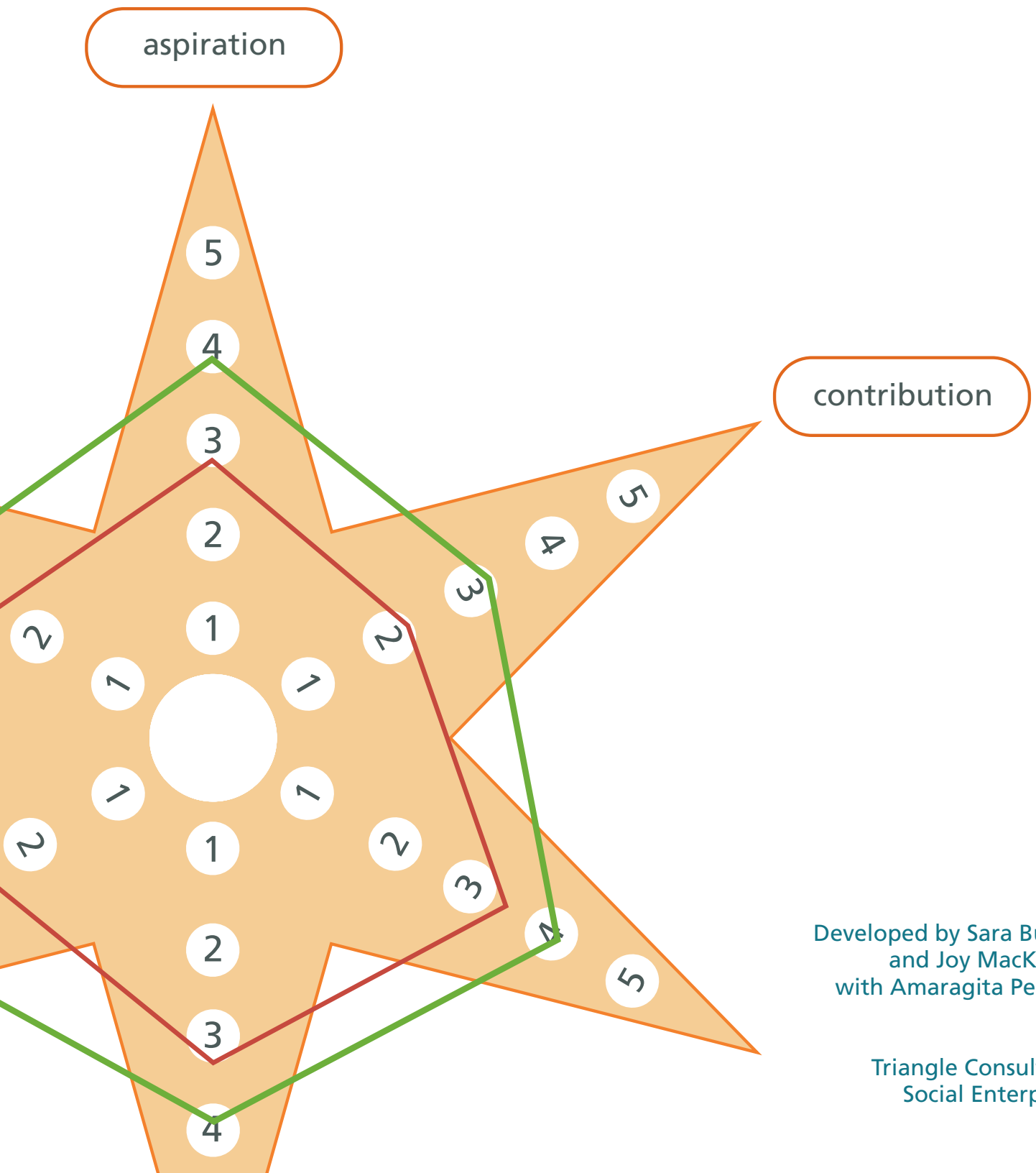




Shooting Star™

The Outcomes Star for success in life



Developed by Sara Burns
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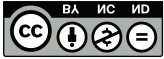
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The Outcomes Star™

The Shooting Star is part of a family of Outcomes Star tools. Each tool includes a Start Chart, scales and guidance on implementation and some have visual and other resources. For other versions of the Outcomes Star, good practice and further information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk. To find out about using this Star as an online tool, visit www.staronline.org.uk. To enquire about training please email training@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

Triangle Consulting was originally commissioned to work on an outcome measurement system by St Mungo's, with financial support from the London Housing Foundation, and recognises St Mungo's vital role in the development of the Outcomes Star.

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Contents

Introduction	4
Introduction to the Shooting Star	4
Shooting Star resources	6
Theoretical foundations	7
Values and assumptions underpinning the Shooting Star	9
How the Shooting Star was developed	9
The pilot process and findings	11
Part 1: Implementing the Shooting Star™ in your School or Community Project	14
1 Review your reasons for introducing the Star	15
2 Check that the Star is suitable for you	15
3 Try it out	15
4 Integrate the Star into your ways of working, paperwork and IT	15
5 Train staff to use the Star	16
6 Ensure quality and consistency in the use of the Star	16
7 Analyse and interpret the data	17
8 Share and act on the learning	19
Part 2: Guidance for Workers: the Shooting Star™ as an integral part of work with students and other people	20
1 Before you use the Shooting Star	20
2 How to introduce the Shooting Star to students	21
3 Completing the Shooting Star with a student	21
4 Use the completed Star Chart to agree actions and next steps	23
5 Revisiting the Star	25
6 Frequently asked questions	25

Introduction

Introduction to the Shooting Star™

The Shooting Star is a version of the Outcomes Star, a family of tools for supporting and measuring change when working with students and other people.

The Star is an outcomes tool that enables organisations to measure and summarise change made by a range of people with different needs. It is also a coaching tool that can help people make changes by providing them with a clear picture of the journey to success, enabling them to take manageable steps and plot their progress along the way.

The original version of the Outcomes Star was developed for the homelessness sector and tailored versions are now available for a wide range of client groups including people with a mental health condition, people receiving support to find work and vulnerable families. These can all be viewed and downloaded at www.outcomesstar.org.uk.

The Shooting Star has been developed for use with secondary school students to facilitate a focus on holistic achievement primarily, though it can also be used in work with adults in community projects¹.

It covers six key areas:

1. Aspiration
2. Contribution
3. Confidence
4. Learning
5. People and support
6. Communicating

For each of these core areas, there is a five-point scale that measures where someone is on their journey in that area. These five points are based on an underlying model of change: an understanding of the journey students and other people go on in order to succeed in life. We call this model the Journey of Change:

Stage 1 – not interested

At the beginning of the journey (stage 1) the person is not interested. They see no point in getting involved or making an effort. They probably don't believe that they could get anywhere or achieve something with their life and/or feel there are no opportunities for them locally. It may seem like the person is not open or willing to try but they can get to the next step by reducing their resistance and beginning to consider getting involved.

Stage 2 – considering it

The next stage (stage 2) is when the person starts considering it; they sometimes think about getting involved or trying something new and may observe from the sidelines. They feel it is too hard; they don't know what to do; they lack confidence or are not sure it's for them, but there is an opening to encourage them to have a go.

¹The Community Star may be more suitable for community projects working with adults and the Youth Star for community projects working with young people. However, schools engaging adults in their local community and wanting to use the same tool across all their work are encouraged to use the Shooting Star.

