

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



How schools improve curriculum and assessment practice



Providing feedback

This resource is the result of the collaboration of numerous educational leaders from across Victoria. Their input and feedback was essential in tailoring the guide to meet schools' needs. This is the first version of the resource and your feedback will assist the Department in further improving the guide. You can provide input into the development of future versions by emailing fiso@education.vic.gov.au

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	4
FISO Strategic Enablers for Implementation Guide	5
Principles	5
How to use the guides	5
CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT: EVALUATE AND DIAGNOSE	6
Assess the school’s readiness to improve curriculum and assessment practice	6
Find the curriculum and/or assessment challenges to pursue	7
Understand teachers’ current curriculum and assessment knowledge	8
Consider how the curriculum and assessments currently operate	9
Gather additional key data to help uncover challenges	10
Work together to make sense of the evidence	11
CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT: PRIORITISE AND SET GOALS	12
Decide on goals to address the identified challenges	12
CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT: DEVELOP AND PLAN.....	13
Use a theory of action to plan backwards from goals.....	13
Develop actions to work towards identified goals	15
Build capabilities in curriculum planning and assessment	16
CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT: IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR	17
Identify how improvements to practice will be monitored	17
Implement curriculum and assessment plans	18
Curriculum planning and assessment case studies	19
Collaborative school improvement in practice: Cobram Primary School	19
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES	20
Links to key resources.....	20
Links to key quality-assured assessment tools	20
References.....	20

INTRODUCTION

To achieve school improvement goals, effective implementation is required. Schools have different strengths, starting points and contexts — there is no one-size-fits-all model for school improvement. To sustain and accelerate improvement, schools need to identify the right evidence-based improvement strategies, plan for effective implementation, and translate these strategies into the day-to-day work of staff.

The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Implementation Guides describe the professional practices of effective implementation within the improvement cycle. This includes identifying the education challenges where efforts will be prioritised, planning for how the prioritised challenges will be addressed, identifying and celebrating what is working, and adapting when barriers are encountered or changes occur.

IMPROVEMENT CYCLE



The guides aim to support schools to effectively implement strategies in six FISO dimensions.

This guide focuses on **curriculum planning and assessment**. That is, it guides schools in creating experiences that develop lifelong learners and responsible citizens — experiences that are underpinned by a shared set of values and clear purposes for teaching and learning.

The six FISO Implementation Guides focus on the following dimensions:

BUILDING PRACTICE EXCELLENCE

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

EMPOWERING STUDENTS AND BUILDING SCHOOL PRIDE

SETTING EXPECTATIONS AND PROMOTING INCLUSION

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

STRATEGIC ENABLERS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

FISO Strategic Enablers for Implementation Guide

Complementing this guide, the [FISO Strategic Enablers for Implementation Guide](#) aims to support schools to reflect on and strengthen four common enablers:

1. Self-evaluation capability throughout a school
2. Real-time data monitoring implementation
3. Leadership capability for school improvement
4. Robust implementation structures

Strengthening these enablers in schools supports implementation across all dimensions. The FISO Strategic Enablers guide contains guidance, research and supports for school improvement and leadership teams. Use the FISO Strategic Enablers guide in conjunction with this guide.

Principles

Three key principles underpin decision-making and ways of working when using this guide:

1. All school staff, students, families and members of the wider school community have a role to play in school improvement and implementation work.
2. School leaders actively engage other staff members, students, families and members of the wider school community in school improvement and implementation work.
3. Everyone in a school has perspectives, experiences and information that can help schools better understand context and educational successes, needs and challenges.

How to use the guides

The guides can support schools to use the improvement cycle to implement improvement initiatives, for example as part of the school review process, for annual planning and monitoring or as part of Professional Learning Communities inquiry cycles. In this guide, the referencing of goals and actions can be related to four-year School Strategic Plans, Annual Implementation Plans or shorter cycles as established by your school.

In school review: School leaders, in partnership with the School Improvement Team (SIT) and school community, can use the guides to gather and examine evidence to inform the pre-review self-evaluation and reflect on the effectiveness of past improvement initiatives and their implementation. The guides can also be used by the school review panel, in partnership with the school community, to develop a new four-year strategic plan.

