

Employability/Life Skills Assessment (ELSA) Format for Transition Team Professionals

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Student / Youth First Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Assessment: _____

Team Member Name: _____ Agency Name: _____ Title / Position: _____

What are Employability Life Skills?

Employability Life skills are personal-social behaviors, self-determination skills and daily living habits identified by employers as expected and essential for obtaining competitive integrated employment. Employability and Life skills must be taught with rigor and to the same high standards as academic skills. The development of Employability and Life Skills is a lifelong process. A person's ability to perform is relative to many factors: age, experience, environment, expectations, etc.

It is never too early or too late to focus on employability and life skills. This assessment can be used with children, youth and adults of any age – with or without a disability. These skills are expected of all adults. Competence as an adult with skills assessed by ELSA are expected of ALL people. This assessment is used to gauge the child/youth's ability to perform Employability/Life Skills against the standards expected of adults. It is likely that children and youth will fall short in some areas, as they are still learning ELSA skills. These skills are important for all aspects of a meaningful life: Living, Learning and Working in the community.

What is New?

If you have used ELSA in the past, you will notice some revisions and updates. ELSA has been a paper/pencil form and now is designed as a downloadable and fillable form. There is still the option to print it out. Another change to ELSA is that there are two versions instead of the previous four versions. The two versions are: *Format for Transition Team Professionals* and *Format for Family Member*. ELSA had four versions that were identical in the skills assessed and provided two age ranges, 6 – 13 and 14 – 21. There was Parent Form and a Teacher Form for each age range. Now for the two revised versions, the age of the youth can be listed and updated, eliminating the need for two age range documents.

Who Can Use ELSA?

There is only one requirement for using ELSA, and that is to have firsthand interaction with the youth. ELSA is a criterion referenced assessment. That means that the youth's performance for each of the skills is compared to the adult expectation of that skill, from the viewpoint of the rater. Each assessor, family member or professional will have a different relationship with the youth and different expectations for performing each of the 24 skills. Different raters interact with the youth in varying environments, with unique expectations. The type of relationship and the environment influence the view of the rater's expectations.

How Do You Use ELSA?

The two formats of ELSA ask the same questions for each of the 24 skills assessed. The sentence tag for each skill rating is phrased to reflect two distinct perspectives: that of a family member and that of transition team professionals.

Professionals who are members of a youth's team can include teachers, related service providers, paraprofessionals, SSAs and other County Board of Developmental Disabilities personnel, counselors from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), Provider agencies and other agency partners. Family members include the parents, family members, relatives and other trusted adults. The composition of the transition team will vary for each youth.

It is difficult to assess and quantify many personal-social skills through formal assessments. ELSA data is generated by thinking about the youth's performance in a variety of environments, from a variety of perspectives. This type of performance data, gained through observation and interaction with the youth, is not easily quantified across the viewpoints of multiple raters. ELSA is a tool that bridges those variables and transforms the opinions and viewpoints of the raters into authentic data that can be used in transition assessment, baseline data for IEP goals, plans for improvement in areas the family wishes to work on and maintain, and in official agency processes and documents.

How Do Individual Raters Use and Score ELSA?

At the top of the first page, enter the FIRST name only of the student/youth that will be assessed. Enter the student/youth's age at the time of assessment. Enter the date of assessment. Enter the name of the person using ELSA and their relationship to the child/youth.

For each skill area, the rater reads the statements and assigns a rating based on their observation, opinion and experience with the youth. Keep in mind that 'independence' does that mean the *absence of all supports*. Supports such as technology, schedules, mobility devices, prompts, smart phones, to name a few, are integrated into everyday life and used by many people. These types of supports should not be considered as reflecting a 'lack of independence' by the student/youth.

The rating scale is as follows: 3 = Usually; 2= Sometimes; 1 = Seldom; 0 = Never. For each skill set, add up the ratings for that area and put those in the Total box. After rating all of skill sets, enter the total score on the graph on the last page of the document by clicking the number cells in the graph that matches the total score for each skill set, creating a column graph. The graph shows the youth's relative strengths and weakness in the 9 skill sets in ELSA. The graph affords the team a tool for prioritizing skills to address. An example follows:

Example of Scoring ELSA for a 14-year-old Youth

III. Task Related Skills

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Ability to Care for Tools, Materials, and Work Area* by:

Age	14					
a	2					
b	1					
c	3					
Total	6					

- a. using/maintaining materials, tools, equipment for the job, etc. safely and appropriately.
- b. locating and returning tools to proper storage area.
- c. following safety procedures to maintain a safe, clean work area.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Practicing Safety Rules* by:

Age	14					
a	2					
b	2					
c	3					
Total	7					

- a. following safety rules appropriate for the situation, activity and conditions.
- b. using tools, equipment, digital devices, materials for their specified purpose.
- c. utilizing safety procedures for emergency situations as identified by the employer/ program supervisor.

