

## TOOL 1:

# Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth

## Teacher Instructions

Below, please find teacher instructions to guide your use of Tool 1. These instructions are designed to address the following questions:

**Why** was Tool 1 developed?

**When** should teachers and students use Tool 1?

**Where**, in which courses, should Tool 1 be used?

**Who** should use Tool 1?

**How** should teachers and students use Tool 1?



Self-direction for students is not a skill that one can develop quickly. Rather, it is developed over time, especially as learning progresses. Tool 1 is designed to help students understand the specific skills that comprise self-direction, become aware of their current performance level in each skill, and gauge growth over time. To that end, this tool should be used in tandem with the Self-Direction Rubric for the appropriate grade level, and can serve as a reference for students regarding their stage of development in each skill area, enabling them to gauge progress over time in their ability to be self-directed when completing performance tasks in any content area.

## When?

This tool should be administered at least twice during the year, such as early in the school year and again mid-year, or at the beginning of a second term and again at end of the term, providing an opportunity for students to review their growth in self-direction. Students' self-assessments then become a record of their progress and growth in the five specific domains of the Self-Direction Rubric.

**Additional Options:** Teachers and students may want to accompany self-assessment ratings with a body of evidence that is stored in a portfolio and which might be used to demonstrate mastery of desired self-direction skills.

## Where?

Tool 1 is designed to be used within any content area or course.

**Additional Options:** If your school offers student advisory periods, the use of Tool 1 might be guided by the student's advisor in collaboration with subject-area teachers—and could be used across multiple courses/subjects.

## Who?

Teachers provide students with an orientation to the Self-Assessment Rubric and offer students guidance in completing Tool 1. Once students are clear on how to self-assess, students should independently rate themselves using the tool and rubric.

**Additional Options:** Teachers may want to encourage students to engage in peer assessments of self-direction skills after students have independently assigned their self-assessment ratings.



Use of Tool 1 can be divided into 4 steps. Students do the following:

**Step 1:** Review the Self-Direction Rubric.

**Step 2:** For each of the five skill areas, reflect on current use of the skill, including strengths and areas for growth.

**Step 3:** Select the level that best reflects your current ability and explain why you chose this level.

**Step 4:** Identify one area of strength to build on, and one area to improve.

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#### STEP 1:

### Review the Self-Direction Rubric.

Before students can self-assess their self-direction, they need to understand the meaning of the skills and their defining characteristics.

- Provide each student with the Self-Direction Rubric and a copy of Tool 1.
- Read through the rubric with the student(s) to assess their understanding of the vocabulary within the rubric, and to reinforce understanding and validate the content of the rubric for students. Ask for clarifying questions, probe for examples, talk about one's own self-direction journey, emphasize this will not be associated with a grade, encourage comparisons and discussions, and then check for understanding.
- Next, have students read through the Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth tool and allow for clarifying questions. This practice may vary in necessity by grade level depending on how familiar students are with the process of using the tool as well as the rubric. This practice of clarification is at the teacher's discretion.

**STEP 2:****For each of the five skill areas, reflect on your current use of the skill, including strengths and areas for growth.**

Once students understand the five self-direction skill areas and rubric wording, they can begin to self-assess their ability.

- Introduce the second column of Tool 1: Student Assessment of Self-Direction Growth. This column asks students to reflect on their current use of each of the five self-direction skill areas.
- Provide guidance to students on how to reflect on their current ability by responding to the following two prompts.
  - *What have I accomplished in past work that makes me feel I can be confident in this area?*
  - *What do I feel I can work on to be more confident in this area?*

Students may need assistance in reflecting on the first self-direction skill before being able to reflect independently on the rest of the self-direction skill areas. Eachers can use strategies such as pairs share, fishbowl, or role plays to introduce or practice what self-reflection might look like.

**STEP 3:****Select the level that best reflects your current ability and explain why you chose this level.**

Once you are confident that students are clear on Tool 1 and its use, they should be asked to independently complete an assessment of their self-direction ability in each of the five skill areas. Some students may be ready to do this independently, while others might benefit from short peer critique sessions before they decide on their focus.

- Students should use the Self-Direction Rubric to review the descriptors of each of the four performance levels (Emerging, Developing, Applying, and Extending).

- Students should select the level that best reflects their perception of their current skill level. These self-assessment ratings should be assigned in column three.
- Students should provide an explanation of why they assigned that rating in column four, using concrete examples.

**Additional Options:** If a student is creating a portfolio to accompany their use of Tool 1, they could be invited to upload work samples and other “evidence” to their e-portfolio to illustrate their self-assessment ratings in each of the five areas.

#### STEP 4:

### Identify one self-direction skill area of strength to build on, and one self-direction skill area to improve.

As a final step, students will review their responses and ratings in Tool 1 and respond to the following two questions *with concrete examples from their work* to identify how they can build on a self-direction skill area of strength, and address a self-direction skill area in need of growth.

- **Building on strengths:** How do I plan to exercise or use my strengths, or what do I want to accomplish to make myself feel more confident in what I am good at?
- **Areas to improve:** In which area do I need to increase my confidence?

**Additional Options:** Once students have completed their self-assessments, teachers may want to use the results to inform plans for providing scaffolding or targeted instruction, and document the formative assessment information (progress made) in the student’s ongoing portfolio or collected body of work.