

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT
AND
REPORTING POLICY
2003



Department of Education

Issued free to schools by the Department of Education

Published in 2003 by the Department of Education, Papua New Guinea

© Copyright 2003, Department of Education, Papua New Guinea

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN

Acknowledgements

The Department of Education acknowledges the work of the Curriculum Development Division of the Department of Education who prepared the National Assessment and Reporting Policy.

Consultations occurred in April 2002 in all regions and representatives of teachers, principals, and inspectors from all levels of schooling and elementary teacher trainers, teacher educators, and many other key stakeholders contributed to this document.

This document was developed with the support of the Australian Government through the Curriculum Reform Implementation Project.

Secretary's Message

This policy identifies the principles and practices that must be applied to the assessment and reporting of student achievement from Elementary to Grade 12. It also identifies the roles and responsibilities of those stakeholders who are most concerned with assessing students, reporting student achievements and with receiving and using student assessment information. Students, parents, guardians, members of a community, and various stakeholders have responsibilities to ensure that assessment and reporting is undertaken in ways that meet the needs of students, schools, communities, and the nation. This policy must be read and applied carefully to ensure that assessment and reporting is valid, reliable, fair and equitable.

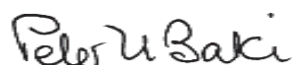
The *National Curriculum Statement* promotes outcomes-based education. All subject syllabuses at all grades from Elementary to Senior Secondary will use this approach. Teachers, and where appropriate, the Measurement Services Unit will base their assessment and reporting on the learning outcomes described in the syllabuses.

Criterion-referenced assessment methods are most compatible with outcomes-based education. Assessors making internal and external assessments should use this approach and will need to make explicit the criteria used to judge the performance of students. At the school level, teachers will use a broad range of assessment methods to assess their students. Criteria will need to be identified in order to assess achievement and report information that will assist students to improve their performance.

Norm-referenced approaches are appropriate in the design of external assessments and to report student achievement data so that valid and reliable comparisons can be made. When assessment data are used for selection purposes or for monitoring performance, norm referenced assessment approaches shall be used.

Whatever approach is used the information gained from assessments must be reported accurately against criteria so that students, parents and guardians, employers and other interested groups and persons can confidently use the information for the purposes intended. Formal reporting to parents and guardians will vary depending on the level of schooling. Schools should present reports in ways that are suitable for their communities to read and understand.

I approve the National Policy for Assessment and Reporting and require its use at all levels of schooling and by all persons and authorities within our education system with responsibility for assessment and reporting of student achievement.



Peter M. Baki
Secretary for Education

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

1 . INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guineans have always used practical and meaningful ways of developing young people within the community. This assessment and reporting policy, along with the *National Curriculum Statement* (2002) builds upon this community experience. The *National Curriculum Statement* (2002) is based on the agreed learning outcomes, which are relevant to individuals in their communities. These learning outcomes are student-centred and written in terms that “enable them to be demonstrated, assessed and measured.” *National Curriculum Statement* (2002, p 42).

This national policy sets out the required assessment and reporting processes that will be implemented consistently across all levels of schooling in all provinces.

The assessment and reporting policy will build upon Papua New Guinean values. Assessment will be continuous at all levels of schooling: Elementary, Primary and Secondary, and will take into account Papua New Guinean values and cultural practices where appropriate.

Assessment is the ongoing process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students’ achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reporting is communicating clearly to students, parents, guardians, teachers and others, the information gained from assessing students’ learning.

2. RATIONALE

The need for curriculum reform was first raised in the ministerial committee report titled, *A Philosophy of Education for Papua New Guinea* (1986). The *National Curriculum Statement* (2002) highlights the many aspects of reform that are part of the *National Education Plan (1995-2000)*. The reform curriculum sets out the new expectations for learning by all our young people in schools. It values all subjects, is outcomes based, and requires fair and consistent assessment and reporting. This National Assessment and Reporting Policy guides all stakeholders so that a systematic process is achieved across the country.

3. PURPOSES

The purposes of assessment and reporting are to ensure that:

- feedback is provided to the individual learner and the teacher on students' progress towards achievement of the learning outcomes;
- students improve their standards of achievement by knowing what they do well and where they need to improve;
- evidence gathered from assessments is monitored and used by teachers to improve their teaching and help students raise their standards of achievement;
- assessment information is reported to parents, guardians and other stakeholders to enhance their understanding of students' standards of achievement; and
- reports are used to inform students' choices of suitable careers and selection for educational progression and employment.

4. PRINCIPLES

These principles will direct the process of assessment and reporting in schools.

4.1 Assessment and Reporting are continuous and based on learning outcomes.

In practice this means that teachers:

- identify assessment activities based on the learning outcomes described in the syllabuses;
- plan a series of assessment activities within term and yearly assessment programs;
- provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes;
- use professional judgment to make decisions about students' learning progress; and
- provide additional support to those students who require assistance.

