

INCA International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Internet Archive

Compulsory assessment systems in the INCA countries: Thematic Probe

May 2007

Catherine Andrews, Ruth Brown and Claire Sargent
with Sharon O'Donnell

QCA
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Supported and managed by nfer

Introduction

INCA is QCA's International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Internative Archive at www.inca.org.uk. It is managed and updated by the International Information Unit at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). INCA provides descriptions of government policy on education for 20 countries. It focuses on curriculum, assessment and initial teacher training frameworks for pre-school, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education in schools (3-19 age range).

In preparing its response to the Education Select Committee's enquiry into national assessment, QCA asked NFER to undertake an INCA thematic probe to gather information via the 20 INCA country archives. The probe sought answers to the following questions, which were developed by QCA's International Unit in response to the Select Committee's enquiry:

1. Is there a compulsory assessment system?
2. What is the compulsory assessment system intended for (evaluative, summative, formative)?
3. Which pupils are assessed (cohort or sample, ages/stages)?
4. When are pupils assessed?
5. Which subjects are assessed?

The result is detailed and up-to-date tabulations of information for Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA and Wales. The tables appear below and provide links to other sources and additional information.

Australia

Australia: Statutory national assessment under the National Assessment Programme (NAP) and the national literacy and numeracy plans			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The National Assessment Programme (NAP). And under the nationally agreed literacy and numeracy plans.	The National Assessment Programme (NAP) encompasses all tests endorsed by the MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs), such as the triennial sample assessments in science, civics and citizenship, and ICT as well as the national literacy and numeracy assessments (the latter to commence in 2008). In line with the national literacy and numeracy plan and the agreed national literacy and numeracy benchmarks, individual states and territories also conduct statutory testing in certain year groups (see below).	http://online.curriculum.edu.au/litbench/default.htm for details of the national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.
What is this compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative. Formative.	The aim of the National Assessment Programme is to gather information for schools, education ministers and the community about the achievements of students and how these compare across Australia. State and territory results from the National Assessment Programme for science literacy, civics and citizenship, and ICT literacy are reported nationally and can be viewed on the MCEETYA website. Participation in state and territory literacy and numeracy assessment programmes allows student progress to be monitored over time. The assessment programmes aim to support student learning and allow schools to identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching programmes. Schools and their communities are able to compare their student's achievements with national benchmarks and with students' in other states and territories. Parents and carers of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 participating in state and territory assessments receive individual reports showing where an individual student's results place him or her in relation to the benchmarks, and in comparison with the remainder of the students in the year group.	*National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/policy_initiatives_reviews/national_goals_for_schooling_in_the_twenty_first_century.htm *Measurement Framework for National Key Performance Measures* http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/2006_Measurement_FW_for_national_KPMs_Final.pdf

Australia: Statutory national assessment under the National Assessment Programme (NAP) and the national literacy and numeracy plans (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Under NAP: A national sample of some Year 6 and 10 students (ages 11/12 and 15/16 respectively). Under the literacy and numeracy plans: All students in Years 3, 5 and 7 (ages 8/9; 10/11 and 12/13 respectively) and, in some states, in Year 9 (age 14/15).	Under NAP: some students (a sample) in Years 6 and 10, as well as some 15-year-olds, participate in national sample assessments of reading, mathematics, science, civics and citizenship, and ICT Literacy. All Australian schools participate in state and territory literacy and numeracy assessments. Some students may be excluded from the assessments for reasons such as lack of competency in English where English is not their first language, intellectual impairment, or special circumstances.	
When are pupils assessed?	See above for year groups/ages. October for NAP testing. August for literacy and numeracy testing.	National Assessment Programme tests generally take place in October. Some items may be trialled earlier in the school year. State and territory literacy and numeracy testing usually takes place in August of the school year. The school year runs from January to December.	http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/2007Testing_schedule.pdf for a full calendar of tests in 2007

Australia: Statutory national assessment under the National Assessment Programme (NAP) and the national literacy and numeracy plans (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy, numeracy, science, civics and citizenship, ICT literacy.	NAP sample assessments are conducted by MCEETYA in accordance with a three-year cycle: • science literacy (2006) • civics and citizenship (2007) • ICT literacy (2008 [and 2005]) Year 3, 5, 7 (and 9 in some states and territories) literacy and numeracy tests take place annually (full cohort).	
What modes of assessment are used?	Standardised written tests and some practical tasks.	For the National Assessment Programme sample tests, the following modes of assessment are used: • Science literacy sample tests, taken by students in Year 6 (aged 11/12) in 2006, included a 60-minute pencil and paper section and a 45-minute practical task. • Civics and citizenship sample tests, taken in 2004 by students in Years 6 and 10 (ages 11/12 and 15/16 respectively) comprised a 60-minute pencil and paper test, with multiple-choice, short-response and extended-response items. • In 2005, the ICT literacy sample tests taken by Years 6 and 10 took approximately two hours and comprised computer-based tasks. See the tables which follow for further details of the modes of assessment used for the Year 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy tests in individual states and territories.	Examples of the test materials used in the NAP tests are available : http://www.mceetya.edu.au/mceetya/default.asp?id=16358

Queensland

Queensland: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The Queensland Testing Programme.	The Queensland testing programme covers aspects of literacy (standard Australian English) and numeracy that allow reporting against the Queensland curriculum and national benchmark standards. The standards do not cover all aspects of literacy and numeracy.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Diagnostic, evaluative.	The testing programme aims to contribute to the improvement of children's learning by providing information on their achievement in aspects of literacy and numeracy. It is managed by the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) for the Queensland Government. The tests are developed specifically for Queensland students; the 2007 tests aim to: • Provide parents/carers with information on their child's progress in literacy and numeracy. • Enable parents to compare their child's performance with that of students in the rest of the state. • Provide teachers with information on class progress in literacy and numeracy to determine areas where the class/individual students need attention. • Provide schools with information on progress in literacy/numeracy to determine the strengths/weaknesses of their curriculum/teaching programmes. • To help the QSA monitor the aggregate performance of specific target groups within each cohort (such as boys and girls, indigenous students, students from a language background other than English, students from urban and rural settings). • To help curriculum developers analyse the literacy and numeracy demands of their particular key learning area. • To inform the QSA and the Queensland Minister for Education and the Minister for the Arts of student performance standards and trends in relation to aspects of literacy and numeracy in the Queensland English and mathematics syllabuses.	

Queensland: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	All children in Years 3, 5 and 7 (ages 8/9, 10/11 and 12/13 respectively).	Students in all state schools and most non-state schools participate. Children who may be exempt from the tests include those for whom English is not their first language and who have not reached a certain level of competency in English, or those with intellectual impairment who have been formally identified as having educational needs requiring an 'educational adjustment programme' (EAP). A small number of children in Years 3, 5 and 7 will also sit other tests as part of the 2007 Queensland Equating Study. These tests will allow a comparison to be made between children's performances on the 2007 Queensland tests and tests from previous years. The QSA is also consulting on the introduction of a Year 9 literacy and numeracy test (14- to 15-year-olds), the aim of which would be to indicate to parents and schools whether an individual student has a strong enough foundation in literacy and numeracy to allow him or her to be successful in the senior phase of learning. Four test options have been proposed: • school-based assessment involving teacher judgement and moderation; • standardised tests of literacy and numeracy; • a combination of school-based assessment and standardised tests; and • strengthening the school-based assessment already available.	

Queensland: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	In Years 3, 5 and 7. In August of the school year.	The school year runs from January to December. Year 3 pupils are aged 8-9; Year 5, aged 10-11 and Year 7, aged 12-13.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy and numeracy.	Aspects of reading and viewing, spelling and writing are assessed in the literacy test. Aspects of measurement and data, number and space are assessed in the numeracy test.	http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/testing/357tests/archive.html#2006 for information on previous tests.
What modes of assessment are used?	Standardised written tests and tasks – multiple choice and open-ended questions.	In the numeracy test, test items are multiple-choice or open-ended; some items require the use of calculators and measurement materials. Other items include mental calculations, written calculations and problem solving. In the literacy test, reading and viewing are assessed through multiple-choice items, which may be based on materials in a magazine. Spelling is measured through dictation and proofreading tasks and through information from the writing task. Writing is assessed through a written response. The tests are conducted in two sessions, separated by a short break. Most children complete the tests in their classroom with their regular classroom teacher.	In the fortnight before the tests, children usually work with some test preparation/practice material. The items used in preparation will be easier than most of the actual test items. Because the tests reflect the current Queensland syllabuses, children do not need to do any extra study.

Victoria

Victoria: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. Known as the Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM).	AIM is a statewide assessment and reporting programme in English and mathematics for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.	AIM replaced the Learning Assessment Project (LAP) in 2001.
What is the statutory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and formative.	AIM assessment provides an indication of how well the literacy and numeracy skills of students are developing in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Results provide a useful source of feedback and guidance about future learning needs to students, parents and teachers. Although AIM assessment is not designed as a diagnostic tool, student response patterns can help identify certain points of strength or weakness in their learning. Information gained from AIM English and mathematics testing is used for reporting against national benchmarks. These benchmarks describe minimum acceptable standards for students across Australia in the areas of English and mathematics. Students who do not achieve these standards are likely to have difficulty making satisfactory progress at school without additional assistance.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All cohort, Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.	Ages 8/9, 10/11, 12/13 and 14/15 respectively.	
When are pupils assessed?	Years 3, 5, 7 and 9,	AIM tests for Years 3, 5 and 7 take place in August each year. AIM tests for Year 9 take place in May. From 2008, all tests will take place in May.	

Victoria: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	English (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy).	AIM comprises tests in English (reading, writing and spelling) and mathematics. The tests are based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), the curriculum framework for Victorian schools.	Under the previous assessment programme (LAP), students were also tested in either science or studies of society and environment, in addition, in alternate years.
What modes of assessment are used?	Standardised, written - pencil and paper – tests.	The tests are pencil and paper tests conducted in school by the pupils' own teachers. They are set and marked by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). Students answer a number of questions, solve problems and write responses to show what they know and what they are able to do. The tests are based on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS), the curriculum framework for Victorian schools. All questions are associated with a Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) standard, and a skill descriptor identifies the particular focus of each question.	Examples of AIM pen and paper tests for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in English and mathematics are available online: http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/testing/index.html

Canada

Canada: Statutory national assessment (PCAP)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. There is a Pan-Canadian assessment, previously know as SAIP – the School Achievement Indicators Programme, this is now PCAP – the Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme.	In 1989, the members of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (the Council of Ministers of Education of all the provinces and territories) combined their expertise to develop the School Achievement Indicators Programme (SAIP). In April 2003, CMEC announced its intention to replace the SAIP assessment programme with a new Pan-Canadian Assessment Programme (PCAP). The first PCAP assessments are taking place in May 2007.	The following link provides more detailed information about SAIP and PCAP: http://www.cmec.ca/pcap/indexe.stm
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative purposes.	SAIP and PCAP were developed to provide individual provinces and territories with a basis for examining their curriculum and other aspects of their school systems. They also aim to identify whether students across Canada are obtaining similar levels of achievement at about the same age. The need to reform SAIP through the development of PCAP was due mainly to changes in curricula at local level and increased emphasis on international assessment. PCAP is intended to complement existing assessments in each province or territory.	
Which pupils are assessed?	A random sample of 13-year-old students across Canada is participating in the first PCAP assessments. 15-year-olds will also be assessed in future.	Over 30,000 students from more than 1,500 schools are participating in the assessments. In jurisdictions (local administrative areas) where there are small student populations all students are being assessed.	The following link provides an overview of the 2007 PCAP assessments: http://www.cmec.ca/pcap/2007/indexe.stm

