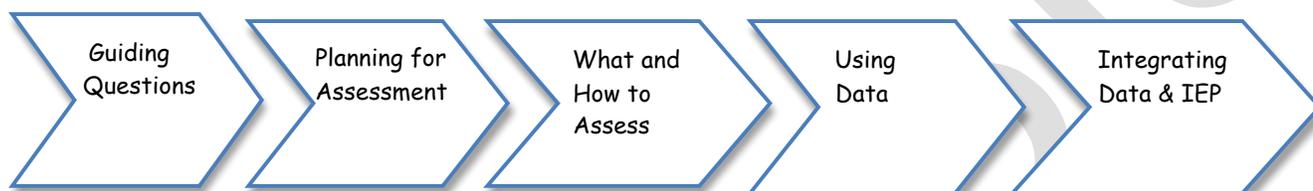


## ATS Designing Transition Assessment

**Assessment is used to determine skill levels, instructional needs, and chart progress.**

### Assessment Planning

Transition Assessment: The Big Picture and Assessment Resources from the Transition Coalition ([www.transitioncoalition.org](http://www.transitioncoalition.org)) provides a framework for conducting transition assessment. Guiding questions help to determine what is known about the student. This helps to address the question from most educators, “what do I use to conduct the assessment”? Often there is existing information that is collected but not used. Other times, kits are taken from a shelf to administer in the name of transition assessment but it is an activity that does not actually address the information needs to plan for the student’s future. To ensure that transition assessment is conducted appropriately, a transition assessment plan should be developed.



*Source: Transition Coalition. Transition Assessment; Where do you start? Online link: [www.transitioncoalition.org](http://www.transitioncoalition.org); Online module (Transition assessment: The big picture and assessment resources).*

Assessment must be informative assessment (Educational Leadership: Informative Assessment, Vol 65(4), December 2007/January 2008). Informative assessment is not separate from the curriculum and is not designed to identify student weaknesses or student readiness. It is all of those things and more. Informative assessment is an assessment design that helps educators to design teaching and manage the time limits in which the teacher has to instruct the student. To accomplish this task, the assessment information must be meaningful, informative, and specific to the mission of the program. The mission of ATS is to provide services that transition students from public school activities and environments to post-school activities and environments. Identification of the desired post-school environments with input from the student and parent/guardian is a starting point. The case manager/teacher must ask guiding questions to identify the student and parent/guardian’s postsecondary goals for their child in the ATS program. To begin the transition assessment process, first collect, review, and analyze existing data to establish longitudinal progress, trends, and to prevent a duplication of assessment effort.

### **Step 1: Existing Information**

- a. Review existing information that helps to determine the student’s needs, strengths, preferences, and interests in order to identify postsecondary goals and plan for transition services.
- b. Review the background information about the student that can be found in the Full Individual Evaluation (FIE), report cards, statewide assessments, Academic Achievement Record (AAR), teacher-made assessments, and any other data sources that exists in the student’s records or teacher records on the student.
- c. Are there medical considerations, support needs that go beyond typical natural supports, or special transportation needs for the student?
- d. Is there a work history or work-based learning history of participation in community-based vocational training, Career Connections Class, or Career and Technology Education?

- e. Is there existing input from parents, such as parent interview records, parent surveys, or parent questionnaires regarding transition services for their child?
- f. Is there existing input from the student, either formally or informally? If the student is non-verbal or unable to express their interests and preferences verbally, have data been collected to help determine this for the student?
- g. Did the student participate in general education extra-curricular activities? Community activities?

**Step 2: Transition Questions**

- a. After determining the data that exist to help identify the student’s needs, strengths, preferences, and interests educators must determine what additional information is needed to plan for transition services.
- b. Identify the postsecondary goals of the student and the future environments in which he/she would like to live, learn, and work.
- c. The assessment questions selected should be triggered by the current and future living, working, and education environments the student and their family/guardian have identified.
- d. If the student cannot identify goals, use questions that help to identify goals and or activities that involve the student in the investigation and selection process.
- e. The following table provides a list of possible questions modified from “Sample Questions to Ask During Transition Assessment” (Sitlington, et al. *Assess for success, 2<sup>nd</sup>*. Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press).

