



# CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY FOR PHD STUDENTS

## SKILLS AUDIT: REFLECTIVE PDF

### Introduction

Reflecting on your skills is essential for your development both during your PhD and beyond. This Reflective PDF should be used as a supporting document when completing your online Skills Audit.

You can edit this document at any stage while completing the Skills Audit or afterwards. Remember to save each version of the PDF after you make any changes.

### Guidelines

First, review your Skills Audit results and the tailored feedback you received for each category. Then, reflect and complete the tables below for each category in this Reflective PDF.

Based on the Skills Audit, Column A (skill area within the overall category) is already completed. Now fill in Column B (each skills statement and confidence rating from your Skills Audit), Column C (any context relevant to your personal circumstances, such as stage of study), Column D (evidence to-date for this skill) and Column E (how you are progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill). See examples 1 and 2 below.

#### Example 1:



### Category 1: Knowledge and Research Skills

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
<b>Subject knowledge</b>	I have acquired in-depth knowledge of intellectual developments and strategic direction in my field. Confidence rating: 3.	As a Year 2 student, this will develop as I progress through my PhD.	I have contributed to School/Department knowledge exchange events. This has been well received by academics and my peers.	I am doing well but there is room for improvement – I would like to present at national and international conferences in my field. I enjoy giving presentations but feel nervous about being perceived as an expert at this stage.

Finally, comment on what you can do to develop skills further within each category. For example:



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?

Read more journals both within and related to my field. Attend informal events to gain knowledge. Ask my Supervisor for advice and support with submitting papers to conferences and identify a potential conference to target in the next 3 months. Present my research findings to other specialists in my field and ask them to question me on them.

## Example 2:



### Category 4: Personal Effectiveness and Career Development

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
Self-management	I critically reflect on experiences and act on such in a cycle of self-improvement. Confidence rating: 2	I have an upcoming review.	I review feedback from previous reviews and try to implement changes accordingly.	I do not enjoy reviewing feedback but recognise I need to build more time for reflection. Can I find a reflection methodology that works for me?

Finally, comment on what you can do to develop skills further within each category. For example:



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?

Schedule 30 minutes at the end of each week for reflection on progress and any work submitted. Ask fellow researchers how they approach reflection. Learn about different ways to reflect and find one that works for me.

## Prompt Questions

The following prompt questions may help you to reflect on your experience of developing each skill.

### Feeling:

How did that experience/using that skill make you feel? (E.g. empowered, anxious, nervous, happy, upset, confident...)

### Evaluation and analysis:

What aspects of that experience/using that skill went well? (what was easy/successful for you?)

What aspects of that experience/using that skill did not go so well? (what was challenging/difficult/not so successful for you?)

### Action:

Faced with that experience/using that skill again, what would you do differently?

What do you need to do (ideas to develop, actions to take, people to meet...) to further develop your chosen skill and what plan can you put in place to acquire it?



## Category 1: Knowledge and Research Skills

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
<b>Subject knowledge</b>				
<b>Research methods: theoretical knowledge</b>				
<b>Research methods: practical application</b>				



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?



## Category 2: Research Governance and Organisation

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
Ethics				
Funding and resources				
Research organisation				



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?



## Category 3: Communication Skills

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
Communication approach				
Technical communication skills				



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?



## Category 4: Personal Effectiveness and Career Development

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
<b>Personal approach and effectiveness</b>				
<b>Self-management</b>				
<b>Professional and career development</b>				



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?



## Category 5: Engagement, Innovation and Impact

Review your Skills Audit results and tailored feedback in this category. Then reflect and provide more detail in the table below.

A. Skill area	B. Skills statements and confidence ratings.	C. Context (For example, your stage in your PhD.)	D. Evidence to-date (List 1-3 points of evidence.)	E. How I am progressing, feeling, and enjoying this skill.
<b>Team-working and leadership</b>				
<b>Innovation and impact</b>				



What positive actions can I take to develop my skills and when? What supports can help me with this?



## Additional Skills

Before finishing, are there any additional skills I would like to reflect on at present?



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