Stage 3 – having a go

The next step (stage 3) is having a go. At this stage they will get involved and may have some confidence that they could achieve something if they tried. They tend to give up when things don't go well or feel difficult so their involvement may be erratic, or they may try several different things without sticking to them.

Stage 4 – working on it

Next they start working on it (stage 4). Some things are going well and they are taking responsibility, but they don't always believe in a positive future for themselves or can't overcome problems, so they are not very resilient and may stop when things get difficult or need support to find a positive way forward.

Stage 5 – actively enjoying it

The end point of the Journey of Change (stage 5) is when the person is actively enjoying what they are doing. They are engaged, enthusiastic and determined, and even when things go wrong they know they can find a way through – alone or with others. This is not the end of their journey to success and they have the rest of their life ahead of them but they are on track, feel positive about their future and feel supported and connected. They may also encourage others.

We found it really useful as a pastoral tool. It takes into account all the things we know go on.

Teacher and mentor, DACA

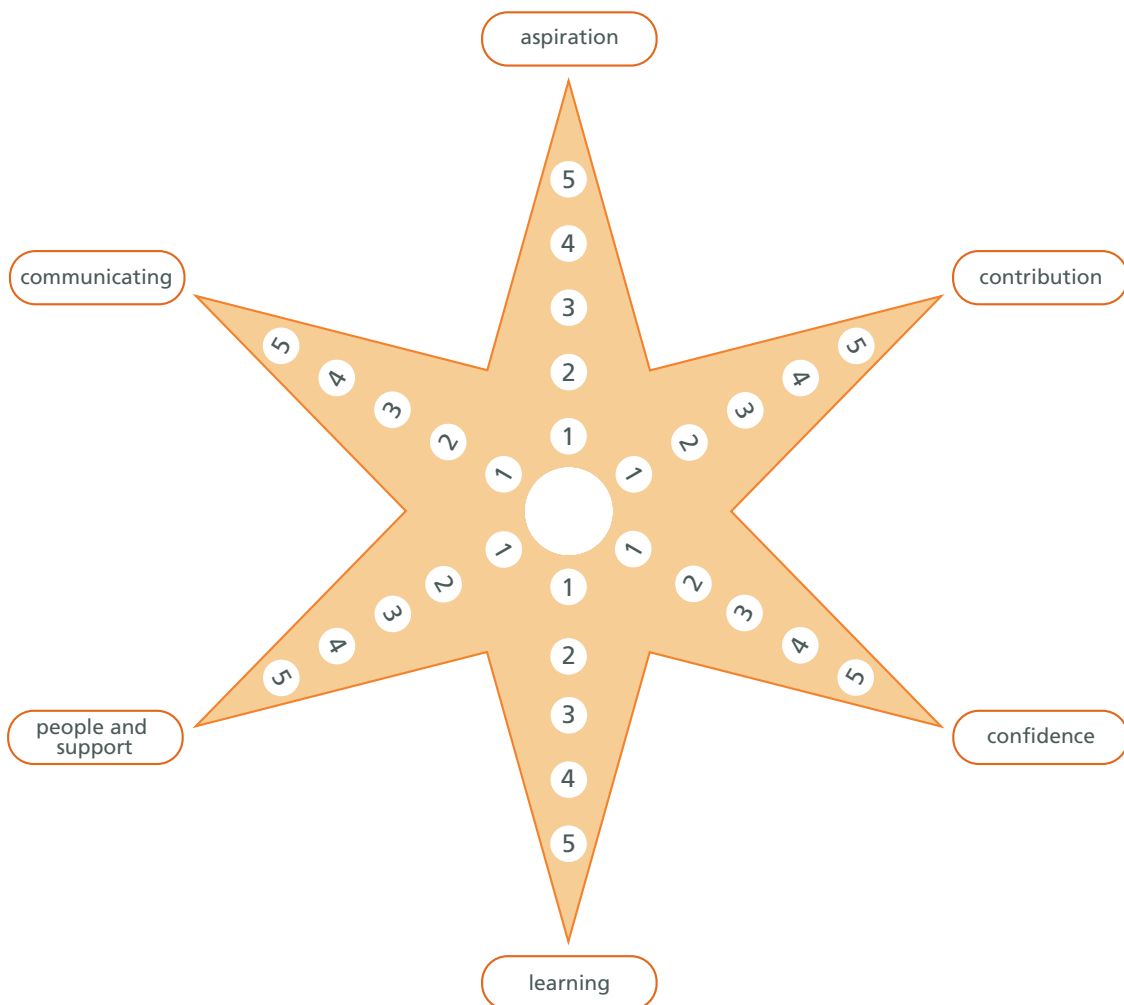


Figure 1: The Shooting Star

Shooting Star™ resources

There is a range of resources available to help schools and community projects use the Shooting Star effectively.

Shooting Star™ Chart and Action Plan

The Star Chart and Action Plan is a three-page document including the Star Chart, on which scores are marked, space for notes and a simple action plan for students. It is completed with students when using the Shooting Star as a paper-based system.

Shooting Star™ Quiz

The Shooting Star Quiz provides concise, user-friendly scales in an accessible quiz format. The quiz will usually be the main resource for students choosing where they are on their journey.

Illustrated Journey of Change

This is an optional, one-page resource summarising the five stages on the Journey of Change using the visual imagery of the Star. It is recommended as an additional resource for all students and can be used instead of the quiz with students who have difficulty with or resistance to reading the quiz.

The Shooting Star™ Online

This is an intuitive, online version of the Shooting Star. It has a feature that allows users to complete the Star Chart with students on screen. It incorporates the scales from the quiz and guidance for workers and students. Alternatively, the Star Online can be used in conjunction with paper versions of the Star. Workers and students can complete the Star on paper and then input the scores on the Star Online later.

The Star Online web application is secure and provides a wide range of features allowing organisations to analyse and report on the outcomes data that workers and managers have added to the system and to benchmark their outcomes against averages for similar services and client groups. The Star Online is available to organisations using the Shooting Star for an annual licence fee, based on the number of workers using the Star.

For more information, or to sign up to the Shooting Star Online, go to www.staronline.org.uk.

This Organisation Guide

The remainder of the introduction to this guide presents the theoretical foundations and development process of the Shooting Star. The following two parts are intended to support the implementation and use of the Shooting Star. Part one is for those in a management role and provides guidance and good practice examples in implementing the Shooting Star across a school or community project. Part two presents guidance for teachers, mentors or other relevant workers in using the Shooting Star with students or other people.

Outcomes Star™ website

The Outcomes Star website – www.outcomesstar.org.uk – contains all versions of the Stars along with supporting information. Specific areas covered by the website include:

- How the Star was developed
- Research and validation material about the Star
- What students and other people say about using the Star
- Good practice on implementation
- Use of Outcomes Star data for outcome measurement
- Use of the Star as a keywork tool
- Information for commissioners on using the Star.

Training

Training is extremely valuable before using the Shooting Star. Triangle Consulting provides in-house training and runs a licensed trainer scheme for those wanting to cascade training within their school. For further details, see www.outcomesstar.org.uk/outcomes-star-training or email training@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

Theoretical foundations

Values and assumptions underpinning the Outcomes Star™

New approach

The approach underpinning the Outcomes Star family of tools is, we believe, an original approach to assessment and outcomes measurement. The Star approach can be described as Participatory Assessment and Measurement (PAM) because it draws on and extends Action Research and Participatory Action Research (PAR), both of which place empowerment, collaboration and integration at the core of research methods². In the same way, the Outcomes Star seeks to empower students and other people within a collaborative process of assessment and measurement that is integrated with support work, rather than a separate activity.

