



**Student Name:**

**Advisor Name:**

**Date:**

Graduate school is about training you to ask and address new questions and discover your passion. Having honest and open discussions with your advisor is an important part of your training. As a grad student, you own your education. That means not only being responsible for your dissertation, but also actively getting the training you need and seeking guidance from your mentors, who will support you as partners in your training.

Your completion of the IDP –privately or with a mentor– along with a corresponding yearly training/ career-planning meeting with your academic mentor is a requirement of the SHBT program. Because the beginning of a new year is an ideal time for self- reflection and planning, we ask that you complete the initial IDP in January in G1, and have the yearly planning meeting before the end of February each following year.

## KEYS TO A GOOD MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

### Think intentionally about your training

You will find it helpful to think through what you want to get out of your training and how your advisors and other sources of support can help you achieve your goals.

### Have open and direct dialogue

Starting off with strong, supportive communication is a fundamental part of getting continual advice that will help guide you throughout your life.

### Establish clear expectations/steps

The IDP covers topics that students have found essential to discuss with their mentors. If you have additional questions or objectives related to your training, these meetings are a great time to bring them up and set action steps.

**1**

#### Step back and self-assess!

It's easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. Fill out this form, using the questions as a starting point for your mentoring relationship with your academic advisor.

**2**

#### Set your first meeting with your academic advisor.

You will coordinate with your academic advisor to meet and discuss your IDP in January.

**3**

#### Lead the discussion.

The IDP covers topics students have found helpful. If you have questions or additional objectives related to your training, these meetings are a great time to bring them up.

**4**

**Complete the “Action Plan” and follow up.** The last page of the IDP encourages you to establish concrete steps in the meeting with your advisor. Keep your Action Plan accessible and check on it every couple of months.

**5**

#### Submit required documentation by March 1.

Record the date the meeting occurred in the form at [https://hms.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_269yP4k4aaBODz0](https://hms.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_269yP4k4aaBODz0) (The IDP itself remains private between you and your advisor.)

“This process sparks much needed conversations between trainees and their mentors regarding career goals, skills, and interests. This kind of communication is imperative.”

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**STUDENTS:** One of the most important parts of your PhD training is to develop a skill set transferrable beyond graduation. Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses below relative to the where you think a student at your stage should be, checking the boxes for skills that you would like to target in the coming year. An honest self-assessment and discussion will help you set goals for your training. ([1] Highly deficient; [5] Highly proficient)

|  |   |   |   |   |   | <b>Target skill<br/>for this year</b> |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Core Scientific Knowledge</b>                                 |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Knowledge of concepts and literature in the field                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| knowledge of concepts and literature related to thesis project   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Critical reading of scientific literature                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Research Skills</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Technical skills   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Experimental or study design                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Analytical and interpretation of data                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Statistical analysis   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Creativity/innovative thinking                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Responsible conduct of research                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Scientific Communication</b>                                  |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Writing scientific publications                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Writing grant proposals  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Writing for nonscientists  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Presenting research to scientists                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Presenting to nonscientists                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Teaching and mentoring</b>                                    |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| One on one teaching  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Leading small groups   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Serving as a teaching assistant                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Training and mentoring individuals                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Seeking advice from advisors and mentors                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Negotiating difficult conversations                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Project Management and Leadership skills</b>                  |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Providing instruction and guidance                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Providing and receiving constructive feedback                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Working with diverse teams/group                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Time management  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Volunteer and outreach</b>                                    |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Participating in public or community service                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Participating in a professional society or institutional service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| <b>Career advancement</b>  |   |   |   |   |   |                                       |
| Identifying career options                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Preparing CV, application, job talk                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |
| Establishing a professional network                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/>              |

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**Program specific questions for G1 students**

- What SHBT Program requirements have you completed thus far? What requirements will you complete this year? Include Fall G1, Winter G1, Spring G1 courses.
- Are you interested to join the Speech Language Pathology track?
- Where are you planning to do lab rotations?
- What qualities are you looking for in a potential thesis laboratory (size, other students, specific research topics, expertise in specific techniques...) and advisor/mentor?
- What qualities are you looking for in a potential thesis advisor/mentor?
- Do you plan on applying for fellowships this year? If so, what are the deadlines? (Please reach out to SHBT Administrator, shbt\_program@hms.harvard.edu, or Greg Desmarais, gregory\_desmarais@hms.harvard.edu, in the DMS office for more information).
- What are your academic goals for the coming year?
- What resources or support mechanisms do you plan on using to help you accomplish these goals? (e.g. Faculty mentor, SHBT office, Paths in DMS Program, Harvard Office of Career Services, Harvard Bureau of Study Counsel, other...)
- Could other resources be provided that would be helpful?
- Do you have any concerns about the first year of graduate school and beyond? What would help to alleviate these concerns?
- What are your personal goals this year? How do you plan to balance studies/research and self-care?