**QUESTIONS THAT DIRECT TRANSITION ASSESSMENT PLANNING (Sitlington, et al)**

<b>Employment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the student have a career or employment goal?</li> <li>2. What are the student’s interests, preferences, and strengths in relation to work?</li> <li>3. What are the student’s needs in terms of support and accommodations on the job?</li> <li>4. Can the student state his/her needs and request accommodations on the job if needed?</li> <li>5. Does the student have job-seeking skills (filling out applications, interviewing)?</li> <li>6. What types of skills does the student need to acquire or learn in order to meet their career objective?</li> <li>7. Will the student need support from a job coach or adult service provider now or in the future for competitive or supported employment?</li> <li>8. Does the student receive Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI)?</li> <li>9. What types of financial issues (e.g. food stamps, housing subsidies, transportation costs) need to be considered when planning for employment?</li> <li>10. What types of job benefits does the student need in order to become an independent member of society?</li> </ol>
<b>Postsecondary Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the student want or need postsecondary education (e.g., college, technical training, adult and continuing education) to reach his or her career or employment goal?</li> <li>2. Can the student relate his or her interests, preferences, and strengths to the postsecondary education goal?</li> <li>3. What subject(s), certification, or major does the student intend to pursue?</li> <li>4. What types of accommodations will the student need in a postsecondary setting?</li> <li>5. Are there assistive technology devices that will support the student’s participation in postsecondary education classes and/or campus life?</li> <li>6. Can the student express his or her need for support services and/or accommodations if needed?</li> <li>7. Does the student know how to access services from the disabled student services at the postsecondary institution?</li> <li>8. Does the student need assistance in selecting an institution or completing application forms?</li> <li>9. What is the position of the parent/guardian in the student’s participation in postsecondary education in regards to transportation, funding, and personal support needs?</li> <li>10. Does the student need financial assistance (FAFSA, grants, scholarships, etc.) to attend a postsecondary institution?</li> <li>11. Does the student meet the entry requirements for the institution, such as SAT/ACT scores? THEA/ACCUPLACER/COMPASS scores?</li> <li>12. If not, is the student willing to participate in the developmental/remedial courses or whatever the remedial requirements are of the institution in order to pursue the certification or degree?</li> <li>13. Has the student applied for agency (DARS, etc.) services to assist with postsecondary education?</li> </ol>

<b>Community Involvement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What public transportation is available to the student in his or her community?</li> <li>2. Is the student able to use public transportation if available?</li> <li>3. Does the student have a driver's license or need assistance in preparing for a driver's license?</li> <li>4. Does the student need financial assistance from a community agency to access transportation?</li> <li>5. Does the student need special travel arrangements made on an on-going basis to get to work, postsecondary education, or leisure activities?</li> <li>6. Does the student need assistive technology in order to use public transportation or drive (e.g., van equipped with lift)?</li> <li>7. What leisure/community activities does the student enjoy?</li> <li>8. Does the student have knowledge/resources for leisure activities of his/her interest?</li> <li>9. Does the student have appropriate social skills for community/environment involvement?</li> <li>10. What accommodations does the student need to participate in leisure activities?</li> <li>11. Can the student locate/use community services such as stores, banks, medical facilities?</li> <li>12. Does the student participate in the political process (e.g., voting if appropriate age)?</li> <li>13. Is the student knowledgeable about laws and does the student observe the law?</li> </ol>
<b>Personal/Social</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the student interact with and have support from family members?</li> <li>2. Does the student have a network of age-appropriate friends?</li> <li>3. Is the student able to conduct himself or herself appropriately in social situations?</li> <li>4. Does the student demonstrate an understanding of his or her rights as a person with a disability?</li> <li>5. Does the student have knowledge of agencies that advocate for a person with a disability?</li> <li>6. Does the student participate in the IEP planning process (e.g., identify needs and interest, develop post-school goals)?</li> <li>7. Does the student understand and express his or her needs, strengths, preferences, and interests?</li> <li>8. Is the student able to advocate for himself or herself in employment, leisure, and community situations?</li> <li>9. Does the student need on-going support from adult service providers?</li> </ol>
<b>Independent Living</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the student aware of how to find independent living quarters?</li> <li>2. Is the student able to purchase and prepare food?</li> <li>3. Does the student know how to arrange for utility services?</li> <li>4. If the student will live in a dorm, does he or she require supports or accommodations to do so?</li> <li>5. Can the student follow daily routines (e.g., get up in the morning, select clothing, do dishes, clean)?</li> <li>6. Can the student manage medication if needed?</li> <li>7. Does the student require financial support from an adult agency to live independently?</li> <li>8. Does the student require support (e.g., budgeting, shopping) from family or an adult service provider to live independently?</li> <li>9. Does the student need accommodations or assistive technology devices to live in an independent living situation?</li> <li>10. Does the student know how to maintain a checking and savings account?</li> <li>11. Can the student manage money appropriately for his or her level of income?</li> <li>12. Does the student understand and manage his or her health and dental needs?</li> <li>13. Does the student know what to do in case of an emergency in the home or in the community?</li> </ol>
<b>Other</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What additional considerations are needed if the student is a resident of a group home?</li> <li>2. What additional considerations are needed if the parent states a desire to have the student remain at home following graduation?</li> <li>3. What additional considerations are needed if the parent states a desire for the student to attend a day-habilitation program as the postsecondary goal?</li> </ol>

