INTERLOCALITY

INCREASED LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

I AM Talent

www.interlocality.eu/

ABOUT

I AM Talent is a tool that is part of the intellectual output within the ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnership "INTERLOCALITY - Increased local employability of international students".

It aims at increasing the employability and retention of international students and alumni on the local labour market.

ARCADA
Finland

FH MÜNSTER
University of Applied Sciences
Germany

Fontys
University of Applied Sciences
Netherlands

seND
One step beyond
Italy

UCN
PROFESSIONSHØJSKOLEN
Denmark

The I Am Talent self-assessement tool

The I AM Talent is a tool designed to give you as an international student or alumnus insight into your own employability, and into your job and organisation fit.

This document is a practical 'paper and pencil' self-assessment. It gives you in an easy way insight into your strengths and weaknesses regarding your employability. In addition, it offers suggestions for tools and information to strengthen your employability or to further deploy your talents at work. You can also use the outcomes as a starting point for a discussion with your lecturer or coach.

Let's get started!

Content overview

1. What is employability?

This section explains very shortly what we mean by employability, why it is important and the components it consists of.

2. Assessing your employability

Grap your pen! In this section you can fill in the self-assessment and calculate your scores. Filling in the self-assessment will take no more than 15 minutes.

3. Improving your employability
In this section you get information on how to interpret your scores and you can find suggestions for strengthen your employability.

Section 1: What is employability?

Employability is set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes you more likely to gain employment and be successful in your chosen occupation, which benefits yourself, the workforce, the community, and the economy. When you are employable you can gain initial employment, to maintain employment, and to obtaining new employment in the future.

The I AM Talent tool sees your individual characteristics and competencies as an important part of your employability, which determine your professional opportunities on the local labour market. Some use the term 'career capital' for these personal factors. Career capital consists of three elements:

1. Orientation (knowing why).
In the orientation phase, motivational characteristics are central. Some speak of knowing-why. This mainly refers to the reflection on oneself: on the interests and motivation that you give to your (future) career, and the fit with the unique qualities and talents that you have. Knowing-why involves themes of individual motivation, the construction of personal meaning and identification (who am I as a professional?)

2. Qualification (knowing how).
In the qualification phase, the ability or knowing-how is central. Knowing-how reflects your repertoire of job-related skills and expertise. Through reflection on your qualities and skills regarding your personal career, it becomes clear which skills you still need to develop to increase your employability (what do I need to develop to get my ideal job?).

3. Networking (knowing who).

In the networking phase, the individual's social capital is central, or the knowing-whom. Knowing-whom involves your work relationships and includes all professional connections that can support your career, like (former) employers or colleagues. Knowing-whom also incorporates broader contacts with family, friends, fellow-alumni, and professional and social acquaintances (who can help me get my ideal job?)

In the I AM Talent tool three dimensions of this career capital are turned into phases: orientation, qualification and networking. As you will see in the self-assessment, in each phase different career competencies are important.

In addition, there is a fourth phase to complete the process and create a circular employability journey:

4. Landing (knowing where).
The employability process culminates in the fourth phase, the landing, meaning: finding a fitting job on the local labour market. In this phase, it is important to reflect on the fit of your job and the organisation you work in, as you bring in your own personality, motivation, values, attitudes, and set of skills to work (how am I doing as a professional?).

After phase four, the employability process can start all over again in the case of wanting to find a better fitting job at a better fitting organisation. Figure 1 on the next page visualizes the employability process model on which the I AM Talent self-assessment is based.

Figure 1: Employability process model I AM Talent tool

Section 2: Assessing your employability

How to use the self assessment?

Read the statements and score each of them on a scale from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5 points). Add the scores per scale to see your total score. Do this for all four phases of the employability model.

1. Orientation

Score the statements with the following scale:

> 1   *Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree.*

Reflection on motivation

I know what I like in my (future) work.

I know what is important to me in my (future) career.

I can clearly see what my passions are in my (future) work.

Total score | 0

Work exploration

I know how to find out what my options are for becoming further educated.

I know how to search for developments in my (future) area of work.

I am able to explore my possibilities on the local labour market.

Total score | 0

Career control

I can make clear career plans.

I know what I want to have achieved in my career a year from now.

I can create a layout for what I want to achieve in my (future) career.

I am able to set goals for myself that I want to achieve in my (future) career.

