Vitae Researcher Development Framework Planner

RDF Planner introduction and user guide – for organisation subscription users

To provide feedback on this user guide or to make suggestions for improvements, please email rdfplannerhelpdesk@vitae.ac.uk with 'User guide' in the subject line.

Contents

1   Introducing the Vitae RDF Planner

In the current economic climate, personal development planning for researchers has become increasingly more important to maintain your progress and make key decisions about your future career.

"The RDF is designed for researchers so it's focussed on our needs. I would use this framework rather than others"

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) has been incorporated into the RDF Planner application to enable you to broaden your horizons and inform your career plans.

The RDF Planner is designed to help you:
- reflect on your achievements against the Vitae RDF
- set aspirational goals
- consider skills and experiences that will enhance your prospects of success in particular career areas
- identify opportunities for further professional development
- create a personal record of progress, backed up by evidence
- develop an action plan
- highlight, articulate and evidence the transferability of your skills in your CV, in job applications and at interviews
- articulate your skills and attributes in a language employers outside as well as inside academia will recognise and respect
- prepare for one-on-one reviews with your supervisor, research manager or principal investigator where you will be discussing your professional or career development

When to review
You can review your career, where you are and where you want to be, at different points, for example to:
- develop in your current role
- prepare for promotion
- find a new direction/job

Vitae has developed this innovative, interactive RDF Planner incorporating the Vitae Researcher Development Framework to support researchers in their own professional and career development.

2   Getting started

To use the RDF Planner under an organisation subscription, you will need to:

- have been added to the application by your organisation admin
- have received an email invitation from your organisation admin
- follow the link in the invitation email and complete and submit the registration form. You must agree to the Terms and Conditions and Cookies policy as part of this process

Registration is a one-off process. Once you have successfully registered you can logon to the RDF Planner at http://www.rdfplanner.net.

Registering and logging on are covered in more detail in the Getting Started guide. You can also see information on how to transfer to a different organisation subscription in the Getting Started guide.

3   Navigating the RDF Planner

From the RDF Planner home page you can access:

- myRDF – first tile/box on the home page. From here you can navigate through the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and record actions and evidence against RDF elements (see Suggestions for creating an action plan)
- myEvidence – second tile/box on the home page. Access your evidence repository, where you can upload documents, add links to online evidence or add text to support your development.
- myReports – third tile/box on the home page. From here you can access the RDF Planner reporting engine and get an overview of your action plan. You can export data from the system (see How to view your action plan and How to export action plan information)
- Useful links – fourth set of tile/boxs on the home page. From here you can link out to help and support files and sites
- Profile – Profile button in the application page footer. From here you can update the profile information that you set when you first registered on the RDF Planner (see Updating your profile settings)

You can use the 'Home' icon in the header to return to the RDF Planner from anywhere in the application.

You can quickly move to the top of a page by clicking on the 'Back to top' icon that appears in the bottom right corner of the screen as you scroll down.

Vitae Researcher Development Framework Planner

There are links to 'Help and Support' files, the 'Privacy Policy',' Terms and Conditions', 'FAQs' and a 'Glossary' of RDF terms in the application page footer.

Tip: you can use the RDF Planner report engine to get an overview of the phases for descriptors that you have achieved or are currently working on and to see the actions and evidence you have entered in the RDF Planner.
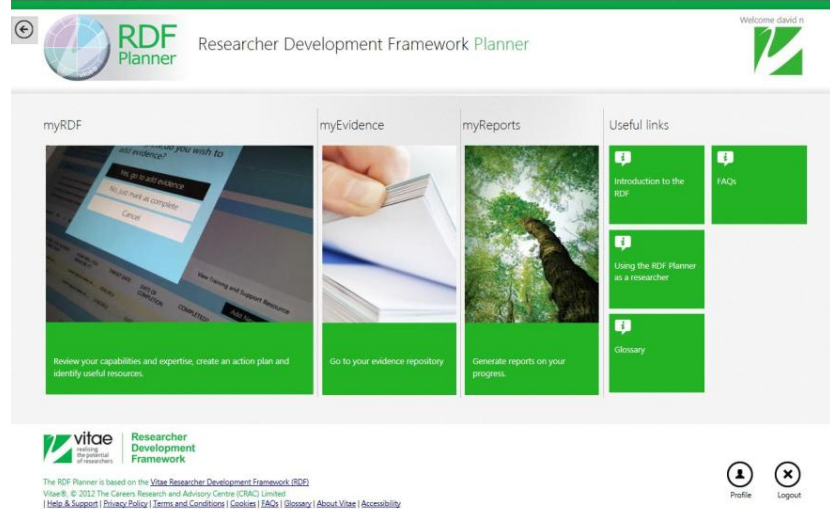
4   Suggestions for creating an action plan

Information

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.

The RDF states in great detail the knowledge, behaviours and attributes gained through doing research. It encourages you to identify your strengths and prioritise your professional development and allows you to set targeted aspirational goals.

Tip: You may wish to [print a copy of the RDF](#) for reference as you navigate the RDF Planner and set goals.

The RDF is divided into four domains and 63 descriptors and covers all the skills and attributes of a successful researcher. Each descriptor is divided into a number of phases of development that describe the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of research professionals at increasing levels of experience. Creating an action plan 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.

Vitae Researcher Development Framework Planner

Creating an action plan involves:
- navigating to the descriptor that interests you
- choosing the phase that best describes your current level of experience, marking this phase as achieved
- optionally adding evidence or hyperlinks to evidence that supports the current phase achieved
- choosing a target phase for the descriptor
- adding an action or multiple actions to the target phase that describe what you will do, in practice, to achieve this phase of development
- revisiting the target phase to add evidence that substantiates development against the target
- marking the target phase as achieved once you feel you have completed your outstanding action or actions and feel you have the experience to support the step up in level of development
- adding evidence to support the new phase
- setting new actions and targets for a higher phase if relevant.

The RDF Planner can be used to explore the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and set actions against the descriptors that interest you.

5   Navigating to the descriptor that interests you

1   Select the myRDF tile/box, the first tile/box on the RDF Planner home page.
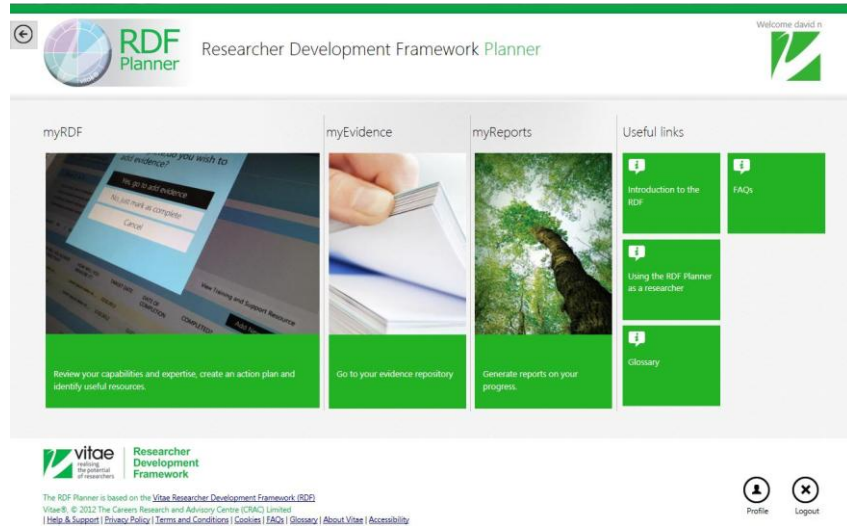
2   Expand the RDF tree view by clicking on the parent RDF domain and subdomain of the descriptor you wish to review until you can see the descriptor.
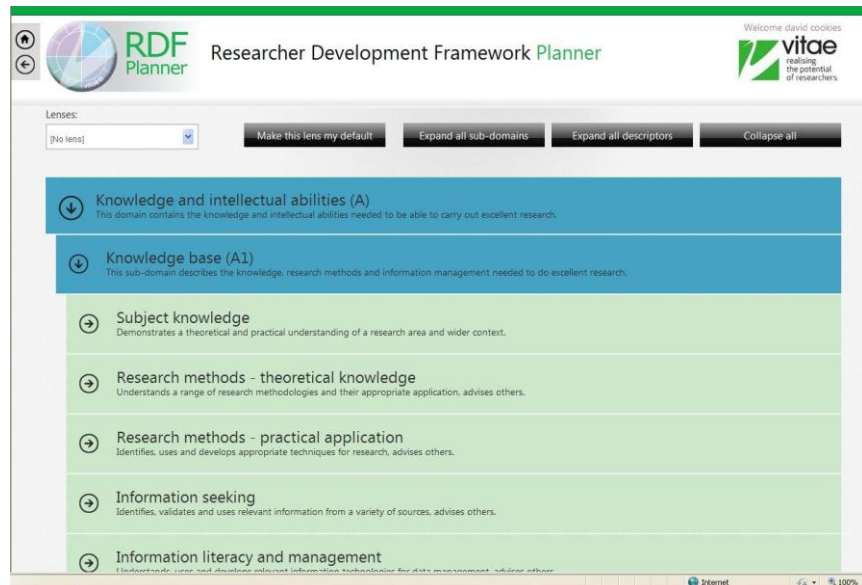
3   Click on the descriptor to expand the descriptor phases and click on a phase to see the phase details.
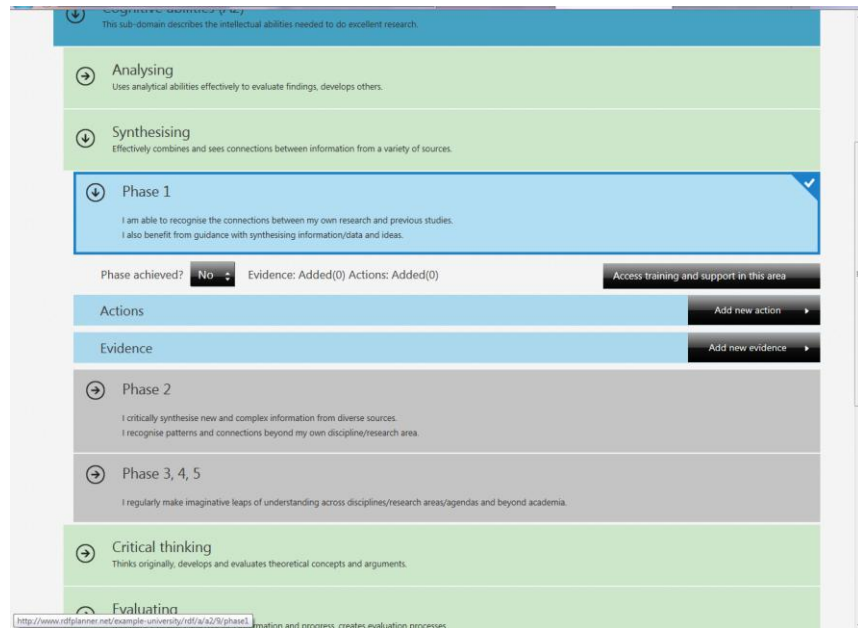
6 Marking a phase as achieved

