Career Readiness Measurement
Design and Validation Tool
WORKING DRAFT (updated 9/28/2026)

Define the Intended Purpose, Use, and Claim

1. What is the purpose of measurement (i.e., what decision or action will it support)?

Consider: *Awarding a credential, determining readiness for graduation, progress monitoring, measuring outcomes in research or program evaluation.*

2. Who will use the information?

Consider: *Students, educators, schools, districts, employers, postsecondary partners, policymakers, or the public).*

3. What competency (skill, knowledge or disposition) do you want to measure?

Consider: *It might be a specific competency (e.g., collaboration, media literacy) or a broader construct encompassing multiple competencies (e.g., readiness to enter and succeed in postsecondary education or a credentialing program).*

4. What claim do you want to be able to make based on the results?

Consider: *What claim is necessary to support the intended use? Should it be written at the student, group, school or system level?*

Example Claim Stem:
A student who performs well on this measure can reasonably be said to _____.
For a school- or system-level claim, specify what the aggregated result is intended to say—and avoid implying more than the evidence supports.

5. What consequences or impacts is the intended use of the measure expected to achieve?

Consider: *What practices, opportunities or discussions do we hope the collection and reporting of this measure will bring about? For example: increase student access to high-quality learning opportunities, broaden the data used by employers to support decision making, inform discussions about where improvements in instruction are needed, guide high school course-taking decisions.*

6. What are the most important conditions and assumptions that must hold for these consequences to occur?

Consider: *What needs to be in place for measurement to have the intended effects—for example, stakeholder understanding and buy-in, appropriate training, timely results, access to the information.*

Establish Context & Describe the Evidence

7. What existing measures, if any, are currently used to support similar claims?

Consider: *Measures that you could adopt or modify; strengths or limitations of those measures relative to the intended claims and purposes.*

8. What do research and constituents (e.g., workforce and community representatives, parents) highlight as important for supporting this claim?

Consider: *What knowledge, skills, dispositions or experiences have been identified as important to measure?*

9. What contextual factors might influence performance on your proposed measure?

Consider: *Opportunity to learn or demonstrate the competency, access to programs and technology, language, disability-related needs, resources, geography, or implementation conditions.*

10. Considering your responses to the questions above, what evidence is needed to support the claim and intended use?

Dimensions to Consider include the following:

- *Evidence type: Evidence of what students know or can do vs. evidence of opportunities or experiences intended to develop those skills*
- *Breadth: Evidence focused on a specific competency vs. evidence reflecting multiple dimensions of career readiness*
- *Comparability: Evidence that is consistent across students or schools vs. evidence that can vary across settings or contexts*
- *Timing/source: Evidence from a single assessment or observation vs. evidence compiled across multiple occasions or sources*
- *Context: Evidence that can be collected regardless of setting vs. evidence that must be demonstrated in a particular or authentic context*

Operationalize the Measure

11. What specific information will be collected, and how?

Consider: *Describe what students will do, produce, complete, or have recorded. For a profile or composite, list the component measures, qualifying evidence, and any required combinations.*

12. How will the information be scored and reported?

Consider: *Specify rubric dimensions, scoring and aggregation rules, the need for cut scores or normative data to establish different levels of performance, and procedures for aggregating from student to school or system, if needed.*

13. How will design and implementation features reduce the effects of contextual factors identified in Q9 that are unrelated to the construct of interest?

Consider: *Access, supports, common definitions, allowable assistance, verification, administration guidance, rater training, data rules, audits, and monitoring.*

Evaluate the Measurement Approach

14. How will you evaluate whether the measure supports the intended claim and use?

Consider: *What sources of validity evidence are most important to collect in both the near and longer terms? How will you examine reliability and fairness?*

15. What unintended consequences or unsupported uses will you monitor, and how?

Consider: *Unequal access, narrowing, strategic behavior, overinterpretation, or using the result to support claims or decisions beyond the available evidence.*

16. How will you verify that the conditions and assumptions needed to support the intended interpretation, use, and consequences are being met?

Consider: *What information will allow you to determine whether the conditions and assumptions identified in Q6 are actually holding in practice?*