



Key stage 2 primary assessment webinar: summary

This document summarises the questions and answers from a live webinar on key stage 2 (KS2) primary assessment, broadcast on Tuesday 15 November 2016. A recording of the webinar is available to [watch online](#).

Due to the high number of questions submitted, the panel was unable to answer every question in the time available. The questions asked reflected the broad themes of those received, as well as addressing questions submitted in advance.

We have grouped the questions into topics and included a summary of the answers. If you wish to watch a specific answer within the webinar recording, a corresponding time signature is provided at the end of each question.

Accountability

1. What are the changes for the 2016 accountability measures? (5:48)

- A new 'expected standard' was introduced for 2016 to set a clear aspiration for more pupils achieving well at primary school and leaving ready to make a successful start at secondary school.
- We have also introduced new progress measures and increased the emphasis on progress that pupils make compared to those with similar prior attainment nationally as this is a fairer way of evaluating school performance.
- New attainment and progress measures will be published in performance tables in December 2016. It is only then we can identify schools that have not met the floor standard.
- In 2016, a school will be above the floor if: at least 65% of pupils meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics; or the school achieves sufficient progress scores in all 3 subjects. For each school, a progress measure will be published for each subject.
- Pupils are allocated to prior attainment groups based on KS1 results. Their KS2 result is then compared to pupils nationally in the same key stage 1 prior attainment group. This should ensure all pupils are stretched throughout the range of attainment.
- [The Secretary of State made a commitment, in her statement to parliament on 19 October 2016, that no decisions on intervention would be taken on the basis of 2016 data alone. Regional Schools Commissioners and local authorities will work together with the current leaders of the small minority of primary schools below the floor or coasting to help and support the schools to move forward in a positive direction.]

- 2. Is progress being measured in the same way as last year? Can we use the same progress measures from last year as prediction measures for this year? (17:08)**
- We have moved away from the previous 'expected progress' measure based on pupils making at least two levels of progress between key stage 1 and 2. The new progress measures are school level value added measures, which means that any progress pupils make contributes towards the school's progress score. It is important to highlight that pupil level scores are only calculated for the purpose of creating the school level measures, and there are no expectations for the progress individual pupils should make.
- 3. Can you explain the definition of a 'coasting' school? (26:24)**
- The definition has been published in the [Primary accountability technical guidance](#) but is subject to parliament agreeing it.
 - It is a measure that looks at 3 years of data to identify schools that are not stretching pupils over time. The first primary schools will be identified when updated performance tables are published in December 2016.
 - Both progress and attainment measures will be looked at across the 3 years.
- 4. If my school is identified as 'coasting' could it be forced to become an academy? (36:46)**
- Once the coasting schools are identified, the first step will be for the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to get in touch to see what support can be provided. An RSC may conclude a school is supporting pupils well or has a sufficient plan and the capacity to improve, and therefore no further support is required at that stage.
 - Where additional support is needed, the RSC will work with the school to arrange this. In some cases, the RSC may consider that a more formal approach is needed. In a small number of cases, they may direct a school to become an academy but we expect this to be in a minority of cases. It is not an automatic process.

Access arrangements

- 5. Are there going to be any changes to the additional time questions in 2017? (9:20)**
- In recent years there has been a move from a database system to a set of 7 questions for teachers to answer. Aside from minor alterations to one of the questions regarding handwriting, the system will remain the same this year.
 - Applications for additional time open on 30 January 2017.
- 6. If we apply for a timetable variation should we wait for all tests to be completed before sealing the script bag? (37:40)**
- Schools should seal test scripts in the transparent inner script bag(s) on the day the tests were taken. If tests are administered on an alternative day, they should be returned within the outer test script bag, on top of the attendance register and sealed transparent inner bag(s). 'Attendance register and script despatch instructions' will be published online and sent with stationery packs.

- Schools will also receive 4 inner green bags for modified scripts or scripts with additional elements, such as transcripts.

Moderation

7. Will there be clarification on evidence needed to support a school's judgement that a pupil has a physical disability and should be excluded from the handwriting standard? (14:13)

- No further advice is planned. All judgements should be based on normal classroom practice and this should be used as evidence during moderation visits.

8. Why can't we ask schools for their rank ordered lists of pupils before a moderation visit? (30:13)

- Local authorities (LAs) must not ask for data in advance, or pick pupils in advance, to reduce the burden on schools.
- If the LA can demonstrate they have a written agreement with schools, they can pick pupils half a day in advance. However, they must make clear that this is not a STA requirement and we would expect the majority to pick pupils on the day.

9. How can you ensure moderation is consistent across LAs? (40:07)

- [External moderation guidance](#) is available online.
- LA events are being held throughout November to ensure LAs are able to clarify any queries they may have prior to training moderators.
- Every moderator will take part in national standardisation exercises provided by STA.

Teacher assessment (TA)

10. Last year, DfE changed the expected standard for handwriting, what is the situation this year? (8:38)

- As in 2016, a pupil doesn't have to show joined up handwriting to make the expected standard but does have to for the greater depth standard.