Empowerment

Underpinning the Outcomes Star is an understanding that, in order for change to take place in people's lives, schools and other service providers need to help students and other people to understand the motivation, beliefs and skills that are needed for them to create that change for themselves.

While practical changes in a person's circumstances, like a work experience placement, may be important, these things do not bring about lasting change. It is the change that takes place within the individual that is the key active ingredient in achieving a more permanent, self-sustained independence and happiness. This is why the primary focus in most versions of the Outcomes Star, including the Shooting Star, is the relationship of the individual to the challenges that they face.

² O'Brien, R. (2001) "An Overview of the Methodological Approach of Action Research" in Roberto Richardson (ed.) *Theory and Practice of Action Research*, Joao Pessoa, Brazil: Universidade Federal da Paraiba (English version)

This contrasts with other assessment and outcomes measurement tools that focus on the severity of a defined problem, such as the number of units of alcohol consumed in the case of substance misuse, or on external circumstances, such as examination results or getting a job. The Outcomes Star approach assumes that these things are important and should be measured but that the picture they give on their own is limited.

Those using the Outcomes Star report that it provides a much more empowering context for their work where students and other people are able to be active participants in the process rather than having assessment done to them. Being involved in their own process of change – and in the validation of their experience and perceptions – is often critical to helping them make the changes they seek³. Even for those not able to participate actively, because they are too young or have other needs, the Shooting Star is compatible with person-centred planning.

Collaboration

When using the Outcomes Star, the worker⁴ and student⁵ assess the student's needs together. Students base their assessment on their knowledge and understanding of themselves and workers utilise their experience of working with other students generally and their observations and reflections on this student's behaviour in particular. The intention is that the assessment emerges through a dialogue between student and worker and this may include both students and workers shifting their views. Thus the Shooting Star is neither a student self-completion tool nor a worker-only completion tool.

The Outcomes Star makes the model of change explicit and the information that is collected (the scores) are immediately presented back to the student, in the form of a completed Star. This makes it possible for the student and worker to take an overview together and to reflect on the completed Star as a basis for deciding what action to take.

This contrasts with extractive approaches to assessment and measurement in which the worker, in the role of expert, collects data from the student and takes that data away to make an assessment on their own. The expert may then decide what course of action is most appropriate and try to persuade the student that this is the best way forward for them.

Integration

The process of completing the Outcomes Star is an integral aspect of the worker (or team) working with the student, and it is intended to support, as well as measure, change. The process of completing the Star, engaging with the model of change and reflecting on the data as presented on the Star can result in a change of attitude within the student in and of itself. It can have a similar impact on the staff working with the person. As a result, the assessment is a part of the intervention. In addition, discussions about where a student is on the Outcomes Star scales and Journey of Change naturally leads to thinking about next steps and action planning. This is why it is recommended that the Outcomes Star is used as an integral part of coaching, mentoring or other support techniques.

This contrasts with traditional approaches in which the collection of data is seen as a separate process to the intervention and may be regarded as intrusive by workers and students.

³ Burns, S., MacKeith, J. and Graham, K. (2008) *Using the Outcomes Star: Impact and Good Practice*, London: Homeless Link

⁴ We use the term 'worker' in this document to refer to the teacher, mentor or other school staff using the Shooting Star with a student and also to ensure the terminology is broad enough to accommodate projects run by schools with parents or other adults in their local community.

⁵ We use the term 'student' for brevity throughout this document as the guidance is for workers only, but this should be understood to include both school and sixth form college students and parents or other adults completing the Star in the community, as appropriate.

Values and assumptions underpinning the Shooting Star™

The Shooting Star is underpinned by the assumption that positive growth is both possible and a realistic goal for all and is designed to focus on people's potential not problems. The teachers and students that collaborated in the development of the Shooting Star said that they hoped the Star would:

- Be an **awakener** – encouraging students to recognise and reflect on their strengths, where they are on their journey now and where they want to be in the future
- Be a **relationship builder** – a powerful guide to building trust with a supportive adult, such as a tutor or link teacher, and peers
- Record the journey of **personal development**, encompassing emotional evolution, skill sets and value-driven behaviour
- Be a **confidence builder** – as students see how they change, this can build motivation and confidence
- Help schools and community projects provide **evidence** that students have abilities beyond exam results to employers and further education colleges
- Help make the case to **government** that focusing on students' holistic development contributes to people leaving education better equipped to be successful in their chosen area as well as helping them achieve better academic results.

How the Shooting Star™ was developed

The Shooting Star was developed in collaboration with the Aldridge Foundation, whose work has an explicit focus on enabling and encouraging students to develop entrepreneurial attributes, and Learning to Lead CIC, an initiative to enhance student engagement in schools. It was developed with teachers and students at the Darwen Aldridge Community Academy (DACA) and was piloted in the Brighton Aldridge Community Academy (BACA) with additional material, input and feedback from Learning to Lead and from the Darwen Creates community project.

Like other versions of the Outcomes Star, the methodology was based on Action Research⁶ and the Existential Phenomenological (PE) research method⁷. Action Research is a collaborative process of identifying issues, trying out solutions and assessing what works. This phenomenological method places a strong emphasis on understanding the subjective experience of the person being researched and the meaning of the experience for them.

The Shooting Star development process consisted of three main stages, and these are described below.

1) Data gathering

An initial one-day workshop was held in July 2011 with a working group comprising managers and teachers from DACA, plus representatives from the Aldridge Foundation and BACA. A group of students – four girls and four boys from years 8 and 9 – actively participated in the morning sessions.

⁶ O'Brien, R. (2001) "An Overview of the Methodological Approach of Action Research" in Roberto Richardson (ed.) *Theory and Practice of Action Research*, Joao Pessoa, Brazil: Universidade Federal da Paraiba (English)

⁷ McCall, R. (1983), "Phenomenological Psychology", Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin'

The workshop explored the following key questions that are common to all versions of the Outcomes Star:

- What are the main areas in which the school and community projects are seeking to create change?
These areas become the points of the Star
- What is the desired end point of the change process? *This becomes the end point on the model of change that underpins all the scales*
- What model of change describes the steps that students take on the journey towards that end point?
This is described in a series of steps showing a clearly discernible, qualitative difference between each step of the journey.

A range of techniques were used to draw out participants' experience and knowledge including:

- Using the Outcome Triangle tool to identify the overall aim of services, the specific changes they are trying to bring about and the activities they carry out to achieve these changes
- Bringing to mind an individual student who has undergone a substantial change and identifying the key areas of change for that person. Students were also asked to do this exercise, thinking about themselves over the past year and the changes they had made
- Structured questioning exercises to draw out the steps, one by one, in each outcome area. The focus with this session is on concreteness, drawing out information about the signs of change in detail.

2) Data analysis and the development of the draft Shooting Star™

Triangle Consulting compiled all the material gathered at the workshop and reviewed it to allow meaning and common strands to emerge. Material used within the participating schools was borne in mind, along with other versions of the Outcomes Star; however, the raw data was allowed to speak for itself rather than organised according to existing models or frameworks. On the basis of this material, a draft version of the Shooting Star was developed.

