

Academy Quality Process 2026-2027: What's New in the Academy Assessment?



Academy Assessment (AA) changes for 2026-2027 are minimal. Model and Distinguished quality level thresholds, AA evidence requirements and changes to a few strategic actions in the AA are outlined.

Model and Distinguished Thresholds

Thresholds for Model and Distinguished academies will be the same as they were in 2025-2026.

See [Model and Distinguished Academy Thresholds](#) for detailed threshold descriptions and requirements for academies to become or maintain a Model or Distinguished quality level this year.

Important Note: An academy must have had at least 10 seniors in the prior school year to be eligible for a Model or Distinguished quality level, even if percentage thresholds have been met.

AA Evidence

Academy Assessment evidence requirements are generally the same as they were in 2025-26, with minor adjustments highlighted for a few strategic actions in the next section.

Evidence requirements within [NAF's Academy Assessment](#) vary depending on the quality level an academy aspires to attain. Each strategic action indicates one of the following four evidence types:

1. **Automatically populated** – automatically populated from annual data collection in ASH, WBL Tracker or NAFTrack
2. **Required for All** – all academies completing the AA must submit evidence
3. **Required for Model +** – academies striving for Model or Distinguished level must submit evidence
4. **Optional** – evidence is optional to submit for all academies

In addition, academies have the option to use the AA *Notes feature* to submit evidence instead of uploading a document (when applicable).

AA Strategic Actions

Updates were made to the following strategic actions in [NAF's 2026-2027 Academy Assessment](#):

Strategic Action 2025-2026	Updated for 2026-2027
<p>4.1.a The academy intentionally plans and calendars work-based learning experiences throughout the school year to ensure a coherent sequence of career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Strategic action language & selection options updated:</p> <p>4.1.a The academy intentionally plans and calendars work-based learning experiences throughout the school year. The academy (select all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Has a documented plan or calendar for work-based learning experiences<input type="checkbox"/> Includes a progression from career awareness to exploration to preparation<input type="checkbox"/> Engages industry partners in the planning and/or delivery of experiences<input type="checkbox"/> Regularly reviews and updates the plan<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above

Strategic Action 2025-2026

Updated for 2026-2027

4.1.d Student voice and input are solicited and used to guide work-based learning program planning.

- Yes
- No

Strategic action language & selection options updated:

4.1.d The academy uses student voice and input to inform work-based learning planning. The academy (select all that apply):

- Regularly collects student input on WBL experiences (e.g., WBL Reflection Forms, post-experience feedback)
- Systematically analyzes student input at least 1-2 times per year to inform WBL planning (e.g., Reflection Form data, Student Survey data)
- Embeds student input into ongoing WBL planning and decision-making (e.g., advisory groups, co-design, feedback loops)
- None of the above