

Professional Services Career Development Guide: For Staff

Your career as built by you

# Introduction

This guide to developing your career at Queen Mary University of London is intended to help you understand and support your personal journey at the University. It is an important part of our Mission and Values to empower you to be proactive about your career.

#### From Our Mission:

*“To create a truly inclusive environment, building on our cherished cultural diversity, where students and staff flourish, reach their full potential and are proud to be part of the University.”*

#### From Our Values:

***Inclusive:*** *Maintaining our tradition of nurturing and supporting talented students and staff*

***Ambitious:*** *We...will foster innovation and creativity...and respond with imagination to new opportunities to further our vision, mission and academic ambitions*

This guide aims to help you in 4 key areas:

|  |  |
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| Badge 1 with solid fill | Why it is important to engage with your career development. |
| Badge with solid fill | Understanding the different types of career journey. |
| Badge 3 with solid fill | Tools and ideas to help you develop your own career plan. |
| Badge 4 with solid fill | What support you can expect from your manager and the institution. |

An academic career tends to have a predefined promotions pathway within the particular field. There tend to be fewer opportunities as someone rises through the ranks, with a career path that is often described as a pyramid. Those unable to get to the next step will most likely find themselves looking to leave academia.

In contrast, pursuing a career in Professional Services – which may have one or two routes up the hierarchy that seem obvious – will lead you to develop skills that can be valuable across different aspects of the establishment.

You might have heard the phrase ‘transferrable skills’. A lot of opportunities are available to move into new roles, not because of years of service in a particular area, but due to the underlying skills needed to get great outcomes. This means that career paths in Professional Services can look more like lattices. This can create opportunities for you by not having to follow specified paths, and increasing your motivation and results in the process.

Contents

[Introduction 2](#_Toc75361118)

[Why is it important to engage with your career development? 4](#_Toc75361119)

[Career development and Our Values 5](#_Toc75361120)

[Different career journeys 6](#_Toc75361121)

[Types of career journey 6](#_Toc75361122)

[Real stories 9](#_Toc75361123)

[‘Lateral moves’ and ‘continuous preparation for opportunity’ 9](#_Toc75361124)

[‘Confident persistence’ and ‘continuous preparation for opportunity’. 9](#_Toc75361125)

[‘Confident Persistence’ and ‘lateral moves’ 10](#_Toc75361126)

[Developing your career plan 11](#_Toc75361127)

[1. Self-Assessment 11](#_Toc75361128)

[Career Values 12](#_Toc75361129)

[Skills and strengths 15](#_Toc75361130)

[Curiosities 17](#_Toc75361131)

[2. Career Exploration 18](#_Toc75361132)

[3. Decision Making 20](#_Toc75361133)

[4. Next Actions 20](#_Toc75361134)

[Next steps and support 21](#_Toc75361135)

[Support 21](#_Toc75361136)

[Getting the most of careers discussions with your manager 21](#_Toc75361137)

[What kind of support is available? 21](#_Toc75361138)

**Engaging with your career**

## Why is it important to engage with your career development?

Planning is a normal activity that we do as part of our jobs. It helps us anticipate what lies ahead and allows us to prepare appropriately. Similarly, being proactive about your career development has a number of benefits to you.

Career development can have a wide range of goals: it isn’t always about the climb from promotion to promotion. For some it is an opportunity to learn, explore and grow; for others, it is a way to support their family. It could be about being driven by the purpose of what you do. Most likely, it’s a combination of multiple factors.

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| Watering pot with solid fill | Identifying options and having something to aim for (a specific job role, skill, department or employer) increases enjoyment of work, **increasing your sense of purpose**. |
|  |  |
| Plant with solid fill | Working towards these goals is likely to lead to you **enhancing skills**, which in turn will increase options/prospects and the quality of future applications. |
|  |  |
| Plant with solid fill | Where career progression is less obvious, or not available, it can help you **minimise uncertainty** as you are actively identifying alternative options. This can also help when you feel ‘stuck’; after all, you probably don’t want to stay in the same job forever! |
|  |  |
| Plant with solid fill | You can’t always rely on a path to open up before you, or for someone else to champion your career, so being proactive means that you can **take charge of your own development and ensure continuity**. |
|  |  |
| Flowers in pot with solid fill | Increased sense of purpose, goals to work towards and control of your career development can all add up to **reduce stress and increase your work-life balance**. |
|  |  |
| Palm tree with solid fill | It can help you with **planning for retirement**. |

### Career development and Our Values

We can also link your engagement in career development to Queen Mary’s Values:

**![A picture containing text, sign, stop, outdoor

Description automatically generated]()Inclusive**: **At Queen Mary, we…**

* Open ourselves up to opportunities and help others with their journeys.
* Explore and support the diverse objectives that we and others have for our careers.

