When am I a Perfectionist?

Being a perfectionist doesn’t necessarily mean you have unrelenting high standards in every area of your life. It is possible to be a perfectionist in one area of your life (e.g., work), but not another (e.g., grooming).

Areas of life in which your perfectionism may flare up include:

- Work
- Study
- Housework/cleaning
- Close relationships
- Eating/weight/shape
- Grooming/personal hygiene
- Sport
- Health & fitness

How am I a perfectionist?

Some common types of perfectionistic behaviours include:

- Struggling to make decisions in a timely manner (e.g., not being able to decide what to wear to work each morning).
- Reassurance seeking. (E.g., asking others to check your work to ensure it is acceptable).
- Excessive organising and list making. (E.g., repeatedly writing and re-writing lists of the tasks you want to get done in the day).
- Giving up easily. (E.g., giving up flamenco after two lessons because you can’t keep up with the teacher (even though nobody can)).
- Procrastinating. (E.g., putting off starting an assignment for fear that it won’t be good enough).
- Not knowing when to stop. (E.g., arguing a point over and over, long after others have lost interest).
- Checking. (E.g., repeatedly looking in the mirror for facial blemishes).
- Hoarding. (E.g., keeping your bank statements for 20 years just in case you might need them).
- Slowness. (E.g., speaking slowly to ensure you say the right thing).
- Avoiding situations in which you may ‘fail’. (E.g., not applying for jobs for fear that you will not get them).

For more detailed information regarding What is Perfectionism, see Perfectionism in Perspective Module 1.