This chapter looks at how the evaluation system – teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation – interacts with practices for student assessment. While Turkey’s evaluation system encourages teachers and schools to focus on student achievement, achievement is frequently measured by numeric marks. This encourages a perception that it is high marks which are most important for learning. It also means that policymaking decisions around student outcomes are not based on reliable and valid data, since marks from classroom assessment can vary significantly across classrooms and schools. This chapter suggests how teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation frameworks can be revised to encourage the kinds of quality assessment practices that research shows are most effective for learning.
Introduction

This chapter looks at the wider system for evaluation in Turkey – teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation – and how well it is aligned with national goals for learning and assessment. Policies in these areas have a significant influence on teaching and learning practices (OECD, 2013[1]). When well designed, they can provide powerful levers for transforming the instructional system so that it promotes the kind of formative assessment practices and higher order learning outcomes that are valued in Turkey’s curriculum.

At the time of this review, significant changes were being discussed to both teacher appraisal and school evaluation in Turkey. This provides an opportunity to ensure better alignment between the learning practices and outcomes valued in the curriculum, and the objectives and procedures for evaluating teachers, schools and the system as a whole. Turkey already has established processes for evaluating teachers and schools and monitoring performance and learning outcomes across the education system. This chapter suggests how these processes can be used more effectively to support improvements in teaching and assessment. The chapter recommends that teacher appraisal and school evaluation focus less on summative test results and more centrally on the progress that students make in their learning, as a more meaningful measure of instructional quality. Developing a regular national assessment will also help to ensure that when outcomes data is used to inform evaluation, including for system monitoring, the inferences are fair, reliable and reflect the curriculum’s learning goals.

The chapter also looks at the extent to which teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system evaluation can be reformed to provide more feedback and encouragement to teachers and schools on what they can do to improve the quality of learning and assessment practices. A stronger focus on the quality of teachers’ assessment practices and on school-wide policies that encourage teachers to continually develop their assessment skills would ensure that evaluation is used more effectively to support improvements in teaching and learning. More analysis from the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and guidance from provincial directorates would also enable schools to make greater use of evaluation information. This would help schools understand better the factors currently preventing many students from making good progress and identify how to improve teaching and learning in response.

Context and main features of the evaluation system

Teacher appraisal

Teacher appraisal refers to how teachers are assessed and given feedback on their performance and competencies. Effective appraisal focuses on how well teachers are supporting the learning of all students. It provides teachers with support and incentives to continually develop their teaching competencies. When used effectively, appraisal can positively influence teachers’ attitudes, motivation and classroom practices and, through this, help to improve students’ learning outcomes (OECD, 2013[1]). Countries combine different types of appraisal at different moments of a teacher’s career to inform ongoing learning, professional development, and career progression (see Figure 5.1).
Significant changes were being made to appraisal at the time of the OECD review, as part of wider reforms to teacher policy (see Box 3.1). These include: the release of new teacher competencies; reforms to how in-service teacher are appraised within the school; and the introduction of a performance-based career path. These changes come in addition to recent revisions to how beginner teachers are evaluated, with the introduction in 2015 of both a structured probation appraisal and a system of mentorship. In many respects, these changes bring Turkey closer to the practice in most OECD countries, where there has been a trend in recent years to develop different appraisals for different stages of a teacher’s career and for the different purposes of development and career progression. However, when the OECD review was being drafted many aspects of the new appraisal system remained unclear, in particular, the new system for appraising in-service teachers.

**Turkey has recently published new teacher competencies**

Like most OECD countries, Turkey has teacher competencies that are expected to guide teacher appraisal, as well as other areas of teacher policy such as the selection of teachers, initial teacher education and continuous professional development opportunities (OECD, 2007[2]). Teacher competencies encourage transparency and fairness in teacher appraisal by evaluating all teachers according to the same expectations. Most OECD countries also use competencies or standards to ensure that teachers develop the professional competencies.
and use pedagogical practices that support national expectations for learning (CEPPE, Chile, 2013[3]).

As part of its teacher strategy, Turkey published new teacher competencies in 2017. In contrast with the previous competencies, which were heavy and complex with 233 performance indicators, the new competencies are more streamlined with just 65 performance descriptors. The new teacher competencies continue to be developed. In particular, it will be important that the new competencies are a central reference for the new process of appraising in-service teachers when it is developed. Based on the OECD team’s review of the previous teacher competencies and appraisal criteria, it does not seem that the previous version of the teacher competencies guided the development of appraisal criteria.

It is also important the new teacher competencies are clearly linked to national learning goals. While Turkey’s curriculum has emphasised competency development and a student-focused approach since 2006, the OECD team’s review of the new teacher competencies in 2017 indicated that the section on “measurement and evaluation” still does not include clear expectations for teachers to use assessment practices that support these aims. For example, the new teacher competencies do not reflect the importance of teachers using a broad range of assessments that evaluate a range of different competencies or providing students with formative feedback that supports future learning.

Criteria for teacher appraisal focus on how frequently teachers demonstrate performance indicators

At present, the teacher appraisal form for probation and regular appraisal sets out 10 main competencies and 50 performance indicators to guide appraisal. The criteria focus on how frequently teachers display each individual performance indicator, rather than the quality of a teacher’s assessment practices. Like the separate teacher competencies, the criteria on assessment could be changed to better reflect key practices that are important to support Turkey’s learning goals in terms of competency development, or teaching in terms of a constructivist approach (see Recommendation 5.1.1). These criteria are likely to be revised, as part of wider reforms to appraisal.

A new performance appraisal is an underdevelopment

At present, all teachers are expected to receive an annual performance appraisal from their principal. This draws on authentic sources of evidence for teaching practice like classroom observation. It is also relatively low stakes, without consequences for career advancement or pay levels (OECD, 2015[4]). This reflects the practice in many OECD countries where regular appraisal is conducted at the school level and carries few stakes for teachers to encourage open discussion and formative feedback on a teacher’s professional development (OECD, 2013[1]). However, teachers in Turkey reported to the OECD review team that appraisals did not always provide them with useful feedback to improve their assessment practices. This likely reflects, in part, the approach to marking for regular appraisal where teachers are evaluated on a scale of 0 to 4 according to how frequently they display each performance indicator and the scores are used to calculate an overall mark out of 200. This encourages principals to focus on ensuring compliance with the appraisal criteria, rather than appraising the quality of assessment practices. The numeric mark provides them with little understanding about their strengths and improvement needs, and teachers’ reports suggest that the mark is not accompanied by descriptive feedback.
Another challenge of this approach to marking is that, since the marks for the student assessment competency only contribute a maximum of 20 marks to the overall appraisal score, a teacher might not demonstrate any of the performance descriptors for assessment competency and still reach the 100 out of 200 required to pass the appraisal. At the time of drafting this review in 2018, Turkey was planning to introduce a new performance appraisal of in-service teachers, however, the plans were still an underdevelopment.

**A recently introduced probation appraisal is based on multiple types of evaluation**

In 2015, Turkey introduced a new probation appraisal and induction programme for trainee teachers, with the aim of better supporting new teachers during their first year of teaching (ERI, 2017[5]). Following these changes, candidate teachers are now appointed to schools for their probation year, with a supervisor to support and mentor them. The supervisor also contributes to the candidate teacher’s probation appraisal. Trainee teachers are formally appraised three times by three different evaluators during their probation year – the school principal, their supervisor and an education inspector from the local provincial directorate.

