

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING - SKILLS AUDIT

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 1**

Consider the skills listed below and rate how important you think each skill is for employment and how competent you are in this skill. Consider how each of these skills may enhance your performance, and allow you to develop and advance further. You may wish to discuss these with your advisor of studies. Alternatively, you may wish to ask a friend or family member, and to compare and discuss your separate findings.

Once you have rated yourself, multiply the number in the column marked 'Competence' with that in the column 'Job Importance'. So, for example, if you feel that you are not very proficient in verbal and written communication (i.e. you have rated your competence at 4), but that these skills are very important for employment (i.e. you have rated it at 5), then your overall total score would be  $5 \times 4 = 20$ .

## **Section 2**

This section will provide you with examples of the types of evidence you can provide to demonstrate your level of competence with each skill.

<b>Competence – How competent are you in this skill?</b>	<b>Job Importance – How important do you think this skill is in Employment?</b>
1. Highly proficient	1. Unnecessary
2. Fairly proficient	2. Not very important
3. Adequate	3. Helpful
4. Not very proficient	4. Fairly important
5. Unskilled	5. Essential

SKILL	COMPETENCE					JOB IMPORTANCE					COMPETENCE X JOB IMPORTANCE	EVIDENCE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF COMPETENCE
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>												
Written:												
Ability to express self well in writing												
Verbal:												
<b>Informal</b> – ability to network easily with other people												
<b>Formal</b> – ability to express self clearly and concisely to a group of people												
Non-verbal:												
<b>Listening</b> – ability to attend actively to others’ views and ideas and understand their point of view												
<b>Body Language</b> – ability to match body language appropriately to what is being said verbally												
<b>WORKING WITH OTHERS</b>												
Cooperation												
Ability to collaborate effectively within a team												
Negotiation												
Ability to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome through compromise												
Sensitivity												
Ability to respond appropriately to individual differences, e.g., age, gender, etc.												
Leadership												
Ability to encourage and motivate others												

SKILL	COMPETENCE	JOB IMPORTANCE	COMPETENCE X JOB IMPORTANCE	EVIDENCE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF COMPETENCE
Ability to supervise or direct work of others				
Ability to evaluate competing priorities to plan ahead				
<b>APPLICATION OF NUMBER</b>				
Calculations				
Ability to use a calculator or PC to make calculations				
Interpretation				
Ability to interpret descriptive statistics, e.g. ratios percentages, means, standard deviations				
Ability to interpret inferential statistics, e.g., confidence intervals, statistical significance, effect size				
Application				
Ability to organise and present numerical data in an appropriate manner				
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>				
File Management Techniques				
Ability to create, store and retrieve files				
Word Processing (e.g. MS Word)				
Ability to use a word processing (WP) package to produce a variety of formats of documents				
Spreadsheets (e.g., MS Excel)				
Ability to use a spreadsheet to record and manipulate different sets of data				

SKILL	COMPETENCE	JOB IMPORTANCE	COMPETENCE X JOB IMPORTANCE	EVIDENCE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF COMPETENCE
<b>Databases (e.g., MS Access)</b>				
Ability to retrieve information from a database				
Ability to create a database				
<b>Presentations (e.g., MS PowerPoint)</b>				
Ability to create and display a PowerPoint presentation				
<b>Information and Communication</b>				
Ability to send and receive e-mail				
Ability to send and receive attachments by e-mail				
Ability to use an internet browser, e.g., Internet Explorer, Netscape, AOL				
Ability to download files from the Internet and transfer to WP				
Ability to use a search engine, e.g. Altavista, Google				
<b><i>PROBLEM SOLVING</i></b>				
<b>Creativity</b>				
Ability to generate new ideas or conceive existing ideas in a new way				
<b>Organisation and Planning</b>				
Ability to set down a systematic sequence of activities and carry them through in an effective manner				
<b>Research</b>				
Ability to gather information in a systematic way to establish certain facts or principles				

SKILL	COMPETENCE	JOB IMPORTANCE	COMPETENCE X JOB IMPORTANCE	EVIDENCE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF COMPETENCE
<b>Analysis</b>				
Ability to understand and summarise information				
<b>Initiative</b>				
Ability to initiate, take decisions and act resourcefully				
<b>IMPROVING OWN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE</b>				
<b>Self Management</b>				
<b>Self awareness</b> – ability to identify and reflect on own strengths and weaknesses in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Development</li> <li>• Educational Development</li> <li>• Career Development</li> </ul>				
<b>Effective learning</b> – ability to learn from a range of situations and apply learning in a variety of contexts				
<b>Reasoning skills</b> – ability to defend argument using logical and systematic thinking based on sound evidence				
<b>Reflection</b> – ability to reflect on and critique own performance				

