### Step 1 - Reflect

Reflect on any career pathway(s) that you are currently considering pursuing (or learning more about). What you would like to be doing in 5 years. How are you going to get there? What skills and experiences will you require?

If you choose to use the Development Needs Analysis document you will find a space on Page 1 to list these. You may find it useful to list what you know about each of these potential career options and any questions you have about each option. Understand that your ideas about your preferred career pathways may change as you progress through your degree. To assist you in considering opportunities and help with planning your professional development activities you can talk with the [HDR Careers Advisor](https://cdf.graduate-school.uq.edu.au/event/124/career-planning) or consider taking a range of workshops provided in the [Career Planning](https://cdf.graduate-school.uq.edu.au/event/124/career-planning) suite of the [Career Development Framework (CDF)](https://cdf.graduate-school.uq.edu.au/home).

Reflect on your progress towards your previous year’s development activities and any prior Individual Development Plans. You may find it useful to list examples of times you have demonstrated your skills over the last year.

### Step 2 - Assess

Consider your prior learning and experience, what you are already accomplished at and identify skills for further development during your candidature.

You can use the *Development Needs Analysis* as a tool to help you with this process. For each skill included in the Development Needs Analysis document, assess your current skill level and record this using the Skill Levels rating scale. Note that Level 5, an ‘Exceptional’ level of skill, is in most instances unlikely to be reached during your HDR program.

Where you assess your skill level to be at Level 3 or above, provide examples to support the rating. Examples may include evidence such as: written reports or published papers; presentation slides; data analysis you have conducted; video evidence of practical expertise; conference programs identifying your presentation; posters presented; funding or award applications; articles or blogs you have written; certificates of courses/workshops you have undertaken; attendance at workshops/conferences/seminars/courses.

Then assess how important it is that you further develop each skill to establish their priority, using the Skill Priorities rating scale.

### Step 3 - Prioritise

Identify the skills that you believe are most immediately in need of development and make these your priority for the next 6~12 months. If you used the  Development Needs Analysis tool this would be those with a high Skill Priority rating but a low Skill Level rating.

Record these skills in your Individual Development Plan document, along with your assessment of your current Skill Level ratings. There is no set number of skills that you need to identify for development, but we recommend prioritising no more than 6 areas for the year ahead.

Then provide this document to your Principal Advisor, and in consultation with them, draft a development goal for each skill that you’ve prioritised. Also record activities you can undertake to develop that skill and when you plan to complete that activity. Make sure that your goals, activities, and timelines are achievable ([SMART goals](https://staff.uq.edu.au/files/73672/SMART_goal_module.pdf) can assist in this). You may also like to share your completed Development Needs Analysis document with your Principal Advisor when you send them your draft Individual Development Plan document, but this is an optional component of the process.

### Step 4 - Plan

During the meeting with your Principal Advisor, discuss the development needs you have identified as priorities. Note that your Principal Advisor may have additional or alternate development needs they suggest you work on. With your Principal Advisor, engage in a constructive discussion to finalise your development goals, development activities, and timelines in your Individual Development Plan document. Remember that it is beneficial to focus on those skills with a low Skill Level and a high Skill Priority.

In planning your development activities, the Graduate School’s [Career Development Framework](https://cdf.graduate-school.uq.edu.au/) can help, but you can also consider opportunities available external to the institution. Some suggestions for development activities within each broad area include:

* Disciplinary Knowledge and Capability: Developed a research plan; Completed a literature review; Participated in relevant workshops, e.g., methodology training/data management etc.; Attended academic seminars; Prepared and deliver research seminars/conference papers; Undertook self-directed development opportunities through online or external courses (e.g., EdX).
* Transferable Skills: Undertook an industry placement; Attended relevant seminars, workshops and/or conferences on communication, writing, networking, emotional intelligence etc.; Participated in the 3MT competition; Wrote a research proposal, literature review, confirmation document, thesis; Published in scholarly journals or, for e.g., The Conversation; Assisted in the co-ordination of conferences or seminars.
* Professional Skills: Undertook an industry placement; Attended relevant seminars and workshops on commercialisation, entrepreneurship, innovation etc.; Attended conferences; Attended networking events and created connections; Used social media in a professional context; Assisted in the coordination of conferences or seminars; Tutored; Published in scholarly journals or, for e.g., The Conversation; Applied for a grant or award.

Responsible Researcher Conduct: Completed the Research Integrity Module [online]; Attended Intellectual Property training; Submitted a request for ethics approval for a research project.

### Step 5 - Implement

After meeting with your Principal Advisor and agreeing to your key development goals, activities, and timelines for the coming year put your plans into place.

As you advance through the year, record your progress in completing your development activities and meeting your development goals.

### Step 6 - Reflect and Review

Throughout your candidature, you are encouraged to reflect regularly on your career aspirations and your progress towards meeting your development goals. You can record your progress in completing your identified key development activities and in meeting your development goals in your *Individual Development Plan* document. This will assist you in reviewing your progress with your Principal Advisor next year prior to creating an updated *Individual Development Plan*.

Don’t forget to also keep examples of times you have demonstrated or developed your skills as this will assist you understanding your skills and where you need to develop in future.