This example is of how to score two skills sets, Cares for Tools, Materials, and Work Area and Practicing Safety Rules under the broader area of Task Related Skills. Look at sample scoring box above, Cares for Tools, etc.

Here's how it works:

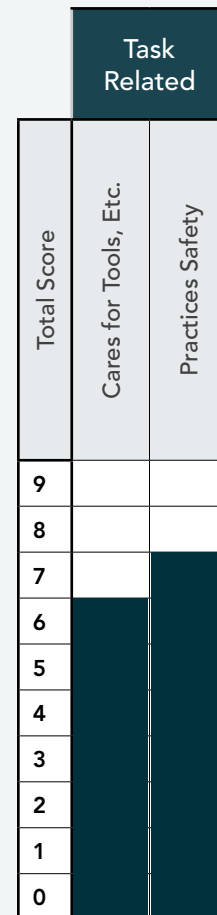
Each rater thinks about what they know and have observed about the youth performing each of the skills in ELSA, and assigns a score, using the scoring rubric at the top of the page. Each rating (or score) is entered into the corresponding numbered row in the score box.

This example shows the ratings provided by one Transition Team Professional member for Cares for Tools, Materials, and Work Area,

The scoring box indicates that for 'using school materials, tools..... safely and appropriately', the rater felt that this happened "Sometimes". A score of '2'. For the next item, "locating and returning tools", the score is '1' or "Seldom". The last statement in this skill set reflects that "following procedures...." happens "Usually" or a '3'. The total for this skill set is 6, entered into the last row of the scoring box.

A rater would score Practices Safety Rules, using the same thought process.

After scoring each of the 24 skills in ELSA in the same way, the scores can be graphed on the last page of this document to show the student/youth's relative strengths and needs. Ideas about how to analyze and use the scores are on the last page of the document.



Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

I. Self Help Skills

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Personal Hygiene and Grooming** for:

- a. cleanliness.
- b. good grooming, hair combed, shirt tucked in, etc.
- c. consistent, independent personal hygiene and grooming.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Dressing Appropriately** by:

- a. choosing clothes to wear appropriate for the weather/ activity/social custom.
- b. identifying when clothes should not be worn (dirty, ill fitting, etc.).
- c. wearing clothes that are in good condition, clean, with detail given to appearance.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Independence with Mobility and Travel Skills** by:

- a. walking/riding to school, work, and in the community following safety/pedestrian rules.
- b. getting around school, work sites and community destinations.
- c. safe use of ride share app/ public transportation.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Communicating Effectively** by:

- a. using effective listening skills, including eye contact.
- b. expressing self, answering and asking questions.
- c. conversational skills (turn taking, choice of appropriate topic, etc.).

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

II. General Work Habits

Meets family expectation for **Attending Regularly and Arriving on Time** by:

- a. having no unexcused absences from school or for agency meetings, activities or services.
- b. arriving at school, work and appointments on time.
- c. following school, employer/ agency procedures when late or absent.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Stays on Tasks** by:

- a. attending to task a sufficient amount of time
- b. completing tasks without distractions
- c. returning to task after breaks or interruptions.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Works Independently* by:

- a. locating appropriate materials, tools and equipment for a task/work.
- b. beginning a task promptly.
- c. knowing when to ask peers/coworkers/providers questions about a task/work at the appropriate time.

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

III. Task Related Skills

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Ability to Care for Tools Materials, and Work Area* by:

- a. using/maintaining materials, tools, equipment for the job, etc. safely and appropriately
- b. locating and returning tools to proper storage area.
- c. following safety procedures to maintain a safe, clean work area.

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Practicing Safety Rules* by:

- a. following safety rules appropriate for the situation, activity and conditions.
- b. using tools, equipment, digital devices, materials for their specified purpose.
- c. utilizing safety procedures for emergency situations as identified by the employer/program supervisor.

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

IV. Quantity of Work

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Completing Work on Time* by:

- a. completing assigned work tasks, without repeated distractions or reminders.
- b. effectively and independently using supports the youth is familiar with to increase or maintain job performance.
- c. maintaining a speed acceptable for the task, or job to complete it by a deadline.