**Proud: At Queen Mary, we…**

* Build our skills to achieve our goals in our work.
* Recognise our strengths, and communicate, build and nurture them.
* Hold ourselves individually and collectively accountable for our commitments.

**Ambitious: At Queen Mary, we…**

* Expect ourselves to seek high standards and focus on results.
* Seek opportunities for continuous improvement.
* Focus on outcomes rather than processes.

**Collegial: At Queen Mary, we…**

* Work with others and build connections, not only to enhance our work but also to create opportunities for career progression and professional development. Colleagues who help others are often highly valued in organisations.
* Work collaboratively, building strong partnerships across Queen Mary and beyond, to resolve major challenges.
* Actively support and endorse each other’s work and being committed to each other’s success.

**Ethical: At Queen Mary, we…**

* Seek out, implement and champion good practice.
* Help out those that seek our help.

# Different career journeys

A career journey is not going to look the same for everyone, as we will want and need different things from our work. Some people seek promotion from one level to the next, while others are happy to develop their skills and look for opportunities throughout an organisation or beyond. Circumstance, environment and life situation can mean that you will change your approach to adapt accordingly and so, your journey is going to be *uniquely* yours.

It is useful to be aware of the different ways that you can approach your career development, to give you a sense of how to move forward. What follows are the major themes in this area to show you a variety of approaches, but you might find your own variation or combination of these that work best for your journey.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | A picture containing icon  Description automatically generated |
| **Ladder progression**  A linear career journey focused on vertical progression | **Lattice pathways**  Flexible progression that is based on applying skills and interests to diverse opportunities |

## Types of career journey

1. **Linear/Ladder**

A steady progression through a series of roles that link from one to another, e.g. progressing through the grades in your area or discipline.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Good Idea with solid fill | **Why this might be right for you:** Easy to see the next step. |
| Puzzle with solid fill | **Opportunities:** Usually a pre-defined hierarchy of roles. |
| Playbook with solid fill | **Challenges:** Roles become increasingly scarce as you progress. |

2. **Continuous preparation for opportunity**

A commitment to learning, self-assessment and exploration to allow you to recognise opportunities for progression which aren’t always obvious. Allowing you to be ready, or show potential, to take on new opportunities which arise. This lends itself well to the more flexible ‘lattice’ style approach to progression.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Good Idea with solid fill | **Why this might be right for you:** You don’t have a predefined idea of what your career journey should look like. You are creative. You want to explore different roles. |
| Puzzle with solid fill | **Opportunities:** Found through networking; making your manager (and others) aware of your ambitions/interests; regularly reviewing and evaluating roles that are advertised. |
| Playbook with solid fill | **Challenges:** Possibility of frustration while waiting for opportunities. Not always easy to see what the next step should be. |

3. **Lateral moves**

Applying your skills and experiences to different roles at a similar level to where you are now. There can be some trial and error, or experimentation, as part of this approach.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Good Idea with solid fill | **Why this might be right for you:** You would like opportunities to develop new skills. You want to try something different, while maintaining your level of progression to date. Another area that you could apply your skills to might offer more opportunities for progression. |
| Puzzle with solid fill | **Opportunities:** Found through networking; discussing lateral moves with your manager; regularly reviewing and evaluating roles that are advertised. |
| Playbook with solid fill | **Challenges:** You might feel that you are making slow progress. Lateral moves aren’t immediately obvious as they are based on your skills rather than job title. |