When you have reached the phase details level of the RDF tree, you can mark a phase as achieved by clicking the black button labelled 'Phase achieved?'. The button value will toggle from 'No' to 'Yes'. This change in phase status is automatically saved to your action plan.

There is no requirement to have marked earlier phases as achieved but you may wish to do this first by going to the relevant phase detail sections.

7 Adding evidence supporting development against a phase or other RDF element/s

1   Select the 'Add new evidence' button
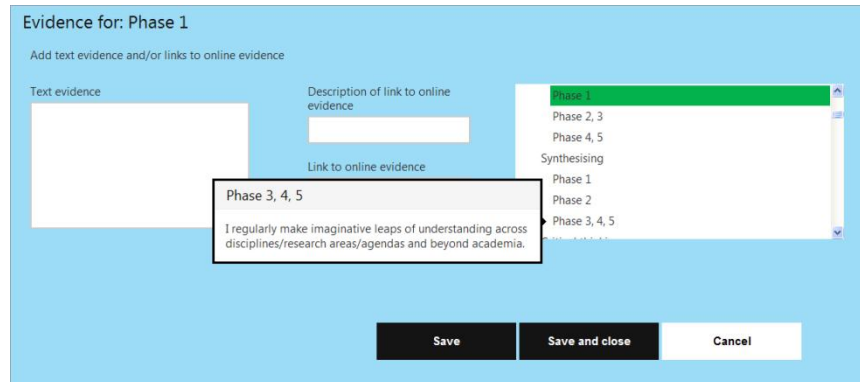
Tip: You can also add and manage evidence from your evidence repository (see section 12).

2   Select to add evidence from your evidence repository (see section 12) or select to add new evidence. In this example we will select to add a new item of evidence.

3   Select the evidence type. There are three types of evidence you can add:
   - text
   - link to online evidence
   - upload a document
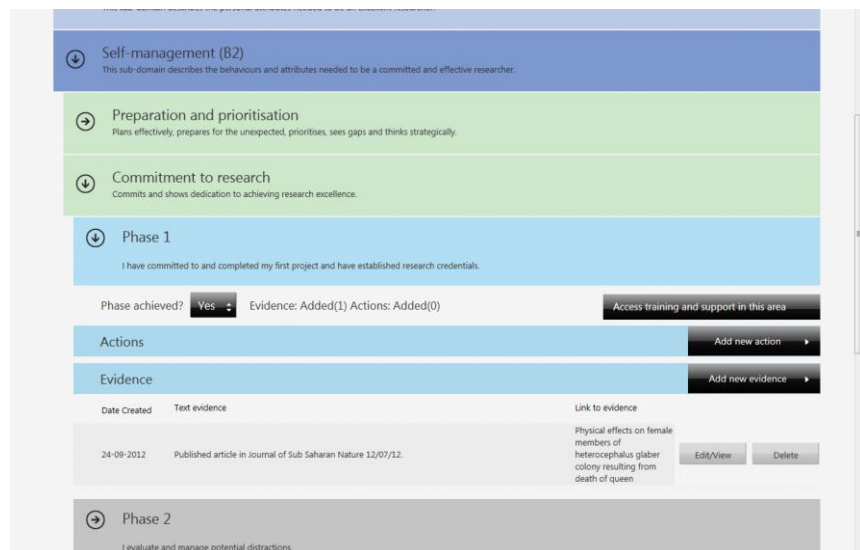
In this example we select the button for the text option.

Tip: hover over the RDF element names on the 'RDF Picker' tool on the 'Add evidence' form to see pop-ups of the text describing the RDF element

4 Complete the form fields and select the domain/s, sub-domain/s, descriptor/s or phase or phases that this evidence applies to using the 'RDF Picker' on the right hand side of the form.

5 Select the 'Save and close' button when finished.

6 Your evidence will appear as a line in the phase 'Evidence' table on the phase or phases that the evidence was tagged against or the phases that belong to the RDF element that the evidence was tagged against.

You can follow links to linked evidence or download your document in this table by clicking on the link description text in the 'Text/link' column in the 'Evidence' table. The target URL or opens in a new browser tab or your document downloads.

You can edit your evidence at any time by selecting the 'Edit/View' button in the table row.

You can remove a line of evidence from the phase 'Evidence' table by selecting the 'Remove' button in the table row. The evidence remains in your evidence repository but is no longer mapped to this RDF Phase.