4.2 Assessment and Reporting are appropriate for Papua New Guinea.

In practice this means that teachers:

- design assessment activities that take into account Papua New Guinean cultural values and practices where appropriate.

4.3 Assessment and Reporting will be based on a balanced approach.

In practice this means that teachers:

- use a range of assessment methods appropriate to individual needs and levels of schooling;
- assess students as individuals and as members in a group; and
- place emphasis on both theoretical and practical assessments.

4.4 Assessment and Reporting must be manageable.

In practice this means that teachers:

- plan in consideration of other school activities when arranging the assessment and reporting programs; and
- develop assessment plans that are realistic and meet the needs of students and teachers.

4.5 Assessment and Reporting must be fair and equitable.

In practice this means that teachers:

- use assessment and reporting methods that are fair, sensitive and broad enough to cater for differences in gender, culture, language, religion, socio-economic status and geographical location; and
- take into account special needs of individual students.

4.6 Assessment and Reporting must be valid and reliable.

In practice this means that teachers:

- develop assessment activities that are integral to teaching activities and learning outcomes and appropriate to different subjects and levels of schooling;
- use a variety of strategies to assess and communicate the range of student achievement described in the syllabus learning outcomes; and
- gather a range of suitable evidence to make accurate decisions about students' achievements.

5. ASSESSMENT, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Assessment should reflect students' achievement of the learning outcomes described in the syllabuses. The assessment and reporting process requires teachers to select appropriate methods of assessment, recording and reporting as approved from time to time by the appropriate Board of Studies. Assessment will be carried out continuously at all levels from Elementary Prep through to Grade 12 and will be used to gather information concerning individual students' learning and achievement.

Assessment will be criterion-referenced and will provide information on the actual learning that has taken place. This information will be used to enhance further teaching and learning and will be reported to parents, guardians, teachers and students.

At Grade 8 external assessment may also be administered to gather information on a national scale concerning student achievement. This information will be reported to parents, guardians, teachers, students, employers and others in the form of national certificates of achievement.

At Grades 10 and 12 assessment may be nationally moderated using an external examination. At these levels, assessment data will be used in a norm-referenced manner to provide a national grade of achievement. This information will be reported to parents, guardians, teachers, students, selectors, employers and others in the form of national certificates of achievement.

5.1 Assessment

Teachers will use a range of assessment methods to gather evidence of students' learning through formal and informal assessment. Assessment is primarily undertaken by the teacher and enriched by student self and peer assessment, community based assessment and external assessment. Schools will plan an assessment and reporting program, which includes the methods of assessment and reporting to be used in the different subjects and grades.

5.2 Recording

Records must describe the students' achievement of the learning outcomes for the purposes of:

- checking students' progress;
- planning and programming future learning;
- reporting students' progress or achievement to parents, guardians and others; and
- informing students about their progress.

Teachers will use a range of appropriate recording methods to gather evidence of students' achievements of the outcomes.

5.3 Reporting

Reporting of students' achievements to parents, guardians, teachers, students and others must be fair and accurate. Reporting will also support teaching and learning by providing information about students' learning and achievement at each level of schooling. Formal reporting to parents and guardians will vary depending on the level of schooling. Schools will present reports in a format that best suits their communities. Schools must complete and maintain national student record cards for each level of schooling.

5.3.1 A formal school report must include:

- a written record of learning outcomes achieved by students since the previous report;
- a written record of the learning outcomes the student is now working towards; and
- information about students' attitudes, values and other additional information that is specific to individual students.

5.3.2 National certificates will:

- be awarded on the completion of Primary (Grade 8), Lower Secondary (Grade 10) and Upper Secondary (Grade 12);
- be issued by the school and will report achievement in areas that are assessed by the school only, including information concerning attitudes and values as well as other achievements; and
- be issued by the National Department of Education and will report relative achievement in those subjects that are externally examined and moderated.

5.4 Evaluation

Each of the stakeholders, described in section six of this policy, have a role to play in using assessment information to make judgements about students' achievements. Analysis of assessment data must be used to inform decisions about:

- the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment programs;
- the suitability of available resources;
- the degree of community participation in schools;
- trends in student achievement at local, provincial and national levels; and
- the contribution of the education system to the future development of the nation.

Evaluation is part of the process of continuously raising standards of student achievement in Papua New Guinea. Assessment information used for evaluation purposes should be used in ethical and constructive ways.

6 . ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Many stakeholders have roles and responsibilities relating to assessment and reporting from Elementary to Secondary school. Some of these people will be heavily involved in the process of assessment and reporting while others will use the information as a basis to make decisions.