Trainee teachers who receive at least half marks in these appraisals progress to a written examination. Half the content of the written examination assesses trainee teachers’ knowledge of general and education legislation, and half assesses their pedagogical knowledge including of student assessment. Trainee teachers who score at least 60% in the written examination become certified teachers and are appointed to their first teaching position. Those who do not are required to take an oral examination. Trainee teachers who do not successfully pass the oral examination remain a trainee for an additional year and start the probation period and appraisal in another school, with the associated training and teaching supervision. If they fail the probation appraisal after a second attempt they are dismissed.

**Teachers progress up the salary scale primarily based on years of service and positive results from regular appraisals**

Teachers’ salary progression in Turkey is the same as the OECD average. However, experienced teachers at the top of the scale in Turkey receive only 17% more than new teachers at the bottom, compared to 71% more on average across the OECD (OECD, 2017[6]). Turkey also has a bonus system (appraisal for reward) that provides some teachers considered to be high performing with an additional salary allowance. Teachers who wish to be considered for the reward are evaluated first by their principal and then by inspectors from the district and provincial education directorates. However, this system does not focus on recognising or rewarding competencies specific to teaching, since it occurs as part of an annual government process that is the same for all staff across the Ministry of National Education (OECD, 2015[4]).

At present, there is also no formal differentiation in a teacher’s roles and responsibilities as they progress in their career, though the new Teacher Strategy indicates that Turkey plans to introduce a performance-based career structure in the near future. By recognising and rewarding higher levels of teaching competencies, including for assessment, this could provide stronger incentives for teachers to develop professionally throughout their career. Turkey has not yet set out how it plans to appraise teachers for promotion within this new career structure. In most OECD countries, the main evaluator in an appraisal for promotion is a trained professional who is external to the school, in order to ensure independence and consistency in this high stakes decision.
**School evaluation**

In common with most OECD countries, schools in Turkey undergo external evaluations, called inspections, and are also expected to undertake self-evaluations. At the time of the OECD review, the system for school inspections was being revised and as a result, school inspections had been put on hold.

A new system for school inspection is being developed. In the past, school inspections have been conducted every three years by the inspectors’ unit in the provincial education directorates following guidelines developed by the MoNE’s Directorate of Guidance and Control. Inspections reviewed schools’ compliance with indicators on education activities, management activities and financial processes. This included ensuring compliance with important positive changes in assessment practices, like reporting student achievement using performance descriptors in Grades 1 to 3 or undertaking at least one project per subject (see Box 5.4). On the other hand, the framework did not focus on key aspects of how schools use assessment, such as the quality of assessments or using a broad range of different types of assessment.

Under the previous system, a team of three to four inspectors undertook the inspection visit over a maximum of three days. The visit included classroom observations, interviews with school staff, and the parents and students on the school council. In the end, the inspectors met with the school management and teachers to share the results of the inspection. A report was also shared with the school administration with a list of recommendations setting out the school’s areas for improvement. The school management team were expected to develop a school development plan based on the results within a month. The implementation of the plan was monitored by the provincial education inspectors.

**Turkey has multiple frameworks for self-evaluation in different types of schools**

Annual school self-evaluation has been compulsory in Turkey since 1999. Today, schools undertake self-evaluations and submit data through the Education Quality Management System. Primary and lower secondary schools are also required to undertake self-evaluations through the Basic Institutional Standards System. Vocational high schools have also had a separate self-evaluation system since 2014. The ministry has implemented and external evaluation of technical and vocational high schools and shared the results of this evaluation, which can be categorised under six themes, with the public (MoNE, 2018[7]). The frameworks for different self-evaluation processes are not clearly related to each other or to the framework for school inspection. The use of different self-evaluation systems seems to reflect the organisation of the ministry, where different directorates have developed their own self-evaluation procedures for the schools for which they are responsible. One of the key findings of the OECD’s work across different countries’ evaluation and assessment systems is that it is important to have clear and consistent goals that support national aims for improving learning and student outcomes (OECD, 2013[1]). The presence of multiple frameworks for school evaluation in Turkey risks that school evaluation does not strongly support a coherent national focus on national learning goals.

The Education Quality Management System

All schools undertake annual self-evaluations as part of the Education Quality Management System and use this information to identify areas for improvement. The framework for the Education Quality Management System includes a student’s foundational learning outcomes across the curriculum. Turkey is now developing new competency-based assessment tools to collect this information. As part of the framework, schools also look at
aspects like school leadership, staff management and the school development plan. Schools are expected to create a self-evaluation team that includes the principal, other school administrators, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders. School’s self-evaluation reports are evaluated by the quality boards within the District and Provincial Education Directories, and the best reports are shared with ministry (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015). 

**The Basic Institutional Standards System**

The Basic Institutional Standards System was introduced in 2010 for primary and lower secondary schools by the MoNE’s Directorate for Basic Education. It is a system for reporting and collecting information about schools, which schools are expected to use for self-evaluation, including identifying their strengths and areas that require improvement. The standards cover 3 areas, with 9 standards and 38 sub-standards, and are updated annually to reflect changes in the education system. The standards include a sub-standard on assessment and evaluation methods, which reflects some important aspects of assessment quality like ensuring that assessments reflect their intended purpose and take into account students’ individual characteristics, and that the results are used for planning of teaching and learning (see Box 5.5) (MoNE, 2016).

Schools are required to report annually on whether each sub-standard is present and whether it is functional, effective and useful. The information is provided by the school principal and management team with support from district and provincial directorates of education. The views of students, parents, teachers and directors are also collected. The reported information is used to produce a standard report for each school which is accessible at the school, district, province and ministry levels. The school principal is expected to evaluate their school’s report, present it to the teachers’ committee and identify the school’s strengths and challenges to prioritise actions for improvement which is expected to feed into the school’s development plan. District and provincial directorates of education are also expected to use the data from the institutional standard reports, as well as schools’ development plans to monitor the school’s progress during the year and in the development of the province’s strategic planning. The ministry is also expected to use the reports to identify regions that are priorities for support and resources, to ensure effective distribution of resources from central to local levels.

**System evaluation**

Most OECD countries use a combination of qualitative and quantitative information in order to monitor the performance of their education system and identify where policies and practices can be improved. This includes administrative data on students, teachers and schools, assessment data, school evaluation information and thematic reports.

In Turkey, major investments have been made in how administrative data is collected and reported. Sophisticated electronic platforms like the e-School Management Information System provide parents with real-time information about their students’ attendance and grades. Systems like e-School and the MoNE’s Education Information System, MEBBIS, also mean that policymakers can monitor policy implementation, aided by the units for measurement and evaluation established in each directorate of the ministry. In the future, it will be important to undertake a greater analysis of information that is provided by schools so that it can contribute to policymaking and provide feedback to provinces and schools to help drive improvements.
Another consideration for system evaluation is reliable and valid information on learning outcomes. In order to monitor learning outcomes, system evaluation currently relies on test scores. However, in all countries, the standards that classroom assessments are based on tend to differ across classrooms and schools to some extent, raising questions about the reliability of test scores for system monitoring purposes. Also, despite efforts to improve teachers’ capacity for classroom assessment, many teachers in Turkey often use multiple-choice or other simple assessments which cannot fully assess the country’s broader learning goals.