Total score | 0

2. Qualification

Score the statements with the following scale:

> *1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree.*

Reflection on qualities

I know my strengths in my (future) work.

I am familiar with my shortcomings in my (future) work.

I am aware of my talents in my (future) work.

I know which skills I possess.

Total score | 0

Intercultural sensitivity

I am openminded to people from different cultures.

I adjust my language in a culturally diverse setting.

I invest into developing relationships across cultures and building culturally diverse networks.

I use cultural diversity as a source of learning and innovation.

Total score | 0

Self-profiling

I can clearly show others what my strengths are in my (future) work.

I am able to show others what I want to achieve in my (future) career.

I can show the people around me what is important to me in my (future) work.

Total score | 0

3. Networking

Score the statements with the following scale:

> *1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree.*

Networking

I know a lot of people within my work who can help me with my (future) career.	
I know a lot of people outside of my work who can help me with my (future) career.	
I know how to ask for advice from people in my network.	
I am able to approach the right persons to help me with my (future) career.	
Total score	0

4. Landing

Only relevant when having a job (i.e. internship, side-job, part-time job, full-time job, freelance job)!

Score the statements with the following scale:

> *1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree.*

Person-job fit

There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job.	
The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by my present job.	
The job that I currently hold gives me just about everything that I want from a job.	
The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills.	
My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of my job.	
My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my job places on me.	
Total score	0

Person-organisation fit

The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organisation values.	
My personal values match my organisation's values and culture.	
My organisation's values and culture provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.	
Total score	0

Scoring

Fill in the total scores you obtained on the following categories of the self-assessment. You can read the interpretation of these scores per category in the next section.

			TOTAL SCORES
1.	Orientation	Reflection on motivation	
		Work exploration	
		Career control	
2.	Qualification	Reflection on qualities	
		Intercultural sensitivity	
		Self-profiling	
3.	Networking	Networking	
4.	Landing	Person-job fit	
		Organisation-job fit	

Section 3: Improving your employability

1. Orientation

Reflection on motivation

What is reflection on motivation?

Self-awareness through self-reflection incorporates traditional career development concerns about your individual uniqueness, reflected in constructs such as personality, aptitudes, values and interests (what are my interest?). It further incorporates attitudes to family, lifestyle, and other non-work factors that affect career choice, adaptability and commitment.

High score: 12-15 points

You have a high score on reflection on motivation: this means that you can reflect on your values, passions, and motivations regarding your (future) personal career.

Reflection on motivation helps you gain a clear understanding of what drives you and what type of work or roles align with your passions and goals. Reflecting on motivation is essential for making informed career choices and staying engaged and satisfied in your chosen career path.

Low score: 3-11 points

You have a low score on reflection on motivation: this means that you are not yet able to reflect on your values, passions, and motivations regarding your (future) personal career. Reflection on motivation helps you gain a clear understanding of what drives you and what type of work or roles align with your passions and goals.

Reflecting on motivation is essential for making informed career choices and staying engaged and satisfied in your chosen career path.

How to improve?

You may want to assess your values, passions, and motivations via the available online tools. You can also seek support of a career coach or counsellor.

There are also multiple online tools to help you reflect on your values, passions, and motivations regarding your personal career:

Personality test	- https://bigfive-test.com/ - https://jobpersonality.co.uk/free-big-five-personality-test
Personal style test	- https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Personal
Values test	- https://personalvalu.es/ - https://www.123test.com/work-values-test/
Interests test	- https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/decide/documents/interests-questionnaire.pdf - https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Interest
Motivation test	- https://jobpersonality.co.uk/career-motivation-test - https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Motivation
Career aptitude test	- https://jobpersonality.co.uk/career-aptitude-test

Work exploration

What is work exploration?

It is important to reflect on the outside world, and in particular on the labour market. This means knowledge about your career options, possible employers, available jobs, the skills demanded by employers for those jobs, and the channels to look for jobs (what are local employers looking for?). This is especially important for international students and alumni since they are less informed about the local labour market in their host country by default than their local peers.

High score: 12-15 points

You have a high score on work exploration: this means that you are able to actively explore and search for work-related and career-related opportunities on the internal and external labour market.

Work exploration helps you develop a deeper understanding of your chosen field, and make informed decisions about your career path.

