.ala.org/acrl/publications/whitepapers/presidential#importance
6 The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy core model for higher education (April 2011) www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/coremodel.pdf

The story of the Vitae Researcher Development Network (Vitae) is managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation, delivering research into career development and managed in partnership with regional Hub host universities across the UK.

Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK), managed by CRAC, and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities.
**Information literacy lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework using the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pillar</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain A - Knowledge and intellectual abilities</strong></td>
<td>- The knowledge, intellectual abilities and techniques to do research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain B - Personal effectiveness</strong></td>
<td>- The personal qualities and approach to be an effective researcher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain C - Research governance and organisation</strong></td>
<td>- The knowledge of the standards, requirements and professionalism to do research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain D - Engagement, influence and impact</strong></td>
<td>- The knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain E - Communication and collaboration</strong></td>
<td>- The importance of information/data sharing and accessibility to maximise opportunities for collaborative research, further subject and enhance own profile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain F - Information literacy - academic literacy and numeracy</strong></td>
<td>- How information searching techniques can impact on the longer term reuse/availability of information/data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domain G - Information handling - legal requirements</strong></td>
<td>- How to set and work to appropriate standards of conduct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Understands:**
- The importance of information/data sharing and accessibility to maximise opportunities for collaborative research, further subject and enhance own profile.
- How sharing and making data accessible aids synthesis and facilitates new research.
- The need for professional integrity and honesty with regards to information/data handling.
- Good research practice and recognises malpractice, e.g. plagiarism and fraud.
- How to set appropriate standards of conduct.
- The need for professional integrity and honesty with regards to information/data handling.

**Is able to:**
- Use different forms and styles of communication, and to network accordingly.
- Incorporate new research findings into the context of existing knowledge, and see connections between sections of own data and relevant literature.
- Assess and advise on the credibility, quality, integrity and authenticity of primary and secondary information/data.
- Use bibliometrics as an evaluative technique.

**Uses:**
- The application of obligations/requirements to other stakeholders.
- Take responsibility for dissemination of information/data and findings as part of the research management process.
- Plan for information needs, including data management, as part of the timing of research projects.
- Use new/emerging information/data-related tools when they become available.

**Understands:**
- How to set appropriate standards of conduct.
- That ideas and opportunities emerge from the seeking and investigating of information/data.
- How new tools/techniques can encourage information/data sharing and interdisciplinary research.
- That information literacy implies the constant and active seeking of new information/data.

**Is able to:**
- Identify and communicate data management requirements to other stakeholders.
- Plan at the start of a project how information/data will be managed.
- Take responsibility for dissemination of information/data and findings as part of the research management process.
- Demonstrate awareness of rights of other researchers and research participants.

**Understands:**
- How the scoping/planning of research can impact upon the longer term reuse/accessibility of information/data.
- How and when to use different search and retrieval resources and tools.

**Is able to:**
- Use new/emerging information/data-related tools when they become available.
- Discover and obtain information/data, assess reliability, reputation, appropriateness and relevance of sources.
- Acquire, collate, organise, validate, share, store and curate information/data.

**Understands:**
- How to set appropriate standards of conduct.
- Take responsibility for a research project, including management of information/data.
- That information literacy implies the constant and active seeking of new information/data.

**Is able to:**
- Critically analyse, synthesise, validate and evaluate new and complex information/data from different sources.
- Incorporate new research findings into the context of existing knowledge, and see connections between sections of own data and relevant literature.
- Assess and advise on the credibility, quality, integrity and authenticity of primary and secondary information/data.

**Uses:**
- The application of obligations/requirements to other stakeholders.
- Take responsibility for dissemination of information/data and findings as part of the research management process.
- Plan for information needs, including data management, as part of the timing of research projects.
- Use new/emerging information/data-related tools when they become available.

**Understands:**
- The importance of information/data sharing and accessibility to maximise opportunities for collaborative research, further subject and enhance own profile.
- How sharing and making data accessible aids synthesis and facilitates new research.
- The need for professional integrity and honesty with regards to information/data handling.
- Good research practice and recognises malpractice, e.g. plagiarism and fraud.
- How to set appropriate standards of conduct.
- The need for professional integrity and honesty with regards to information/data handling.

**Is able to:**
- Use different forms and styles of communication, and to network accordingly.
- Incorporate new research findings into the context of existing knowledge, and see connections between sections of own data and relevant literature.
- Assess and advise on the credibility, quality, integrity and authenticity of primary and secondary information/data.
- Use bibliometrics as an evaluative technique.

**Understands:**
- How to set appropriate standards of conduct.
- Take responsibility for a research project, including management of information/data.
- That information literacy implies the constant and active seeking of new information/data.

**Is able to:**
- Use new/emerging information/data-related tools when they become available.
- Discover and obtain information/data, assess reliability, reputation, appropriateness and relevance of sources.
- Acquire, collate, organise, validate, share, store and curate information/data.

**Understands:**
- How the scoping/planning of research can impact upon the longer term reuse/accessibility of information/data.
- How and when to use different search and retrieval resources and tools.

**Is able to:**
- Use new/emerging information/data-related tools when they become available.
- Discover and obtain information/data, assess reliability, reputation, appropriateness and relevance of sources.
- Acquire, collate, organise, validate, share, store and curate information/data.