Canada: Statutory national assessment (PCAP) (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	At age 13 (Years 6, 7 or 8, depending on the province or territory). The PCAP programme will also assess students at age 15 (in Years 8, 9 or 10 depending on the province or territory), although no information is currently available about when this will take place.	The 2007 PCAP assessments for 13-year-olds are taking place between 14th May and 1st June.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading, mathematics and science.	The PCAP programme also intends to allow for other subjects to be added as the need arises. The assessment is conducted in English or French. For the 2007 PCAP assessments, reading is the major component, with science and mathematics as minor components. Students also respond to a questionnaire about their interests, attitudes and classroom activities.	The following link provides access to a 'Handbook for Schools' on the 2007 PCAP programme, which includes further information regarding the skills tested in each subject; see in particular pages 1-2: http://www.cmec.ca/pcap/2007/handbook.en.pdf

Canada: Statutory national assessment (PCAP) (continued).			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	The 2007 PCAP assessments were developed and reviewed by teachers in cooperation with CMEC. Towards the end of 2007, CMEC will report the assessment results at both the provincial/territorial level and the pan-Canadian level, and by language of instruction. Each province or territory will also receive detailed technical information. However, results for individual students, schools, or school board/school district will not be reported. Students' academic records will not be affected in any way.	It may also be of interest to consult the reports compiled by CMEC analysing the results of previous SAIP assessments. These are accessible from the right-hand side of the page at the link below: http://www.cmec.ca/pcap/indexe.stm

Alberta

Alberta: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The 'Achievement Testing Program'.	The achievement tests are closely aligned with the provincial curriculum to assess student learning of selected curricular knowledge and skills.	For a detailed overview of the 'Achievement Testing Program': http://www.edc.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/supporting_excellence/overview.asp
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative, summative and informative purposes.	The achievement tests aim to provide: • feedback to students and parents on how well students have achieved curriculum-based learning objectives; • information for teachers on how well their classes have achieved; • teachers with a means of comparing their assessment information with provincial achievement test results; • feedback to teachers on the effectiveness of their teaching methods; • school principals with information on school achievement patterns in relationship to provincial results; • school principals with information for the school's annual education results report, and for setting goals, priorities and targets in the school's education plan; • system-wide information on student achievement levels for consideration in relation to provincial results and other data on student achievement levels; • information for monitoring student learning and targeting areas for improvement through curriculum redesign or programme initiatives.	

Alberta: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	All pupils in Years 3, 6 and 9 are usually assessed.	Although all pupils in the relevant years are usually assessed, a superintendent of schools (the head of the school board, which is responsible for the administration of education in a local area) has the authority to excuse a student if it is deemed that he/she cannot respond to the test – for example, a student who has recently arrived in Canada and has minimal knowledge of English or French.	
When are pupils assessed?	Year 3: age 9 Year 6: age 12 Year 9: age 15.	Tests are usually administered in May and June of the school year. The school year runs from September to June.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Year 3: English language and mathematics. Years 6 and 9: mathematics, science, social studies, English and French.	The language tests assess both reading and writing skills. Students in French immersion and francophone programmes take both English and French language arts tests. French versions of the tests in mathematics, science, and social studies are available for these students.	

Alberta: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	Teachers administer the achievement tests in their classrooms, based on instructions provided by Alberta Learning (the Department of Education). Scoring materials are provided to schools for teachers to use in marking the tests locally, if they wish to do so, prior to submitting them for central marking. A teacher may use the local mark as part of a student's final mark in the course. Provincial results of the achievement tests are released publicly in mid-September, along with diploma examination results. Detailed reports for the school year and multi-year reports are also provided electronically to schools and school authorities. Language tests include a written-response component, as well as a part marked by computer. The other achievement tests include only machine-scored questions. The content of the tests is age-appropriate, based on the programmes of study. The format of the tests is also age-appropriate. For example, in completing the Year 3 tests, students fill in test booklets, whereas in Years 6 and 9, a separate answer sheet is used for the tests by computer.	The following link provides further information regarding the reporting of the results of the student achievement tests: http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/supporting_excellence/reporting.asp The parent guides to provincial achievement testing in Years 3, 6 and 9 respectively provide test descriptions and sample questions. They are available at the following URLs: http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/parentguides/GR3_ParentGuide_WEB.pdf http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/parentguides/GR6_ParentGuide_WEB.pdf http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/parentguides/GR9_ParentGuide_WEB.pdf

British Columbia

British Columbia: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The 'Provincial Assessment Program'.	The British Columbian Ministry of Education manages the 'Provincial Student Assessment Program', which assesses students' knowledge and skills at specific points in their schooling.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and informative purposes.	The 'Provincial Student Assessment Program' aims to determine the extent to which students are achieving the knowledge, skills and understanding prescribed in the provincial curriculum. A significant part of the 'Provincial Student Assessment Program' is the 'Foundation Skills Assessment' (FSA) (see below for further details). This is intended to: • provide information to districts about the performance of their students in relation to provincial expectations and standards in order to assist districts to plan for improvement; • provide information to the public about the performance of students provincially in relation to expectations and trends over time; • measure the achievement of students in reading comprehension, first-draft writing and selected components of numeracy; • determine if there are any trends in student performance at the school, district and provincial levels; • determine if there are any groups of students who under-perform with respect to provincial standards; and • determine whether students are learning vital skills they will need in later life, and determine whether student achievement is improving over time.	The following link provides an overview of the 'Provincial Student Assessment Program': http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/ This link provides further information regarding the FSA: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/

British Columbia: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Generally all pupils in Years 4, 7 and 10 participate in the tests for the FSA.	The Ministry of Education does, however, provide guidelines detailing the circumstances when students may be excused from participating in the FSA, for example, when they are on authorised absence from school or, if they are students with special needs following modified educational programmes.	
When are pupils assessed?	Year 4: age 10/11 Year 7: age 13/14 Year 10: age 16/17.	FSA tests are usually held during a period of around two weeks in May. Tests take approximately four and a half hours of classroom time and are spread over a minimum of three days.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading comprehension, writing and numeracy.	The skills tested in the FSA are linked to performance standards developed for voluntary use in British Columbian schools.	The performance standards for use in British Columbian schools: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests. The reading comprehension and numeracy components of the tests consist of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The writing component consists of first drafts of two writing tasks.	The British Columbia Ministry of Education has overall responsibility for the Provincial Learning Assessment Program/ Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). It contracts material development and data analysis components to external agencies. The Ministry distributes and collects materials and convenes interpretation panels. Assessment development for the FSA begins in October with final versions completed by the following March. Tables of specifications are established, and item-writing and item-review teams of practising classroom teachers are selected in early autumn. Steps taken in assessment design and development include: translation; development of marking keys; social equity reviews; classroom teacher and reading specialist reviews; technical reviews; and pilot testing.	

Ontario

Ontario: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes; province-wide standardised tests.	Province-wide standardised tests began to be introduced from the 1996/7 academic year.	
What is the system intended for?	Summative and informative purposes.	The tests aim to provide teachers and parents with information regarding student progress and potential for improvement.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All students in the relevant year groups (see below)		
When are pupils assessed?	Year 3: ages 8/9. Year 4: ages 9/10. Year 5: ages 10/11. Year 6: ages 11/12. Year 7: ages 12/13 Year 8: ages 13/14. Year 9: ages 14/15. Year 10: ages 15/16. Year 11: ages 16/17.	At age 8/9 (Year 3) and 11/12 (Year 6), tests usually take place in May of the academic year. The school year runs from September to June.	

Ontario: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Year 3 and Year 6: literacy (reading, writing) and numeracy. Year 4 and Year 7: science and technology, and language. Year 5 and Year 8: social studies (history and geography) and mathematics. Year 9: science and mathematics. Year 10: literacy and history. Year 11: English and mathematics.	Province-wide testing began to be expanded from the 2002/03 school year to encompass a broader range of subjects; previously literacy and numeracy were tested. The new tests are intended to complement the literacy and numeracy assessments in Years 3 and 6, and assist teachers in determining how well students are learning curricular material and where improvements could be made. The Year 10 literacy test became a high school diploma requirement from the 2001/2002 academic year. It is intended to assure students, parents, post-secondary institutions and employers that graduates of Ontario's high schools have the literacy skills they need. The testing takes place in Grade 10, age 16 (graduation in Ontario usually takes place on successful completion of Grade 12, age 18, which is post-compulsory) to ensure that there is sufficient time for remedial help if necessary.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	The standardised, province-wide tests are developed, set and administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), an arms-length agency of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Students' own teachers give the tests to their students and, in the case of the standardised tests in science, science and technology, English, language, social studies, history and mathematics (see above), have the flexibility to administer the test questions as part of their regular student assessments. and the results count towards a student's final grades (20 per cent of a student's mark each term	A report published by the EQAO outlining the results of the Year 3, 6 and 9 tests for 2005/6 is available at: http://www.eqao.com/pdf_E/06/06P031E.pdf

England

England statutory assessment: early years			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The Foundation Stage Profile (until 2008).	Foundation Stage Profile assessment. **NB**. A new Early Years Foundation Stage will be introduced from 2008. This will replace the Foundation Stage Profile assessment and provide a single framework for care, learning and development for all children from birth to the age of five in early years settings. See the table which follows for further information.	Foundation Stage Profile assessment website: http://www.qca.org.uk/163.html
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative. To sum up a child's progress and learning needs at the end of the foundation stage.	The Foundation Stage Profile is a means of summing up each child's progress and learning needs at the end of the foundation stage - the period of education from age 3 to the end of the academic year in which a child has his/her fifth birthday.	The Foundation Stage Profile Handbook: http://www.qca.org.uk/5824.html
Which pupils are assessed?	All children in the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday.		
When are pupils assessed?	Towards the end of the academic year in which the child has his/her fifth birthday (the end of the foundation stage).	Teachers assess children's progress throughout the foundation stage. The Foundation Stage Profile provides a way of summing up that knowledge towards the end of the foundation stage.	

England statutory assessment: early years (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	The six statutory 'early learning goals': • Personal, social and emotional development. • Communication, language and literacy. • Mathematical development. • Knowledge and understanding of the world. • Physical development. • Creative development.	Practitioners assess each child's development in relation to the statutory 'early learning goals' by accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child. The early learning goals became statutory under the Education Act 2002. Personal, social and emotional development is the first subject area to appear in the list as this is regarded as the prerequisite for children's success in all other learning and a distinguishing feature of this stage. The other five areas are organised to reflect the priority which the Government feels needs to be given to language and literacy and mathematical development.	Further information on the 'early learning goals': http://www.qca.org.uk/160.html
What modes of assessment are used?	There are no assessment activities, tasks or tests to be carried out.	The Foundation Stage Profile is based on practitioners' ongoing observations and assessments in all six areas of learning set out above. Assessment for the Foundation Stage Profile involves grading children's ability on 13 nine-point scales in aspects such as social development and reading. Children are generally expected to reach between points 4 and 8 on the scale. Point 9 signifies that the child is working beyond the level generally expected.	Detailed information on the assessment scales for the Foundation Stage Profile is accessible via: http://www.qca.org.uk/ages3-14/foundation/163.html.

England statutory assessment: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (from 2008)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Profile (from 2008).		EYFS website: http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/eyfs/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative. To sum up each child's development and learning achievements at the end of the EYFS.	The EYFS Profile is intended to provide a means of summing up each child's development and learning achievements at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The EYFS covers from birth to the age of five.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All children in early years education.		
When are pupils assessed?	Towards the end of the EYFS, as children reach the age of 5.	Practitioners assess children's progress throughout the EYFS. The EYFS Profile provides a way of summing up that knowledge towards the end of the foundation stage, age 5.	
Which subjects are assessed?	The six areas covered by the EYFS early learning goals.	The six areas covered by the EYFS early learning goals are: • Personal, social and emotional development • Communication, language and literacy • Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy • Knowledge and understanding of the world • Physical development • Creative development. The statutory early learning goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. They provide the basis for planning throughout the EYFS.	Further information on the early learning goals: http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/eyfs/site/requirements/learning/goals.htm

England statutory assessment: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (from 2008)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	There are no assessment activities, tasks or tests to be carried out.	The EYFS Profile is based on practitioners' ongoing observation and assessments in all six areas of learning and development (above). Each child's development must be recorded against the 13 assessment scales derived from the early learning goals.	Further information on assessment at the end of the EYFS: http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/eyfs/site/requirements/learning/assessment.htm

England statutory assessment: National Curriculum assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes.	System of statutory national assessment, within the framework of the National Curriculum. Statutory assessment arrangements for the National Curriculum consist of teacher assessment and national tests and tasks.	Further information on the National Curriculum tasks and tests: http://www.qca.org.uk/45.html
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative: to assess children's achievement. Results from National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment are also intended to provide information for parents and the public to help them judge the quality of the education being provided.	Assessment arrangements constitute a formal part of the National Curriculum. Statutory assessment and testing take place in relation to the National Curriculum Subject Orders, and therefore aim to chart students' attainment in those subjects. Although the tests, as opposed to teacher assessment, can cover only a limited range within each subject, they do still set out to provide a valid assessment of that range. They are therefore curriculum-based tests. This makes them different in character from either intelligence tests or aptitude tests. They set out to assess children's achievement, rather than their potential. The overriding purpose of National Curriculum assessment is to contribute to raising educational achievement. Assessment and testing provide information about children's attainment which schools, teachers, managers and students themselves need to direct their efforts into improved teaching and learning.	