Low score: 3-11 points

You have a low score on work exploration: this means that you are not yet able to actively explore and search for work-related and career-related opportunities on the internal and external labour market.

Work exploration helps you develop a deeper understanding of your chosen field, and make informed decisions about your career path.

How to improve?

You can improve this competency by investigating the current job market in your domain by using job search websites and online job boards to look for open positions. You can also research organisations you are interested in and attend job fairs.

There are also many online job boards and websites for searching jobs. There are also multiple websites to help you explore careers (finding out what a job involves).

Job search websites and online job boards	- https://indeed.com/ - https://www.google.com/search?q=jobs+near+me - https://www.monster.com/
Employment-focused social media platform	- https://www.linkedin.com/
Career exploration	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers

Career control

What is career control?

Career control is the competency to plan and act upon your learning and working process. By combining self-awareness and labour market awareness, you can create a strategic career plan, setting long- and short-term goals, determining activities to achieve these goals, and evaluating the results. Career control also involves managing your learning process and balancing work and private life.

High score: 16-20 points

You have a high score on career control: this means that you are able to actively influence your learning processes and work processes related to your personal career by setting goals and planning how to fulfil them.

Career control is a crucial competency for maintaining a sense of direction and fulfilment in your career.

Low score: 4-15 points

You have a low score on career control: this means that you are not yet able to actively influence your learning processes and work processes related to your personal career by setting goals and planning how to fulfil them.

How to improve?

Career control is a crucial competency for maintaining a sense of direction and fulfilment in your career. You can improve this competency by setting SMART career goals and creating a career plan that outlines the steps you need to take to achieve your goals.

If you want to be able to create and sustain meaningful work, you need to set ambitious but realistic career goals. More importantly, you need to establish and follow effective strategies for achieving them. Writing down your goals using SMART principles will help you do this.

Step 1: Understanding the difference between goals and strategies, and the SMART principles

A goal is something you want to 'be' or 'achieve', and a strategy is how you plan to achieve that goal. Both are important, but it is essential that you do not confuse one with the other.

SMART goals are goals that have strategies which are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely (time-based). To formulate a goal using the SMART principles, take the following in mind:

- **S**pecific: What is the goal? Who is responsible for it? What steps need to be taken to achieve it?
- **M**easurable: Use a clear metric or result that will show you have accomplished the goal.

- **A**ttainable: Is it reasonably possible to accomplish the goal?
- **R**elevant: Why are you setting this goal? Why is it relevant?
- **T**imely: When should the goal be achieved?

Examples of career SMART goals are:

- 'Completing at least one employability increasing task every week of the next 6 months that helps me find a career path that will build on my strengths, align with my interests, be on a team that I enjoy working with, and has responsibilities that align with my drivers.'
- 'Finding a job within a bikeable commute that contributes to social good, uses my strengths in Engineering, while providing the opportunity to keep learning from people with more experience, and do it in the next 12 months."
- 'Identifying my biggest gap in growing as an individual contributor in the field of International Business and grow my skills to a level that people across my organisation, by the end of 2025, recognize me as the subject matter expert on this topic and use me as a resource to help them make a bigger impact.'

Step 2: Write down your personal career goals and SMART strategies

Use the table below to write down your personal career goals and SMART strategies to achieve them. You can have more than one strategy per goal.

Goal	SMART strategy

If a strategy does not meet each of the five SMART principles, reflect on how it might be improved.

You can further reflect on your personal career goals and SMART strategies using the following questions:

- Is it easier to think of strategies if the goal is more short term, or if the goal itself is more general?
- Is there a link between 'learning' goals and work or 'career' goals?
- What are the challenges or barriers you might face in implementing the strategies you have outlined?

2. Qualification

Reflection on qualities

What is reflection on qualities?

Through reflection on your qualities and skills regarding your personal career, it becomes clear which skills you still need to develop to increase your employability (what do I need to develop to get my ideal job?). A reflection on qualities may include Hard skills (formal qualifications and training, like subject knowledge, digital literacy and proficiency in languages) and soft skills. Soft skills are attributes that are difficult to both master and measure, such as the capacity to communicate, problem solving, teamwork skills, leadership skills, time-management skills, critical thinking, curiosity, creativity and resilience.

High score: 16-20 points

You have a high score on reflection on qualities: this means that you are able to reflect on your strengths, shortcomings, and skills with regard to your (future) personal career.