11. Are the handwriting criteria in the interim TA frameworks applicable this year? (21:54)

- The arrangements from 2016 remain; the criteria apply for pupils working at greater depth but not for those working at the expected standard.

12. At KS2, can resources be used if it is normal classroom practice and if the pupils access them independently? (22:24)

- TA guidance remains the same as last year; pupils are allowed to access resources, such as dictionaries, as long as it is normal practice and done independently.
- The only change from last year is that work is not independent if there has been direct teacher intervention, but peer and self-review is allowed.

- Success criteria and learning objectives are allowed but if they detail what the pupil should be writing and how, that is classed as over-aiding. Moderators will be trained to recognise when work is over-scaffolded.

Test development and materials

13. Are there plans to provide schools with information given to markers in addition to the mark schemes? (4:46)

- As these materials are delivered to markers during their training, they will not be released to schools.
- Schools can download mark schemes after the testing period to inform their decisions on sending test papers for review.

14. Is the 2017 KS2 English reading test likely to be as challenging as the 2016 paper in terms of text choices and vocabulary? (12:43)

- The skills pupils need to show to achieve the expected standard remain the same to reflect the more challenging new curriculum. The test is still designed so that the texts and the questions get progressively harder.
- However, particular attention has been paid to how pupils experience the test this time around to make it more accessible, while maintaining the integrity of the test.

15. Will there be sample papers provided this year? (24:13)

- No sample papers will be provided this year. Schools should use the previous sample materials and the 2016 tests to familiarise pupils with the tests. [Practice materials](#) are available in a collection on GOV.UK.

16. How are national curriculum tests developed? (34:28)

- We work to frameworks which teachers can access ([test frameworks](#)). These describe the structure of the tests and how they will measure performance on the national curriculum for the particular subject. At the start of the development process, item writing experts produce questions based on the test specifications in the frameworks. These questions ('items') are then reviewed by a series of panels. Curriculum experts, teachers, headteachers and inclusion specialists are involved throughout this stage to ensure the items and tests are appropriate. In addition to the expert reviews there are 2 large scale trials with representative samples of schools, after which the data is analysed. Once the tests have been taken by pupils, further analysis is undertaken to confirm the number of marks required to meet the expected standard on the test and to maintain the standard from year to year. The whole process takes 3 years and is regulated by Ofqual.
- A handbook detailing these processes will be available in spring 2017.

Assessment policy

17. Why consult on primary assessment now - after many changes have already been implemented? (10:24)

- In a statement in October the Secretary of State for Education confirmed that there will be no new national tests or assessments introduced before the 2018 to 2019 academic year, and announced a consultation on the primary assessment system in early 2017.
- Now is a good opportunity to look at where we are in terms of the reform programme and work with stakeholders to develop a vision for the future of primary assessment.
- We urge everyone to take part in the consultation which, among other things, is likely to cover the starting point for measuring progress and the role and operation of TA.

18. Should we continue to use P scales to assess pupils with special educational needs? (15:16)

- [The Rochford Review](#) looked at assessment of pupils working below the standard of the tests, and the outcome was published in October.
- The review recommended that we stop using P scales but, to allow time for us to consult on this, they should continue to be used by schools in the current academic year.

19. Why has the government done a U-turn on the decision to introduce year 7 resits? (20:24)

- The Secretary of State for Education has made it clear that the government doesn't intend to introduce mandatory resits. Having discussed the matter with stakeholders, it has been decided that there are better ways to help pupils to catch up.
- High quality resit materials will be made available to secondary schools and the wider department is working on evidence-based catch-up strategies.

20. What does 'no new tests before 2018' actually mean? (25:21)

- No new national tests or assessments will be introduced before the 2018 to 2019 academic year, to leave time to consult and provide stability for schools. This includes any mandatory baseline assessment in reception, if taken forward, and the multiplication tables check.

21. When is the new multiplication tables check going to be introduced? (32:11)

- This will not be introduced before the 2018 to 2019 academic year.
- Our priority is to make it as easy for schools to administer as possible, so we are conducting on-screen trialling and development work.
- We are aware of the particular challenges for pupils with special educational needs and smaller schools with limited internet.
- It is likely that discussion about the implementation of the check will feature within the forthcoming primary assessment consultation.

Maladministration

22. If my school was subject to a maladministration investigation would I know? (28:57)

- This depends on the type of allegation and your position within the school. The school will not be informed of where allegations come from.

23. How are cases of maladministration investigated? (18:36)

- STA receives allegations from various sources and each one is investigated, but the steps we take depend on the nature of the allegation.
- Investigations can include visits to the school, interviews with staff and analysis of scripts. Schools may, or may not, be aware that they are being investigated.
- All investigations are confidential, as are any concerns raised with STA.

Further information

For further information about primary assessment at key stage 2, visit www.gov.uk/STA.

For general enquiries, you should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

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