Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If your questions are not answered in our FAQ section, then please ask your question at rdfplannerhelpdesk@vitae.ac.uk.

Queries relating to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and the RDF Planner

1. What is the Vitae Researcher Development Framework?

The Vitae 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. The RDF states in great detail the knowledge, behaviours and attributes gained through doing research. Divided into four domains and 63 descriptors, it covers all the skills and attributes of a successful researcher. It encourages you to identify your strengths and prioritise your professional development. The RDF enables you to consider skills and experiences that will enhance your career prospects and articulate your knowledge, behaviours and attributes to employers.

2. How do I plan my professional development using the RDF Planner?

The RDF Planner allows you to set targeted aspirational goals. This involves reading through the phases of development for each descriptor you are interested in, deciding which phase best describes you currently, choosing which phase you want to reach and thinking about how you are going to achieve that.

3. Why is it important to focus on my professional development?

Many successful people follow a plan for their career. This can vary from a detailed plan to a broad direction which allows chance to play a role too. The most useful plans are based on thorough self-awareness and knowledge of career options open to you. You are the only person who can take responsibility for your own professional development.

4. Is the Vitae Researcher Development Framework limited to planning a career in academia?

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) is designed to encourage researchers to develop the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and these skills are transferable to occupations and employers outside academia. The RDF provides researchers with the language to articulate their experience to employers. The employers who contributed to the validation of content of the RDF recognised the language and value of the RDF. Several noted a similarity between the RDF and their organisations' professional development frameworks.

5. How can the RDF Planner help me plan my career options?

The RDF Planner enables you to consider skills and experiences that will enhance your career prospects and articulate your knowledge, behaviours and attributes to employers. It is not exclusive to people wanting to pursue an academic career. The RDF Planner covers the complete researcher continuum from postgraduate researcher to research staff to principal investigator/supervisor and the complete breadth of their roles: research, teaching and learning, career development, knowledge transfer, etc. It is informed by the requirements of different job roles/functions as appropriate during a research career. It allows individuals to take different routes through the framework and recognises varied learning styles and approaches to development. Differences between disciplines have been taken into account.

Technical queries relating to the RDF Planner

6. Do I have to have an account with one of these services to log in?

We are currently using the following authentication services to establish the identity of users logging in to the RDF Planner:

- Windows Live (Hotmail, SkyDrive, Xbox LIVE)
- Google (Gmail, Google+, YouTube, Google Docs)
- Yahoo! (Yahoo! Mail, BTInternet, flickr)
- Facebook

You will need an account with one of these services to access the RDF Planner. Most people will already have one of these accounts and will not have to maintain a separate username and password to access this RDF Planner.

Each ACS provider requires you to login. Some ACS provider provide additional options/preferences as part of accessing and configuring access to the RDF Planner via ACS. Please ensure that you take time to select these preferences.

7. Can my university/organisation/employer see or use the email address associated with the account I use to log in?

No. If you were invited to use the RDF Planner by your organisation, your organisation can see which provider you are using to login with but they cannot see or use any account details associated with the provider. Knowing which ACS provider you used to access the RDF Planner will enable your administrator to remind you should you forget which provider you used.

8. Can Vitae see or use the email address associated with the account I use to log in?

Vitae will use the email address associated with the account that you use to log in with to contact you if, and only if, you have opted-in to receiving updates and information about the RDF Planner and/or have opted in to receiving updates and information about other Vitae services. Employees of Vitae and its service development and hosting partners will have access to user data in order to administer the RDF Planner and ensure the service operates as efficiently as possible in accordance with the Privacy Policy. Vitae will never pass or sell on your email address to third parties for marketing or sales purposes. Your personal information will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

9. Can I change which provider I use to log in with?

Once you have chosen to use a one of the supported providers you will need to continue using the same provider to access the RDF Planner. If for some reason this is not possible, you will need to contact Vitae in order to request a change to the log in provider you are using.

10. What do I do if I've forgotten which provider I'm using?

If you have accounts with more than one of the supported log in providers, you could use trial and error to find the correct account. Alternatively, if you were invited to use the RDF Planner by your organisation you could contact the organisation RDF Planner administrator who sent you the original invitation and they will be able to tell you which login provider you are using. If you cannot contact your organisation's RDF Planner administrator, please contact Vitae at rdfplannerhelpdesk@vitae.ac.uk.