

Key principles of EIS policy on assessment

- Formative assessment based on teacher professional judgement should be the central approach until pupils reach the senior phase and are at the stage of sitting qualifications as set by external bodies.
- Confidence in and the reliability of teacher professional judgement should be developed through professional dialogue at all stages in the learning and teaching process.
- This must be supported by the provision of allocated time for meaningful moderation activities, including the planning of assessment and understanding of standards.
- Teacher professionalism and autonomy in determining how and when to assess learners are of key importance.
- Assessment methodology and the timing of assessment should be tailored to the particular learning needs of individual pupils.
- It is therefore unlikely to be appropriate for whole cohorts or classes of pupils to be assessed at the same time using the same assessment tool.
- Standardised tests/ assessments can be useful diagnostic tools but are of limited value to learning, teaching and assessment as a whole.
- The use of any kind of standardised tests/assessments in schools should therefore be limited.
- The use of standardised testing/ assessment for the purposes of data-gathering to enable the setting and streaming of pupils by ability, school to school comparison, or the creation of accountability measures is not in the interests of learning and teaching.
- Where standardised tests/ assessments are in use, their results should not be treated as an exclusive measure of learners' progress and achievement.
- Assessment judgements should be based on a range of assessment conducted over the period of time in which a pupil has been working within a particular CfE level.

- This broad approach to assessment should be reflected in reporting to parents and carers, with information being fully contextualised- no single item of assessment data should be reported in isolation.
- At points of transition, time should be made available to teachers to share this assessment information to support future learning.

Taking account of the 'Achieving a Level' advice from Education Scotland, assessment policy should reflect a commitment to the provision of time for teachers to collaborate in the planning of learning and assessment; to observe learning and assessment in process; and to evaluate outcomes collaboratively to ensure a shared understanding of, and reliable information gathered from, assessment to support further progress by learners. Such commitment should be reflected also in Working Time Agreements.

The policy should also reflect a commitment by the local authority to offer opportunities for professional learning for teachers in a range of assessment approaches and practices, and to support moderation and understanding of standards: through moderation within primary schools; among primary schools in a cluster; within and across departments in secondary schools; across secondary departments within a learning community; and across sectors.