In annual implementation planning and monitoring: The School Leadership Team, in partnership with the school community, can use the guides to develop the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) targets, actions and activities during Term 4. The SIT can also use the guides to reflect on how the school monitors progress each term, and during mid-year monitoring activities.

In regular cycles: Professional Learning Communities/Teams (PLCs/PLTs) can use the guides to plan and implement inquiry cycles, using real-time evidence to monitor, evaluate and celebrate student progress and reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies.

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT EVALUATE AND DIAGNOSE

Student-centred challenges in the area of curriculum planning and assessment can be complex to define. The opportunity at this stage of the improvement cycle is to work with the wider school community to find the challenges where investing time and effort will have the greatest impact.

This is helped by working together to define the challenges, better understand the causes and build commitment around identified areas of improvement. Engaging in these challenges is important because students and their learning needs are at the centre of effective curriculum planning and assessment.

A recent systematic review of 60 studies found that training in the use of assessment criteria for providing meaningful feedback, and student seeking and processing feedback, was effective in driving school improvement (Heitink, et al., 2016).

Assess the school's readiness to improve curriculum and assessment practice

The first step at this stage is to determine the readiness of the school to implement change. The school can use the discussion points, FISO dimensions and key questions in the table below to reflect on readiness, using a range of information and evidence to inform the discussion.

The following guidance and resources can support schools in getting ready to improve curriculum and assessment practices:

- Victorian Teaching and Learning Model (VTLM) [Practice Principles](#)
- [Reporting Student Achievement and Progress Foundation to 10 Policy](#)
- [DET Whole-School Guide to Curriculum Planning](#)
- [VCAA Whole-School Curriculum Planning Guidance](#)
- [Victorian Curriculum F-10](#)
- [VCAA F-10 Assessment Resources](#)



Download and edit a template of the [Assessing readiness table](#) (below).

DISCUSSION POINTS	FISO DIMENSIONS	KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK
All schools must provide a planned and structured school-based curriculum program and formally report student achievement and progress at least twice per school year.	Curriculum planning and assessment	Do we have a structured curriculum program, and do we report student achievement and progress at least twice per school year?
A documented curriculum plan, assessment and shared pedagogical approaches		<p>Do we have collaborative curriculum planning processes in place to maintain a school-wide sequential curriculum plan and shared pedagogical approaches?</p> <p>Do we have a whole-school learning continuum that covers the Early Years Framework, the Victorian Curriculum F-10, the EAL curriculum and the VCE, VET and VCAL curricula?</p>
Moderation of common student assessment tasks		Do we have established processes and protocols in place to moderate student assessment tasks?
Data collection, analysis and evaluation of student learning growth over time	Evaluating impact on learning	<p>Do we work in teams to analyse assessment data and monitor student learning growth?</p> <p>How do we use data to inform curriculum and instruction?</p>

Find the curriculum and/or assessment challenges to pursue

The second step in this stage is for a representative group of leaders and staff to gather and interpret data to understand the challenges they want to solve, and which will have the greatest impact.

As a starting point, reflect on the following questions:

- What assumptions guide how teachers use and report on curriculum and assessment?
- Do we recognise that curriculum planning is not a static but an ongoing and iterative process?
- Have multiple leaders, teachers and educational support staff with different perspectives had the opportunity to validate the above assumptions?
- Are decisions about curriculum planning and assessment informed by research evidence?

To set priorities in the next phase, schools will need to be familiar with the processes for curriculum planning and assessment. Leaders can use the following checklist in preparation for setting goals.

What does the research evidence say?

- The choice of instructional materials can have a significant effect on student learning, and teachers need to understand how students think about the content, evaluate their own misconceptions, and identify students' common misconceptions (Coe et al., 2014).
- Effective teachers have strong content knowledge and make expert use of pedagogical materials to improve student learning (Hattie 2009).
- Feedback is more effective if it is focused more on the task than on the student (Dweck, C.S. 2016).
- A stronger understanding of curriculum is built when staff work collaboratively, meeting to discuss units of work, differentiate lessons and develop assessments (Bauman, 2015; Benoliel & Berkovich, 2017; Sutton & Knuth, 2020).
- Every day teachers confront a huge range of student achievement levels in their classrooms. In any given year level, there is a five to six-year difference between the most advanced and the least advanced 10 per cent of students. If teachers only teach material targeted at the expected year level for their class, only a few students will receive teaching that is at the right level for them (Goss et al., 2015).

Further research evidence supporting the building practice excellence dimension can be found in the [excellence in teaching and learning evidence base](#).

Understand teachers' current curriculum and assessment knowledge

A well-documented curriculum provides a foundation for teaching and learning, but this foundation is eroded if there is not adequate time to teach the curriculum and accommodate learning enrichment activities.

Curriculum leaders, including PLT/PLC leaders, can use the following checklist to help establish a baseline for leaders' and teachers' knowledge, and to identify any challenges.

CURRICULUM PLANNING	ASSESSMENT
<p>Do all teachers and leaders know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ what a well-documented curriculum looks like☑ what contributes to excellence in curriculum documentation☑ why curriculum excellence is critical for learning growth☑ why the curriculum is timetabled in a particular way☑ whether the content being taught is aligned with the Victorian Curriculum☑ what resources are available to guide schools through the stages of curriculum documentation☑ how to align lesson plans to the VTLM, or to the school's instructional model?	<p>Do all teachers and leaders know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ what a learning continuum and curriculum continuum are☑ why a learning continuum and curriculum continuum are essential for promoting student learning☑ how to create a learning continuum that breaks down learning into units of work to support teaching and learning decisions☑ how to collect, interpret and use evidence to plan for teaching and learning☑ how to develop a repertoire of formative assessment strategies☑ how to analyse student achievement data and formative ('check for understanding') data☑ how to adjust teaching in response to formative assessment data?

Consider how the curriculum and assessments currently operate

The SIT may choose to review the way the curriculum is timetabled, and how assessment practices are developed and used. Possible questions to guide the SIT are outlined below.

CURRICULUM PLANNING	ASSESSMENT
Does formative assessment inform the ongoing evaluation and design of curriculum plans?	To what extent are common assessment tasks being used within teaching teams?
Are there audit strategies in place to identify gaps in the curriculum? For example, if a large percentage of students makes consistent errors in assessments, this may point to a gap in curriculum.	Are teachers collaborating to develop assessment tools?
Is there enough time allocated to learning/subject areas to cover the expected content?	To what extent are 'checking for understanding' practices being used across the school?
Are there other ways to structure the timetable so that gaps in learning are addressed?	How are teachers engaging students in formative assessment discussions?
Does the timetable give due attention to the special needs of certain students?	To what extent is student learning tracked through standardised and diagnostic assessments?
Are there catch-up programs for students who require additional literacy, numeracy and/or wellbeing support?	Is tracking student learning a focus of staff? Is this focus visible? For example, are data charts/walls displayed in staff rooms to track the learning data of different cohorts of students?
Are there ways to use technology to support students' learning opportunities?	Are there audit strategies in place to identify gaps in students' learning, such as an error analysis against a curriculum standard, or a Guttman chart?
Is the rationale for running an elective program translated into how the school schedules electives?	

Gather additional key data to help uncover challenges

After curriculum leaders have established a baseline of leaders' and teachers' knowledge, they can come together and identify all other relevant sources of data to be gathered.

Use improvement measures in our system

Useful measures include:

- NAPLAN reading and numeracy achievement and growth
- VCE and/or VCAL completion
- School Staff Survey: 'guaranteed and viable curriculum', 'collaborate and plan curriculum' and 'use data for curriculum planning' factors
- Attitudes to School Survey: 'effective teaching time' and 'differentiated learning challenge' factors
- Parent Opinion Survey: the 'effective teaching' factor.

Collect classroom and school data to understand teaching practices

The SIT can:

- meet with representatives from various learning areas or grade levels to establish their views on the current processes for documenting curriculum plans and assessment practices
- engage in classroom walk-throughs or learning walks to observe the extent to which formative assessment practices agreed by PLTs/PLCs (for example, learning goals, questioning, differentiation, checking for understanding, and students' engagement in learning) are consistent features of classroom practice
- survey students and staff to gauge how consistent and rigorous its approach to whole-school curriculum planning and assessment is across the four interrelated layers of the whole-school curriculum plan (curriculum area, year level, unit and lessons)
- guide teachers to complete the [VTLM Teachers self-reflection tool](#) for Practice Principles 4 and 6 at a whole-staff meeting.