*The Strategic Plan 2015-19 makes improving student learning outcomes a priority*

The Strategic Plan 2015-19 includes annual targets based on the average classroom marks of all students from Grades 1 to 5 in all subjects (MoNE, 2015[10]). Classroom assessments are marked by students’ individual teachers. In order to encourage reliable marks for classroom assessment, many OECD countries use moderation within or across schools and national learning standards to encourage alignment with the curriculum (OECD, 2013[1]). The OECD review team’s interviews demonstrated there is limited use of both practices in Turkey, which means that system evaluation may not be based on an accurate or valid measure of learning. At the end of the year, the ministry publishes progress against each of the Strategic Plan’s indicators in an activity report. Provinces follow the same priorities as the national strategic plan and use a similar report template.

*The introduction of new national assessments would provide valuable information on learning outcomes*

Many countries also use data from national examinations to monitor learning outcomes since this provides reliable data. While this is also the case in Turkey, the country no longer has a compulsory national examination for all students. There are also concerns about the validity of examination data since they use predominantly multiple-choice questions assessing knowledge recall. While Turkey participates in international student assessments that provide information on learning against international benchmarks, the data is only available every three to four years and assesses learning using an international, rather than a national framework. Turkey is now developing national assessments – *Akademik Becerilerin İzlenmesi ve Değerlendirilmesi* (ABIDE), as well as the Student Learning Achievement Monitoring Assessment and the Turkish Language Skills Study – that would go a long way in addressing gaps in the instruments available to monitor learning outcomes and progress (see Chapter 4).

More analysis of information provided by the evaluation system is important. More in-depth analysis of the education system’s data and evaluation information would help to better understand the factors that are impeding many students to make good progress. The review team’s interviews highlighted a general understanding that the quality of teacher assessment is a concern, but there is little research into teachers’ classroom practices or level of understanding of the assessment strategies required by the curriculum. A new project between the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the MoNE’s Directorate of Measurement, Evaluation and Examination of teacher capacity for classroom assessment is a positive step towards addressing this evidence gap. Schools can also be helped by a more systematic analysis of achievement data and information from school evaluations. This could help schools to be more aware of the learning areas where students commonly experience difficulties or the groups of students who tend to have greater difficulty to master content – and the kinds of classroom or school-wide changes that could be put in place for more effective learning.
Policy issues

Turkey’s current reforms to teacher appraisal and school evaluation create the opportunity to revise its evaluation system to support national objectives for teaching, learning and assessment more effectively. The first step and clear priority will be to revise the learning outcomes that appraisal, school and system evaluation are based on in order to reflect the broad learning competencies set out in the curriculum. The current focus on test scores is hindering transformation of the education system away from a focus on knowledge recall towards broader and higher-order learning outcomes. Second, appraisal and school evaluation need to be better focused on the quality of assessment practices. The current plans to reform in-service teachers’ regular appraisal and school inspection mean that these can be revised first, providing a reference for later revisions to probation appraisal and school self-evaluation. Third, the ministry can start immediately to undertake a greater analysis of evaluation information, which coupled with sustained efforts to develop capacity at provincial and school levels, will enable schools to draw more on information from the evaluation system to identify and implement strategies to improve how they use assessment.

Policy issue 5.1. Using appraisal to encourage and support teachers to employ good assessment practices

By assessing teachers and providing feedback on their performance, appraisal can have a significant impact on teaching, learning and assessment practices. Turkey has systems for probation and regular appraisal that include some of the dimensions considered important for the effectiveness of these processes. For example, the regular appraisal of in-service teachers is based on authentic evidence from classroom observation, follows a set timetable and is undertaken by principals who should be familiar with teachers’ work. However, the review team’s interviews with teachers and national research that highlights the range of challenges teachers face in developing and selecting appropriate tools for competency development (Kan, 2017[11]) suggest that appraisal is not currently serving as a lever to develop and modernise teaching practices. Appraisal for probation, although recently introduced, also does not seem to be ensuring that all new teachers enter the profession with the necessary teaching skills, including for assessment.

This chapter provides suggestions for how this can be addressed by creating stronger alignment between the education system’s objectives for learning and the criteria that both types of appraisal are based on, which at present does not cover the breadth of assessment skills important for competency development or for student-led learning. It also suggests how principals’ competencies for undertaking appraisals and classroom observations can be strengthened, so that these processes contribute more effectively to teachers’ assessment practices. Finally, it makes suggestions for how appraisal can provide teachers with more helpful feedback and create stronger links to professional development so that appraisal better supports teachers to develop their assessment competency.

Reforms that are planned to be introduced to reform the appraisal of in-service teachers and introduce a performance-based career structure may address some of these challenges. Revising fundamental aspects of the overall appraisal system, like the performance criteria it is based on and how classroom observations are conducted will be important if these reforms are to be effective. This will need to be followed by specific revisions for different types of appraisal, like developing standards for beginning and more experienced teachers.
Recommendation 5.1.1. Ensure that appraisal reflects the breadth and depth of assessment competency important for learning

The effectiveness of any evaluation and assessment practice depends on its alignment with an education system’s objectives for student learning (OECD, 2013[1]). This means that teachers should be evaluated based on criteria and evidence that reflect national learning goals. However in Turkey, while the curriculum emphasises the need for teachers to use a broad range of assessment types to assess different competencies and engage students in their own learning, the OECD team’s review of Turkey’s appraisal criteria revealed that these assessment competencies are not included in the criteria (MoNE, n.d.[12]). Instead, the appraisal criteria focus on how frequently teachers display individual assessment practices, encouraging teachers and evaluators to focus on discrete activities in a compliance-oriented exercise, rather than considering the quality of assessment practices or how they interact to support student learning.

Ensure that appraisal is coherent with national learning goals

Turkey should ensure that its new teacher competencies are consistent with the goals for learning that are set out in the curriculum framework and learning standards that this review recommends the country develops (see Chapter 2). Other countries also use learning standards as the reference that guides the development of teacher standards. Australia’s teachers’ standards, for example, are explicitly based on the Melbourne Declaration which describes the country’s aspirations for its young people for the next decade (AITSL, 2011[13]).

Second, Turkey should ensure that the guidelines and criteria used in different types of teacher appraisal are clearly based on the new teacher competencies. The OECD team’s review of the previous teacher competencies and the teacher appraisal form suggests that the previous teacher competencies were not a central reference in the development of the appraisal form. The new teacher competencies should clearly guide the development of new performance criteria for appraisal.

