Assessment is for Learning
Self-Assessment Toolkit
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Introduction

What is an AifL School?

Adapting principles to one's own context

The ideas in this toolkit represent a set of principles. They are widely endorsed in consultation with teachers and have been implemented in many schools involved in the Assessment is for Learning (AifL) programme.

However, the principles are only effective when schools consider how they can be adapted and given meaningful use in their day-to-day work in classrooms.

An AifL school is a place where everyone is learning. It is a place where assessment is part of learning and teaching without dominating them. In an AifL school:

- staff are skilled in using assessment to support learning and in planning next steps in consultation with pupils and their parents
- pupils and staff are fully involved in planning, reflecting on and evaluating their own learning
- there are sound procedures in place for quality assuring assessment judgements, and for using them as evidence to plan for improvement.

In an AifL school, therefore, learning and teaching need to be really well planned. By using formative assessment, reflective self-assessment and summative assessment – that is assessment FOR learning, assessment AS learning and assessment OF learning – as part of learning and teaching, schools can help pupils to achieve course aims and to develop their learning and thinking skills.

It is also very important for schools to make sure that, within the broad structure of the curriculum, the teaching and learning activities and assessment are entirely appropriate for the school’s and pupils’ needs.

Only staff involved in the day-to-day work and culture of a school are able to make the decisions to ensure that learners and learning are the clear focus of their work.
The AifL Programme

Substantial progress within the AifL programme has been made through using action research principles at school level. Schools and staff have been developing their own approaches to formative assessment, personal learning planning and local moderation.

Adapting principles to one’s own context

Assessment FOR Learning (Formative Assessment)

Assessment FOR Learning links everyday assessment practices with learning and teaching. It is the process of interaction that occurs between staff, the pupil and the parent as they all promote learning by:

- discussing what is to be learned
- recognising when learning has taken place
- providing useful and timely feedback that supports next steps in learning.

Assessment AS Learning (Personal Learning Planning)

Assessment AS Learning links the curriculum with learning and teaching. The benefits of personal learning planning come from its basis in formative assessment and involve:

- gathering and interpreting evidence to review current learning – its strengths and weaknesses
- planning learning accordingly, knowing what is to be learned and what evidence will show success
- evaluating and deciding what should be done next
- noting progress and next steps.

These processes – involving learners, staff, those at home and in the community – are essentially about learning how to learn.

Assessment OF Learning (Local Moderation)

Assessment OF Learning links everyday assessment and the curriculum. This process goes beyond traditional summative assessment, which provides a ‘snapshot’ of progress at any particular time. Local moderation gives us the opportunity to talk about pupils’ learning and to agree about their progress and levels of attainment. By sharing standards within and across establishments, we can increase our confidence to exercise our professional judgement on levels of attainment. Thus evidence from everyday activities can be used to report on progress.
The AifL Triangle
What is an AifL School?
A Place Where Everyone is Learning Together

Curriculum
Staff use a range of evidence from day-to-day activities to check on pupils’ progress
Staff talk and work together to share standards in and across schools
Staff use assessment information to monitor their establishment’s provision and progress, and to plan for improvement

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING
Our pupils and staff identify and reflect on their own evidence of learning

Learning and Teaching
Our pupils, staff and parents are clear about what is to be learned and what success would be like
Our pupils and staff are given timely feedback about the quality of their work and how to make it better
Our pupils and staff are fully involved in deciding next steps in their learning and identifying who can help

Assessment
Our classroom assessment involves high quality interactions, based on thoughtful questions, careful listening and reflective responses

Our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals
Our pupils and staff practise self and peer assessment
Our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals

Our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals
Our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals
What is an AifL School?
A Place Where Everyone is Learning Together

AifL and Quality Indicators

Our approaches to assessment can be evaluated by using relevant quality indicators from How good is our school? (HGiOS), which has been used in schools for a long time. We can carry out an audit of good practice within the three strands of the Assessment is for Learning programme using these indicators.

This document is intended to help you to make the links with HGiOS and it is hoped that you find the ideas in this guidance pack useful. It takes the 10 key statements of the AifL triangle and converts them into 10 key questions for staff to consider.

The document has been divided into four sections. The first three sections are:

• Assessment FOR Learning
• Assessment AS Learning
• Assessment OF Learning

Within each of these sections:

• the appropriate key questions are listed and considered individually
• these questions are then linked to quality indicators and themes
• there are examples of interesting practice in the classroom using extracts from the AifL case study database found on the AifL website at www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess
• each key question has accompanying audit sheets to allow staff in schools to identify areas of strength and areas for development.

The fourth section of the document includes the bibliography, indicates materials for possible CPD use, itemises selected journal articles and papers, and lists useful websites.
Assessment FOR Learning

Key questions

To what extent does our classroom assessment involve high quality interactions, based on thoughtful questions, careful listening and reflective responses?

