The Development Needs Analysis (DNA) is a yearly progress review and projection to help you focus on skills you wish to obtain in the coming year and which will aid in your professional and career development. It also helps you to outline any training you require to develop these skills.

The aim is for you to consider your long term goals and make plans to achieve them. These goals should not be direct results from your core research project (such as: order and assemble some equipment, finish an experiment, write a literature review etc) but related skills which will help you in completing your PhD (for example: learn to speed read, learn a language, improve your academic writing skills, improve your data collection or analysis skills etc) and add skills for your post-PhD life and work.

This form has been developed by PGR student representatives in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. You are welcome to use this form or to use the University Graduate School’s form. You should choose the form that best suits your way of thinking about your training needs.

Further information about the Development Needs Analysis process is given on the last page of this document.
Reflection (not required in the first year of study)

To be completed by the student:

Name: Student ID No:
Programme: Year of Study:

With reference to your previous DNA form:

Which of your listed goals have you achieved in the past year?

What goals do you feel you have not fully achieved?

What reasons underlie these unachieved goals (shift of priorities, re-evaluation of needs, insufficient time or planning etc)?

Do you feel you have been impeded or unsupported in any way in achieving your goals?

How could these obstacles be avoided or rectified for the future?
Reflection (not required in the first year of study)

To be completed by the student’s supervisor:

Do you agree with the student’s assessment of progress since the previous DNA form?

Do you agree that the student’s proposed actions helped towards achieving their goals?

Do you have any further comments on this matter?

I have read and discussed the above points with my student/supervisor on the date stated below.

Student’s signature: Date:

Supervisor’s signature: Date:
EPS Development Needs Analysis (DNA) form
Part 2

Projection

To be completed by the student:

Name:  
Student ID No:

Programme:  
Year of Study:

What are your training and development goals for the coming year for your PhD?

What is required of you to achieve these goals?

What is required of your supervisor to achieve these goals?

Is there any training/workshops you wish to undertake this year to complement your career development, and how do you feel this will help with your career development?

Are these training/workshops available to you at the University?
Projection

To be completed by the student's supervisor:

Do you agree that the student’s proposed goals are in their best interests?

Do you feel that the student’s plans are sufficient to achieve their goals?

Do you agree to aid the student in the manner outlined above?

Do you have any suggestions for the student?

Do you have any further comments on this matter?

I have read and discussed the above points with my student/supervisor on the date stated below.

Student's signature: Date:

Supervisor's signature: Date:
From the University Graduate School: Development Needs Analysis Form

Successful and timely completion of your research degree will depend on developing a mixture of subject-specific skills, intellectual skills, such as critical thinking, and more generic skills, like communication and enterprise. Many of these skills will also be important in your future life, whatever career or life choices you make.

The Development Needs Analysis (DNA) form uses Vitae’s Researcher Development Framework (RDF) to help you think about your current skills, pinpoint gaps in your knowledge, and identify areas for future development. The RDF articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attitudes of researchers, from postgraduates to established academic leaders and is endorsed by Research Councils UK.¹

There are four sections to the form, based on the RDF domain:

¹ For a full version see here https://www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/rdf-related/researcher-development-framework-rdf-vitae.pdf

If you want to focus on a specific area see here https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework/lenses-on-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework