

AIRS

Advanced Information Research Skills

AIRS Module 12

Building further skills



<http://airs.library.qut.edu.au>

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Contents

Module 12: Building further skills	2
12.1 Skill pathways	2
Advance, Lead and Engage	2
HDR Skills Assessment Tool	3
When should you use the HDR Skills Assessment Tool?	4
How does the HDR Skills Assessment Tool work?	4
Initiate	5
Onboarding	6
Landing	7
Get a head start: QUT HDR Internships	11
Maximise your skills with GRE+D and e-Grad School	11

Module 12: Building further skills

This module begins the process of developing the skills for your research and for your professional career. By the end of the module you will:

- understand the skills needed for your research degree and career
- identify your existing skill levels, the skills you need to further development and potential training and development opportunities
- explore ways to document your skills experience.

12.1 Skill pathways

Advance, Lead and Engage

Ever wondered which skills you most need to successfully complete your research and build your career? We've done the hard work for you and compiled the HDR skillset grouped into three key pathways: Advance, Lead and Engage. These pathways allow you to easily identify skills embedded within all HDR learning offerings.

The **Advance** pathway focuses on supporting your research skills, from how you conceptualise your research to how you communicate it. Skills include: Academic communication, Methodologies and practices, Ethics and integrity, Critical and creative thinking, Discipline-specific, and Digital literacy and data management.

The **Lead** pathway centres on leadership and the professional skills needed to launch your career and drive your personal success. Skills include: Career development, Project management, and Wellbeing.

The **Engage** pathway involves improving your teamwork and industry connections and bringing your research to the world. Skills include: Industry engagement, Commercialisation and entrepreneurship, and Collaboration.

Did you know that only about 25 per cent of HDR graduates take up careers in academia? Others choose positions in government and industry. Whether you are looking to develop a career in academia or to work with industry, your future employer will be seeking a connected, rounded candidate with a range of skills. The great news is that a QUT research degree allows you to develop all these skills and more while you study, with flexible options you can tailor to your own needs.

Your QUT HDR course encompasses more than just your research project. It incorporates a range of training, opportunities and resources available to QUT HDR students. Taking advantage of these empowers you to graduate QUT with a **degree plus** and be competitive in the job market, regardless of your career path.

Here's QUT's HDR skillset:



HDR Skills Assessment Tool

Start planning the development of your essential skills now! To get started, assess your skills using the HDR Skills Assessment Tool. This tool is designed specifically for you to assess your competency in skills that are related to both your research development and your professional development so that you can identify skills gaps. QUT has a suite of specifically designed workshops, online modules, optional units and self-guided learning options to address these skills so you can complete your degree with a Real World focus. For you to take full advantage of the offerings you need to honestly assess within the tool and then review the opportunities available to help guide your learning.

When should you use the HDR Skills Assessment Tool?

You should commence your Skills assessment as early in your candidature as possible to get an idea of which skills you might need to continue to develop. Remember that the tool is a live record so you should return to it at regular intervals to keep your assessment up to date. For instance, once you are progressing in your research, your needs will probably change, so you should reassess your skills gaps to identify new learning opportunities. Each time you participate in further skills development opportunities, consider whether your skill level has changed. If so, you can update your skill level and also add further detail on your experience. This will allow you to recognise your strengths, and areas for development. In the tool, the skills areas are linked to available skill development opportunities. These offerings are constantly being developed and updated so it will be part of your own candidature management plan to stay on top of your needs and connect to any new training available.

Sharing your skills experience and gaps with your supervisory team is a great way to start conversations about your research skill development and future career path. Your supervisors might also be able to help you determine which skills are the more important to work on, at any particular time.

How does the HDR Skills Assessment Tool work?

Given the number and complexity of the skills HDR students need to develop, QUT has developed an online HDR Skills Assessment Tool to help you identify the skills you need and direct you to the opportunities to build your skills.

The HDR Skills Assessment Tool is open to all HDR students. You are encouraged to utilise it now, towards the start of your studies, and to continue to use it and update it to help you track your skills development throughout your candidature. There are three phases to the Skills Assessment Tool – Initiate, Onboarding and Landing.

Initiate

You can find the tool here: <http://qut.to/HDRskills> or you can navigate to it through the research area in your student HiQ site. Below is the landing page:

QUT **HiQ** Search content, people, uni

Home Enrolment Study Student life Campuses and Transport IT and printing Health and wellbeing Jobs and careers

Home > HDR Skills Assessment Tool

HDR Skills Assessment Tool

Beta version - [we'd love your feedback!](#)

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Student number: 4640217
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How this tool helps you

Excel at your research
Find out what skills you need to complete your research and how to improve them.

Grow your career
Develop your skills to be more industry-ready to help you find a job.

Track your experience
Record your research and work experiences to use in your CV and HDR annual report.

