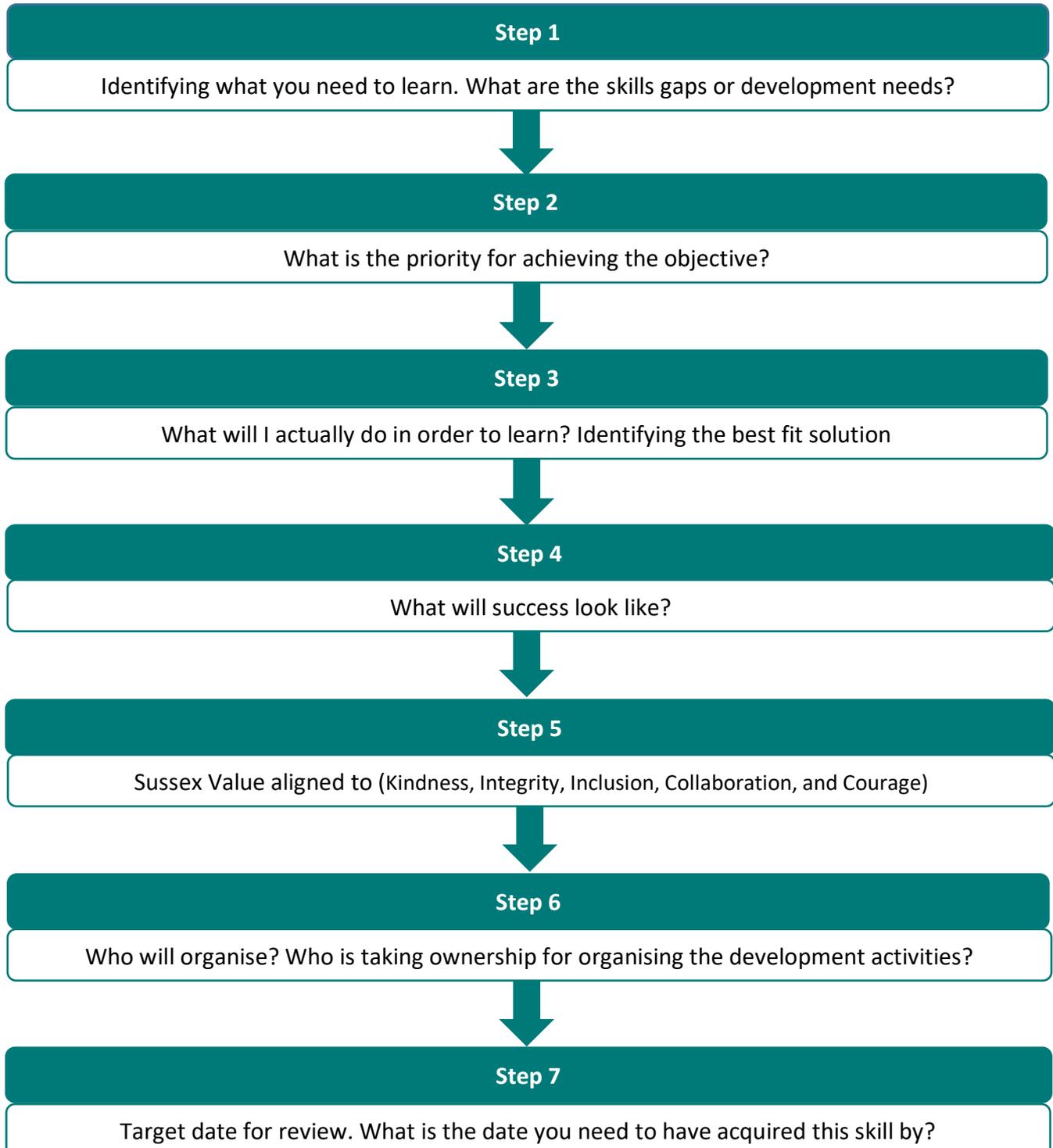# Preparing your Personal Development Plan (PDP)

At Sussex University we want to ensure staff get the best out of their development and individuals are encouraged to take ownership for their learning. This guide provides step-by-step instructions for completing your personal development plan.