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Stamina* by:

- a. finishing tasks within a time frame appropriate to the student/youth's age.
- b. maintaining an acceptable pace without tiring.
- c. maintaining consistent speed and quality throughout a task.

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets transition team professional's expectation for *Adapts to Increased Demands in Workload* by:

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

- a. responding to being assigned additional tasks/work in a positive manner.
- b. attempting new tasks or asking for help without demonstrating frustration.
- c. adjusts to changing conditions on the job or program by applying time management skills, adapting work pace while maintaining efficiency and quality.

V. Quality of Work

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Makes Appropriate Choices and Decisions* by:

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

- a. choosing, on their own, an appropriate solution when given options.
- b. making decisions with input and guidance from supervisors, providers, etc.
- c. using a problem-solving process to thoughtfully respond to a problem situation with reasonable alternative solutions.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Recognizes and Corrects Mistakes* by:

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

- a. using self-check strategies to review work for errors/mistakes before considering it complete.
- b. using self-evaluation methods to ascertain quality and consistency of work.
- c. making corrections or asking for help once an error has been identified.

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

VI. Relationship to Supervisor, Parent, or Adult

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Accepts Constructive Criticism from a Family Member or Work Supervisor by:**

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. listening to constructive criticism with respect and patience.
- b. making changes based on constructive criticism.
- c. identifying that changes have been made and that performance has improved.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Seeks Help when Needed by:**

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. identifying when help is needed.
- b. asking for assistance when help is needed.
- c. using requested information to remedy the problem.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Follows Directions from Supervisor/Provider by:**

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. correctly completes new tasks by following verbal or written directions and using supports the youth typically uses.
- b. correctly completes familiar tasks following verbal or written directions and using supports the youth typically uses.
- c. communicating and accepting consequences for not following directions.

VII. Relationship to Peers

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Cooperates with Peers by:**

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. working well with others.
- b. seeking help from co-workers.
- c. directing co-workers without being overbearing.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for **Shows Respect for the Rights and Property of Others by:**

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. taking turns/sharing.
- b. asking permission to use another's property.
- c. treating borrowed property with respect.

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Uses Appropriate Language and Manners with Peers* for:

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. shows respect and uses everyday manners, social conventions.
- b. avoiding teasing/ridiculing or bullying others.
- c. using language appropriate for a given situation.

VIII. Work Attitudes

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Develops and Seeks Personal Goals* by:

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. demonstrating short term personal goals such as completing daily work activities 'error free'.
- b. making and following through with plans for leisure time, personal growth, promotions on the job.
- c. seeking and developing personal goals that are viable and consistent with preferences, interests, needs and skills/strength.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Shows Initiative* by:

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. starting work at the expected time.
- b. beginning a task without prompting or prodding.
- c. asking for additional work or directions once a task is completed.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Accepts Societal Values and Rewards* by:

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. responding to various types of rewards for work well done (verbal praise, incentives, rewards, bonuses, etc.).
- b. recognizing when good work has been done.
- c. identifying changes that will enhance performance.

Meets transition team professional's expectations for *Takes Pride in Working* by:

Age							
a							
b							
c							
Total							

- a. sharing, with humility, personal and work accomplishments.
- b. striving for positions requiring improvement in skills and additional responsibility.
- c. being a team player and contributing to the common good of the group.

First Name: _____

Age: _____

Date: _____

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

How Is the Graph Created?

Use the list of Employability/Life Skills below to write in the total score for each skill set. This will make it convenient for entering the scores into the scoring table and creating the graph. Plot on the graph the total score for each skill area by clicking the number of cells that matches the score (i.e.g.; click cells 0 – 6 on the score table to show a score of 6). Once all the scores are entered into the scoring table, a column graph is created. The higher the column, the more that skill is a relative strength and vice versa.

How Does a Team Use ELSA Data?

During a team meeting, discuss each rater's total scores for each skill set and their view of the youth's relative strengths and weaknesses across all the skill sets (using the graph). Discuss similarities and difference across raters. Come to a team consensus for relative strengths and weaknesses to target for improvement.

The team may choose to prioritize specific areas that were consistently rated lower across all ratings. Or to target skills to maintain or extend for areas of relative strength. When there are significant differences across raters in the scores for the same skill area, discuss as a team the underlying reasons. It might be that individual team members have higher or lower expectations than others. Or perhaps the youth exhibits lower or higher skills in different environments. The reasons for discrepancies in ratings assists the team to decide how, where and when interventions, supports, instruction, etc. should be put in place. The team should also look for data from other assessment sources that assess similar skills to see how it provides insight into the underlying reasons discussed by the team.

