OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment
Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes

Synergies for Better Learning: An International Perspective on Evaluation and Assessment
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1. Key Features of the Review
2. Key Themes
3. Specific Policy Options
1. Key Features of the Review
Purpose: To explore how systems of evaluation and assessment can be used to improve the quality, equity and efficiency of school education.

Focus: A Review of national approaches to evaluation and assessment in school education (primary and secondary schools)

Comprehensive approach: The Review looks at the various components of assessment and evaluation such as:
- Student assessment;
- Teacher appraisal;
- School evaluation;
- The appraisal of school leaders;
- Education system evaluation.

Investigation of each component individually, as well as the coherence of the framework as a whole (including the links between the different components).
OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment
Frameworks: Key areas for analysis

1. Governance: Striking the right balance between central efforts and local initiative and between accountability and development

2. Procedures: Designing the right instruments to ensure evaluation and assessment contribute to improvement of teaching and learning

3. Capacity: Developing competencies for evaluation and for using feedback at all levels of the education system

4. Use of results: Organising evaluative information in such a way that it facilitates effective use by stakeholders; avoiding ‘misuse’ of E&A results
OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks: **Methodology**

**Analytical strand**
- Reviewing the literature and evidence on the impact of evaluation and assessment procedures
- Gathering data on countries’ policies and practices

**Country Review strand**
- Country Reviews provide specific advice to individual countries.
- OECD-led Review Team

**Synthesis report**
- Comparative report to analyse policy options and highlight good practices across countries.

**A wide range of groups involved**
- National co-ordinators and informal groups within countries to produce CBRs
- 30 external reviewers involved in OECD-led Review teams
- About 90 schools visited and over 2 800 persons interviewed
- Links with other international organisations and key stakeholder groups (BIAC, TUAC, EC, Eurydice, the World Bank, SICI, UNESCO)
- Collaboration with other OECD units (PISA, TALIS, CERI’s projects, Education Indicators)
OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks: Participation

• 28 systems provided detailed data on their evaluation and assessment practices (Estonia, Israel and Spain in addition to countries below)

• 25 systems prepared a comprehensive Country Background Report

• 15 systems (in green) opted for a Country Review

Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Belgium (French Community), Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland).
OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks: Outputs

- Background papers on issues such as formative assessment, use of test results, teacher appraisal, school evaluation etc. (11)
- Country Background Reports (25)
- OECD Publication series: *OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education* (15 Country Review Reports)

All outputs available at:
www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy
Final Synthesis Report

Synergies for Better Learning
AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

To be published on 11 April, 2013, at International Conference in Oslo
2. Key themes
1 – Fostering synergies within the E&A framework

Issue:
Most countries do not have an integrated E&A framework but instead a series of components operating at different levels that developed independently of each other over time
Potential for generating complementarities; avoiding duplication; and preventing inconsistency of objectives.

Challenges and options:
– Integrate the E&A framework – develop a strategy document conceptualising a coherent E&A framework
– Clarify responsibilities across the framework
– Establish articulations within the E&A framework
  • Within specific components of the overall E&A framework
    e.g. teacher appraisal and teacher professional development; self- and external school evaluation
  • Between specific components of the overall E&A framework
    e.g. teacher appraisal, school evaluation and school development; school evaluation and system evaluation; school evaluation and the appraisal of school principals
  • Processes to ensure the consistency of E&A procedures
    e.g. moderation processes for teacher appraisal and teacher-based assessment
2 – Aligning evaluation and assessment with student learning goals

Issue:
A critical aspect is the alignment of the E&A framework with educational goals and student learning objectives

Challenges:
– If systems are poorly aligned, it is impossible to draw valid conclusions from E&A results
– Misalignment can have consequences on instruction and learning
– No system can achieve perfect alignment – complexity of education systems

Options:
– E&A procedures to align with main principles embedded in student learning goals (e.g. student-centre learning, collaborative work)
– E&A procedures require direct alignment with student learning objectives (e.g. fit for purpose assessments)
– School agents to have a clear understanding of student learning goals (e.g. clear articulation of goals; criteria and guidelines for assessment; teacher capacity; collaboration among teachers)
– Essential to evaluate the impact of E&A on the quality of teaching and learning (e.g. unintended effects)
3 - Focussing on the improvement of classroom practices and building on teacher professionalism

Issue:

There is often focus on structures, programmes and resources in a top-down approach and less reflection on establishing the channels which foster improvement in the classroom.

