



Tips on how to complete your RPDP



RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING



UCD Graduate Studies



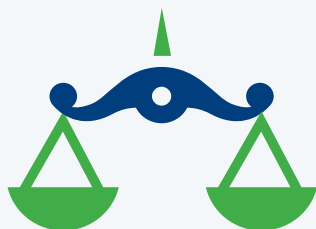
Tips on how to complete your RPDP

Purpose

Research and professional development planning is integral to the Structured PhD programme at UCD. The purpose of such planning is to ensure that your work is clearly focused on achieving your research and professional development goals. This will play a major part in informing the trajectory of your PhD research and in your training and development as a researcher.

WHAT IS NEW?

Based on the new Academic Regulations 2019-2020, effective from September 2019, the Research and Professional Development Planning document from your most recent RSP meeting is one of the mandatory documents that the Transfer Assessment Panel will base its judgement on when determining if a PhD student progresses from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of a Doctoral programme or a Research Master's Degree Student transfers to a PhD Programme.



HOW TO USE THE RPDP TEMPLATE

1. Make sure you have the most recent version of Adobe Acrobat installed.

To download a free update click here <https://get.adobe.com/reader/> or access it via UCD AppsAnywhere at UCD Connect page.

2. Go to [UCD Graduate Studies website](#) and Download the RPDP template.pdf (file named Research and Professional Development Planning)

3. After you read the Introductions and the next 2 sections, go to the third section which is the RPDP form.

4. Activate highlighted template field (blue section) by clicking in the box

5. Fill out the details

6. Save template

7. Send it for signature to your Supervisor(s) and Research Studies Panel members when completed.

8. To upload the form to your SISWeb account, please refer to the [Step by step guide](#) to upload StudentSupervisor meeting records in Infohub



Note:

Please note that RPDP is an online document that the user can fill in each field. In case the information exceeds the visible field area, this will trigger a scroll bar to give the user sufficient space to write. However, the user cannot expand the visible field area and print it.



When developing your research plan, it may be helpful to consider the following:

Formulating your Research Question and Hypothesis

- What hypothesis (es) are you testing?
- What question(s) are you asking?
- Why is this important?

Reviewing the Literature

- Are you familiar with the relevant literature in your area?
- Can you clearly explain how your research question builds on what is currently known?

To test your research question or hypothesis, do you need to define more specific objectives? If so, what are these objectives?

Devising your investigative plan to test your hypothesis/meet your objectives

- What methodological/technological approaches will you use and why are they most appropriate?
- How will you collect your data (sources, documents, surveys, experiments, etc)?
- How will you organise and analyse your data?
- How will you interpret your data?

Reviewing your findings

- How do your findings inform your original objective(s)?
- Do they prove or disprove your hypothesis?
- What new information do they provide you and/or your area of research?

Drawing conclusions

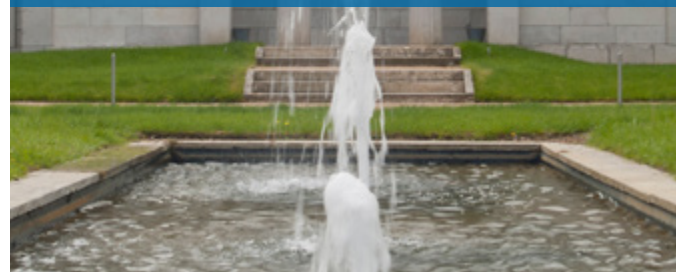
- What conclusions can you draw from your work to date?

What is your next step?

- Given your results and conclusions to date, what further work needs to be done to address your original hypothesis? Or do you want to change or adjust the direction of your research?

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For over 150 years, UCD has produced graduates of remarkable distinction including famous surgeons, writers (e.g., James Joyce) architects, entrepreneurs and five of Ireland's taoisigh



Presenting and publishing your research

- Where do you intend to present the results of your work?
- Where do you intend to publish the results of your work?
- In each instance, are you familiar with what is required for presenting and/or publishing in the manner you plan?

Writing up your thesis

- Have you prepared a thesis plan (you should do this as early as possible in your research programme)?
- Are you familiar with how best to present your work in thesis form and what the requirements are?
- What progress have you made in writing chapters of your thesis?
- When do you hope to have your first draft completed?
- When do you hope to submit?

You will also need to set a time frame to each of the aspects outlined above. Devising a realistic schedule for each step on the way is extremely important if you want to complete your PhD within the timeframe required.



UCD Graduate Studies
www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies