

# The ABCs of the Professional Development Requirement

## Faculty and Staff

The University of Alberta [Professional Development Requirement](#) includes:

- 1) an individualized career plan document called an [Individual Development Plan \(IDP\)](#) and
- 2) the completion of [eight hours of professional development activities](#) inspired by the career plan.

The ABCs are as follows:

**A**

**Access the IDP workbook.** Students are required to work from the Individual Development Plan (IDP) workbook. Students who are returning to graduate studies after years of professional experience may wish to use the Individual Development Plan for Professionals (IDP Pro) workbook.

**B**

**Be specific.** As part of the IDP, graduate students research three careers or goals, and these will be as diverse as the students and their field of study. Supervisors should review any departmental specific requirements for professional development and guide students to complete those activities as part of the eight hour requirement.

**C**

**Complete the IDP.** Students receive guidance through a three part [IDP workshop series](#) and an [IDP Online Workshop \(Part 2\)](#). There are also [tip sheets](#), an [IDP Review Guide for Students](#), and an [IDP Review Guide for Faculty](#).

**D**

**Deadlines.** To help students take advantage of internships and other professional opportunities available on campus, there are deadlines for completion. The IDP must be finalized and reviewed by a supervisor or career mentor.

**E**

**Eight hours of PD activities.** Students will find, participate and log the eight hours of PD activities that interest them, inspired by their IDP and/or advised by their department. The activity must meet the professional development activities guideline and be approved by the department to count towards the eight hours. The [PD Opportunities Guide](#) lists some of the available options.

**F**

**Forms.** When both the IDP and eight hours of PD activities are finished, students need to complete and submit a supervisor/career mentor signed [IDP/PD Completion Form](#) to their department. The IDP is kept by the student.

**G**

**Goal setting.** IDPs are used by professionals to help them achieve their life goals. We recommend supervisors or career mentors review it annually with students.

### Deadlines for Completion

IDP

- Within 12 months of a program's commencement for master's students
- Within 18 months of a program's commencement for doctoral students

Eight hours of PD activities

- By time of program completion for master's students
- Within 3 years of a program's commencement for doctoral students

### Completing the Professional Development Requirement

Students complete IDP  
- 3 career paths/goals  
- self assessment  
- timeline



Students review IDP with supervisor/career mentor and seek guidance for PD activities



Students complete 8 hours of PD activities



Students submit a supervisor/career mentor signed **IDP/PD Completion Form** to department



Students review IDP annually with supervisor/career mentor (recommended)

# Completing the Eight Hours of Professional Development Activities

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As students complete the IDP self-assessment of their skills and attributes in the IDP package, they should be able to identify their career goals and skill gaps. Students are encouraged to find the professional development activities that align with their individual career interests to fulfill the eight hour requirement.

## Professional Development Activities Guideline\*

A professional development activity fulfills the University of Alberta Professional Development Requirement if it contributes to the acquisition of skills, knowledge or mindset and includes all of these three components:

- comprises of formal training or active learning with an assessment component (self-assessment, reflection, quiz, write-pair-share, evidence of knowledge application)
- falls outside of research methods training, capstone project, thesis or equivalent, and required practicum
- supports the career goals and/or seven skills/competencies identified in the individual development plan

\*Note: This updated professional development activities guideline applies to all sessions starting Fall 2017. Previous professional development sessions will still be recognized for professional development credit.

## The Seven Skills/Competencies (As outlined in the IDP)

- Creativity
- Communication
- Confidence
- Scholarship
- Ethical Responsibility
- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration

## What Activities Do Not Fulfill the Requirement?

The following (unless otherwise stated) do not fulfill the eight hour requirement:

- Sessions used towards the Ethics and Academic Integrity Requirement
- Presenting a talk or poster
- Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships
- Serving as a mentor
- Information sessions to highlight resources or programs

## Reviewing the Eight Hours of Professional Development Activities

Students are expected to conduct their professional development activities with the same integrity they apply to all other areas of their graduate program. Students are responsible for keeping track of (and safeguarding) their own PD activities and for gathering the proof of attendance. Students can demonstrate that they have attended sessions through a variety of ways. Departments will determine what they consider acceptable evidence. Options include:

1. Google sign-in is available at all FGSR events. Students receive a confirmation of their sign-in through email, which they retain as evidence of their attendance.
2. Students can sign a Declaration of Attendance. The presenter at the session/workshop also signs the form to verify attendance.
3. Many online courses provide students with a certificate of completion/participation.
4. Departments may choose to develop and use a PD record book. Students verify their attendance by having session presenters sign the document. Some departments record the Ethics and Academic Integrity Requirement this way.

## Questions about the Professional Development Requirement can be directed to:

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