

A supplement to the ‘proofs’ of the assessment principles developed through a secondary school lens

This document was put together after a query from a secondary school teacher asking if the Assessment Principles, Practices and Proofs in the [NZAI publication of the same name](#) apply to the secondary school sector. The answer of course is yes; the principles, practices and proofs are relevant for students, teachers and schools from Years 1 to 13. In fact, much of it will be relevant for ECE, although that has not been a focus of the Assessment PPP.

However, on examination of the Assessment PPP with a secondary focus, we identified additional indicators that can be added to the Proof columns in Principles 1 to 6, all of which apply to secondary settings. These additional indicators are headed with:

Additional indicators relevant for secondary classrooms

Furthermore, we have added a range of indicators most applicable to assessment for NCEA. These are headed with:

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

You will notice that some of the indicators appear against more than one principle. This is because the principles, while separate, are interconnected. A student or teacher action can be indicative of more than one assessment principle.

We hope that this additional information to supplement the Assessment PPP will further assist schools in evaluating their assessment systems and practices by offering them further concrete examples of what they might expect to find in their secondary teaching and learning environments.

1. Assessment guides improvement in learning and teaching

Principles

- The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning and teaching.
- Assessment in the classroom is integrated with, and acts as the bridge between, learning, teaching and curriculum.
- Students and teachers trust and use effective assessment practices to guide learning and teaching and to make improvements.

Practices

- Students and teachers together consider the impact of a teaching-learning-assessment cycle and discuss what might need to be improved.
- Teachers consider how they can enhance each student's learning and give feedback accordingly.
- Students, teachers, parents/whānau, schools, clusters of schools (kāhui ako), and government agencies consider the evidence of progress, achievement, excellence and equity, and deliberate on what might need to be improved.

Proof

- Students report that they work in partnership with their teachers, using assessment to determine their next steps in learning.
- Teachers' planning refers to or aligns with assessment information, showing intent to meet the diverse needs of students.
- There is evidence of progress for all students.
- There is evidence of improvement in equitable outcomes.
- Local and national curricula are periodically adjusted in response to assessment information.
- Educational agencies use assessment information to contribute to policy and decisions about priorities.

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Students understand that assessment runs on a continuum, from minute-by-minute classroom teacher/self/peer assessment and observations through informal 'tests' to more formal assessments. They understand that it's primarily about improvement – finding out where they are in their learning and where they need to go.
- Students use feedback from others and assessment results to make improvements in their knowledge and skills and are provided with opportunities to do so.
- Teachers have ongoing knowledge of the progress of their students, which they share with them.
- Teacher feedback, oral and written, makes successes and gaps in their learning clear to students.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Students are clear about the requirements of the standards needed to achieve each part of a course.
- Students are clear about the rules and processes for resubmission.
- Students can easily access their NCEA results to check their progress.
- Department/faculty has systems to ensure that teachers are up to date with recording assessment results.

2. Assessment builds student agency

Principles

- Students and teachers are partners in assessment.
- Assessment builds the mana and connectedness of students.
- Assessment recognises and strengthens student agency and engagement.
- Student self-and peer-assessment capability is a vital component of the assessment process.

Practices

- Assessment practices are shared and co-constructed, where possible, between students and teacher.
- Teachers work with students to support them to understand the purpose and practice of all assessment, whether informal or formal.
- Teachers ensure that students have the skills, opportunities and encouragement to work with assessment information, to plan pathways to improvement.
- Teachers teach, support and nurture student self-and peer-assessment capability

Proof

- Students have a positive attitude towards assessment and understand it as being fundamental to their learning.
- Students can describe the purpose of assessments and how assessment helps their learning.
- Students are skilled at analysing their assessment information and working with the teacher to identify their next steps in learning.
- Students are self-and peer-assessment capable.
- Students are confident and self-assured in the learning and assessment processes.

