YOUTH LEADER'S SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

engage youth

EMPOWERING NEXT GENERATION ADVOCATES FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

ERASMUS+ COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUTH

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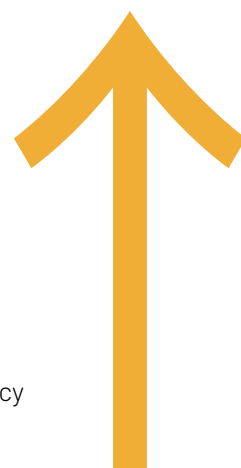
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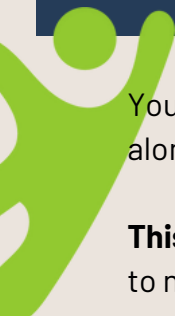
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YOUTH LEADER'S SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL
CODE OF ETHICS WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth work begins with a clear commitment: place young people and their interests first, work alongside them in their real contexts, and empower their participation and rights.

This self-assessment helps you translate that commitment into everyday practice by pausing to notice where you're strong, where you're stretched, and where you need support.

Knowing your limits is not a weakness—it's ethical practice. The Code of Ethics asks youth leaders to be self-aware about their own values and blind spots, to maintain professional boundaries, and to uphold a duty of care that avoids exposing young people (or others) to harm.

Clear limits protect trust (e.g., confidentiality and transparency about its boundaries), keep relationships professional, and signal when collaboration, referral, or supervision is needed. They also sustain you: self-care and ongoing learning are named ethical responsibilities, so that your work remains safe, competent, and rights-affirming over time.

This tool invites practical reflection across key areas of youth leadership—such as inclusion, power-sharing, digital ethics, risk and duty of care, reflective practice, and motivation—so you can act with integrity and consistency. For each statement, you'll select the level that best describes your current practice and can add brief notes or examples.

The four-level scale—Limited awareness, Basic participation, Active engagement, and Leadership—shows both where you are and what growth could look like.

How to use it
1. For each statement, <u>reflect</u> on your current practice and mindset.
2. <u>Select</u> the level that best describes your present state and add notes or examples if helpful.
3. <u>Compare</u> with the answer key. If a module has fewer than two Leadership selections, plan targeted learning or coaching for that area, so, go back to the <u>EngageYouth Course Module</u>.
4. <u>Turn insight into action</u>. Choose 1–2 concrete changes (e.g., tighten boundaries, improve multilingual access, schedule supervision) and set a date to review. This follows the Code's call to ongoing learning and transparent, accountable practice.

Used regularly, this self-assessment becomes a reflective habit that keeps you within ethical limits, grows your competence, and—most importantly—centres young people's safety, dignity, and voice in every decision you make.

EUROPE AND YOUNG PEOPLE

a. Youth leaders should align practice with European youth work values of human rights, participation, inclusion, and cross-cultural understanding; collaborate with European partners where relevant.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I respect everyone here; I encourage only adult-led decisions; I have not yet examined barriers; I treat everybody the same no matter their culture; I am not aware of EU partner opportunities.	
2	I use non-discriminatory language; I gather simple input from young people; I make ad-hoc adjustments; I check my assumptions; I maintain light EU networking.	
3	I ground my work in rights-based practice and challenge bias promptly; I co-design with young people; I plan proactively for accessibility; I facilitate intercultural dialogue; I participate in EU projects.	
4	I advocate publicly for rights; I share formal power with young people; I allocate and measure resources for equity; I build organization-wide intercultural competence; I lead strategic EU partnerships and dissemination.	

b. Youth Leaders should ensure accessibility across languages and contexts commonly encountered in European youth programmes (consider translation/interpretation).

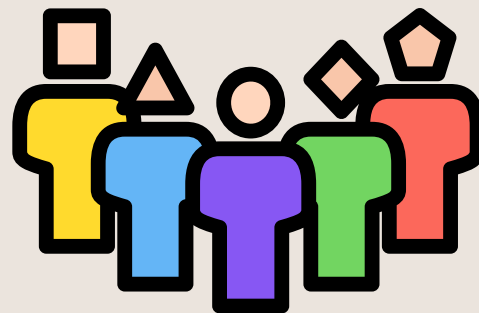| Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I use simple language; provide translations or interpretation when asked; check tone/terms; make small context adjustments.	
2	I rely solely on the official language, assuming everyone understands, and I expect others to adapt and ask me if they do not understand.	
3	I plan multilingual materials from the start; arrange interpretation proactively; verify comprehension with youth; adapt formats to setting and literacy.	
4	I embed multilingual access in policy and budgets; secure professional translation/interpretation; mentor colleagues; evaluate and share accessibility practices across European partners.	