To what extent are our pupils, staff and parents clear about what is to be learned and what success would be like?

To what extent are our pupils and staff given timely feedback about the quality of their work and how to make it better?

To what extent are our pupils and staff fully involved in deciding next steps in their learning and identifying who can help?
Assessment FOR Learning

To what extent does our classroom assessment involve high quality interactions, based on thoughtful questions, careful listening and reflective responses?

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**Things to think about**

- Our questioning is skilled and pupils’ responses are listened to and used effectively.
- Our questions identify what pupils understand, partly understand and do not understand.
- Our questioning is used to encourage thinking, for example by using wait time and producing dialogue.

**Questions to ask**

- To what extent do we use questions to stimulate thinking and learning?
- To what extent do we use pupils’ responses effectively:
  - to identify what pupils understand?
  - to plan for future learning and teaching?
Voices

Primary case study: Langcraigs Primary School, Renfrewshire
Science, P4, P6

Questioning: higher order questions were used to stimulate discussion. The … open questions
allowed initial thoughts to be expressed. The children’s confident and open explanations of their own
ideas soon became the main factor with discussions.

Both teachers feel that they are now confident to lead lessons [by using] key questions and [through]
using children’s responses to develop teaching points. If the children are stimulated by questions
… the learning is far more meaningful. Paired discussion gives them confidence, [shown] by the
improved quality, complexity and range of both written and oral responses. The pupils are more
active in their own learning. The less able contribute willingly. During [periods of] discussion children
are completely absorbed and on task. Children were motivated to learn, [which] was particularly
noticeable in Primary 6.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Pitcoudie Primary School, Fife, Cross-curricular, P7
Longniddry Primary School, East Lothian, Mathematics, P7

Secondary case study: Bannockburn High School, Stirling
Mathematics, S2

Both wait time and questioning techniques were used to encourage pupils to think. Planning for
this took time and required a great deal of forethought: how could I incorporate open questioning
techniques in this lesson? Using open-ended questions in [every] lesson is not always possible,
appropriate or necessary. My advice is to target the lessons where open-question techniques are
going to be used. Ask yourself: what and how do I want the pupils to learn?

I have [found that] questioning gives class members the opportunity to support the learning process
by providing help to their peers with answers given in their own words. Pupils’ wrong answers were
becoming more interesting … because they provided a strong source of immediate feedback. It was
therefore important to listen carefully to pupils’ responses, since it was giving me feedback about
where they were in their learning. It also had the potential to lead the class somewhere constructive.

I am more convinced now that formative assessment makes absolute sense and that continual
short, regular summative assessments have a negative effect on pupil learning and performance. I
believe that formative assessment promotes confidence and understanding and gives the teacher the
opportunity to know a pupil’s learning needs.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Galashiels Academy, Scottish Borders, History S1, S2
Prestwick Academy, South Ayrshire, English, Science, S1/S2, S3/S4
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Assessment FOR Learning

To what extent are our pupils, staff and parents clear about what is to be learned and what success would be like?

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<td>encouragement to parents to be involved in their child’s learning and the life of the school</td>
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Things to think about

- We indicate clearly what pupils are expected to learn and how they will know if they are successful, for example:
  - we specify learning intentions and success criteria as part of our plan
  - we plan a process of helping pupils to identify success criteria through modelling and discussion.
- We plan activities in a way which makes effective use of dialogue about learning, for example opportunities are included to share and describe successful examples of work.

Questions to ask

- To what extent do our teaching plans indicate what pupils are expected to learn and how they will know if they are successful?
- To what extent do we share learning intentions and success criteria using clear language and display them in a way that helps pupils to stay focused on their learning as they work?
- To what extent do we encourage parents to support their child’s learning by sharing learning intentions and success criteria with them?
Voices

Primary case study: Annette Street Primary School, Glasgow City
Mathematics, P1

Staff have seen the positive effect that sharing of targets has had on the Primary 1 pupils. The weekly targets are written on a large whiteboard and are referred to by the teacher at the beginning of each lesson and at the end of the week.

The two topics covered within the period of the project were 3D shapes and the numbers from 1 to 10. When working on 3D shapes, it was very simple to set class targets, as all of the children were working at the same pace and level. However, when it came to working with numbers this had to be tackled slightly differently. When it came to setting targets for each group, they were all given their own group targets, but the overall learning outcome remained the same for all groups.

We have also agreed that the teachers will meet parents to share … targets with them … at the beginning of the session. The school board has agreed to assist us in encouraging parents to attend these meetings.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Carmuir Primary School, Falkirk, Cross-curricular, P1
Crombie Primary School, Aberdeenshire, Writing, P7

Secondary case study: John Ogilvie High School, South Lanarkshire
History, S1

The criteria … used involved assigning marks for [six areas of a pupil’s report]. Our first task therefore was to clarify exactly what we were already doing in … this initiative and to devise a … method of assessing performance without using marks.