3) Consultation and piloting

Through an iterative process of sharing, listening, refining and sharing again, the outcome areas, the Journey of Change and descriptions of the steps towards change in each outcome area were honed until they resonated with the students, support workers and managers participating in the development process. This process had four main steps:

- A second workshop in late September 2011. Here, the first draft of the Shooting Star was presented to workshop participants and feedback gathered. In the light of this feedback, improvements were made
- Workers and students tested the pilot Shooting Star during the second half of the 2011 autumn term and the first half of the 2012 spring term, gathering feedback questionnaires and Star data for analysis by Triangle
- A final workshop in March 2012 where the results of the pilot were reviewed and participants shared their experiences of using the Star with students and adults in the community and the value and meaning of the data generated
- Further revisions were subsequently made to the Shooting Star and the final stage involved editing and design to further ensure the tool is clear, accessible and user-friendly in advance of the first edition being published.

The pilot process and findings

The Shooting Star was tested in a wide range of contexts and using a range of approaches, including the following:

- A sample of year 11 students used the Star in one-to-one sessions with their mentors
- Year 7 students used the Star in a group setting and years 8 and 10 used it during business studies classes, also as a group
- A sample of year 8 and 9 students used the Star in one-to-one sessions with their tutors
- A sixth-form tutor completed the Star with a group, and a sample of sixth formers completed it in one-to-one sessions with their mentors
- A small sample of adults at the Darwen Creates community project completed the tool in one-to-one sessions with the DACA member of staff running the project.

The pilot Shooting Star was used with well over 100 students and 94 students completed two readings – one in the second half of the autumn term and the second in the first half of the spring term. Star data for the 94 students was analysed using a simple spreadsheet.

Highlights from the pilot

Of the total of 94 students who completed two Shooting Stars during the pilot period:

- 54 students (57%) showed an increase in their overall score on the Star, of which nine showed a substantial change (over one-point shift on the scale of 1–5)
- 37 (39%) of students showed no change in their overall score and three showed a reduced score
- The overall mean score increased from 3.76 to 4.08 during the pilot period
- The average start and review positions on the different scales on the Star were very consistent between the six Star areas; the initial scores were 3.7–3.9 on average and in the average second reading were all between 4.0 and 4.2
- Within this, the greatest changes were in Aspiration, Contribution and People and Support, all with an average increase of 0.5 out of a maximum of four points that could be increased (a 12.5% increase)
- The least change was recorded in relation to Learning, with 39% of students showing an improvement and an average increase of 0.3 on the scale.

Feedback from students and workers on the pilot Star

Analysis of the 101 feedback forms completed by students showed that around two-thirds found the Star helpful. Students agreed with the statements below in the following percentages:

- 66% – My Star helps me see my strengths and what needs to change
- 41% – It helped me see what I need to do next
- 38% – I enjoyed completing my Shooting Star
- 32% – I will like seeing how I progress on my Star
- 22% – There was no point doing the Star
- 21% – It took too long

Analysis of feedback forms from 14 tutors and mentors showed that when asked whether completing the Shooting Star helped them and students have a useful discussion:

- 45% said: "Yes, often"
- 55% said: "Yes, a bit"

In addition, tutors and mentors were asked to agree or disagree with five statements about the process of using the Shooting Star with students. Their responses are summarised in the table below.

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Using the Star helped me to get an overall picture of my students' strengths and needs	92%	0	8%
Using the Star helped students to see where they needed to focus and make progress	92%	8%	0%
The quiz helped me to understand where to focus next with students	85%	7%	8%
I found it encouraging to see the progress that students had made between Star readings	70%	14%	16%
I found the process of completing the Star with students too long	8%	15%	77%

The quality of conversation as a result of the process is most valuable.

Sixth form tutor, DACA

My relationship with my mentee has definitely developed as a result of doing the Star

Teacher, DACA

Key points that were fed back at the end-of-pilot workshop about the experience of tutors and mentors using the tool:

- The Shooting Star is an excellent mentoring and pastoral tool
- The areas that the Shooting Star covers are exactly the areas on which schools should be focusing attention, helping balance a more narrow focus on exam results
- It works best within a one-to-one interaction as it supports quality conversations
- It takes time to complete a Star reading and it is difficult to find the one-to-one time
- A group setting is useful for explaining and unpacking the underlying concepts of the Star and the Journey of Change. However, during the pilot, workers concluded that students were more thoughtful when they completed the Star in one-to-one sessions than when completing it in a group setting
- Even when the Star is not completed in the best context it still gives rise to better action plans.

General conclusions about the pilot were:

- The focus of the Shooting Star is appropriate
- Tutors and mentors like the Star very much and find it helps students to take a more active part in discussions about their progress and in action planning
- The majority of students found the Shooting Star helpful but most did not say they liked completing it. Overall, those completing it in one-to-one sessions with a tutor or mentor appreciated the process more while those completing it in a class or other group context were less engaged with it
- The Shooting Star shows change for some students, even during the relatively short pilot period, but is probably most useful when completed once in an academic year to allow more change to take place.

Part 1: Implementing the Shooting Star™ in Your School or Community Project

Implementing the Shooting Star can affect an organisation's approach in a number of ways, for instance, it can help:

- Move towards more holistic outcomes for students and away from a narrow focus on academic achievement and exam results. This can place greater emphasis on the skills and attributes people need to be successful in their lives in whatever way is right for them
- Provide a shared language for the aims underlying a holistic approach, clarifying the skills, attributes and support needed and the steps along the way
- Help to change the culture of a school from one in which students are passive recipients of learning and support to one that empowers students to take control of their own development
- Highlight the value of one-to-one time spent with students discussing their strengths and needs, and developing goals
- Highlight the difficulty of finding one-to-one time with students and add to the pressure on the number of things that need to be done in the time that is available
- Demonstrate effectiveness and highlight the areas where improvement is needed and with which workers and managers need to engage.

Implementing the Star effectively, and achieving the full benefits of using it, takes time, continuous attention, and a commitment to follow the process through and address issues as they arise. For these reasons, we strongly recommend that the implementation of the Shooting Star is led from the top. Only in this way will the Star receive the profile and backing it requires for developments to be co-ordinated across a school. We also recommend nominating a Star champion and possibly also setting up an implementation group to oversee the introduction of the Star.

The rest of this section covers a checklist of eight steps to introducing the Star. Many organisations find it helpful to have support with the implementation process. Triangle can help with specific aspects of this process and provide background support or mentoring to those leading the implementation. We also provide implementation packages that include Outcomes Star training and a licence to use the Star Online web application.

My advice is to see the implementation of the Outcomes Star as a change management process. It is vital to communicate to keyworkers how it will help them to do their job and that it will help the organisation as a whole to make its case to the outside world. It is also vital to integrate the Star fully into keywork processes and training.

Manager at St Mungo's

(Refers to the Outcomes Star for Homelessness)

1 Review your reasons for introducing the Star

Increasingly schools, like organisations in other sectors, are under pressure to provide evidence externally of the difference they are making to their students. The Star can help schools capture and demonstrate achievements. However, it works best when there is also a focus on the benefits of the Star as a mentoring or coaching tool to support students.

2 Check that the Star is suitable for you

The Star is primarily designed to be used in one-to-one sessions, preferably by a student with a tutor, teacher or mentor, though it could be used within a peer support context. It can be used in a class or group setting and does not need to be completed more than once in an academic year (and not necessarily by every year group) but is unlikely to be the right tool for schools where there is no one-to-one goal setting, planning or pastoral time.

3 Try it out

It is quite likely that at least some workers will be concerned about or resistant to the introduction of the Shooting Star, with valid concerns about finding the time or introducing an additional tool or measurement. This was certainly the case at the start of the Shooting Star pilot, and research on the implementation of the Outcomes Star in 2008 found that there was resistance from workers within over half of the 25 organisations interviewed. However, in both the Shooting Star pilot and nearly all cases researched this was quickly overcome.