CULTURAL IDENTITY

a.Youth leaders should recognize and value each young person's cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and personal background; avoid assumptions and stereotypes.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I recognize and respect each young person's background, actively challenge stereotypes, and mentor colleagues to embed these standards in daily work; I resort to inclusive practices (e.g., interpreters, observance needs); I review data to spot bias and elevate marginalized voices.	
2	I use respectful language; ask before assuming; learn correct names/pronunciations; adjust when issues are raised.	
3	I invite youth to define their identities on their terms; I reflect on my biases; I adapt plans to cultural/religious/linguistic needs; I challenge stereotypes in the moment.	
4	I consider my norms as standards. When I lack information, I often fill the gaps based on my experience; I sometimes overlook names, pronouns, or practices when focusing on the task.	

b. Youth Leaders should practice cultural humility: acknowledge limits of their own knowledge, embrace feedback, and commit to ongoing learning.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I admit I don't know everything; I accept feedback when offered; I do occasional learning to improve.	
2	I model cultural humility openly; I build feedback loops for youth and peers; I mentor others and embed continuous learning in our work.	
3	I schedule regular feedback points; I reflect and adjust my practice; I follow a learning plan and apply new insights.	
4	I assume my understanding is sufficient; I'm uncomfortable with critique; I've had limited opportunities for cultural learning so far.	

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

a. Youth leaders should treat every young person with dignity; ensure equitable opportunities to participate and be heard. Remove barriers that disadvantage any group.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I use respectful language; ask for and encourage input; help when asked; watch speaking time and discourage interruptions.	
2	I co-design inclusive formats; offer multiple ways to contribute; proactively remove barriers (cost, transport, language, disability) and monitor participation.	
3	I greet warmly but apply ground rules sporadically as there are so many things to do. I stick to all the activities I planned, never change them. I praise a few voices while overlooking others.	
4	I embed dignity and equity in policy and budgets; share decision-making with youth; audit outcomes, address systemic barriers, and mentor others to do the same.	

b. Youth leaders should explicitly prohibit discrimination and establish clear procedures to address it.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I prefer to focus on promoting respectful language, inclusivity, and understanding without explicitly singling out specific instances or groups as discriminating. I'd rather not directly identify or name problematic or discriminatory actions or attitudes.	
2	I state "no discrimination" in ground rules; I intervene when it's obvious; I tell people how to report simply and informally.	
3	I train peers on prevention and response; I track patterns and report trends; I update policy with youth input and ensure accountability measures are applied.	
4	I promote a clear anti-discrimination policy; I act promptly using a step-by-step procedure; I document incidents, follow up, and protect those affected.	

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

a. Youth leaders should challenge structures and practices that limit life opportunities; support awareness-raising and collective action that seeks fairer outcomes.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe opportunities are earned individually; treating everyone the same is fairest; staying neutral is best; I don't see a need to question systems.	
2	I believe inequities exist but are best addressed through respectful dialogue and small adjustments; I support awareness-raising, not collective action.	
3	I believe fairness calls for challenging policies and practices that block access. I support youth-led collective action and see advocacy as part of my role.	
4	I believe lasting justice needs systemic change; I prioritize building coalitions, shifting power to affected youth, and pursuing policy reforms with accountability.	

b. Youth Leaders should identify and address power imbalances in groups and programmes.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe power differences are natural or irrelevant; hierarchy keeps things efficient and in order.	
2	I believe fairness requires challenging power dynamics; I support redistributing voice, roles, and information so quieter or marginalized youth can have a say and be heard.	
3	I recognize power imbalances, but I doubt I can address them consistently, so I handle them case by case.	
4	I believe equity needs structural change; I focus on working together with youth, making shared transparent decisions, and ensuring accountability.	