The groups referred to on the following pages have common roles and responsibilities for a number of aspects of the assessment and reporting policy. They should ensure that:

- all assessment and reporting is valid and reliable;
- assessment and reporting takes into account Papua New Guinean values and cultural practices where appropriate;
- this National Assessment and Reporting Policy is fully implemented;
- certification awarded reflects students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and other relevant achievements;
- assessment records are used to help students' progression to the next level of education and/or training; and
- they contribute to the ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review of the National Assessment and Reporting Policy.

In addition the specific roles and responsibilities of the groups are listed on the following pages.

6.1 Teachers have a responsibility to:

- develop and implement effective school assessment and reporting practices within school assessment and reporting programs;
- discuss with students the assessment, recording and reporting procedures that meet the learning needs of individuals and groups of students;
- develop students' knowledge, skills and understanding of effective assessment and reporting methods;
- maintain and share relevant records of student progress whilst maintaining confidentiality where appropriate;
- plan tasks and activities, which provide sufficient evidence to show that particular learning outcomes have been achieved;
- report students' progress and achievements to students, parents, guardians, teachers and others;
- use assessment information to inform and enhance their teaching and learning practices;
- use assessment information to guide students to career paths; and
- make valid reports on students' achievement of outcomes, attitudes and values using the appropriate reporting or certification systems.

6.2 School Assessment Coordinators have a responsibility to:

- facilitate the development and implementation of the school's assessment and reporting policy and programs;
- work with other teachers to contribute to a coordinated whole school approach to assessment and reporting; and
- lead in identifying and developing good assessment and reporting practice.

6.3 Head Teachers and Teachers in Charge of schools have a responsibility to:

- plan and manage the implementation of the National Assessment and Reporting Policy in their schools;
- allocate responsibility to senior assessment coordinators for developing and implementing the school assessment and reporting policy;
- ensure that all members of the school community have a good knowledge and understanding of the school assessment and reporting policy;
- ensure that all teachers are supported to effectively implement the school assessment and reporting policy;
- ensure that their schools meet examination and certification requirements; and
- maintain archives of records of past students' results.

6.4 Local Curriculum Committees have a responsibility to:

- assist teachers to define the learning outcomes for approved school-based curriculum, which will form the basis for assessment and reporting;
- assist teachers, where appropriate, to develop a variety of local assessment methods to assess the students' knowledge, skills, attitudes and values; and
- work with teachers to use information gathered through assessment to improve teaching and learning.

6.5 Boards of Management /Boards of Governors and Governing Councils have a responsibility to:

- ensure that parent, guardian and teacher interviews and student and teacher conferences are carried out; and
- ensure that parents and guardians are correctly informed about students' progress.

6.6 Provincial Education Advisors and District Education Officers have a responsibility to:

- work with head teachers to ensure that the National Assessment and Reporting Policy is implemented;
- coordinate and administer support to schools as they implement their school assessment and reporting policies;
- assist schools to monitor the implementation of their school assessment and reporting policies; and
- ensure that examination and certification requirements are met.

6.7 School Inspectors have a responsibility to:

- ensure that assessment and reporting are carried out according to the requirements of this policy;
- ensure that schools and students meet examination and certification requirements;
- provide support through training and in-service on assessment and reporting policy, programs and procedures;
- monitor the implementation of school assessment and reporting policies in schools.

6.8 Guidance Officers and School

Counsellors have a responsibility to:

- use assessment information to help students make informed decisions;
- use psychological test information to help teachers provide appropriate academic and vocational guidance to students;
- help teachers interpret test results in order to make informed decisions about their students;
- give information about probable strengths and weaknesses to those responsible for selecting students for training or a job; and
- guide students and teachers about students' relative abilities, achievements and performance.

6.9 Curriculum Officers have a responsibility to:

- compile the learning outcomes for approved national subject syllabuses which form the basis of national assessment and reporting;
- develop curriculum and assessment and reporting support materials;
- ensure that national examinations reflect the syllabus learning outcomes; and
- assist with monitoring and implementation of the National Assessment and Reporting Policy in schools.

6.10 Subject Advisory Committees have a responsibility to:

- make recommendations about draft syllabuses and support materials that guide assessment and reporting;
- make recommendations about appropriate assessment and reporting procedures to assess and report learning outcomes achieved by students; and
- recommend specifications, weightings and special conditions for national examinations in the relevant subjects.

6.11 Boards of Studies have a responsibility to:

- advise the Secretary for Education about the curriculum content, standards and examinations within the national education system.

