Relationships

Definition of Terms

There are a number of terms used to describe relationships

- **Dependent entity:** This is the entity that contains the foreign key property(s). Sometimes referred to as the 'child' of the relationship.
- **Principal entity:** This is the entity that contains the primary/alternate key property(s). Sometimes referred to as the 'parent' of the relationship.
- **Foreign key:** The property(s) in the dependent entity that is used to store the values of the principal key property that the entity is related to.
- **Principal key:** The property(s) that uniquely identifies the principal entity. This may be the primary key or an alternate key.
- **Navigation property:** A property defined on the principal and/or dependent entity that contains a reference(s) to the related entity(s).
  - o **Collection navigation property:** A navigation property that contains references to many related entities.
  - o **Reference navigation property:** A navigation property that holds a reference to a single related entity.
  - o **Inverse navigation property:** When discussing a particular navigation property, this term refers to the navigation property on the other end of the relationship.