### Step 3: Planning for Assessment

- a. Use the sample questions to identify areas to assess. Ask questions appropriate for the student. Additional questions will arise as you interview the student; add those questions and responses to the list.
- b. As the postsecondary goals, of the student, begins to develop, add questions that help to clarify goal acquisition needs.
- c. Identify the information needs based on the student's postsecondary goals related to education, employment, independent living, and specific support needs.
- d. Use the planning list to identify specific assessment instruments and method to conduct the transition assessment

#### **Step 4: What and How to Assess**

- a. The list from Step 3 will direct the “what to assess”
- b. Determine the methods to be used for assessing, such as:
  - i. Inventories
  - ii. Person-centered Planning
  - iii. Interviews
  - iv. Observations
  - v. Review of records
  - vi. Task Analysis
  - vii. Learning Styles Inventory
  - viii. Medical Review
  - ix. Situational Assessment (e.g., transportation)
  - x. Functional Academic Assessment
  - xi. Agency Assessment Sharing
- c. Identify transition assessment tools to obtain the needed information to make decisions related to instruction, support, accommodations, family information and training, and agency connections.
- d. The following is a list of ATS assessment instruments. (the list is not inclusive and additional tools are available in the district):
  - i. ESTR
  - ii. Vocational Assessments
  - iii. Vision Planning Results
  - iv. Transition-to-Work Inventory
  - v. Transition Planning Inventory (TPI)
  - vi. ATS Observation Checklists
  - vii. Community Assessment
  - viii. Other
- e. Assessment is not the responsibility of one person. The student, parent/guardian, case manager, related service personnel, and appraisal personnel should be part of the multi-disciplinary team that conducts the assessment. Using the planning list of information needs, identify appropriate assessment tools to collect the data. Divide the assessment task among the parties of the assessment team. The case manager then collects the information from team members, conducts their assessment tasks, and analyzing the total assessment data to determine trends, needs, and determine if additional information is needed.
- f. Assessment can be conducted in the home, community, and postsecondary environments in which the student may participate during ATS and after public school.

#### **Step 5: Using Data**

- a. Once the data has been collected, consider organizing the findings into an assessment portfolio. The sections of the portfolio will be determined by the postsecondary goals of the student.
- b. Involve the student and family in the portfolio development and collection of data related to the postsecondary goals. The student and family can contribute work samples or descriptions of activities that document strengths, skills, training, experiences, and/or needs. The portfolio lends itself to assessing progress as future information and work samples can easily be compared to the starting point or baseline to determine progress.
- c. No one can work on every need they have, whether they have a disability or not. We all have room to improve. It is critical to work with the student and family to review the assessment findings. Identify priorities that facilitate postsecondary goals and eliminate items that are not related to postsecondary goals. If too many priority goals remain, ask the student and parent to identify the top 3 to 5 items (If, you could only work on 5 of these priority items which 5 would you chose?).
- d. Use the transition assessment findings to develop measurable, postsecondary goals.
- e. Use the priority skills/behaviors/supports to develop IEP goals and objectives that facilitate the measurable, postsecondary goals.

### **Step 6: Integrating Data and the IEP**

- a. Transition assessment is the basis for developing transition services according to federal law.
- b. Transition assessment information should be included in the section of the IEP that list assessments used to make data-driven decisions in the development of the IEP. Assessment tools, dates, and party administering the assessment are typically found in the IEP.
- c. Strengths identified in the transition assessment should be included in the Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance.
- d. When the FIE is being developed (the initial and the 3-year re-evaluation) transition assessment should be integrated into the report.
- e. Measurable, postsecondary goals are written in the transition supplement of the IEP.
- f. Supporting Annual IEP goals are included in the IEP, along with the accommodations and modification needs.
- g. Copy of measurable, postsecondary goals and annual goals should be given to the student at the end of the annual ARD/IEP meeting to assist the student in maintaining focus on his/her future.