Develop appraisal criteria that cover key competencies for assessment

Turkey’s current reform to in-service teacher appraisal creates the opportunity to address gaps in the existing appraisal form’s criteria for assessment. Teachers need to be competent in a variety of assessment skills including selecting, applying, using, communicating and evaluating student assessment information and practices (see Box 5.1). At present, the appraisal performance criteria on assessment cover some of these skills, like choosing appropriate tools and methods of evaluation and assessment (MoNE, n.d.[12]). But there are critical gaps including teachers’ skills for developing their own assessments, using a variety of different assessment types and interpreting assessment results. These skills are especially important for assessing competency development because the latter requires the complex integration of different sets of knowledge and skills which can only be assessed through a range of different types of assessment. In other cases, criteria are ambiguous. For example, while feedback to stakeholders is specified, it remains unclear which stakeholders this is referring to and how feedback should be used to support student learning. Providing feedback to students helps them to progress to the next level, and engages them in their learning to develop transversal competencies like learning to learn.
Box 5.1. Standards for teacher competency in student assessment

The American Federation of Teachers has developed standards for teacher competency in student assessment, with the aim of helping to ensure that the potential educational benefits of student assessment are realised:

1. Teachers should be skilled in choosing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.
2. Teachers should be skilled in developing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions.
3. Teachers should be skilled in administering, scoring and interpreting the results of both externally-produced and teacher-produced assessment methods.
4. Teachers should be skilled in using assessment results when making decisions about individual students, planning teaching, developing curriculum and school improvements.
5. Teachers should be skilled in developing valid student grading procedures, which use student assessments.
6. Teachers should be skilled in communicating assessment results to students, parents, other lay audiences and other educators.
7. Teachers should be skilled in recognising unethical, illegal and otherwise inappropriate assessment methods and uses of assessment information.


Assessment skills reflecting the curriculum’s constructivist pedagogy are also absent. Constructivism encourages students to create understanding for themselves, guided by inquiry and questioning. Assessments like self-evaluation and peer-assessment are therefore important to this approach because they engage students in their own learning and reinforce learning as students critically and constructively review their own work and that of their peers. While both self- and peer-assessment are mentioned in Turkey’s curriculum, they are absent from appraisal criteria.

New appraisal criteria should also encourage teachers (and their evaluators) to understand the complexity of the competencies that they are expected to demonstrate. This means referring to broad competencies or complex sets of skills, rather than pointing at “micro-level” competencies or describing only one task (Guerriero, 2017[15]). The current appraisal form in Turkey is based on a set of assessment-related performance descriptors that teachers are marked on individually, rather than referring to a broad set of competencies. This encourages teachers and evaluators to focus on individual assessment activities in a checkbox-focused exercise, rather than understanding the complexity and interaction of different student assessment competencies and practices.

Addressing these points in new appraisal criteria can be done in a relatively simple way, through statements of the kinds of practices teacher are expected to demonstrate in relation to assessment (see Box 5.2 for example). Guidance for evaluators should encourage them to use these statements or performance descriptors as a group of statements that clarify further the complexity of the competency requested, rather than as a checklist with each item considered individually (Guerriero, 2017[15]).
Box 5.2. The Scottish standard for pupil assessment for registered teachers

Use assessment, recording and reporting as an integral part of the teaching process to support and enhance learning

Registered teachers:

- Systematically develop and use an extensive range of strategies, approaches and associated materials for formative and summative assessment purposes, appropriate to the needs of all learners and the requirements of the curriculum and awarding and accrediting bodies.
- Enable all learners to engage in self-evaluation and peer assessment to benefit learning.
- Record assessment information in a systematic and meaningful way in order to enhance teaching and learning and fulfil the requirements of the curriculum and awarding bodies.
- Use the results of assessment to identify development needs at class, group and individual level and as a basis for dialogue with learners about their progress and targets.
- Produce clear and informed reports for parents and other agencies which discuss learners’ progress and matters related to personal, social and emotional development in a sensitive and constructive way.


Illustrate assessment competencies with examples of effective practice

Providing examples of effective assessment practice can help make complex competencies accessible, provide teachers with a clear understanding of what they should be aiming towards and ensure that evaluators share consistent expectations when evaluating teachers. The latter is important in Turkey where current evaluators – principals and inspectors – need to be supported to develop expertise in the use of assessment. It is particularly important when appraisal carries high stakes for teachers, as is the case for probation and might be the case in the future if an appraisal for promotion is introduced within the new performance-based career structure. Other countries use examples of effective teacher practice, which state the practices that an evaluator might expect to see of a teacher demonstrating a given competency. This can also be illustrated with videos. Australia’s teacher standards, for example, use videos to demonstrate expected competencies, including what an effective assessment sequence looks like (AITSL, 2011[13]). Such videos might be provided online via Turkey’s new EBA portal – both to support evaluators and as a resource that illustrates what teachers should be working towards (see Chapter 3).

Develop specific levels of assessment competency for different stages in the teacher career path

As part of the new performance-based career path that Turkey plans to develop, the country will need to set out the different steps of a teacher’s career, e.g. graduate, proficient and experienced. The new career structure should make clear how teaching competencies, including for assessment, are expected to progressively develop during a teacher’s career.
and the different responsibilities that more experienced teachers are expected to take on. For example, Australia’s “roadmap” teacher standards set out how teacher competency in assessment is expected to develop from graduates of initial teacher education to teachers at the most advanced career stages (AITSL, 2011[13]). The structured career path would need to be accompanied by a distinct appraisal process for a promotion that draws primarily on trained evaluators external to the school (such as the inspectors from the provincial education directorates) since it would carry high stakes for a teacher’s career.

A new career structure and associated appraisal for promotion would ensure that teachers are recognised and rewarded for demonstrating increasing pedagogical competency, including in assessment. Such an approach would help to incentivise teachers to undertake professional development opportunities, especially on assessment where take-up is currently very low. It would also make better use of the professional capital that exists to generate systemic improvement. For example, experienced teachers might be expected to take on the role of assessment leaders or champions at the school-level as they reach more advanced steps in the new career structure. Given concerns about the depth and range of new teachers’ assessment skills in Turkey, it is also important that the teacher competencies include a separate standard or expectations for graduates from initial teacher education, to provide a common basis for accreditation and help to ensure the quality of initial teacher education providers (see Chapter 3).

Focus on quality when evaluating assessment practices

At present, appraisal is based on how frequently teachers perform certain assessment activities. This can provide some insights about how a teacher uses assessment but will not reveal much about the quality of assessment practices, like how appropriate they are for assessing the targeted competency, how effective they are in revealing students’ learning needs, or the range of assessments that teachers use. National research has highlighted that these are all areas where teachers in Turkey need to develop significantly their understanding and skills (Kan, 2017[11]).

Turkey should consider adopting an approach to evaluating teachers that describes different levels of teacher proficiency, accompanied by descriptors of performance at each level. Many countries have been inspired by the four-point performance scale in Danielson’s Framework for Teaching of unsatisfactory, basic, proficient and distinguished. For the domain of student assessment, the framework describes teacher competency and behaviours at each of these levels and provides illustrative examples of a teacher performing across these (see Table 5.1) (Danielson, 2013[17]).

