

# Self-assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) It's My Journey through Life: Am I in the Driving Seat?

## Realising the potential of this SAQ:

- It alerts you to actions you may need to take in order to be(come) more effective in learning and improving (similar to marking criteria that show what it takes to achieve a top A+ grade).
- Use the SAQ as a conversation starter, discuss and clarify the ideas and words used here.
- Use it as a self-diagnostic tool at the start (Time 1) and then return to it at a later stage (Time 2) to evaluate how your learning behaviours may have changed.
- At any stage of the higher education process it serves as a frame of reference.
- You can identify those behaviours that are important for you to develop, and seek opportunities and resources to develop them. The good news is that your curriculum can provide those opportunities and resources.
- When you have completed this SAQ it may be important for you to plan and take specific action in order to be(come) more effective as a learner.

## Caution!

- This SAQ is expressed in terms of an ideal world where perfect learning could be conducted perfectly by perfect people! Arguably there is no such thing.
- Your ratings are therefore expected to be low – especially if you are new to learning in higher education. Please consider each statement as potential for a learning process and not in terms of expecting perfection. Low ratings are not to be viewed as failure but as raw material for development and success.
- It can seriously damage your sense of well-being as a learner if you evaluate your abilities harshly and use any SAQ as a stick to beat yourself up with!

# It's My Journey through Life: Am I in the Driving Seat?

(Adapted from *The Windmills Programme*, Dr Peter Hawkins, Liverpool University Graduate into Employment Unit)

**Rate yourself for each statement, along a scale from 0 to 4:**

0 = not considered    1 = poorly    2 = partially    3 = adequately    4 = optimally

## 1. Self Awareness / Self-Assessment / Self-Efficacy Self-Management

		<b>RATINGS:</b>
		<b>1    2    3    4</b>
<b>A:</b>	I can express the full value of my learning: the benefits I gain through my personal, academic and extra-curricular experience (including part-time jobs, voluntary work, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>B:</b>	I can explain how my interests and values relate to possible career ideas / intentions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>C:</b>	I am aware of the strengths and limitations associated with my personality (styles, attributes)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>D:</b>	I have an accurate, complete picture of my career profile – my unique mix of skills, experience, interests, knowledge and attributes – that makes me stand out in the employment market place.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>E:</b>	I maintain comprehensive evidence which convincingly demonstrates my strengths and interests (e.g. a record of achievement, an updated CV, portfolio, examples of major achievements)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>F:</b>	I can build and maintain a positive self-image, and realize how this influences my life and work	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>G:</b>	I have high-level self-management skills (I can effectively organize my time and workload)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>H:</b>	I am able to accept and learn from both success and failure in a positive manner	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

## 2. Opportunity

### RATINGS:

- A:** I am aware of how my degree and subject knowledge are perceived in the graduate job-market 1 2 3 4
- B:** I have examined how my current mix of knowledge, skills, priorities and experience could be applied to different options after university 1 2 3 4
- C:** I understand how my essential skills can transfer and develop from one situation to another 1 2 3 4
- D:** I am building up a clear picture of the type of work I am likely to enter when I graduate 1 2 3 4
- E:** I know what level of skills and knowledge will be required to progress and grow in my area of interest / expertise 1 2 3 4
- F:** I can explore and take advantage of opportunities on offer – at work, within the community, socially and through my current higher education experience 1 2 3 4
- G:** I recognize the benefits and limitations of pursuing particular career paths (e.g. that there are diminishing jobs in certain industry sectors) 1 2 3 4
- H:** I understand the changing world of work 1 2 3 4
- I:** I have assessed my response to the demands made by the changing world of work 1 2 3 4

## 3. Information and Support

- A:** I regularly seek and use feedback from people at all levels regarding my performance – e.g. my peers and tutors have given me objective feedback on my strengths and areas for development 1 2 3 4
- B:** I can retrieve, evaluate and make effective use of careers information from a range of print and internet sources – e.g. I know where to look for my chosen job vacancies and employers, and can analyse occupational / course descriptions, job advertisements, person specifications, etc. 1 2 3 4
- C:** I make the most of my support network – people who can inform, advise and help me achieve my objectives 1 2 3 4

#### 4. Aspirations (Decisions and Plans)

- RATINGS:**
- A:** I can make informed decisions for the short and longer term, based on a realistic assessment of my core strengths, motivations, experiences, assets and constraints 1 2 3 4
- B:** I am aware of internal and external factors that can help or hinder me (e.g. my own limitations or funding decisions out of my control) 1 2 3 4
- C:** I continually set myself practical, specific career development objectives with measurable outcomes and defined timescales. These are broken into manageable steps and written down, but are flexible and reviewed regularly 1 2 3 4
- D:** I am able to adjust my goals and time scales in the light of changing circumstances 1 2 3 4

#### 5. Results (Implementation, Transition Skills, Review and Improvement)

- A:** I understand the methods different employers use during a typical recruitment process 1 2 3 4
- B:** I can make clear connections between my 'career profile' and the requirements of various options and opportunities realistically available to me 1 2 3 4
- C:** I can clearly express my strengths and motivations through written or visual communication (e.g. targeted CVs, letters, applications, project proposals, a portfolio of work) 1 2 3 4
- D:** I am confident at orally promoting the benefits I can bring to a situation (i.e. good interview and self-presentation skills) 1 2 3 4
- E:** I have undertaken work experience in my chosen occupation, or in a related area 1 2 3 4
- F:** I am prepared for the demands that can be made by Assessment Centre activities 1 2 3 4
- G:** I continually seek to develop my skills and expertise to enhance my employability 1 2 3 4

## Your ratings

This self-audit alerts you to the skills and actions needed to control the direction of your life-career. Add up your ratings in each section separately and pay attention to low ratings.

These indicate the areas in which you need to concentrate your efforts to become more self-reliant and pro-active in managing your career. You should be looking for potential rather than perfection – participating in development opportunities will improve your ratings. You can return to this questionnaire at a later date and use it as a checklist against which to measure your progress. You can also add up ratings in total to get a general idea of how well you are currently doing.

**If you scored mostly 4s:** you're very focused, aware of your strengths and opportunities, flexible in a changing world and a self-starter, with all the hallmarks of a true life-long learner.

**Action:** Keep going – what you're doing is not a static process, so you will still need to maintain your ratings and focus on continual improvement in your journey through life.

**Mostly 3s:** You're well on your way to effectively managing your career and life-long learning.

**Action:** Take another look at your ratings. Ensure you understand where the gaps are and develop a plan of action to address areas that need development.

**Mostly 2s:** You're doing well, but are you making the most of the opportunities to manage your learning and career?

**Action:** You may wish to consider: How can I be more proactive? Where are my real obstacles? Do they revolve around time, ability, resources or motivation? Can someone help me develop an action plan?

**Mostly 1s:** You may be good in certain areas, but you need to think carefully about how you can be more proactive, confident and motivated.

**Action:** Like many people you have capability but you need to work on the consistency of your approach. Positive steps to improve may include: taking time out for reflection, finding a mentor, building your network and researching future opportunities available to you.

**Mostly 0s:** You have a long way to go, but you have the opportunity to benefit greatly from the PDP and CMS learning opportunities provided for you.

**Take action as suggested for 'Mostly 1s' - see above.**