Curriculum leaders including learning specialists, learning area leaders, literacy and numeracy leaders can:

- compare and share curriculum and assessment documentation and practices with the [VCAA examples of whole-school curriculum plans](#) and other schools through networks and Communities of Practice (CoP)
- complete the [VCAA self-assessment tool](#) to review the four essential interrelated layers of the whole-school curriculum plan (curriculum area, year level, unit and lessons)
- engage in discussions with members of their team about the usefulness of the school's curriculum documents, and the extent to which the intended curriculum is aligned with the implemented curriculum, conveying their findings to the leadership team for consideration and reflection.

Work together to make sense of the evidence

Once all data, information and assessments of existing efforts have been gathered, the SIT can work to ‘triangulate’ assumptions — that is, use multiple methods and sources to test their validity. This will help the SIT thoroughly understand the root causes of challenges, and identify and prioritise areas for focus.



Download and complete the [Making sense of data and evidence](#) template to ensure benefits and potential barriers for each action are considered.

SENSE-MAKING ACTIVITIES	REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS AND SENTENCE STEMS	ACTIONS TO SUPPORT PRIORITISING AND SETTING GOALS
Identify patterns from observations and reviews of curriculum and assessment documentation	<p>What were the trends? “In general I noticed...”</p> <p>What surprised you? “I wasn’t expecting to see...”</p> <p>Were there contradictions? “On the one hand... On the other hand...”</p>	Document perspectives from each SIT member, highlighting where multiple members agreed.
Test assumptions about curriculum and assessment practices	<p>What curriculum planning and assessment practices does our school do well? How do we know?</p> <p>To what extent does our documented curriculum support our instructional model or approach?</p> <p>How much variation is there in curriculum and assessment knowledge and practices across our school? What evidence supports this?</p> <p>What improvements to curriculum and assessment practices will be most impactful? How do we know?</p>	<p>Document perspectives on the highest-priority needs.</p> <p>This may also make it clear that more data is required. If so, data should be gathered and brought back to the group.</p>
Build consensus on priority areas of focus in curriculum planning and assessment	<p>Allow each team member to respond to these questions:</p> <p>Where is the evidence telling us we need to focus efforts to improve curriculum and assessment practices?</p> <p>What are the root causes of challenges in those areas?</p>	Record responses from each member. If there is not a clear consensus, ask members to justify their responses, seek additional data or use a voting system.

Understanding what has worked and what has not can help schools improve implementation over time. Research suggests that changes to school improvement take time, and that it is important for schools to identify different challenges and their capacity to address them (Borman, et al., 2003).

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

PRIORITISE AND SET GOALS

Use the data, discussions and assumptions developed in the evaluate and diagnose stage to identify where improvement efforts will be focused. These may be the areas of greatest need, or where opportunities exist to maximise impact. Each school's goals will be specific to its context, including its community demographics, performance strengths and challenges, and staff climate and capability.

Decide on goals to address the identified challenges

Any priorities for improving whole-school curriculum planning will contribute to cyclical and iterative processes. Curriculum planning is not static. It needs to accommodate revisions to the mandated curriculum, changes in the school's priorities, the changing needs of student cohorts, changes in the way the school timetable is structured, and suggestions for refining planning templates and documentation processes.

EMERGING \ EVOLVING

Schools which are 'emerging' or 'evolving' in curriculum planning and assessment, or which are beginning to focus efforts in this dimension can consider:

- establishing common scope and sequences and unit planners for all year levels and learning areas
- establishing common assessment practices and a schedule for conducting these
- establishing a school-wide understanding of the features of high-quality curriculum and celebrating examples of this practice across the school
- gaining school-wide agreement on the school's use of formative assessment practices
- ensuring the cross-curricular priorities are embedded across the curriculum.

EMBEDDING \ EXCELLING

Schools which are 'embedding' or 'excelling' in curriculum planning and assessment, or which have sustained improvement efforts in this dimension, can consider:

- establishing agreed approaches to differentiation and ensuring these are supported by curriculum and planning documentation
- establishing consistent processes for analysing and using students' formative assessment data to inform planning
- effectively implementing the capabilities of the Victorian curriculum across the learning areas and year levels
- prioritising time, effort and resources on areas of the curriculum which address the academic, social and emotional needs of students at the school
- enriching teachers' repertoire of formative assessment techniques and understanding of learning progressions.