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**Program specific questions for G2 students**

- What SHBT Program requirements have you completed thus far? What requirements will you complete this year? Are you joining the Speech Language Pathology track?
- How many rotations have you completed? Are you doing another rotation this spring?
- Have you identified a Dissertation Advisor for your thesis work? (DAD due May 1st of G2)
- Have you picked an area of Concentration? If so, have you contacted the faculty that will be working with you? Have you taken or identified upcoming elective courses that will strengthen your knowledge in your area of concentration (this should be discussed with your mentor and concentration advisor).
- Have you reviewed the graduate calendar milestones for the upcoming year? Have you reviewed the format and requirements for the qualifying exam (QE)?
- Other than those required by the curriculum, do you have other academic goals this year? What are your short term and long-term professional goals?
- What resources or support mechanisms do you plan on using to help you accomplish these goals? (e.g. Faculty mentor, SHBT office, DMS Program, Harvard Office of Career Services, Harvard Bureau of Study Counsel, other...). Could other resources be provided that would be helpful?
- How will you prepare for meetings with your thesis advisor this year to make them as productive as possible? Is the current frequency of meetings sufficient? If not, what frequency would be ideal
- Do you plan on applying for fellowships this year? If so, what are the deadlines? (Please reach out to Bill Goods, shbt\_program@hms.harvard.edu, or Greg Desmarais, gregory\_desmarais@hms.harvard.edu, in the DMS office for more information).
- Do you have any concerns about the second year of graduate school and beyond? What would help to alleviate these concerns?
- What are your personal goals this year? How do you plan to balance studies/research and self-care?

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**Program specific questions for G3/G3+ students**

- What SHBT Program requirements have you completed thus far? What requirements will you complete this year?
- Have you taken or identified upcoming elective courses that will strengthen your knowledge in your area of concentration (this should be discussed with your mentor and concentration advisor).
- G3 only: Have you taken your QE? If yes: when?
- G3 only: If conditional pass on QE: What are your plans/timeline for completing your QE? Do you have concerns or questions?
- G3 only: Have you reviewed the format and requirements for the initial DAC meeting? Did you form a DAC committee? Have you scheduled your first DAC meeting?
- G3+: Have you scheduled your next DAC meeting?
- Other than those required by the curriculum, do you have other academic goals this year? What are your short term and long-term professional goals?
- What resources or support mechanisms do you plan on using to help you accomplish your goals? (e.g. Faculty mentor, SHBT office, DMS Program, Harvard Office of Career Services, Harvard Bureau of Study Counsel, other...). Could other resources be provided that would be helpful?
- How will you prepare for meetings with your thesis advisor this year to make them as productive as possible? Is the current frequency of meetings sufficient? If not, what frequency would be ideal
- Do you plan on applying for fellowships this year? If so, what are the deadlines? (Please reach out to Alex Shimada-Brand, ashimada@hms.harvard.edu, in the DMS office for more information)
- Do you have any concerns about your graduate work? What would help to alleviate these concerns?
- What are your personal goals this year? How do you plan to balance studies/research and self-care?

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|                       | What actions or steps will be taken towards accomplishing this goal? | What is the time frame for accomplishing this goal? This action or step? |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| <b>Academic goals</b> |  |  |
| 1.                    |  |  |
| 2.                    |  |  |
| 3.                    |  |  |
| <b>Career goals</b>   |  |  |
| 1.                    |  |  |
| 2.                    |  |  |
| 3.                    |  |  |
| <b>Personal goals</b> |  |  |
| 1.                    |  |  |
| 2.                    |  |  |
| 3.                    |  |  |

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THIS ACTION PLAN IS TO BE DEVELOPED JOINTLY BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT AND THE ACADEMIC ADVISOR DURING OR AFTER THE DISCUSSION. Keep it accessible for your yearly IDP meetings and potential for your monthly check-ins with your mentor.

**1****Communication**

What is the best way to set meetings and communicate regularly?

**2****Target skills**

What skills (~1-2) did you identify as important development targets for the coming year?

**3****Activities**

List any activities in which you and your mentor agree you should participate to achieve your academic objectives in the coming year.

**4****Financial support**

If you know, what will be your financial support for the next year?

**5****Additional actions**

In order to aid your success, are there any additional actions that can be initiated or continued by you? By your mentor?

**6****Following up**

How often do you and your advisor plan to meet?

**7****Other**

Is there anything else you would like to discuss with your advisor/mentors at this time?