Using eDoc for a Training Needs Analysis
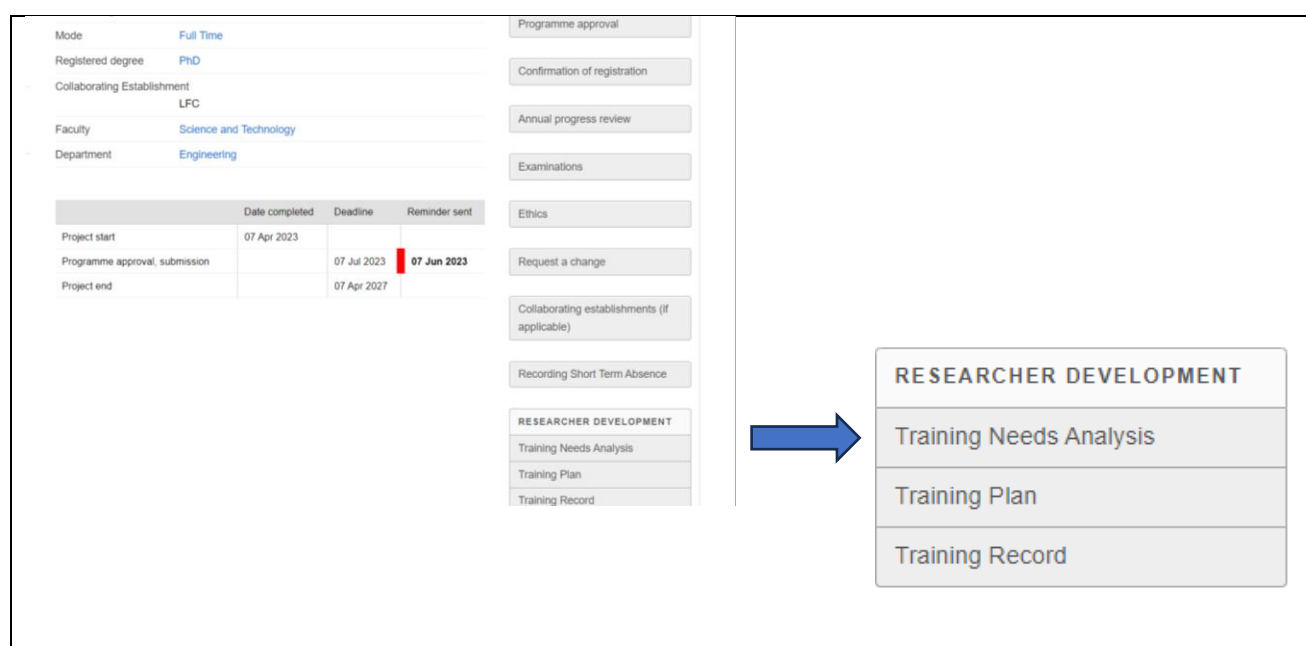
What is a Training Needs Analysis?

A Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is a reflective exercise to help you to identify your current skillset and to establish what areas of development you need to focus on to improve your skills, knowledge and abilities as a researcher.

When should I undertake a Training Needs Analysis?

You should start your TNA early on in your doctorate. The results will help you to complete your first Training Plan (TP), which is required for your Programme Approval. Your TNA helps you to determine your development priorities for the year ahead, and your TP then sets out a series of specific, timely objectives based on these priorities. Please refer to the 'Creating a Training Plan in eDoc' for more guidance on this process. Unlike your Training Plan, there is no submission point or approval for your Training Needs Analysis, so you can go into it and update it wherever you need to, as your training needs evolve.

How can eDoc help with my Training Needs Analysis?

eDoc has an interactive tool that can help you to do a Training Needs Analysis. You can find the TNA tool at the bottom right corner of your project page on eDoc:

The eDoc TNA tool enables you to benchmark yourself against the **Researcher Development Framework** (RDF), which is a national framework of skills, behaviours and characteristics needed to be an effective researcher. See the Appendix for the full RDF image.

