Essential Skills and Apprenticeship

Essential Skills Self-Assessment for the Trades

Strong Essential Skills are required for success in apprenticeship training and for a career in the trades. Complete this self-assessment to learn about your Essential Skills strengths and areas for improvement. This self-assessment includes statements that describe common trades-related tasks for the nine Essential Skills.

Instructions:

1. Read each statement and place a check mark in the column that best describes your ability to complete the task. Think about work and life experiences when considering your response to each statement.
2. Review your responses. A skill with five or more check marks in the *Somewhat* and/or *No* columns indicates an area you should consider improving.
3. Record your results in the *Skills Summary* section to gain a better understanding of your training needs.

Reading

Understanding materials written in sentences or paragraphs (e.g. reports, contracts and manuals).

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Read and follow directions on products or labels.	☐	☐	☐
Read and understand emails, memos or letters.	☐	☐	☐
Read a catalogue to learn basic product information.	☐	☐	☐
Read several short documents, such as newsletters, brochures or magazine articles to find information.	☐	☐	☐
Read and understand formal documents, such as service contracts and incident reports.	☐	☐	☐
Read and follow directions in equipment manuals, installation guides or work orders.	☐	☐	☐

Read handbooks and manuals to find information.	☐	☐	☐
Read policies or procedures when handling a problem at work.	☐	☐	☐
Read a variety of documents to compare information, such as product specifications.	☐	☐	☐
Read and interpret regulations to comply with standards.	☐	☐	☐
Total			

Document Use

Finding, understanding or entering information (e.g. text, symbols, numbers) in various types of documents, such as tables or forms.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Understand signs or symbols, such as safety signs.	☐	☐	☐
Understand labels, such as shipping or hazardous materials labels (e.g. WHMIS).	☐	☐	☐
Create short lists, such as material lists.	☐	☐	☐
Find information in a document.	☐	☐	☐
Enter information into forms, such as order forms or building permits.	☐	☐	☐
Understand graphs, tables or charts, such as production reports or load charts.	☐	☐	☐
Enter information into graphs, tables or charts, such as work schedules or invoices.	☐	☐	☐
Create diagrams to explain how something works.	☐	☐	☐
Compare information from a variety of documents.	☐	☐	☐
Understand drawings or sketches, such as maps, schematics or blueprints.	☐	☐	☐
Create drawings or sketches, such as scale drawings.	☐	☐	☐
Total			

Numeracy

Using numbers and thinking in quantitative terms to complete tasks.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Perform one-step calculations, such as addition, subtraction, multiplication or division.	☐	☐	☐
Perform multi-step calculations and calculations using percentages, fractions, decimals or ratios.	☐	☐	☐
Convert numbers from one unit of measurement to another (e.g. metric to imperial).	☐	☐	☐
Plan or monitor schedules, budgets or inventories.	☐	☐	☐
Take precise measurements, such as length or temperature.	☐	☐	☐
Calculate the dimensions, area or volume of different shapes.	☐	☐	☐
Analyze or compare numerical data to identify trends or compile statistics.	☐	☐	☐
Estimate unknown values, such as time, distance, volume or quantity.	☐	☐	☐
Calculate ratios and proportions (e.g. determine actual measurements using scale drawings).	☐	☐	☐
Perform calculations using geometry (e.g. calculate slopes or elevation).	☐	☐	☐
Total	☐	☐	☐

Writing

Communicating by arranging words, numbers and symbols on paper or a computer screen.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Record information, such as telephone messages or tasks to be completed.	☐	☐	☐
Use correct grammar and spelling.	☐	☐	☐
Write to inform or request information.	☐	☐	☐
Tailor writing for a specific audience, such as a foreperson or a supplier.	☐	☐	☐
Express my opinions in writing.	☐	☐	☐

Write brief notes, such as log entries or reminder notes.	☐	☐	☐
Write letters to clients or complete incident reports.	☐	☐	☐
Write notes to co-workers.	☐	☐	☐
Write business plans or proposals.	☐	☐	☐
Write documents using a template, such as contracts or financial reports.	☐	☐	☐
Total			

