

Modularising Multilingual and Multicultural Academic Communication Competence for BA and MA level

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MAGICC e-portfolio: Self-assessment of Intercultural Competence

Autobiography of Academic and Professional Intercultural Competences and Skills (AbAPICS)

Introduction

This tool is designed to help you assess, evaluate and reflect upon your intercultural skills and competences within the specific context of academic and professional communication.

You may already be aware of your own competence in different languages, possess some intercultural skills and be familiar with certain academic and professional skills such as giving presentations, reading academic papers, writing reports, etc. This tool will help you understand how these areas relate to each other to make up your multilingual and multicultural profile. It will also help you describe your skills and provide supporting evidence for personal development and employment purposes.

This self-assessment tool comprises two sections, each focusing on one broad skill area of **intercultural skills and competences for academic and professional communication**. The two skill areas are:

- A. Reading and listening
- B. Spoken production, spoken interaction, and writing



To familiarise yourself with the terminology used in this section, please consult the **MAGICC Transparency tools**.

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A . Intercultural skills and competences for academic and professional reading and listening

Introduction: What are these skills about?

In academic and professional contexts it is essential to understand written and spoken information. However linguistic knowledge alone is not always enough. In a multilingual and multicultural environment, the role of culture can be just as important when it comes to listening and reading. Through a series of targeted questions, the aim of this section is to help you demonstrate the extent to which you are able to:

- identify and interpret information in its cultural context
- distinguish and compare academic and professional written and oral texts for their cultural elements and conventions
- demonstrate understanding and awareness of culture and its influence on communication

A-1) Openness and tolerance of ambiguity (reading and listening)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Have you ever considered that ambiguity and lack of clarity in written and oral information may be due to cultural differences rather than to a lack of language skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you deal with these ambiguities constructively? If so, how?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you ever tried to look for clarification in other available sources (e.g. talking to native speakers, reading in reference materials, internet, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you aware that the concepts mentioned in texts or speech may not refer to identical concepts in different languages/different varieties of the same language?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you try to find out what people really mean when they mention such concepts in academic and professional situations? If so, how do you check their intended meaning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **openness and tolerance of ambiguity in academic and professional reading and listening**. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **openness and tolerance of ambiguity in academic and professional reading and listening**? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

A-2) Adaptability and behavioural flexibility (reading and listening)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
In your experience listening to/reading professional and academic speech and texts, have you ever come across differences that are specific to particular cultures or disciplines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you ever tried to work out the origin or reason(s) for such differences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
As you know there are many kinds of academic and professional texts and speech (essays, reports, presentations, surveys, position papers, etc.). Can you tell how each of these may differ between languages as well as between academic and professional cultures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know how culture influences the way in which these different types of academic and professional texts and speech are produced?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you identify, compare and contrast typical discourse structures and culture-embedded communicative conventions in this types or texts and in general?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you adapt your own reading and listening behaviour to the requirements of cultural and disciplinary differences in text and speech?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **adaptability** and **behavioural flexibility in academic and professional reading and listening**. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **adaptability** and **behavioural flexibility in academic and professional reading and listening**? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

A-3) Adaptability in communicative awareness (reading and listening)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Have you ever thought about your own culture-embedded values, beliefs, norms, conventions and how these may influence your understanding of written and spoken information in academic and professional situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you ever questioned the seemingly self-evident meanings brought about by your own cultural and scientific background in such situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you ever acted upon any conclusions you drew from this self-questioning process? If so, in what way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
When considering cultural phenomena, do you use any kind of conscious strategy to help you distance yourself (e.g. observing, analysing, recognising components, comparing, contrasting, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **adaptability in communicative awareness**. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **adaptability in communicative awareness**? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

A-4) Knowledge discovery (reading and listening)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
When you read or hear information in academic and professional situations, do you try to enhance your understanding by acquiring, using, and evaluating your knowledge of the relevant cultural background (e.g. relating what is said/written to the cultural, historical, social, scientific context and traditions where it originated)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you use reference materials and individual experiences to develop this approach? If so, how?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you check whether concepts and terminology refer to the same notions in different languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you able to identify cultural biases and ethnocentric points of view (e.g. differentiate scientific arguments from cultural interpretations)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know where to find information to improve your awareness in this area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose one a single example that would best represent your **knowledge discovery skills**. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **knowledge discovery**? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

A-5) Reporting on your reading and listening skills

Prospective employers are busy people, so you need to be able to describe and 'sell your skills in a way that is quick, clear and convincing. Take another look at the examples and self-evaluations you used throughout this section and write one short paragraph in each of the boxes below describing and demonstrating your current expertise in the relevant areas.

My intercultural skills in academic and professional reading

Areas you may wish to discuss: tolerance of ambiguity, behavioural flexibility, communicative awareness and knowledge discovery.

My intercultural skills in academic and professional listening

Areas you may wish to discuss: tolerance of ambiguity, behavioural flexibility, communicative awareness and knowledge discovery.

B. Intercultural skills and competences for academic and professional spoken production, spoken interaction and writing

Introduction: What are these skills about?

Whether it is in written or spoken form, producing meaningful messages is central to academic and professional communication. In order to do this, you cannot rely exclusively on your linguistic skills. The questions in this section will help you reflect on the important role played by culture when it comes to speaking and writing in multilingual and multicultural environments.

The aim of this section is to help you demonstrate the extent to which you are able to:

- understand intercultural differences in written and spoken communication in different academic and professional contexts
- show understanding of culture and different individual multicultural profiles and their influence in communication and have an overall understanding of the kinds of communicative difficulties that can arise in an intercultural context
- negotiate and create a common ground/understanding when interacting with a person(s) with a different multicultural profile(s) appropriate to the context, objective and relationship
- manage misunderstandings and communication breakdown between people with different cultural profiles
- adapt your presentations and communication style to fit intercultural encounters in situ
- analyze your own writing from a cultural perspective and accommodate it accordingly

B-1) Openness and tolerance of ambiguity (spoken production, spoken interaction and writing)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Can you accept ambiguity and lack of clarity in spoken interaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you able to deal constructively with this ambiguity and lack of clarity in spoken interaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you check what people mean by saying or behaving in a particular way? How?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you able to manage unfamiliar situations even when they are not entirely clear to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
In such situations, do you normally ask for clarification?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How do you react whenever a misunderstanding occurs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **openness and tolerance of ambiguity** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate represent your **openness and tolerance of ambiguity** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

B-2) Adaptability and behavioural flexibility (spoken production, spoken interaction and writing)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Are you aware of the role of culture and its influence on the way people speak and write in academic and professional situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you ever taken steps to better understand the role of culture in spoken and written communication? If so, what did you do?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you aware of the kinds of communicative difficulties that can arise when speaking or writing in an intercultural context?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
When addressing partners from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds are you able to identify and consciously work with a variety of communication styles and conventions to suit their different norms, representations and values?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you critically analyze your own communication behaviour from a cultural perspective?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
When expressing your ideas orally or in writing, have you ever experienced a situation where you noticed the presence of different, culture related requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you able to identify what these requirements are for spoken production in different cultural contexts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you adapt your presentation and communication style, as well as your behaviour to different requirements and situations / to a different academic culture /to multicultural groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you able to negotiate with your partners a common ground which is appropriate to the context and purpose of communication and the participants' relationships?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **adaptability** and **behavioural flexibility** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **adaptability** and **behavioural flexibility** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

B-3) Adaptability in communicative awareness (spoken production, spoken interaction and writing)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Are you aware that your own culture-embedded values, norms, customs and representations may lead to misunderstanding when writing or speaking in intercultural academic and professional contexts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you aware that your own perception is not shared universally, that concepts might not refer to the same notions and representations in different languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you consciously analyze your own culture-embedded values, norms etc. when speaking or writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you question the beliefs and norms brought about by your own cultural and scientific background and that seem self-evident for you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you aware of the fact that different cultural assumptions may be at play when you speak or write in an intercultural situation, even if a common language/or different common languages is/are used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you modify your own verbal and written forms of expressions according to specific needs in academic and professional situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you invite for participation, make yourself understood and check what your partners have understood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
When considering cultural phenomena, do you use any kind of conscious strategy to help you distance yourself (e.g. observing, analysing, recognising components, comparing, contrasting, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you use your observations to clarify and resolve misunderstandings of incomprehension when speaking and/or writing?			

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **adaptability in communicative awareness** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **adaptability in communicative awareness** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

B-4) Knowledge discovery (spoken production, spoken interaction and writing)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
Do you consciously seek to acquire and use new knowledge of cultural practices, values, rules, norms underlying other's behaviour by asking direct questions to your partners?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you consciously seek to acquire, use and verify cultural knowledge while writing academic and /or professional texts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you make sure to check whether concepts / terminology refer to the same notions and representations in different languages/cultural contexts or if a <i>lingua franca</i> is used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you critically differentiate scientific arguments from cultural interpretations in your own writing and speaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you take active steps to develop your knowledge in this aspect of intercultural competences? How?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **knowledge discovery skills** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **knowledge discovery skills** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

B-5) Knowledge and showing empathy (spoken production, spoken interaction and writing)

Step A: Explore your skills

First of all, look at the following questions and think of specific examples from your own experience that could illustrate each of these issues. The same example may be suitable to illustrate more than one question. If you cannot find examples for some of the questions at this stage, just tick 'no/not sure' and move on. Over time your range of skills will expand as you encounter new situations and develop your competence in more areas.

	No/Not sure	Yes	Example
In situations involving spoken and written interaction do you seek to find out what your interlocutors/listeners/readers think and how they feel?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Can you demonstrate understanding of their feelings, wishes, values, beliefs and ways of thinking (e.g. by observing language, attitude, gesture, facial expressions, etc.) and deal appropriately with them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you take active steps in order to develop these skills? How?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Step B: Choose your evidence

Now choose a single example that would best represent your **knowledge and ability to show empathy** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations. If you have already uploaded documents onto the Dossier section of this e-Portfolio, you may want to use one of those as an example.

Example:

Does this relate to a document in your Dossier?

No

Yes

Document's title:

Step C: Reflect

In what way do these examples demonstrate your **knowledge and ability to show empathy** when writing or speaking in academic and professional situations? Explain it in 100-200 words.

What could you do in order to develop your skills in this area even further? Look at the questions where your answer was 'no'/'not sure'. What specific steps could you take in order to develop your experience in those areas? What about those areas where you already have some experience? What further challenges would develop them even more?

B-6) Reporting on your writing and speaking skills

Prospective employers are busy people, so you need to be able to describe and 'sell your skills in a way that is quick, clear and convincing. Take another look at the examples and self-evaluations you used throughout this section and write one short paragraph in each of the boxes below describing and demonstrating your current expertise in the relevant areas.

My intercultural skills in academic and professional writing

Areas you may wish to discuss: tolerance of ambiguity, behavioural flexibility, communicative awareness and knowledge discovery skills.

My intercultural skills in academic and professional spoken production

Areas you may wish to discuss: tolerance of ambiguity, behavioural flexibility, communicative awareness and knowledge discovery skills.

My intercultural skills in academic and professional spoken interaction

Areas you may wish to discuss: tolerance of ambiguity, behavioural flexibility, communicative awareness and knowledge discovery skills.



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