We each agreed to review [two] 5–14 strands … devising suitable stems … for … peer/group assessment of extended pupil reports. We … put our statements to the S1 classes with a view to clarifying and simplifying if necessary. We also felt that this would allow classes to become familiar … with the criteria on which presentations, and therefore extended writing, would be judged.

Two S6 pupils helped the [pupils] with review and, if necessary, simplification; [they] were also asked to reinforce the main criteria for judging extended presentations. By the end of the period, many of the S1 suggestions to simplify the statements had been adopted, and all of the class could state the five main criteria of extended writing/presentations on which subsequent work would be judged.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Kilmarnock Academy, East Ayrshire, English, S3
Liberton High School, Edinburgh City, Sharing Criteria, English Language, Writing, S1
To what extent are our pupils, staff and parents clear about what is to be learned and what success would be like?

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Questions to be asked

- To what extent do our teaching plans indicate what pupils are expected to learn and how they will know if they are successful?

- To what extent do we share the learning intentions and success criteria using clear language and display them in a way that helps pupils to stay focused on their learning as they work?

- To what extent do we encourage parents to support their child's learning by sharing learning intentions and success criteria with them?
Assessment FOR Learning

To what extent are our pupils and staff given timely feedback about the quality of their work and how to make it better?

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Things to think about

• We ensure that any feedback we provide is positive and encouraging but that it always points towards a specific action for improvement.
• Pupils take responsibility for, and are active in, their own learning. Pupils recognise they are responsible for acting on feedback given. We have strategies in place to give clear feedback to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
• The pace of learning enables pupils to make good progress. Every pupil can make progress from where they are, based on assessment and feedback of their last piece of work/activity.

Questions to ask

• To what extent do we know about our pupils’ progress, including their successes and difficulties?
• To what extent does our feedback give pupils a very clear sense of what they need to do to improve?
• To what extent do we identify our pupils’ learning needs in a systematic way?
• To what extent do we give pupils information about their progress in a way which values individual achievement and identifies next steps in learning?
Voices

Primary case study: Sunnyside Primary School, Clackmannanshire
English Language, Writing, P2

After three to four weeks, the oral feedback was proving so successful [with one half of the class] that I decided it would be fairer if I worked with one half for two weeks, and then swapped over. I had time to conference with one half of the class and advise them, in very simple terms, about how to make improvements in their writing the following week. In the second session they were reminded of their writing targets for the lesson. After the writing was complete it was a simple task to speak with the same pupils to see if they had met their targets. Obviously they were expected to continue to meet these simple targets for the next two weeks until it was their turn to receive feedback again. We would then build on their knowledge and try to take another step towards improvement in their own story writing. Children became enthusiastic about this and it proved a great success – evidence being provided by improvements in children’s writing.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Lawthorn Primary School, North Ayrshire, French, P6
Hamnavoe Primary School, Shetland Islands, Mathematics, P4/5, P6/7
St Catherine’s Primary School, Glasgow, Cross-curricular, P1

Secondary case study: Inverkeithing High School, Fife
Chemistry, S3

Pupils peer assessed homework [using the issued marking scheme]. This gave a good opportunity to deal with misconceptions. Pupils had support to do this and [they] provided feedback to their peers for comment. The opportunity to give teacher feedback was also taken, as shown below:

Pupil comment (homework): Questions 1 and 2 were good but the rest I didn’t quite understand.
Teacher comment: Go back to the learning outcomes. You should [use] prior learning and outcomes 1–6. Use the textbook to [revise] anything missing. Write down what you’ve done here.
Pupil comment: I got full marks in the quick quiz.

The responses from the pupil questionnaire showed that … the most popular kinds of feedback were teacher correction and comments and oral feedback. The following recommendations [are envisaged]: develop more material which provides a feedback loop for improvement and schedule more detailed oral feedback [time] to pupils.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Dumfries High School, Dumfries and Galloway, English, S1
Webster’s High School, Angus, Mathematics, S1, S4
Auchinleck Academy, East Ayrshire, Computing, S3
Tain Royal Academy, Highland, Chemistry, S3
To what extent are our pupils and staff given timely feedback about the quality of their work and how to make it better?

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Assessment FOR Learning

To what extent are our pupils and staff fully involved in deciding next steps in their learning and identifying who can help?

### Things to think about

- Our pupils have opportunities to develop the skills and dispositions they need to become more effective in evaluating and directing their own learning.
- Our pupils participate in a dialogue about their learning, for example they are involved in self and peer assessment, identifying strengths and identifying next steps in their learning and discussing their progress across the curriculum.

