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WORKPLACE READINESS CHECK

DIAGNOSIS

VET design

1. AT A GLANCE

Tool name	*Workplace Readiness Check*
Activity Type	*Individual, Group or Online*
Purpose	*Diagnosis*
Challenge	*Challenge 1 – Closing the Skills Mismatch*
When to use it	*Empathise and Define stages of Design Thinking*
Time to complete	*25–35 minutes*
Materials Needed	*One-page canvas, information about a target job or work placement, employer feedback or professional experience, pen or digital document.*

WHAT YOU WILL HAVE AFTERWARDS

- A clear work focus and 2–3 real work tasks
- The key skills for each task, described as visible behaviour
- A readiness rating (ready / partly ready / not ready yet) and one priority skill
- One concrete next step to strengthen learners' workplace readiness

WHERE THIS TOOL FITS IN DESIGN THINKING

✔ **Empathise** | ✔ **Define** | Ideate | Prototype | Test

2. DESCRIPTION

The Workplace Readiness Check helps VET professionals identify which skills learners need for a specific job, role or work placement, and how these skills can be recognised in practice.

The tool starts from real work. Users first define the type of work learners are preparing for, then identify the most important tasks and name the skills needed to perform them well. Finally, they describe what each skill looks like in practice – because many skills are described too generally.

The result is a clear diagnosis of learners' workplace readiness: which skills matter most, how they can be observed, and where learners need stronger preparation.

2.1 WHEN TO USE IT

Use this tool when you want to understand whether learners are ready for a specific job, role, work placement, or workplace situation.

Use it before improving practical training, reviewing assessment, planning employer cooperation or designing new learning activities.

It is especially useful when the skills mismatch is described too generally and needs to be translated into concrete skills and observable learner behaviour.



- Start with real work tasks, not school subjects.
- Always ask: "How would we know that the learner can do this?"
- The aim is diagnosis – not yet designing the full solution.
- Work with a colleague or employer contact if possible: two views give a sharper diagnosis.

VAGUE vs. OBSERVABLE – THE KEY DIFFERENCE

✗ TOO VAGUE
"Good communication skills"
"Works independently"

✓ OBSERVABLE
"Repeats the order back and asks when unsure"
"Prepares the station without being reminded"

3. STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1

DEFINE THE WORK FOCUS · about 5 min

Write the job area, role or work placement learners are preparing for. Then list 2–3 real tasks they will be expected to perform there.

Ask yourself: Where exactly will learners work? What does a normal working day look like?

2

NAME THE SKILLS NEEDED · 5–10 min

For each task, identify the key skill learners need: technical, digital, communication, teamwork, responsibility or problem-solving.

Ask yourself: What would go wrong at work if this skill were missing?

3

DESCRIBE VISIBLE EVIDENCE · about 10 min

Write how you would recognise the skill – behaviour, performance, product, communication or a decision. Then rate each skill: ready, partly ready or not ready yet.

Ask yourself: What would I actually see or hear if a learner has this skill?

4

SUMMARISE THE DIAGNOSIS · 5–10 min

Name the strongest skill and the one that needs most attention, explain why it matters for employability, and choose one concrete next step.

Ask yourself: Which single improvement would make the biggest difference for learners?

Total time: 25–35 minutes · Works individually, in pairs, in a team meeting or online

4. THE TEMPLATE / CANVAS

WORK FOCUS

STEP 1

Job area / work placement learners are preparing for:

Main workplace situation or task:

Evidence used:

□ Employer feedback □ Placement experience □ Graduate feedback

□ Job information □ Teacher/trainer observation

SKILLS NEEDED FOR THIS WORK

STEPS 2 + 3

① Real work task: ..... Skill learners need: .....

How can we recognise this skill? ..... □ Ready □ Partly ready □ Not ready yet

② Real work task: ..... Skill learners need: .....

How can we recognise this skill? ..... □ Ready □ Partly ready □ Not ready yet

③ Real work task: ..... Skill learners need: .....

How can we recognise this skill? ..... □ Ready □ Partly ready □ Not ready yet

QUICK DIAGNOSIS

STEP 4

Strongest workplace skill: .....

Skill that needs most attention: .....

Why does this matter for employability? .....

NEXT STEP

STEP 4

Choose one: □ Ask employer for more detail □ Observe learners in practice □ Review practical training

□ Review assessment □ Design a small practice activity □ Discuss with colleagues

My concrete idea: .....

FINAL DIAGNOSIS

STEP 4

Learners need to be able to: .....

To be more workplace-ready, they need stronger preparation in .....

Name: _____ Date: _____ Programme / module: _____

Authors and main contributors:

Thomas Gkilias (MindmeUp), Konstantina Mataftsi (MindmeUp), Mohamed Sakr (Acceleras), Kristýna Strnadová (Know-House), Magdalena Hubená (Know-House), Marzena Beáta Oltean (VET Center Romania), Szabolcs Dolcsig (VET Center Romania), Thomas Blum (RegioVision GmbH Schwerin)

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AI

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