England statutory assessment: National Curriculum assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Generally, all pupils in maintained (publicly funded) schools (and some in private, independent schools), at the ages of 7, 11 and 14.	Some children assessed by their teachers as working below certain levels of the National Curriculum eight-level scale of performance are not assessed by the formal tests in place, but by teacher assessment alone. Independent (private) schools are encouraged, but not required, to take part in the statutory assessment arrangements at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3.	
When are pupils assessed?	Towards the end of key stage 1, age 7; key stage 2, age 11; and key stage 3, age 14. Usually around the month of May.	Children in the final year of key stage 1 (in Year 2, aged around 7) are assessed. Teachers have flexibility in the timing of the tests and tasks, and are given a choice of task and test materials. Children in the final year of key stage 2 (Year 6, aged 11 by the end of the school year [31 August]). The tests are administered according to a specified timetable, and usually take place during a specified week in May. Students in the final year of key stage 3 (Year 9 and aged around 14). The tests are administered according to a specified timetable, and usually take place during a specified week in May. Test dates for the key stage 2 and 3 tests are determined by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Within each school, all students take the tests simultaneously (during the specified week), unless unavoidable practical difficulties make this impossible.	http://www.qca.org.uk/12305.html

England statutory assessment: National Curriculum assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Key stage 1: English and mathematics. Key stage 2: English, mathematics and science. Key stage 3: English, mathematics and science.	Children in key stage 1 are assessed by means of externally provided written tests and tasks in English (reading and writing), and mathematics, and by teacher assessment in English, mathematics and science. These are marked by a pupil's own teacher. Towards the end of key stage 2 (age 11), statutory assessment involves externally set and marked tests in English (reading, writing and spelling); mathematics (includes a mental mathematics test) and science. There is also teacher assessment against the attainment targets in English, mathematics and science. Towards the end of key stage 3 (aged around 14), statutory assessment involves externally set and marked tests in English (reading, writing and Shakespeare), mathematics (includes mental mathematics tests), and science. It is also a statutory requirement for students to be assessed by their teacher at the end of key stage 3 in all National Curriculum subjects.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Statutory written tests and tasks; reading tests; and mental mathematics tests. Statutory teacher assessment.	Teacher assessment and statutory tasks and tests are intended to give complementary information about students' attainment. The tests show what students have achieved in selected parts of a subject on a particular day. Teacher assessment is a judgement of performance in the whole subject over time.	

France

France: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes.	National mass diagnostic testing.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Diagnostic.	The primary goals of this assessment are to: • provide teachers with a tool to gauge their students' progress; • assist teachers in choosing the teaching activities most suited to the students' needs; and • assist teachers in planning their teaching of the curriculum accordingly.	
Which pupils are assessed?	The full cohort in Year 3 (primary education) and Year 6 (secondary education), nationwide.		
When are pupils assessed?	Age 8 (Year 3 of primary education); and age 11, the first year of secondary education.	Assessment takes place at the start of the school year, in September.	Previously, there was also compulsory national testing for 15-year-olds, as they entered the final year of compulsory education.
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy, numeracy.	At age 8, the assessment tests are closely related to the curriculum and assess 8-year-olds' strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Some cross-curricular skills such as observation, spatial awareness and temporal awareness are also included.	

France: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Formal written tests.	The *Direction de l'Evaluation, de la Prospective et de la Performance* (DEPP) (the Division for Assessment, Evaluation, Potential and Performance) of the Ministry of National Education is responsible for national assessment tools. It develops the diagnostic tests (guided by national protocols and/ or the national bank of assessment tools) and makes these available to teachers. The DEPP's overarching role is to determine the nature of assessment procedures, arrange sampling (in cases where sampling is required), devise and develop tests, supervise their administration and analyse and publish findings. In practice, groups of teachers, academics and inspectors from a number of regions, together with Ministry officials, meet in the Ministry throughout the year to devise, develop and test national assessment material. Much emphasis is laid on the principle of participation; that is, involving all interested parties in designing and developing such tests. Schools, however, are not directly involved in this process. Individual teachers are. They are drawn from as many different regions and schools as possible to involve as many people as possible. They serve for a few years and are then replaced by others. Continued overleaf	Results of these assessments are published in the Ministry's information bulletins. See: http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid273/les-notes-evaluation.html

France: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used? (continued)	Formal written tests.	Teachers normally administer and mark their own students' national mass diagnostic assessment tests and are provided with a detailed mark scheme for what are almost entirely right or wrong answers. They then either enter the data on a computer provided for this purpose (using software made available to them by the Ministry), so that they themselves can work out percentages and means, or they calculate the marks manually and complete a result sheet for each student using a series of code numbers, relating to a sophisticated error analysis. The coding system allows for gradations of incorrect answers and several elements (for example, spelling) can be assessed in one task. The DEPP provides support materials which illustrate ranges of typical answers and their corresponding codes, along with computer software to analyse students' results. The same codes are valid for all subjects and are entered on an optical results sheet and read and computed by a central computer. These tests take approximately two hours to administer and a further two hours to mark. The software provided is also designed to aid teachers in analysing the data in more detail for each subject and across both French and maths, in order to identify where students are having difficulty.	

France: national monitoring assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	End-of-year sampling (*evaluations bilans*).	Compulsory end of year sampling is carried out from time to time (at the end of the academic year and under Ministry instruction) for use in the course of national or international surveys or for international comparisons.	
What is the assessment intended for?	Evaluative.	The intention is to provide a snapshot of a pupil's knowledge and skills at key moments in his or her educational career: usually at the end of primary school (age 11) and the end of *collège* (compulsory lower secondary school, age 15), for example. The assessment has a precise objective: to compare the results obtained by the educational system with the goals established at important points in the school curriculum. Regular use of such end-of-year sampling provides educational decision-makers with feedback and comparative information over time.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Nationally representative samples of pupils at the end of primary education (age 11) and *collège* (age 15).	Samples vary between 3,000 and 30,000 students, depending on the subject/year groups being assessed and the variables being analysed. Students for the sample are selected randomly from a database of all students in the cohort. Adjustments are occasionally made to ensure that samples are representative.	

France: national monitoring assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Age 11 and age 15.	The national Ministry of Education advises headteachers that mass testing will take place in certain forms or that some classes in their schools are part of a national sample. Headteachers receive the relevant material in appropriate quantity, including test instruments as well as the rationale behind them. Testing takes place during normal class time and central government provides all instructions to headteachers and teachers.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Various.	In a cycle, starting with reading in (2003), foreign languages (2004), history/geography and civics in 2006, science and technology in 2007, mathematics in 2008; then returning to reading.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Standardised written tests.	The coding of end-of-year sample tests is normally undertaken by outside agencies; the statistical analysis is carried out in the Ministry.	Results of these assessments are published in the Ministry's information bulletins. http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid273/les-notes-evaluation.html

Germany

Germany: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	There will be. A system is currently under development.	Due to devolved responsibility to *Land* (federal state) level, there has, until recently, been no overarching national system of assessment. However, from the 2004/05 school year, national educational standards (*Bildungsstandards*) specifying competences which students should achieve at particular points in their education, in specific subject areas, began to be developed and introduced. The Institute for Quality Assurance in Education (*Institut zur Qualitätssicherung im Bildungswesen*, IQB), the body responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the standards, is currently developing tests to assess student performance against the standards.	For background information, it may be helpful to consult the following publication (Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2003), which sets out a definition of the concept of educational standards and describes the national infrastructure required for the development and evaluation of the standards: http://www.bmbf.de/pub/the_development_of_national_educationel_standards.pdf
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative purposes (system).	The tests are intended primarily to facilitate a national comparison of performance against the standards. However, they will also provide some data for international studies such as PISA, IGLU and PIRLS.	The national educational standards (*Bildungsstandards*) and tests are key elements of the Standing Conference of Ministers' overall strategy for monitoring educational performance. This strategy is available in German at: http://www.kmk.org/schul/Bildungsmonitoring_Brosch%FCre_Endf.pdf

Germany: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	A representative sample of students in the relevant year groups (see below).		
When are pupils assessed?	Age 10, end of Year 4 (end of primary education). Age 15/16, Years 9 and 10 (towards the end of lower secondary education).	Assessment will take place at age 10, the end of Year 4, and the end of primary education in most federal states. Students taking the lower secondary qualifications towards the end of Years 9 and 10 (ages 15 and 16 respectively) will also be assessed against the standards. The first standardised tests for 15- and 16-year-olds, in German, mathematics and the first foreign language (English or French), are scheduled to take place in 2009.	Detailed information (in German) regarding test development in different subject areas is available at: http://www.iqb.hu-berlin.de/arbbereiche/testentw
Which subjects are assessed?	Age 10 (Year 4): German and mathematics. Age 15/16 (Year 9/10): German, mathematics and first foreign language (English or French).		
What modes of assessment are used?	Not yet clear. The system is at an early stage of development.		

Hungary

Hungary: Statutory assessment under the National Core Curriculum			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. Recently introduced.	The first tests took place in 2006 and first results were issued in March/April 2007.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative.	The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the system. Testing is not high stakes for pupils	
Which pupils are assessed?	The full cohort in the year groups detailed below.	All students in all these year groups are tested.	
When are pupils assessed?	Grades 4, 6, 8 and 10 (ages 10, 12, 14, and 16 respectively).		
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy (reading) and numeracy.		
What modes of assessment are used?	Written standardised tests.	Tests are compiled in accordance with domestic and international assessment guidelines and traditions. In reading comprehension, pupils read texts of different lengths, genres and arrangement, appropriate to their age. Most of the mathematics problems are based on real-life.	

Hungary: Statutory assessment. National representative surveys			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	National representative surveys are carried out on occasion, in addition.	National representative surveys are carried out on occasion in subjects including mathematics, reading, sciences, computer science and cognitive abilities. The aim is to gain a general picture of the effectiveness of education and of trends in student achievement. The form of these tests differs somewhat from school tests; they mostly consist of multiple choice items. The Ministry of Education finances the surveys and receives and handles the results.	

