

Academy Quality Process 2025-2026: What’s New in the Academy Assessment?



Academy Assessment (AA) changes for 2025-2026 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 2024-2025. 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 2024-25, 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 2025-2026 Academy Assessment](#):

Strategic Action 2024-2025	Updated for 2025-2026
<p>1.5.a The academy team (of more than three members) participates in common planning or other formal collaboration time to prepare for curricular integration, student support systems or interventions, and college and career activities across the curriculum and grade levels. Common planning occurs with an academy team of more than three members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Weekly<input type="radio"/> Bi-Weekly<input type="radio"/> Monthly<input type="radio"/> Not Regularly	<p>Strategic action language & selection options updated:</p> <p>1.5.a The academy team (of more than three members) meets regularly for collaborative planning focused on student success and academy improvement. The academy team (select all that apply):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Meets regularly<input type="checkbox"/> Reviews student outcome data<input type="checkbox"/> Plans for curriculum integration and/or projects<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinates college and career readiness activities<input type="checkbox"/> Updates academy goals<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above

Strategic Action 2024-2025	Updated for 2025-2026
<p>2.1.b The advisory board created operational documents, including a strategic plan with clear annual outcomes informed by academy data and by-laws to help the academy grow and sustain academy needs. The advisory board developed (select all that apply):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strategic plan for 2024-25</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> By-laws</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None of the above</p>	<p><i>Strategic action broken into two separate strategic actions:</i></p> <p>2.1.b The advisory board created a strategic plan with clear annual outcomes informed by academy data.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>2.1.c The advisory board created by-laws to help the academy grow and sustain academy needs.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>N/A</p>	<p><i>Strategic action is NEW for 2025-26. An updated 2025-26 WBL calendar/plan is required as evidence.</i></p> <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</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>
<p>4.2.c (Unscored until 2025-26) The proportion of 2023-24 academy students who completed at least one work-based learning activity during the 2023-24 school year is:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 71-100%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 41-70%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 21-40%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 11-20%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1-10%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Less than 1%</p>	<p><i>Strategic action moved from 4.2.c to 4.2.b. It will be <u>scored</u> this year and is automatically populated from NAF's WBL Tracker.</i></p> <p>4.2.b The proportion of 2024-25 academy students who completed at least one work-based learning activity during the 2024-25 school year is:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 71-100%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 41-70%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 21-40%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 11-20%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1-10%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Less than 1%</p>
<p>4.2.d (Unscored until 2025-26) The proportion of 2023-24 seniors who completed work-based learning activities in at least two different phases of the WBL continuum in any year (i.e., career awareness, career exploration, career preparation) is:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 71-100%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 41-70%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 21-40%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 11-20%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1-10%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Less than 1%</p>	<p><i>Strategic action will be <u>scored</u> this year and is automatically populated from NAF's WBL Tracker.</i></p> <p>4.2.d The proportion of 2024-25 seniors who completed work-based learning activities in at least two different phases of the WBL continuum during their academy experience (i.e., career awareness, career exploration, career preparation) is:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 71-100%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 41-70%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 21-40%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 11-20%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 1-10%</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Less than 1%</p>