6.12 Measurement Services Unit (MSU) has a responsibility to:

- implement a national examination system according to the policies approved by the Boards of Studies at appropriate levels;
- develop support materials to ensure that examination and certification requirements are met;
- ensure that all students awarded national certificates meet the requirements laid down by the Boards of Studies;
- ensure that, over time, standards are monitored and reported on at appropriate levels;
- establish a close working relationship with curriculum officers and subject advisory committees to ensure that all assessment and reporting is compatible with the aims and outcomes of the curriculum; and
- maintain an archive of national examination records and respond to queries for information where required.

6.13 Teacher Education has a responsibility to:

- ensure that pre-service and in-service teacher training programs reflect nationally approved learning outcomes and the related assessment and reporting requirements; and
- ensure that trainee teachers have the knowledge, skills and understanding to effectively implement this National Assessment and Reporting Policy.

Students are the main stakeholders in the assessment and reporting process.

6.14 Students have a responsibility to:

- use assessment information to improve their learning; and
- ensure that they reach their highest potential.

7. STATEMENTS FOR LEVELS OF SCHOOLING

Elementary, Primary and Secondary schools must assess and report the achievement of learning outcomes as described in the syllabus documents.

7.1 Elementary

Assessment at Elementary level should:

- use a range of assessment methods;
- use local cultural approaches to assess and report students' achievement where appropriate;
- be used for diagnostic purposes only; and
- result in information about students' achievements being transferred to Lower Primary or their next school.

7.2 Lower Primary

Assessment at Lower Primary should:

- be predominantly integrated into teaching and learning activities as students bridge from vernacular to English;
- use a range of assessment methods;
- use local cultural approaches to assess and report students' achievement where appropriate; and
- be used for diagnostic purposes only.

7.3 Upper Primary

Assessment at Upper Primary should:

- be flexible and use a range of assessment methods;
- be continuous and show the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in all school subjects;
- use local cultural approaches to assess and report students' achievement where appropriate;
- be mainly internal but may include external assessment at the end of Grade 8;
- use criterion referencing and learning outcomes as the basis of the external assessment at the end of Grade 8; and
- result in the issue of national certificates of basic education approved by the Board of Studies reporting academic achievement, attitudes, values and other relevant achievements.

7.4 Lower Secondary

Assessment at Lower Secondary should:

- use a variety of methods to assess and report on learning outcomes for all subjects;
- be continuous and emphasise the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in all school subjects;
- include internal and external components in certification at the end of Grade 10;
- use local cultural approaches to assess and report students' achievement where appropriate;
- use final results for selection and reporting purposes to different pathways at completion of Grade 10; and
- result in the issue of national certificates reporting academic achievement, attitudes, values and other relevant achievements.

7.5 Upper Secondary

Assessment at Upper Secondary should:

- enable students to demonstrate that their performance is compatible with international standards;
- use a variety of methods to assess and report on learning outcomes for all subjects;
- be flexible to accommodate both the practical and academic components of the curriculum, along with approved school-based curriculum;
- include internal and external components in certification at the end of Grade 12;
- use the final results for selection and guidance of students into different pathways beyond Grade 12; and
- result in the issue of national certificates reporting academic achievement, attitudes, values and other relevant achievements.

GLOSSARY

Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria are statements that are used to judge the quality of student performance.

Balanced Assessment

Balanced assessment requires teachers to use a variety of assessment methods that give students many opportunities in different contexts to demonstrate what they know, can understand and do in relation to the syllabus learning outcomes. This approach enables teachers to make well-informed judgements about students' achievements.

Criterion-referenced Assessment

Criterion referenced assessment uses specific assessment criteria derived from the learning outcomes to judge a student's individual performance. It does not compare the performance of one student to another.

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic assessment is designed to show where students are successful or have problems and what kind of support is required.

Evaluation

Evaluation involves gathering and interpreting data to make judgements about the effectiveness of aspects such as the school curriculum, teaching and learning programs or assessment and reporting practices.

Learning Outcome

A learning outcome is a statement that identifies the typical knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes or values that students should achieve or demonstrate at the end of a particular grade. The syllabuses describe learning outcomes for each subject.

Norm-referenced Assessment

Norm-referenced assessment compares students' achievements with achievements of a representative sample of other students. This sample is usually a national sample. The purpose of norm-referenced assessment is usually to sort and rank students.

Outcomes-based

Outcomes-based curriculum makes explicit the learning outcomes that students are to achieve.

Peer Assessment

Students judge the performance of their peers and provide constructive feedback using agreed criteria.

Reliable

Reliable assessment provides dependable results that are consistent in measuring particular knowledge and skills.

School-based curriculum

This is curriculum that is developed within schools that is relevant to the school context. This curriculum may be developed in accordance with approved guidelines and, at secondary level, is accredited by the assessment authority.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment encourages students to reflect on their own abilities and performance related to specific criteria derived from the learning outcomes. The aim is to have students continuously monitor their own learning.

Valid

Valid assessment assesses what has actually been taught.