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Teachers work with students where possible to make shared decisions about assessments, their purpose, content and timing.
- Students are fully informed about up-coming assessments, their purpose, content and timing.
- Students look forward to informal progress assessment as an opportunity to find out what they need to work on next.
- Students are taught how to analyse assessment information so that they can use it for improvement.
- Students have resources and strategies to ensure that they can assess their own work, and that of their peers.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Students understand how NCEA works, for both internal and external assessments.
- Students know and are clear about the NCEA standards available in each course.
- Students know how the standards work towards assessing their overall knowledge and skills in the subject.
- Teachers support students to assess their progress and achievement against the standards.
- Students have access to good exemplars of the standards required.
- Students have milestones that are used frequently to check progress.

3. Necessary and sufficient evidence of progress and achievement is gathered using a range of assessment approaches.

Principles

- A range of assessment approaches is important to gain a comprehensive picture of areas of progress, areas requiring attention, and the pattern of each student's pathway of progress.
- The validity of assessment information is enhanced when it includes multiple perspectives/sources and a range of approaches.
- Overassessment is avoided through ensuring that formal assessments are both necessary and, in aggregate, sufficient.
- The formality and rigour of assessments are related to the immediacy of the need for the results to guide learning and teaching. Generally, more immediate needs for assessment information tend to use less formal assessment approaches.

Practices

- Teachers and students gather and use assessment information from a range of sources using informal approaches, for example:
 - teacher observations
 - portfolios of work
 - students' own views of their learning and achievement and the results of more formal assessment, for example:
 - standardised tests
 - national assessment resources.
 - anecdotal notes
 - teacher-made tests/exercises/activities
- Teachers and students negotiate informal and formal methods of assessment to guide teaching and learning.
- Teachers and schools ensure that each formal assessment is necessary to provide, in total, sufficient information.
- Informal 'moment-by-moment' assessment is often sufficient to guide the next learning or teaching step.

Proof

- The use of multiple assessment approaches is part of a school's assessment policy.
- Students, teachers and parents/whānau have access to assessment information that has been gathered from a range of sources and is trusted to reliably indicate progress and achievement.
- Teachers are comfortable with explaining why each formal assessment they use is necessary.

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Students have a range of opportunities and assessment modes to demonstrate their progress and achievement.
- Teachers use more formal assessment results to support in-class assessments.
- Teachers investigate discrepancies between informal and formal results.
- Teacher/faculty/department has the balance right between teaching, learning and assessment, so that each supports the other.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Students understand how NCEA works, and how they will be assessed against both internal and external standards.
- Students know how their progress will be assessed during the teaching cycle, leading up to the final assessment activity itself. Some examples are self and peer assessment against exemplars, class tests, practice assessment activities.
- Students understand that the quality of their response is more important than the length.

4. Curriculum is interconnected with learning, teaching and assessment.

Principles

- Assessment policies and practices reflect the beliefs, values and expectations of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) which is at the heart of our schooling system.
- Assessment of localised curricula is customised by schools to reflect the learning contexts that suit their students and their environment.

Practices

- Teachers know NZC curriculum expectations and guide students' learning towards them.
- Teachers make curriculum expectations clear to students and assess students against them.
- Schools access the knowledge of their students, parents/whānau and community to customise the curriculum and assessment approaches to local contexts.

Proof

- School policies on assessment follow the expectations of the NZC.
- Students experience the curriculum as relevant and important. Their engagement is strong.
- The effectiveness of assessment practices is monitored and confirmed by school self-review, ERO reports and research.

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Teachers and students are clear about curriculum expectations in a given subject.
- Teachers are able to assess student progress and achievement against these expectations and teach students how to do so.
- Students are clear about the progressions of learning in a given subject.
- Teachers integrate the key competencies and other aspects of the curriculum, including the vision, values and principles, with the learning areas.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Teachers and students are clear about the requirements of the achievement standards available for a given subject and level, and how they relate to the curriculum and the learning matrix.
- Students have an outline of the course and each standard that is used, and have appropriate criteria against which to check their progress.
- Students understand the knowledge and skills that are assessed through each standard and how these relate to those assessed against other standards.

