



2.4.1 Goal setting

I suppose in September last year, I was drawing to the end of the funded part of my PhD and I was thinking about careers. I did go to the ...Careers Service, but I didn't really find that...much help ...I was considering sort of a career in academia, looking at postdoctoral positions and lectureships at some of the newer universities, and research assistants on different projects, and I was thinking about that, but ...deep down, I felt like I needed a bit of a change. [Nina]

This quote from Nina illustrates the experience of many of the PhD researchers in our study, who focused on possible careers only near the end of the PhD. While it is understandable that most people focus on more immediate goals – often on a day-to-day, weekly or monthly basis; it benefits your career to set goals for the medium and long-term. Thinking broadly about career options early in your PhD may enable you to set sub-goals to complete during your PhD study that will help you achieve your career aspirations. This table will help you to imagine life after the PhD and set some career goals.

Mapping possibilities for the future

This table encourages you to reflect on your career hopes and think of ways to achieve them. Begin by imagining your ideal career situation five years from now; assess your current situation and plan how best to make progress toward your preferred career. This self-assessment works best if repeated regularly, therefore we recommend that you answer all the questions then save the document for future review. Put a reminder in your diary for 3-4 months from now to check your progress and adjust your goals as necessary. Good luck!

Hope	<u>Five years</u> from now, what type of position and responsibilities do I hope to have?	
Progress to date	How close am I now to achieving this goal?	
Goal	<u>This year</u> , what goal can I set that will advance my career hope?	
Action	What concrete actions will make that goal achievable?	
Resources	What resources do I need to carry out the actions?	
Challenges	What might inhibit my progress?	
Solution	What can I do to manage the challenges?	



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