The RDF has four domains: knowledge, personal effectiveness, research governance and engagement. These are represented in the four tabs in the TNA on eDoc:

Update training needs: Mr Dieter Bowen

Training Needs Analysis ▶ **Training Plan** ▶ **Training Record**

Please keep your training needs up-to-date throughout your project.

RDF Domains

Engagement | Knowledge | Personal effectiveness | Research governance

Skill	Current skill level	Priority	Events

Each RDF domain has three subdomains and a number of associated descriptors. Each descriptor has five phases which set out the typical knowledge and/or behaviour for different levels of that descriptor. You can find a description of the phases by selecting the information button next to the descriptor.

Engagement | Knowledge | Personal effectiveness | Research governance

Skill	Current skill level	Priority	Events
Communication and dissemination - Communication media	1 2 3 4 5	low high	2
Communication and dissemination - Communication methods 2 notes	1 2 3 4 5	low high	1

RDF subdomain

RDF descriptor

Links to forthcoming training events related to descriptor

Select 'i' for details of phases

Skill	Current skill level	Priority	Events
Communication and dissemination - Communication media	1 2 3 4 5	low high	

1. Develops skills in a range of communication means, e.g. face-to-face interaction using interactive technologies, and/or textual and visual media, where useful/necessary. Has a web presence as a researcher. Uses audio-visual aids effectively in presentations.

2. Is confident in face-to-face interactions. Uses interactive communication technologies for networking, information/data sharing and promoting research presence. Engages with locally available media. Makes the complex accessible using a wide range of audio-visuals as appropriate. Willingly learns additional skills.

3. Confidently uses e-resources. Establishes and leads virtual research environments. Collaborates and communicates research 'virtually'. Uses national/international media and web media. Continuously seeks self-improvement in terms of media usage. Educates, advises and guides others.

4. Maintains advanced level of knowledge and skill in interactive communication technologies. Is aware of and engages with international media.

5. Is an institutional/disciplinary leader with global presence on key issues.

Note that the RDF is intended to be an aspirational framework. Phases 1-5 represent a long research career, with phase five describing behaviour of a very established researcher. There is no expectation that you reach phase five as a doctoral researcher!

Once you've read through the phases, you can mark the phase that matches where you are with that particular skill descriptor, and decide whether it is a priority area for you over the next 6-12 months:

Do I need to fill in my current skill level for ALL of the skills listed in the Training Needs Analysis?

No you don't need to do every skill listed in the RDF/TNA. There are 63 skill descriptors in total, which can be quite overwhelming, especially at the start of your doctorate. One way to approach it is to look at the Researcher Development Framework wheel first (see Appendix), identify a few areas that you feel are current strengths, and a few skills areas that you are likely to need during the next 6-12 months, and focus on these in your TNA. It would be helpful to discuss this with your supervisor(s) too.

Do I have to use eDoc for a Training Needs Analysis?

No, the TNA on eDoc is a tool to help you reflect on your development needs and priorities, but you can choose to do this another way if you prefer, eg. through a conversation with your supervisors, or by annotating a copy of the RDF (see Appendix).

What do I do with my Training Needs Analysis once I have completed it?

There is no end point or submission required for your Training Needs Analysis. You can go into it and update it whenever you need to, as your training needs change. Before your Programme Approval stage, however, you need to complete and submit a Training Plan. You can use the priorities you identified in your TNA to create objectives for your Training Plan.

Your supervisory team can see where you have benchmarked yourself in your TNA. The supervisor's view looks like this:

Appendix: The Researcher Development Framework

The Researcher Development Framework (RDF) was developed by Vitae in 2010. It sets out the wide-ranging knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards expected to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research.

You can find more information on the Vitae website here and you can download a full version of the RDF, which includes all of the phases for each descriptor here. An image of the RDF domains, sub-domains and associated descriptors is included below.