

## What are SMART Goals?

SMART stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime bound and is an approach to goal setting to help you focus, stay motivated and achieve your goals. This guide and resource shows you how to set SMART Goals in the context of your career and skills development planning.

## How do I use the SMART Goal Setting tool?

This page provides a summary of what SMART goals should include. Page 2 provides a template for you to try setting your own SMART Goals. The three examples below show how you could set some goals to help towards the aims of a) understanding career options, b) gaining relevant work experience and c) developing skills.

### S

**Specific:** The goal should identify a specific action that will take place.

- a) Investigate the entry routes and requirements for job roles of current interest to me
- b) Source and apply for work experience related to career areas of interest to me
- c) Apply for the Leadership Academy co-curricular programme

### M

**Measurable:** The goal and its benefits should be quantifiable.

- a) List the findings of my investigations together so that I can compare and contrast the roles
- b) Add a number to this goal—for example, five work experience opportunities
- c) This is already measurable, you either apply or not

### A

**Achievable:** The goal should be attainable given available resources.

- a) This goal is achievable as long as you have access to careers resources and information
- b) Adding the number to identify (for example, five) ensures this is achievable
- c) This is achievable as long as the application deadline and process is open at that time

### R

**Relevant:** The goal should be relevant to the wider context of what you are trying to achieve.

- a) This is relevant if your overall aim is to investigate career options of current interest to you
- b) This is relevant if your overall aim is to gain work experience related to your career interests
- c) This is relevant if an overall aim is to develop your leadership skills

### T

**Time Bound:** The goal should state the time period in which it will be accomplished.

- a) This goal should have a self-defined realistic deadline, for example by 2 weeks time
- b) This goal should have a timeframe which matches availability, i.e. to meet any closing dates
- c) This goal should have a timeframe set to match the programme application deadline

## How can I use this tool if I am unsure of my aims?

You might find the [SWOT Analysis tool](#) helpful to complete before setting your SMART Goals. The Careers and Employability Service team can also discuss your career aims and aspirations with you.

Other guides in this series: ★ [Completing a Skills Audit](#) ★ [SWOT Analysis](#)

# TO COMPLETE: SMART Goal Setting

**STEP 1: Note down some of your career or skills development aims here:** if you are not sure, you can refer to our [SWOT Analysis tool](#) to generate some ideas for this:

**STEP 2: Set a SMART goal which will help towards your aims:**

Check off that your goal is Specific  Measurable  Achievable  Relevant  Time Bound

**STEP 3: Set a second SMART goal which will help towards your aims:**

Check off that your goal is Specific  Measurable  Achievable  Relevant  Time Bound

**STEP 4: Set a third SMART goal which will help towards your aims:**

Check off that your goal is Specific  Measurable  Achievable  Relevant  Time Bound

**What do I do once I've set my goals?**

Use a diary system to note down the actions you need to take, and when you will do this. Put the deadline for each goal into your diary as a reminder and to tick off once complete as a motivating boost.

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