Challenges:

- E&A have no value if they do not lead to the improvement of classroom practice and student learning.
- Improvement function accomplished more at a local level – difficult for policy to reach classroom.
- Risks that E&A procedures do not place adequate focus on teaching and learning.

Options:

- Design the E&A framework in order to facilitate impact on classroom practices, role of local structures.
- Promote the regular use of E&A results for improvement in the classroom – emphasis on developmental function.
- Ensure that the evaluation of T&L quality is central to evaluation procedures.
- Build on teacher professionalism – teachers as the central agent in linking E&A to classroom.
4 – Effectively conceiving the accountability uses of evaluation and assessment results

Issue:
Growing prominence of accountability as a purpose of evaluation (public reporting of school results; rewards and sanctions on the basis of E&A results): creation of incentives for improved performance – opportunity to recognise and rewards; and information for parents and society.

Challenges:
– Range of potential detrimental effects (e.g. “teaching-to-the-test”, “narrowing of curriculum”)
– Accountability function of evaluation not to hinder the improvement function
– Conveys a “control”, “compliance”, “measurement” concept of evaluation
– It might constrain the ownership of E&A by school agents

Options:
– Communicate purposes of E&A
– Build on a range of E&A components achieving a variety of functions
– Publication of quantitative data to be perceived as fair by schools and set in a wider set of evidence
– Avoid overemphasis on student standardised tests as an accountability instrument
– Cautious with performance-based rewards (e.g. career advancement rather than bonuses)
5 – Placing the student at the centre

Issue:

A desirable principle in the design of the E&A framework is to place the student at the centre since the fundamental purpose of E&A is to improve the learning of the students.

Challenges:

– Teaching, learning and assessment may still take place in a somewhat ‘traditional’ setting with a more passive role for students in their learning
– More limited attention to student motivation and developing skills for “learning to learn”
– Collecting views and perspectives of parents and students is not a general practice

Options:

– Teaching, learning and assessment approaches which focus on students’ authentic learning
– E&A to focus on improving student learning outcomes
– Students to be fully engaged in their learning (contributing to planning, learning expectations communicated, assessing their learning, benefitting from individualised support and differentiated learning)
– Student feedback to be used for formative teacher appraisal
– Community and parental involvement (learning as a shared responsibility)
– Reduction of grade repetition in some countries
Issue:

Growing emphasis on measuring student outcomes; the proliferation of education indicators; and the establishment of education targets.

Provides potential for placing student outcomes as the focal point for analysis; monitoring key student learning outcomes; holding stakeholders accountable.

Challenges:

– Ensuring breadth of performance measures
– Securing fair and meaningful comparisons
– Avoiding detrimental effects of uses for accountability
– Preventing dominance of the quantitative over the qualitative

Options:

– Ensure policy making is informed by high quality data, but not driven by their availability
– Give a prominent role to qualitative analysis and research
– Ensure a broad approach to national monitoring
– Clarity of purposes for the uses of standardised tests results
**Issue:**

E&A policies often introduced with no due attention to capacity development

Capacity building offers potential for reinforcing the effectiveness of E&A procedures; engaging students as active learners; and strengthening teacher professionalism

**Challenges:**

Legitimacy of evaluators and accountability procedures; skills to benefit from E&A

**Examples of areas for capacity development:** standardised test development; formative assessment; assessment against standards; running systems of externally-based student examinations; analytical capacity in education agencies to use system level information; data handling skills of school agents; formal evaluators of individual school agents; competencies for classroom observation.