### Questions to ask

- To what extent do our pupils have opportunities to develop the skills they need to become more effective in evaluating and directing their own learning?
- To what extent do our staff support pupils in setting their own learning goals?
- To what extent do our pupils have opportunities to participate in a dialogue about their learning that allows them to identify their next steps?

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Voices

Primary case study: St Lucy’s Primary School, North Lanarkshire
Problem Solving, P2, P6

A workshop for parents showed that they were enthusiastic and interested; one parent said that her son had the comment ‘handwriting’ consistently in his jotter from P1 through to P6. But it was only after his P6 teacher suggested that he lean more heavily with his pencil that they were delighted with the improvements made. I helped children to work as a trio and assess each other, and this meant that they had to be given some ground rules. However, I had to help them to realise that discussion was good and important if they had to work together. To help pupils to become involved in discussions, I created a climate of mutual trust.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Richmond Park School, Glasgow City, Environmental Studies, Special Primary
Hazlehead Primary School, Aberdeen, Physical Education, P3

Secondary case study: Back School, Western Isles
English, S1/S2. Mathematics and Geography S1/S2 were also involved.

Like many who first encounter formative assessment, my reaction was that I was already applying these techniques. However, I now realise that it is not about individual teaching methods but about how a wide range of techniques interlink to create better classroom teaching and better classroom learning. I have used traffic lighting in lessons to raise pupil awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses and to measure progress.

Pupil’s comment: It’s better to put the red rather than green … you … get the help that you need.

Pupils work in groups of the same colour, discuss each other’s work and share ideas. Sometimes it is beneficial to ‘mix colours’, while one-to-one feedback has the effect of helping pupils to overcome difficulties. Self-marking had the benefit of acting as a forum for reinforcement as well as giving a framework on how to present answers.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Forres Academy, Moray, Mathematics, S1, S5
Kelso High School, Scottish Borders, French, S2
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Questions to be asked | Evidence of good practice | Areas to be developed |
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To what extent do our pupils have opportunities to develop the skills they need to become more effective in evaluating and directing their own learning? |  |  |
To what extent does our staff support pupils in setting their own learning goals? |  |  |
To what extent do our pupils have opportunities to participate in a dialogue about their learning that allows them to identify their next steps? |  |  |
Assessment AS Learning

Key questions

To what extent do our pupils and staff practise self and peer assessment?

To what extent do our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals?

To what extent do our pupils and staff identify and reflect on their own evidence of learning?
Assessment AS Learning

To what extent do our pupils and staff practise self and peer assessment?

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<td>7.2</td>
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Things to think about

- We engage in dialogue with pupils about their progress and in identifying next steps for learning.
- We incorporate strategies in day-to-day activities to promote self and peer assessment, for example through the use of learning logs, diaries, concept maps, traffic lighting, response partners, 'two stars and a wish', rubrics.

Questions to ask

- To what extent do day-to-day activities incorporate strategies to promote self and peer assessment?
- To what extent do we use self and peer assessment to provide feedback to inform improvement?
- To what extent do we negotiate realistic learning targets with pupils?
- To what extent do our pupils self-assess their abilities and interests as preparation for choice at key stages?
- To what extent does staff self-evaluation generate reliable evidence which can be used to identify priority areas for action?
Voices

Primary case study: Dounby Community School, Orkney
Drama and Art, P6

We planned to use a video camera to help pupils assess their own individual work and also group work through peer and self assessment discussions. The pupils were extremely enthusiastic from the outset. We felt that giving the opportunity to discuss their work was always going to be a motivating factor, but it was also something that they had to learn and practise. As a result of both our own and the children’s interpretation of the video evidence, the children became more effective workers. Some were perceptively self-critical and showed an ability to learn from each other while some of the video clips showed how effectively the pupils could assess their own learning. Indeed a group which achieved little in one session were invited to discuss what had gone wrong by viewing video footage. They undertook the task in a very mature way and came to conclusions which helped in their future work sessions. We have come to the conclusion that the use of video evidence is a valuable tool in self and peer assessment and in reflective practice.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
St Catherine’s Primary School, Glasgow, Mathematics, P1
Alford Primary School, Aberdeenshire, Information and Communications Technology, P1–P6

Secondary case study: Bannockburn High School, Stirling
English, S3

A colleague picked up on a comment in one pupil’s jotter where I had written: ‘This is not really a short story.’ He felt it was negative and did not really help the pupil find out what he needed to do to improve the piece.

A discussion ensued … it was unrealistic to write lengthy comments for 27 pieces of work, nor was it possible, because of time constraints, to sit down with each pupil in turn and discuss their stories. A possible solution … was to give the pupils the skills they needed to assess each other’s work; … they could make corrections and comments, and discuss their work with each other. Pupils, … when assessing a partner’s work, have the required skills and the content of the task reinforced in their own minds; … the pupils would receive meaningful comments and would have the time to discuss how to improve their work.

