



Embedding Formative Assessment

Diagnostic self
assessment tool

Sample

About this resource

This self-assessment tool has been developed to support schools participating in SSAT's Going Further with Embedding Formative Assessment programme. Building on Dylan Wiliam's five key strategies of formative assessment, it provides a structured framework for evaluating current practice, identifying strengths and prioritising areas for development.

Designed for use by individuals, departments, phases or whole-school teams, the tool encourages evidence-informed reflection on how effectively formative assessment is embedded across teaching and learning. It can be used to support professional dialogue, inform improvement planning and monitor progress over time.

The most successful schools use formative assessment not as a collection of techniques, but as a consistent and shared approach to improving learning. This resource will help you identify what is already working well, where practice can be strengthened, and the next steps needed to secure sustainable improvement.

About programme lead

Alex Galvin, Senior Education Lead, SSAT

Alex joined SSAT in 2008 and is now a senior education lead. She runs SSAT's Leading Edge network, our network for high performing schools, supporting schools to collaborate, innovate and share best practice. Alex also leads on curriculum for SSAT. Prior to joining SSAT, Alex taught for fifteen years in schools in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.



How to use this self-assessment tool

This diagnostic self-assessment tool is based on the 5 principles of formative assessment and the interaction and importance of the teacher, the student, and their peers across these principles. As Dylan Wiliam states *‘formative assessment is about 3 processes; Where the learner is going, where they are right now and how to get there...If you cross those two dimensions you get 9 cells, which can be usefully grouped in to 5 strategies of formative assessment.’*

5 Key Strategies of formative Assessment

1. Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions and success criteria.
2. Engineering effective discussions tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning.
3. Providing feedback that moves learners forwards.
4. Activating students as learning resources for one another.
5. Activating students as owners of their own learning.

This tool could be used in a number of ways to help you decide which aspects of formative assessment are well embedded, regular and consistent practice and which need further development. It could equally be used at a department, subject or phase level assessing all 5 principles simultaneously or examining one at a time.

	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is	How to get there
Teacher	Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success (Sharing learning intentions)	Engineering effective classroom discussion, questions and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning (Questioning)	Providing feedback that moves learners forward (Feedback)
Peer		Activating students as owners of their own learning (Self-assessment)	
Learner		Activating students as instructional resources for one another (Peer-assessment)	

Criteria for judgements

- ▶ What evidence do you have for each principle?
- ▶ How do you know that an area is a definite strength?
- ▶ What has become well embedded after the EFA programme?

The statements under ‘teacher’ in the self-assessment grids will help you to think about this. Some examples of teacher and student activity and formative assessment techniques are given based on the EFA programme but these are not exhaustive.

The key to successfully embedding formative assessment is the leadership of it across subjects and phases. The final section can be used to assess this aspect.

2. Engineering effective discussions tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning <i>'Where the learner is' - better evidence, that leads to better decisions which leads to better learning - ask questions that are worth asking.</i>	Definite strength	Relative strength	Relative limitation	Definite limitation	No evidence
Teacher Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience use a method to ensure that all students are expected to respond in class.					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience give sufficient wait time (10 seconds) before calling on a student to answer.					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience question skilfully and use a range of ways to elicit a response .					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience give thinking time to students.					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience regularly use open questions to allow for richer discussions.					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience never accept "don't know" as an answer.					
Teachers across departments/phases and all levels of experience use a range of ways to elicit evidence of learning in lessons and then use this to adapt learning and respond to misconceptions.					
Learner Learners at all stages/phases respond confidently and with understanding to teacher methods of checking.					
Peer Learners at all stages/phases are confidently and regularly involved in answering questions.					

2. Engineering effective discussions tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning

'Where the learner is' - better evidence, that leads to better decisions which leads to better learning - ask questions that are worth asking.

Evidence

Next steps

Mostly definite strengths	Mostly relative strengths	Mostly a relative limitation	Mostly a definite limitation or no evidence
Consider: Sharing best practice with other EFA schools through Going Further with Formative Assessment workshops. Delving in to why this is a strength e.g. through learner voice. Why has it become embedded? Developing subject/phase experts in this principle.	Consider: Revisiting TLC 2 and the principle 2 in Dylan Wiliam's video. Looking at subjects or phases where there is great practice and share specifically and deliberately. Look at the finer detail e.g. can wait time be improved and how.	Consider: Choosing a whole school-based approach to learner selection e.g. no hands up except to ask a question. Revisiting TLCs 2, 9 and 14 (hinge questioning). Holding mini refresher sessions for this principle.	Consider: Looking at your QA/feedback, personal action plans from year 1 and 2. What was effective then? Why did it not stick? Revisiting TLCs 2, 9 and 14 and choosing one or two aspects to focus on to reboot this principle. Seeking advice and support from EFA Team and Going Further with Formative Assessment.

Take your formative assessment practice even further

You have already laid the foundations through **Embedding Formative Assessment**. The challenge now is sustaining momentum, deepening practice and ensuring formative assessment remains consistently embedded across your school.

This new offer for schools who have completed Embedding Formative Assessment, is designed to support your team in maintaining an ongoing commitment to understanding learners' needs and improving classroom practice. It supports effective strategic leadership and the ongoing development of teachers' expertise.

Book a call with our team to find out more about the benefits of **Going Further with Formative Assessment** today.



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