



# Student Transition Benchmark Self-Assessment Tool



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The Student Transition Benchmark Self-Assessment Tool can be used by the full range of stakeholders engaged in supporting youth transitions (including those engaged in policy, management, and/or front-line practice within K–12 and postsecondary education (PSE); community-based career and employment service providers; employers; and all levels of government). The tool can be used by any one of these stakeholders independently or collaboratively by a cross-sectoral group of stakeholders to assess current policy/practice and, in concert with the Student Transition Action Plan Template, move to implementation, monitor impact, and report on progress and outcomes. The indicators herein refer to the K–12 and PSE sectors specifically, but can be adapted and added to by other stakeholder groups. Data collected<sup>1</sup> against the benchmarks can be used to support sharing of promising practices, mitigate barriers to equitable access to transition services and supports, promote the ongoing refinement of provincial/territorial action plans, and, ultimately, ensure that Canadian youth and young adults are supported in their transition from school to success.



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<sup>1</sup> Data collection should be done in a manner that respects the individuals providing it, including optional self-identification of Indigenous identity. The interpretation of such data is best informed by a thorough understanding of, and appreciation for, all relevant historical or contextual background information.

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
1. Stable and student-centred career programming is provided.	a. A framework/strategy, including a set of principles, goals, and outcomes, exists and is understood, supported, and actively used to guide decision making and the actions of school/PSE administrators and educators.				
	b. K–12 and PSE students are aware of and have easy access to the career programming and services available to them and speak positively about their experience.				
	c. All career pathways are presented as valid and valued options in career programming.				
	d. Stakeholders (e.g., youth, parents, guardians, employers, transition support workers, career service providers) are involved in the design of transition policy and program development.				
	e. Stakeholders can describe the purpose and impacts of career education on students and their community				
	f. Career education is central to and an integral part of the curriculum, school community, and K–12 school/PSE institutions.				
	g. A percentage of K–12/PSE institutions' budgets are allocated to career-education/service programming.				
	h. The career-education/service program is evaluated to track impact and collect feedback from students and stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers/professors, employers).				
	i. An effort to coordinate and collaborate among service providers/educators is made within and across sectors.				
	j. Intermediaries work with education providers and employers to identify skills gaps across school-to-work transition pathways, develop skill-building solutions, gather data, and report on the impact of education/employer collaboration.				
	k. The outcomes of career education are integrated across all grades.				
	l. Career education is seen by the administration, educators, and the community as a whole-school priority.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/24

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
2. Career-management skills (CMS) are actively developed.	a. CMS <sup>2</sup> (knowledge, skills, attitudes) are clearly articulated and are actively integrated into classroom instruction/activities and reflections.				
	b. Students have multiple opportunities to learn and demonstrate CMS in K–12 and through career-service programming in PSE.				
	c. Students apply CMS to workplace and community-based learning opportunities while in K–12 and PSE.				
	d. Students are assessed on the development and demonstration of these competencies as part of required learning in K–12 and PSE.				
	e. Appropriate professional learning ensures that educators understand CMS and are equipped with instructional and assessment strategies to creatively foster and evaluate these competencies in students.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/10

<sup>2</sup> Career-management skills are skills that people need to have in order to effectively respond to a rapidly changing labour market. They include skills of personal management (self-awareness and building a positive self-image and the ability to interactive effectively with others and to change and grow throughout life); learning and work exploration (to be able to participate in lifelong learning, research labour-market information and use it effectively, and understand the relationship between career goals and society/economy); and life/work building (secure, create, and maintain work; make life-/work-enhancing decisions; maintain a balance between life and work roles; understand the changing nature of life and work roles; and understand, engage in, and manage one's own life-/work-building process). Historically, in Canada, the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs has been used as the model for the delineation and development of these skills. The Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) is reviewing the articulation of these skills with the intention of publishing a revised CMS taxonomy focused on the Atlantic region in 2018.

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
3. Career and labour-market information is accessible, and its effective use is supported.	a. Students have access to quality information about a wide range of future learning and work options that are objectively presented.				
	b. Students have access to supports that help them make sense of career and labour-market information in the context of their personal career planning.				
	c. Stakeholders (parents/guardians, educators/professors, career development practitioners) have access to quality information about learning and work options.				
	d. Stakeholders (parents/guardians, educators/professors, career development practitioners) have training/resources that help them support their child/student/client in career decision making.				
	e. Appropriate professional learning ensures that educators/service providers understand the connections between educational pathways and associated labour markets.				
	f. Labour-market information can be accessed by students with a range of skills.				
	g. Information on education and work options is presented locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.				
	h. Labour-market information is reliable and regularly updated according to a predetermined schedule.				
	i. Data are systemically gathered on all high-school and PSE graduates on job-placement rates and their career trajectory five years out to inform continuous improvement of transition practices.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/18

