# Annex 1. Research student self-assessment form

The Department of Zoology TCD expects PhD students to take ownership of their PhD in terms of its content and development. Along with this expectation comes an acknowledgement that we are here to provide support (intellectual and practical), training and to aid your personal development as a professional scientist. This form is designed to enable you to pinpoint areas of personal strengths and weakness, and to determine where and how you would like support to increase the knowledge and skills required for the successful completion of your PhD. Please take time to think whilst filling out this form, as it will provide a benchmark for your progress throughout your time as a postgraduate student in the Department.

1) What are your reasons for undertaking a PhD course? (e.g., long-term career plans, advancing understanding, developing specific knowledge/skills)

2) What is the main question you hope to address/answer with your work? Why?

3) What are your expectations of:

a) this PhD course?

b) your supervisor?

c) the Department?

d) the College?

e) yourself?

4) An understanding of where your research fits and how it will contribute to scientific knowledge is essential. How would you rate your knowledge of:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | none | bare bones | some knowledge, requires basic training | good understanding, but requires development | excellent |
| the research area immediately around your PhD |  |  |  |  |  |
| the broader research area |  |  |  |  |  |

How would you expect to improve your knowledge?

a) self-teaching

b) training by: (i) supervisor, (ii) lab group/graduate students, (iii) taught courses

5) Analytic skills are essential for the practice of good science. How would you rate your skills in:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | none | basic undergraduate courses/research project | advanced courses or extensive field/lab experience (employed as assistant) | excellent |
| experimental design |  |  |  |  |
| statistical analysis |  |  |  |  |
| field/lab techniques |  |  |  |  |

How would you expect to improve these skills?

a) self-teaching

b) training by: (i) supervisor, (ii) lab group/graduate students, (iii) taught courses

6) Conducting a PhD requires the ability to take command and organise yourself and your work, which increasingly means making efficient use of IT systems. How would you rate your skills in:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | None | Self-taught but unsure | Taught/self-taught and secure | Complete whizz |
| Time management |  |  |  |  |
| Word processing |  |  |  |  |
| Statistical and spreadsheet packages |  |  |  |  |
| Graphical programs |  |  |  |  |
| GIS software |  |  |  |  |

How would you expect to improve these skills?

a) self-teaching

b) training by: (i) supervisor, (ii) lab group/graduate students, (iii) taught courses

7) Disseminating your knowledge to others, both within and outside the scientific community, is a prerequisite for being a good scientist. How would you rate your skills in:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | none | have done once or twice | have had training and done once or twice | have had training and considerable experience | excellent |
| Scientific writing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Report writing |  |  |  |  |  |
| Poster presentations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seminar presentations |  |  |  |  |  |
| Public communication |  |  |  |  |  |
| Demonstrating/Teaching |  |  |  |  |  |

How would you expect to improve these skills?

a) self-teaching

b) training by: (i) supervisor, (ii) lab group/graduate students, (iii) taught courses

With reference to points 4) – 7) above, please make specific suggestions as to how you intend to proceed in developing those skills/areas you have highlighted above.