4. **Confident persistence**

Staying in your role because that is the right choice for you. Building and ensuring the quality of the work that you do and supporting your area of work as it develops over time.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Good Idea with solid fill | **Why this might be right for you:** You are looking for stability and a level predictability in your work. You have other life priorities that mean you are happy with your level of work at present. You enjoy what you do! |
| Puzzle with solid fill | **Opportunities:** Keep your eyes open for interesting projects within your area which can both stimulate you and grow your skills. Let your manager know what kinds of projects would be of interest to you. |
| Playbook with solid fill | **Challenges:** Keeping your skills up to date with the changes in your area of work. You might be unprepared for the impact of fundamental structural changes. Staying interested in your work. |

### Influences on your career journey

Whatever your journey looks like, it will be influenced by lots of different factors that you should consider as you work on your career development. Some of these might be out of your control, so make sure you have time to reflect on how they may affect your planning and progression.

* **Your skill levels.** Are they appropriate to the kinds of roles you are interested in, or the way your area is developing? Are you willing and able to develop those skills?
* **Your knowledge.** Are you aware of, and have, the appropriate knowledge for the role?
* **Your preparation.** How well prepared are you to make the next step? Both in terms of ability and in terms of practical factors such as CVs, evidence of ability, and interview skills. Also, in terms of how much effort you have put into identifying opportunities.
* **Opportunities.** Sometimes, the opportunities in the areas that we are interested in are scarce. Do you have alternative options? Have you identified what makes you different to your potential competition?

## Real stories

Below, you’ll find quotes from interviews with staff across Professional Services functions at Queen Mary.

### ‘Lateral moves’ and ‘continuous preparation for opportunity’

“I started in Queen Mary in September 2008, as a Governance Administrator in the Council Secretariat. My manager sent me on various training courses, signed me up to the Association of University Administrators, and acted as an informal mentor for me.

“He also made it clear that I needed experience of student-facing roles to progress within the university. He helped to get me shadowing opportunities. My next role was in the School of Business and Management (SBM) as a Programme Administrator; that was a sideways move for me, but it gave me that exposure. Within a year, I moved up to Programme Manager.

“Working in SBM showed me that I really wanted to work with students to enhance their experience. At my level at that time, it was clear what the issues were, but I couldn’t implement solutions. I needed to become a more senior manager to really help out.

“Around that time, I went on to the Women Into Leadership programme. That was fantastic. It opened my eyes to how many struggles other women share with me. So that that was an illuminating experience for me and led me to look for more opportunities for progression.

“A secondment came up in the Blizard Institute. It opened me up to HR, finance, and other areas. While I was there, I was successful in my application to the Aurora [leadership] programme – again, life-changing.

“Now I'm School Manager in Physics and Astronomy.”

**Lorna Ireland**

**School Manager – Physics and Astronomy**

### ‘Confident persistence’ and ‘continuous preparation for opportunity’.

“I started at Queen Mary in March 2019, so just over two years ago now. I joined as Placement Officer, which was a newly created role for the School of Economics and Finance. I was appointed to manage the Year in Industry programmes and all study abroad related matters.

*[On development activity outside of the core role:]* “There are four main things. First of all, I'm a Mental Health First Aider, and I've started mental health drop-in sessions for the school alongside a colleague. We run them once a week, virtually at the moment, and students can just drop in and talk about any challenges they're facing.

“I'm also involved with the sustainability team at Queen Mary. I did Environmental Sustainability Skills for the Workforce training last year. After that, some colleagues and I created an Environmental Sustainability Champions group. There’s a sustainability strategy now, which is great. I took a course in environmental sustainability management in November, through Queen Mary. I'm now part of the team working on putting together the documents to achieve the EcoCampus certifications and, further down the line, ISO 14001 *[the international standard for an effective environmental management system]*.

“I'm also doing coaching training at Queen Mary – studying for the ILM qualification for coaching and mentoring in the workplace.

“Lastly, I’ve recently been awarded the HEA Associate Fellowship. The Teaching Recognition Team at QMUL provides support for staff interested in applying for one of the fellowships.”