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
4. Policy and programming recognize and are tailored to the diverse and specific needs of students.	a. Career services are tailored to individual student needs, and wraparound supports (i.e., supports that are community-based, culturally relevant, individualized, strength-based, and family-centred) are made available.				
	b. Career programming actively seeks to challenge stereotypes and raise aspirations among disadvantaged and under-represented groups (e.g., Indigenous, immigrant, low-achieving students, youth with disabilities, youth from rural or Northern communities, low-income students).				
	c. Services and programming to support transitions are tailored to individual student needs and interests.				
	d. Student diversity is considered in all career-education and transition-support programming, and specialized programs are made available to specific student populations (e.g., Indigenous, immigrant, high- and low-achieving students, youth with disabilities, youth from rural or Northern communities, international students, low-income students) that are respectful of cultural perspectives (e.g., Indigenization of the curriculum), address attitudinal barriers that implicitly or explicitly limit career choice (e.g., young women's entry into STEM careers). Wraparound supports (i.e., supports that are community-based, culturally relevant, individualized, strength-based, and family-centred) are made available to disadvantaged/marginalized groups.				
	e. K–12 and PSE institutions have a case-management system that tracks student sessions with career educators/practitioners, records agreed-upon decisions, and monitors progress/outcomes.				
	f. An evaluation system for career- and transition-support services is established and used to collect data on, and improve outcomes for, all students.				
	g. A system of post-services/graduation follow-up ensures that youth not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) are actively linked back into supports as needed.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/14

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
5. Learning is explicitly linked to labour-market applications.	a. Students have multiple opportunities to learn how skills developed in different subject areas help them enter and progress in a variety of career pathways.				
	b. Educators make explicit links between subject-area learning and labour-market applications.				
	c. Educators are encouraged to seek and partner with community members (employers, parents/guardians, alumni/alumnae) to participate in classroom/course activities that demonstrate the relationships between in-class learning and workplace tasks.				
	d. All educators have opportunities to access professional learning related to career education and development.				
	e. Outcome statements across curricula include links between learning and career pathway options.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/10

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
6. All students participate in work-integrated learning opportunities.	a. From an early age (e.g., Grade 5), students participate in meaningful work-integrated learning opportunities through to their graduation from K–12/PSE.				
	b. Students and stakeholders (e.g., parents/guardians) are fully aware of the work-integrated learning opportunities available (e.g., co-op, job shadowing, mentorships, employer presentations, entrepreneurship programs, and workplace visits).				
	c. Students understand the nature of work, work environments, and the skills needed and valued across workplaces because they have had multiple “real” workplace experiential-learning opportunities.				
	d. Schools and postsecondary institutions actively promote work-integrated learning opportunities for all students that are appropriate to the program of study and educational context.				
	e. Schools and postsecondary institutions actively seek employer partnerships to expand work-integrated learning to the full student body.				
	f. The value of work-integrated learning in promoting both better career transitions and academic success is actively promoted by administrators/educators to students, parents, employers, and the broader community.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/12



Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
7. Students learn about all PSE pathways.	a. All PSE learning pathways are presented to students as valid and valued options.				
	b. Information on the full range of PSE opportunities is readily available to students, and students are encouraged to explore all options.				
	c. Links between PSE learning options and career options are made in the resources available to students and by teachers in the classroom.				
	d. Students understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them as they navigate secondary school, along with the requirements and opportunities associated with them.				
	e. By the end of high school, students have had at least two experiences at different postsecondary institutions (e.g., have visited a trades school, spoken with college students about their programs, visited a campus, met with an instructor/professor in a program related to the student's preferred future).				
	f. PSE institutions reach out to local K–12 students, informing them of pathways/requirements and offering mechanisms for students to explore/experience the institution.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/12

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
8. Youth have access to career and transition services.	a. Students in, and graduates of, K–12 and/or PSE have free and ready access to career services at their school/institution and/or in the community.				
	b. Every student in K–12 or PSE has multiple opportunities to connect with trained career educators/career-development practitioners to explore and develop strategies to manage their learning, work, and transitions.				
	c. K–12, PSE, and community-based career and employment services cooperate and coordinate to support seamless transitions and provide access to targeted supports.				
	d. An evaluation system for career- and transition-support services collects data on a range of meaningful student and system outcomes to inform continuous improvement of transition practices.				
	e. A system of post-services/graduation follow-up ensures that youth not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) are actively linked back into supports as needed.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/10

