SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Your current position represents a transitional stage in your professional journey. This questionnaire is designed to help you assess both your academic and transferable skills, in order to support your career development.

It enables you to:

- Identify your strengths and areas for improvement.
- Document your concrete experiences (publications, teaching, conferences, training, real-life situations, etc.);
- Prepare for your professional steps (career discussions, funding applications, job applications, personalised support).

How to proceed?

Before you begin, you may wish to reflect on your main objective:

- Evaluating your current skills and setting priorities for the coming year
- Strengthening key competencies in preparation for an academic career
- Identifying your needs to prepare for a career change or professional development

For each skill:

- Assess your current level on a scale from 1 to 5:: 1: Beginner; 2 : Novice ; 3 : Competent ; 4 : Avanced, 5 : Expert
- Provide concrete examples illustrating your experience in the designated fields
- Indicate in the summary which skills you would like to further develop

After the self-assessment:

- Analyse your results, identify less-developed skills, and determine concrete actions (training, reading, practical experience)
- **Discuss your results** with a reference person (line manager, academic host, mentor, Graduate Campus advisor, etc.) to jointly define an individual development plan

Note: It is not necessary to complete the entire questionnaire in one sitting. Some sections may not be relevant or may be filled in at different stages of your journey. Repeating the exercise at several points allows you to measure progress and adjust your career plan
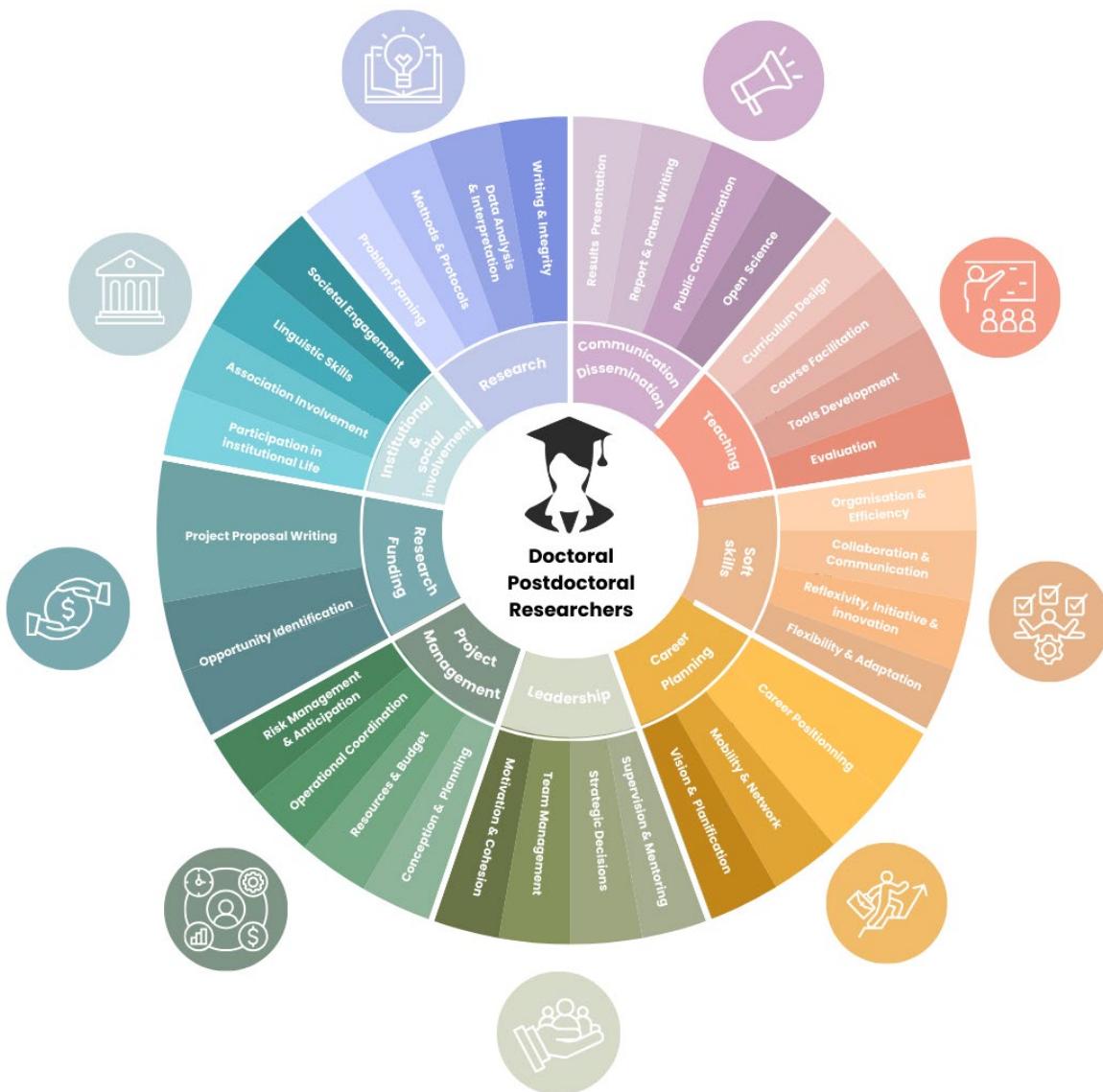
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General Information

