



ResearchComp

FAQs

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Research and
Innovation

List of FAQs on ResearchComp

- Is the use of ResearchComp compulsory?
 - No, ResearchComp is not a compulsory tool. However, it is the first competence framework for researchers at EU level, developed on the basis of the most recent analysis of the transversal skills that researchers need for successful and interoperable careers in all sectors of the society (academia, industry, business, public administration, NGOs etc.). Therefore, the use of ResearchComp by all relevant users is strongly encouraged.
- Does the Commission offer support to institutions for the use of ResearchComp?
 - The Commission is ready to support institutions in the use of ResearchComp. Some initiatives are already ongoing, in the context of Horizon Europe, whereas others will be put in place also on the basis of concrete suggestions by users. Please share your proposals via the [contact us](#) section.
- Can an institution make changes or adaptations to ResearchComp?
 - While ResearchComp will be subject to revisions when necessary, the current version is not subject to changes at the moment, as it is the result of years of analysis and consultations with all relevant stakeholders. However, it is important to point out that stakeholders can adapt the proposed tool to their own context and needs. In addition, comments are possible, including by using the [relevant section](#) of the website, and will be taken into consideration on the occasion of future revisions of ResearchComp.
- How was ResearchComp developed? Was the point of view of institutions, researchers and stakeholders more in general taken into consideration?
 - ResearchComp is the result of years of consultations with all relevant stakeholders, including in the context of studies contracted by the European Commission. The consultations, which included meetings, workshops, surveys, interviews, led in the first place to the update of the European Skills, Competences and Occupations classification ([ESCO](#)) with a taxonomy of skills and occupations for researchers (January 2022). The taxonomy of skills for researchers used for the new version of ESCO was then used as the basis for the development of ResearchComp. Please consult the following [policy brief](#) for more information.
- Which are the most important competences of ResearchComp?
 - All competence areas and individual competences of ResearchComp are equally important. However, the different users may attribute a different relevance to the competences on the basis of their own context and needs.
- How can researchers assess their level of competence in line with ResearchComp?
 - Each of the 38 competences of ResearchComp contains a descriptor, as well as learning outcomes on the basis of 4 proficiency levels. On the basis of these learning outcomes, researchers are able to assess their level for each of the competences, and to take action to improve their level where necessary.
- Are researchers expected to master all the competences of ResearchComp?
 - Researchers are not expected to have the highest level of proficiency in all of the competences of ResearchComp. However, with a view to successful and interoperable careers in all sectors of the society, researchers are encouraged to have at least a minimum level in all competences, and to further develop those competences that are more relevant on the basis of their own situation, needs and expectations. It is important to point out that competences can be developed

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not only via formal training, but also via informal training, such as on-the-job-training, peer-to-peer learning, coaching and mentoring.

- How should researchers develop a given competence?
 - Doctoral candidates should develop the competences of ResearchComp already during their doctoral training. In this regard, universities are encouraged to adapt their doctoral training accordingly. Competences can also be developed via targeted training opportunities offered by Higher Education Institutions and other training providers. It is important to point out that competences can be developed not only via formal training, but also via informal training, such as on-the-job-training, peer-to-peer learning, coaching and mentoring.
- What is a learning outcome?
 - A learning outcome is a statement of what a researcher is able to do at a certain level of a given competence of ResearchComp. Such learning outcome can be reached via doctoral training, targeted training opportunities, or informal training, such as on-the-job-training, peer-to-peer learning, coaching and mentoring.
- Where can dedicated training courses linked to ResearchComp be found?
 - The Commission is currently developing the ERA Talent Platform, a one-stop-shop for researchers where they will be able to find all relevant information and support for their careers. The ERA Talent Platform will contain information on skills training opportunities for researchers.
- Is ResearchComp updated regularly?
 - ResearchComp is the result of years of analysis and consultations with all relevant stakeholders, and a revision is therefore not foreseen in the near future. However, updates will be taken into consideration in the future, on the basis of the evolving EU R&I context.
- What does it mean that ResearchComp is aligned with the ESCO classification?
 - In line with the 2020 Commission Communication on “A new ERA for Research and Innovation” and Skills Agenda, the Commission has developed with the support of experts and in consultation with all relevant stakeholders a list of transversal skills needed by researchers for interoperable careers in all sectors of the society. This list has been used to update the European Skills, Competences, and Occupations classification ([ESCO](#)) classification in its new version, which was released in January 2022. All researchers’ occupations now include the relevant transversal skills needed.

The same database of transversal skills has then been used to develop ResearchComp, ensuring alignment with ESCO. However, as the process for the development of ResearchComp included additional interactions and comments by stakeholders, some differences may exist between the list of transversal skills used for the ESCO update and the ResearchComp competences. A table mapping the list of skills for researchers in ESCO against the competences included in ResearchComp can be found in this [policy brief](#) (pages 48-50).
- How can users share their good practices in the use of ResearchComp?
 - The success of ResearchComp will highly depend on the exchange of best practices. The Commission, in its regular interactions with stakeholders, notably Member States and umbrella organisations, will collect and foster good practices. In addition, all users are encouraged to share their good practices via the [contact us](#) section of the website.

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- Are competences in ResearchComp aligned with similar competences in other competence frameworks developed by the Commission and the Joint Research Centre?
 - Yes. A number of other sector-specific EU competence frameworks were developed by the Commission and the Joint Research Centre before ResearchComp (e.g. [DigComp](#) for digital competences, [EntreComp](#) for entrepreneurial competences). During the development of ResearchComp, the Commission has ensured that competences which are similar to those contained in other EU competence frameworks are aligned, for clarity and coherence.
- Is there a link between ResearchComp and the assessment of researchers, including the ongoing work towards a reform?
 - Since January 2022, stakeholders, with the support of the European Commission, have been co-working to reform research assessment, including by developing an Agreement that identifies principles and concrete actions for changes and establishing a Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment ([CoARA](#)). Through this global Coalition of research funding organisations, research performing organisations, national/regional assessment authorities and agencies, as well as associations of the above organisations, learned societies and other relevant organisations, signatories of the Agreement will work together to enable systemic reform on the basis of common principles. The common vision is that the assessment of research, researchers and research organisations should recognize the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research. To this extent, the recognition of skills and skilling activities plays a very important role in the context of the ongoing reform.