

# ASSESSMENT & MODERATION Circles

## ASSESSMENT LITERACY

Building the Curriculum 5 provides an assessment framework for CfE that acknowledges the importance of good classroom assessment and seeks to encourage better use of teachers' professional judgements in assessing progress that is consistent within CfE. AM circles are designed to foster an enhanced understanding of assessment and also develop practice to support learning and to evaluate it reliably.

To ensure that participants can share standards and expectations about their students' learning, we first need to define terms. By establishing a common vocabulary for talking about quality, participants will become more familiar with concepts like expectations, criteria, evidence, validity and reliability.

Finally participants learn how to use their new vocabulary, framework and understanding by practising different evaluative activities leading to sound judgements based on evidence of learning gathered from a range of everyday classroom interactions. In this way, they learn new ways of thinking and working.

## SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

AM circles have been devised to help participants to develop a sustainable approach to good assessment practice that benefits classroom learning and improves the quality of their assessment judgements for summative purposes. An AM circle is organised around a sequence of four or six events, during which terms and concepts are examined within a practical and supportive framework which allows participants to explore and then evaluate practice.

Next, the vocabulary needs to be located within a robust framework which allows participants to review their planned learning experiences using CfE outcomes to ensure the learning purposes are clear, the criteria for judging quality established and the nature of the evidence needed for judgements determined.

The third stage distinguishes between on-going assessment to support learning and periodic assessment to sum up what has been learned and how well. Participants use the criteria identified to reflect on different degrees of quality in students' work and to discuss how to respond to what students have said, written, made or done.

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### INITIAL MEETINGS

<b>DEFINING TERMS</b> Deciding the learning or skills described in those CfE outcomes under consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• differentiating between contexts for learning and the skills to be developed</li> <li>• looking for 'linked' outcomes in curriculum areas and aspects across learning.</li> </ul>	<b>IDENTIFYING THE CRITERIA</b>	
	formative purposes What are our expectations for students? Is challenge & support acknowledged? Is personalization & choice offered? Is differentiation by task, support or response provided?	summative purposes What information do we need? What will a good one look like?
	<b>DETERMINING THE EVIDENCE</b>	
	What evidence will demonstrate the quality of the learning: how much and how well? What about a range of evidence: two or more of say, write, make, do?	Devising experiences from which evidence can emerge. Providing a range of experiences to ensure a match between learning and evidence.
	Reviewing planned experiences: are they valid? do they accommodate breadth, challenge and application?	

### LATER MEETINGS

To ensure assessment <b>for learning</b> : evaluating the evidence against criteria and compiling feedback for individuals on strengths and next steps.	To provide assessment <b>of learning</b> : using summative criteria to interpret a range of evidence of learning and evaluate the extent to which it meets expectations.
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## ASSESSMENT & MODERATION CIRCLES

*Assessment and Moderation circles* are intended to foster professional learning by a combination of instruction, action and reflection. Learning is not a linear process, so they can be set up and supported in different ways to suit the needs of those involved. They can be organised within a school, across a group of schools or across an authority.

AM circles involve sharing experiences and activities, so a circle of up to 30 participants is likely to work best. Where circles include more than one school, the involvement of at least two participants from an individual school is likely to provide greater benefit for both those involved and for the school itself. Participants explore how they plan, approach and assess the teaching and learning required to address a set of *CfE* experiences and outcomes of their own choosing.

Supported by a variety of resources and half or one day meetings held at appropriate intervals throughout, participants discuss and work through these processes over an extended period. They may also collaborate online, using GLOW or other social networking media. The aims would be to produce a documented example of how teaching and learning can be planned and assessed.

STAGES	CONTENT
Group session: clarifying terms and establishing the context in <i>CfE</i> , drawing on BtC3 (totality of learning experiences), BtC4 (skills for learning, life and work) and BtC5 (assessment).	<i>CfE</i> policy context. Assessment as part of teaching and learning. Assessment vocabulary: formative, summative, expectations, standards, criteria, evidence (say, write, make, do), validity, reliability etc.
Situated learning: participants work during a short gap (2 - 3 weeks) between group sessions, returning to the group having developed an increased awareness of the contexts for learning and the nature of skills and competences embedded in Es & Os.	Participants identify Es & Os to work with and look across others at the same level that could be complementary (e.g. in HWB, literacy and numeracy across learning, which are 'the responsibility of all').
Group session: clarifying the role of moderation in <i>CfE</i> ; agreeing interpretation of Es & Os; setting out a process (purpose, activities, criteria, evidence) for devising, planning and providing learning experiences likely to generate evidence of learning.	What is the <i>purpose</i> of the planned learning? What <i>activities</i> will pupils engage in? What are the <i>criteria</i> for judging success and what <i>evidence</i> will be gathered to demonstrate learning? Are opportunities provided for responding to challenge and applying learning in familiar and unfamiliar contexts?
Situated learning: participants work during a short gap (2 - 3 weeks) between group sessions, returning to the group with individual pieces of evidence from a few pupils' work.	Participants proceed as planned to provide learning experiences for a specific group and begin to gather evidence.
Group session: formative focus on evidence gathered; opportunity to review the essential nature and purpose of formative assessment (assessment for learning)	Formative uses of assessment information: participants present pupils' responses and work together, reflecting on the evidence and agreeing appropriate feedback.
Situated learning: participants work during a longer gap (4 - 6 weeks) between group sessions, returning to the group with a <u>range</u> of evidence from up to three pupils in the pupil group.	Participants continue to provide planned learning experiences for the pupil group, gathering a wider range of evidence.
Group session: summative focus on evidence gathered; validity; reliability; dependability. Most of session involves practical work.	Summative uses of assessment information: participants share and discuss the range of evidence for each pupil with the aim of agreeing a best fit judgement indicating the standard achieved in relation to the criteria identified at the outset. This should take account of breadth, challenge and application across familiar and unfamiliar situations.