

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 MSc/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 course?

b) your supervisor?

c) the Department?

d) the College?

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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 MSc/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

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6) Conducting a MSc/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.