Download and use the [Identifying where efforts will be prioritised](#) template to help with this process.

Feedback is vital for effective formative assessment, although results vary based on how assessment is implemented. A recent meta-analysis of studies on formative assessment in schools indicates a positive gain of about three months' learning when feedback is effective. However, four months' impact on learning was achievable in schools when the approach was supported with professional learning (Evidence for Learning, 2020).

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

DEVELOP AND PLAN

Once goals have been set and prioritised, the SIT can develop plans for how these will be achieved, mapping out all possible actions and approaches, then selecting those likely to have the greatest impact given the school's context.

Use a theory of action to plan backwards from goals

Schools may choose to develop a theory of action to explain how change will be achieved. This describes the relationships between the intended impact, outcomes, outputs and actions to help schools see the changes that will need to occur for implementation to succeed.

- Along the way, the SIT can test the theory using questions such as:
- What assumptions are being made about the relationships?
- Whose perspectives are we including? Whose are we excluding?
- Are the proposed actions informed by research evidence?



Download and use the [Theory of action](#) template.

Illustrative practice case study

Student assessment data at one school showed a large spread of abilities in reading comprehension. Deeper analysis of NAPLAN results, teachers' formative assessments and internal progressive achievement testing identified that most classes contained students with comprehension skills spread across three levels.

Interviews with teachers and observations of classes indicated that teachers were unsure how to effectively differentiate to meet the spread of student abilities. Therefore, the following theory of action was developed to improve differentiation practices through building teacher capability in curriculum and assessment.

Leaders may need to put implementation structures such as teams and schedules in place and ensure professional learning plans are aligned to teachers' and students' learning needs. For more information about leading change and structures for implementation, see the [Strategic Enablers for Implementation Guide](#).

Common barriers include time constraints, and improvement strategies being too broad or ambitious. Schools should develop plans with a limited number of achievable actions.

A synthesis of 97 studies of professional development that led to improved outcomes for students identified three important elements. These were teachers' ability to identify problems, acquire pedagogical skills and adjust practice accordingly (Timperley, et al., 2008).

Impact indicators

- NAPLAN and progressive achievement testing results indicate increased growth for students at different levels.
- AToSS percentage of positive responses to 'effective teaching practice for cognitive engagement' increases.

Impact

- Improved student outcomes in reading comprehension
- Improved student motivation and efficacy

Outcome indicators

- Staff surveys indicate an increase in comfort differentiating.
- Observations indicated an increasing proportion of students working at their level, with clear expectations in place.
- Increase in formative assessments and internal progressive achievement results

Outcomes

- Whole-school take up of differentiation models, use of guides and regular moderation
- Improved use of scaffolded guides by teachers and students
- Improved student capability to build literal and inferred meaning from text

Output indicators

- Number of teachers attending professional learning, agreement on levelled student work samples.
- Number of teachers participating in moderation sessions, variation in moderation.
- Number of teachers using guides, number of texts for which guides are created.

Outputs

- Documentation of the achievement standards with corresponding student work samples and agreed models for differentiation identified by teachers as appropriate for the schools' context.
- Moderation of student work to ensure consistency in identifying student levels
- Reading comprehension curriculum documentation with scaffolded guides for differentiated text levels

Actions

- Build teachers' understanding of curriculum levels and achievement standards in the interpreting, analysing and evaluating of the literacy sub-strand.
- Build teacher practice in effective models of differentiation and establish expectations for students when working in groups.
- In PLCs/PLTs, identify quality texts for each level and develop a scaffolded guide, prompting questions for each text and rubrics to assess student progress between levels.

Develop actions to work towards identified goals

Guidelines on curriculum planning in Victoria include that schools:

- should develop and publish a whole-school curriculum plan that documents their teaching and learning program
- must report student learning against the achievement standards in the curriculum.