8   Choosing a development target phase for a descriptor

To choose a target phase for a descriptor, exit the 'Add evidence' form if it is open by selecting 'Save and close'. Move down the RDF tree view by expanding and reviewing the phase details sections as you go. Decide which phase you would like to set as your target.

9   Access support resources and training opportunities

You can view training and support resources and opportunities for each phase by selecting the black button labelled 'Access training and support in this area' in the phase detail area of the RDF tree. A window will open showing resources and opportunities provided by Vitae, on the right hand side, and resources and opportunities provided by your organisation on the left hand side.
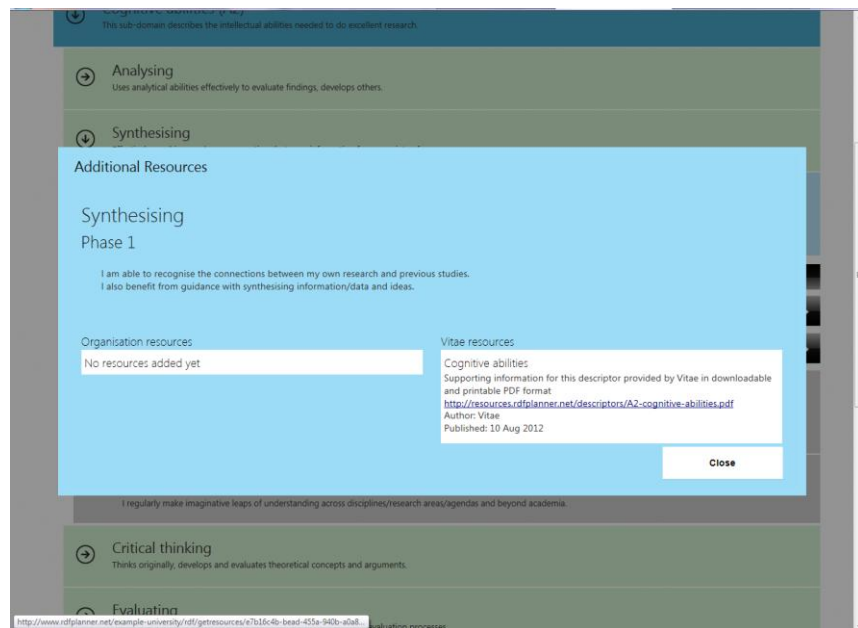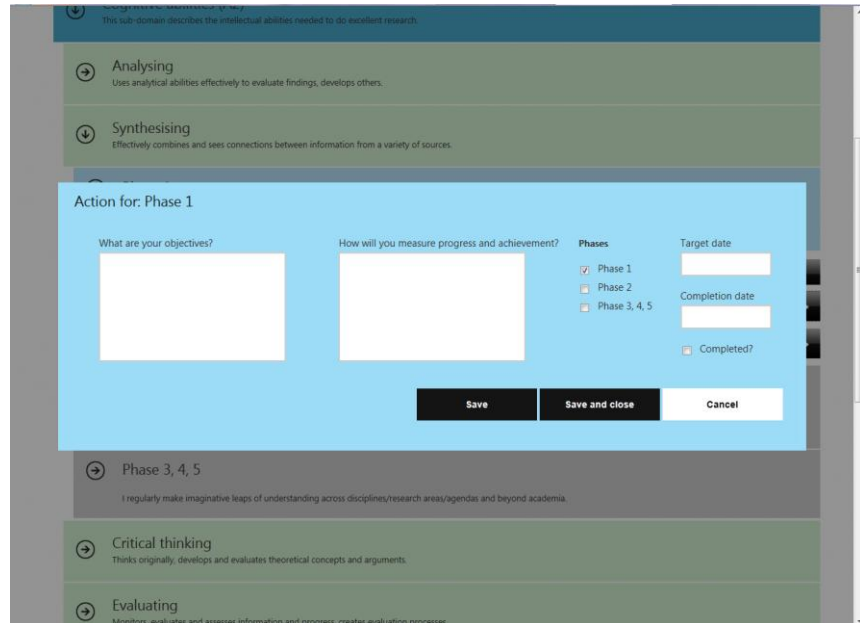
Once you have selected a target phase, you can use the phase description and supporting resources to help you reflect on how you might reach this developmental goal. It might then be useful to record how you are going to reach this goal as an action, or series of actions, marked against the target phase.

10 Adding an action or multiple actions to a phase

1 Select the 'Add new action' button in the phase detail view of the RDF tree. The 'Add action' window will open.

Tip: hover over the phase names on the 'Add action' form to see pop-ups of the text describing the phases

There are fields to record what your objective is for the action, and how you will measure progress and know when you have achieved the action.
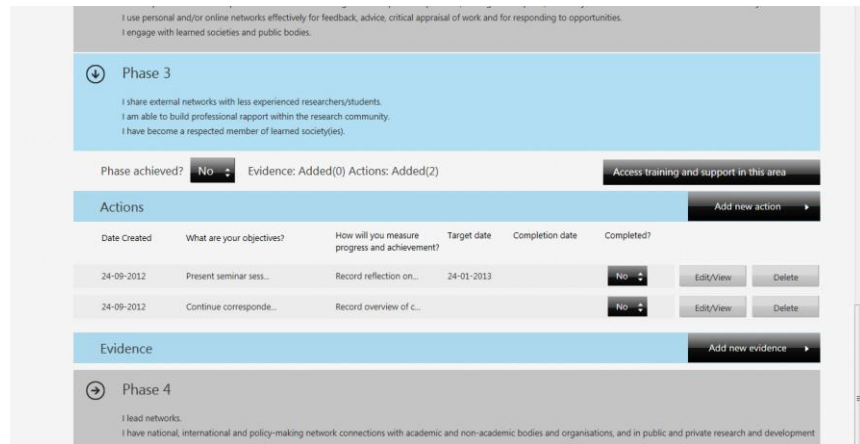
2 Select the other descriptor phases that this action applies to if relevant.

