

# PODCAST 5

## Creating a personal development plan

### Guidance Notes

This podcast explains why creating a plan for your own learning and development is important and shows you how to create a plan. It also introduces the Directory of Opportunities which will help you discover the opportunities that are available to you for developing yourself and the opportunity for professional advice on your development plans and ideas.

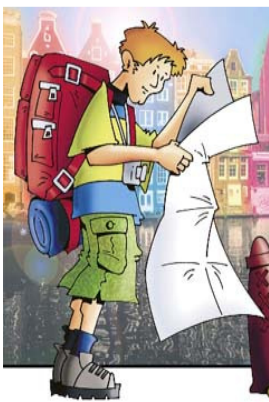
#### Slide 2

**Managing and evaluating your own development** is an important capability being developed through your participation in the Award and one of the purposes of the Award is to value and recognise your commitment to your own development.

In actively engaging with the award you will be demonstrating that you have:

- thought about your current capability and identified aspects of your capability that you would like to further develop
- thought about the opportunities available to you in all aspects of your life through which you could develop yourself
- created a plan linked to your own personal development goals to help you gain the experiences and development you believe will help you
- implemented the plan, if necessary modifying it in the light of experience or new opportunities
- evaluated the development you have gained through implementing your plan

#### Slide 3



#### Your Personal Development Plan

A plan is a way of thinking about the future. At work we create plans all the time to help us identify priorities and check on progress in meeting our goals.

The purpose of your personal development plan is to help you organise your thinking about your own development over a period of time and identify the ways in which you will access the opportunities for development that are available to you.

A plan has a purpose like these are the things I have to do today or in order to accomplish something these are the five things I have to do.

A plan is a framework for action and improvisation, not a straight jacket!

Creating a personal development plan is a process not an event. The most useful plans are living documents. They evolve over time as you reflect on needs, interests and possibilities, and take account of other things in your life and are flexible enough to accommodate and integrate things that were not anticipated. This means that you need to periodically review your plan and change it if necessary (a monthly review of progress is a good idea).

#### **SLIDE 4**

##### **How does this relate to PDP?**

The process for 'planning, doing and reviewing' underlying the award is the same process as the personal development planning process that you might be using in your course. The award provides a whole of life context for PDP and gives University recognition for your efforts.

#### **SLIDE 5**

##### **Your personal goals**

The first step in creating your plan is to identify the underlying goal for your plan... It could for example be:

- Development for a specific career goals
- Preparation for going on a professional training placement
- Learning and mastering a new skill like 'skydiving'
- Organising a significant event
- Or simply I want to become a better person

#### **SLIDE 6**

##### **Creating your development plan**

The Award is trying to promote some important dimensions of your capability (discussed in podcast 3) and these capabilities, together with particular knowledge, skills and experience that you believe are important to achieve your goal, are the things we want you to focus on in your personal development plan.

Using the same framework that formed the basis for Task 4, and giving due consideration to the opportunities available to you for further development,

- 1) identify recent and current experiences that provide you with opportunities for each of the areas of capability listed in the plan, including any areas that you have specifically identified
- 2) evaluate your own performance in each of the dimensions of capability – *What are your strengths? Is there scope for improvement? Are some aspects of capability in greater need of improvement than others?*
- 3) looking ahead over the next few months, identify any new opportunities through which you will seek experiences to further your own development

## SLIDE 7

Here are some things that you can do help you create your plans

- 1) Consider your life map – where are the opportunities that already exist in your life for developing these capabilities?
- 2) Use the resources in the Directory of Opportunities to broaden your horizons. There are many ideas in the Directory and links to further information. There is an on-line version to make it easier to find up to date information.
- 3) Discuss your ideas with a friend or a member of your family. Its always good to get other perspectives when you are making important decisions.
- 4) The scheme also offers an opportunity for you to discuss your plans with an advisor, mentor or coach

You will find some examples of personal development plans that students have produced on the website.

## SLIDE 8

The **Directory of Opportunities** is an important asset to help you appreciate the many opportunities for learning and personal development available to you within the university and off campus.

It is provided as a hard copy document, as a downloadable document and as an interactive webpage on the Lifewide Learning Award website

It deals with:

- 1 Opportunities for developing skills such as the training workshops run by careers, Students' Union or SPLASH
- 2 Opportunities for you to enhance your wellbeing and spirit such as are offered by the Centre for Wellbeing and Multi Faith Centre

- 3 Opportunities for developing skill in a language
- 4 Coaching and mentoring opportunities
- 5 Opportunities for volunteering
- 6 Societies and clubs
- 7 Arts and culture
- 8 Sports

And many more things

## **SLIDE 9**

### **Opportunities for consulting a professional**

As part of the support for the Lifewide Learning Award, you have the opportunity to meet with someone who can help you consider and progress your plans. This is an important way in which you can incorporate professional advice into your life-wide learning experience.

You can talk about:

1. A specific career that you would like to prepare for.
2. A possible career/post-graduate opportunities.
3. Specific personal development goals or your development as a person in a more general sense.

Once you have produced your self-evaluation and personal development plan, you can indicate the assistance you would like and we will try to link you with someone who can help you explore your thinking and planning.

- 1) If you have a concrete career idea, we will try to organise for you to meet an experienced practitioner in that field who would act as a mentor and go through your proposed plan for development with you and comment on how appropriate it was to your employment goal – for example, helping you to identify any obvious areas for development that have not been considered?

When you think that you are nearing completion of the Lifewide Learning Award but before you submit your portfolio and reflective account, you could have a second meeting. In this meeting you would present the skills you have developed in relation to this area of work. Your mentor would probe these statements, and make suggestions if there are still areas for development. You would then be able to work on these.

- 2) If you have no firm career plan, but think it would be sensible to start considering your options, you could ask to meet with a Careers Advisor who

would discuss with you your self-evaluation and possible career areas that relate to your strengths and interests.

At a second meeting you could update the Advisor on your plans and consider the next steps.

3) If you would just like to have some professional input into your personal development plan, you could meet with a coach. They would discuss your aspirations and consider ways to achieve them.

At a second meeting the coach would listen to your account of what you have done and if necessary, make relevant suggestions to enhance your development plan.

These one-to-one sessions will be confidential and informal, focusing on your aspirations, goals and short term objectives. If you would like us to arrange a meeting please contact the Award Coordinator [lifewideaward@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:lifewideaward@surrey.ac.uk)

## **SLIDE 10**

### **Recap**

#### **In this podcast we:**

- explained why creating a plan for your own learning and development is important
- we considered the framework for personal development planning used in the Award and showed you how to create a plan.
- we introduced the Directory of Opportunities which will help you discover the opportunities that are available to you for developing yourself
- and described the opportunity for professional advice on your development plans and ideas

### **How can I use this knowledge?**

**Task 5-** using the template provided identify your personal development goal(s) and create a plan to help you develop capability to realise that goal.