**Emanuela Nova**

**Placement Officer, School of Economics and Finance**

### ‘Confident Persistence’ and ‘lateral moves’

“I started at Queen Mary in late 2010, initially as a temporary technician in the Copy Shop, which was the rebranded reprographics. department. In early 2011, the role had been made permanent; I applied and was successful. I stayed there in the Copy Shop until April 2019. In my role I did a lot of the physical work of printing and finishing, but I also took care of the bulk of the administrative work: dealing with customer records, invoicing and so on

“There was no step up within the Copy Shop to the next grade; the manager's role would be two grades up, which I felt was too big a jump. I decided to go forward by moving into a more general role within Queen Mary, which gives me more skills and therefore more options in the future.

“I've now moved over to Housing Services, into my current role in administration. In Housing Services we take applications for student accommodation, and we allocate the rooms. My team is there before they move in and when they're preparing to move out, and we handle the financial side of things while they're here. I provide administration support to the Housing Officers and our management.

“I've never even thought about leaving. It's convenient for me in terms of where I live - I can cycle to work. I like the people here, I've always thought that the salary is competitive, and the pension and the annual leave offering is excellent.”

**Paul Jauncey**

**Housing Services Administrator**

# Developing your career plan

In this section we will introduce a simple and effective method of developing your career plan. There are some practical exercises included to help you get started. This is applicable to all journey types, and what you do with the information will change depending on the path you are on and the stage which you are at.

There are 4 stages of planning and action as part of this method. They are intended to guide you through a deliberate process to help you develop your thinking. This could be simply your next step, or a view much further forward than that.

There is not a set timescale for you to complete your planning; you should go at the pace that is appropriate to you and your journey. If you find yourself getting stuck at any of the stages, ask for the input of others. An external perspective can help you see and consider things that you hadn’t before.

The method is presented below and you will see that it shown as a cycle. This is intended to show that career planning in an ongoing process. Your skill set and priorities will change over time; your plan might not work out as you’d hoped, or perhaps you have taken a new direction and need to think about how this affects your vision of the future.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **4. Next Actions:** Increasing your chances of success | **Diagram  Description automatically generated** | **1. Self-assessment:** Working out what you want from your career and assessing your abilities |
|  |  |
| **3. Decision making:** Effectively evaluating the alternatives | **2. Career exploration:** Investigating all your options |

## 1. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is all about understanding what is important to you in your career; what factors will influence the direction you’d like to go in; and the roles that you would choose.

It also involves recognising which skills you are strong in and which you are developing, with a view to what you can offer in a future role. This is still valuable even if you plan to stay within your existing role for now. The aim is to help you identify good quality matches for your next step or future direction.

### Career Values

The first exercise in this section is to look at ‘career values’. These are factors which are important to you and will have an influence on your career decisions. For example: money, types of colleagues or location. The following worksheet will offer career values for you to consider, but it is by no means an exhaustive list.

You could consider these to be things that you are looking to receive from the work that you are interested in.

Once you have your list of values, it can help you in a few useful ways:

* Creates criteria with which you can evaluate your current role.
* Helps you identify possible future roles. Share the most important values to you, as well as you core skills or job role that you are looking for, and then ask others to suggest roles/departments/employers that are a good match.
* Creates criteria you can use to evaluate roles you are interested in.
* Gives you points for discussion when investigating job roles, or working with someone to identify ­­­­possible career directions.

Try asking yourself ‘why?’ something is a value to help you learn more about what is important to you.

#### Career Values Worksheet

On the following pages are some of the common factors that people find are important to them when asked **why** they do their job. There are spaces at the bottom to add anything not listed that you would like to add.

