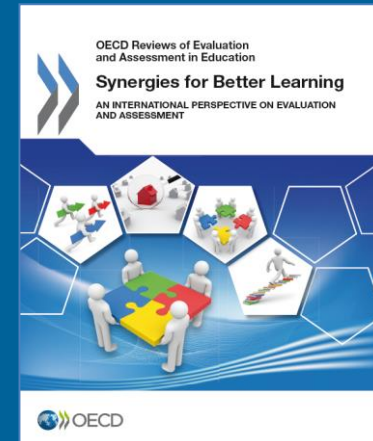




# Synergies for Better Learning: Key themes and conclusions

OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes

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# OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes

- **Purpose:** To explore how systems of evaluation and assessment can be used to improve the quality, equity and efficiency of school education.
- **Comprehensive approach:**
  - Overall framework and individual components student assessment, teacher appraisal, school evaluation, school leader appraisal, education system evaluation
  - Issues: Governance, procedures, competencies, use of results, implementation
- **Methodology and participation:**
  - Analytical strand, country review strand, final synthesis report
  - **26 systems** prepared a comprehensive Country Background Report; **14 systems** opted for a Country review
- ***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



# 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

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### 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

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### 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

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### 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

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### 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



## 6 – Going beyond measurement in educational evaluation

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### 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**





## 7 - Building capacity for evaluation and assessment

### 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**



## 8 – 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



***Merci de votre attention!***

***[www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy](http://www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy)***

***PDF of “Synergies for Better Learning” available from:  
[www.oecd.org/edu/school/Evaluation\\_and\\_Assessment  
\\_Synthesis\\_Report.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/Evaluation_and_Assessment_Synthesis_Report.pdf)***