Simple Guide to the TESTED School Dropout Risk Questionnaire

Psychometric perspective

The Assessment Tool: A Quick Overview

The **Psychometric Assessment Tool** was developed in the ***TESTED project*** *(Tackling Drop-Outs Through Systematic Student Screening)*, an initiative funded by the **ERASMUS+ Program** (Agreement number: 2022-1-RO01-KA220-VET-000086834). Its main goal is to **systematically screen** students to identify those at risk of dropping out of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and provide timely, targeted support.

The Dropout Risk Questionnaire is a straightforward, user-friendly tool developed by the TESTED project partners to assess a student's risk of dropping out of school.

- **Goal:** To quickly and accurately pinpoint the specific factors driving a student's potential decision to leave school early.
- **For Whom:** It is intended for students in VET to help educators, counselors, and support staff understand their needs.
- **Format:** It consists of **44 statements** where students rate their level of agreement on a 5-point scale (from 1 = Totally disagree to 5 = Totally agree).
- **User-Friendly:** The tool is designed to be completed easily and quickly, focusing on honesty rather than "right or wrong" answers.
- **Flexible delivery format:** flexible, accessible, and universally applicable —can be used online or printed. This flexibility ensures the results are always equally reliable and comparable.
  https://tested-project.eu/psychometric-questionnaire/

What Does the Tool Measure?

The 44 questions are grouped into five factors (F1-F5) proven to cause school dropout. This scoring allows educators to identify a student's specific risk root cause.

Factor	Description	Key Focus (What it measures)
F1	**Dropout Intent** (Items 1-13)	How often does the student think about quitting school, and their motivation to stay.
F2	**Learning Difficulties & Mismatches** (Items 14-24)	Perceived lack of suitability of the study field, poor grades, and struggles to understand the material.
F3	**Optimal School Environment & Support** (Items 25-33)	Positive factors like support from family/teachers, enjoyment of school, and feeling understood. **(Note: A high score on this factor is good!)**
F4	**Lack of Resources** (Items 34-41)	Negative external pressures like peer/parent discouragement, poor family relationships, and financial difficulties.
F5	**School/Field Change** (Items 42-44)	The desire or intention to switch to a different school or field of study.

How Are the Results Used?

The scores for each factor are categorized into five levels: **Very Low, Low, Medium, High, and Very High** risk. This provides a clear **profile** for every student.

Example of a Student Profile:

A student with a **Very High** score on **F4: Lack of Resources** and a **Low** score on **F3: Optimal School Environment** shows that their risk is primarily driven by external pressures and a lack of support.

Actionable Insights:

- **Instead of general advice,** the tool points to a specific area that needs intervention.
- **For high F4 (Lack of Resources):** The focus should be on connecting the student with financial aid or social support services.
- **For high F2 (Learning Difficulties):** The focus should be on tutoring, academic counseling, or skills development.
- **For high F5 (Change Intent):** The focus should be on career guidance and discussing alternative, more suitable educational pathways.

The **TESTED Assessment Tool** moves beyond simply identifying "at-risk" students; it helps practitioners understand **WHY** a student is at risk, enabling them to implement the most effective and personalized intervention.

The school dropout psychometric questionnaire

Age: ....

Gender:
a) male
b) female
c) non-binary

Nationality: ....

Family type:
a. Family with 2 parents
b. Family with one parent
c. Parents/one parent living/working abroad
d. I have my own family

If option **d** is checked, additional questions appear (in the online version):
a) marital status: married/not married
b) number of persons as dependents.....
c) number of children......

Please rate various statements on a scale of 1 to 5, where:

1 = Totally disagree
2 = Disagreement
3 = Neither agree nor disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Totally agree

Read each statement carefully.
Think about how much you agree or disagree with the statement.
Choose the number that best matches your opinion.
There are no right or wrong answers, so be honest and offer your own opinions.
Don't overthink the answers. Choose the first answer that comes to mind.
Do not leave any statement blank.
If you are not sure of your answer, choose the option that best fits you.

	Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below by choosing the option that best corresponds to you:	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Totally agree
1	My motivation to attend/finish this school is very low.					
2	I often think about dropping out of school.					
3	I thought about dropping out of school many times.					
4	Different thoughts go through my head about what I could do instead of studying.					
5	I'm thinking of dropping out of school.					
6	I can't shake the feeling that I should give up my studies.					
7	I have thought many times about dropping out of school and looking to earn money.					
8	I'm thinking of dropping out of school because I need money.					
9	Considering the difficulties regarding my studies, I am thinking of abandoning them.					
10	If I could find a job now, I would drop out of school.					
11	I would give up this school anytime if I could find something better.					
12	I'm thinking of dropping out of school and getting a job so I can move away from home and have a place of my own.					
13	Given the difficulties in balancing my professional or personal life with my studies, I am thinking of dropping out.					

	Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below by choosing the option that best corresponds to you:	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Totally agree
14	My schoolmates don't help me finish school at all.					
15	I realize that what I study in school does not suit me.					
16	I don't feel fit to study.					
17	I realized/ I realize that I don't like studying/ what I learn at school.					

18	What I learn in school won't help me later in life anyway.					
19	I doubt this is the right school for me.					
20	My school results in the first semester were very poor.					
21	I'm having a hard time at school.					
22	I don't understand anything they teach me at school.					
23	I don't see why I would bother to understand what I am being taught in school.					
24	I often feel overwhelmed by schoolwork.					

	Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below by choosing the option that best corresponds to you:	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Totally agree
25	There is at least one family member who is supporting me to finish school.					
26	There is at least one professor who insisted that I finish school.					
27	There is at least one close teacher who understands me when I have problems.					
28	There is at least one teacher who helps me when I have problems at school.					
29	I used to discuss with my family members about the importance of my education.					
30	I like what I learn practically at school.					
31	The decision to choose this school was mine.					
32	I like going to school every day.					
33	I like what I learn at school.					

	Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below by choosing the option that best corresponds to you:	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Totally agree
34	My parents tell me to quit school and get a job, earn money					
35	No one in my family helps me when I have problems at school					

36	My friends tell me that there is no point in going to school anymore					
37	People around me tell me that I'm old enough to get a job and drop out of school					
38	I don't often interact with friends or classmates outside of school hours					
39	I get along very badly with my parents at home					
40	I have nowhere to get money to go to school					
41	I don't have money for everything I need at school					

	Indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statements below by choosing the option that best corresponds to you:	1 Totally disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Totally agree
42	I have considered changing my school or field of study					
43	I don't care much about the major I'm taking at school					
44	I think I might decide to change schools					

Interpretation of the total factor scores of the school dropout questionnaire:

The questionnaire refers to 5 risk factors:
F1: dropout intent, which contains the items 1-13.
F2: learning difficulties and the perception of mismatches, which contains items 14-24.
F3: school climate and optimal support, which contains items 25-33.
F4: lack of resources, which contains items 34 -41.
F5: the intention/tendency to change the field/school, which contains the items 42-44.

The total score for each factor is obtained by adding the items corresponding to each factor.
Furthermore, each total score can be interpreted according to the table below.

	Very low level	Low level	Medium level	High level	Very high level
F1-Dropout intent	13	14	15-22	*23-41*	**42 – maximum**
F2-Learning difficulties	minimum – 12	13-15	16-27	*28-37*	**38 – maximum**
F3-Optimal school environment	**minimum – 19**	*20 – 33*	34 – 40	41 – 44	45 – maximum
F4-Lack of resources	minimum – 8	9	10 – 14	*15 – 21*	**22 – maximum**
F5-School field change	minimum – 3	3	4 – 7	*8 – 11*	**12 – maximum**

Examples from the sample – profiles on high risk of dropping out of school

Student A

	Very low level	Low level	Medium level	High level	Very high level
Dropout intent					X
Learning difficulties			X		
Optimal school environment		X			
Lack of resources					X
School field change				X	

Student A has a very high risk of dropping out, determined in particular by a high lack of resources, but also a low school climate, and a high tendency to change fields. To reduce the risk of dropping out, it is recommended to pay close attention to the student's lack of resources, to remedy them, followed by an increase in the level of the school climate.

Student B

	Very low level	Low level	Medium level	High level	Very high level
Dropout intent					X
Learning difficulties					X
Optimal school environment		X			
Lack of resources				X	
School field change				X	

Student B has a very high risk of dropping out, determined in particular by very high learning difficulties, but also a low school climate and a high tendency to change fields. To reduce the risk of dropping out, it is recommended to pay a lot of attention to the student's learning difficulties, to remedy them, followed by an increase in the level of the school climate.

Student C

	Very low level	Low level	Medium level	High level	Very high level
Dropout intent					X
Learning difficulties			X		
Optimal school environment			X		
Lack of resources	X				
School field change				X	

Student C has a very high risk of dropping out, determined by the need to change the field. Although it is very well-resourced, it has average learning difficulties and an average school climate. To reduce dropout, work could be done on developing the school climate and reducing learning difficulties, but the student must be advised in particular regarding the unsuitability of the field of study; we believe that suggesting another, more appropriate study route could have a much better effect on reducing school dropout