3 Select a target date for the action (optional).

Information

Target and completion dates can now be set in the past. This is useful if you are transferring data from the RDF Planner Excel Prototype tool.

4 Save and close when finished.

5 Your action will appear as a line in the phase 'Actions' table on the phase or phases that the evidence was tagged against.

6 You can edit your action at any time by selecting the 'Edit/View' button in the table row.

7 You can delete an action from the phase 'Actions' table by selecting the 'Delete' button in the table row.

11 On-going recording of evidence of achievement and progress

It is recommended that you periodically revisit the RDF Planner to:

- update target phases with new evidence (add new lines of evidence to the 'Evidence' table using the 'Add new evidence' form)
- review actions and add further actions if required (add new action to the 'Actions' table using the 'Add new action' form)
- close and mark as complete any actions that have been undertaken (using the 'Completion date' and 'Completed?' fields in the 'Edit action' form accessible from the 'Edit/View' button in the action table row
- explore and review other parts of the RDF as potentially useful for reflecting on and planning your career and personal development.

12 Managing your evidence using the evidence repository

1   Select the 'myEvidence' tile/box on the RDF Planner home page.
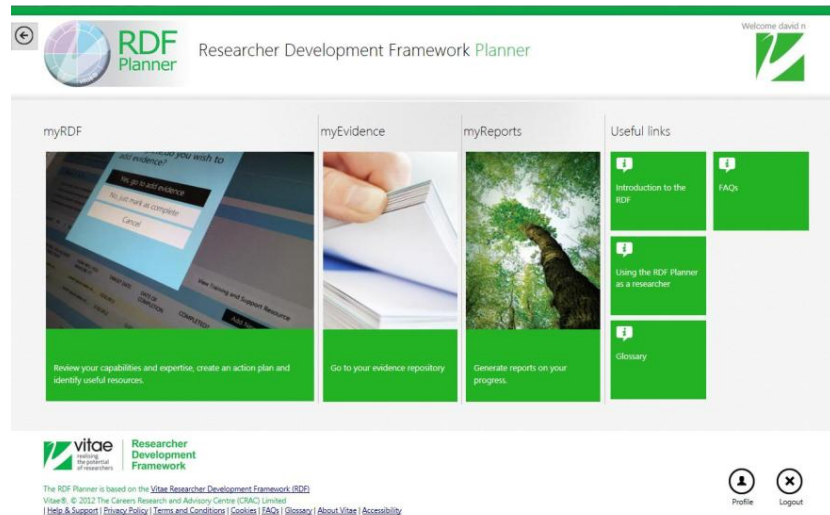
2   The 'Evidence list' shows you all the items of evidence that you have added to the RDF Planner.
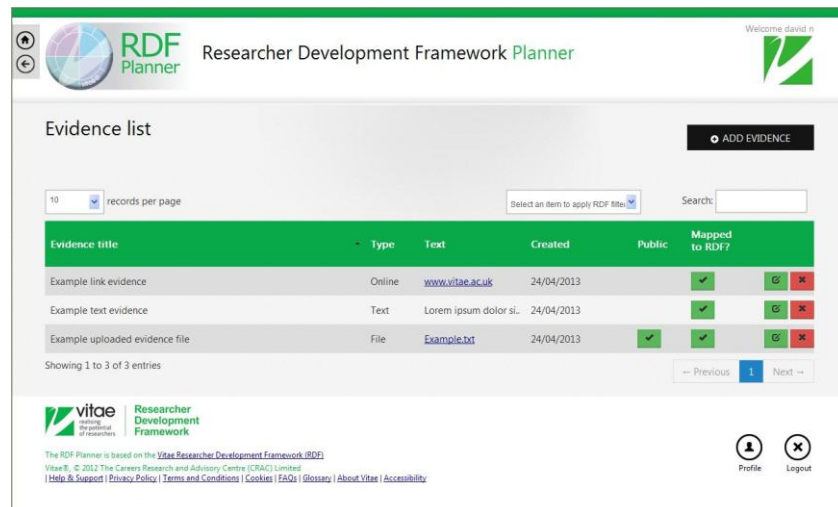
Information

There are three types of information that you can add to evidence your development:
- text
- link to online evidence
- upload a document

3   Manage your evidence. From the 'Evidence list', you can:
- add new evidence ('Add evidence' button, top right). Evidence added to the myEvidence repository will be available when you select to add evidence to a Phase in the RDF tree view.