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
9. Implementation, impact, and quality assurance are underpinned by adequate training of providers.	a. Underpinned by the <i>Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners</i> , common professional competency-based standards are articulated for provider roles in the delivery of career education and career services in K–12 and PSE.				
	b. Staff delivering career education and career services have completed competency-based training specific to their roles.				
	c. Pre-service and existing subject teachers receive basic career-development training.				
	d. Administrators receive tailored professional learning to ensure that they understand the value of career education and its contributions to their institutions' and students' success.				
	e. Career educators and service providers are informed about, and sensitive to, the impact of culture, gender and gender identity, ability, and sexual orientation on career development.				
	f. Career education is actively promoted as part of annual staff-development plans.				
	g. Monitoring and feedback systems are in place to evaluate training against student outcomes.				
	h. Career educators/service providers are members in good standing of their provincial/territorial career-development association and/or the Canadian Council for Career Development.				
	i. Career educators/service providers are certified Career Development Practitioners.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/18

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
10. Career education and service provision are assessed.	a. Data on programming and services are regularly collected, and results are published/actively shared with stakeholders.				
	b. There is a common approach to indicator articulation and data collection across schools, PSE institutions, and service providers.				
	c. User-benefit, satisfaction, impact, and equity-of-access data are collected and inform policy, system, and program development.				
	d. An evidence-based culture across both K–12 and PSE systems is promoted, with an emphasis on impact evaluation and return on investment.				
	e. Results are widely and publicly reported.				
	f. Results are used systematically to inform policy and programming reviews and the continuous improvement of career-transition practices.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/12

Benchmark	Indicators of good practice	Score			
		Not started	Under way 1	Achieving results 2	Not applicable
11. Continuous Improvement is guided by evidence and return on investment.	a. Performance measures of career education and career services are explicitly linked to program/policy objectives and related to wider transition outcomes for students.				
	b. Use of funds and return on investment in the provision of services and products are measured and reported annually.				
	c. A systematic and formal improvement process is in place to review evaluation results so that evidence-based decision making and action are transparent.				
	d. Participation of, and impacts on, underrepresented and marginalized groups are tracked through voluntary self-identification parameters.				
	e. Data on resource usage and expenditure are collected to track efficiency, under-resourced areas of priority are flagged, and the evaluation of impact and return on investment is used to guide continuous improvement.				
	f. Evidence-based research is conducted to support policy-making across the education system, including market, longitudinal, time-in-motion, and impact-evaluation studies.				
	g. Results are publicly reported and expenditure is supported by evidence.				
<b>Total score:</b>					/14

## Scoring key:

Benchmarks	Gap/Challenge	Under way	Achieving results
1. Stable and student-centred career programming is provided.	<12	12–17	18–24
2. Career-management skills (CMS) are actively developed.	<5	5–7	8–10
3. Career and labour-market information is accessible, and its effective use is supported.	<9	9–13	14–18
4. Policy and programming recognize and are tailored to the diverse and specific needs of students.	<7	7–9	10–14
5. Learning is explicitly linked to labour-market applications.	<5	5–7	8–10
6. All students participate in work-integrated learning opportunities.	<6	6–8	9–12
7. Students learn about all PSE pathways.	<6	6–8	9–12
8. Youth have access to career and transition services.	<5	5–7	8–10
9. Implementation, impact, and quality assurance are underpinned by adequate training of providers	<9	9–13	14–18
10. Career education and service provision are assessed.	<6	6–8	9–12
11. Continuous improvement is guided by evidence and return on investment.	<7	7–9	10–14

## Consider your priorities:

- Where are you achieving your strongest results? How can you best extend and capitalize on these results through targeted investment and action?
- Where are your most significant gaps/weaknesses? What resources/opportunities exist to address them? Would addressing any of these gaps/weaknesses have a multiplier effect (i.e., progress in one area could likely result in progress in another or in multiple benchmarks)?
- What are your key priorities for action in the short, medium, and longer term?
- Are certain benchmarks more significant for your student base and/or community, and if so, should those be prioritized?





## **Student Transition Benchmark Self-Assessment Tool**

The Student Transition Benchmark Self-Assessment Tool can be used by the full range of stakeholders engaged in supporting youth transitions (including those engaged in policy, management, and/or front-line practice within K–12 and postsecondary education (PSE); community-based career and employment service providers; employers; and all levels of government). The tool can be used by any one of these stakeholders independently or collaboratively by a cross-sectoral group of stakeholders to assess current policy/practice and, in concert with the Student Transition Action Plan Template, move to implementation, monitor impact, and report on progress and outcomes.