This approach to evaluating teachers would also provide regular appraisals with more meaningful formative information than the current marking process for appraisal, which gives teachers little information about what they should be working towards in terms of the quality of their assessment practices. For appraisals that carry stakes such as probation and promotion, it would also provide more transparency in terms of the benchmarks that teachers are being assessed against in order to become fully certified or to move to the next level on the teacher career path.
### Table 5.1. Levels of teaching performance for designing student assessments in the Danielson Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical attributes</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory – Level 1</th>
<th>Basic – Level 2</th>
<th>Proficient – Level 3</th>
<th>Distinguished – Level 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment procedures are not congruent with instructional outcomes and lack criteria by which student performance will be assessed. The teacher has no plan to incorporate formative assessment in the lesson or unit.</td>
<td>Assessment procedures are partially congruent with instructional outcomes. Assessment criteria and standards have been developed, but they are not clear. The teacher’s approach to using formative assessment is rudimentary, including only some of the instructional outcomes.</td>
<td>All the instructional outcomes may be assessed by the proposed assessment plan; assessment methodologies may have been adapted for groups of students. Assessment criteria and standards are clear. The teacher has a well-developed strategy for using formative assessment and has designed particular approaches to be used.</td>
<td>All the instructional outcomes may be assessed by the proposed assessment plan, with clear criteria for assessing student work. The plan contains evidence of student contribution to its development. Assessment methodologies have been adapted for individual students as the need has arisen. The approach to using formative assessment is well designed and includes student as well as teacher use of the assessment information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Critical attributes

- Assessments do not match instructional outcomes.
- Assessments lack criteria.
- No formative assessments have been designed.
- Assessment results do not affect future plans.

#### Possible examples

- The teacher marks papers on the foundation of the United States Constitution mostly on grammar and punctuation; for every mistake, the grade drops from an A to a B, a B to a C, etc.
- The teacher says, “What’s the difference between formative assessment and the test I give at the end of the unit?”
- The teacher says, “The district gave me this entire curriculum to teach, so I just have to keep moving.”
- The teacher says, “The district gave me this entire curriculum to teach, so I just have to keep moving.”
- The district goal for the unit on Europe is for students to understand geopolitical relationships; the teacher plans to have the students memorise all the country capitals and rivers.
- The plan indicates that the teacher will pause to “check for understanding” but does not specify a clear process for accomplishing that goal.
- A student asks, “If half the class passed the test, why are we all reviewing the material again?”
- The teacher knows that his students will have to write a persuasive essay on the state assessment; he plans to provide them with experiences developing persuasive writing as preparation.
- The teacher has worked on a writing rubric for her research assessment; she has drawn on multiple sources to be sure the levels of expectation will be clearly defined.
- The teacher creates a short questionnaire to distribute to his students at the end of class; using their responses, he will organise the students into different groups during the next lesson’s activities. etc.
- The teacher says, “What’s the difference between formative assessment and the test I give at the end of the unit?”
- The plan indicates that the teacher will pause to “check for understanding” but does not specify a clear process for accomplishing that goal.
- A student asks, “If half the class passed the test, why are we all reviewing the material again?”
- The teacher knows that his students will have to write a persuasive essay on the state assessment; he plans to provide them with experiences developing persuasive writing as preparation.
- The teacher has worked on a writing rubric for her research assessment; she has drawn on multiple sources to be sure the levels of expectation will be clearly defined.
- The teacher creates a short questionnaire to distribute to his students at the end of class; using their responses, he will organise the students into different groups during the next lesson’s activities. etc.

Use authentic evidence of classroom practice to identify underperformance

Turkey should determine a minimum threshold on the performance scale for evaluating teachers, e.g. basic, that teachers are required to meet. This would signal teachers’ need for further support, which the current approach to marking does not since a teacher might not demonstrate any of the performance descriptors for assessment competency and still reach the 100 out of 200 required to pass the appraisal. Teachers who do not meet minimum competency thresholds should be required to undertake appropriate professional development.

Recommendation 5.1.2. Ensure that evaluators focus on authentic measures of teachers’ assessment practice

Classroom observation is used for both probation and regular appraisal in Turkey, as it is in four-fifths of OECD countries (OECD, 2015[4]). The frequent use of classroom observation for appraisal reflects the fact that it is one of the most relevant sources of information about a teacher’s performance since most aspects of teaching are displayed when a teacher interacts with their pupils in the classroom (OECD, 2013[1]). However, teachers and principals reported to the OECD review team that observation rarely focuses on the quality of classroom practices, including assessment practices. At the same time, the use of other sources of evidence like student test results might be reconsidered since they may not provide a useful reflection of the quality of teachers’ assessment or teaching practices overall.

Improving the way evidence is collected as part of regular teacher appraisal would enhance its formative function, by providing more valid information of what teachers are doing well and where improvement might be needed. Ensuring the use of authentic measures of teaching quality will be equally important for appraisal processes that carry stakes for teachers, be this at the end of the probation period or in association with the new performance-based teacher career structure, where it is critical to ensure that teachers have the required competencies to progress to the next level.

Provide more guidance for evaluating assessment practices during classroom observation

One way to improve the quality of classroom observation would be to provide principals and other evaluators in Turkey with rubrics that focus on a limited number of indicators that are observable during a classroom visit. These should include key areas where there are identified gaps in the knowledge and skills of teachers in Turkey such as: observing whether teachers use a range of different types of assessment; if they regularly check that students have mastered the key content needed to progress to the next stage; and whether teachers provide feedback that is descriptive, constructive, timely and specific to support students in their learning. Principals might also be provided with guidance on how to undertake a classroom observation to ensure that they have the opportunity to observe these skills or practices (see Table 5.2).
Table 5.2. Suggested strategies for appraising assessment practices during classroom observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on the learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look for the teacher’s impact on each learner and their progress. It is helpful to think in terms of cause (what the teacher does) and effect (what progress towards mastering the learning objective all learners make as a result).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take opportunities to talk to learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask questions that are relevant to their learning. For example, ask them to describe what they are doing and how they will know that they have achieved the learning or lesson objective well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners can provide us with lots of primary evidence including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- how much progress they think they are making and how they know this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- how effectively the teacher delivers the course and helps them to understand what they need to do to improve further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- any problems they are facing and what support they receive from the teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Look at work and displays on the walls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take time to look around you to observe the learning environment. Are there any examples of assessed learner work on display? Does it help learners to know what to aim for and how they can get there?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Ensure that appraisal includes evidence of learning progress

Evidence of student progress and outcomes is central to evaluating the effectiveness of classroom teaching (OECD, 2013[1]). Currently, when collecting evidence on learning as part of the appraisal process, interviews conducted by the OECD review team suggested that principals rely significantly on the grades that students receive in classroom assessments or national examinations, rather than on how teachers are helping to support learning in the classroom.

A narrow focus on achievement results risks creating the perception that it is high marks rather than progress overall which matters and might create incentives for teachers to inflate students’ classroom assessment results, especially in appraisals that carry stakes for a teacher’s career like for probation or promotion. It is also unfair for teachers since it is very difficult to capture an individual teacher’s impact on learning outcomes through assessment results alone. Learning outcomes are influenced by a range of factors beyond an individual teacher’s specific contributions, such as the student’s ability, expectations, motivation, family support, the school context and prior learning (OECD, 2013[1]).

Instead, a fair appraisal system should draw on a broad range of evidence of progress in learning, not just end results. Strengthening the classroom observation component of appraisal would help in this regard. Another practical step would be to include examples of assessed student work over the year as part of a teacher portfolio. While Turkey reports that it currently uses teacher portfolios for teacher appraisal (OECD, 2015[4]), neither the teachers nor the principals that the OECD review team met with reported keeping or using portfolios for the purposes of appraisal. National guidance on the materials relating to student assessment that should be included in the teacher portfolio might include:

- Samples of marked student work.
- Lessons plans indicating assessment methods for all learning outcomes.
Where required, lesson plans including modified assessments for some students to meet the learning needs of different groups of students in the class.

Lesson plans which indicate when formative assessments will be used and indicating possible adjustments that will be made based on formative assessment information.