Ireland

Ireland: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes in primary education, from calendar year 2007.	The website of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (http://www.ncca.ie) sets out a series of publications aimed at 're-envisioning' assessment in primary schools, in the context of the revised primary school curriculum and the obligations under Article 22 of the Education Act on schools "to regularly evaluate students and periodically report on the results of the evaluation to the students and parents". The publications seek to support the development of a school policy on assessment which would provide for assessment for learning (information to guide a student's future learning) and assessment of learning (information on a student's achievement at that point in time). The Ministry of Education accepted NCCA's advice that, as part of the range of assessment approches used in primary schools, all students should take standarised tests in reading (English) and mathematics at given points during primary education. In junior cycle (lower secondary) education, work on developing the assessment for learning initiative has not included standardised tests in the repertoire of assessment approaches. The use of standardised tests at this level is not well researched and there are currently no tests available for use in Irish post-primary schools.	http://www.into.ie/descirculars/DESCirculars2006/filedownload,4952,en.doc The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) was requested to identify key issues relating to the implementation of standardised testing of literacy and numeracy in compulsory schooling, and to provide corresponding advice. Its report is available online: http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/primary/advice%20comp%2005.pdf

Ireland: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Informative (for teachers, parents and students). Results not for publication.	Standardised testing is recognised as one of a range of modes of assessment that can help teachers make more informed decisions in relation to teaching and learning. The results of standardised tests will also be used to inform parents of pupils' progress and to assist in the identification of students who may require support. For students in those classes subject to standardised testing, test results will be maintained by the school and made available for inspection by Department of Education officials. Test results will also be reported to parents in respect of their own children in accordance with a reporting template currently being piloted. The results of standardised testing must be made available to inspectors conducting evaluations. Inspectors will not, however, make reference to test data in their reports that might facilitate school comparisons or the compilation of school performance ('league') tables.	
Which pupils are assessed?	The full cohort, nationwide, in Year 1/2 and Year 4/5.	Children may be excluded from the tests if, in the view of the school principal they have a learning or physical disability which prevents them attempting the test or, in the case of newcomers, where their level of English is such that attempting such a test would be inappropriate.	
When are pupils assessed?	Age 7 (Year 1/2) and age 10 (Year 4/5).	Individual schools are able to choose whether the tests are taken at the end of Year 1 (first class, age 6 – 7) or at the beginning of Year 2 (second class); and at the end of Year 4 (fourth class, age 9 – 10) or the beginning of Year 5 (fifth class, age 10).	

Ireland: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading (English) and mathematics.		
What modes of assessment are used?	Tests selected by schools from a range of standardised tests, normed for the Irish population and consistent with the primary curriculum.	Selection of the appropriate standardised tests is a matter for individual schools, provided that the tests chosen are normed for the Irish population and consistent with the Primary School Curriculum introduced in 1999. Examples of standardised tests available for the use of primary schools include the Drumcondra Primary Reading Test, the Drumcondra Primary Mathematics Test, and the Drumcondra Reasoning Test. NCCA considers that it may be necessary to review the tests available for their suitability for use in the contemporary classroom setting. It has proposed a comprehensive evaluation of standardised test use in primary schools two years after the introduction of statutory standardised testing.	Further information about the Drumcondra tests is available online http://www.erc.ie/index.php?p=31

Ireland: national monitoring assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	National monitoring assessment.	To complement the introduction of standardised testing in all primary schools (as described above), a separate programme of national monitoring will be undertaken by the Educational Research Centre. It is envisaged that such monitoring will be based on the model currently used to conduct national surveys of reading and mathematics in primary schools (also undertaken by the Educational Research Centre).	Educational Research Centre website: http://www.erc.ie/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	National system summaries.	The purpose of national monitoring will be to identify changes in trends over time for particular categories of school and to inform ongoing policy development. Individual school results will not be identifiable.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Sample.	The assessments will be targeted at: • a nationally representative sample of schools • a representative sample of schools in the School Support Programme of DEIS schools (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) • a representative sample of Irish-medium schools. If the new system of national monitoring follows the current model, the sample would be drawn equally from each year of primary education.	Information about the previous national monitoring assessment is available online: http://www.erc.ie/index.php?s=7
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy and numeracy.	It is planned to extend the range of assessments to include other areas of the curriculum in future years.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Standardised written tests.	These may include a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer items.	

Italy

Italy: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes **– in the process of being introduced.**	In 2004, the *Istituto Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e Formazione* (INVALSI, THE National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System) was established to evaluate and improve the quality of the education system. Their remit includes regularly assessing students' skills and knowledge at specific points in the education system. Tests have recently been piloted. Until the 2004/5 school year, children took the *licenza elementare* (national primary school leaving examination) at the end of Year 5 (age 11). This examination consisted of two written papers, relating respectively to language and expression, and logic and mathematics, and one oral examination covering all subjects together. The *licenza elementare* certificate was required to progress to lower secondary school . The Italian Constitution stipulates that examinations are only compulsory at the end of a cycle of schooling. As primary education (ages 6 to 11) has become part of a subdivision within the *primo ciclo di istruzione* (first cycle of education, pupils aged 6 six to 14), it is no longer considered necessary to assess pupils at the end of the phase.	The Italian national dossier; see in particular, chapter 9, Evaluation of Educational Institutions: http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/DB_Eurybase_Home The INVALSI website (in Italian): http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/index.php
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and summative purposes.		

Italy: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Primary: Years 2 and 4 (ages 7/8 and 9/10 respectively). Lower secondary: Year 6, 11/12. Upper secondary: Years 9 and 11 (14/15 and 16/17). End of Year 13, age 19.	In primary and lower secondary education, all schools and all Year 2, 4, and 6 classes participate in the tests. It is not yet compulsory for upper secondary schools to participate in the tests as the legislation introducing them has not yet come fully into force. School entry assessment may also be introduced.	http://www.eurydice.org/ressources/Eurydice/pdf/eurybase/2006_DNIT_EN.pdf http://www.eurydice.org/ressources/eurydice/pdf/047DN/047_IT_EN.pdf
When are pupils assessed?	In specific years of primary, lower and upper secondary education (see above).	INVALSI will also be responsible for organising and managing national tests, which will form part of the national examinations taken at ages 14 and 19 (the end of lower secondary and upper secondary education respectively). These will determine progression to the next phase of education. The remaining part of the national examinations will be set by the examination boards.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Italian, mathematics and science.		
What modes of assessment are used?	Information not currently available.		

Japan

Japan: Statutory assessment. Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment 2007			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	There are periodic national surveys of student achievement such as the Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment 2007.	The Ministry of Education, through the National Institute for Educational Research (NIER) does, however, conduct occasional nationwide scholastic achievement surveys, and previously most have been conducted on the basis of census or probability samples. The surveys, often in specific subject areas, are usually undertaken in collaboration with prefectural institutes of educational research, and aim either to compare the scholastic achievement of Japanese students in a given year with that in previous years, or to compare the achievement of Japanese students at the international level. The results of such testing have, in the past, been used in the improvement of curriculum standards, for example. **In 2007, the NIER conducted its first national survey of achievement since the 1960s. The 'Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment' may be repeated next year and in the future. The information which follows relates to these tests.**	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and informative purposes.	The 2007 Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment aims essentially to review the standard of education in Japan in light of recent structural reforms and specifically to: • Provide information on the levels of achievement and understanding of students in schools throughout Japan. • Identify ways of improving and strengthening educational guidance in individual schools. • Provide information on the outcomes of educational policies and identify problem issues. The assessment is taking place in response to growing concerns that children's academic abilities are declining. The test questions express the kind of academic abilities the Government believes pupils should possess, and aim to test pupils' ability to apply their knowledge in practice.	Newsletter of the National Institute for Educational Policy Research of Japan (NIER): http://www.nier.go.jp/homepage/kyoutsuu/English/publication/newspdf/v38-1.pdf

Japan: Statutory assessment. Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment 2007			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	All pupils in Year 6, the final year of primary education, age 11-12. All pupils in Year 3 (the final year) of lower secondary school, age 14-15.	In 2007, all national and public schools, except 14 schools in Inuyama, Aichi Prefecture, and approximately 60 per cent of private schools participated in the tests.	
When are pupils assessed?	At the end of primary and lower secondary education.	Tests took place on the fourth Tuesday in April, from 8.30am onwards. It is currently planned to hold the tests again next year at the same time. Results are expected in September.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Academic ability in Japanese and mathematics. Also, 'eagerness to learn' and 'daily life habits'.	**Primary school, Year 6, age 11/12.** Japanese: a 20-minute test on reading and writing and general knowledge about the language, followed by a 20-minute arithmetic test on fundamental calculation and general subject knowledge. Plus, a 40-minute test in Japanese in which students write about what they have learned from reading an article, followed by a 40-minute arithmetic test involving diagrams and graphs so that students can demonstrate their ability to utilise information. **Lower secondary school, Year 3, age 14/15.** Tests on Japanese knowledge and usage, followed by maths knowledge and application, with 45 minutes allowed for each. After the achievement tests, both primary and lower secondary school students answered a survey about their daily lives.	

Japan: Statutory assessment. Nationwide Academic Ability Assessment 2007			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	Test results for each municipality and school will not be announced, so that league tables cannot be compiled. Instead, local governments and schools will receive information on the results. Schools themselves can then determine their position by comparing the national averages, which will be announced by the Government and subsequently take their own steps to improve academic ability. Students will also be informed of their results so that they are familiar with the areas in which they need to improve.	

Japan: Statutory assessment. End of secondary achievement tests			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	All prefectures set achievement test at the end of compulsory secondary education, age 15.	These tests are set locally by the prefecture and take place at the end of compulsory junior high school (lower secondary) education.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative and informative purposes.	Results from the prefecture-set achievement tests on completion of junior high school (along with the results of internal teacher assessment in junior high school) are important in influencing student admission to post-compulsory upper secondary education. (Admission is, however, mostly dependent on student performance in the entrance examination for the upper secondary school concerned.)	
Which pupils are assessed?	All students at the end of junior high school, age 15.		
When are they assessed?	At the end of junior high school.	The school year runs from 1st April to the end of March.	
Which subjects are assessed	Tests may cover Japanese, social studies, mathematics, science and English, depending on the prefecture.		
What modes of assessment are used?	Usually formal written tests.		

Korea

Korea: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. National scholastic achievement testing/national assessment of educational achievement.	A revised system of periodic national assessments of student achievement (the national assessment of educational achievement) began to be implemented in September 2000, the principal aim of which is to monitor the curriculum.	http://www.kice.re.kr/kice/eng/info/info_3.jsp
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluation and formative.	Official objectives for the nationwide scholastic achievement tests are: • to identify - nationally - the scholastic achievement level of students; • to improve the various methods of teaching and learning and to guide the direction of education; • to explain the inter-relation between scholastic development and other influential factors; and • to collect data for curriculum improvement and effective supervision. Other objectives include monitoring the curriculum and monitoring teacher/headteacher accountability.	
Which pupils are assessed?	A sample in specific year groups (see below).	Small samples of students (between 0.5 per cent and one per cent of the whole student population in specific Years/Grades) are involved in the tests.	
When are pupils assessed?	Years 6, 9 and 10 (ages 11/12, 14/15 and 15/16 respectively).	The Year 6 sample is the final year of primary (elementary) school. The national scholastic achievement test for elementary and secondary school students is usually administered in September. In 2007, it takes place in October. The school year runs from March to the end of February.	

Korea: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Korean language, mathematics, science, social studies, English communications skills, and information technology skills.	Two subjects are tested each year. Korean language, mathematics, science and social studies are assessed every two years (two subjects each year), while English communications skills and information technology skills are assessed once every three years.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Formal written tests.	National scholastic achievement testing is formal and written. Each national scholastic achievement test has both multiple-choice items and constructed response items. Constructed response items usually account for 20-40% of the total score, depending on the features of the subject. Tests are norm-referenced and results are recorded by numerical scores.	

Netherlands

Netherlands: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. There is statutory assessment on completion of lower secondary education at age 15, and optional testing on completion of primary education (age 12).	The national tests taken on completion of the first cycle of secondary education (*basisvorming*, age 15) are compulsory. Those taken at the end of primary education (commonly known as the 'CITO tests' and taken at around age 12) are not. However, as the CITO tests are widely used by schools, they have been included in this table.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative, formative and summative purposes.	The tests are intended to help guide students' progression to the appropriate school/course type in the next phase of education.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Optional CITO tests: pupils aged 12, completing primary education. Compulsory assessment for 15-year-olds, completing *basisvorming* (the first phase of secondary education).	Around 85 per cent of primary schools use the national CITO tests. All pupils take the tests at the end of the first cycle of secondary education (*basisvorming*).	
When are pupils assessed?	At the end of the primary phase or the end of the first phase of secondary education (see above).	Tests on completion of *basisvorming* (the first phase of secondary education): the timing of the tests is decided by the school. Completion of the whole period of *basisvorming* generally takes three years. Pupils may, however, take tests after two years. Students take at least one test in each of the compulsory curriculum subjects during *basisvorming*.	