When the pupils wrote an essay about [a] poem, the peer-assessment exercise worked really well. The pupils took it very seriously. Their comments were perceptive, positive and very useful. It has been one of the most liberating experiences of my teaching career to realise that the mechanical process of grading work can be counterproductive and that directed peer assessment is a much more helpful approach.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Greenock Academy, Inverclyde, English, S3–S5
St Michael’s Academy, North Ayrshire, Art and Design, Technology, S1
To what extent do our pupils and staff practise self and peer assessment?

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<td>7.2</td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
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<td>To what extent do we negotiate realistic learning targets with pupils?</td>
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Assessment AS Learning

To what extent do our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals?

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<tr>
<td>3.4 Meeting pupils’ needs</td>
<td>choice of tasks, activities and resources</td>
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</table>

**Things to think about**

- We provide opportunities to help pupils develop the habit of thinking about their own learning.
- Our pupils contribute to identifying next steps and learning goals through dialogue based on feedback and evidence of learning.
- We encourage pupils to plan and record next steps in learning through the personal learning planning process, for example future goals are agreed with pupils and recorded in appropriate ways, for example in diaries, learning logs, comment record, progress file, etc.

**Questions to ask**

- To what extent do we provide opportunities for our pupils to reflect on their own learning?
- To what extent do we help pupils to think about and identify their learning needs?
- To what extent do we help our pupils to set next steps or learning goals through a dialogue based on feedback and evidence of learning?
Voices

Primary case study: Dunbar Primary School, East Lothian
All curricular areas, P4–P7

The initial attempt at setting targets was done as part of a PSD lesson where the class set targets. After much discussion by the whole class, then in groups or pairs, success criteria were set for that lesson. Later each pupil was asked to set another two personal targets in different curricular areas of their choice, with one target being home-based. All of these targets were taken home for parents to discuss and make suggestions. Once the targets were returned, the children had individual interviews where the final agreed targets were set and strategies for achieving them established. Four targets were set per term and pupils used an evaluation sheet to gauge their level of success in achieving their targets. Some pupils used their individualised educational programme (IEP) to set their targets while others put their targets into their IEP. At the end of the project pupils appreciated that they were being given the opportunity to participate in making decisions about some aspects of their education.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
West Barns Primary School, East Lothian, Cross-curricular, P5–P7
Pinwherry Primary School, South Ayrshire, Language, Mathematics, Health, PSD, P5–P7

Secondary case study: St Kentigern’s Academy, West Lothian
Science, Geography, S1

[The secondary and two associated primaries] … decided to model the personal learning planning process … on two cross-cutting skills, information handling, line graphs, and functional writing. It was agreed that the Geography department would focus on functional writing, instructions for direction, and the Science department would concentrate on graphical display and interpretation of information. Other departments … were kept informed of developments as their work could reinforce practice within the relevant key skills areas.

Planned learning outcomes were … then shared with the pupils. Pupils recorded their ‘starting points’ in purpose-designed booklets. This provided another opportunity for emphasising the cross-curricular nature of learning targets and the gathering of evidence. Where possible, one-to-one interviews were used, … helping pupils focus on their next steps.

Pupils were also provided with the opportunity for peer assessment in each of the subject areas. Subject-specific reports were written about each pupil. In a series of one-to-one meetings with their guidance teacher, the pupils participating in the trial assessed their progress and negotiated learning targets in all subject areas. Targets were based on their own and their teachers’ assessments of their strengths and development needs.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Hazlehead Academy, Aberdeen City, Mathematics and Language, S1, S2
Alford Academy, Aberdeenshire, ICT, S1, S2
To what extent do our pupils and staff help to set their own learning goals?

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**Questions to be asked**

- To what extent do we provide opportunities for our pupils to reflect on their own learning?
- To what extent do we help pupils to think about and identify their learning needs?
- To what extent do we help our pupils to set next steps or learning goals through a dialogue based on feedback and evidence of learning?

**Evidence of good practice**

**Areas to be developed**
Assessment AS Learning

To what extent do our pupils and staff identify and reflect on their own evidence of learning?

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use of assessment information
profiles of pupils’ progress and development
process of self-evaluation

Things to think about

• Both staff and pupils are involved in dialogue about their progress and their views on learning.
• Both staff and pupils gather evidence of learning to support effective self and peer assessment.
• Next steps for pupils’ and our school’s improvement are based on the effective collection and consideration of evidence.