Reflection on qualities helps you identify your areas of expertise and areas that may need improvement. Understanding your qualities allows you to make informed decisions about your career, including selecting opportunities that leverage your strengths and working on areas for development.

Low score: 4-15 points

You have a low score on reflection on qualities: this means that you are not yet able to reflect on your strengths, shortcomings, and skills with regard to your (future) personal career.

Reflection on qualities helps you identify your areas of expertise and areas that may need improvement. Understanding your qualities allows you to make informed decisions about your career, including selecting opportunities that leverage your strengths and working on areas for development.

How to improve?

You can seek support of a career coach or counsellor. You may also want to assess your qualities via online tools. There are also multiple online tools to help you reflect on your qualities (hard skills and soft skills) regarding your personal career:

General skills test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=SkillAreas
Skills & career options test	- https://www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx
Working with numbers test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Numeric
Verbal reasoning test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Verbal
Information checking test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Checking
Abstract problem solving test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Abstract
Spatial problem solving test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Spatial
Mechanical problem solving test	https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/skills-health-check/question?assessmentType=Mechanical
Language proficiency test	- https://www.transparent.com/language-resources/tests.html - https://www.esl-languages.com/en/online-language-tests
Soft skills test	- https://jobpersonality.co.uk/soft-skills-test - https://www.123test.com/competency-test/
Entrepreneurship test	- https://jobpersonality.co.uk/entrepreneur-test

Intercultural sensitivity

What is intercultural sensitivity?

Especially important for international students and alumni is the soft skill intercultural sensitivity, defined as a deeper understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences, such as differences in communication, reaction, performance, interaction and teamwork, but also beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions and expectations.

High score: 16-20 points

You have a high score on intercultural sensitivity: this means that you are able to effectively and respectfully communicate and interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Intercultural sensitivity involves understanding, appreciating, and valuing the diversity of cultures and recognizing that people from different cultural backgrounds may have different worldviews, beliefs, customs, and communication styles.

Low score: 4-15 points

You have a low score on intercultural sensitivity: this means that you are not yet able to effectively and respectfully communicate and interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Intercultural sensitivity involves understanding, appreciating, and valuing the diversity of cultures and recognizing that people from different cultural backgrounds may have different worldviews, beliefs, customs, and communication styles.

How to improve?

To improve your intercultural sensitivity, consider enrolling in a training programme. You can also assess your intercultural competencies via online tools. There are multiple online tools to help you reflect on your intercultural sensitivity.

Intercultural sensitivity	- https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/intercultural-citizenship-test - https://www.londonschool.com/young-adults/resources/intercultural-quiz/

Self-profiling

What is self profiling?

Career competencies are important for acquiring an adequate employment position. Self profiling can be defined as presenting and communicating personal knowledge, abilities and skills to the internal and external labour market. You should be able to make clear to relevant others what you want careerwise and what you are able to fulfil. This can take the form of writing a CV and cover letter, but also presenting yourself during a job interview or networking event or using LinkedIn and other social media for professional purposes.

High score: 12-15 points

You have a high score on self-profiling: this means that you can present yourself and communicate about your personal knowledge, abilities and skills to the internal and external labour market.

Self-profiling in job applications, interviews and networking is a crucial competency for effectively communicating with potential employers or collaborators to improve chances of career success.

Low score: 3-11 points

You have a low score on self-profiling: this means that you are not yet able to present yourself and communicate about your personal knowledge, abilities and skills to the internal and external labour market.

How to improve?

Self-profiling in job applications, interviews and networking is a crucial competency for effectively communicating with potential employers or collaborators to improve chances of career success. You can improve your self-profiling by attending a training on how to write a compelling CV and cover letter, or on how to present yourself during a job interview.

There is also a lot of information online to help you write a compelling cover letter and CV or present yourself correctly during a job interview:

Writing a cover letter	- https://developingemployability.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Writing-a-cover-letter-GL53-1.pdf - https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/covering-letter
Writing a CV	- https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/cv-sections
Job interviews	- https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice/interview-advice - https://developingemployability.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/The-Art-of-interviews-GL36-1.pdf

3. Networking

Networking

What is networking?