Netherlands: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	CITO test: language, arithmetic/mathematics, study skills, and world orientation. On completion of b*asisvorming*: each of the 15 compulsory subjects, except physical education.	CITO test: the four main areas assessed cover the following: • Language: spelling, writing, reading comprehension, vocabulary. • Arithmetic/mathematics: understanding figures, mental arithmetic, percentages, fractions, measurement, weights, money and periods of time. • Study skills: dealing with textbook material and sources of information such as the telephone directory; reading and understanding diagrams, schedules, tables and graphs. • World orientation: applying knowledge acquired in geography, history, biology, physics, citizenship and religious education. Students are tested in Dutch, English language, second foreign language (usually French or German), mathematics, biology, physics and chemistry, IT studies, history and politics, geography, economics, technology, life skills, and at least two of: visual arts, music, drama, or dance.	The following link provides an overview of the CITO test: http://www.cito.nl/com_assess_ex/end_psc hool_test/eind_fr.htm

Netherlands: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	End of primary/CITO tests: the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO) develops the end of primary tests in collaboration with teachers. The test consists entirely of multiple choice items. CITO provides a scoring service and prepares detailed reports on every pupil, as well as two reports on overall school performance: • The first report compares the school's average scores (for the various sections within the test) with national averages and can be used to monitor the quality of educational provision. The report has an even more important function: by splitting up the test into 15 sections, it provides information on discrepancies in scores between the various sections. If, for example, the school's score for reading comprehension is much lower than the total score for language, this may prompt further analysis, leading to changes in the school's curriculum. • The second report compares the school's mean total scores with those of other schools in a similar category.	

New Zealand

New Zealand: Statutory assessment on school entry			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	There is optional school entry assessment (*Aro matawai Urunga-a-Kura*) (SEA/AKA).	School entry assessment tests are nationally standardised assessment procedures for the collection of information on the skills, knowledge and understanding of new entrants to school (usually aged 5).	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Diagnostic, formative and informative purposes.	Optional school entry assessment aims to: • provide reliable information for teachers about an individual child's skills and understandings when he or she enters school; • help schools decide how best to support their new entrant children and evaluate their programmes in the light of children's needs; and • enable the Ministry of Education to build up a database from which to identify differing patterns in children's skills and understandings (in selected areas) on entry to school, and thereby contribute to national policy development and allocation of resources. School entry assessment has been designed to give teachers reliable, valid information that will help them to plan their classroom programmes. The information is therefore primarily for teachers. Principals and school management also find the information useful in making decisions about the support their new entrants need. A summary of the information gained is used by the Ministry of Education to help identify particular areas of need which may be addressed through policy or resourcing.	

New Zealand: Statutory assessment on school entry (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Pupils aged 5 to 6 on school entry.	Although education is compulsory from age 6 in New Zealand, most children start school on their fifth birthday. Schools can enrol children as soon as they reach the age of 5 but not before. Optional school entry assessment was introduced in 1997. Since that date, many primary school students have been assessed on school entry.	
When are pupils assessed?	On starting school, generally at age 5.	School entry assessment tasks are designed for use as soon as practicable after a child has settled into the classroom environment. This is usually within four to six weeks of the first day of school.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy, numeracy and oral language.	SEA/AKA assesses aspects of children's literacy, numeracy, and oral language. It has three components, one devoted to each of these areas: • Concepts about Print (literacy). • Checkout (numeracy). • Tell Me (oral language). Tasks are designed to assess emerging concepts about print, numeracy and spoken language. They are all performance based, and use close observation to identify strengths and weaknesses.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Observation of tasks.	School entry assessment is carried out by class teachers. Schools use a variety of arrangements that allow time for a teacher to work alone with a child. Some boards of trustees have included time to release teachers for assessment as a part of their school management and have a regular 'reliever' who releases teachers throughout the school for this purpose. In some schools, senior staff release teachers to assess children. Other schools rely on informal arrangements between colleagues, which allow teachers to withdraw a child; for example, one teacher may take responsibility for two classes during large group activities.	

New Zealand: Statutory assessment. National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. The National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP).	The National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) is an annual assessment of a three per cent sample of students in Year 4 (aged 8-9) and Year 8 (age 12-13, the primary to secondary transition period). It is intended to cover all curriculum areas over a four-year period. The Educational Assessment Research Unit (at the University of Otago) is contracted by the Ministry of Education to run the National Education Monitoring Project and to manage research studies which involve deeper analyses of national research data. The current contract runs until 2007.	http://nemp.otago.ac.nz/ for the official website of the NEMP.
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative purposes.	NEMP assessment aims to provide a broad picture of the achievements of representative samples of New Zealand school students at successive points in time so that: • trends in educational performance can be identified and reported; • good information is available to assist policy makers, curriculum specialists and educators with their planning; • the public can know about trends in educational achievement.	
Which pupils are assessed?	A three per cent sample of pupils in Year 4 (age 8-9) and Year 8 (age 12-13).	Each year about 3,000 students in 260 schools are randomly selected to take part in NEMP. The support of the selected schools and the parents of selected students is sought. So that a considerable amount of information can be gathered without placing too many demands on individual students, different students attempt different tasks. The 1440 students selected in the main sample at each year level are divided into three groups of 480 students, comprising four students from each of 120 schools. Each group attempts one third of the tasks.	

New Zealand: Statutory assessment. National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Year 4 (age 8-9) and Year 8 (age 12-13). In Mäori Medium settings, the focus is at Year 8 only.	The assessments take place in the second half of the school year, between August and November. The Year 8 assessments occur first, over a five- week period. The Year 4 assessments follow, over a similar period. Each student participates in about four hours of assessment activities spread over one week. The school year runs from January to December.	
Which subjects are assessed?	All curriculum areas over a four-year period, as well as knowledge, skills, motivation and attitudes.	Each year, the assessments cover about one quarter of the areas within the national curriculum for primary schools. *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* is the blueprint for the school curriculum. It places emphasis on seven essential learning areas, eight essential skills and a variety of attitudes and values. National monitoring aims to address all of these areas, rather than restrict itself to pre-selected priority areas. The same learning areas are assessed every four years in order to give a picture of progress across time	NEMP: http://www.inca.org.uk/1283.html New Zealand Curriculum : http://www.inca.org.uk/1279.html

New Zealand: Statutory assessment. National Education Monitoring Project (NEMP) (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Assessment tasks provided by the Educational Assessment Research Unit (responsible for NEMP).	Students work on tasks, with the support of a trained teacher-administrator, in four different ways: • One-to-one: one student working with a teacher-administrator. • Group: four students working cooperatively. • Pencil-and-paper (independent): four students working on their own on the same pencil-and-paper tasks. • Stations: four students working independently around a series of hands-on activities. Each student works for three to four hours spread over a period of five days. Some tasks are video-taped as they are completed to enable later detailed analysis. The assessments are conducted by experienced teachers, usually working in their own region of New Zealand. The teachers are selected from a national pool of applicants, attend a week of specialist training in Wellington led by senior NEMP staff and then work in pairs to conduct assessments of 60 children over five weeks. Their employing school is fully-funded by NEMP to employ a relief teacher during their secondment.	Examples of tasks are available: http://nemp.otago.ac.nz/i_access.htm

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. Statutory assessment procedures related to the Northern Ireland Curriculum.	**Reform, from 2007/2008 onwards** Proposals for a radical restructuring of the curriculum have recently been approved. These will have an effect on the statutory assessment arrangements for children in key stages 1 – 3 (ages four to 14), which are set to be replaced by annual teacher assessment, the results of which will be reported to parents using a standardised annual report to be known as the 'Pupil Profile'. In addition, a new foundation stage is being introduced to cover the first two years of primary school (children aged 4 to 6 years). Baseline assessment (see below) will also be abolished.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Formative, summative, evaluative and informative.	**Current system** Statutory assessment procedures exist for children of compulsory school age and are related to the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Assessment procedures are intended to help teachers and students in a number of ways: • Formative elements help teachers decide how a child's learning should be taken forward, and give the child clear and understandable targets and feedback about their achievements. This information helps teachers and others to identify the need for further diagnostic assessments for particular children in order to help their educational development. This form of assessment is becoming known as 'assessment for learning'. • Summative elements provide evidence of children's achievements and of what they know, understand and can do, and is becoming known as 'assessment of learning'. • Evaluative elements provide comparative information about children's achievements nationally, which may be used as an	

		indicator of any need for further effort, resources or changes in the curriculum. • Informative elements help teachers report on a child's progress to his parents and on the school's achievements to boards of governors, Education and Library Boards and the wider community. Baseline/school entry assessment School entry assessment is designed to provide information for teachers to assist in the planning of learning for individuals, and to allow the measurement of children's progress as they move through school. **New system, from 2007/2008** The Revised Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum for key stages 1 and 2 (effective from September 2007) states that: 'assessment is an integral part of the learning process through which teachers build a comprehensive picture of the progress and learning needs of each child in order to plan future work and ultimately improve learning.' Similar aims are stated in the key stage 3 curriculum. Techniques recommended include the use of observation; class discussion; oral, written, visual presentations or physical demonstrations; independent or group tasks; project work; homework; and diagnostic or standardised tests.	

Northern Ireland: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	Current system: all the cohort in the year groups below.	At key stage 3, pupils working below level three of the eight-level Northern Ireland Curriculum scale are assessed by their teachers at the end of the key stage, rather than by taking the end of key stage external tests.	
When are pupils assessed?	Baseline (school entry): age 4/5. End of key stage 1, Year 4, age 8. End of key stage 2, Year 7, age 11. End of key stage 3, Year 10, age 14.	Baseline (school entry) assessment must be carried out during the first year of compulsory primary education. The (Northern Ireland) Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) generally recommends that it should take place during September or October (the first two months) of a child's first year of primary education. The teacher assessment period for all key stages is between January and early May. The key stage 3 external tests (see below) usually take place during one week in May. The school year runs from September to June/July.	
Which subjects are assessed	Key stage 1: English (or Irish) and mathematics. Key stage 2: English, mathematics and Irish (in Irish-speaking schools only). Key stage 3: English, mathematics, science and Irish (in Irish-speaking schools only).	At the end of key stage 1 (aged around eight), statutory assessment in English (or Irish in Irish-speaking schools) and mathematics involves: • Externally provided short informal tests (Assessment Units) which are internally marked and externally moderated. • Teacher assessment against the key stage 1 attainment targets in English (or Irish) and mathematics. . At the end of key stage 2 (aged around 11), statutory assessment in English and mathematics involves: • Externally provided short informal tests (Assessment Units),	(Northern Ireland) Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA): http://www.ccea.org.uk/

		which are internally marked and externally moderated. • Teacher assessment against the key stage 2 attainment targets in English and mathematics. In Irish-speaking schools, children are assessed in Irish in addition. At the end of key stage 3 (aged 14), students are formally assessed by their teachers in English, Irish (in Irish-speaking schools only), mathematics and science during the final two terms of key stage 3. In addition, students are required to sit formal, end of key stage tests in the above subjects. The tests are externally set and marked by the CCEA, which decides on the exact test dates and the timetable, and informs schools accordingly.	

Northern Ireland: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Key stages 1 and 2: teacher assessment, combined with short, informal (externally moderated) written tests – 'Assessment Units'. Key stage 3: teacher assessment, combined with externally set, formal written tests.	At the end of key stages 1 and 2, assessment is on the basis of teacher assessment, combined with short, informal tests, known as 'Assessment Units', which are supplied by the CCEA. Teachers choose, from a selection of Units, the most appropriate ones to assess work which each child will have covered in class. The Units are then used as part of normal class work. At least two Assessment Units must be used in each subject during the assessment period (January to early May of the school year). These are marked by the child's usual class teacher, and are externally moderated by the CCEA, in accordance with a three-year rolling programme. Children are not required to take formal tests. At the end of key stage 3, the externally set tests for mathematics, science and Irish (where applicable) are set at different levels of difficulty. Teachers select the appropriate test for each child, depending on the level he/she is working close to at the time. There is one overarching test in English.	

