

# **Supporting Professional Conversations about Assessment:**

## **A Guide for School Leaders**

### **SECTION 1**

#### **Instructional Leadership in Assessment**

DRAFT



---

[www.aac.ab.ca](http://www.aac.ab.ca)

This resource has been developed by the Alberta Assessment Consortium, under contract to the Alberta Teachers' Association as part of the support for implementation of the *Leadership Quality Standard* and the *Teaching Quality Standard*.

Please do not reproduce or distribute this DRAFT copy. It is provided as a work-in-progress to workshop participants. Feedback from participants will inform the revisions to the resource. For ease in accessing the accompanying video collection, workshop participants may also access this DRAFT version on the AAC website at the following link.

<https://aac.ab.ca/test-password-protected-page/>

This DRAFT will be revised and an updated copy made available to workshop participants in hard copy in the spring of 2019. It will also be available on the AAC website.

For further information about this resource, please contact AAC.

[info@aac.ab.ca](mailto:info@aac.ab.ca)

780-761-0530

## Overview of this Resource

### Section 1: Instructional Leadership in Assessment

The new *Leadership Quality Standard (LQS)* and *Teaching Quality Standard (TQS)* both contain specific references to student assessment. This section of the resource provides an opportunity for school leaders to make the connection between the LQS and TQS indicators on the topic of student assessment. It also highlights the pivotal role that assessment can play in supporting effective instructional leadership.

### Section 2: Establishing a School-based Assessment Team

This section of the resource maps out a process that school leaders can use to facilitate professional conversations about assessment within the school. School leaders invite a small number of teachers to participate in a collegial school-based assessment team. This core group of teachers will meet regularly with the school leaders to discuss principles of sound classroom assessment practice. They will then engage in action research within their classrooms to integrate these practices, noting the impact these practices have on student learning. Subsequent team meetings will include sharing of successes, challenges, and further questions. New topics of conversation and classroom follow-up will continue throughout the year.

Another key purpose of the assessment team is to serve as a catalyst for team members to engage in conversations with their peers both informally, as well as in whole-school meetings.

Parameters for inviting teachers to participate in this assessment team, as well as protocols for team meetings are suggested in the resource. When a school-based assessment team is functioning effectively within a school, many of the LQS competencies and indicators, beyond just those referring to instructional leadership, will be met through this endeavor.

### Section 3: Resources to Anchor Professional Conversations

The Alberta Assessment Consortium (AAC) has developed a collection of 32 videos of assessment ‘in action’ within Alberta classrooms. This video collection was developed through a grant from Alberta Education. These videos reside in the public access section of the AAC website, i.e., no password is required to access this collection. <https://aac.ab.ca/grants/assessment-capacity/>

This section of the resource provides support materials to accompany each of the videos. It provides a summary of the video, suggested connections to the TQS assessment indicators, recommendations for further professional learning for school leaders, possible responses to challenges that may be raised, and suggestions for using the video to support professional conversations about assessment with teachers.

### Section 4: Video Reflection Guides

This section of the resource includes reproducible handouts that can be used during assessment team and/or whole school conversations based on the AAC Assessment in Action video collection.

## Assessment Literacy is the Work of Leaders

The 2018 *Alberta Leadership Quality Standard* (LQS) provides a list of indicators within Competency 6 that relate to providing instructional leadership. A quick scan of the verbs within this section clearly reveals that this is an *action* list for leaders. Leaders are ensuring, demonstrating, facilitating and implementing as they provide instructional leadership.

An indicator within Competency 6 provides a specific reference to a leader's responsibility relative to student assessment practices.

