

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is a comprehensive new approach to enhancing the careers of researchers. It was developed through interviews with successful researchers in a range of disciplines.

## For researchers

The RDF encourages individual researchers to identify strengths and prioritise their professional development. It enables them to consider the skills and experiences that will enhance their career prospects and to articulate their knowledge, behaviours and attributes to employers.

## For supervisors, research managers and principal investigators

The RDF provides a way to fulfil the intentions of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, the QAA Code of practice for research degree programmes and the Roberts recommendations for postgraduate researchers and research staff. It is fundamental to the planning of professional and career development for groups or individual researchers.

## For staff in higher education institutions (HEIs)

The Researcher Development Statement (RDS) provides a UK framework for professional and career enhancement for researchers, which is recognised by the Research Councils, Funding Councils, Universities UK, employers and other relevant organisations. HEIs use the RDS to underpin strategies for researcher development, build researcher development into the day-to-day business of doing research and identify priorities for professional development.

## For policy makers, employers and other stakeholders

The RDS underpins researcher training and development in the UK, enhancing our capability to develop world-class researchers and realise their potential for all sectors of the economy and society.

## About Vitae

Vitae works with UK higher education institutions (HEIs) to embed professional and career development in the research environment. Vitae plays a leading role in innovating, sharing practice and enhancing the capability of the higher education sector to provide professional development and training for researchers.

Our vision is for the UK to be world-class in supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers.

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# The Researcher Development Framework

The Researcher Development Statement (RDS) and Researcher Development Framework (RDF) contribute to researcher training and development in the UK by providing a strategic statement (RDS), endorsed by Research Councils UK, Universities UK and other leading national organisations, and a more detailed operational framework (RDF). Together they support the implementation of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers<sup>1</sup>, and the QAA Code of Practice for research degree programmes<sup>2</sup>.

## What is the Researcher Development Statement?

The Researcher Development Statement (RDS) is a strategic statement setting out the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of effective and highly skilled researchers appropriate for a wide range of careers.

The RDS is designed for policy makers, businesses and research organisations that provide personal, professional and career development for researchers. The Researcher Development Statement is an evolution of the Research Councils' Joint Skills Statement (JSS) and replaces the JSS as the key reference statement for the development of postgraduate researchers' skills and attributes. Four domains encompass what researchers need to be effective in their approach to research, when working with others and in contributing to the wider society and environment.

**Domain A:**  
Knowledge and intellectual abilities

**Domain B:**  
Personal effectiveness

**Domain C:**  
Research governance and organisation

**Domain D:**  
Engagement, influence and impact

## What is the Researcher Development Framework?

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) underlies the Researcher Development Statement (RDS) and represents a major new approach to researcher development, to enhance our capability to build the UK workforce, develop world-class researchers and build our research base.

The RDF is a tool for planning, promoting and supporting the personal, professional and career development of researchers. It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of researchers and encourages them to aspire to excellence through achieving higher levels of development.

### The Framework is designed for:

- researchers to evaluate and plan their own personal, professional and career development
- managers and supervisors of researchers in their role supporting the development of researchers
- trainers, developers, human resources specialists and careers advisors in the planning and provision of support for researchers' development.
- employers to provide an understanding of the blend of skills unique to researchers and their potential as employees.

<sup>1</sup> [www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/documents/concordat.pdf](http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/documents/concordat.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section1/default.asp](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section1/default.asp)