Encourage some workers to try the Star with a number of students to test how it works in practice, explore practical issues and gather feedback from students. This enables the service to address any problems before it is rolled out and, where it goes well, to demonstrate to others that it is a positive, helpful and usable tool. This is particularly effective if workers are given the freedom to test it in different ways with a range of students and when there is time to allow students and workers to experience the benefits.

4 Integrate the Star into your ways of working, paperwork and IT

The Star works best as an integral part of work with students and particularly within the pastoral role of a tutor or mentor. It is up to individual schools and projects to set a policy specifying:

- Which students will use the Star – all students, only some specific year groups or just those receiving additional individual support
- When students should complete the Star
- How it dovetails with other processes, avoiding duplication of other paperwork
- How the information will be recorded and summarised.

Workers were unsure at first but my approach was to give the Star to those workers likely to be most open and encourage them to just have a go with it in their own way. Almost immediately, positive feedback from those workers and their service users encouraged others to try it too.

**Manager,
Croftlands Trust**
(Refers to the Outcomes Star for Homelessness)

If there is a pilot or trial period this can help define a positive process. Following the pilot of the Shooting Star, the participating academies decided to introduce the Star in the first term of year 10 and chart progress from there. It is not designed to be used more than once a year as change is likely to be slow but it works best when integrated with the times when students are developing goals or action plans for themselves.

If you operate paper-based files, it is advisable to keep a copy of each Star reading and Star Notes on the student's file. They may also want to have their own copy. The Star is not intended to increase the amount of paperwork that students and workers need to complete. If the Star Action Plan is used, this should be instead of any existing action plans and schools should explore other ways in which the Shooting Star might fully or partially replace existing paperwork.

Stars can be completed with students on paper, using the Star Chart and Action Plan, or online, using the Star Online web application. Where laptops, iPads and other mobile devices are available, many students will find the interactive experience of completing the Star online as engaging as using the paper version and some may find it more stimulating. A notable advantage of online completion is that the data is simultaneously captured, eliminating the need for data entry later, and providing immediate, up-to-date, school-wide reports for analysis. Visit www.staronline.org.uk to sign up for a free trial or contact info@triangleconsulting.co.uk about licensing to integrate the Shooting Star with other IT systems.

5 Train staff to use the Star

Although the Shooting Star and Quiz are intuitive and straightforward to use, we strongly recommend that workers have training; the Star can require a different way of working with students and training substantially increases consistency in the data. Effective use of the Star requires that those using it are skilled in working with students. Introducing the Star may be an opportunity to review the training needs of your staff in this area and address any outstanding concerns. Email training@triangleconsulting.co.uk for details.

6 Ensure quality and consistency in the use of the Star

The data gained from using the Star will only provide an accurate picture of students' progress if those using it have a good understanding of the tool and apply the scales consistently. We recommend that you ensure this happens through:

- **Supervision:** When discussing a tutor group or other student progress, draw on students' completed Stars (all or a sample) to ensure that the Star is being used as planned, and is completed accurately with an understanding of the Journey of Change
- **File auditing:** As part of the normal process of auditing files, managers should ensure that Star records are present, accurate and stored confidentially

It prompted good discussion rather than me doing all the talking.

Tutor, DACA

- **Team meetings:** When discussing students in team meetings, look at their Stars and explore where they are on the Journey of Change. This kind of discussion enables the team to develop a shared understanding of how to use the scales and the Journey of Change.

7 Analyse and interpret the data

Star data can be used for routine monitoring of a school or community project and periodic research into its effectiveness. Collated Star data provides a rich source of information about the needs of students coming to your service and the progress they make. This could highlight areas of success or concern that can be explored further and support benchmarking.

We suggest that for routine monitoring purposes you compare the initial student reading with their most recent reading.

The tables below show **fictional** data on the final, post-pilot version of the Shooting Star over a period of one year for students in a secondary school and are designed to illustrate the formats for reporting and learning from Star data – these are the tables used within Star Online’s reports.

Table 1: Starting points, change and end scores

This table shows the average scores in each of the Star areas:

- At the first reading, averaged across all students
- At the review point a year later
- The amount of change over the year.

Star Area	Start	A year later	Change
Aspiration	2.8	3.9	1.1
Contribution	2.2	3.2	1.0
Confidence	3.4	4.1	0.7
Learning	3.3	3.9	0.6
People and support	2.7	4.0	1.3
Communicating	2.5	3.4	0.9
Average	2.8	3.8	1.0

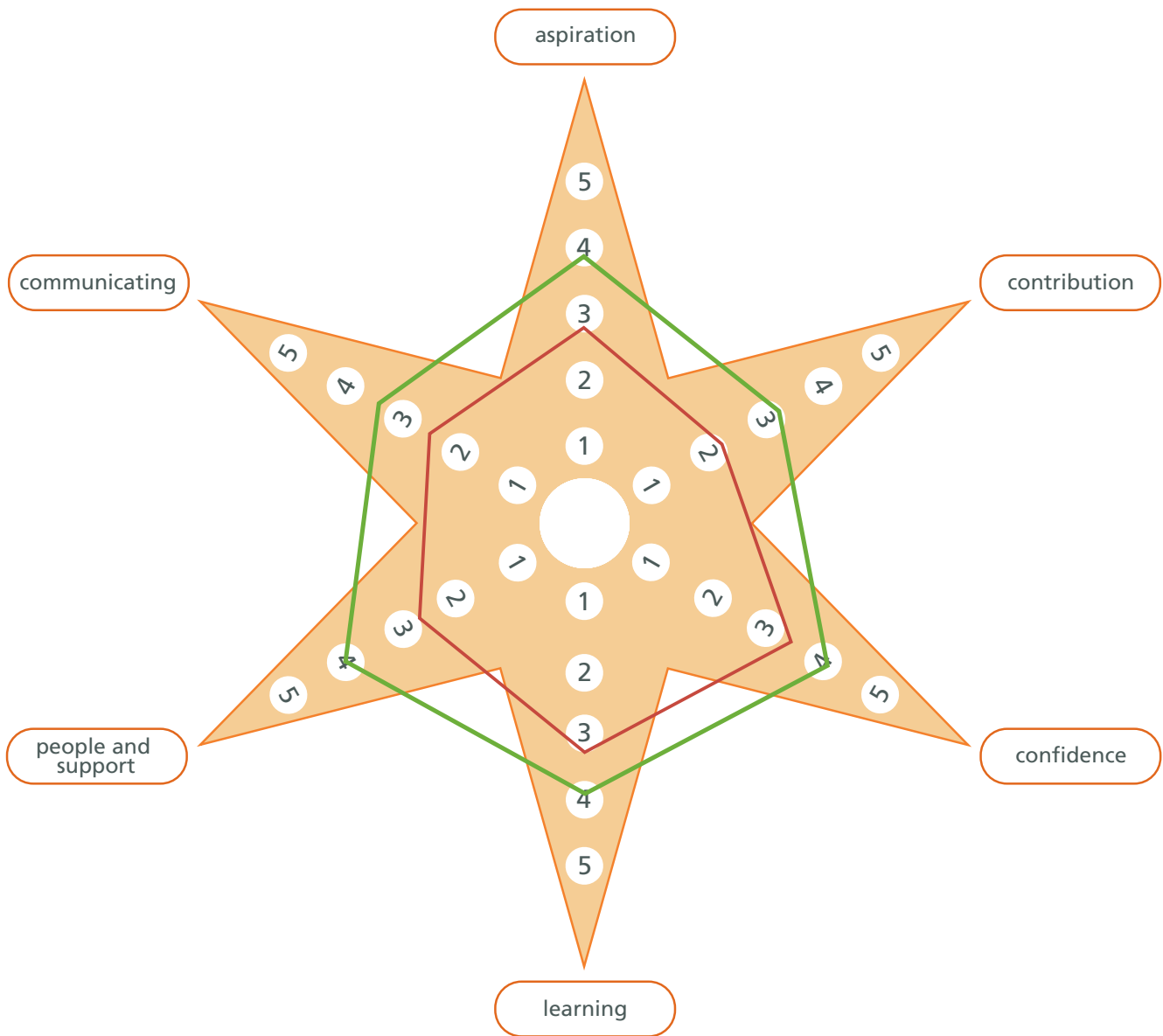


Figure 2: The average across two readings displayed visually on the Star (data taken from Table 1)