SKILL	COMPETENCE					JOB IMPORTANCE					COMPETENCE X JOB IMPORTANCE	EVIDENCE FOR YOUR LEVEL OF COMPETENCE	
Study Skills													
Ability to manage and prioritise time to meet deadlines													
Ability to identify relevant sources of information, including people and reference material													
Ability to use a library to find books and journal articles													
Ability to take notes, organise them, and integrate them with other sources of information													
Ability to reference materials using an appropriate system, e.g., Harvard or Vancouver													

### **Identify your learning needs**

Now pick three of the highest scoring skills from the above audit (by multiplying your scores as shown above) that you need to develop further. List these below in order of priority.

<b>Skill Area</b>	<b>Action Pan for Development</b>
1.	
2.	
3.	

## **Section 2: Providing Evidence you have the Skills**

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication may be formal or informal, personal or impersonal, creative or factual. Messages may be delivered verbally, in writing or non-verbally. There are many areas where examples of each communication approach may have been successfully applied, at university, at work, at home, etc

#### **Written** - *Ability to express self well in writing*

- Essays/reports for School/University, competitions, Scholarships, Work
- Reports/Minutes from Committees/Clubs
- Personal Statements/Covering letters for CV's, Application forms
- Posters for forthcoming events or to present research gathered
- Letters to gain sponsorship/support, contact new friends/old friends
- E-mail contacts for any of the above

#### **Verbal:**

##### **Informal** – *ability to network easily with other people*

- Tutorials, socially (making friends, making contacts), gathering or giving information, for example for a holiday or to solve a problem at work or to arrange an outing (in person or over the telephone)

##### **Formal** – *ability to express self clearly and concisely to a group*

- Presentations university/school/clubs/committees/interviews

#### **Non-verbal:**

##### **Listening** – *ability to attend actively to others' views and ideas and understand their point of view*

- Lectures (evidenced from good notes and good results!), in groups/teams, peer tutoring, supporting/counselling others, ability to take instructions (e.g. when learning a new skill – music, driving, sport).

##### **Body Language** – *ability to match body language appropriately to what is being said verbally*

- Body language (eye contact, posture, movement, expression, etc) in presentations, socially, on holidays, at work.

## **WORKING WITH OTHERS**

Working with others is a skill highly valued by employers. Suitable evidence for this skill need not be limited to work experience. You should think of all aspects of your work, studies and social life.

**Cooperation** - *Ability to collaborate effectively within a team*

- You may have developed this skill through your involvement with, group project work during your course, team games, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, committee work etc.

**Negotiation** - *Ability to reach a mutually satisfactory outcome through compromise*

- It is likely that you will have used this skill in many aspect of your day-to-day life. Try to think of situations where you have wanted something and the person you have been dealing with has been reluctant to give it to you. This is very common when dealing with bureaucracy. E.g. dealing with problems about welfare benefits, dealing with a landlord, extending an overdraft. You might have been in more formal negotiating situations such as getting sponsorship for a project, representing students on university committees, student union work etc.

**Sensitivity**- *Ability to respond appropriately to individual differences, e.g., age, gender, etc.*

- You many have developed this skill through working on a student nightline or help line, being a course or hall rep, committee work etc.

**Leadership** - *Ability to encourage and motivate others*

Obvious examples include: being a team captain, drama directing, chairing a committee etc. Less obvious examples include: editing a magazine, co-ordinating the activities of a group who are planning a social event etc.

## **APPLICATION OF NUMBER**

**Calculations** - *Ability to use a calculator or PC to make calculations*

**Interpretation** - *Ability to interpret descriptive statistics, e.g. ratios percentages, means, standard deviations*  
*- Ability to interpret inferential statistics, e.g., confidence intervals, statistical significance, effect size*

**Application** - *Ability to organize and present numerical data in an appropriate manner*

- You can draw evidence directly from your degree if a high level of numeric or mathematical ability is an essential part of your programme of study. If this is not the case you can demonstrate this skill by GCSE/AS/A level Maths, a job involving a significant amount of work with numerical data, a leisure or extra- curricular activity that involves manipulating figures etc.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**File Management Techniques** - Ability to create, store and retrieve files

- Have you ever - Saved a file to disk to print in university?  
Accessed information on the university network?

