



## Self-Reflection: Talking Mats

## **Purpose:**

This sheet is designed to establish a snapshot of the sub-skills that contribute to the overall skill of facilitating a Talking Mats session. It can act to guide personal goal setting and development as a communication partner. Place a mark under the number which reflects current performance in each area.

The reflection can be revisited regularly as part of personal or professional development. Some people may demonstrate different areas of strength.

If consent is provided, videos of an interaction with an individual is a good way to evaluate performance with each of the elements.

## **Key steps of Talking Mats:**

Plan the topic

- Plan the top scale and option involved in the topic you want to do with the individual
- Ensure the individual has the experiences they need to understand the options

Set up

- •Set up in a quiet space
- •Introduce the Mat, Topic, & Top Scale. Tell them why the mat is being done
- •Reinforce that there are no right/wrong answers. This is not a test

Introduce options

- •Introduce each option the same way each time
- •Use an open question (e.g., "how do you feel about xxx?")
- •Encourage the individual to place the options under the most appropriate top scale

Add extra

- •Use comments the individual makes throughout the mat session to add items not prepared ahead of time
- •If a new option is identified, present it in the same way as others (do not assume you know how they feel about it)

Finish

- •Starting with the negative side, go through the options: "You've told me..."
- Provide an opportunity to change anything
- Take a photo with permission from the individual



**Get consent** before using a student's aided communication system. **Respect** their right to refuse. **Do not assume** that a 'yes' yesterday is a 'yes' today.





## **Reflection Recording Sheet: Talking Mats**

Person completing reflection				Role:							
Date 1 (x):	Date 2 (o):			Date 3 (/):							
Skill	Never		Sometimes		Half the time		Usually		Always		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Introduced the topic and the purpose											
Explained the top scale											
Kept the top scale the same											
Used a consistent, open question for each option											
Kept personal opinions quiet											
Referred to placement on the mat objectively											
Waited in silence to give thinking time											
Reviewed/summarised the mat, negative to positive											
Gave opportunities to move options											
Gave opportunities to add options to the mat											
Ideas on how to improve:											
Two things that went well				Two things to change for next time							