Table 2: Percentage of students showing change

This data is for the same students over the same year as Table 1. It shows the proportion of students who made positive progress, stayed the same or dropped back in each of the six star areas.

Star Area	Improvement	The same	Dropped back
Aspiration	64%	43%	3%
Contribution	62%	32%	6%
Confidence	55%	42%	3%
Learning	53%	40%	7%
People and support	57%	36%	6%
Communicating	61%	34%	5%

Table 3: Proportion improving on their overall star

This table shows the number and percentage of students who made a large or moderate improvement in their overall star score or had no significant change

Large increase (>1 on av)	Moderate increase (0.25-1)	No significant change	Decrease in score (>-0.25)
20%	48%	29%	3%

Star data can be used to explore questions such as why one class or type of student (by gender or ethnicity for example) consistently progresses more than another. There are many other ways to analyse the data and it is helpful to develop some hypotheses and then use the Star data to put these theories to the test. However, many factors contribute to progress and it is not possible to reliably attribute success to a particular intervention, and outcomes information from the Star should therefore not be used on its own to judge work as successful or unsuccessful but should be used as a basis for discussion and further exploration.

Benchmarking with similar schools can be useful in identifying areas where you have good practice to share and also areas where you could learn from others. If you are using the Star Online, you will have instant access to an anonymous benchmark of similar schools and students.

Academic researchers are showing increasing interest in the Outcome Star family of tools. Triangle Consulting is supporting a number of research institutions that are looking to publish their findings in academic journals.

If you have an interest in formal research, please email info@triangleconsulting.co.uk.

8 Share and act on the learning

There are a number of different audiences for Star data:

- **Management team** meetings are an important forum for exploring effectiveness and highlighting difficulties. Once the Star is implemented the management team might want to review the data regularly at their meetings
- **Teachers or other workers** – sharing data with workers helps to keep them motivated to collect the information. It also provides a boost to morale if it shows positive change. If the data shows that there are areas for development, change will be easier to implement if workers are aware of the problem themselves
- **Boards of governors** receive regular financial reports but often get only anecdotal information about student progress outside exam results. You might want to present them with Star reports on an annual basis
- **Local authorities** – where they are responsible for the school, Star data can capture and provide evidence of the true nature of what you do. You can draw on Star data when tendering to deliver services, use it as part of your routine reporting or as a one-off exercise to demonstrate the value of your service. It should add to your credibility and show that you are taking the initiative when it comes to measuring your outcomes.

Part 2: Guidance for Workers: The Shooting Star™ as an integral part of work with students and other people

Using the Star is meant to be a helpful process that stimulates and focuses discussion and provides a useful basis for agreeing actions with students. The following guidance is designed to help you use the Shooting Star well so that it is a positive and helpful experience for both you and the student. This guidance is intended to support rather than replace the skills of those working with students. The Shooting Star is a flexible tool that relies on the skills and judgement of the professionals using it and on a degree of understanding and trust between student and worker. The tool should never be used in a way that undermines the effectiveness of your work with students.

The Star is a flexible tool designed to be quick, accessible and engaging to use. It is designed primarily to be used in a one-to-one setting though it can also be completed in a group with support. We are not prescriptive about the setting in which the Star should be completed or how long it should take: the aim is to have a genuine engagement with the student.

How the Shooting Star™ can help

- Increasing student engagement – the Star provides a clear focus for conversation
- Demonstrating and reinforcing progress – seeing the change set out in a visual way can be very encouraging to students and workers
- Helping with goal-setting – the Journey of Change helps to break change down into small, manageable steps
- Creating a more holistic approach – the Star requires conversations about aspects of life beyond academic attainment and can help raise issues that might otherwise get lost
- Making support more systematic and consistent – the Star creates a consistent framework for pastoral work and other support.

1 Before you use the Shooting Star™

- Ensure that all teachers taking part in the pilot (and students, if it will be used with peers) know about the Shooting Star and have had some training. They particularly need:
 - A good understanding of the five stages of the Journey of Change
 - To be familiar with the six areas and Quiz questions, so that they can unpack and rephrase them if the young person is having trouble understanding them
 - To be able to introduce the Star and explain how it is used in your school
- We recommend finding opportunities to present the Shooting Star and discuss the language and ideas with groups of students through tutor groups or assemblies before using it with them one-to-one
- Decide when and how the Shooting Star will be completed – through tutor groups and other opportunities.

2 How to introduce the Shooting Star™ to students

How the Shooting Star is introduced is important in encouraging students to engage. It can be helpful to explain the Shooting Star to a whole class or tutor group to support students to understand the areas and scales and this will save time in the one-to-one sessions.

When introducing the Star it is important to:

- Be friendly and encourage students to ask if they do not understand the words
- Use the illustrated Journey of Change to explain the stages step-by-step
- Explain that 5 is the top of the Shooting Star scales (which may be different to other Stars they may be familiar with).

However, it is also important to emphasise that 5 is not the end of the journey and people should continue to improve after they have reached this stage. A student at a Shooting Star development workshop used this analogy – reaching 5 is like getting a business up and running and profitable but you must still go on running the business and making it better and better beyond that point.

Some suggested phrases for introducing the Star include:

“We are here to help you make the most of the opportunities and support available, to enjoy learning and to feel confident so that you leave school your own person, able to do what interests you.”

“The Shooting Star is a way of tracking your journey and finding out about your strengths and needs – there are no right or wrong answers.”

“It is a bit like a school report but it is about you as a person not your grades. It shows us where you are now and where you want to be in the future.”

“It will track your progress and you choose where you are.”

“It is a progress star. It’s about you, about going step-by-step on a journey and we will do it together.”

“It helps you and the service to improve on where you are now and tells us what you need in key areas in order to make that improvement.”

You may want to explain that as well as supporting the student’s progress the Shooting Star is necessary to support the school to learn what it is doing well (and what it is not doing so well). However, it is best not to mention terms like monitor, measure or data analysis.

3 Completing the Shooting Star™ with a student

The Shooting Star is a flexible tool that workers can use in a way that responds to the needs and abilities of each student:

- The illustrated Journey of Change can be used to explain the difference between each of the points on the scales.
- For most students, it will be helpful to go through the Shooting Star Quiz together or they could read

it on their own initially and then discuss it together – collaboratively agreeing where they are now in each area

- Encourage students to mark the scores on the Star Chart themselves – either as each area is discussed or all together at the end after completing the Quiz
- Students at 3 or above can probably to take the lead in placing themselves on the Star scales. If someone is at 1–2 the worker may need to be directive about placing them on the scales.

