



ASSESSMENT IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS

Glossary of Terms

This Glossary has been developed as a result of on-going discussions with project experts during the project. It is therefore a glossary of 'working definitions' that were applied in the project. Often the descriptions of terms have been reached through a process of compromise as specific terms may be used in different ways in different languages and also country situations.

Assessment - Assessment refers to the ways teachers or other professionals systematically collect and use information about a pupil's level of achievement and/or development in different areas of their educational experience (academic, behaviour or social).

Assessment Adaptation / Modification / Accommodation - an alteration in the way a general assessment is done or test is applied. The purpose assessment accommodation is to allow the pupils with SEN to show what they know or can do by removing the barriers that may be intrinsic in the assessment itself (for example, providing written test question orally to pupils with visual impairments).

Assessment for Learning - is used in a general way in many countries to refer to qualitative assessments assessment procedures carried out in classrooms, mainly by class teachers and the professionals that work with class teachers that inform decision-making about teaching methods and next steps in a pupil's learning. However, it has a very specific meaning with the UK (England) context - the Assessment Reform Group (2002) defines *Assessment for learning* as the 'process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there'.

Baseline assessment - a first assessment in either a general, or of a specific area of functioning to determine a pupil's profile of strengths and weaknesses at a particular time. Baseline assessments are often given at the start of teaching and learning programmes and are used as a starting 'measure' to assess progress over a period of time.

Curriculum based assessment - assessment linked to programmes of learning; used to inform teachers about the learning progress and difficulties of their pupils in relation to the programme of study, so they can make decisions about what a pupil needs to learn next and how to teach that material.

Diagnosis - is one particular use or purpose of assessment information where the information is used to identify particular strengths and weaknesses a pupil may have in one or more areas of their functioning. Diagnosis often implies the collection and interpretation of information from a medical perspective, although educational 'diagnosis' also occurs. Diagnosis is often one aspect of assessment processes linked to initial identification of special educational needs.

Evaluation - a teacher or other professional reflecting upon all the factors involved in the whole teaching and learning process (which may include assessment of pupils' learning) in order to make decisions about next steps in their work.



Initial identification - recognition/detection of possible special educational needs (SEN) in a pupil. This recognition leads to the process of collecting systematic information that can be used to develop a profile of strengths, weaknesses and needs the pupils may have. Initial identification of SEN may be linked to other assessment procedures and it may involve professionals outside of the mainstream school (including health professionals). In most countries there is separate legislation directly the procedures for initial identification of SEN.

Measurement - refers to assessment that is linked to some form of numerical quantifier (a score, mark or grade). Usually measurement implies some possibility to compare one pupil's score/mark against others.

Needs based assessment - is a decision-making process in which an assessor analyses the pupil's learning difficulties and tries to find possible explanations in order to make recommendations that can solve these problems. These recommendations are often used as the basis for an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

On-going assessment - assessment procedures carried out in classrooms, mainly by class teachers and the professionals that work with class teachers that inform decision-making about teaching methods and next steps in a pupil's learning. The term *formative assessment* relates to the idea of on-going assessment.

Process oriented assessment - assessment that aims at developing pupil learning through change or improvement in their learning environment. The methods associated with this form of assessment are usually pupil oriented, for example pupil interviews, portfolios etc.

Screening - is a preliminary process for identifying pupils who may be at risk of future difficulty in a particular area and who therefore maybe a priority for intervention. Screening is intended for all the pupils and so the measures/tests used are usually inexpensive, quick and easy to administer, and easy to interpret. Screening is often the first step to further, more detailed assessment (diagnostic tests etc).

Specialist / multidisciplinary assessment teams - teams of professionals from different specialisms (educational, psychological, social, health etc) who can assess a pupil in different ways and then contribute to a broader, multi-disciplinary assessment information that will inform decisions about their future learning.

Standardised assessment - the collection of quantifiable information about a pupil's achievement that relates to a fixed test with a scale of possible scores. The test and scoring scales are standardised by trialling them with a large number of pupils so they are reliable (i.e. will produce the same results consistently over time) and also valid (i.e. measures what they are supposed to).

Summative assessment – a 'one-off' used to get a snapshot of a pupil's level of achievement in relation to a programme of study. Usually, summative assessment is carried out at the end of a period of time, or the end of a programme of study. It is frequently quantitative and is often associated with a mark or grade that provides a comparison of the pupil's achievement in relation to other pupils. The term 'product oriented' assessment is often linked to summative assessment.

Testing - is one possible method of assessing a pupil's learning in specific areas.



Tests are quite specific and are linked to very particular circumstances and used for specific reasons.