Such evidence can provide the basis for a conversation between a teacher and their evaluator where teachers may be encouraged to evaluate their assessment practices and identify areas for improvement. Teachers might be expected to set learning targets for their students, explaining how they will support students to reach these goals and the methods that they will use to assess their progress towards them. Principals can also use this conversation to ensure that a teacher’s class-level targets support the school’s overall learning targets. Undertaking reviews of teachers’ portfolios is also important for probation and promotion appraisal. Here, external evaluations might ask teachers to select and discuss what they regard as examples of effective practice, and principals to provide their views of how a teacher’s assessment literacy has evolved over time.

Reconsider how the written examination for probation appraisal is used

The use of a written examination as part of appraisal for probation might be reconsidered. In the short to medium term, Turkey might decide to retain the written examination because they can be useful to ensure that new teachers have basic knowledge and skills. But in order for the examination to do this, Turkey should revise the content that is assessed since it currently duplicates content already assessed in the written examinations as part of initial teacher education (ERI, 2015[19]). Instead, Turkey might use this examination to require teachers to demonstrate how they would use their assessment skills in practice. For example, teachers might be required to explain how they would plan to assess learning in a given topic including how and when they would use formative assessment to check for understanding, and what kind of summative assessment they would use at the end of the topic and the rubric they would use. As a priority, Turkey should also revise how the written examination results for probation appraisal are used so that they are considered alongside the evaluations from school principals, supervisors and inspectors rather than having an eliminatory role for candidate teachers who have already demonstrated themselves to be competent in the classroom. In the future, as the quality of initial teacher education programmes improves, this written examination could be phased out.

Recommendation 5.1.3. Use appraisal results to develop teachers’ assessment competency

A key objective of appraisal is to identify teachers’ professional development needs. Ensuring that there is a strong link between performance appraisal and development opportunities is important to improve teaching practice (Ofsted, 2006[20]). Among 20 OECD education systems with regular appraisal of in-service teachers and available information, in over half of the systems (13) appraisal results inform teachers’ professional development activities. However, in Turkey, regular appraisal does not inform professional development (OECD, 2015[4]). In order to inform professional development, appraisal needs to both provide feedback that helps teachers understand their strengths and learning needs and be linked to professional development opportunities that target these.
Ensure that appraisal provides teachers with useful feedback

Evidence from teacher surveys and the review team’s interviews with teachers suggest that appraisals in Turkey could be adapted to better help teachers to understand their strengths and weaknesses. In 2008 – the last time Turkish teachers were last surveyed as part of the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) – over a third of Turkish teachers reported that appraisal and the feedback provided were not helpful for their development compared with a fifth of teachers on average across TALIS participating countries (OECD, 2009[21]). This finding was reflected in the review team’s interviews with small groups of teachers who reported that nearly all in-service teachers receive top marks in their regular appraisals and that appraisal results do not provide them with much useful feedback or understanding of their assessment practice.

As part of the changes to regular appraisal, Turkey plans to introduce a self-assessment, where teachers will be required to identify their learning and development needs (see Box 3.1, Chapter 3). This should encourage teachers to engage more directly in their own professional development, which may promote greater uptake in development opportunities. In order to help Turkish teachers to accurately identify gaps in their skills it will be important that efforts are made to strengthen their understanding of the requirements of effective teaching and assessment, and in particular the changes to these expectations that were created by the curriculum changes in 2006 (see Chapter 3).

Teachers, and especially those at the beginning of their career, would benefit from more guidance and descriptive feedback as part of appraisal to help them to understand their strengths and learning needs. Evaluators can make feedback practical and accessible by demonstrating points with examples of a teacher’s practice and by drawing on a teacher’s portfolio. Turkey might consider providing pointers for evaluators on how to give this feedback in a constructive way, like providing dos and don’ts and tips on how to give feedback that is motivating, especially when delivering a message on underperformance.

Use professional development plans to link appraisal to professional development

Turkey already plans to introduce professional development plans for teachers as part of a new School-Based Professional Development Model, which is positive (see Box 3.1). Professional development plans involve principals working with teachers to develop individual plans that set out a teacher’s learning needs and how they intend to address them through professional development over the coming year or longer (OECD, 2013[1]).

If this is to be a meaningful exercise, Turkey will need to provide training and significant guidance to principals on how to work with teachers to identify their professional development goals and develop strategies to achieve these. Research suggests that the following are important components of effective teacher development plans:

- Identifying specific actionable growth objectives that are tied to the classroom, with realistic timelines and practical examples of activities that can lead to change (Cole, 2012[22]).
- Drawing on a range of professional development opportunities, including both formal training courses provided nationally or regionally, and more informal collaborative types of professional development between teachers.
- During a teacher’s regular appraisal, the following year they should be required to reflect on the professional development they have undertaken, its impact on their development and how far they have met the objectives that they set for themselves.
This information can also be used nationally to inform the development of professional development opportunities on assessment practice.

Making some professional development a requirement for teachers every year would also help to ensure teachers have sufficient time to devote to their professional learning (Chapter 3).

**Policy issue 5.2. Revising school evaluation to support learning and effective assessment practices**

School evaluation is currently undergoing a major change in Turkey. At the time of the OECD review, external school evaluations were on-hold and a new model for evaluation was being developed. This creates an opportunity for Turkey to revise parts of its evaluation system so that it is more effective in encouraging schools to develop the kinds of teaching and learning, including assessment, practices that will improve students’ outcomes. This chapter provides an analysis of the existing arrangements for school inspection and school self-evaluation, making recommendations that can be addressed as part of the ongoing reforms.

First, the country will need to revisit the framework for external school evaluation – called school inspection in Turkey. It is important that the inspection framework is based on school outcomes that reflect the broad competencies for student learning emphasised by the curriculum. It is also important that the school-level processes in the framework encourage an evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning practices. A second issue that will help to strengthen the school evaluation system is to use school’s self-evaluations to encourage schools to focus more centrally on the quality of teaching and learning, including assessment, and how to improve. Finally, self-evaluation needs to provide schools with greater scope to adapt and appropriate self-evaluation to reflect their individual context and priorities for improvement.

**Recommendation 5.2.1. Ensure that the school inspection framework reinforces national objectives for learning and good assessment practices**

At present, the indicators on learning outcomes and school-level processes for assessment in Turkey’s inspection framework are not encouraging improvements in teaching and learning as well as they might. This is because the learning outcomes focus on “student success” in terms of high marks in national examinations and classroom assessments (see Box 5.3). This provides a summative judgement that does not capture progress in learning or the breadth of the learning competencies that the country’s curriculum is based on. It is also because, while the inspection framework includes some aspects that are important for assessment – for example, assessments should be appropriate for students’ learning and development level, and a variety of assessment types should be used – the focus is on ensuring that schools comply with a list of practices. This means that key aspects of how assessment is used in schools – the quality of assessment, how it is being used to support learning, in particular, the use of formative assessment, and what schools are doing to support improvements in assessment practice – do not receive sufficient attention.
Box 5.3. Indicators of student assessment in Turkey’s framework for school inspection

School inspection in Turkey looks at both measures of student outcomes, called measures of “student success” and practices for student assessment. This includes the following indicators on student success:

- Results from central and local examinations, including Transition to Higher Education Examination – Yükseköğretim Geçiş Sınavı (YGS) and Undergraduate Placement Exam – Lisans Yerleştirme Sınavı (LYS) for upper secondary high school according to school type and environment characteristics.
- Academic achievement from Grade 4 onwards, including in written examinations, practical examinations, performance studies, projects and practical training in vocational education.
- Assessment of participation and results of national and international projects/competitions.
- Data on student participation, drop-out, repetition and higher educational participation.