**Options:**

– Sustain efforts to improve student and teacher capacity for E&A

– Strengthen school leaders’ capacity for school development and instructional leadership

– Ensure support from educational authorities and identification of best practice

– Need for a strong capability at the national level to steer evaluation and to promote use of results for improvement
Establishing clarity about the purposes and appropriate uses of different evaluations and assessments is important to ensure the optimal contribution of E&A frameworks.

**Challenges**

- The challenge of sticking to original purposes and intended uses of evaluation and assessment procedures
- The proper design of E&A procedures depends on the clarity of purposes
- The need to respond to individual needs and school community contexts

**Options:**

- For each component of the E&A framework, develop a range of E&A procedures each with a clearly defined purpose and with the format being aligned with that particular purpose
- Keep the original purposes and intended uses of E&A procedures
- E&A procedures to suit the needs of different learner groups, school agents, and community contexts
Issue:

A certain degree of national consistency of approaches to E&A is desirable. However, there is also a need to meet local needs.

Challenges

– Nationally consistency of E&A procedures might jeopardise ability to respond to local needs
– E&A procedures defined at the local level provide fewer guarantees that they are aligned with national student learning objectives and that students, teachers, school leaders and schools receive equal treatment

Options:

– Need to find the right balance between national consistency and local diversity
– Agree general principles at the national level and allow flexibility of approach within the agreed parameters to better meet local needs
– Principles agreed should come along with clear goals, a range of tools and guidelines for implementation
– Encourage the different actors to co-operate, share and spread good practice
10 – Implementing evaluation and assessment policy successfully

Issue:

Moving from design to successful implementation

Challenges

– Implementing evaluation policies is complex, involves a wide range of stakeholders with distinct interests, and requires informed debates and capacity building

– A variety of factors may make implementation difficult: lack of consensus; lack of evaluation culture; insufficient information and guidance; limited involvement of professionals; inadequate competencies; narrow resources; poor leadership.

Options:

– Evaluation and assessment policy to be based on informed policy diagnosis, drawn on best practice, backed by research evidence and consistent (intrinsically and with other education policies)

– Build consensus and involve education practitioners

– Use pilots and policy experimentation; offer opportunities for feedback by practitioners as policies are implemented

– Develop expertise and capacity; reduce excessive bureaucratic demands; ensure sufficient resources
3. Specific policy options
1. **Governance**
   - Establish a coherent framework for student assessment
   - Develop clear goals and learning progressions to guide student assessment
   - Ensure a good balance between formative and summative assessment
   - Establish safeguards against an overreliance on standardised assessments
   - Share responsibilities for the governance and implementation of assessment frameworks

2. **Procedures**
   - Draw on a variety of assessment types to obtain a rounded picture of student learning
   - Support effective formative assessment processes
   - Clarify and illustrate criteria to judge performance in relation to national goals
   - Ensure the consistency of assessment and marking across schools
   - Promote assessment formats that capture valued key competencies
   - Build on innovative approaches developed in particular education sectors
   - Tap into the potential of ICT to develop sophisticated assessment instruments
   - Ensure that student assessment is inclusive and responsive to different learner needs
3. Capacity

– Put the learner at the centre and build students’ capacity to engage in their own assessment
– Maintain the centrality of teacher-based assessment and promote teacher professionalism
– Identify assessment priority areas for teacher initial education and professional development
– Use teacher appraisal and school evaluation processes to help teachers develop their assessment capacity

4. Reporting and use of results

– Develop clear reporting guidelines
– Engage parents in education through adequate reporting and communication
– Ensure transparency and fairness when using assessment results for high stakes decisions
– Promote the regular use of assessment results for improvement
1. Governance
   – Clarify the purposes of teacher appraisal and ensure that it fits national education objectives
   – Resolve tensions between the developmental and accountability functions of teacher appraisal
   – Establish a coherent framework for teacher appraisal
   – Establish a mandatory probationary period for new teachers
   – Consolidate regular developmental appraisal at the school level
   – Establish periodic career-progression appraisal involving external evaluators
   – Create a teacher career structure with distinct pathways

