

# Comparison Tool



The Alliance of Career Resource Professionals (ACRP) develops and promotes rigorous industry standards for career information products and services. These standards inform the development of products and services that meet the highest levels of quality and ethical practice.

ACRP developed this tool to help busy career development professionals compare career products and services before purchase. The tool's writable electronic format enables the user to compare products by applying ACRP standards constructs to key components of career information products and services. ACRP's intent is to assist counselors, administrators and others tasked with comparing systems that are often complex and organized in different ways.

The comparison tool focuses on the content and processes of the product or system. Other important considerations in selecting a career information product or service include:

- \* Availability and extensiveness of user training and support
- \* Cost
- \* The commitment of the provider to ACRP standards
- \* Opt-out provisions

ACRP is committed to high-quality career information resources that people can trust. We believe that optimal career development requires these resources to be readily available, easy to use, and based upon accurate information and valid processes for presenting the information. ACRP believes that it is critical that individuals have a source of understandable and relevant information they can use in career planning and decision-making. ACRP Standards reflect the highest level of quality in the field of career development.


For our members, adopting ACRP Standards is voluntary. ACRP does not certify or audit compliance with the standards. Compliance means that developers, managers and distributors of career information products and services must complete a rigorous quality-assessment for their product and publicly declare that it meets these standards. These products may then signify their compliance with ACRP Standards by posting the ACRP logo (above) with the tagline, "ACRP Standards-Compliant."

The complete text of ACRP Standards, instructions for administration, and glossary of terms is posted on the ACRP website at: <http://www.acrpro.org/aws/ACRP/pt/sp/standards>.


## Instructions for Completing the Career Information and Service Comparison Tool



The next six pages contain the product comparison tool, which provides you the opportunity to evaluate and rate the importance you attribute to ACRP Content, Process, and Assessment Standards on a scale of 1-5 (Weighted Importance). Rate each factor according to the importance you attribute to that factor, then rate the degree to which each product you are considering meets the standard on a scale of 1-10 (Match Score). The form will automatically multiply the product of your two values to obtain your Total Score for each factor. After scoring each standard area, the form automatically tabulates your weighted totals for the three sets of standards to provide your overall weighted rating for each product evaluated. The three sets of standards are color-coded and labeled on the table that follows. If you need or wish to save this form, click **Save** or **Save as** from the **File** pulldown menu at the top of the page and save the form. You can return and edit it later.



Section 1: CONTENT FACTORS TO CONSIDER:	Weighted Importance 1-5	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES
		Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
School inclusion policy is available								
Consistent presentation								
Time period specified for education information								
<b>Financial aid information</b> includes sources of college student financial aid, procedures for applying for aid, and the criteria for awarding such aid. Financial aid awards include grants, scholarships, loans, and employment. Currency is of the utmost importance in presenting financial aid information.								
Includes relevant factors for awards & indicates financial need								
Award inclusion policy is available								
Indicates number of awards & applicants								
Specifies deadlines and expiration of information								
Information reviewed annually								
Privacy policy available when end users linked to relevant awards								
Only relevant & necessary data collected for award matching								
Personal data released only with informed consent								
Consistent presentation								
<b>Job search information</b> includes information about what employers seek in prospective employees, job vacancy listings, techniques for obtaining employment, and methods of documenting preparation, experience, and references.								
Age and experience appropriate								
Associated costs clearly specified								
Defined methods for updating time-sensitive information in place								
<b>Localization</b> Comprehensive systems provide mechanisms that localize key information or present information in a localized context. Localized information may be included as part of a product or may be a feature that permits product users to add localized information.								
Labor market information made available at state and sub-state level								
Education and training information made available at state and sub-state level								
Information of interest to users								
<b>TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT</b> 		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		



Section 2: PROCESS FACTORS TO CONSIDER:	Weighted Importance 1-5	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES	
		Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)		
Processing based on client data is explained to user									
Client records and use are secure and confidential									
Provision for erasing data after client use ceased									
Data used for research excludes personal data									
Career planning & management tools indicate who has access									
Users may save, store, or print information, as well as delete.									
<b>Support and Services:</b> Entities should provide support, technical assistance, and a method of communicating with users to ensure that the needs and concerns of those using the component(s) are being met. Some examples of support methods include documentation, help files, e-mail, toll-free numbers, letters, and on-site support visits.									
Documentation available for all major components									
Documentation includes details									
Instructions and/or on-line help available for components									
Available assistance for information provided									
Available assistance for component operation									
Available assistance for users with disabilities									
Available information about organizational services & mission									
Technical assistance available and easily found									
Staff available to address end user and practitioner questions									
<b>TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT</b> 		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:			

Section 3: ASSESSMENT FACTORS TO CONSIDER:	Weighted Importance 1-5	Product:		Product:		Product:		NOTES
		Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	Match Score 1-10	Total Score (Weighted X Match Score)	
<p><b>Assessments</b> provide measures of personal attributes, traits, interests, and other factors that relate to career decision-making. Whether formal or informal in nature, assessments should be accompanied by clear instructions, statements of appropriate use, necessary proscriptions, and disclosures of limitations. Technical information allowing judgment of the quality of the assessment should be available.</p>								
Need for trained professional indicated								
Technical information that permits judgment of the quality of the assessment is available								
Clear instructions guide appropriate use								
Provides proscriptions, as necessary, and disclosure of limitations								
<b>TOTALS FOR EACH PRODUCT</b> 		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		
<b>CUMULATIVE TOTALS OF ALL 3 SECTIONS FOR EACH PRODUCT</b> 		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		TOTAL:		