* For the first column (“Free choice”) tick all the values that are important or desirable to you
* For the next column (“Half”), cut the number of values you have chosen by half, discarding those of less importance.
* For the final column choose only your “Top three” essential values.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Career Values Worksheet | | Free choice | Half | Top three |
| **Using your abilities** | Not feeling like the job is “easy”. Stretching yourself. Using your skills. |  |  |  |
| **Accomplishment** | Feeling that you achieve something. You have clear goals. You can see a result for your efforts. |  |  |  |
| **Being busy** | Not having stretches of time when you have nothing to do. You have a buzz of activity. |  |  |  |
| **Being responsible** | Taking charge of your own work and the work of others. Being accountable. |  |  |  |
| **Variety of task** | Every day is not the same because you do different things. |  |  |  |
| **Variety of environment** | Every day is not the same because you are in different places. |  |  |  |
| **Variety of contact** | Every day is not the same because you are interacting with different people. |  |  |  |
| **Adventure** | You regularly take risks and have feelings of exhilaration or danger. |  |  |  |
| **Prestige environment** | The place where you work is held in high regard as a major player in the field. |  |  |  |
| **Advancement** | There are opportunities to be promoted to higher positions. |  |  |  |
| **Money** | You earn or have the potential to earn a larger than average salary. You have perks, such as a company car, etc. |  |  |  |
| **Development** | There are opportunities to enhance, expand or develop your role and learn new things. |  |  |  |
| **Recognition** | When you perform well, your efforts are acknowledged or rewarded by praise, promotion or money. |  |  |  |
| **Authority** | You get to tell people what to do. You give direction to others. |  |  |  |
| **Social status** | You feel proud when you tell people what you do for a living. People think your job is interesting or glamorous |  |  |  |
| **Colleagues** | The people you work with are easy to get on with or interesting. There are opportunities for socialising with colleagues. |  |  |  |
| **Helping individuals** | You are involved in providing aid and assistance to people directly. |  |  |  |
| **Helping society** | You are doing something which contributes beneficially to society. |  |  |  |
| **Caring** | You are involved in showing support, empathy and love to others. |  |  |  |
| **Justifiable** | What you are doing fits in with your moral value system. |  |  |  |
| **Fairness** | You and other workers are treated fairly by your employer. You have good conditions of employment. |  |  |  |
|  | | Free choice | Half | Top three |
| **Spirituality** | Your work allows you to express or explore your faith. |  |  |  |
| **Management** | You have a good working relationship with your boss. Your manager's way of working fits in well with your own. |  |  |  |
| **Training** | Structured opportunities for learning are provided and supported. |  |  |  |
| **Creativity** | You get to generate new ideas or solutions to problems. You get to innovate and be original. |  |  |  |
| **Decision making** | You get to make some of the choices that affect your work. |  |  |  |
| **Autonomy** | You have some freedom to do things when you want and how you want. |  |  |  |
| **Being expert** | You have the opportunity to gain and use an in-depth knowledge of a subject. You are sought for advice in this area. |  |  |  |
| **Competition** | You get the opportunity to test your abilities against others. |  |  |  |
| **Subject** | Your work is enjoyable because you have a strong interest in the subject matter you are dealing with. |  |  |  |
| **Aesthetics** | You deal with ideas or things that are beautiful and require appreciation. |  |  |  |
| **Quality** | You work in situations in which precision and attention to detail are important, or where there is little room for error. |  |  |  |
| **Security** | You have security of employment. It is not likely that you will lose your job or have to find another job regularly. |  |  |  |
| **Stress-free** | You do not have to work under high levels of stress. The pressure of work is not too high and there is little conflict. |  |  |  |
| **Health** | Your work positively contributes to your physical and psychological wellbeing. |  |  |  |
| **Stability** | Work routines and duties are largely predictable and not likely to be subject to sudden or unforeseen changes. |  |  |  |
| **Hours** | You do not work more than average or irregular hours. Your job does not impinge on your family or social life. The patterns of work suit your lifestyle. |  |  |  |
| **Resources** | You have the materials, equipment and money you need to do the job. You are not expected to produce great results without the right tools. |  |  |  |
| **Workspace** | The place where you work is comfortable and suited to your working style and personal preferences. |  |  |  |
| **Supportive** | The organisation you work for is open and tolerant. Your views are sought and respected during decision making. |  |  |  |
| **Co-operation** | Your work requires operating as part of a team and interacting with others to achieve a goal. |  |  |  |

### Skills and strengths

The second exercise is to reflect on your skills and strengths. You could think about these as what you have to offer in your current and future role. This can also help you identify future options, by asking yourself (and others) what roles need these skills.

You might already be evaluating your skills as part of your annual appraisals. As with all the exercises presented in this guide, similar reflection you are doing elsewhere can be integrated into your career planning.