Scotland

Scotland: Statutory assessment. National Assessments.			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. National Assessments 5-14.	The education departments of local authorities ensure that schools use nationally devised tasks to confirm students' progress in English language and mathematics and report the results of tests individually to parents.	National Assessment 5-14 website: http://www.aifl-na.net/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative purposes.	National Assessments 5-14 are assessment materials designed to be used by teachers in Scottish schools to confirm their judgements about students' levels of attainment in English language (reading and writing) and mathematics. They are designed to confirm a teacher's judgements that a child: • has covered the strands and targets at a given level; • is consistently producing work at that level in class; • can complete the assessment with the degree of independence required. National Assessments 5-14 are summative and their use is internal to the school.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All students aged 5 to 14.		

Scotland: Statutory assessment. National Assessments (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Teachers decide when children aged between 5 and 14 years of age should take National Assessments.	As part of overall assessment arrangements, all students aged 5-14 are expected to take National Assessments in key aspects of reading, writing, and mathematics whenever evidence from the teacher's continuous assessment indicates that the student has largely completed one of the five levels (A-E) of the curriculum, as specified in the National Guidelines. National Assessments confirm a teacher's judgement on the level which a student has reached. Schools only access the assessment when they have a group of students ready to be assessed. Students who are absent when the tests are taken are given the opportunity to take them at a later date.	
Which subjects are assessed?	English language (reading and writing) and mathematics.	English language: separate National Assessments are provided for reading and writing. Listening and talking (the other attainment targets) in English language are not covered by National Assessments. However all four outcomes are assessed and reported by the teacher as part of a school's assessment and reporting arrangements. In reading, a National Assessment at any level comprises two assessment units. One of these presents a child with a piece of narrative text to read, the other with a piece of information text. Children are asked to answer a number of questions on each text. In writing, a National Assessment comprises three pieces of writing by the student; one piece coming from class work, the other two based on tasks randomly selected from an assessment bank. The latter extended pieces of writing are assessed using a set of criteria derived from the national criteria. In mathematics, a National Assessment at any level comprises two assessment units. Each unit addresses all four 5-14 attainment outcomes for mathematics (information handling; number, money and measurement; shape position and movement; and problem solving).	

Scotland: Statutory assessment. National Assessments (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written assessment.	Assessments are delivered to schools via the National Assessment 5-14 website. Schools go online, select the appropriate curriculum area and level and download the assessment package. There is no choice of assessment package beyond the choice of curriculum area and level. Downloading of the National Assessments is password protected. Schools must register before they can access and download National Assessments. Each package contains assessment units, marking schemes and guidance notes for teachers. Class teachers will normally mark the assessments completed by their students. Marking schemes are provided with the assessments. To show that they are secure in the level, students need to: • In reading, answer two-thirds or more of the questions in each unit correctly. • In writing, satistfy the criteria for all three pieces of writing. • In mathematics, answer two-thirds or more of the questions in each unit correctly. Class teachers use evidence from class work to decide if students who are one or two marks short of the threshold for one of the units can be considered as secure at the level. It the evidence from classwork is not entirely sound, the teacher may decide to re-assess the student. If a student is one or two marks short of the threshold in both units then the teacher will probably want to use an additional unit even if there is sound evidence from classwork that the student has been working consistently to that level. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements as set out above are not considered to be working confidently and consistently at the expected level.	National Assessment 5-14 website: http://www.aifl-na.net/

Scotland: Statutory assessment. Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes. Scottish Survey of Achievement (SSA).	SSA is a sample survey to monitor national achievement in schools.	SSA website: http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/of/ssa/index.asp
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Monitoring national achievement in schools.	SSA aims to monitor national achievement in Scottish schools, by establishing how well pupils are learning at ages 8 and 10 in primary schools and in the first two years of secondary school, at ages 12 and 14.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Representative national sample of 8-, 10-, 12- and 14-year-olds.		
When are pupils assessed?	At age 8, 10, 12 and 14.	SSA takes place each year from late April to early June.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Subject varies according to the survey year. Includes: English, mathematics, science, social subjects. Also gathers evidence of core skills.	Each year the survey focuses on one curricular area - English language, mathematics, science or social subjects. SSA also gathers evidence of pupil performance in core skills such as numeracy, communications, using ICT, problem solving and working with others, and enquiry skills.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Written assessments and practical activities.	SSA involves nationally devised written and practical assessments which are externally marked. Individual schools and children remain anonymous. The main findings are published by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) in the year following the survey.	

Singapore

Singapore: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes.	Until 2003, primary level education and the assessments which took place during this phase were not compulsory. However, in practice, all pupils who were eligible for the assessments took them.	http://www.inca.org.uk/1082.html#6.2.2
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Summative, formative and evaluative purposes.	The tests are intended to help teachers make decisions regarding which stream of education students should be placed in. At age 10 (the end of Year 4), the tests determine which of three streams for the final two years of primary education (EM1, EM2, EM3) children should be placed in. A child's results in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) (taken in Year 6, age 12) help determine their placement on differentiated courses of secondary education (special, express, normal technical or normal academic). The PSLE is also one of the ways in which school performance is monitored. See below for further details.	The following link provides further information about the Primary School Leaving Examination: http://www.seab.gov.sg/SEAB/psle/generalInfo.html
Which pupils are assessed?	All pupils in Year 4 (age 10) and Year 6 (age 12) (the end of primary education).	Pupils in Year 4 take tests for purposes of streaming for the final two years of primary education. All pupils in Year 6 take the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), the results of which influence the course they will follow/terminal examination they will take in secondary education.	

Singapore: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	In Year 4 (age 10) and Year 6 (age 12).	The Year 4 tests take place on set days. Generally the written and aural examinations take place on set days in October, and the oral examinations take place in September. The examinations normally take a total of around 7 hours. The Year 6 (PSLE) tests also take place on set days. Generally, the written examinations take place in October; the aural examinations in September; and the oral examinations in August. The examinations usually take a total of between 9.5 and 14 hours depending on the stream.	http://www.inca.org.uk/1082.html#6.2.2
Which subjects are assessed?	At age 10, pupils are assessed in the mother tongue (Chinese, Malay or Tamil), English and mathematics. At age 12, pupils are also assessed in these subjects, as well as in science.	For English and the mother tongue, pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills are assessed. For the PSLE, tests in the various subjects are available at different levels according to the stream of education students are in. For example, pupils in EM1 take an additional higher level mother tongue paper.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Written, oral and aural examinations.	Whereas schools set the assessments which pupils take at age 10, tests for the PSLE are set centrally by the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (SEAB). This body was established in 2004 to develop and conduct national examinations, as well as to provide other examination and assessment services. It works in close cooperation with the Singapore Ministry of Education. The PSLE results are released each year in the first week of the November /December holidays.	The SEAB website is available at: http://www.seab.gov.sg/index.html

Spain

Spain: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes – current national sample surveys. Proposed new diagnostic evaluations.	National sample surveys are carried out annually by the Institute of Evaluation (formerly INCE). **NB.** Following the passing of the 2006 Law on Education (LOE), national testing for all 10/11-year-olds (Year 5) and 13/14-year-olds (Year 8) will be introduced in the 2008/09 school year. This will involve: • 'General Diagnostic Evaluation', carried out at national level by the Institute of Evaluation (in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities and on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science). • 'Diagnostic Evaluations' carried out by the various Autonomous Communities in their respective territories. These diagnostic evaluations will be developed by each individual Autonomous Community and may vary from one Autonomous Community to the next. The only common aspects of these evaluations will be that pupils in the relevant grades will be assessed and that they will take place every year.	Website of the Institute of Evaluation: http://www.ince.mec.es/index_e.htm
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Diagnostic and informative purposes.	The main purpose of national sample surveys is to contribute to the general evaluation of the education system. As Spain is made up of autonomous regions (Autonomous Communities), national assessment studies can provide a broad, comparative picture of educational progress both at national and regional levels. Consequently, national sample surveys have both diagnostic and informative purposes. They can provide policy makers, schools, families and the public with reliable information on the state of the education system.	

Spain: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for? (continued)	Diagnostic and formative purposes.	The proposed new national General Diagnostic Evaluation aims to provide information on how the education system as a whole is developing, so that this information can be used as a basis for policy making. The proposed Diagnostic Evaluations in the Autonomous Communities will be internal and formative (for schools). The intention is that they will form the basis for improvement plans, developed at school level. Current intentions are that results will be published in the form of 'league tables'.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Current surveys: national samples, at ages 12 and 16. Proposed General Diagnostic Evaluations: sample based. Years 5 and 8 (see below). Proposed diagnostic evaluations (Autonomous Communities): all pupils in the relevant Year groups (Years 5 and 8, see below).	The national surveys carried out by the Institute of Evaluation are usually based on an assessment of students attainment, and background data collected from principals (headteachers), teachers, students and families on a sample basis. Every year, not more than 700 schools (providing both compulsory primary and secondary level education) take part in the different national assessment surveys. This means that an individual school will probably only be asked to take part in some of the surveys once every five or six years. The proposed new General Diagnostic Evaluations (national) will be sample-based national evaluations, with representative samples of every Autonomous Community. The proposed new diagnostic evaluations (developed by the individual Autonomous Communities) will assess all pupils in the relevant grades.	

Spain: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Current national sample surveys: pupils aged 12 and 16. Proposed new diagnostic evaluations: 10/11-year-olds (Year 5) and 13/14-year-olds (Year 8).	The current national sample surveys carried out by the Institute of Evaluation usually take place on completion of compulsory primary and secondary education (students aged 12 and 16 years respectively). Assessment usually takes place during the later months of the school year (April or May), in one to three two-hour sessions. The proposed new diagnostic evaluations will take place towards the end of the school year.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Current national sample surveys: mathematics, Spanish (language and literature) and regional languages, natural and social sciences, geography and history, and foreign languages. New diagnostic evaluation: key competences.	The national sample surveys carried out by the Institute of Evaluation at the end of primary education assess students' competence in mathematics, Spanish and regional languages, natural and social sciences, and foreign languages. At the end of compulsory secondary education, they assess student competence in mathematics, Spanish language and literature, social sciences, geography and history, and foreign languages. The proposed new General Diagnostic Evaluation (national) will not assess particular subjects, rather the key competences included in the national core curriculum, approved by the Ministry of Education for the whole country.	

Spain: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Current national sample surveys: mostly formal written tests. Proposed General Diagnostic Evaluation: probably written tests.	Assessment for the national sample surveys includes multiple choice items, open-ended questions and, occasionally, free response items, depending on the subject, the competencies to be assessed and the test objectives. Most tests are in written form, but in some cases (foreign languages, for example) may include observation, listening or conversation. All tests are based on the national core curriculum. Students included in the sample are tested in their own schools and classrooms. Instruments used for the assessment are nationally set tests, prepared by specialists from the Institute of Evaluation in collaboration with representatives from the Autonomous Communities. The test development process is a long and careful, collaborative process, in which the curriculum is analysed, a table of specifications established, items written, pilot instruments developed and piloted, and tests approved. A number of experts - curriculum designers and developers, teachers, assessment specialists, and statisticians - from regions throughout Spain are involved in the development process. Test administration is the responsibility of regional authorities, in collaboration with the Institute of Evaluation. The principals (headteachers) of the schools included in the sample are contacted first by the regional authorities. Schools are also briefed via a letter from the Institute of Evaluation detailing the purposes and characteristics of the testing, and requesting their collaboration. Personnel external to the school usually administer the tests and the responsible organisation (usually a university department or contracted agency) contacts schools in the sample to agree the data and procedures for the administration of the tests, in accordance with the general criteria set up for the tests. In some cases, external personnel are not used to carry out the testing and the students' teachers themselves administer the tests. On some occasions, information on student attainment is also collected from teachers who, in such cases, may conduct their own assessments of student performance. The outcomes of testing and assessment undertaken as part of this national testing are expressed in different ways: percentage of success, failure and non-response for each test item; a global score for each dimension or group of items; a global score for each exercise; a global score for each student (anonymous); aggregated scores for each school (anonymous); and aggregated scores for each region.	

