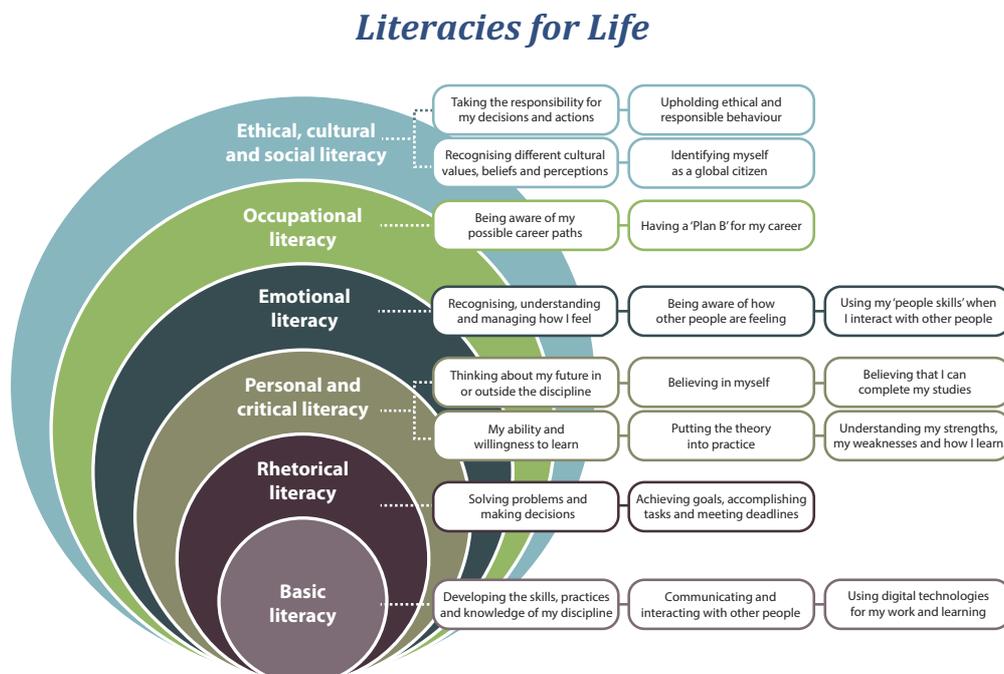


Literacies for life: A brief introduction for educators

Theoretical background

The *Literacies for Life* model was developed by Professor Dawn Bennett, lead researcher in the *Developing Employability Initiative* at Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia. The associated measure is grounded in social cognitive theory and many items are drawn from or informed by extant sources. These include social cognitive self-management and decision-making relative to self and career (Lent et al., 2017) and to self- and academic self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993; Byrne, Flood, & Griffin, 2014) and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965); professional identity construction related to academic work and future work (Mancini et al., 2015); person-centred conceptualisations of self and employability including the citizen-self (Coetzee, 2014); emotional intelligence (Brackett & Mayer, 2003); and the self-assessment of learner and graduate skills and attributes (Coetzee, 2014; Smith, Ferns and Russell, 2014).





Engagement with the measure

The six *Literacies for Life* combine to enhance employability and inform personal and professional development. Students create a personalised employability profile using an online self-assessment. The profile report is downloaded as a pdf, and students can review and revise their profile at any time.

The self-reflection tool and profile form part of a *Student Employability Starter Kit*. This is made available without charge, as are the resources on the student website.

Educators can request an anonymised, aggregated, cohort-wide profile summary as well as assistance with the workshop and reflection process. The educator site hosts employability development resources for use with students.

When completing the personalised profile tool, students choose whether or not to include their anonymised responses in the research database. The database is hosted securely and all institutional, program and personal details are removed prior to analysis. The consent and information form can be accessed [here](#).

Elements of the model

Basic literacy

- Developing disciplinary skills, practices and knowledge
- Communicating and interacting with other people
- Using digital technologies for work and learning

Rhetorical literacy

- Solving problems
- Making informed decisions
- Managing goals, tasks and deadlines

Personal and critical literacy

- Being responsible for personal development and learning
- Putting the theory into practice
- Believing in myself and my abilities

Emotional literacy

- Managing emotions
- Being aware of other people's feelings
- Helping other people

Occupational literacy

- Making informed career decisions
- Aligning career options with personal values and interests
- Creating an alternative career plan

Ethical, cultural and social literacy

- Behaving ethically and responsibly
- Being a global citizen
- Being culturally aware

Ethical considerations

Equipping and enabling educators to embed employability across higher education has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) (number HRE2017-0125). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the Ethics Officer on (08) 9266 9223 or the Manager, Research Integrity on (08) 9266 7093 or email hrec@curtin.edu.au.

Key sources

- Brackett, M. A., & Mayer, J. D. (2003). Convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity of competing measures of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 1147–1158. (Emotional literacy items)
- Byrne, M., Flood, B., & Griffin, J. (2014). Measuring the academic self-efficacy of first-year accounting students. *Accounting Education*, 23(5), 407-423. (Critical literacy items)
- Coetzee, M. (2014). Measuring student graduateness: Reliability and construct validity of the Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(5), 887-902. (Basic, Rhetorical and Ethical literacy items)
- Fugate, M., Kinicki, A. J., & Ashforth, B. E. (2004). Employability: A psycho-social construct, its dimensions, and applications. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 65, 14-38.
- Lent, R. W., Ezeofor, I., Morrison, A., Penn, L. T., & Ireland, G. W. Applying the social cognitive model of career self-management to career exploration and decision-making. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 93(2016), 47-57. (Occupational literacy items)
- Mancini, T., Caricati, L., Panari, C., & Tonarelli, A. (2015). Personal and social aspects of professional identity. An extension of Marcia's identity status model applied to a sample of university students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 89(2015), 140-150. (Critical literacy items)
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Critical literacy items)
- Smith, C., Ferns, S., & Russell, L. (2014). Conceptualising and measuring 'employability': Lessons from a national OLT project. Proceedings of the ACEN National Conference, Gold Coast 2014. (Critical literacy items)

More information

For more information, please contact Dawn Bennett at d.bennett@curtin.edu.au or visit the educator website (<http://www.developingemployability.edu.au/>) or student website (<http://www.student.developingemployability.edu.au/>)