Questions to ask

• To what extent are our staff and pupils involved in dialogue about their progress and their views on learning?
• To what extent do we record progress and next steps in learning?
• To what extent do we use evidence collected to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching and inform future provision?
• To what extent do we use outcomes from our staff self-evaluation to improve the quality of pupils’ experiences and standards of attainment?
Voices

Primary case study: Dreghorn Primary School, North Ayrshire
French, P7

We linked up with the local secondary school and they were able to provide support that proved invaluable in constructing a framework for planning. The children had to show evidence of learning, by saying numbers in French, count in sequence and read numbers. 'Show me' whiteboards were used and children kept diaries, which they used to write down what they were going to learn, what was achieved and work that needed to be revised/practised.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Sunnyside Primary School, Clackmannanshire, Mathematics, P3

Secondary case study: Balwearie High School, Fife
Environmental Studies, S1–S6

Using materials from the Assessment is for Learning programme, the teaching staff undertook a baseline audit. We completed the audit relatively quickly … since staff were [already] using similar How good is our school? materials in departmental development planning. From this, areas of strength were identified and areas for improvement were highlighted. Two particular areas for improvement … worthy of particular attention … were:
• whether teachers interact with pupils at the appropriate level
• whether pupils are actively involved in learning.

It was clear that across our department the pupil experience was very different depending on the teaching staff involved and the ability of the young person. Many of the pupils … were happy to be passive learners and were uncomfortable with and not used to staff taking a less active role.

[Staff] discussions proved to be an important feature of the project: through shared discussion, the staff became really involved in thinking about the notion of 'assessment is for learning'.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
John Ogilvie High School, South Lanarkshire, Geography, S3, S4
Stronsay Junior High School, Orkney, English, S3
Dumfries High School, Dumfries and Galloway, Science, S1
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**Assessment OF Learning**

**Key questions**

To what extent do we use a range of evidence from day-to-day activities to check on pupils' progress?

To what extent do we talk and work together to share standards in and across schools?

To what extent do we use assessment information to monitor our establishment’s provision and progress, and to plan for improvement?
Assessment OF Learning

To what extent do we use a range of evidence from day-to-day activities to check on pupils' progress?

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**Things to think about**

- We use assessment information from a range of day-to-day activities to evaluate teaching and monitor pupils' progress through, for example, observations, dialogue, digital imaging and audio recording.
- Performance in terms of pupils' attainment is based around our professional judgement. National Assessments are used to support our judgements, which are gained through dialogue, observation and local moderation of standards.

**Questions to ask**

- To what extent do we use a range of assessment approaches, both formal and informal, to monitor pupils' progress and attainment?
- To what extent does our recording of evidence give a comprehensive and useful profile of pupils' aptitudes, progress and attainment?
- To what extent do we use National Assessments to confirm professional judgements?
Voices

Primary case study: St Anthony’s Primary School, Renfrewshire
Language and Communication, P2, P6

As part of the primary school there is a unit for primary-aged pupils with communication disorders. Pupil X, Primary 7, was observed in a number of group settings and observations were noted informally. Pupil X’s mother came in to discuss the child’s personal profile, which she was able to take home and complete as far as she could. The class teacher and therapists subsequently completed their relevant section. Pupil X also completed a self-assessment sheet where the pupil was able to give a very accurate picture of their skill levels and difficulties. As a result, it was decided to use self-assessment as a learning strategy with this child. Pupil Y, Primary 2, and the parents went through the same procedures. Consequently the pupil’s play skills were targeted for inclusion within their IEP and a peer mediator, a Primary 5 pupil, was used as a ‘trainer’ in a series of play situations. Our next steps are to revise our profiles, involve parents more in the profile completion, to better schedule activities and resources to support staff in gathering information and to have more regular formal meetings between parents and staff.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
- Lochgelly West Primary School, Fife, Cross-curricular, Nursery and Primary
- Morebattle Primary School, Scottish Borders, French, P6, P7

Secondary case study: Aberdeen Grammar School, Aberdeen City
Science, S1/S2

One strategy we found which improved the collecting of evidence in an open-ended investigation was the use of sticky notelets. These were used to gauge pupil participation in the discussion phase of the investigation and retained as part of the individual pupil record. Also used was a mini tape recorder to record pupil discussions during the planning stage. A digital stills and a digital video camera [were used in] the collection of evidence as the investigation proceeded. Valuable photographic evidence of changes that pupils made to their original models showed how pupils were able to identify variables as they proceeded through the investigation. Finally, the pupils wrote a report of what they had done, generating evidence of reporting, measuring, recording and evaluation skills. [Other] evidence was gathered through conversations with pupils.

Pupil comments: I think we should do more experiments like this. There wasn’t as much writing. Doing this has made me think more about science.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
- Perth High School, Perth and Kinross, English, S4, S5
- Hawick High School, Scottish Borders, Cross-curricular, S1, S2
### To what extent do we use a range of evidence from day-to-day activities to check on pupils' progress?