Sweden

Sweden: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes.	National testing is compulsory at certain stages of schooling, and voluntary at others. Many municipalities impose requirements on schools to participate in the 'voluntary' tests. Tests are administered in both public sector and private schools.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Diagnostic and evaluative purposes.	According to a government directive introduced in 2004, the national testing system intends to: • contribute to increased attainment by students; • exemplify course goals and grading criteria; • assist in the process of setting fair and reliable grades (grading assistance); • show students' strengths and weaknesses; and • by collating results, indicate the extent of overall attainment. The tests are intended to assist teachers in determining the measures required to support individual children in their development and in planning their teaching. Results are intended to highlight individual strengths and weaknesses in the subjects concerned (see below) and to provide an indication of an individual child's chances of achieving the objectives on completion of compulsory basic school, age 16 (at the end of which students take the school leaving certificate - *grundskolabetyg*). The criterion-referenced tests also facilitate the nationwide evaluation of school performance.	In 2005, the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*) published *National Assessment and Grading in the Swedish School System*, which provides an overview of the national assessment system. It can be downloaded (in English) from the following URL: http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/193/url/006800740074007000 3a002f002f007700770077003400 2e0073006b006f006c00760065007 2006b00650074002e00730065003a 00380030003800300 02f007700740070007500620 02f00770073002f0073006b006f006 c0062006f006b002f00770070007500 6200650078007400 2f00740072007900 63006b00730061006b002f00520065006 3006f00720064003f006b003d00310035003200 34/target/Record%3Fk%3D1524

Sweden: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	All pupils in the relevant year groups (see below) are assessed.	As regards the Year 9 tests (see below), these are compulsory for schools, but not for individual students. That is, if an individual student is absent or ill on the day of a particular national test, the school does not have to ensure that he or she takes the test at a later date.	
When are pupils assessed?	Age 9 (the end of year 2): voluntary. Age 12 (the end of year 5): voluntary. Age 14 (the end of year 7): voluntary. Age 16 (the end of year 9): compulsory.	The Year 9 tests are held separately at different times during the spring term (final term) of the school year. Written tests have set dates, whilst teachers decide when oral tests should take place. In Year 9, a passing final grade in Swedish, English and mathematics is required for children to receive the school leaving certificate (*grundskolabetyg*) and be able to continue to post-compulsory upper secondary school.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Age 9 (Year 2): literacy (Swedish) and numeracy. Age 12 (Year 5): Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics. Age 14 (Year 7): Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics. Age 16 (Year 9): Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics.	Test materials are provided by the Swedish National Agency for Education, *Skolverket*) Tests are criterion-referenced.	

Sweden: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Written and oral tests	The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is responsible for the development and administration of national assessment. Assessment instruments are usually produced by university departments of educational research (one contracted university department for each subject), but teachers are involved throughout the development process. They contribute, for example, to the design of tasks and questions, in testing, and in decisions on, for example, the standards or levels of achievement and the general comments on students' results which are included in the material. It takes approximately 1.5 to 2 years before a test is fully ready for distribution. Test development also involves pilot testing, development of assessment guidelines and setting standards. The assessments themselves are conducted and the grades awarded by a student's teacher. The tests in each subject consist of a number of subtests (usually three), and include an oral test conducted in a small group. Results of the Year 9 tests are collected nationally.	

Switzerland

Switzerland: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	There is no statutory national assessment system in Switzerland. A national 'harmonisation' project – Project HarmoS may introduce nationally agreed competency models and minimum standards across a range of core subjects.	In most *cantons*, primary school students are continuously assessed throughout the year. This overall assessment of their performance may include periodic tests. Some *cantons* implement self-evaluation projects for quality assurance in compulsory education, whereby specific evaluation instruments enable teachers to evaluate the learning progress of one class compared with that of others. During lower secondary education, teachers implement regular tests in the respective subjects during the school year. Many *cantons* also implement evaluations, requiring pupils to complete a selection of tasks covering key aspects of the lower secondary curricula. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education is currently developing a 'harmonisation' project, known as 'Project HarmoS'. The aim is the development of nationally agreed competency models and minimum standards for some core subjects (first and second languages, mathematics and natural science) at the end of Years 2, 6 and 9 of compulsory education, aged around 7/8, 11/12 and 14/15 respectively. Competency models are currently being defined and linked to minimum achievement standards. Once this has been completed, it is intended that standards and tests will be developed and implemented across Switzerland. An inter-cantonal agreement/regulation will be required to formally implement the standards. Such a regulation would also regulate the core requirements for compulsory schools, such as school starting age.	http://www.european-agency.org/site/themes/assessment/docs/indexed_reports/switzerland.doc

Switzerland: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Project HarmoS: to implement some nationally agreed achievement standards.	See above for further information.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Project HarmoS: pupils in Year 2, 6 and 9 of compulsory education.	See above for further information.	
When are pupils assessed?	N/A.		
Which subjects are assessed?	Project HarmoS: possibly first and second languages, mathematics, and natural science.	See above for further information.	
What modes of assessment are used?	N/A.		

USA

Statutory assessment: USA NAEP assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).	The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is a regularly administered, congressionally mandated assessment programme, which assesses representative national samples of students attending public and private elementary (primary) schools, junior high (lower secondary) schools and high schools (upper secondary schools). Since 1990, NAEP assessments have also been conducted to give results for participating states. States choosing to participate receive assessment results that report on the performance of students in that state. The state assessment is identical to the assessment conducted nationally. However, because the national NAEP samples are not currently designed to support the reporting of accurate and representative state-level results, separate representative samples of students are selected for each participating jurisdiction/state.	Further information on NAEP: http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and informative purposes.	NAEP is designed to make available reliable information about the academic performance of US students in various learning areas.	
Which pupils are assessed?	A sample of pupils in Years 4, 8 and 12.	The sample includes students drawn from both public and non-public (private) schools and reports results for student achievement in Years 4, 8, and 12. NAEP usually selects 100 public schools in each state, for each subject, in each year group, for the sample. Each school would then represent about one per cent of the students in public schools in the year group being assessed in that state.	

Statutory assessment: USA NAEP assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Year 4: age 9/10. Year 8: age 13/14 Year 12: age 17/18.	NAEP assessments can be implemented throughout the school year, but usually take place during the period January to March. The school year runs from September to June.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading, mathematics, science, writing, American history, civics, geography, and the arts.	For 2006, NAEP developed an assessment in economics. Assessments in foreign languages and world history are also under development.	Timetables of which subjects will be/have been assessed are available online: http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/assessmentsched.asp
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests. NAEP assessments generally contain both constructed-response and multiple-choice questions.	NAEP assessments follow the frameworks developed by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), and aim to use the latest advances in assessment methodology. For example, NAEP assessments include a large percentage of constructed-response questions and questions that require the use of calculators and other materials. Innovative types of questions have been used in assessments such as the arts (theatre, music, and visual arts) and science to measure students' ability to perform hands-on tasks. NAEP long-term trend (LTT) assessments are designed to give information on the changes in academic performance of America's youth. They are administered nationally every four years and report student performance at ages 9, 13, and 17 in mathematics and reading. Measuring trends of student achievement or change over time requires the precise replication of past procedures. Therefore, the long-term trend instrument does not evolve based on changes in curricula or in educational practices, unlike the main NAEP national and state assessments in mathematics and reading, which respond to changes in the classroom by updating the framework for the assessment about every decade, as needed.	

Statutory assessment: USA. The 'No Child Left Behind' assessments			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Statutory testing under the 'No Child Left Behind' legislation.	President Bush's 2002 Education Act - No Child Left Behind supported the introduction of statutory testing in reading, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 8 (pupils aged 8-14). As a result, all states in the USA are expected to have in place standards for all Years for mathematics, reading and science, and testing began from the 2002-03 school year, when schools were expected to begin to administer tests in reading and mathematics in three Grade (year group) spans - Grades 3-5; Grades 6-9 and Grades 10-12. States must demonstrate their compliance with NCLB to receive federal funding. Most states comply in view of their state-wide testing programmes for given Grades - see below.	Further information is available via the No Child Left Behind website at http://www.nclb.org/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative purposes. Accountability programme.	The testing requirements for NCLB are intended to improve standards across all systems towards common goals.	
Which pupils are assessed?	Full cohort in specific year groups.		
When are pupils assessed?	Years 3-8, ages 8-14.		
Which subjects are assessed?	Literacy, numeracy and science.	Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, tests had to be administered every year in all of Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 in mathematics and reading and, starting in the 2007-2008 school year, in Grades 3-8 inclusive in science in addition.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Generally written tests.		

Kentucky

Statutory assessment: Kentucky. Kentucky Core Content Tests			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Under the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), there are: • **Kentucky Core Content Tests**; • the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5 test); • writing portfolios; and • alternate testing portfolios for students with severe to profound disabilities.	CATS includes the Kentucky Core Content Test, a nationally norm-referenced test; the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5 test); writing portfolios and prompts; and the alternate portfolio for students with severe to profound disabilities. The Kentucky Core Content Test assesses student mastery of the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment, as well as higher order thinking and communication skills.	http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Curriculum+Documents+and+Resources/Core+Content+for+Assessment/default.htm
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) is designed to improve teaching and student learning in Kentucky. Evaluative and informative. Accountability programme.	The over-riding goal of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) is for all schools in Kentucky to reach 'proficiency' as defined by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). Scores received by students under CATS (which includes test results, results from a student's writing portfolio, his/ her longitudinal assessment measure and several non-academic measures) are intended to be used for the purposes of student and school accountability. The accountability system provides the mechanism for measuring 'proficiency' and for providing feedback to schools on how they are progressing toward the long-term goal set by the KBE. By regulation, Kentucky's accountability system focuses primarily on schools and not districts.	

Statutory assessment: Kentucky. Kentucky Core Content Tests (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	The full cohort in Years 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12.		
When are pupils assessed?	Grade 4: age 9/10. Grade 5: age 10/11 Grade 7: age 12/13 Grade 8: age 13/14 Grade 10: age 15/16 Grade 11: age 16/17 Grade 12: age 17/18.	The tests usually place during a two-week period in April. The school year runs from September to June.	http://www.inca.org.uk/395.html
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living and vocational studies.	The Kentucky 'Core Content for Assessment' represents the content that has been identified as essential for all students to know. This content is included in the state assessment. It is intended for use with Kentucky's Academic Expectations and programmes of study to provide the focus for the development of the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).	Details are available online: http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/Instructional+Resources/Curriculum+Documents+and+Resources/Core+Content+for+Assessment/Core+Content+for+Assessment+4.1/
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	The Kentucky Core Content Tests are a combination of multiple-choice and open-response questions. To ensure that the tests provide complete coverage of the core curriculum content each year, a matrix design is used. This means that six different, equivalent test forms are administered each year, permitting broad coverage of the core content and providing maximum information to schools regarding their instructional programme, but keeping test time reasonable for the individual student. In most content area tests, a student answers only 24 multiple-choice items and six open-response questions. Items are written to elicit	The test blueprint is a public document designed to communicate the structure and contents of the Kentucky Core Content Test to classroom teachers, administrators, school councils, and other interested persons. It is available online: http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/

		factual (recall) information or higher-order thinking. The open-response items in the test are always designed to elicit higher-order thinking. Multiple-choice items present the student with four options, only one of which is correct. Open-response items request specific information, but students are free to organise and present the information as they choose within one page. The one-page limit is considered as the items are developed. The tests are not timed. The Kentucky Core Content Tests (for each content area) are developed by an appointed contractor in collaboration with a Content Advisory Committee (CAC), composed of Kentucky teachers. Essentially, the teachers draft test items which are edited by the contractor. In their final form, test items are reviewed by the same CAC that generated them and either selected or rejected for use as test items. In addition, items are reviewed by special committees for possible bias and for content accuracy. Items rejected by any of these committees do not appear in the test unless revised. Completed Core Content Tests are marked/scored by "Core Content Test Evaluators". These often include qualified current, retired or new teachers who work for a period during the school summer holidays.	Administrative+Resources/Testing+and+Reporting+/CATS/Accountability+System/Blueprint+for+Kentucky+Core+Content+Test.htm

Statutory assessment: Kentucky. Kentucky Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Under the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), there are: • Kentucky Core Content Tests; • **the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5 test);** • writing portfolios; and • alternate testing portfolios for students with severe to profound disabilties.	CATS includes the Kentucky Core Content Test, a nationally norm-referenced test; the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5 test); writing portfolios and prompts; and the alternate portfolio for students with severe to profound disabilities. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5 test) is a national norm-referenced test in reading, language arts and mathematics.	Reports on the results of CTBS are available: http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Testing+and+Reporting+/Reports/CTBS+5+Reports/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and informative purposes. Summative purposes. Accountability programme.	Scores received by students under the state-wide Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) are intended to be used for the purposes of student and school accountability. The CTBS/5 tests permits comparisons between the performance of Kentucky students and the performance of students across the country.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All pupils in the cohort leaving Years 3, 6 and 9.		
When are pupils assessed?	End of Year 3: age 9 Year 6: age 12 Year 9: age 15.	The tests take place during April. The school year runs from September to June.	