Networking can be defined as the awareness of the presence and professional value of your network, and the ability to expand this network for career related purposes. It involves identifying your work relationships and includes all professional connections that can support your career by providing support, transmitting reputation or affording access to information. Identifying and deploying career-enabling relationships is especially important for international students and alumni since they have less social capital in their host country by default.

High score: 16-20 points

You have a high score on networking: this means that you are aware of the presence and professional value of an individual network, and that you have the ability to expand this network for career-related purposes.

Effective networking can open doors to new career opportunities, provide insights into your field, and help you learn from others' experiences. It is a valuable competency for career advancement and personal growth.
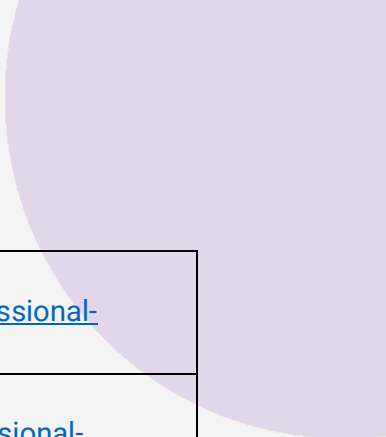
Low score: 4-15 points

You have a low score on networking: this means that you are not yet aware of the presence and professional value of an individual network, and that you do not yet have the ability to expand this network for career-related purposes.

Effective networking can open doors to new career opportunities, provide insights into your field, and help you learn from others' experiences. It is a valuable competency for career advancement and personal growth.

How to improve?

You can improve your networking by using LinkedIn to connect with professionals or attend networking events to meet new people. Consider attending workshops or training sessions to improve your networking techniques. These can provide you with valuable skills and insights.

There is a lot of information online to help you build, extend and maintain a professional network:

Build a network	https://developingemployability.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/How-to-develop-a-professional-network-GL21-1.pdf
Extend a network	https://developingemployability.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/How-to-extend-a-professional-network-GL22-1.pdf
Maintain a network	https://developingemployability.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/How-to-maintain-a-professional-network-GL23-1.pdf
Using LinkedIn for networking	https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/networking-linkedin-why-you-should-how-do-tzufit-herling/

4. Landing

Person-job fit

What is a person-job fit?

This refers to the degree to which your knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics match the job demands. Person-job fit and person-organisation fit are positively related to job satisfaction and commitment.

High score: 24-30 points

You have a high score on the person-job fit: this means that your personality, skills, values and interests seem to align with the requirements and characteristics of your job.

A good fit between you and your job may lead to high job satisfaction, high motivation, and productivity, as well as lower turnover and absenteeism. You might want to keep this job.

Low score: 6-23 points

You have a low score on the person-job fit: this means that your personality, skills, values and interests do not seem to align with the requirements and characteristics of your job.

How to improve?

A bad fit between you and your job may lead to job dissatisfaction, low motivation, and disengagement. You might want to improve your person-job fit. Speak to your manager about this. Maybe you can improve the person-job fit by job crafting or finding a different position within or outside the organisation.

Person-organisation fit

What is person-organisation fit?

The person-organisation fit refers to the degree to which your personality, values, goals, and other characteristics match those of the organisation. Person-job fit and person-organisation fit are positively related to job satisfaction and commitment.

High score: 12-15 points

You have a high score on the person-organization fit: this means that your personality, skills, values and interests seem to align with the values and culture of the organisation you work at.

A good fit between you and the organisation you work at may lead to high job satisfaction, high motivation, and productivity, as well as lower turnover and absenteeism. You might want to stay in this organisation.

Low score: 3-11 points

You have a low score on the person-organization fit: this means that your personality, skills, values and interests do not seem to align with the values and culture of the organisation you work at.

How to improve?

A bad fit between you and the organisation you work at may lead to job dissatisfaction, low motivation, and disengagement. You might want to improve your person-organisation fit. Speak to your manager about this. Maybe you can improve the person-organisation fit by aligning your values to the organisation's values. In case of incompatibility, you can find a different position outside the organisation.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

"INTERLOCALITY - Increased Local Employability of International Students" is a strategic partnership project co-financed by the ERASMUS+ program (KA220-HED-2021-010).

Its main objective is to increase local employability among international higher education degree students within the fields of engineering and business administration.

PARTNERS

INTERLOCALITY Consortium includes four Universities of Applied Sciences and one third-sector actor, focused on the connection between higher education institutions and the employment of students through training and guidance activities.

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