



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Town and
Regional Planning.

Your Guide to
Personal
Development
Planning
(PDP)

Level 1

What is Personal Development Planning?

Your Personal Development Plan (PDP) is the way you can review and record development of your academic skills throughout your degree course. It is designed to help you get the most out of your degree and to keep an ongoing record of your achievements. By the end of your course this will help you to develop a strong Curriculum Vitae (CV) for prospective employers. Many prospective employers now look for a commitment in graduates to what is called continuing professional development (CPD) – your Sheffield PDP will be of great assistance here. As an example, the Royal Town Planning Institutes *Assessment of Professional Competence* (APC) will build on the evidence you develop as part of your PDP.

The most important thing to remember about your PDP is that is designed for YOU to get the most out of your degree, and to enhance your job prospects after graduation. YOU are responsible for keeping it up to date. Remember, it is your personal record, so record (honestly!) your skills, knowledge and achievements in a structured and reflective manner.

PDP can help you to:

- Settle in to the Department
- Provide some discussion points for meetings with your year tutor
- Begin to produce and update your CV
- Help your year tutor get to know you better, useful both for during your degree and afterwards when you might ask them for a reference
- Record the skills you develop through your course to show prospective employers
- Introduce you to the concepts of lifelong learning and continuing professional development

How does it work?

Each year you will meet with your Year Tutor on two occasions. In the autumn semester, you will usually meet in the first few weeks of semester, and in the spring semester you will meet near the end of the semester. Each of these meetings will look at your PDP and are the way that the Department can help you get the most out of your degree. Your tutor will respect the confidential nature of any discussions, if necessary.

At the **autumn** semester meeting, you will be expected to have prepared for your meeting by:

1. (In your **first year only**) preparing a **Personal Profile** (see page 5) to introduce yourself to your Year Tutor. This will also help you think about your likes and dislikes and begin the process of self-

reflection! Bring your Personal Profile along to your first tutor meeting.

2. (In years 2, 3 and 4) looking over the action plan you prepared in the previous year: update it if necessary.
3. (In years 2, 3 and 4) identifying a piece of coursework or an exam in which you felt you could have done better. Using the feedback, try to think about the lessons you could learn for future work. Bring the feedback along to the meeting.

At the **spring** semester meeting, you will be expected to have prepared for your meeting by doing the following:

1. reflecting on your academic skills and personal progress to date. Then, identify any strengths and weaknesses you have by completing (and taking to your meeting) the **Self-Assessment** form (see pages 6 + 7). You will have the chance to talk through your skills and weaknesses with your tutor.
2. thinking about what you would like to achieve over the next year in terms of improving on some skills and knowledge. Then prepare your personal development **Action Plan** (see page 8). You will have the chance to talk through your plan with your tutor.
3. (In your third and fourth years only) completing your PDP **Experience Record** (see page 9). Fourth year students should also bring along their Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) documents, which they worked on during their Local Action Planning Project (TRP449).

For both meetings some good questions to ask of yourself to help your self-reflection and prepare for the meetings include:

- What progress have I made and which areas of work are most important to me? Why?
- What skills have I gained and used?
- What have I enjoyed the most?
- What did I enjoy least?
- Is there anything I would like to change?
- How do I learn most effectively – when do I most enjoy learning (eg in lectures, discussion groups, studios, field trips)?
- Can I do anything to make myself a better learner?

Helping you think about academic skills

What kinds of skills might you gain throughout your course of study? The PDP process is designed to help you record your skills and experiences and make sense of them. This section presents some examples of types of skills

you will gain from your degree course to help you reflect on your development.

Data Collection and Analysis:	Use a set of key data collection and analysis methods and recognise strengths/limitations.
Decision Making:	Which modules to take during the course, type of vacation work, how to gain more experience/skills.
Group/Team Working:	Contribute to group project work, tolerance of others.
Managing a Project:	Ability to set deadlines, achieve required outcomes.
Communication Skills:	Communicate a subject area with clarity. Essay writing skills. Ability to use presentation equipment
Researching:	Ability to use the library, internet to collect relevant information. Assimilate ideas, make connections and relate research findings to practice.
Time Management:	Ability to work towards deadlines, plan own work load
Using Computers:	Use of email, internet and other applications
Working with Ideas:	Ability to write creatively, generate ideas in group settings, explore new ideas.