- (g) ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence-informed;

Where appropriate, leaders also have specific responsibilities relative to supporting teachers in meeting the *Teaching Quality Standard*. An indicator within Competency 6 states the following:

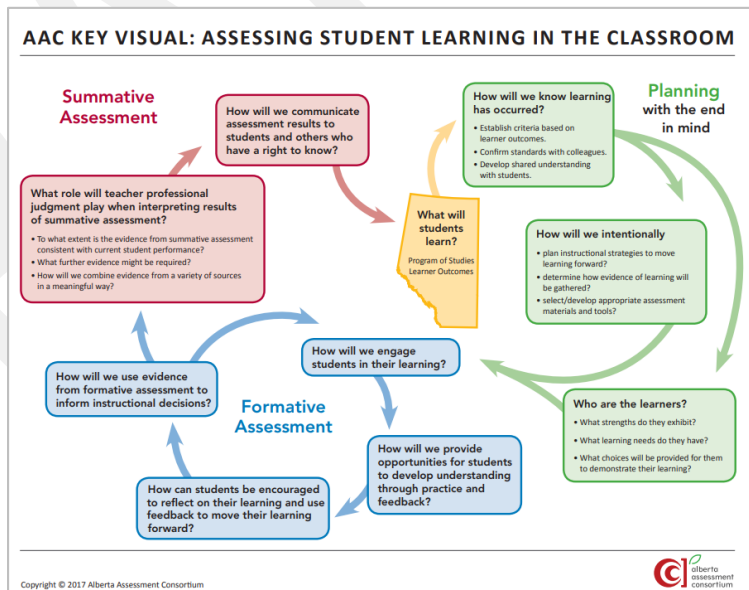
- (c) implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;

Competency 3 within the *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS) references five indicators of effective assessment practice. It's clear that in order to support teachers with their student assessment responsibilities, a leader must be well-versed in these same principles of sound assessment practice.

The indicators previously mentioned outline significant responsibilities for leaders.

However, assessment is more than an event that takes place at the end of learning. The [AAC Key Visual](#) presents the perspective that assessment is an integrated process, encompassing the entire teaching/learning endeavor.

A second look at the LQS competencies now reveals even more connections to assessment.



Assessment literacy is an *essential* area of study for leaders. This resource is designed to support leaders in the work of enhancing their personal assessment capacity in order to assist them in providing effective instructional leadership in assessment.

**Excerpt from *Alberta Education Leadership Quality Standard (2018)***

**Providing Instructional Leadership**

**6. A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students;
- (b) implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- (c) ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- (d) facilitating mentorship and induction supports for teachers and principals, as required;
- (e) demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum;
- (f) facilitating the use of a variety of technologies to support learning for all students;
- (g) ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence-informed;
- (h) interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students; and
- (i) facilitating access to resources, agencies and experts within and outside the school community to enhance student learning and development.



**Excerpt from *Alberta Education Teaching Quality Standard (2018)***

**Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge**

**3. A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (c) applying student assessment and evaluation practices that:
  - accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study;
  - generate evidence of student learning to inform teaching practice through a balance of formative and summative assessment experiences;
  - provide a variety of methods through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes;
  - provide accurate, constructive and timely feedback on student learning; and
  - support the use of reasoned judgment about the evidence used to determine and report the level of student learning.

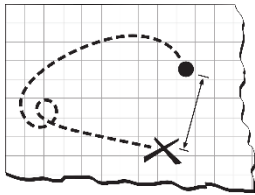
This resource will focus on the indicators from the TQS. The text in the following excerpt is taken directly from the 2018 *Teaching Quality Standard* and has been used with permission. The illustrations and the use of bold font within the indicators have been added for emphasis.

## Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

### 3. A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

(c) applying student assessment and evaluation practices that:



- **accurately** reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study;
- provide a **variety of methods** through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes;
- generate evidence of student learning to inform teaching practice through a **balance of formative and summative** assessment experiences;
- provide accurate, constructive and timely **feedback** on student learning;
- support the use of **reasoned judgment** about the evidence used to determine and report the level of student learning.

©Alberta Education. *Alberta Education Teaching Quality Standard: Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge*. Edmonton, AB. <https://education.alberta.ca/media/3739620/standardsdoc-tqs-fa-web-2018-01-17.pdf>