Statutory assessment: Kentucky. Kentucky Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/5) (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading, language arts and mathematics.		
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	The CTBS/5 tests are national, norm-referenced multiple-choice tests.	

Maryland

Statutory assessment: Maryland			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	The Maryland School Assessment (MSA).	The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is a student performance evaluation programme which meets the testing requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), see above. Students with disabilities sit the Alternate Maryland School Assessment.	Information about testing Maryland: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/msa/
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Raising standards. Evaluative and informative purposes. Summative purposes. Accountability programme.	MSA provides an assessment - for students, parents, teachers and administrators - of the progress of each school towards annual goals. In addition to this school-wide information, the assessment produces individual student scores. Maryland's school improvement efforts include setting high standards for student achievement, measuring academic progress, publicly reporting each school's performance annually, and taking action when schools are not making adequate progress.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All students in Years 3 to 8 and in Year 10.	All students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency, are included in testing. Most students take the MSA. A small percentage of students take the Alternate MSA (Alt-MSA), an alternate test for students with severe disabilities.	
When are pupils assessed?	In Years 3-8: all children aged 8-14. In Year 10: 15/16.	MSA tests are given each year in early March. The school year runs from September to June. Students are tested for around 90 minutes each day over four days - two days for reading and two days for mathematics, for a total of about six hours. Two tests also take place at high school level (Year 10) to measure reading and mathematics.	

Statutory assessment: Maryland (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading and mathematics. Science from 2007.	The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is a criterion-referenced test that measures student proficiency and advanced proficiency on the Maryland content standards embedded in the reading and mathematics Voluntary State Curriculum	
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	MSA includes both multiple-choice and constructed response (short answer) questions. It is a criterion-referenced test. Tests are developed, written and selected by Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff and Maryland teachers, working with the commercial company selected to produce the tests. Potential test items go through an extensive process of editing and review to improve, correct, or eliminate poor items.	Sample questions are available: http://www.mdk12.org/mspp/k_8/index.html

Massachusetts

Massachusetts: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS).	MCAS was implemented in response to the Education Reform Act 1993. It was originally implemented for pupils in Years 4, 8, and 10 and has since been expanded to include children in Grades 3, 5, 6 and 7 in addition. MCAS fulfils the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (see above).	http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/default.asp
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluative and informative purposes. Summative purposes. Accountability programme.	MCAS measures student performance based on the Massachusetts curriculum framework learning standards, and provides a means of reporting on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts. It serve as one basis of accountability for students, schools, and districts. The stated goals of MCAS are to: • measure student performance; and • improve the effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction. The Massachusetts Department of Education does not rank schools or districts on the basis of MCAS results.	
Which pupils are assessed?	All the cohort in Years 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10.	MCAS tests should be administered to all students in the relevant Years, including those with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. MCAS tests may be adapted to suit the needs of students with disabilities who meet eligibility requirements. Additionally, if a student is identified as having a disability which prevents him or her from taking the MCAS tests, even with adaptations, that student must be tested by some alternate means of assessment, appropriate to the student's academic development. Some students with limited English proficiency who have been enrolled in school in the USA for three or fewer years may also be exempt from the MCAS tests, or may be tested via modified/adapted (in some cases, Spanish language) tests. Legislation requires that limited English proficient (LEP) students are assessed annually to measure their proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English. For such pupils there are Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) tests.	Details of the Alternative MCAS: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/

Massachusetts: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
When are pupils assessed?	Years 3-8, ages 8-14. Year 10, age 15/16.	MCAS testing usually takes place in late spring (April/May), with scoring (marking) taking place in July/August. The school year runs from September to June.	The testing schedule is available online: http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/cal.html
Which subjects are assessed?	English language, mathematics, science and technology, and history and social science.	Different subjects are tested for the different age groups as follows: • English language arts (students in Grades 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10); • mathematics (Grades 4, 6, 8 and 10); • science and technology (Grades 5, 8 and 10); and • history and social science (Grades 5, 8 and 10).	http://www.inca.org.uk/395.html#6.2.2
What modes of assessment are used?	Written tests.	MCAS testing involves the following types of assessment: • Multiple-choice questions. These are used in all content/subject area tests, and students select an answer from four options. • Short-answer questions. These are used in mathematics tests only. Students generate a brief response, for example, a short statement or computation leading to a numeric solution. • Open-response questions. These are used in all content area tests. Students create a one- or two-paragraph response in writing or in the form of a narrative or a chart, table, diagram, illustration, or graph, as appropriate. • Writing prompts (cf. Kentucky). These are used in English language arts tests only. Students write a composition based on a writing prompt, which may relate to a reading passage. MCAS is externally marked by professional scorers and Massachusetts teachers who have been specifically trained. All open-response answers are marked by professional scorers, using a scoring guide or rubric. MCAS rubrics indicate what knowledge and skills students must demonstrate to earn 1, 2, 3 or 4 score points.	Detailed examples of MCAS test questions can be accessed at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html

		For all but long compositions, scorers view electronic copies of digitally scanned images of student responses on a computer monitor and assign scores electronically. Use of this computerised scoring system aims to ensure that student responses are randomly assigned to scorers; that second readings are truly "blind"; and that supervisors have immediate access to information about scorer accuracy. Students' long compositions are each scored twice (by two separate scorers) for both topic development and standard English conventions.	

Wisconsin

Wisconsin: Statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Under the Wisconsin Student Assessment System: • Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion-Referenced Test (WKCE-CRT).	The Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) includes the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion-Referenced Test (WKCE-CRT) as one component. WSAS also includes alternate assessment for students with disabilities and English language learners.	http://dpi.state.wi.us/oea/wkce.html
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	Evaluation and informative purposes. Accountability programme.	WSAS is a comprehensive state-wide accountability programme designed to provide information about what students know in core academic areas. The WKCE-CRT is implemented to provide: • information about student attainment for students, parents and teachers; • information to support curriculum and instructional planning; and • a measure of accountability for schools and districts. Test results are used by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to: • meet its statutory requirement to identify low perfoming schools; • meet federal (NCLB, see above) requirements to use high-quality assessments to determine how well students are learning; • meet federal requirements to determine adequate yearly performance; and • determine the extent to which schools and districts across the state meet the Wisconsin proficiency standards.	

Wisconsin: Statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which pupils are assessed?	All the cohort in Years 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10.	The DPI is required to provide for inclusion of all students in the statewide assessment programmes, using accommodations where necessary. Alternate assessments must be provided for students for whom the state assessment is inappropriate.	
When are pupils assessed?	WKCE-CRT is administered to all students in Grades 3-8, aged 8-14 respectively, and to students in Grade 10, aged 15/16.	Assessment generally takes place in October and November. The school year runs from September to June. The total time required for the administration of the tests varies by Grade/Year and ranges from four-and-a-quarter to seven hours. Testing may be spread out over several days. Schools set their own testing schedule. If a student is absent during testing, he or she must be allowed to retake the test.	
Which subjects are assessed?	Reading, mathematics, language arts, science, social studies and writing.	Since the 2005/06 school year, NCLB (see above) has required testing in reading and mathematics in Years 3-8 inclusive and once in high school. In addition, in Wisconsin, pupils are tested in language arts, science and social science in Years 4, 8 and 10. They also complete a writing prompt.	
What modes of assessment are used?	Criterion-referenced standardised written tests.	The WKCE-CRT includes a combination of multiple-choice and short answer items. It includes commercially developed questions used in schools across the country and questions customised specifically for Wisconsin. Released items in reading and mathematics are available to provide educators, students, and the public with examples of how students are assessed in these subjects on the WKCE-CRT. WKCE-CRT test results only give certain kinds of information about student achievement. For a more complete picture, daily class work, other test results, homework and other learning activities are considered.	Released test items: http://dpi.state.wi.us/oea/releaseitems.html

Wales

Wales: statutory assessment			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Is there a compulsory assessment system?	Yes.	Statutory teacher assessment and optional tests within the framework of the statutory curriculum.	
What is the compulsory assessment system intended for?	School entry ('baseline') assessment, age 4/5: formative. Key stages 1 to 3 (ages 7, 11 and 14): summative and formative.	Baseline (school entry) assessment for children aged 4/5 aims to assist the planning of children's learning and the measurement of future progress. In key stages 1 to 3, statutory assessment aims to determine the level of attainment achieved by the pupil in each subject assessed. Proposed new tests to be introduced for 10-year-olds approaching the end of Year 5, aim to inform teaching programmes for Year 6 (the final year of primary education) and transition planning with Year 7 teachers (in the first year of secondary school).	
Which pupils are assessed?	Generally all pupils aged 4/5, 7, 11 and 14 in maintained schools.	Headteachers may decide to exempt an eligible child from baseline assessment, at age 4/5, if the child has already been assessed at a previous school, or if the headteacher is of the opinion that baseline assessment would not add to other assessments of the child made in connection with a statement of special educational needs. Private (independent) schools are not required to follow the statutory system of assessment, but are encouraged to do so.	
When are pupils assessed?	On school entry, age 4/5, and towards the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3, ages 7, 11 and 14 respectively.	School entry (baseline) assessment must take place within seven weeks of children first entering primary school. Statutory teacher assessment in key stages 1, 2 and 3 usually takes place towards the end of the key stage, but is a matter for individual teachers.	

Wales: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
Which subjects are assessed?	School entry assessment (age 4/5): • language skills • mathematic skills • personal and social skills. Key stages 1 and 2 (ages 7 and 11 respectively): • English; • Welsh (in Welsh-speaking schools and classes); • mathematics; and • science. Key stage 3 (age 14) • All statutory curriculum subjects. Proposals at age 10: • literacy • numeracy; and • problem-solving	School entry/baseline assessment involves teacher assessment of a child's: • language skills: focusing on children's skills in speaking and listening (oracy), reading and writing; • mathematics skills: focusing on children's abilities in number, mathematical language, size, shape and space; and • personal and social skills: focusing on children's ability to work, play and cooperate with others Towards the end of key stages 1 and 2, statutory assessment in English, mathematics and science involves teacher assessment against the attainment targets for English, mathematics and science. Children in Welsh-speaking schools or classes are assessed by teacher assessment against the attainment targets for Welsh. At age 14, statutory assessment involves teacher assessment against the attainment targets in English, Welsh, mathematics, science, history, geography, design and technology, information technology, modern foreign languages, art, music and physical education. Current government proposals will see the gradual introduction of new skills tests in literacy, numeracy and problem-solving for 10-year-olds; taken towards the end of Year 5.	

Wales: statutory assessment (continued)			
Question	**Brief answer**	**More detail**	**Further information**
What modes of assessment are used?	Moderated teacher assessment only.	School entry (baseline) assessment: teacher assessment against accredited assessment schemes. Although the tests and tasks which were previously statutory at the end of key stages 1, 2 and 3 (7-, 11- and 14-year-olds respectively) are no longer compulsory, teachers may, optionally, still use these tests with their students.	