Skills will fall into three categories:

1. Skills that are usually acquired or learned as a result of work-related activities. These might be technical skills, such as how to create databases, or process-oriented skills, such as how a finance system works.
2. Soft skills, also called competencies. Examples are teamwork or planning and organising.
3. Strengths, which can be defined as activities/skills that an individual finds energising. These are commonly used naturally, frequently and to a good standard.

In order to measure your skills, you need to consider what it is you are measuring, and in what context.

* For technical and process-oriented skills, there are often measures that will indicate the level of your ability. For example, a PRINCE2 qualification will indicate that you understand best practice for project management. Successful projects and the size of these will suggest your skill level.

Similarly, in finance you could look to an ACCA or CIMA qualification and measurable outcomes in your work, which could include volume of savings made, or the size of accounts you are responsible for. As you can see, there are some formal indicators, and then the measurable outcomes in your work that show how good your skill is.

* For soft skills, an example of using that skill in practice can help you assess the quality of that skill. However, you also need to consider context. So, if you are great at managing people, you might want to consider what type and size of team you have experience of managing?

This helps you establish opportunities which might need your skill set at that particular level or it might help you identify areas of growth needed to show promise for an opportunity that you are interested in.

* One example can show multiple competencies in action. Take time to record some examples of you achievements, so that you can use them when you are spending time on your career development planning.
* Another way to assess your skills and qualities is to get feedback from someone else. Sometimes they can see things that we miss. You can ask them directly, or you can share some of your examples and ask for them to reflect back the skills they hear are being used.

At this point, it might be a good idea to refresh your existing evaluations or have a go at the ‘Skills and Strengths Evaluation Worksheet’.

#### Skills & Strengths Evaluation Worksheet

1. In the table below rate your confidence in each of the skills from 1 to 5:

1 = very low confidence – 5 = very confident

1. If you are unsure how to rate yourself, just choose the score that feels right in the moment; you can always change your mind later once you start thinking about examples.
2. State examples of each behaviour that evidence your confidence and competence in each area you have scored 4-5.
3. State what actions you could take that might help you improve your confidence/competence in those areas scoring 3 or less.

The skills listed here are a set of common competencies that you might choose to evaluate. It is not a definitive list, and if you want to add your own, you should do so.

| **Skills** | **Personal rating** | **Examples/Evidence** | **Action points** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Planning, organisation and project management |  |  |  |
| Written and oral communication |  |  |  |
| Analytical skills, problem-solving and creativity |  |  |  |
| Self-motivation, initiative and drive |  |  |  |
| Results/quality orientation |  |  |  |
| Resilience, ability to bounce back from adversity |  |  |  |
| Staff management and leadership |  |  | *Look at the* [*Leading Together*](http://www.profdev.qmul.ac.uk/what-we-offer-/pathways-to-leadership/) *webpage and self-assessment tool, which covers other areas of leadership.* |
| *Add your own here…* |  |  |  |

### Curiosities

The final part of self-assessment is to look at curiosities. These allow for you to think freely and generate a list of things that are interesting to you. These can sometimes hold clues to directions that could be a good match for you.

* What work have I enjoyed the most?
* What roles have I seen that I am interested in?
* What is the most interesting part of my work?
* What work am I doing when I lose track or time or am totally absorbed in my work?
* What roles have I seen that I am interested in?

You could follow any of these questions with the question ‘why?’ to help you further understand the curiosity.

## 2. Career Exploration

The career exploration stage takes all the self-assessment that you have engaged in and gets you thinking about which roles/departments/employers might be a good fit or would be attractive to you.

What roles would be a good fit for you? In your direct path? Outside of your path? What experiments could you try to find out more?

To help with this, the ‘Career Exploration Worksheet’ contains 6 categories for you to make notes on, and then encourages you to consider what roles might be a good fit based on the information you have put into the worksheet. The categories are:

* Your values/career priorities
* Strengths and work that you find energising
* Weakness and work that you find stressful
* Curiosities
* Personality. What are the characteristics of your personality? These might hold clues as to what work you would be well suited to. You can use one of the variety of personality type tests out there if you like those, or simply use your own assessment/judgement.
* Interests and hobbies outside of work can also hold useful insights for where you might like your career development to go. It is not necessarily about turning interests and hobbies into your career, but it might help you spot some insights that weren’t present elsewhere.
  + What skills do you use in those hobbies and interests?
  + Which elements are most absorbing?