In this pack you will find templates for the following:

- **Personal Profile** (year 1). Complete this before your meeting with your tutor in the autumn semester. *See page 5.*
- **Self Assessment** (all years). Use this in the spring semester to honestly reflect on your level of skills and knowledge. *See pages 6+7.*
- **PDP Action Plan** (all years). This is where you can reflect on your goals – both for your studies and for your career ahead – and plan what you need to do to achieve these. You can complete this section with the help of your Year Tutor. *See page 8.*
- **Experience Record** (years 3 and 4). Record details of your planning work experience and reflect on the skills and knowledge it has helped you to develop. *See page 9.*

You will also find electronic versions of these documents on MOLE (My Online Learning Environment). They are in the *Personal Development Plan* folder.

Keep a record of all your PDP documents. A good place to keep them is in your *e-portfolio*, which is part of MOLE. You will receive training on how to use your e-portfolio in your first few weeks in Sheffield.

PDP Personal Profile

Name

Help us to get to know you a little better by completing this form and taking it to your very first meeting with your Level One Tutor.

1. What is your home town?

2. Do you have any interesting work experience, voluntary or paid? Any other achievements? Sports/Artistic/Leisure?

3. What are your hobbies and interests?

4. Why did you decide to do your degree subject and why at Sheffield?

5. What are your long term career aims?

6. What do you enjoy/dislike most?

7. What do you think are your personal qualities?

PDP Self Assessment Form

The next two tables show you a set of *knowledge* and *skills* that are important for undertaking the final year of your MPlan course here in the department of Town and Regional Planning. Please look at each area of knowledge or type of skill listed and think honestly about your own level of expertise in that area.

Complete this self-assessment and bring it to your meeting with your year tutor in the spring semester. It will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned over the year and what you want to develop over the next year. You can discuss with your year tutor the results of your self-assessment and its implications for your action plan.

Knowledge

What do I know about....?

	Nothing	A little	Reasonable amount	Quite a lot	Detailed knowledge
The UK planning system					
Historical development of cities					
Appreciation of architectural design					
Economic ideas and the economy					
Numerical data analysis					
A specialist area of planning (e.g. transport, housing)					
Equal opportunities and diversity					
Planning theories and ideas					
Social and planning research					
Planning practice (including work experience)					
Other countries' planning systems					
Property development					
Others.... (state)					

Skills

What skills do I have?

	None	A little	Reasonable amount	Quite a lot	Detailed knowledge
Computing and ICT					
Team working					
Leadership					
Graphics and visual presentations					
Time/workload management					
Writing (including report writing)					
Problem analysis					
Problem solving					
Independent study					
Public speaking and presentations					
Synthesising knowledge from different areas					
Conducting research					
Understanding numerical information					
Negotiation skills					
Lateral thinking/creativity					
Self-confidence					
Resilience and perseverance					
Ability to work under pressure					
Organisational ability					
Flexibility and adaptability					
Geographic Information Systems					
Others.... (state)					

Areas for development

PDP Action Plan

<p>What do I want to achieve this year (my short term goals)?</p>	<p>How will I achieve these goals?</p>
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<p>What are my long term goals?</p>	<p>How will I get there? <i>Objective 1</i></p> <p><i>Objective 2</i></p> <p><i>Objective 3</i></p>
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PDP Experience Record (photocopy as required)

ORGANISATION(S) WHERE EXPERIENCE TOOK PLACE:

DATE(S):

BRIEF DESCRIPTION(S) OF WORK UNDERTAKEN:

Skill/Attribute/Work-Related Knowledge Developed	Example(s) To Demonstrate This In Action <i>e.g. nature of professional task undertaken</i>	Supplementary Evidence Ref. No.

