

EXERCISE

Am I ready, willing, and able to be successful in school?

Your life is probably busy already. Going back to school will make it even busier. There are many things in life that can affect your ability to be successful in school. Here's an exercise to help you identify those things. Read the statement on the left. Then write in a checkmark to show whether you agree or disagree.

My situation	Agree	Disagree
My attitude		
I know myself well and what I am able to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good about myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel able to do this	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a positive attitude toward training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am motivated to work toward my goals.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My health		
I feel healthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am free from alcohol or drug problems.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to cope with stress.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family		
My family is in good health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have good child care for my kids.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family and friends support what I am doing.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have stable relationships with my family and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My finances		
I know that students often live on a limited budget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to live on a limited budget.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have the money to go back to school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I don't have the money myself, I know where to get help.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My situation

Agree Disagree

My life as a student

- I have a plan for going back to school.....
- This is a good time for me to go back to school
- I have transportation to get to school.....
- I know what is expected of me as a student
- (regular attendance, good academic progress, following school rules, teacher expectations)
- I know where I can go for help

If you checked *disagree* for more than a few items, you may want to rethink your decision to go back to school at this time. It doesn't mean you have to give up the idea altogether. It just means there may be some things that may need to be dealt with first.

Talk to a counsellor about how you're going to deal with things that might make it hard to do well in school. Make a plan to deal with any obstacles to your success. There are some things that may always be a challenge. But if you decide in advance how you're going to deal with them, it will be easier to be successful in school.

Coming back to school as an adult? I enjoy the new experiences. It's something I seek out. I got into the classes right away. I know the value of what I'm doing.
(George, 25 years old)

What are my fears?

If you've been away from school for some time, you may have some doubts or fears. Some examples are listed here, along with information to think about.

Can I still learn?

You may be thinking, "I'm too old to learn." But adult students have some real advantages when it comes to learning and school. We may take longer to learn things as we get older, but we can actually get smarter as we age! Our life experiences make it easier for us to relate to material. We can often see the connections between things more readily than we did as younger people.

Some people also wonder if they've been out of school too long. Just because you haven't been sitting at a desk doesn't mean you haven't been learning. Your brain is working all the time. You have been learning new skills in nearly everything you do. Living is learning!

WORKSHEET

My back to school plan

Steps to get ready to go back to school	What I've done and still need to do	Date to be completed	Done ✓
<p>Think about where I want to go with my life.</p> <p>Find out about my skills, interests, values and traits.</p>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a career planning workshop. • Talk to counsellors. • Call the Career Information Hotline. • Get a copy of <i>Career Planner: Choosing an occupation.</i> 		
<p>Find out more about occupations that interest me.</p>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend a day in the workplace I'd like to be in. • Find out what jobs employers need done. • Talk to counsellors. • Call the Career Information Hotline. • Get a copy of <i>Career Planner: Choosing an occupation.</i> • Visit the website alis.alberta.ca/occinfo 		
<p>Find out more about the program that I need.</p> <p>Check out different schools.</p> <p>Explore online education</p>	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See a career counsellor. • Visit a school. • Get a copy of a school calendar. • Call the Career Information Hotline. • Get copies of <i>Education and Training Planner</i> and <i>Time to Choose... a post-secondary education program.</i> • Visit the website alis.alberta.ca/edinfo • Visit the website ecampusalberta.ca 		

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Find out how much this will cost (there will be many different costs).	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the Registrar's office to ask about tuition costs. • Figure out how much housing and child care will cost. • Read <i>Taking Care of the Kids</i> in this book. • Get a copy of <i>Education and Training Planner</i>. • Get a copy of <i>Time to Choose... a post-secondary education program</i>. • Visit the website alis.alberta.ca/edinfo 		
Figure out where I'm going to get the money.	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at my own resources. • What do I have saved up? • What money can I earn during school? • Read <i>Money Matters</i> in this book. • Check out student funding options. • Visit websites: alis.alberta.ca/studentsfinance alis.alberta.ca/scholarships 		
Fill out application forms for school. Fill out application forms for student funding.	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get copies of <i>Education and Training Planner</i> and <i>Time to Choose... a post-secondary education program</i>. 		
Talk to my family and work out a plan for all our needs.	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a family meeting. • Talk about how we can get things done. • Get a babysitter or daycare. • Make a plan to manage my time. • Read <i>Getting the Support You Need, Taking Care of the Kids, and Fitting Everything In</i> in this book. 		
Other things I need to do.	Write down the other things you have to do before you go back to school.		