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**Questions to be asked**

- To what extent do we use a range of evidence from day-to-day activities to check on pupils' progress?
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Assessment OF Learning

To what extent do we talk and work together to share standards in and across schools?

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Things to think about

• We are fully involved in reflective self-evaluation through staff development activities that promote shared understanding of standards, for example:
  – staff meetings are used effectively to focus on improving learning
  – associated schools groups (ASGs) work together to share standards
  – assessment practices are reviewed and evaluated in terms of their impact on both learning and teaching

Questions to ask

• To what extent do we have arrangements in place to moderate our judgements?
• To what extent do we have arrangements in place for communicating attainment evidence between staff?
• To what extent do we have arrangements in place to discuss judgements made about evidence of attainment?
Voices

Primary case study: Arran High School cluster, North Ayrshire
Expressive Arts, P6, P7 (also S2 case study below)

It became evident … , through the work being done (see secondary case study below), that the core skill analytic drawing might also be presented as a folio of work. By giving grade-related criteria and examples for pupils in P6 and P7 at different levels, this would provide definitive criteria to apply to individual pupil pieces. I was lucky enough to be able to include work at levels B through to E in relation to P6 work and also P7 work (as well as for S1 and S2). At each level strand 1, investigating visually and recording, focused on how well the still life had been observed; strand 2, using media, concerned itself with how well the pupil had demonstrated the use of a 2B pencil through rendering; and strand 3, using visual elements, concentrated on how well the pupil handled line and tone or shading.

Other relevant primary case studies available on the website:
Cornhill Primary School, Aberdeen City, Science, P2
Dens Road Primary School, Dundee City, Writing, P6, P7

Secondary case study: Arran High School, North Ayrshire
Expressive Arts, S1, S2

Examples of pupils' work were collated and assessed in three strands of the 5–14 guidelines: using media, using visual elements and creating and designing. Examples of work from levels C, D and E from each project in S1 and S2 were used. At departmental meetings pupil work was moderated and set into three categories: working towards the common standard, working at the common standard and working beyond the common standard. The close work and collaboration of my colleague was invaluable. We both learned a lot about what we think of as 'good practice’ and working both together and independently, we came up with sometimes similar but sometimes different solutions that were both equally valid. The pupil assessment form I found especially useful and intend to use this aspect of feedback more formally. The pupils were asked to reflect on and evaluate their completed work, commenting on areas of strength and possible areas for improvement.

Other relevant secondary case studies available on the website:
Sanquhar Academy, Dumfries and Galloway, Technical, S1, S2
The Gordon Schools, Aberdeenshire, French, P6, S2
John Ogilvie High School, South Lanarkshire, History, S1
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- To what extent do we have arrangements in place to moderate our judgements?
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Assessment OF Learning

To what extent do we use assessment information to monitor our establishment’s provision and progress, and to plan for improvement?

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Things to think about

• We track progress using both formative and summative approaches.
• We use assessment information from other sources to plan for improvement, for example the Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA) information, international studies, HMIE school inspection reports.
• We seek pupils’ views on how assessment helps learning and use information gathered to improve teaching and learning.

Questions to ask

• To what extent do we make use of assessment information to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching and to plan for improvement?
• To what extent do we communicate information about pupils’ achievements to staff and parents?
• To what extent do we use self-evaluation, which identifies strengths and areas for improvement, to provide accurate evidence of our performance?
Voices

Primary case study:  Hazlehead Primary, Aberdeen
Physical Education, P3

The working group met to develop observation checklists and activity assessment records. The former were used to link together our forward plans, which already contained appropriate 5–14 attainment targets. They were designed for staff use in team teaching sessions and were designed to provide a structure and focus for ongoing formative assessment by providing the criteria for success, for example for use in any PE lesson but especially for use by a non-specialist. These checklists were also used as an ongoing record to allow for pupil tracking. The information collected was directly incorporated into the school’s current planning, assessment and record-keeping procedures. The activity assessment records were designed to allow children to participate in peer assessment. The use of a digital video camera proved a huge success, providing evidence on how to improve through discussion. It also proved very successful in other curricular areas such as listening, talk, art and design and writing.

Another relevant primary case study available on the website:
St Ninian’s Primary School, Stirling, Writing, P1–P7

Secondary case study:  Sanquhar Academy, Dumfries and Galloway
Cross-curricular, S1, S2

The school senior management team had already undertaken an audit of learning and teaching across the whole school. This showed that some departments were well on the way to operating an assessment system in line with … policy while others were in need of support. These departments were provided with illustrations of ‘good practice’. Included in the support measures were activities to help in planning of courses and lessons. It was also felt important that staff had opportunities to share their own good practice, as well as time to review their planning to ensure continuous improvement. Possible pupil support for learning would include the provision of a suitably differentiated curriculum, varied physical resources, targeting of learning support staff through departments, making use of their expertise as cross-curriculum specialists, improved provision for more able pupils and the implications of IEPs for teaching each subject.