For example, do you take a leadership role in charity work in your spare time? Perhaps you could consider leadership opportunities at work.

Do you like playing strategic board games with your friends? Perhaps taking up some strategic opportunities at work could be appealing to you.

**Curiosities**

**Interests/  
Hobbies**

**Weaknesses/  
Stressors**

**Strengths/**

**Energisers**

**Personality**

**Career Priorities**

**(Transfer the Top 3 from  
your Values sheet)**

**Good fit roles:**



**Career Exploration Worksheet**

## 3. Decision Making

Having identified possible options, the next step is to decide which ones you will investigate further and take specific actions on. Where you have a lot of options, you will need to prioritise where you dedicate your attention as you do not have a limitless amount of time and energy.

There is no rule for how you decide. After your investigation, you may simply have a really good feeling about one direction or another. If you are more analytical, you may have scored the options to help you decide.

A couple of useful points to consider are:

* What roadblocks might you encounter on this path and how would you overcome these?
* What skills might you need to develop in order to move in the direction that you are interested in?

You may need to do some further investigation if you realise that you are still uncertain.

Once you have got a sense of a direction that is appealing to you, the next step is to take action.

## 4. Next Actions

When reaching the point of setting actions to help you progress on your journey, it will depend on what decisions you have made as to what next actions are appropriate. Here are few things that it might help to reflect on:

* Who could help you identify next actions?
* Who could you talk to in your area/s of interest?
* What connections could you build that would help you move towards areas of interest?
* How often would it be helpful for you to review?
* Who could you share your goals with in order to help keep you accountable and on track?
* If this feels too big or overwhelming, what is the smallest manageable chunk you could do next?
* What will you do if things don’t go to plan? This can help you maintain momentum in your journey when we have those moments when things don’t work out like you had hoped.

It may be useful to use the SMART goals acronym (which you have likely seen before) as a guide:

**Specific** Being specific helps you take deliberate actions in your career journey. Goals and actions which are not well defined have the habit of not getting done!

**Measurable** How will you know if this action has been useful/successful?

**Achievable** Is this something that you will be able to do, even if you need help?

**Relevant** Will this be helpful to your career goals and planning?

**Timebound** Setting a deadline can help prevent the career actions slipping down your to do list. If it remains in a ‘someday/maybe’ category, then it is likely that you’ll never get round to it.

# Next steps and support

Careers are very much a journey and a learning experience. There will be change, roadblocks, successes and disappointments along the way. Each will have an effect on your goals, whatever those may be. Some of them will be within your ability to control and some will not.

Remember that your career development should be an ongoing process and that you should consider your career development as a cycle where you regularly review your progress and check in on your values, skills and curiosities (amongst other considerations) and see how they are affecting your personal vision for your career. Think of it like a check-up with your doctor or dentist!

## Support

You manager can help you with all the different stages of your career journey. You may choose to do this as part of your appraisal or by having specific discussions about your career development. It can help you to build momentum and explore or access what opportunities are available to you. Wherever you seek support, remember that you own the process as it is your career.

### Getting the most of careers discussions with your manager

* Bring along any self-assessment exercises or notes that you have made ahead of the session.
* Think about what you would like your manager to help you with.
* Talk through your careers thoughts and ideas with a trusted friend/colleague/coach or mentor/family member so that you can clarify ideas ahead of the meeting to increase the focus.
* Try to create some ideas for what you would like to do next, whether that is a career development or a skill development. Your thoughts here can help your manager better understand your needs and support you more effectively.

### What kind of support is available?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **How you can help yourself** | **How your manager can help you** | **How Queen Mary can help you** |
| * Self-assessment * Networking * Applying for a secondment/project * Generate ideas of what you would like to do * Identify what support you might need for your exploration | * Ask you about your career plans at appraisal * Connect you to other departments * Suggest areas for development * Build upon your strengths and identify where there might be opportunities to leverage those strengths | * Careers coaching * Careers training * Skills training * Projects as part of Queen Mary’s wider change initiative * Secondments |



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