

# An assessment framework for building employability skills



## AUTHORS

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## INTRODUCTION

Employability skills are highly desired workplace skills. For instance, the ability to think creatively is the second most valued workplace skill in 2023 [1].

However, a traditional university course in Chemical & Materials Engineering has no learning outcomes related to, e.g., thinking creatively in the context of solution seeking.

Therefore, we developed the “Know it. Grow it. Own it.” assessment framework below to address the need for a distinct pedagogical approach for teaching and learning employability skills.

### REFERENCES

[1] World Economic Forum, “Future of Jobs 2023 Report,” Geneva, Switzerland, Accessed: Oct 27, 2023. [Online]. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/the-future-of-jobs-report-2023/>

[2] TeachWell@UoA, “Signature Pedagogical Practices,” The University of Auckland, <https://teachwell.auckland.ac.nz/signature-pedagogy/> (accessed Oct 27, 2023)

[3] J. Biggs, “Enhancing teaching through constructive alignment”, *Higher Education*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 347-364, 1996, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00138871>.

## METHODS

To facilitate and normalise employability teaching and learning, the assessment framework is grounded in ‘assessment for learning’ pedagogy [2] and constructive alignment [3].

Students construct their own knowledge and shift their mindset through frequent assessment and feedback.

## CONCLUSIONS

The framework builds employability skills in three phases that are intuitive, adjustable, transferrable and scalable like an exercise routine:

1. Know one’s skill level
2. Grow a skill to a desired level through exercise
3. Own the skill lifelong through awareness and self-efficacy

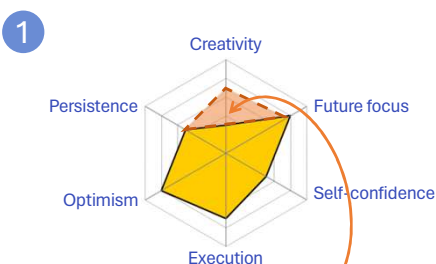
## THE FRAMEWORK

The assessment framework has three phases: Know it. Grow it. Own it. They build employability skills consecutively through assessments.

### Phase 1: Know it

A student uses psychometric assessment to get to know their employability skills levels.

Our preferred psychometric tool assesses levels of creativity, future focus, self-confidence, execution, optimism and persistence (Fig. 1).



Employability skills can be built through exercise routines. For example, to build creativity, often read materials outside your area of expertise and integrate new insights into thinking. As a result, thinking creatively and innovatively will become a strength.

### Phase 2: Grow it

Growing employability skills requires practice, like building muscle strength involves repetition. Various types of marked individual and group assignments anchored in problem-based learning, project work and teamwork build a range of employability skills (Fig. 2).

Akin to an exercise routine, the number, frequency and type of assignments can be tailored to suit one’s preferences.