Oral Communication

Using speech to exchange thoughts and information.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Talk to co-workers about a work-related issue.	☐	☐	☐
Talk to clients about services to be provided.	☐	☐	☐
Speak comfortably in different situations or to different groups of people.	☐	☐	☐
Communicate information clearly and concisely (e.g. explain a work-related issue to a supervisor).	☐	☐	☐
Understand information or questions that are presented orally (e.g. instructions for repairing a piece of equipment).	☐	☐	☐
Gather information by asking questions.	☐	☐	☐
Listen to others without interrupting.	☐	☐	☐
Restate in my own words information that is presented orally.	☐	☐	☐
Speak in front of a group of people (e.g. lead a discussion with about a work-related issue).	☐	☐	☐
Persuade others by speaking convincingly.	☐	☐	☐
Total			

Working with Others

Interacting with others to complete tasks.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Work with limited direction or supervision.	☐	☐	☐
Work with others to schedule and coordinate job tasks.	☐	☐	☐
Ask for help when required.	☐	☐	☐
Complete my assigned work on time to ensure team deadlines are met.	☐	☐	☐
Give or follow recommendations or instructions.	☐	☐	☐
Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of other team members.	☐	☐	☐
Use feedback from co-workers to improve my work.	☐	☐	☐
Give feedback to help others improve their work.	☐	☐	☐
Resolve conflicts when working with others.	☐	☐	☐
Take on a leadership role (e.g. mentor, advisor).	☐	☐	☐
Total	☐	☐	☐

Thinking

Finding and evaluating information to make informed decisions or to organize work.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Recognize and identify problems.	☐	☐	☐
Use past experiences to help solve problems or make decisions.	☐	☐	☐
Identify several reasonable options to address a problem.	☐	☐	☐
Evaluate options and choose the best course of action when confronted with a problem or a decision.	☐	☐	☐
Make reasonable assumptions when information is unavailable.	☐	☐	☐
Find and use relevant information required to complete a task.	☐	☐	☐

Organize job tasks according to their level of priority.	☐	☐	☐
Memorize information required for different job tasks.	☐	☐	☐
Plan and arrange job tasks to meet deadlines.	☐	☐	☐
Evaluate the accuracy or credibility of information.	☐	☐	☐
Total	☐	☐	☐

Computer Use

Using computers and other forms of technology.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Use company-specific technology, such as two-way radios or computer-controlled machinery.	☐	☐	☐
Perform basic interactions with a computer (e.g. log on, manage electronic files).	☐	☐	☐
Use word processing software to perform tasks (e.g. produce or format text).	☐	☐	☐
Use spreadsheet software to perform tasks (e.g. organize data, create graphs).	☐	☐	☐
Use databases to perform tasks (e.g. find or verify customer information).	☐	☐	☐
Use graphics software to create visual aids (e.g. create basic drawings of parts and fixtures).	☐	☐	☐
Use email to communicate (e.g. send attachments, email a group of people).	☐	☐	☐
Use company-specific software (e.g. financial).	☐	☐	☐
Use the Internet to find information (e.g online supplier catalogue).	☐	☐	☐
Resolve basic technical difficulties (e.g. replace an ink cartridge in a printer).	☐	☐	☐
Total	☐	☐	☐

Continuous Learning

Participating in an ongoing process of improving skills and knowledge.

I am confident in my ability to...	Yes	Somewhat	No
Understand my skills strengths and areas for improvement.	☐	☐	☐
Develop a learning plan with guidance.	☐	☐	☐
Seek learning opportunities, materials and/or resources.	☐	☐	☐
Learn from past experiences and apply lessons learned to new situations.	☐	☐	☐
Try new ways of doing things.	☐	☐	☐
Learn from others (e.g. seek feedback from an experienced journeyperson).	☐	☐	☐
Take responsibility for my own learning.	☐	☐	☐
Apply new skills and knowledge.	☐	☐	☐
Keep my skills up-to-date.	☐	☐	☐
Ask questions when information is unclear.	☐	☐	☐
Learn by reading and researching.	☐	☐	☐
Total	☐	☐	☐

Skills summary

- Identify your Essential Skills strengths – skills with less than five checkmarks in the *Somewhat* and/or *No* columns.
- Identify areas for improvement – skills with five or more checkmarks in the *Somewhat* and/or *No* columns.
- Record your results in the space provided.
- Use your results to develop a training plan.

My Essential Skills strengths (e.g. reading)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Areas for improvement (e.g. working with others)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

For more information on Essential Skills and related resources, visit **hrsdc.gc.ca/essentialskills**

For more information on the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program, visit **www.red-seal.ca**

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