Using the Shooting Star Quiz is not compulsory. For those students who are particularly put off by paperwork, it may be better to use the Star Chart and illustrated Journey of Change without the Quiz and to talk through each of the Star points verbally, describing and drawing on the underlying Journey of Change to guide the student towards agreeing where they are on their journey.

It will be important to use the Star to encourage self-reflection, which can be done by asking students for evidence of why they think they are where they are on the scales and taking the time to challenge them appropriately and discuss their views.

Differences of opinion are helpful starters for discussion. If a student struggles with low self-esteem, they might place themselves towards the start of the journey and need reminding about their achievements. Others may not recognise or admit to how they are behaving and some students with low self-esteem may place themselves unrealistically high on the journey. Workers might present evidence of discrepancies between their behaviour and their views, paving the way for a meaningful discussion or working relationship and for a more realistic assessment from which progress is possible. If you cannot agree a score and you decide it is not helpful to discuss it further, record both scores on the Star, labelling which score is whose.

If someone appears to be between two scale points, maybe because they are fluctuating between considering and having a go, choose the point they are at the majority of the time, or opt for the lower of the two points. Avoid placing students between the scale points.

While the Star will usually be completed collaboratively with a tutor or mentor in a one-to-one setting, workers are encouraged to experiment with different approaches, particularly during a trial or pilot period. One approach is to introduce the Star to a tutor group, giving each student a Star Chart and asking them to mark where they think they are. Workers can then talk with each student about the experience one-to-one and change the scores, if necessary. It may also be good to experiment with peer-to-peer support. It is not recommended that students complete the Star as a group, without a conversation, or as something that young people take away to do by themselves.

Whatever approach you choose, it is vital that the discussion and agreed number is based on the defined scales and that students understand that the journey is about their attitude, awareness and behaviour in relation to a

The quality of conversation we had as a result of completing the Star is most valuable.

Mentor, DACA

My mentee's need to be more confident about asking for support would not have come to light without the detailed conversation about communication as a result of completing the Star together.

Mentor, DACA

given area, not the severity of problems they face or the things they are good at. Without using and understanding the Journey of Change, one person's 3 could be another person's 5 and although the process may still be helpful on a one-to-one basis, the collated Star data will not be useful.

4 Use the completed Star Chart to agree actions and next steps

The visual of the completed Star provides an excellent basis for agreeing changes and actions that are needed. These actions can be noted on the action plan or on the Star Online. Once you have the completed Star, either on paper or on screen, look at it together and prompt the student to reflect on it as a basis for what to do next, asking motivational questions such as:

- ? Is the shape of the Star an accurate picture of how things are for the student now?
- ? What does it tell them about what is and is not going well?
- ? What are the strengths that they bring to the areas that are going well? How might they apply those strengths in other areas of their life?
- ? What is most important to address first?

Once the areas are agreed, further questions might include:

- ? Where on the journey do they want to get to and by when?
- ? What actions are needed in order to bring about that change?
- ? Who is responsible for those actions?
- ? Is it appropriate to set a deadline for completing them?

A student's position on the Journey of Change can provide valuable pointers about the things they need to work on and the likelihood of them following through on actions independently. Some key pointers are summarised in the table on the following page.

My relationship with my mentee has definitely developed as a result of doing the Star.

Mentor, DACA

The Shooting Star generated a lot of discussion – it helps put the student at the centre and they come up with ideas for their action plan.

Teacher, DACA

The statements and process spark students to have ideas about what they can do differently.

Teacher, DACA

Journey of Change stage	Possible approaches and actions that could be agreed
1 Not interested	<p>Since students at this stage will not be engaged or interested in changing, the focus could be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding out what might interest them • Suggesting they observe activities or talk to other students who are taking part in activities to see if that sparks their interest • Finding out what they see as the pros and cons of the choices they are making
2 Considering it	<p>Students at this stage may observe from the sidelines but probably won't join in and may be disruptive or lack confidence to have a go. Actions could focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement and support to follow through
3 Having a go	<p>Students at this stage may give up easily so goals and actions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping them to plan what they are going to do and develop strategies for themselves • Helping them to learn and reflect on what has worked for them
4 Working on it	<p>When students reach this stage after working their way through the other stages, the focus of keywork may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating their achievements • Helping the student to reflect on their achievements, how they have overcome barriers and draw learning from this • Supporting them to deal with difficulties themselves
5 Actively enjoying it	<p>At this stage a student is doing well and is on track so the main actions will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep going • Build on the success to date • Focus on the future.

5 Revisiting the Star

The Star is designed to be completed a number of times to show progress. The timing and frequency of completing the Star needs to be agreed within your school or other organisation when implementing the Star (see part one of this guide for more on this). It usually makes sense to integrate the Star with times when students are creating personal plans.

At each review, repeat the process of discussing each of the Star areas and agree where the student is on each scale. We recommend you do this without reference to the previous Star scores initially to focus on a snapshot in time without being influenced by previous scores. Once the new Star has been completed, it is helpful to compare the two to give an instant visual picture of change. You can then use this to encourage discussion:

- ? Does what the student see on the Star fit with their own sense of how they have changed?
- ? How do they feel about what they see, especially where they have moved up one or more of the scales?
- ? What has helped them make progress? What strengths have they brought to this? What might they learn from that to help them in other areas?
- ? What areas do they want to address now – the same areas as before or new ones?
- ? Where do they want to get to by the next review? What actions do they want to agree to make that happen?

Then complete a new action plan and, if working on paper, file the Star Chart and Action Plan and enter the data, as required. If using the Star Online, the data will already be captured, just print and file the Star Chart, Notes and Action Plan.

When positive change occurs, reviews can be very helpful in encouraging and motivating both the student and the worker as the Star makes progress very evident. Change is hard, particularly at the **having a go** stage, and students can be easily put off by difficulties that arise. Seeing progress on the Star can help to encourage students and reinforce change as they start to try out new ways of doing things. You can use your discussions with students and other people to help point this out.

6 Frequently asked questions

Using the Star may mean working with students in a different way. How natural and easy it feels for you will depend on your ways of working prior to the introduction of the Star. Most workers find that the Star is fairly self-evident and it feels familiar and comfortable after using it a few times but the following questions are most frequently asked in training.

What if we don't agree on where the student is in an area?

This is a rich starter for discussion. Part of the process of making changes in an area that isn't working for us is developing a realistic picture of how we are doing at the moment. Here are some pointers:

- Listen carefully to what students have to say – it will help you understand their perceptions and they may have information that you are not aware of that will change your view

- Present evidence for why you see things differently – this will work best if you present specific examples rather than general statements. For example, “You felt anxious both times you tried going to college last week”, rather than, “You’re not ready for college” or, if the person is underestimating their progress, providing specific evidence of their achievements, for instance, “You were the one who decided to take that course and found the information you needed to do it”
- Take into account the student’s current situation – in the early part of the journey, the young person is likely to be less self-aware and this can result in a higher personal rating.

If, following discussion, you and the student still disagree, record both scores on the Star Chart. We suggest, however, that it is the workers’ scores that are used for analysis of service-wide outcomes.

When a student’s scores are recorded separately from the worker’s using the Star Online, both can be captured on the system; however, only the scores from “worker only” and “worker and student” versions are used to generate reports.

We have no available one-to-one time – how do we use the Star?