Flow Chart – Completing your Personal Development Plan

Step 1

Identifying what you need to learn. What are the skills gaps or development needs?

Step 2

What is the priority for achieving the objective?

Step 3

What will I actually do in order to learn? Identifying the best fit solution

Step 4

What will success look like?

Step 5

Sussex Value aligned to (Kindness, Integrity, Inclusion, Collaboration, and Courage)

Step 6

Who will organise? Who is taking ownership for organising the development activities?

Step 7

Target date for review. What is the date you need to have acquired this skill by?

Completing your Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Step 1 – What do I need to learn?

As part of the appraisal process, and in discussions with your line manager you should start by identifying what it is that you need or want to learn. This may be achieved by reviewing your objectives or thinking about personal career goals. Skills gaps and development needs can also be identified by reviewing the Sussex Competency Framework which breaks down the five Sussex Values by describing the skills and behaviours that are expected for each grade. Reviewing this document and completing a self-assessment exercise may help identify areas for development.

If you are unclear on what skill or behaviour needs to be developed and what success looks like, the chances of the learning solution being effective are very low.

Step 2 – Priority

Think about the priority for the objective. It is high, medium or low? You may need to have acquired and practised a certain skill in order to active some of your objectives.

Step 3 – What will I actually do in order to learn?

Identifying the best fit solution isn't always easy. It has been argued that 70% of the most impactful learning happens on the job (testing, practicing, observing and listening), 20% happens in a social situations (formal and informal), and only 10% happens in structured learning such as a course. Find out more about the 70:20:10 approach to learning here.

Some development suggestions may include:

- Job shadowing
- Mentoring
- Coaching
- eLearning - LinkedIn Learning and FutureLearn (free online courses/programmes designed by Universities)
- Writing blogs
- Sector specific websites/magazines/books such as CIPD/People Management for HR Professionals
- Attending external seminars or webinars
- Online research
- Giving a presentation
- Networking such as the AUA (Association for University Administrators)
- Jisc M@il (Email discussion lists for the UK Education and Research communities)

Step 4 – What will success look like?

Describe what will be happening when this new skill or approach has been learned and is being practised. Thinking about what success looks like may help you to identify the best way to develop that skill or required knowledge.

Step 5 – Sussex Value aligned to

Our values shape and say what we do. Therefore as with your objectives, your development goals should align to the Sussex Values (Kindness, Integrity, Inclusion, Collaboration, and Courage).

Step 6 – Who will organise?

Who will take responsibility to organise the development activities? Face to face training may need to be approved/organised by a manager, but it is important for individuals to take ownership for their development and be proactive in their approach to identifying learning opportunities.

Step 7 – Target date for review

You are more likely to achieve something if you have committed to a completion or review date. Is there a date you need to have acquired this skill by? It may be linked to one of your objectives. It's important to have review dates throughout the year and not just a completion date at the end of the appraisal cycle.

Example

What do I need to learn?	Priority	What will I actually do in order to learn	What will success look like	Sussex Value aligned to	Who will organise?	Target date for review
Develop project management skills	High	Shadow a team member who has experience in running projects. Attend project meetings. Complete online eLearning. If this doesn't help me achieve my goals, I may then need to consider what training courses are available.	I will be able to manage a project using the appropriate tools. Be confident managaging the needs of different stakeholders, and complete a project on time.	Integrity and Collaboration	I will need my managers support to approved shodowing a colleague, and if any face to face training is needed.	January 2021

Further guidance on completing your Personal Development Plan can be found here.

University of Sussex Personal Development Plan

What do I need to learn?	Priority	What will I actually do in order to learn (remember to think about self-directed learning , including online, work shadowing, a stretching objective, reading, being mentored/mentoring etc .as well as courses)	What will success look like? How will I demonstrate the change achieved through learning?	Sussex Value aligned to	Who will organise?	Target date for review
				(for example Integrity)		