- link to online evidence or download uploaded file evidence (click on link in 'Text' column)
- mark an uploaded file as 'Public' (accessible over the internet via a complex URL) or 'Private' (click on icon in the 'Public' column)
- share a file marked 'Public' with any contact. Copy the complex URL linking to a document that you have uploaded and marked as public. You can forward the URL link to a contact who will then be able to download and view the shared document (to copy link, right click link in 'Text' field and select 'Copy shortcut' from pop up menu)
- map evidence to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (click on the row edit icon next to the row delete icon and use the 'RDF Picker' on the evidence form)
- flag evidence as being relevant to your CV (click on the row edit icon next to the row delete icon and use the 'Useful for CV' checkbox on the evidence form)
- delete evidence from the RDF Planner (click on the row delete icon at far end of evidence row

13 Applying a lens (filter) to the RDF tree view

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) provides an overarching framework to support researchers in identifying the wide range of knowledge, behaviours and attributes of excellent researchers. Using the RDF, a lens provides an overview of the key knowledge, behaviours and attributes developed by researchers that can be acquired through, or used in, particular areas such as enterprise, leadership, teaching etc.

More information about the current complete set of RDF lenses can be found at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdflenses.

Lenses available on the RDF Planner can be applied by selecting from the 'Lenses' dropdown list at the top of the RDF tree. You can set a lens as your default view of the RDF by selecting the 'Make this lens my default' button.
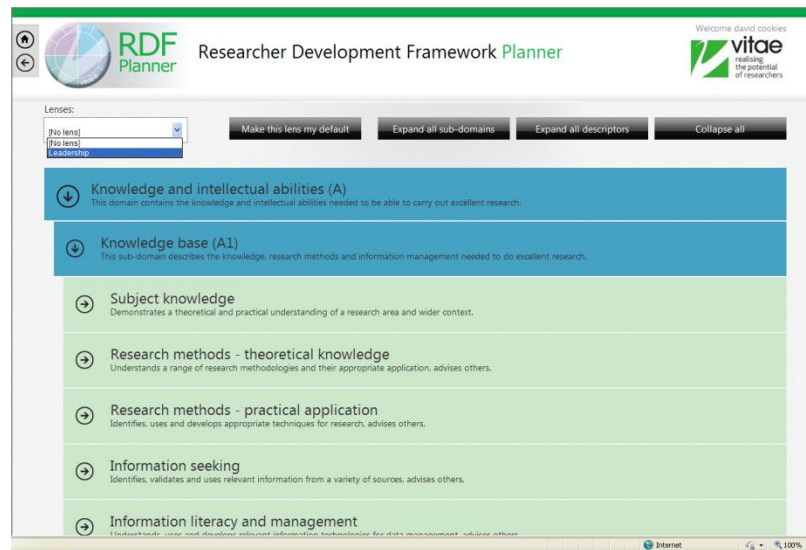
14 Getting an overview of your action plan

1   There are a number of real-time reports that you can run and that will give you an overview of your action plan. All reports are accessed by selecting the second tile/box on the RDF Planner home page labelled 'Reports'.
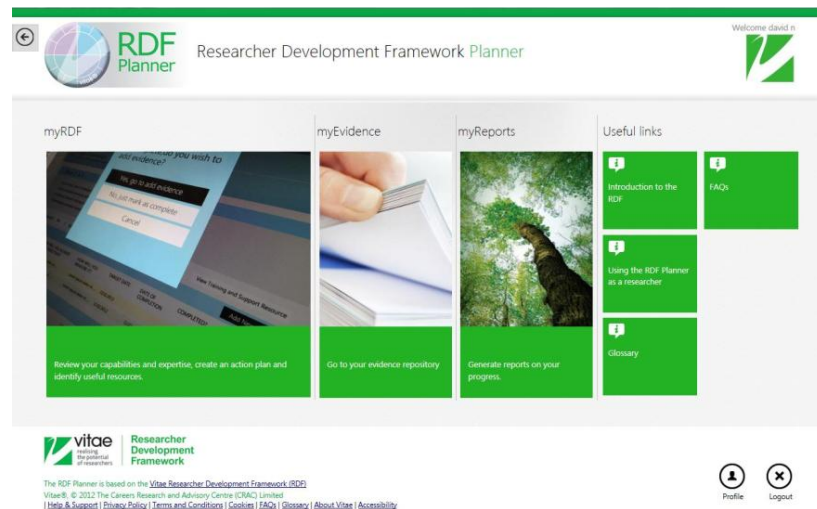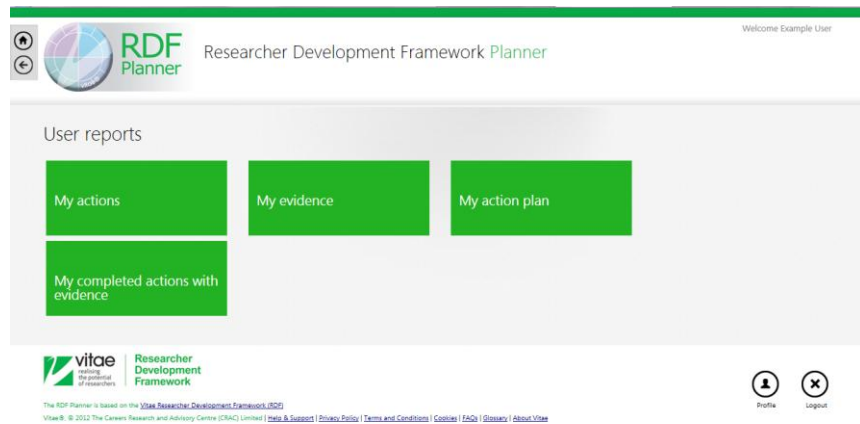
2   You will be taken to the 'Reports' home page which lists the available user reports.