And on student assessment practices:

- In Grades 1, 2 and 3, student assessment is conducted under the teacher’s guidance in line with the assessment principles set out in the curriculum that indicates student achievement as very good, good and improved.
- For each subject, student assessment includes at least one project, either individual or group.
- In Grade 8, on any single day students do not take more than three examinations, and in the other grades, not more than two examinations.
- Examination questions are developed based on the learning expectations set out in the curriculum.
- Appropriate assessment and evaluation tools are used to measure student achievement.
- Teachers develop examinations that use different types of questions and cover different topics, and an appropriate answer key.
- For high school students, student assessment results are recorded in the e-School system.


Focus inspection indicators for learning outcomes on national learning standards

In many OECD countries, school evaluation focuses on recording and monitoring students’ achievement of national learning standards as they are set out in the curriculum. This means that learning outcome indicators specifically reference learning in the school against national learning standards. In Turkey, the absence of such a standard for recording and monitoring learning outcomes creates a major gap for monitoring what students are
learning and the progress that they make because the information provided is not a meaningful indicator of the curriculum’s expectations for learning. The inspection framework’s focus on “student success” may also encourage teachers and schools to focus on recording high marks, rather than ensuring that students are fully mastering the curriculum’s content. Turkey should use the national learning standards that this review recommends defining indicators on learning outcomes for school evaluation (see Chapter 2). This can be done very simply by explicitly referencing national learning standards. For example, the outcome indicator on learning outcomes in New Zealand’s school evaluation framework specifies that: “students in primary education achieve success in relation to National Standards in mathematics, reading and writing” (Education Review Office, 2016[24]).

An important measure of school performance is how well it supports each of its students to progress, based on their individual starting points. This means that indicators on learning outcomes for school evaluation should include information on the progress that student cohorts make in terms of reaching national learning goals, and the progress that the school makes over time in terms of at least maintaining, or improving student outcomes, against national learning standards. For example, Scotland’s school evaluation framework includes an indicator of “attainment over time”, and an illustrative example of effective practice is provided: “learners make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy”, and “across all curriculum areas we [the school] have raised attainment continuously over time and/or maintained consistently high standards of attainment for all learners” (Education Scotland, 2015[25]).

When it revises the school inspection system, Turkey should include an outcome indicator based on national learning standards as well as an indicator of student progress over time. Once implemented, ABİDE will provide reliable and valid evidence for this indicator. The background information collected by ABİDE will also help inspectors develop a better understanding of how to evaluate schools’ performance relative to their context, by providing national data on how schools in different contexts tend to perform.

**Introduce expectations for learning outcomes in Grades 1 to 3**

Following national reforms to end the use of summative, numerical marking in Grades 1 to 3, the school inspection framework does not explicitly reference that learning outcomes in these first years of primary should be looked at as part of inspections. However, outcomes in these early years should still play a role in school inspection in Turkey, as they do in other OECD countries that have enacted similar reforms to marking in the early grades. This will encourage teachers and schools to ensure that a range of assessments appropriate for students is used to monitor learning. The review team’s interviews suggested that, in the absence of summative assessments linked to numerical marks, teachers currently make limited use of assessment because they lack understanding of more continuous, informal, formative assessments to monitor learning and support progress.

**Include indicators on the quality of assessment practices**

Current indicators in the school inspection framework focus predominantly on whether summative assessments are being undertaken (see Box 5.3). This focuses inspection on what the teacher does in a way that is disconnected from students and the interaction between teachers and students that is central to the learning process. Turkey should ensure that its new inspection framework includes indicators that focus on the quality of assessment practices across the school in the following areas:
• Looking for evidence that teachers are undertaking formative assessment. Teachers should be using assessment to help students understand their own learning processes, using information from assessment to adapt instruction to each student’s learning needs and providing students with feedback that helps them to progress in the absence of summative, numerical marks. School inspection frameworks in a number of countries include process indicators dedicated to evidence of formative assessment (see Box 5.4).

• Ensuring that assessments are valid by reflecting the breadth of the curriculum’s learning outcomes. For example, the evaluation framework might specify that there should be evidence that teachers are encouraged and supported to use a broader range of assessments (such as those specified in the curriculum).

Box 5.4. Formative assessment as part of school evaluation in New Zealand

New Zealand published a new version of its school evaluation indicators in 2016. The new indicators draw on the feedback and advice of academic experts, education leaders and teachers as well as case studies looking at how schools used evaluation and inquiry to improve outcomes for students. “Domain 4: Responsive curriculum, effective teaching and opportunity to learn” includes the following indicator on formative assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation indicators</th>
<th>Effective practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment for learning</td>
<td>Teachers and students co-construct challenging but realistic learning goals and success criteria, developing shared understandings about the kind and quality of work required to achieve the desired outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops students' assessment and learning-to-learn capabilities</td>
<td>Assessment activities are inclusive, authentic and fit-for-purpose; they provide meaningful evidence of achievement and progress and a basis for determining next steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students receive and give timely, specific, descriptive feedback in response to these questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Where am I going? (What are my goals?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● How am I going? (What progress is being made towards the goal?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken next to make continuing or better progress?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● How will I know when I’ve got there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students identify their own learning needs and develop and use self-assessment skills to evaluate their own and others' work against clear criteria. Students provide feedback to teachers about the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. Teachers, parents and whānau actively participate in, and contribute to, students' learning journeys through ongoing, reciprocal communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Classroom observations provide the opportunity to review many of the aspects related to the quality of assessment. While classroom observation is already part of school inspection in Turkey, inspectors will need more guidance in terms of what they should be looking for so that they can collect evidence on the quality of assessment practices, in particular, formative interaction, in line with the recommended revisions to the inspection framework. The guidance and rubrics developed for principals as part of teacher appraisal can be used
for this purpose (see Recommendation 5.1.2). The ministry might also develop guidance to help ensure that classroom observations for inspections are used to review assessment methods across a whole school (rather than focusing on evaluating individual teachers’ assessment practices which should be the focus of teacher appraisal). For example, the English School Inspectorate, Ofsted, specifies that classroom observations for the purposes of school inspections are short and evaluators may spend just a few minutes in each classroom and try to visit a range of different classes and domains (Ofsted, 2017[27]).

*Include indicators on school-wide strategies to support improved use of assessment*

As well as looking at the use of assessment in classrooms across the school, inspectors should look for evidence of school-wide policies that are supporting teachers to use assessment more effectively. This would mean the inspection framework looking for evidence that:

- Teachers have a shared understanding of learning expectations, with dedicated strategies and activities to promote this like the moderation of student work.
- The school provides professional learning opportunities on assessment and creates opportunities for leaders and teachers to work together through collaborative inquiry and learning opportunities on assessment.
- Data on student learning and outcomes are used and analysed to identify improvements for teaching and learning practices, including the use of assessment, across the school. These activities might be led by school leadership as part of self-evaluation and objective setting, and as a collective exercise involving both the school leadership and teachers to create opportunities for peer learning.
- The school engages parents to inform them about the learning expectations for their children, their progress and how they can best support their child’s learning and development.

