

A Guide to Writing SMART Goals

Check the strength of your goals

Ensure your goals are strong by checking that they meet the SMART criteria:

Specific - enough detail to make it clear

Measurable – how will you know if you’ve achieved it?

Agreed – input from you and your manager

Realistic – enough stretch to make it interesting but achievable

Time bound – when or how often or how quickly will you achieve it?

Here is a tip to help you to make sure your goals are SMART:

Microsoft Co-Pilot can be a great tool to support in our work, and we all have access to use this AI tool by opening our browser and clicking on the Microsoft Co-Pilot icon in the top right corner of the screen – here’s what the icon looks like:



AI can offer suggested improvements to your goals, which you can then take forward to discuss with your manager.

Try using the prompt, ‘Please make this goal SMART – [insert your draft wording]’. Not only will it return sample wording for you to check and edit, but it will also break it down to show you the SMART elements.

SMART Goal Examples

Over the next few pages are some examples of strong goals, tested against the SMART criteria, which are designed to be clear, help you to communicate and agree with your manager what you will be working on, and easy to assess when you review your progress.

Take a look at these examples and compare them with your goals; can you make your goals stronger?

Example 1

Heading:

To arrange travel for Members and staff.

SMART Goal:

By March 31, 2026, establish and implement a streamlined travel booking process that ensures 100% of Members and staff travel arrangements (flights, accommodation, and ground transport) are confirmed at least two weeks prior to departure, with a target of 95% on-time confirmations tracked through a monthly travel log.

Breaking it down

Let's break it down to check it meets the SMART criteria:

Specific 🎯 : Arrange flights, accommodation, and ground transport for Members and staff.

Measurable 📊 : 95% of bookings confirmed on time; tracked via a monthly travel log.

Agreed ✅ : Supports organisational operations by ensuring smooth travel for Members and staff.

Realistic 🌐 : Uses existing travel booking systems and staff resources.

Time-bound ⌚ : Fully implemented by March 31, 2026, with ongoing monthly monitoring.

Adding it to your form

Here's how this task goal would look if we added it to the Career Plan and Review Form:

Part 1 – Task and Learning Goals

No.	Goal (aim/overview)	Details (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound)	Review Notes (Briefly document how the goal
1.	To arrange travel for Members and staff.	By March 31, 2026, establish and implement a streamlined travel booking process that ensures 100% of Members and staff travel arrangements (flights, accommodation, and ground transport) are confirmed at least two weeks prior to departure, with a target of 95% on-time confirmations tracked through a monthly travel log.	
2.			

Example 2

Heading:

Update the Tynwald website with the Register of Business.

SMART Goal:

By February 15, 2026, ensure the Register of Business is fully updated and published on the Tynwald website, with all entries verified for accuracy and completeness. Success will be measured by achieving 100% of scheduled updates posted within 48 hours of receipt, tracked through the website's content management system.

Breaking it down

Let's break it down to check it meets the SMART criteria:

Specific 🎯 : Update the Tynwald website with the Register of Business entries.

Measurable 📊 : 100% of updates posted within 48 hours; tracked via CMS logs.

Agreed ✅ : Provides transparency and accessibility of parliamentary business to Members and the public.

Realistic 🌐 : Uses existing staff and website tools for uploading and verification.

Time-bound ⌚ : Completed by February 15, 2026, with ongoing compliance for future updates.

Adding it to your form

Here's how this task goal would look if we added it to the Career Plan and Review Form:

Part 1 – Task and Learning Goals



No.	Goal (aim/overview)	Details (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound)	Review Notes (Briefly document how the goal
1.	Update the Tynwald website with the Register of Business.	By February 15, 2026, ensure the Register of Business is fully updated and published on the Tynwald website, with all entries verified for accuracy and completeness. Success will be measured by achieving 100% of scheduled updates posted within 48 hours of receipt, tracked through the website's content management system.	
2.			

Example 3

Heading:

Manage all recruitment admin.

SMART Goal:

By June 30, 2026, implement and maintain a recruitment administration system that ensures 100% of job postings, candidate communications, and interview scheduling are completed within three working days of request, with a target of 95% accuracy in documentation and compliance checks, monitored through monthly HR reports.

Breaking it down

Let's break it down to check it meets the SMART criteria:

Specific 🎯 : Manage all recruitment administration tasks (job postings, applications, candidate communication, interview scheduling, documentation).

Measurable 📊 : 95% accuracy in records; all tasks completed within three working days.

Agreed ✅ : Supports efficient recruitment processes and ensures compliance with organisational policies.

Realistic 🌐 : Uses existing HR tools and staff capacity.

Time-bound ⌚ : Fully operational by June 30, 2026, with monthly monitoring thereafter.

Adding it to your form

Here's how this adaptive goal would look if we added it to the Career Plan and Review Form:

Part 1 – Task and Learning Goals

No.	Goal (aim/overview)	Details (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound)	Review Note (Briefly document progress)
1.	Manage all recruitment admin.	By June 30, 2026, implement and maintain a recruitment administration system that ensures 100% of job postings, candidate communications, and interview scheduling are completed within three working days of request, with a target of 95% accuracy in documentation and compliance checks, monitored through monthly HR reports.	
2.			

Example 4

Heading:

To attend a leadership course to develop strong management skills.

SMART Goal:

By 30 June 2026, I will successfully complete an accredited leadership course—such as IL Level 5 or an equivalent programme through LEAD—to strengthen my management skills. I will apply at least three new leadership techniques learned from the course in my day-to-day role, demonstrated through improved team communication, more effective delegation, and documented feedback from colleagues.

Breaking it down

Let's break it down to check it meets the SMART criteria:

Specific 🎯: Attend and complete an accredited leadership course (e.g., IL Level 5 through LEAD) to develop stronger management skills, including techniques in communication, delegation, and team leadership.

Measurable 📊: Successfully complete the course assessment requirements and apply at least three new leadership techniques in day-to-day work, evidenced through improved team communication and documented colleague feedback.

Agreed ✅: Supports professional development and enhances leadership capability, aligning with organisational goals to strengthen management practice across teams.

Realistic 🌐: Training is accessible within existing development resources and workload, and the application of leadership techniques is manageable within current responsibilities.

Time-bound ⌚: To be completed by 30 June 2026, with ongoing application of learned techniques reviewed during regular development discussions thereafter.

Adding it to your form

Here's how this learning goal would look if we added it to the Career Plan and Review Form:

4.	Learning - To attend a leadership course to develop strong management skills.	By 30 June 2026, I will successfully complete an accredited leadership course—such as IL Level 5 or an equivalent programme through LEAD—to strengthen my management skills. I will apply at least three new leadership techniques learned from the course in my day-to-day role, demonstrated through improved team communication, more effective delegation, and documented feedback from colleagues.
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