EMERGING \ EVOLVING

Schools which are 'emerging' or 'evolving' in curriculum planning and assessment, or which are beginning to focus efforts in this dimension, could consider:

- supporting staff to engage with Department and VCAA curriculum planning resources by providing time and sharing resources
- working with middle leaders to quality-assure curriculum and identify areas for improvement
- scheduling opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan curriculum
- ensuring that teachers and teams refer to the school's scope and sequence and VTLM (or agreed pedagogical model) in their planning
- developing an agreed assessment schedule and common assessment tasks
- establishing processes to ensure that beginning teachers and teachers teaching outside their specialty area are well supported by the school's curriculum plans.

Download and complete the template for **Mapping possible actions** to ensure benefits and potential barriers for each action are considered.



In developing actions, the SIT should discuss whether they meet the characteristics of effective implementation:

- ☒ Are actions and activities sufficiently 'bite-sized'?
- ☒ Are actions easy to understand? Is it clear what will be implemented?
- ☒ Can actions be embedded in the school's everyday structures and routines (making them easier to prioritise and adapt to)?
- ☒ Is it clear who will be responsible for what, and when? Are there systems for monitoring this?
- ☒ Are timelines and monitoring cycles short? (Completion builds satisfaction, opportunity for celebration, acknowledgement of achievement and momentum for further work.)

EMBEDDING \ EXCELLING

Schools which are 'embedding' or 'excelling' in curriculum planning and assessment, or which have sustained improvement efforts in this dimension, could consider:

- monitoring school-wide consistency in the way that the curriculum is documented
- improving lesson plans by ensuring that they explicitly define learning continua and formative assessment rubrics
- ensuring that the skills and knowledge defined in the VCAA capabilities will be developed, practiced, deployed and demonstrated by students in and through their learning across the curriculum
- evaluating the balance of face-to-face and online teaching elements in the curriculum, ensuring both are supported by clear explanations, scaffolding, feedback and guided practice
- co-designing units of work with students
- developing curriculum documentation and resources for intervention and tutoring programs to support mastery learning
- mapping out a scope and sequence of where the capabilities will be explicitly taught and revisited in the curriculum of each learning area.

Build capabilities in curriculum planning and assessment

Curriculum planning is a demanding task that requires deep content knowledge, high-level writing skills and planning practices to ensure the knowledge and skills in the mandated curriculum cascade down to unit and lesson planning.

If even a small proportion of teachers are developing their curriculum and formative assessment capabilities, it should be reflected in the school's actions and addressed through a professional learning and development plan.

Effective professional learning is **active**: it includes opportunities to discuss and apply what is learnt during training and between sessions (Garrett et al., 2019; Timperley et al., 2007).

Schools could consider:

- increasing teachers' content knowledge and understanding of how students progressively develop skills and knowledge
- increasing teachers' expertise in curriculum documentation and the features of well-documented curriculum units
- developing leaders' and teachers' knowledge of formative assessment practices
- identifying curriculum champions to provide feedback on draft curriculum unit plans and share their work (to share their expertise and improve consistency)
- improving teachers' understanding of how to differentiate curriculum unit plans according to students' varied abilities and interests
- enhancing teachers' knowledge of strategies and activities to implement the VCAA capabilities
- increasing teachers' understanding of creating and using developmental rubrics
- developing teachers' data literacy and practices to regularly collect, record and use data
- taking steps to address any knowledge and skill gaps in curriculum planning and assessment by developing a professional learning plan.

A rigorous systematic review of 25 studies emphasised five attributes that are critical for implementing effective assessment for learning: 1. interpreting assessment information on the spot, 2. engaging students in the assessment process, 3. providing constructive and focused feedback, 4. a school-wide assessment culture, and 5. collaboration and autonomy of teacher practice around assessment (Heitink, et al., 2016).

CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR

The success of any plan depends on how well it is implemented. Implementation is not a one-off event, but an iterative process of actioning what is planned, identifying and celebrating what is working, and adapting when barriers are encountered, changes occur, or plans fall behind schedule.

Identify how improvements to practice will be monitored

Monitoring enables leaders to know what practices are changing in their schools and what impact those changes are having. Monitoring also helps to identify barriers to implementation early, so that approaches are adapted and strategies put in place to get back on schedule. Monitoring usually involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data.