This self-assessment tool can help you to identify research skills, strengths and gaps. It consists of three sections: Advance, Lead and Engage.

How it works

1. Identify your current skill levels by answering the questions for:
 - Advance**
Build your research skills, to support your research and thesis.
(6 skills)
 - Lead**
Develop the leadership and professional skills needed to launch your career and drive your personal success.
(3 skills)
 - Engage**
Improve your industry engagement and innovation skills through internships, networking and engagement in entrepreneurial experiences.
(3 skills)
2. Receive recommended opportunities such as online modules, video tutorials, face-to-face workshops and industry internships to help you improve your skills based on your self-assessment. GRE+D may contact you to recommend additional opportunities.
3. Track and develop your skills and document your experience and your progress.

[Get Started >](#)

Click here to **begin**

Onboarding

Please note that you will only see this screen the first time you enter the tool.

Once you have hit the **Get Started** button, you enter an interface, like an online form, where you are asked to rate your experience levels across each of the 12 HDR skills. This is broken into three sections: Advance, Lead and Engage. You answer each question in one of four ways: New to me, Some experience, Significant experience or Not relevant. Below is an example of what this page looks like.

Home > [HDR Skills Assessment Tool](#) > Skills Assessment

Skills Assessment

Beta version - [we'd love your feedback!](#)



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Advance
Advance your research skills
(6 skills)

Update your Advance skills

Academic communication

Write, structure, speak about and represent research clearly and accurately for the intended audience.

Some examples of experience in this skill include:

Written academic papers, reports, theses, milestone documents and project proposals; delivered conference and milestone presentations, participated in academic communication training.

New to me Some experience Significant experience Not relevant

Save

Critical & Creative thinking

Use critical and creative thinking to generate new ideas and evaluate the relevance and validity of concepts, data, evidence and arguments.

Some examples of experience in this skill include:

Critically analysed literature, reviewed research findings, analysed data, critiqued publications, conducted user and needs analysis, creatively solved problems, generated innovative ideas and participated in critical and creative thinking training.

New to me Some experience Significant experience Not relevant

Save

Self-assess your skill experience here

Landing

Once you have completed the self-appraisal for each skill, you will land on the screen below, which offers multiple functions. From here you can update your skills, export your self-assessment and find a range of opportunities to help build your skills.

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[Export your skills assessment record here](#)

[Generate my skills report](#)

Well done on completing your skills assessment!

The HDR skills assessment tool can help you identify and build your skills. Update skill levels and record progress in **Advance**, **Lead** and **Engage** skills. Plus, check out the opportunities to develop your skills below.

Advance
Advance your research skills
[Update my advance skills >](#)

Lead
Lead your career and professional skills
[Update my lead skills >](#)

Engage
Engage with industry and innovation
[Update my engage skills >](#)

Your recommended opportunities

We have some opportunities you might be interested in. Use the filter on the left to help you narrow down the opportunities.

Filter opportunities

- All Advance skills
- Academic communication
- Critical & Creative thinking
- Digital literacy & Data management
- Discipline specific
- Ethics & Integrity
- Methodologies & Practices
- All Lead skills
- Career development
- Project management
- Wellbeing
- All Engage skills
- Collaboration
- Commercialisation & Entrepreneurship
- Industry engagement

Results: 76 opportunities

Opportunity	Session date
3MT Development Series - Presenting Your Research Confidently and Effectively Learn the elements of effective presentations & strategies to maintain audience interest. More information	
Academic presentations These sessions help you improve your knowledge of academic presentations. More information	
Academic Vocabulary This writing workshop provides an opportunity to improve knowledge of academic vocabulary More information	
Academic Writing This writing workshop provides an opportunity to improve your academic writing style. More information	
Animal ethics training This is a required training for research involving animals More information	
Biosafety training Train for Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) or high-risk biological agents or materials More information	
Career Roundtable events Collaborative session exploring strategies for identifying and creating ideal internships More information	
Careers beyond academia - a world of possibilities	

Filter opportunities by skill here

Filter opportunities by skill level

The HDR Skills Assessment Tool allows you to find training opportunities to build each of the skills needed for your HDR degree. There are many opportunities available, so this tool makes it possible to filter the full list based on the skills or groups of skills that you choose (left-side of the screen). You can turn individual skills on and off and also filter by Advance, Lead and Engage pathways. We suggest you particularly focus on the skills for which you self-assessed as having little experience. For instance, if you consider that you are new to academic writing, then filter by that skill and find opportunities such as online resources, webinars and workshops. The Skills Assessment Tool provides links to further detail and booking forms for each event.

Update your skills

Once you have gained further experience in a skill, it is possible to update your self-assessment by clicking on either the Advance, Lead or Engage sections of these skills. There is also the opportunity for you to record any relevant experiences across each of the skills in a text box which you can return to throughout your course. So, when you are next putting together a **job application** or your HDR **annual report**, you can return to the HDR Skills Assessment Tool and your experience details will be available when you need it.