Selecting a report will take you to that report's page. The report window will show as empty while the report compiles. This may take a few seconds.

14.2 My actions

The 'My actions' report shows all actions that you have entered onto the RDF Planner. Actions that are overdue are written in red. Actions that are in progress are written in blue. Actions that are completed are written in green. The 'Completed', 'In progress' and 'Overdue' status is also written in the 'Completed' column on the report.
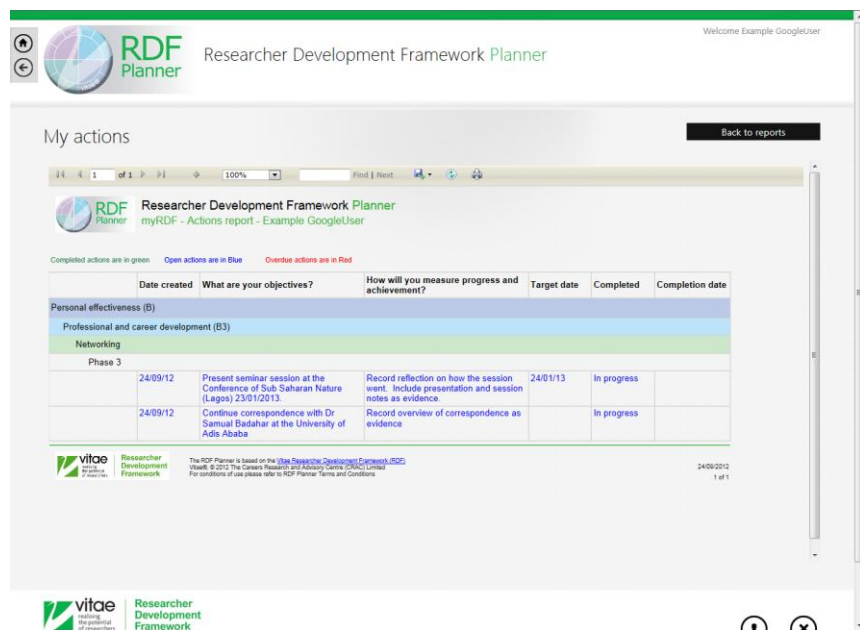
14.3 My evidence

The 'My evidence' report shows all evidence that you have entered onto the RDF Planner mapped against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.
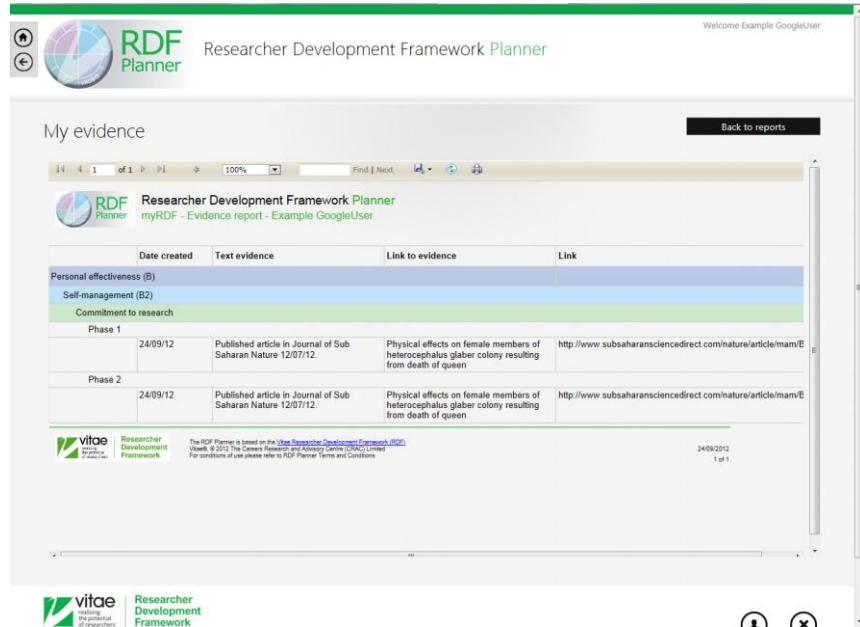
14.4 My action plan
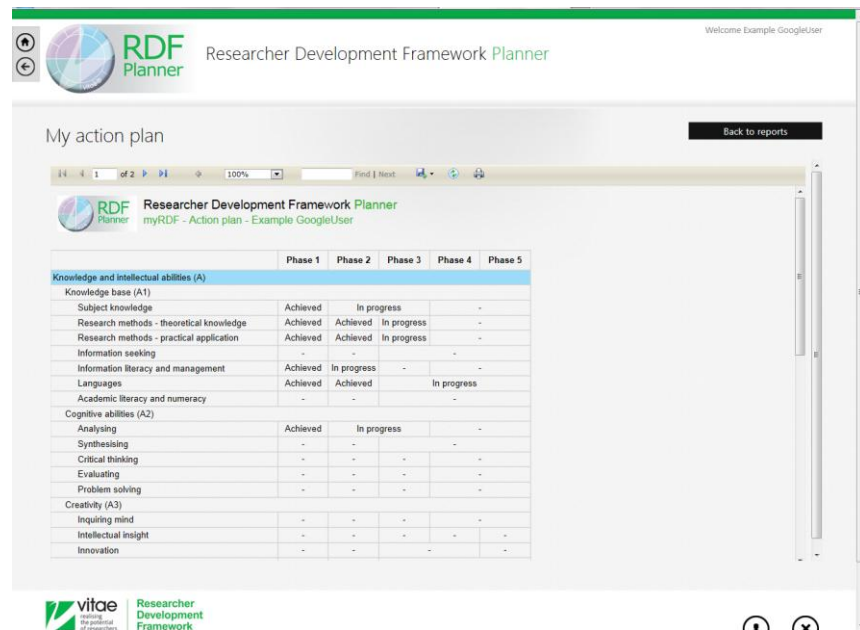
The 'My action plan' report gives an overview of your activity against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