Another relevant secondary case study available on the website:
St Columba’s High School, Inverclyde, Cross-curricular Literacy, S1, S2
To what extent do we use assessment information to monitor our establishment’s provision and progress, and to plan for improvement?

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Further Information

Further reading

Bibliography

Further information can be found at:
http://www.qca.org.uk/downloads/beyond_black_box2.pdf

Further information can be found at:
http://www.nfer-nelson.co.uk/catalogue/catalogue_detail

Further information can be found at:
http://www.gtce.org.uk/research/assessmenthome.asp

ISBN 1871984688
Further information can be found at:
http://www.nfer-nelson.co.uk/catalogue/catalogue_detail

Bibliography and materials for possible CPD use

Further information can be found at:
http://www.nfer-nelson.co.uk/catalogue/catalogue_detail

Further information can be found at http://mcgraw-hill.co.uk/html/0335206379.html

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Further information can be found at: http://www.heinemann.co.uk/secondary/book

Further information can be found at www.learningunlimited.co.uk

Further information can be found at: http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-047115847X.html


**Journal articles and papers**


Dagley, V, ‘Pupils’ Perceptions of the Efficacy of Target Setting and How it can be Made More Effective’, *Pastoral Care in Education*, 2004, 22, (2), pp. 14–18


**Useful websites**

**Assessment Reform Group**
Further information can be found at [http://arg.educ.cam.ac.uk](http://arg.educ.cam.ac.uk)
Further reading and resources can be found at [http://arg.educ.cam.ac.uk/publications.html](http://arg.educ.cam.ac.uk/publications.html)

**The Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment**
Further information can be found at [http://www.aaia.org.uk](http://www.aaia.org.uk)
Further publications information can be found at [http://www.aaia.org.uk/pubs.htm](http://www.aaia.org.uk/pubs.htm)
Further reading and resources can be found at [http://www.aaia.org.uk/resource.htm](http://www.aaia.org.uk/resource.htm)
Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
This UK government site offers access to essential research findings for teaching staff.
Further information can be found at http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/research

General Teaching Council for England
This organisation has a Research of the Month page where current and sponsored research is summarised.
Further information can be found at http://www.gtce.org.uk/PolicyAndResearch

General Teaching Council for Scotland
The GTC Scotland undertakes and supports a number research projects. It has online access to completed research papers.
Further information can be found at http://www.gtcs.org.uk

King’s College London, Department of Education and Professional Studies
Assessment for Learning section
Further information can be found at http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/education/research/kai.html and http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/education/research/kallearn.html.

Learning and Teaching Scotland
Assessment is for Learning website
Further information can be found at http://www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess


Key documents, links and information on general and specific aspects of the AifL programme can be found at http://www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess/about/keydocuments/index.asp

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
Assessment for Learning: Guidance designed to support staff who wish to integrate the principles of Assessment for Learning into their classroom practice.
Further information can be found at http://www.qca.org.uk/afl

Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED).
Further information can be found at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education
Selected publications:

Evaluation of Project 1 of the Assessment is for Learning Development Programme: Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment, 2004,
This document can be found at www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/

Assessment is for Learning: Development Programme; Personal Learning Plan: 2002–2004; evaluation report can be found at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/

Review of Assessment in Pre-School and 5-14: Summary,
This document can be found at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/3-14assessment/

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
National Assessments are intended for use by teachers to confirm their judgements about pupils’ levels of attainment in English language (reading and writing) and mathematics.
Further information can be found at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/
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Contact details

We welcome your comments on the areas of the AifL programme referred to in this document and/or the Assessment is for Learning programme in general.

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Each authority has an Assessment Coordinator and/or Development Officer(s) who will be able to help in your local area. Further information can be found at:
www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess/contact_us/coordinators.asp
This is version 1 of a self-assessment toolkit, designed to help schools and stage groups, subject departments, faculty groups and individual members of staff to determine how far they have incorporated the principles of Assessment is for Learning into practice.

The toolkit links the 10 statements on the AifL triangle to identified Quality Indicators in *How good is our school?*. Together, they provide a framework for auditing practice within the three strands of AifL – Assessment is for Learning, namely Assessment FOR Learning; Assessment AS Learning; and Assessment OF Learning.

It also provides extracts from and additional references to relevant case studies which give examples of interesting practice in schools. The bibliography lists materials which might be useful for continuing professional development purposes, including selected journal articles, research papers, and related websites.

An online version of this toolkit is available on the AifL website: www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess