



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Assessment arrangements: summer term 2021

Guidance for schools and settings on learner assessment for the summer term 2021 including key considerations to support learner progression and supporting case studies. This relates to normal assessment practice not the arrangements being made for general qualifications this year.

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Introduction

The recently published **supporting information** to the **learning guidance** provides details to schools and settings to help them in their thinking and planning for the summer term. The supporting information highlighted that to create greater space and flexibility to support a more individualised approach to assessment, the legal requirements for end of key stage assessments (Foundation Phase, Key Stages 2 and 3) and the associated Key Stages 2 and 3 moderation will be disapplied for the summer term 2021. The space and flexibility created by this disapplication of end of Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2 and 3 assessments provides the opportunity to approach assessment practices in a different way, in preparation for Curriculum for Wales.

This guidance provides advice on where the focus for assessment should be over the coming term and provides some examples of the types of conversations that should be taking place to support individual learner progression.

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Why we assess

Assessment is intrinsic to curriculum design and its overarching purpose within the curriculum, as outlined in the [Supporting learner progression: assessment guidance](#), is to support every learner to make progress. It is integral to learning and teaching and it requires effective partnerships among all those involved, including the learner.

Assessment for learner progression

Learner progression along a continuum of learning from ages 3 to 16 is central to Curriculum for Wales, with assessment focusing on providing evidence to inform and support learner progression. Assessment plays a fundamental role in enabling each individual learner to make progress at an appropriate pace, ensuring they are supported and challenged accordingly.

‘Progression’ here includes progression in depth and breadth of knowledge, in extending and refining skills and in developing the processes of learning, including independence and resilience.

Assessment in the new curriculum will build on current practice to strengthen the focus on the individual learner so that we can describe more clearly their achievements and strengths, the ways in which they learn, areas for development and any support that may be required to inform next steps in learning and teaching.

Assessment to support learner well-being

Learner well-being is a key focus this coming term. Assessment for learner progression, embedding assessment in day-to-day practice, engaging with the learner and involving them in understanding and then planning their own progression journey can all contribute to supporting learner well-being. As their understanding of their learning and progression becomes deeper, as their sense of autonomy and control becomes stronger and as their capacity and willingness to share responsibility for their learning becomes greater, then their feelings of

well-being are likely to be strengthened. Prompts for further reflection and consideration in this area can be found in [learner well-being and assessment: mutual support systems](#).

How should we assess?

To support individual learner progression, assessment has three main roles:

- supporting individual learners on an ongoing, day-to-day basis
- identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time
- understanding group progress in order to reflect on practice

When planning and delivering learning experiences, schools and practitioners should be clear about the specific role of each assessment being undertaken, and what the evidence and understanding gained from assessment will be used for and why.

Assessment plays a fundamental role in ensuring each individual learner is supported and challenged accordingly. It should contribute to developing a holistic picture of the learner; their strengths, the ways in which they learn, and their areas for development; in order to inform next steps in learning and teaching.

Personalised assessments, as a flexible means of gaining information about reading and numeracy skills in order to support individual learner needs, can contribute to this approach.

The practitioner's professional experience and knowledge of their learners' learning forms the foundations on which to build and share a holistic picture of learners' well-being, their progression to date and their intended next steps in learning.

What should we assess?

Assessment

Usual arrangements

Summer 2021

Foundation Phase: baseline assessment

- Practitioners could use the full Foundation Phase Profile to support their understanding of the learning and development needs of each learner, and use the resource to review progress regularly.

End of Foundation Phase assessment

- Schools will not be required to undertake or record final assessments and National Data Collection will not occur in the 2020/21 academic year.
- It is essential that time and space is made to ensure a learner's learning and development needs are assessed and understood, and that they are supported to move at a pace that is consistent with their own developmental needs. In keeping with the Foundation Phase pedagogical approach, the introduction of more formalised learning in the Foundation Phase is inappropriate and should not be considered.

End of Stage 2 assessments

- Schools will not be required to undertake or record final assessments and National Data Collection will not occur in the 2020/21 academic year.
- It will be for individual schools to determine how best to meet the needs of their learners and to support progression; this should be led by the [six key principles of assessment](#).
- Schools will need to make provision for transition. Professional experience and knowledge of their learners should drive the dialogue to build on and support progression.