Name:

First name:

Unit / Faculty / Institute:

Supervisor / PI:

Years of doctoral/postdoctoral experience (approx.):

Envisioned career path:

Research skills

A. Formulation of Research Questions and Hypotheses (*Identifying a problem or gap in the current state of knowledge within the specific research field by analysing existing literature; highlighting unanswered questions and formulating a relevant research question; developing clear and testable hypotheses to address it)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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B. Methodology Selection and Protocol Design *(Choosing qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods; designing experiments, surveys, or pilot studies)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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C. **Data Analysis and Interpretation** *(Applying qualitative or quantitative analysis methods; proficiency with analytical software—statistical, textual, etc.; scientific interpretation of data; contextualising findings within the literature)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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[                                                                    ]
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D. **Scientific Writing and Publication** *(Structuring a manuscript; adhering to journal standards; responding to reviewers; publishing in peer-reviewed journals)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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[                                                                    ]
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E. **Knowledge of Bibliographic Management Tools** *(Zotero, EndNote, Mendeley; organising and managing references; citation standards; automated bibliography insertion)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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[                                                                    ]
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F. **In-Depth Knowledge of Literature and Concepts in the Field** *(Scientific monitoring; critical reading; understanding major and emerging developments)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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[                                                                    ]
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G. Evaluation of Scientific Quality *(Peer review; project assessment; evaluation of publications and methodologies)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

H. Autonomy and Intellectual Independence *(Generating original ideas; critical thinking; synthesising information; making independent decisions)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

I. Scientific Integrity and Ethics *(Respect for intellectual property; methodological transparency; reproducibility; confidentiality; adherence to ethical standards and responsible data sharing; authors' rights and responsibilities; respect for anonymity and confidentiality)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

J. **Use of Artificial Intelligence** *(Understanding the limitations and biases of AI; knowing institutional guidelines for its use in research and scientific writing; using AI responsibly to support writing and scientific production)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

Communication, Outreach and Dissemination Skills

A. **Presentation of Scientific Results** *(Oral presentations, posters, flash talks, participation in conferences and seminars)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

B. **Writing Scientific Reports or Patents** *(Technical reports, patents, funding applications, reports for institutions and partners)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

C. Communication with Non-Specialist Audiences *(Science outreach articles, media appearances, blogs, podcasts, social media, organisation of public events, science communication/mediation)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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D. Open Science and Digital Communication *(Data sharing, open-access deposits, preprints, dissemination through digital platforms)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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Teaching and Pedagogical Skills

A. Curriculum design *(Setting learning objectives, creating a syllabus, structuring a course, adapting methods and materials to target audiences)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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B. **Teaching and Facilitation of Courses and Seminars** *(Group management, clarity of explanations, managing interactions)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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C. **Facilitation of Tutorials or Practical Sessions** *(Supervising students, supporting active learning, managing equipment and safety)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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D. **Development of Teaching Tools** *(Interactive digital materials, pedagogical illustrations or videos, online quizzes, Moodle or equivalent learning platforms)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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E. **Student Assessment** *(Developing assessment criteria, grading, providing constructive feedback, implementing continuous and final assessments)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

Personal and Interpersonal Skills

A. **Time Management and Personal Organisation** *(Scheduling and planning one's workload, using digital calendars or other tools, managing work–life balance, overcoming procrastination, prioritising tasks)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

B. **Reflexivity (***Self-assessment and self-critique of practices and skills, recognising one's limits, integrating constructive feedback, developing a personal development plan)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

C. Innovation and Creativity *(Generating innovative ideas, proposing original methods, adopting entrepreneurial or interdisciplinary approaches)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

D. Initiative and Engagement *(Proactivity, perseverance, resilience, motivation when facing obstacles)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

E. Efficiency and Pragmatism *(Maintaining an overall perspective, avoiding getting lost in details, avoiding perfectionism, recognising the value of unexpected or negative results)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

F.   Conflict Management and Resolution *(Active listening, constructive feedback, seeking compromise, mediation, empathy, respect and kindness, asking questions when uncertain or lacking understanding)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

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G.   Flexibility and Adaptability *(Bouncing back after setbacks, integrating divergent viewpoints, adapting to new environments or cultures)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

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Career Development Skills

A.   CV and Cover Letter Writing *(Adapting the CV to academic or non-academic contexts, highlighting transferable skills, building a publication portfolio)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

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B. **Job Interview Preparation** *(Mock interviews, researching the employer and envisioning oneself in the role, training in communication techniques, anticipating common interview questions)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

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C. **Scientific Mobility Projects** *(Research stays or internships abroad, international collaborations, institutional exchanges)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

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D. **Professional Networking** *(Conferences, visits to other institutions, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, professional associations)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

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E. **Career Planning** *(Identifying one's skills and interests, anticipating opportunities, developing transferable skills, discussions with supervisors or mentors)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

Leadership Skills

A. **Supervision and Mentoring of Students** *(Setting objectives, providing methodological guidance, giving constructive feedback, supporting the career development of supervisees)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

B. **Strategic Decision-Making** *(Defining research priorities, weighing options, anticipating the future needs of the team or project)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

C. Team Motivation and Engagement *(Fostering commitment, communicating expectations and decisions clearly, supporting team cohesion)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

Project Management Skills

A. Planning and Organisation *(Managing operational and strategic elements: time, human, material and financial resources; prioritisation; defining a detailed action plan with objectives and milestones)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

B. Resource Management *(Assessing and anticipating financial, human and material needs; optimising resource use)*

Scale: 1☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

C. **Budget Management** *(Preparing and monitoring a budget, handling invoices and expenses, writing a budget report)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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D. **Team Coordination and Task Monitoring** *(Clearly communicating objectives, allocating tasks, supervising work, coordinating volunteers, technicians, etc.)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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E. **Deadline Management** *(Meeting deadlines and ensuring they are met in line with objectives and constraints)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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F. **Risk Management** *(Identifying and anticipating risks, ensuring data security, developing a contingency plan in case of unforeseen events)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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Research Funding Acquisition Skills

A. Identification of Funding Opportunities *(Monitoring European and national calls for proposals, private foundations, industrial partnerships, philanthropic funding)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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B. Project Proposal Writing *(Structuring a project, drafting a state of the art, defining objectives and impacts, preparing a provisional budget, developing a data management plan)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2☐   3☐   4☐   5☐

Provide concrete examples

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Institutional and Social Engagement

A. **Participation in Institutional Life** *(Membership in institute, faculty, ethics or selection committees)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

B. **Association or Union Engagement** *(Participation in professional or student associations, unions, NGOs)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

C. **Language Skills** *(Publishing in English or other languages, mastery of technical vocabulary, intercultural negotiation, integration into a multilingual environment or host institution)*

Scale: 1 ☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐

Provide concrete examples

D. **Societal Engagement and Knowledge Transfer** *(Open science, sharing knowledge with companies and non-academic institutions, collaboration with public decision-makers, highlighting the societal and environmental impact of research)*

Scale: 1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Provide concrete examples

Summary

To complete your skills review:

- Identify, within each category, the specific aspects you wish to strengthen or develop by ticking the corresponding box.
- Note any points you would like to explore further or clarify.
- Prepare a list of these elements so you can discuss them with your reference person (supervisor, mentor, Graduate Campus advisor, etc.) and jointly define an appropriate individual development plan.

Research skills

☐ Formulation of Research Questions and Hypotheses

☐ Methodology Selection and Protocol Design

☐ Data Analysis and Interpretation

☐ Scientific Writing and Publication

☐ Knowledge of Bibliographic Management Tools

☐ In-Depth Knowledge of Literature and Concepts in the Field

☐ Evaluation of Scientific Quality

☐ Autonomy and Intellectual Independence

☐ Scientific Integrity and Ethics

☐ Use of Artificial Intelligence

List the specific points to improve

Communication, Outreach and Dissemination Skills

☐ Presentation of Scientific Results

☐ Writing Scientific Reports or Patents

☐ Communication with Non-Specialist Audiences

☐ Open Science and Digital Communication

List the specific points to improve

Teaching and Pedagogical Skills

☐ Curriculum Design

☐ Teaching and Facilitation of Courses and Seminars

☐ Facilitation of Tutorials or Practical Sessions

☐ Development of Teaching Tools

☐ Student Assessment

List the specific points to improve

Personal and Interpersonal Skills

☐ Time Management and Personal Organisation

☐ Reflexivity

☐ Innovation and Creativity

☐ Initiative and Engagement

☐ Collaboration and Team spirit

☐ Efficiency and Pragmatism

☐ Conflict Management and Resolution

☐ Flexibility and Adaptability

List the specific points to improve

Career Development Skills

☐ CV and Cover Letter Writing

☐ Job Interview Preparation

☐ Scientific Mobility Projects

☐ Professional Networking

☐ Career Planning

List the specific points to improve

Leadership Skills

☐ Supervision and Mentoring of Students

☐ Strategic Decision-Making

☐ Team Motivation and Engagement

List the specific points to improve

Project Management Skills

☐ Planning and Organisation

☐ Resource Management

☐ Budget Management

☐ Team Coordination and Task Monitoring

☐ Deadline Management

☐ Risk Management

List the specific points to improve

Research Funding Acquisition Skills

☐ Identification of Funding Opportunities

☐ Project Proposal Writing

List the specific points to improve

Institutional and Social Engagement

☐ Participation in Institutional Life

☐ Association or Union Engagement

☐ Language Skills

☐ Societal Engagement and Knowledge Transfer

List the specific points to improve

To go further, you may draw inspiration from existing competency frameworks:

- [The European Competence Framework for Researchers](#)
- [The Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#)
- [The European competence framework for researchers](#)

[Portraits and testimonies from PhD candidates:](#)

- [PhDs testimonies UNIL](#)
- [CUSO (Doing a doctorate…and then what ?)](#)
- [ViTAE: Researchers Career stories](#)
- [Research Careers; Career profiles: PhD](#)
- [PhD career stories: A podcast for people interested in career possibilities after a PhD](#)