For some services, one-to-one time is very limited. It is possible to use the Star in the classroom or in other group settings provided there is an opportunity for some one-to-one discussion. There are different options for how this can be done and workers are encouraged to be creative, for example:

- Introduce the Star to a group – students have a Star Chart in front of them and mark where they think they are on each scale. They then talk with a worker about the experience one-to-one and change the scores if necessary
- Write the main stages on flipchart pages placed on the walls or on the floor and ask people to stand where they think they are on the Journey of Change. Discuss the reasons for their choice – which may result in them moving to another point
- Put the Quiz on wall charts and give each young person numbered stickers and ask them to put a sticker on each question. Keep a record of which person has which number so that you can repeat the process at review time. If this is made into a game and done speedily, it will support students to be honest rather than to place themselves at the same point as their peers
- Experienced peers can support students to complete the Star in peer-to-peer situations.

What if the student can’t or won’t engage with the Star?

Students who are **not interested** are also likely to be disinterested in completing the Star. You may choose to share your worker-only assessments with them later, when they engage with keywork, in order to demonstrate progress or to prompt learning and discussion.

Experience shows that it is unusual for students to engage with keywork but to resist using the Star. If this happens, ask why and check they have had a sufficiently detailed introduction to the Star and have not misunderstood how it works or how the information will be used. Make sure they understand the key points and answer any questions or concerns they have. You may also want to point out that the Star is an integral part of how your school or project provides support.

If students don't make progress will my performance be in question?

The purpose of the Star is to help students see where they have come from and where to go next, and to help give your school an overview of where it is helping students to make positive changes and which areas may need further attention. When students and other people do not make progress on the Star there are many possible explanations. It is not about judging the work of individual members of staff.

However, this may indicate that you have a particularly difficult tutor group or need additional support or further training. You may want to discuss these with your manager.

What if the student doesn't want to discuss certain areas?

This can happen when a student feels that some of the scales are not relevant to them because they do not have an issue in that area. If you also feel that this area poses no problems, simply place the student at 5 for that scale and move on.

Some areas may be particularly sensitive or the student may not be willing to discuss a problem. Many workers find that simply having an area as a scale on the Star can be a helpful way to introduce sensitive areas that do need to be discussed. However, the relationship of trust between the worker and student, and the goal of supporting their progress, are more important than the Star. If it is not helpful to continue, opt for 5 or 1, and move to the next scale.

Won't students be demotivated if they go back down the scales?

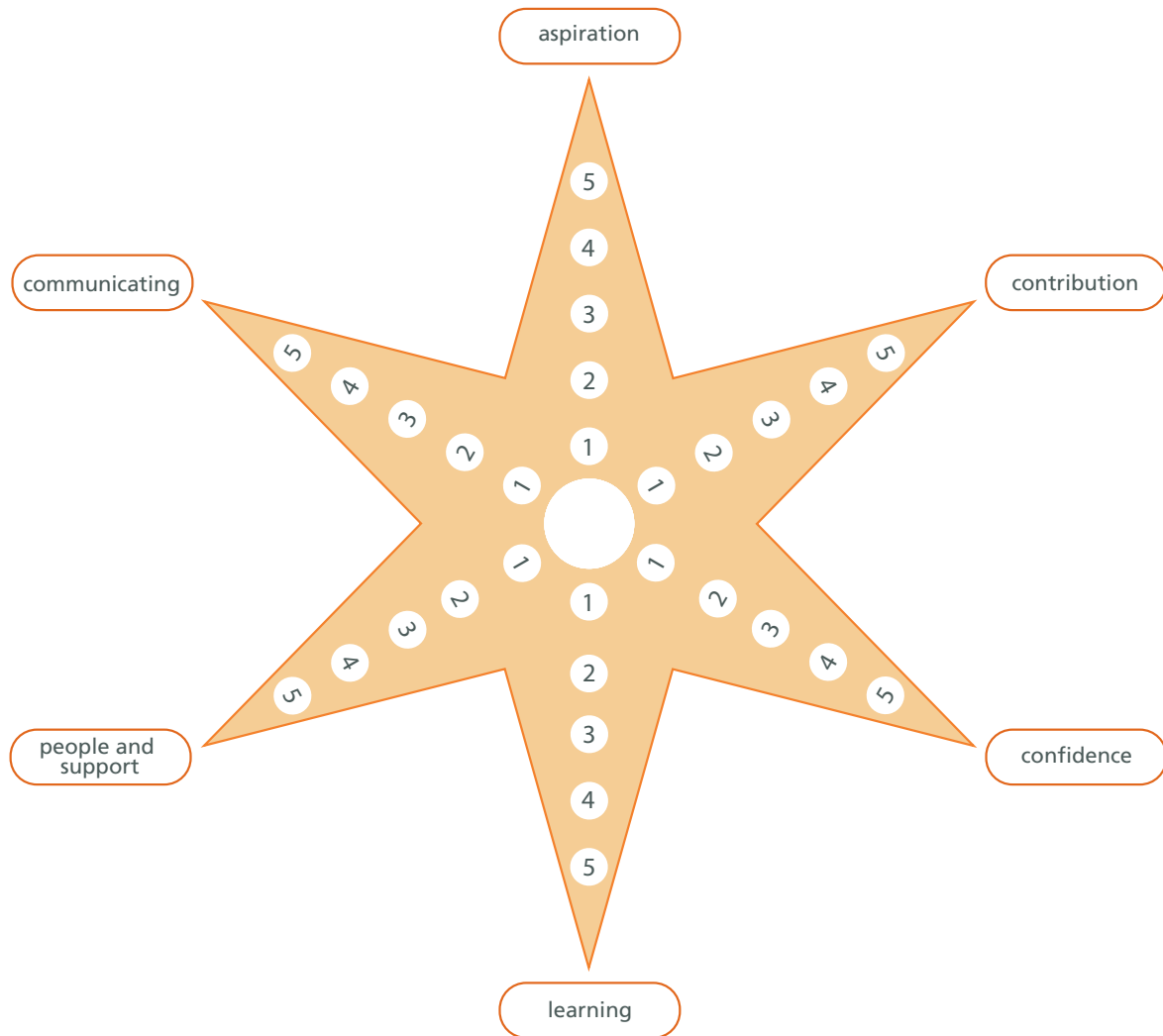
When negative change occurs, workers are sometimes concerned that seeing this so clearly on the Star will demotivate students. Usually, the student is only too aware that they have moved further away from their goal and acknowledging this can be a helpful first step in reversing that trend. In these instances, it can be helpful to remind students that change is difficult and that it isn't a linear process.

It is also possible that students may score themselves lower in a review than in an initial assessment. This can be a positive step, showing greater self-awareness and trust, and it is therefore important to identify why their scores are showing a decrease and whether this is a slip-back or the result of greater self-awareness and honesty.

What if a student has limited literacy and/or English?

The Star materials are designed to be used flexibly. If a student's English is limited, you may need to paraphrase the text in simplified language to support their understanding. If a student has limited literacy, you could use the Star and Journey of Change visuals and explain the five stages verbally. You could also use the Quiz for reference and read out the stage descriptions that you feel they are closest to at that time.

If you have a question that isn't answered here, or you have any concerns about the Shooting Star, you are encouraged to raise them with your manager. It is important that you have the chance to discuss your views as the Star will only work well for you and your students if you feel comfortable using it.



The Shooting Star™ is a version of the Outcomes Star™, a family of tools developed by Triangle Consulting for supporting and measuring change when working with people.

For more information see www.outcomesstar.org.uk



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