5. Assessment is fair and serves the learning of all students.

Principles

- Assessment is appropriate, responsive and fair to the diversity of students.
- Assessment responds to the whole child, their cultural identity and their cognitive, physical and social development.

Practices

- Assessment tasks are designed to measure the diverse skills of students.
- All students have equitable opportunities to show what is important to them and their parents/whānau, who they are, what they know, and what they can do.
- Teachers seek the views of students and parents/whānau on what is important to assess, to ensure there is an equitable representation of diversity.
- The mode and content of assessments are appropriate for different groups and individuals.

Proof

- Students report that assessment approaches and tasks are meaningful, appropriate and relevant for them.
- Students can relate to assessment tasks and have equitable opportunities to show who they are and what they know and can do.
- Students report that assessment is fair.

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Assessment tasks and activities are relevant to the lives of the students in a given setting.
- Alternatives or options are provided, where possible, to meet the diverse and variable needs of all students: for example, in stimulus material.
- Students have a choice of methods or approaches, where possible, through which they can demonstrate their learning.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Internal assessments provide equitable opportunities for the range of students in a given class to demonstrate what they know and can do.
- Internal moderation procedures ensure equitable marking practices.
- Reassessment opportunities are provided for students according to the NZQA Assessment and Examination Rules and Procedures.
- Students are prepared to respond to a wide range of possibilities in their external assessment activities and examinations.

6. Assessment information is dependable.

Principles

- Judgments on progress and achievement are made on dependable (valid and reliable) assessment information.
- Flexible assessment processes in all but standardised and external examinations ensure that assessment results reflect the capability of each student.

Practices

- Teachers use their knowledge of curriculum expectations and effective assessment to make dependable assessment judgments.
- Teachers are supported in the use of informal and formal assessments to gather, collate and analyse dependable data.
- Teachers use their knowledge of students, adaptable assessment processes and evidence from a range of assessment to ensure that assessment judgments best reflect student capability.
- Teachers work with students to support the accuracy of students' self and peer assessment capability.
- Formal assessment is based on assessment methodologies that have known dependability including moderation processes.

Proof

- Information from a range of assessment sources, considered alongside each other, provides a dependable basis for guiding teaching and learning, and identifying progress and achievement in appropriate formats for use at different tiers of the system (classroom, school and government agencies).
- Assessment decisions are trusted by stakeholders (e.g. new teacher trusts assessment results of previous teacher, whānau trust assessment information provided by teachers.).

Additional indicators relevant for secondary settings

- Teachers know when and how to use appropriate assessment tools, ranging from informal to formal, in order to make dependable judgments.
- Teachers understand all aspects of administration, marking and interpretation of formal assessments, using materials in accordance with guidelines.
- Teachers can explain all relevant statistical terms – norm, mean, standard deviation, stanine, validity, reliability etc.
- Teachers can support their assessment decisions with evidence.
- Teachers have access to collegial assistance or professional development to further their assessment capability.
- Moderation of results is carried out with colleagues. Routine cross-checks are made on marking and data entry accuracy.
- Students have a range of opportunities and modes by which to show their progress and achievement.
- Students have opportunities to challenge assessment decisions.

Additional indicators most relevant for assessment for NCEA

- Teachers have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the standards required at each level.
- Department/faculty moderation procedures ensure dependable marking of internal assessments.
- Reassessment and resubmission opportunities are provided for students according to the NZQA Assessment and Examination Rules and Procedures.
- Students understand how external assessments will be marked and assessed.

7. Assessment information is essential at all tiers of the education system.

Assessment capability for all tiers of the education system is detailed in the Principles, Practices and Proofs described above in numbers 1 to 6, as summarised in number 7 in the Assessment PPP.