Sometimes, data collected across Victoria (available in Panorama) will assist with monitoring and assessing impact from year to year. At other times, schools will need to develop tailored tools to monitor implementation in real-time over shorter regular cycles, or at the end of each term.



SITs can use the template for **Identifying how actions will be monitored** to document this.

Sources of data for monitoring implementation of curriculum planning and assessment actions include:

- classroom observations and 'learning walks' with a specific focus on an agreed strategy
- curriculum and assessment documents or audits of shared folders
- a documented assessment schedule and evidence of teachers inputting data and moderating assessments
- student work samples, such as readers' or writers' notebooks, or high/medium/low examples of common assessment tasks
- staff feedback from curriculum or assessment professional learning sessions
- student feedback on curriculum and assessment
- parent feedback on resources used to support home learning
- student reports and assessment data gathered through learning management systems
- interviews with teachers on which curriculum and assessment practices are working, and which are not.

Survey tips

- Short, focused surveys with a clear purpose are most effective for monitoring.
- Questions need to be carefully designed for the audience, use clear and accessible language, and be presented in a logical order (Taherdoost, 2016).
- Pre-test surveys with a small group for feedback before sharing more broadly.
- Combine all monitoring questions for the same group into one survey. Consider other ways you can minimise the burden of completing surveys.

For more information about real-time data monitoring, see the [Strategic Enablers for Implementation Guide](#).

Implement curriculum and assessment plans

Once goals have been set, plans have been developed, and monitoring tools are in place, school and program leaders lead implementation by:

- ensuring enough time is allocated to develop curriculum and assessment documentation or engage in planned professional learning
- identifying potential champions of the work and seeking to engage them early to build momentum across the school
- sharing the rationale for focusing efforts on curriculum and assessment, and gaining staff 'buy-in' to the need for change
- regularly revisiting the importance of the school's plans to improve curriculum and assessment, and promoting the expectation that all teachers contribute to improvement efforts in this area
- establishing and celebrating milestones in curriculum planning and assessment
- using and adapting the monitoring tools regularly, and seeking out a variety of evidence to understand how curriculum and assessment practices are changing
- using the improvement cycle over shorter periods to diagnose challenges and adapt implementation.

Evidence shows that learning technologies can motivate student learning. A small positive impact on learning was found when learning technologies are used to reinforce regular classroom reading instruction, with evidence suggesting a higher positive impact on students from vulnerable backgrounds (Cheung & Slavin, 2012). Another review found that 'flipped lessons' increased student satisfaction in their learning, with high impacts for most subjects including social sciences and STEM (Evidence for Learning, 2020).



Curriculum planning and assessment case studies

- [Torquay College](#): building the capacity of staff to plan for deep learning, implement and review Inquiry units of work and consistently assess their students' development of learning competencies.
- [Footscray North Primary School](#): developing a Literacy Non-Negotiables document to ensure consistent delivery of practice and reduce variability from room to room.
- [Officer Primary School](#): building consistency in teaching and learning and strengthening staff collaboration to improve literacy outcomes.
- [Irymple Primary School](#): developing a moderation resource based on the Victorian Curriculum to enable teachers to assess students' writing with consistency and accuracy across the school.

Collaborative school improvement in practice: Cobram Primary School

Cobram Primary School has been undertaking whole-school improvement since 2017. The school's transformation to date is the result of a collaborative, evidence-based approach, led by a highly skilled leadership team and supported by teachers and educational consultants.

The SIT developed and implemented collective approaches to curriculum development, assessment and the building of teacher capacity, ensuring the consistency and quality of teaching practice across all classrooms. New curriculum scope and sequence now guarantees multiple exposures to content required for student progression, and provides consistency across year levels.

In 2018/19, significantly improved student achievement, especially in reading and numeracy, led to Cobram Primary School being highly regarded as an exemplar school.

Collaboration is central to Cobram Primary School's everyday practice. Testament to its quality teaching practices, its staff now work with schools from across Victoria and New South Wales that are seeking similar improvements in student outcomes.



REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Links to key resources

- [FISO Continua of Practice for School Improvement](#)
- [FISO Implementation Toolkit](#)
- [FISO Improvement Cycle](#)
- [DET Whole-school guide to curriculum planning](#)
- [VCAA curriculum planning resource](#)
- [VCAA F-10 assessment resources and tools](#)
- [VCAA self-assessment tool](#)

Links to key quality-assured assessment tools

- [Abilities-Based Learning and Education Support](#)
- [Diagnostic Assessment Tools in English for curriculum levels F-4](#)
- [English Online Interview](#)
- [Maths Online Interview](#)
- [Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Strategy \(MYLNS\) support resources](#)
- [Reading and Vocabulary assessment for English as an Additional Language students](#)
- [The Digital Assessment Library](#)

References

Bauman, C. (2015). A refreshing perspective on teacher leadership: How teacher leaders effectively combine the use of autonomy and collaboration to enhance school improvement. *Leading & Managing*, 21(2), 46-59.

Benoliel, P. & Berkovich, I. (2017). There is no "T" in school improvement: The missing team perspective. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(7), 922-929.

Borman, G., Hewes, G. & Overman, L. (2003). Comprehensive school reform and achievement: a meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 73(2), 125-230.

Cheung, A. C., & Slavin, R. E. (2012). How features of educational technology applications affect student reading outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, 7(3), 198-215.

Coe, R., Aloisi, C., Higgins, S. & Major, L.E. (2014). What makes great teaching? Review of the underpinning research. Retrieved from <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/13747/>

Dweck, C.S. (2016). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Ballantine Books

Education Endowment Foundation (2020). The EEF Guide to Supporting School Planning: A Tiered Approach to 2021. Retrieved online: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/guide-to-supporting-schools-planning/>

Evidence for Learning (2019). Putting evidence to work: A school's guide to implementation. Retrieved online: <https://evidenceforlearning.org.au/guidance-reports/putting-evidence-to-work-a-schools-guide-to-implementation/>

Evidence for Learning, (2020). Feedback: Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Retrieved online: <https://evidenceforlearning.org.au/the-toolkits/the-teaching-and-learning-toolkit/all-approaches/feedback/>

Evidence for Learning, (2020). Using technology to support vulnerable students' learning: An evidence review of system-school interventions for remote learning and transition back to school in response to COVID-19.

Goss, P., Hunter, J., Romanes, D., Parsonage, H. (2015). Targeted teaching: how better use of data can improve student learning. Grattan Institute, Melbourne. Retrieved online: <https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/827-Targeted-Teaching.pdf>

Hattie, J. (2009). Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement. London: Routledge.

Heitink, M., Van der Kleij, F. M., Veldkamp, B. P., Schildkamp, K. & Kippers, W. B. (2016). A systematic review of prerequisites for implementing assessment for learning in. Educational Research Review, 17, 50-62.

Lai, M., Wilson, A., McNaughton, S. & Hsiao, S. (2014). Improving Achievement in Secondary Schools: Impact of a Literacy Project on Reading Comprehension and Secondary School Qualifications. Reading Research Quarterly, 49(3), 305-445.

Leithwood, K. & Sun, J. (2012). The Nature and Effects of Transformational School Leadership: A Meta- Analytic Review of Unpublished Research. Educational Administration Quarterly, 48(3), 387-423.

Sun, J. & Leithwood, K. (2015). Direction-setting school leadership practices: a meta-analytical review of evidence about their influence. School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 26(4), 1-25.

Sutton, P. S. & Knuth, R. (2020). How high school academic departments impact school reform efforts. Journal of Curriculum Studies, 52(1), 118-137.

Taherdoost, H. (2016). How to Design and Create an Effective Survey/Questionnaire; A Step by Step Guide. International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM), 5(4), 37-41.

Tan, C. Y. (2015). Examining school leadership effects on student achievement: the role of contextual challenges and constraints. Cambridge Journal of Education, 48(1), 21-45.

Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H. & Fung, I. (2008). Teacher professional learning and development: Best evidence synthesis iteration. Retrieved online: https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/16901/TPLandDBESentireWeb.pdf

© State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) 2021



Curriculum Planning and Assessment Implementation Guide is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), indicate if changes were made and comply with the other licence terms, see: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International

The licence does not apply to:

- any images, photographs, trademarks or branding, including the Victorian Government logo and the DET logo; and
- content supplied by third parties.

Copyright queries may be directed to copyright@edumail.vic.gov.au

