

## **Activity 1: What do you do with your time?**

This activity will help you review *how* you use your time in a typical week & to self-assess as to whether you use your time productively. *You might want to focus on a week you have recently completed, or one coming up.*

### **Activity instructions**

1. Begin by blocking out the activities that you routinely must do each week, filling out the table on page 2. Examples might include sleep, administration, paid work e.t.c.
2. Now add the additional activities/tasks you typically undertake. Consider categorising them into groups such as research, socialising, chores and family e.t.c. You might want to do this with coloured pens or symbols.

### **Post-activity reflections:**

When you have completed the activity consider the following reflective questions:

- When is your most productive time?
- Where is your most productive location?
- On reflection, does anything surprise you about how much time you spend on the different activities you have included in your week pro-forma? What would you want to change and why?



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<u>Time</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
7:00 (am)							
8:00 (am)							
9:00 (am)							
10:00 (am)							
11:00 (am)							
12:00 (pm)							
13:00 (pm)							
14:00 (am)							
15:00 (pm)							
16:00 (pm)							
17:00 (pm)							
18:00 (pm)							
19:00 (pm)							
20:00 (pm)							
21:00 (pm)							
22:00 (pm)							
23:00 (pm)							
00:00 (pm)							
1:00 (am)							
2:00 (am)							
3:00 (am)							
4:00 (am)							
5:00 (am)							
6:00 (am)							

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## **Activity 2: exploring your environment**

Now you have audited how you spend your time, list the academic, professional, personal or financial challenges that impact your day-to-day environment as a researcher. Use the table of the following page. *Need inspiration? Explore examples below:*

Academic	Professional development	Personal	Financial and Employment factors
Thesis writing Data Analysis Research Governances (e.g ethical approval) Conference attendance and speaking Supervisory relationships and expectations Project administration Training Publication	Teaching responsibilities Committee roles Mentoring Peer learning groups Professional network membership. Voluntary positions Funding applications Peer review roles Training and CPD Outreach and engagement work	Relationships Changes in physical and mental health Major life events Caregiving Personal financial pressures Living arrangements and housing stability Parenthood	Changes in employment status Visa or international funding restrictions Fixed term contracts Paid work full or part-time Scholarship applications/or end of funding cycle

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Academic	Professional Development	Personal	Financial and Employment Factors



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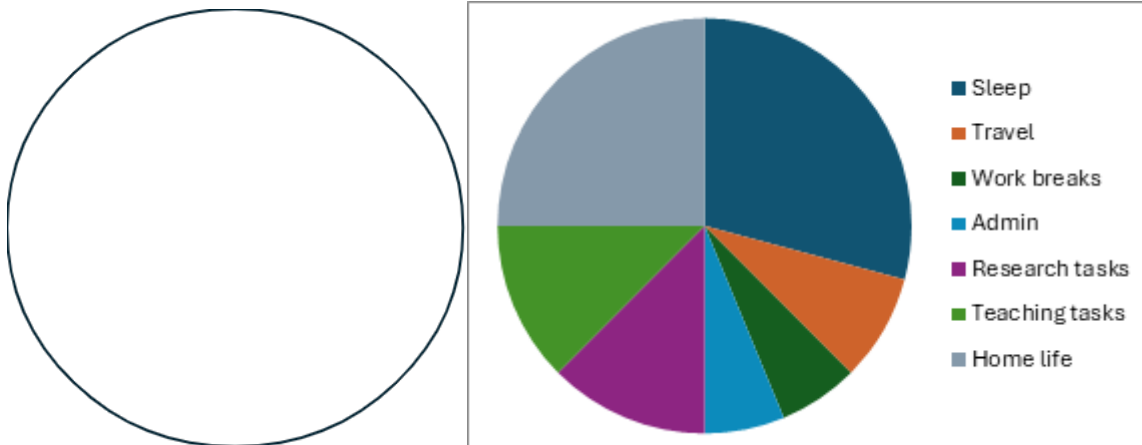


Having completed the table consider the following:

- Which challenges and experiences are within and outside of your control? ( *You may wish to highlight both, in two different colours*)
- For the challenges within your control, what could you do to reduce the impact of those challenges?



If you were to re-sketch your 'ideal wheel' to reflect a *productive, yet realistic, day* – what would it look like?



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### Activity 3: cultivating balanced behaviours

This activity requires you to identify specific behaviours that you wish to change or maintain, supporting you to produce a roadmap to achieve better balance. Its individual to you – founded in your priorities and reflections.

Reviewing the slides and content on setting boundaries and saying no and answer the following questions in the table provided:

1. What will you **STOP** doing? *This might be a routine, or a particular circumstance where you might say yes*
2. What will you **START** doing? *This might be a routine, or a particular circumstance where you might say NO more*
3. What will you ...**CONTINUE** doing? *This is a chance to identify habits that are supporting you*

What will you <b>STOP</b> doing	What will you <b>START</b> doing	What will you <b>CONTINUE</b> doing

4. Reviewing the table, choose three practical commitments that you are going to uphold in the next three months

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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## Activity 4: Strategic Action Plan

This activity is designed to support you to create a Strategic Action Plan for you to GROW.

Instructions:

1. Take your time to review the resource and your notes.
2. Decide whether you want to focus on goal setting for the next 1-3 months, or across a longer time span.
3. Explore our example of the 'GROW action plan' and chose your goal
4. Complete your own 'GROW' Actin Plan. *When focusing on 'options', try to identify specific strategies you might use to improve your time management, boundary setting, or habits related to working with others. Remember, you can repeat this exercise every time you want to focus on a new goal within your PhD, or beyond.*

Example:

GOAL	<b>What exactly do you want to achieve?</b> Enhance daily time management to allocate focused blocks writing draft chapter to complete within 3 months.	
REALITY	<b>What is your current reality?</b> My current time is often fragmented due to meetings and events that arise unexpectedly. This leads to reduced deep work periods and increased stress during deadlines.	
OPTIONS	<b>What could you do? What possible options are available to you?</b> I can repeat activity one every few weeks to review my time use and identify areas for improvement, like streamlining tasks or scheduling writing blocks. Using a digital planner would help track tasks and progress. I could also try: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use the Pomodoro technique to structure work into 25-minute focused intervals.</li> <li>• To block out "no-meeting" hours each morning for uninterrupted work.</li> <li>• Use a weekly planner to prioritize tasks by urgency and importance.</li> <li>• Delegate or batch routine tasks and activity section reviews.</li> </ul>	
WILL	<b>What will you do? When will you do it?</b>  Starting next Monday, commit to: Blocking 2 hours each morning for focused work. Using a digital planner to track tasks and progress. Reviewing time usage weekly to adjust and improve.	
GOAL	What exactly do you want to achieve?	

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REALITY	What is your current reality?	
OPTIONS	What could you do? What possible options are available to you?	
WILL	What will you do? When will you do it?	

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