**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](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf).

For further information about the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy visit [www.sconul.ac.uk](http://www.sconul.ac.uk).

Supporting materials relating to this lens are available at [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf lenses](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf lenses).

**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)

**The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy**

The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy is a comprehensive model for the development of information literacy in higher education. The pillars are:

1. **Evidence**
2. **Identity**
3. **Present**
4. **Gather**
5. **Receive**
6. **Evolve**
7. **Process**

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 overlaid. The model is not a linear process and a person can be developing 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.

**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 and vice versa
- Strategically align information literacy learning and development provision around the lens.

**Lens development**

The information literacy lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy has been developed by RIN, SCONUL and members of the Working Group on Information-Handling. The Working Group is a partnership of higher education institutions and the following stakeholder organisations:

- British Association for Information and Library Education and Research (BAILER), British Library, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), Digital Curation Centre (DCC), Higher Education Academy (HEA), JISC, Jorum, Research Information Network (RIN), Research Libraries UK (RLUK), Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL), UK Council for Graduate Education (UCGCE), Universities UK (UKU), Vitae.

For further information about the Vitae Researcher Development Framework visit [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk).

For further information about the range of Vitae activities go to [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk) or contact rdf@vitae.ac.uk.

For further information about the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy visit [www.sconul.ac.uk](http://www.sconul.ac.uk).

Supporting materials relating to this lens are available at [www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf lenses](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf lenses).

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2. The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy core model for higher education (April 2011) [www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/coremodel.pdf](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/coremodel.pdf)
3. [www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/researchlens.pdf](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/information_literacy/publications/researchlens.pdf)