The report shows every phase for every descriptor in the framework.

Phases that have been marked as achieved in the RDF Planner show as 'Achieved' on the report.

Phases that are not marked as achieved but have actions and/or evidence recorded against them are marked as 'In progress' on the report.

Phases that are not marked as achieved and have no activity against them, in the form of actions or evidence are marked with a dash symbol.

14.5 My completed actions with evidence

This report shows a complete list of your actions in the RDF Planner along with any evidence that has been entered against the phases containing actions.

14.6 How to export action plan information

To export data, run the report that contains the data you want to export. Then click the small floppy disk icon in the report header and select the file format you want to export to from the drop down menu. Supported formats for data export are:
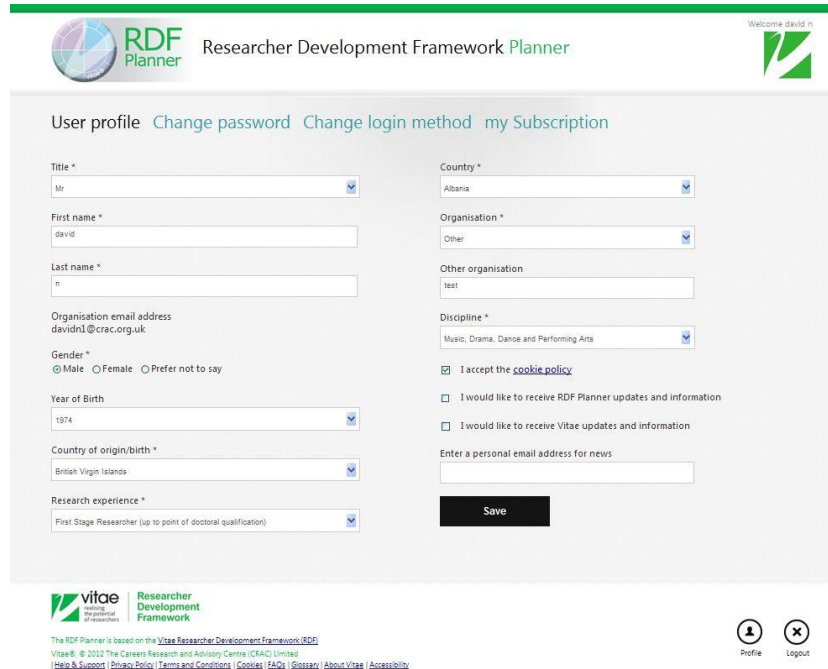
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- XML
- CSV (comma delimited)
- PDF
- MHTML
- Excel
- TIFF
- Word

15 Updating your profile settings

1   To update your profile information, log on to the RDF Planner and select the 'Profile' button on the right hand side of the application footer. The profile window will open. Update your profile information and save changes by selecting the 'Save' button.

You can:

change your password if you are using the standard email and password login method or change to an alternative login method.

16 Getting help

There are a number of sources available to gain further information about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and for obtaining more help in using the RDF Planner online tool.

16.1 RDF help

- Information about the RDF can be found by clicking on the 'Introduction to the RDF' tile/box in the 'Useful links' section of the home page
- Further information about the RDF can be found on the Vitae website at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf
- Links to a glossary of RDF terms and terms related to the area of personal development can be found in the RDF Planner footer and in the 'Useful links' section of the home page

16.2 RDF Planner help

- The 'Useful links' section on the RDF Planner home page includes links to help documents and web pages provided by Vitae and your organisation
- You can view training and support resources and opportunities for RDF descriptor phases by selecting the black button labelled 'Access training and support in this area' when you are looking at the phase detail section of the RDF tree
- If you are having problems getting started or logging on to the system, you can get help from your organisation administrator. Your organisation administrator's email address is included in the email you were sent inviting you to logon to the RDF Planner
- If you cannot find the answers you need in the above resources, you can email the RDF Planner support team at rdfplannerhelpdesk@vitae.ac.uk