2. Procedures
   – Establish teaching standards to guide teacher appraisal and professional development
   – Use multiple instruments and sources of evidence
   – Provide support for effective classroom observations
   – Establish safeguards against simplistic use of student results for teacher appraisal
   – Ensure that student feedback to teachers is used for formative purposes
3. Capacity
   - Prepare teachers for their role in appraisal processes
   - Strengthen the capacity of school leaders for teacher appraisal
   - Ensure that designated evaluators are qualified for their role
   - Build central expertise to continuously improve teacher appraisal policies and practices

4. Use of results
   - Ensure that teacher appraisal feeds into professional development and school development
   - Establish feedback loops between teacher appraisal systems and initial teacher education
   - Establish links between teacher appraisal and career advancement decisions
   - Consider the use of non-monetary rewards as a complementary tool to recognise teachers
   - Ensure that underperformance is identified and adequately addressed
1. Governance
   - Promote the effective appraisal of school leaders within the broader assessment and evaluation framework while giving room for local diversity
   - Clarify the purposes of school leader appraisal

2. Procedures
   - Develop a common leadership framework or set of professional standards for school leaders
   - Promote the appraisal of pedagogical leadership together with scope for local adaptation
   - Promote the appraisal of school leaders’ competencies for monitoring, evaluation and assessment
   - Consider school leaders’ efforts to distribute leadership, to enhance teacher leadership within schools, and to assume leadership responsibilities beyond their school borders as an integral part of appraisal
   - Promote the use of multiple instruments and sources of evidence
3. **Capacity**
   - Build capacity for effective school leader appraisal
   - Promote school leader appraisal as an opportunity for peer learning

4. **Use of results**
   - Ensure school leader appraisal informs professional development
   - Consider the development of a career structure and career advancement opportunities to reward successful school leaders
1. Governance
   - Clarify the role and purpose of school evaluation within the wider evaluation and assessment framework
   - Ensure the focus for school evaluation is the improvement of teaching, learning and student outcomes
   - Evaluate and adapt external school evaluation to reflect the maturity of the school evaluation culture
   - Raise the profile of school self-evaluation
   - Align external school evaluation with school self-evaluation

2. Procedures
   - Develop nationally agreed criteria for school quality to guide school evaluation
   - Develop appropriate resources for school self-evaluation
   - Ensure a strong evidence base for external school evaluation and appropriate analysis tools
   - Ensure transparency in external school evaluation procedures
3. **Capacity**
   - Ensure the credibility of external evaluators and enhance their objectivity and coherence
   - Ensure sufficient capacity and retraining as necessary to fit the approach to external school evaluation
   - Strengthen school principals’ capacity to stimulate an effective school self-evaluation culture
   - Promote the engagement of all school staff and students in school self-evaluation
   - Promote peer learning among schools

4. **Reporting and use of results**
   - Optimise the feedback of nationally collected data to schools for self-evaluation and development planning
   - Promote the wider use of the results of external school evaluation
   - Ensure the systematic follow-up of external school evaluations
   - Report a broad set of school performance measures with adequate contextual information
1. **Governance**
   - Ensure a broad concept of education system evaluation within the evaluation and assessment framework
   - Ensure policy making is informed by high quality measures, but not driven by their availability
   - Situate education system evaluation in the broader context of public sector performance requirements

2. **Procedures**
   - Develop a national education indicator framework
   - Design a national strategy to monitor student learning standards
   - Ensure the collection of qualitative information on the education system
   - Assure the monitoring of changes over time and progress of particular student cohorts
   - Ensure collection of adequate contextual information to effectively monitor equity
3. **Capacity**
   - Establish and secure capacity for education system evaluation
   - Promote the development of evaluation capacity at the local authority level
   - Ensure objectivity and credibility in education system evaluation activities

4. **Reporting and use of results**
   - Strengthen analysis of education system evaluation results for planning and policy development
   - Communicate key results of education system evaluation to stakeholders
   - Support feedback for local monitoring
Thank you for your attention!

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