

Assessment without levels

Why should I do this course?

- **Agree strategy** for developing assessment without levels in your school, and moving away from a fixation on linear flight paths.
- **Identify what's working and what's not working** in terms of what you currently do and prioritise what you want to improve.
- **Clarify what makes a valid and reliable assessment** and ensure that the intended outcome of any assessment is clearly defined and purposeful.
- **Make assessment serve learning**, not the other way round, with our assessment case studies and strategies.

Making the most of this course

1. Gather a core group of SLT and middle leaders to evaluate assessment in your school. The approach taken is collaborative: assessment needs to be appropriate to the subject and pupils it is applied to.
2. Make use of the associated reading and resources to supplement and deepen your learning.
3. Ensure participants document their progress after units and reflect in later input sessions.

Suggested participants

- SLT and middle leaders, along with input from classroom teachers where most appropriate and useful.

Unit 1: Moving away from a levels mindset

Review and change beliefs

- Challenge preconceptions about progress and the purpose of assessment. Discuss tensions between summative and formative assessments and how to confront these.
- Agree directions for assessment without levels in your school/organisation, and equip staff with knowledge of key concepts in assessment such as construct validity.
- Survey your school's current strengths and weaknesses in assessment in order to develop your approach.

Units can be done in any order: choose according to your needs and priorities for development.

Unit 2: Comparing assessment approaches

Plan for your approach

- Review what you want assessment without levels to achieve in your school or organisation.
- Examine different assessment strategies and their potential strengths and weaknesses in order to make an informed decision about what approach will work best for your school.
- Decide what assessment approaches will avoid replicating levels in another form, while being able to offer useful information about pupil progress.

Unit 3: Trialling, monitoring and evaluating

Test methods and improve your assessment system

- Use action research methods to see how the assessment system is actually working in the classroom.
- Build in further improvements to assessment by evaluating the impact on pupils and using feedback from teachers and leaders.
- Embed a consistent approach to assessment across the school or in departments.
- Decide how to share developments with stakeholders.



Reinforce your learning from this training course with these resources from our Knowledge Centre

1. Read Damian Haigh's series on [designing a meaningful approach](#) to assessment without levels.
2. The Assessment Commission report should be a useful resource as you develop your approach. [View our summary](#).
3. Stephen Tierney explains why and how assessment should be [led by your curriculum](#).

1. Learn how Chris Hildrew led his school's [approach to assessment](#) without imposing ceilings on achievement.
2. Listen to an interview with Michael Tidd about using a [Key Objective model](#) for the primary curriculum.
3. Find out how to develop [reliable summative assessments](#) without using levels or grades.

1. Read Stephen Lockyer on practical approaches to [embedding teaching and learning initiatives](#).
2. Find out how to [drill into your data effectively](#): what you get out is only as good as what you put in.
3. Weave assessment into whole-school quality improvement with the one hour a week [monitoring and evaluation plan](#).