The best way to record your experiences in the HDR Skills Assessment Tool is by using the **STARS** method which stands for Situation, Task, Action, Results, Self-reflection.

Situation: What is the context or background? Where and when did your experience occur?
e.g. *I participated in an internship with Google in 2019, with a role as Business Analyst.*

Task: What was the challenge you were set?
e.g. *My role involved critically reviewing trade literature so that Google could make an informed decision on the commercial viability of a new product.*

Action: What was done and how was it achieved?
e.g. *By using the critical analysis skills developed during my PhD, I was able to identify 67 equivalent products and compare their popularity, affordability and relevance to users.*

Results: What was the outcome and what is the evidence to support this?
e.g. *My comparative report of products identified both the viability of the product and a potential untapped market. Based on my recommendations, Google will be releasing this product next year. Bill Smith, my Google supervisor stated, "your analysis was insightful and your report writing, exemplary."*

Self-reflection: What did you learn?
e.g. *This internship experience highlighted the transferability of my skills from academia to industry settings.*

HDR Skills Assessment Tool

Beta version - [we'd love your feedback!](#)



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Advance

Advance your research skills
(8 skills)

Update your skills experience self-assessment

Update your Advance skills

Academic communication

Write and structure research clearly and accurately for the intended audience.

Some of these attributes may include:

Written reports, research-based dissertations, theses, milestone documents, project proposals, academic papers, scholarly reviews, participated in academic writing training.

New to me **Some experience** Significant experience Not relevant

Add notes

Documenting examples of your experience in this skill will help you complete your annual progress report, and serve as a useful record for when you apply for jobs. We recommend using the [STARS](#) format.

(Situation) I participated in an internship with Google in 2019, with a role as Business Analyst.
(Task) My role involved critically reviewing trade literature so that Google could make an informed decision on the commercial viability of a new product.
(Action) By using the critical analysis skills developed during my PhD, I was able to...

Save

Record your experience with the STARS method

Export your skills assessment record

It is important to track your progress as you build your HDR skills throughout your course. The Skills Assessment Tool allows you to save a snapshot of your experience level and recorded experiences for each skill. From the landing page, just click on **Generate my skills report** and then either print or save as a pdf, which will look like this:

4/28/2020 HDR Skills Assessment Tool



HDR Skills Assessment Tool

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'Advance' skills
8 skills

Academic communication

Write and structure research clearly and accurately for the intended audience.

Significant experience

(Situation) I participated in an internship with Google in 2019, with a role as Business Analyst. (Task) My role involved critically reviewing trade literature so that Google could make an informed decision on the commercial viability of a new product. (Action) By using the critical analysis skills developed during my PhD, I was able to identify 67 equivalent products and compare their popularity, affordability and relevance to users. (Results) My comparative report of products identified both the viability of the product and a potential untapped market. Based on my recommendations, Google will be releasing this product next year. Bill Smith, my Google supervisor stated, "your analysis was insightful and your report writing, exemplary." (Self-reflection) This internship experience highlighted the transferability of my skills from academia to industry settings.

Critical & Creative thinking

Use reflection, revision of evidence and novel approaches to respond to challenges.

New to me

Get a head start: QUT HDR Internships

QUT HDR students can undertake funded internships during candidature and examination. QUT prefers HDR students to commence an HDR Internship within the first 18 months of candidature. Students must have completed Stage 2 plus six months full-time equivalent study to participate. HDR Internships are a great way to start developing essential skills, as well as a way to explore how your advanced research skills are applicable in industry environments. As the majority of HDR students go on to work in industry, it is essential that you understand from the early stages of candidature how to communicate, collaborate, and work with industry. Through this experience, you will partner with your industry and an academic mentor to develop a project to be completed over about three months. During this time you will demonstrate your leadership and communication skills, engage with industry, extend your networks, and broaden your job prospects. HDR Internships are open to domestic and international PhD and MPhil candidates. For more information, go to the [Engage with Industry HiQ page](#), [register your interest for the HDR Industry Engagement program](#), and email hdr.intern@qut.edu.au for any further assistance.

Maximise your skills with GRE+D and e-Grad School

The Graduate Research Education and Development (GRE+D) team curate and manage training for HDRs at QUT. We offer a range of webinars, face-to-face workshops, moderated online modules, quick self-paced modules, and short video tasters to help you explore and choose the skills areas you'd like to develop. There are many training providers helping HDRs at QUT, so GRE+D helps connect you with training throughout the university (including the flexible, five-week online modules offered by award-winning e-Grad School). Every research student is on a different journey and has different goals. To find the right opportunities for you: check out the [HDR HiQ website](#), keep returning to your personalised [HDR Skills Assessment](#), and keep an eye out for the GRE+D fortnightly email alerts.