**Word Processing** - *Ability to use a word processing package to produce a variety of formats of documents*

- Have you produced letters, CVs, coursework, posters, and flyers?

**Spreadsheets** - *Ability to use a spreadsheet to record and manipulate different sets of data*

- Can you: -Input information? , Produce graphs? , Use formula to calculate averages, maximums, totals etc?

**Databases** - *Ability to retrieve information from a database/ Ability to create a database*

- Can you: - Run queries?, View reports? , Use macros, Use tables to view the information you want? etc
- Can you: - Create tables?, Create relationships?, Design queries? Etc.

**Presentations** - *Ability to create and display a PowerPoint presentation*

- Have you ever used PowerPoint to produce a presentation for a lecture/tutorial?
- Can you produce a presentation with graphics/moving images?

**Information and Communication** - *Ability to send and receive email*

- Can you use web mail such as Hot Mail?
- Have you used windows based email such as MS Outlook or Pegasus

*Ability to send and receive attachments as email*

- Have you forwarded your CV to an employer?
- Forwarded coursework to a lecturer?

*Ability to use an internet browser e.g. Internet Explorer, Netscape, AOL*

- Have you checked your exam results on the student web?
- Have you researched coursework on the web?

*Ability to download files from the internet and transfer to WP*

- Have you downloaded course notes from the web?

- Downloaded past exam papers?
- Filled in an application form you have downloaded from the web?

*Ability to use a search engine e.g. Altavista, Google*

- Have you used a search engine when: researching coursework?, Looking for a job?, Shopping online? Etc.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

**Creativity** - *Ability to generate new ideas or conceive existing ideas in a new way*

- Perhaps you have found a new way of approaching your coursework or taken over a project from someone else bringing a fresh approach to achieving a goal. Do you produce publicity materials for a charity?

**Organisation and Planning** - *Ability to set down a systematic sequence of activities and carry them through in an effective manner*

- Perhaps you have organised a group holiday or club event; do you use a diary or action plan for successful study/revision?

**Research** - *Ability to gather information in a systematic way to establish certain facts or principles*

- Perhaps you have looked into different options for a place at university live or conducted research for an assignment / project. Writing an article for a journal or magazine.

**Analysis** - *Ability to understand and summarise information (Detailed examination of structure and content)*

- Perhaps you enjoy digging into or interrogating a topic or concept for better awareness such as reading articles in a broadsheet paper or professional journal. Consider your examples of independent study such as academic essays and dissertations.

**Initiative** - *Ability to initiate, take decisions and act resourcefully*

- Do you undertake tasks in your part-time job without waiting for someone else to give the order? Deciding to create your own website or start a new club

## **IMPROVE OWN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE**

### **Self Management**

**Self-awareness** – *ability to identify and reflect on own strengths and weaknesses in relation to:*

- **Personal Development:** Are you confident in expressing yourself or is this something you need to work on? Are you fully aware of your core strengths ie., skills, experience knowledge and attributes that are your ‘unique selling points’ in the employment market.
- **Educational Development:** Do you regularly review your progress against targets you set yourself? Do you make good use of your time when working on assignments or do you need to be more organized?
- **Career Development:** Do you have a career plan? Do you have an up-to-date, well-organized, concise and accurate CV which clearly sells your strengths? Do you have any part-time jobs, or do voluntary work, that has developed your employability skills?

**Effective learning** – *ability to learn from a range of situations and apply learning in a variety of contexts*

- Have you developed skills from a hobby or sport that you have transferred across to your academic studies?

**Reasoning skills** – *ability to defend argument using logical and systematic thinking based on sound evidence*

- Do you make best use of a wide range of sources from books and articles when presenting arguments in essays and seminars?

**Reflection** – *ability to reflect on and critique own performance*

- Do you make use of feedback received from one assignment to help you plan the next assignment? Do you regularly take dedicated time out to reflect more deeply on your learning? Are you able to accept and learn from failure in a positive manner?

**Study Skills** - *Ability to manage and prioritise time to meet deadlines*

- *Ability to identify relevant sources of information, including people and reference material*

- *Ability to use a library to find books and journal articles*

- *Ability to take notes, organize them, and integrate them with other sources of information*

- *Ability to reference materials using an appropriate system, e.g., Harvard or Vancouver*

- These are very specific statements and you should be able to provide the required evidence. The kinds of questions you should be asking yourself are: - Do you use a timetable to organize assignments and prepare for exams?, Do you use a diary to record times and locations of classes and adviser of study sessions? Are you fully aware of how you learn most effectively and make full use of the current range of learning opportunities available to you? etc.