End of Key Stage 3

- Schools will not be required to undertake or record final assessments and National Data Collection will not occur in the
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**Usual
arrangements****Summer 2021**

Assessment

2020/21 academic year.

- It will be for individual schools to determine how best to meet the needs of their learners and to support progression; this should be led by the **six key principles of assessment**.
- Schools will need to consider how to support transition between key stages. Professional experience and knowledge of their learners should drive the dialogue to build on and support onward progression.

**Moderation of
teacher
assessment of
Key Stage 2
and Key Stage
3**

- There are no expectations that moderation conversations for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 will be undertaken.
- Schools, however, are able to arrange conversations within their networks to help learner progression across the network or across key stages and are encouraged to do so.

**Personalised
assessments
for reading and
numeracy**

- Requirements around personalised assessments will continue on a reasonable endeavours basis and their use is encouraged to enable teachers to understand and support individual learner needs.

Clear communication

Clear and active communication will need to be at the heart of assessment during this term. To replace information from end of Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2 and 3 assessments, practitioners are encouraged to use their professional experience and understanding of their individual learners to inform open and honest conversations with colleagues, parents/carers, and the learners themselves as a focus for discussing individual learners' needs and a means of feeding back on progression.

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Communicating and engaging with parents/carers

Many parents/carers may be worried about how their children are progressing with the interruption to normal learning over the last school year. Some parents/carers may have concerns about the absence of the usual level descriptors to summarise their child's progress. Actively engaging in two-way communication with parents/carers, explaining the changes this year and supporting them to develop a clear understanding of their child's progression and future needs and how they can support those needs, should be prioritised this summer term. This active engagement will help provide assurances to parents/carers not only around progression but also around their child's well-being, their transition back into school and how they are engaging in learning.

Communicating with parents/carers in this way will be particularly important for those learners transitioning to secondary school or into qualifications years; parents/carers can understand the decisions being taken, particularly where additional support for progression is identified.

Use of a wide range of communication means is encouraged, e.g. virtual face-to-face, written, digital, etc., and these can build on the home–school links already made during distance learning.

Effective reporting

These procedures are a key aspect of good communication with parents/carers.

The provision of reports in respect of all learners will remain a statutory requirement for the 2020/21 school year in order to provide assurances of progress to parents/carers. The particular duties that specify the content for reports about the educational achievement of learners have been amended to a reasonable endeavours basis, reflecting the changes to the end of phase and stage assessments this year.

This change gives schools the enhanced opportunity to provide learner reports that are personalised to encourage motivation and engagement. Drawing on teachers' knowledge of their learners and the information available to them we

encourage using reports to include information about individual learners’:

- general well-being and how they are engaging in learning, particularly in light of the disruption over the past year
- progress, particular strengths, areas for development and next steps in that development

Reports could also include detail of planned activity by the school to support the learner in achieving their next steps, along with details of the support they need at home that will add value to what they do in school and aid progression.

We have published some case studies of good examples of how to approach communicating and engaging, including reporting.

Reporting to parents/carers: Glyncollen Primary School

Reporting to parents/carers: Jubilee Park Primary School

Reporting to parents/carers: Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg

Learning reviews with parents/carers

These are another important and established means of communicating with parents/carers. All schools should maintain dialogue with parents/carers, using the flexibility that virtual meetings can bring to maximise engagement. Where families may not have the technology to support a virtual event a telephone conversation would be an effective alternative.

Transition

Transition conversations held at this time will be critical in helping to support the onward journey of the learner. Practitioners should use their knowledge and experience, as well as trust in their understanding of progression, to hold conversations focusing on the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of progression, with a real focus on next steps in progression and the support needed to achieve this.

Ensuring the well-being needs of all learners should be an important and integral part of the transition process. Conversations should focus on the overall needs and well-being of the learner, with a clear holistic picture of the learner's development and progression across the breadth of the school curriculum being provided.

Opportunities to involve learners in the transition period should be considered.

Under normal circumstances, many Year 6 learners would be offered the opportunity to visit their new school as part of their agreed transition plans. Last year many schools put in place virtual arrangements to support learners in their transition journey. This year it will be for individual schools, in accordance with the **operational guidance** and their local situation at that time, to determine the most appropriate arrangements to support learner transition but we would encourage schools to continue to be innovative and creative in supporting learner well-being as part of effective transition.

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