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

a. Youth Leaders should model integrity, honesty, and accountability; take responsibility for conduct and decisions, acknowledge mistakes, and improve.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe outcomes matter more than process; integrity is personal; admitting mistakes weakens authority; accountability is mostly administrative.	
2	I believe accountability must be shared; everyone knows their duties, they are held responsible for their actions, and performance and progress are evaluated systematically. I welcome feedback and careful review, share my reasons and results openly, guide others, and always look for ways to improve.	
3	I believe transparency builds trust; I own decisions and errors publicly; I ask for feedback and set clear remedial actions to improve.	
4	I value honesty but balance it with harmony; I'll acknowledge minor mistakes when it feels safe; informal accountability and gradual improvement are enough.	

b. Foster youth participation and shared leadership; collaborate with colleagues and partners for the best outcomes.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I value youth input through consultation, but final decisions stay with me; I collaborate informally with colleagues when convenient.	
2	I believe adults should lead and youth should learn; shared leadership risks confusion; collaboration beyond my team only complicates things.	
3	I believe power-sharing is essential; young people co-govern roles, budgets, and evaluation; I build strategic, cross-sector partnerships for collective impact.	
4	I believe shared leadership improves outcomes; I co-design and co-decide with young people; I coordinate actively with colleagues and relevant partners.	

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

a.Youth leaders should communicate online with the same ethical standards as offline; respect privacy norms and differing levels of digital access and literacy.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe online spaces are informal; sharing widely is fine; most people have enough access and skills. When deadlines are tight, I prioritize speed over obtaining consent or protecting privacy so the message arrives on time.	
2	I believe courtesy and basic privacy settings are sufficient; I ask permission when it seems necessary and expect others to manage their own access and tools.	
3	I believe strong digital ethics should be the standard. I state our data practices in simple language, use informed, voluntary consent, collect only essential data, set clear boundaries and secure channels, provide low-access alternatives, and regularly review and improve our online practices.	
4	I believe the same standards apply online as offline; I ask for consent, use secure channels, and adapt format/timing for differing access and literacy while setting clear boundaries.	

b. Safeguard data: protect sensitive information; share only with consent or when legally required.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I store and share freely, I assume participation implies consent, and I rely on common passwords and informal platforms.	
2	I believe safeguarding is essential; I obtain and record consent, I limit access on a need-to-know basis, use secure storage, and follow clear retention/deletion rules.	
3	I believe explicit data governance is required; I state practices in plain language, use opt-in consent, encrypt and use MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication/ a login safeguard), run audits and incident plans, train others, and share only with consent or when legally required.	
4	I think basic privacy settings are enough; I ask permission when it seems obvious, I keep data "just in case," and I handle sensitive info case by case.	

DEVELOPING PROJECT MANAGEMENT

a. Youth leaders should plan activities with explicit risk assessment and duty of care; prioritize physical, emotional, and psychological safety.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe safety is mostly common sense; formal risk assessments slow things down; energy and outcomes matter more than paperwork. There is a lot of bureaucracy that hinders the natural flow of work.	
2	I believe basic checklists and venue rules are enough; I scan for obvious hazards and handle issues as they arise.	
3	I believe thorough risk assessment is part of good practice; I plan for physical, emotional, and psychological safety with clear consent, roles, ratios, and intervention steps needed to ensure safety and appropriate action.	
4	I believe safety is a shared culture; I use formal frameworks and trauma-informed approaches. I allocate resources for supervision and reporting, review incidents, and improve plans with youth input.	

b. Youth leaders should define roles, boundaries, and communication protocols at the outset; establish procedures for conflict resolution and for addressing breaches of ethics.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe establishing clear expectations from the beginning helps prevent problems. I want defined roles, boundaries, and channels, with a step-by-step, time-bound process for conflict and ethics breaches.	
2	I believe shared management is essential; I co-create an agreement with youth, ensure transparent reporting and independent review, and link outcomes to learning and accountability.	
3	I believe flexibility matters more than structure; roles can emerge naturally; good intentions will resolve conflicts without formal procedures.	
4	I think some structure helps, but I prefer light, informal agreements and case-by-case conversations rather than set protocols for breaches.	

EVALUATE IMPACT

a. Youth leaders should build in reflective practice: regularly review inclusivity, accessibility, and outcomes; use feedback from young people to improve.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe regular reflection leads to quality; I schedule reviews on inclusivity, accessibility, and outcomes and use youth feedback to make concrete changes.	
2	I believe improvement must be systematic; I co-design feedback with youth, track equity indicators - e.g. who speaks, decides, or leads, I promote results, and I schedule regular reviews.	
3	I believe results speak for themselves; formal reflection isn't needed; feedback risks derailing plans, so I don't prioritize it.	
4	I believe occasional check-ins and simple surveys are enough; I'll adjust if clear issues are raised but won't set a review cycle.	

b. Youth leaders document and address cultural misunderstandings as learning opportunities; update procedures accordingly.

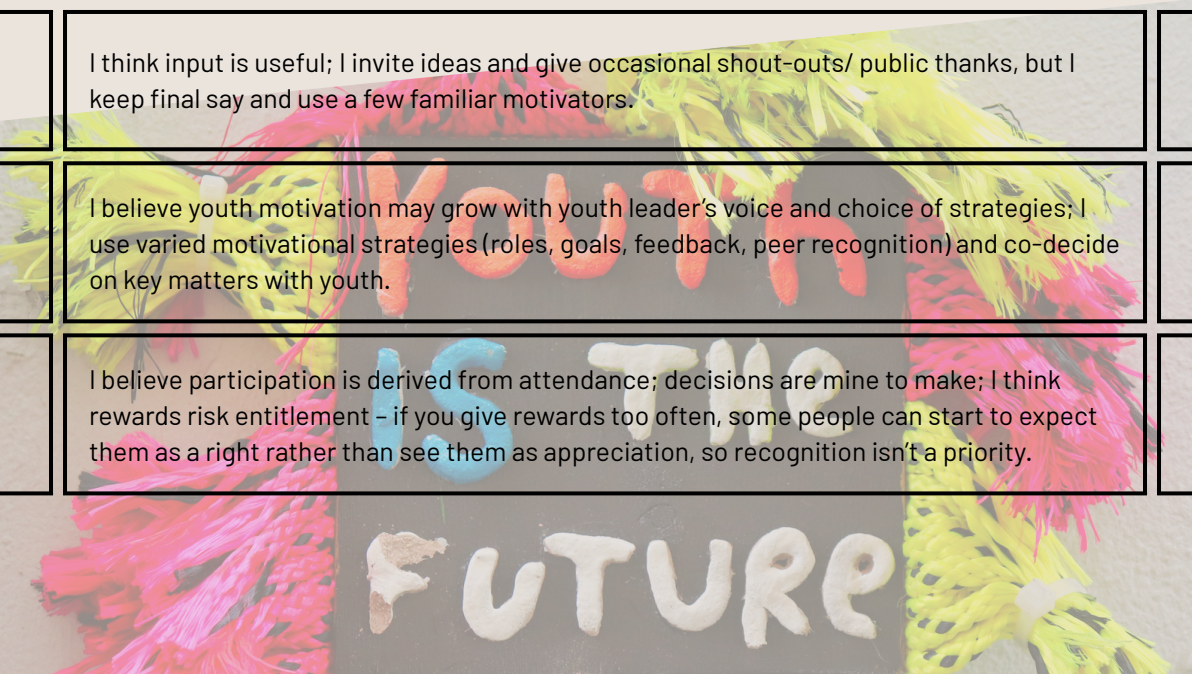| Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe organizational learning needs transparency; I co-create case reviews with youth, embed lessons in policy/training, and track patterns to prevent repeats.	
2	I think it's polite to acknowledge misunderstandings; I prefer private apologies and small fixes; formal updates are rarely needed.	
3	I believe missteps are learning opportunities; I document them with those involved, share takeaways, and update guidance accordingly.	
4	I believe cultural misunderstandings are minor and best left alone; documenting them feels unnecessary. The procedures do not need to be changed.	

MOTIVATION STRATEGIES

a. Youth leaders should practice active, empathetic listening; validate feelings and perspectives to build rapport and motivation.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe empathy drives motivation; I listen without interrupting, reflect on what I hear, and adapt plans based on youths' perspectives.	
2	I believe a listening culture sustains engagement; I model and teach active listening, build feedback rituals, and recognize emotions as valid inputs to decisions.	
3	I consider completing the agenda to be the main focus. Letting feelings dominate may cause us to lose sight of the goal, so I guide discussions back to solutions.	
4	I believe it's polite to listen; I acknowledge feelings when raised, but I don't consistently check for understanding or dig deeper.	

b. Youth leaders should encourage meaningful participation and shared decision-making; recognize achievements and growth.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe shared decision-making sustains commitment; I co-design governance and incentives, celebrate growth publicly and equitably, and evaluate what truly motivates our group.	
2	I think input is useful; I invite ideas and give occasional shout-outs/ public thanks, but I keep final say and use a few familiar motivators.	
3	I believe youth motivation may grow with youth leader's voice and choice of strategies; I use varied motivational strategies (roles, goals, feedback, peer recognition) and co-decide on key matters with youth.	
4	I believe participation is derived from attendance; decisions are mine to make; I think rewards risk entitlement – if you give rewards too often, some people can start to expect them as a right rather than see them as appreciation, so recognition isn't a priority.	

GENDER, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND HEALTH

a. Youth leaders should apply a non-discrimination lens across gender, social class, disability, migration status, and health.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe the fairest approach is to treat everyone the same; identity and health are private and shouldn't affect activities; I avoid "politics" around discrimination.	
2	I believe everyone deserves respect; I'll address obvious discrimination and consider adjustments when asked, but I don't build equity into plans; I focus on the content.	
3	I believe intersectionality must guide our work; I co-create policies with youth, allocate resources to close gaps, track outcomes, and hold myself and others accountable.	
4	I believe fairness requires proactive equity; I look for how gender, class, disability, migration, and health shape access, and I design inclusion without requiring disclosure.	

b. Youth leaders recognize how racism and cultural abuse harm wellbeing; intervene promptly and supportively.

Level	Descriptor	Tick
1	I believe racism and cultural abuse cause real harm; I intervene promptly, state the problem, support the person harmed, keep a record, and ensure concrete next steps happen.	
2	I believe incidents are personal misunderstandings; staying neutral and moving on is best; calling it out risks escalation.	
3	I believe overt offensive language is unacceptable; I prefer quiet, after-the-fact conversations; I focus on intent more than impact.	
4	I believe prevention and repair are core to wellbeing; I set clear anti-abuse protocols, train and empower bystanders, provide trauma-informed support, track patterns (I log incidents securely and review them for trends -who/where/when, so we can fix root causes), and ensure accountability (fair, transparent consequences and repairs, communicate outcomes as appropriate, and verify changes were implemented).	

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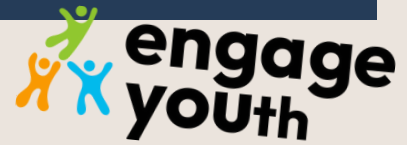
ANSWER KEY

Module Europe and Young People
1a: 1. Limited awareness 2. Basic participation 3. Active engagement **4. Leadership**
1b: 1. Basic participation 2. Limited awareness 3. Active engagement **4. Leadership**

Module Cultural Identity
2a: **1. Leadership** 2. Basic participation 3. Active engagement 4. Limited awareness
2b: 1. Basic participation **2.Leadership** 3. Active engagement 4. Limited awareness

Module Diversity and Inclusion
3a: 1. Basic participation 2. Active engagement 3. Limited awareness **4. Leadership**
3b: 1. Limited awareness 2. Basic participation **3. Leadership** 4. Active engagement

Module Social Justice and Equity
4a: 1. Limited awareness 2. Basic participation 3. Active engagement **4. Leadership**
4b: 1. Limited awareness 2. Active engagement 3. Basic participation **4. Leadership**

Module Civic Engagement and Leadership
5a: 1. Limited awareness **2. Leadership** 3. Active engagement 4. Basic participation
5b: 1. Basic participation 2. Limited awareness **3. Leadership** 4. Active engagement

Module Digital Citizenship
6a: 1. Limited awareness 2.Basic participation **3. Leadership** 4. Active engagement
6b: 1. Limited awareness 2 Active engagement **3. Leadership** 4. Basic participation

Module Developing Project Management
7a: 1. Limited awareness 2.Basic participation 3. Active engagement **4. Leadership**
7b: 1. Active engagement **2. Leadership** 3. Limited awareness 4. Basic participation

Module Evaluate Impact
8a: 1. Active engagement **2. Leadership** 3. Limited awareness 4. Basic participation
8b: **1. Leadership** 2.Basic participation 3. Active engagement 4. Limited awareness

Module Motivation Strategies
9a: 1. Active engagement **2. Leadership** 3. Limited awareness 4. Basic participation
9b: **1. Leadership** 2. Basic participation 3. Active engagement 4. Limited awareness

Module Gender, Social, Economic, and Health
10a: 1. Limited awareness 2. Basic participation **3. Leadership** 4. Active engagement
10b: 1. Active engagement 2. Limited awareness 3. Basic participation **4. Leadership**

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