*Look for evidence of strategies to monitor and support students at risk of falling behind*

Given the large share of students who do not develop basic proficiency in core competencies at school in Turkey (OECD, 2016[28]), inspectors should look for evidence of school-wide policies for monitoring those at risk of falling behind. Across OECD countries, important policy tools for tackling underachievement include clearly identifying struggling students and putting in place special support and help for those students (OECD, 2016[29]). Other countries, like the Netherlands, also use the school evaluation framework to collect evidence of additional support schools make available to students not reaching national learning standards (Dutch Education Inspectorate, 2017[30]). In Turkey, inspectors might look for the following types of evidence:

- Teachers regularly pause during lessons and use formative assessment to check for understanding before moving on.
- Teachers use assessment information to identify areas where students need to revisit certain content to fully consolidate learning.
- Feedback is provided in a way that is motivating and encouraging.
• Summative assessments are timed so that students only take them when they are likely to do well.

Inspection should also provide schools with feedback for improvement to encourage and support schools to make more systematic use of these kinds of practices.

Illustrate indicators with examples of effective practice

Examples of effective practice will make the framework for school inspection a more practical tool. They can help schools understand what they should be working towards achieving and encourage a consistent approach across evaluators. Many OECD countries already provide these kinds of examples in their frameworks, which can be short and simple. For example, Scotland (United Kingdom) provides the following example of effective assessment practice:

“Assessment is integral to our planning of learning and teaching. We use a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities in different contexts across the curriculum. Our assessment evidence is valid and reliable. At key milestones, our assessments provide reliable evidence which we use to report on the progress of all children and young people. Across our learning community, we have shared expectations for standards to be achieved, and have robust arrangements for moderation across stages and across the curriculum.” (Education Scotland, 2015[25])

Provide schools with actionable recommendations

In order for inspections to drive school improvement, inspection reports should include detailed feedback and actionable recommendations. The ministry should develop a template so that inspectors are required to provide specific descriptions of areas of strength in the school, where improvement is needed and a “to-do list” of actions.

Recommendation 5.2.2. Use self-evaluation to focus schools on developing their assessment capacity

In a large and geographically diverse country like Turkey, raising learning standards nationally will depend to a large extent on each school developing its capacity to lead its own improvement. Self-evaluation can support this by providing a framework that guides schools to review how effectively they use teaching and learning, including assessment practices, to support national learning goals and develop strategies for improvement.

The systems for self-evaluation in Turkey could have a greater impact in helping schools to achieve this by ensuring that the indicators for self-evaluation (like those for school inspection), focus centrally on learning outcomes in terms of achievement of national learning standards and key aspects of assessment quality. While the Basic Institutional Standards system goes further than the framework for school inspection in terms of the latter, paying particular attention to how assessment is used to support learning, key aspects like using a range of different types of assessment and quality of formative feedback continue to be absent (see Box 5.5). Second, there are at least three different systems for self-evaluation – all schools undertake self-evaluations and submit data through the Education Quality Management System; primary and lower secondary schools are also required to undertake self-evaluations through the Basic Institutional Standards System; and vocational high schools have also had a separate self-evaluation system since 2014.
Rationalising these systems to create a single self-evaluation framework for all schools would help to create a coherent focus across all schools towards national goals. At the same time, schools will need more flexibility to be able to tailor self-evaluation to reflect their type of school, the local context, their students’ needs and their development priorities.

**Box 5.5. The Basic Institutional Standards System in Turkey**

The Basic Institutional Standards System covers school-level activities in the three following areas: educational management, including strategic planning and management; learning and teaching processes; and support services, including the security, health, nutrition and cleaning practices at the school.

“Learning and teaching processes” includes a sub-standard on assessment and evaluation methods ensuring that assessments methods reflect their intended purpose, take into account the individual characteristics of the children, and that the results of assessment are used for to plan teaching and learning and support students’ overall development. There are also sub-standards on how far the school makes plans that support each child’s development and teachers’ completion of professional development activities.


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*Create a single framework for self-evaluation based on core indicators in the inspection framework*

Following the revisions to the framework for school inspection that this chapter recommends, the different existing systems for self-evaluation should be revised to create a single framework that adopts the same core indicators as the inspection framework. This will ensure that the current gaps across the self-evaluation frameworks, in terms of focusing on national learning goals and ensuring that assessment is used in a way that supports these goals, will be addressed. The core indicators that are used in both external and internal frameworks should reflect national priorities for assessment like ensuring that students make good progress against national learning standards, taking steps to ensure that assessments are valid and reliable, using assessment for learning and to engage students in their learning and that there are school-wide policies to ensure the availability of professional development opportunities to improve teachers’ assessment literacy and analysis of assessment data.

*Provide schools with space to add indicators*

At the same time as adopting a single, national approach for self-evaluation, schools also need some space to be able to adapt self-evaluation so that they can appropriate it as a tool for their own improvement. In the majority of OECD countries, this is encouraged by developing self-evaluation systems at the school or local level (OECD, 2015[4]). In Turkey, the importance of ensuring a coherent and consistent focus on national learning objectives and the limitations of school, district and provincial capacity for school evaluation and improvement means that using a set of nationally-determined core indicators for both inspection and self-evaluation is the most feasible option at present.
However, schools could be provided with the opportunity to add to the core indicators, through new indicators that reflect their own school context and priorities. For example, schools in the less developed eastern provinces where drop-out is higher might include specific indicators on how teachers use assessment and feedback to motivate students and to help students understand their strengths and which kinds of future educational pathways might best reflect these. This will also mean that different types of schools can adapt self-evaluation to their own needs and context, rather than having entirely separate self-evaluation systems as exist at present.

Use “challenge” questions to encourage critical inquiry

When the new single framework for self-evaluation is developed, it should be used to frame indicators in a way that encourages schools to reflect on their practices. At present, the indicators in the self-evaluation frameworks encourage schools to comply with indicators, for example, the Basic Institutional Standards system requires schools to report on whether a standard is present in the school, and how functional, effective and useful it is in a tick-box form. However, research on the use of indicators to improve practice in schools highlights the importance of stimulating cultures of inquiry and encouraging deep and challenging conversations about practice (Earl, 2014[31]). If the indicators in Turkey are to do this, they will need to be framed in a way that prompts schools to engage in a discussion about how well they are supporting all students to make progress in their learning, the quality of the assessment practices undertaken in the school and what aspects can be improved. In other OECD countries, school evaluation frameworks often include specific questions to encourage schools to ask themselves these kinds of questions. For example, Scotland’s School Evaluation Framework (Education Scotland, 2015[25]) includes suggested “Challenging Questions” on assessment practice:

- How well do we apply the principles of planning, observation, assessment, recording and reporting as an integral feature of learning and teaching?
- How well do we make use of a range of valid, reliable and relevant assessment tools and approaches to support the improvement of children and young people’s learning?
- How well do we record, analyse and use assessment information to identify development needs for individual learners and specific groups?
- How effectively do we involve learners and parents in planning and evaluating learning?
- How well do we enable all children and young people to engage in self- and peer assessment to improve their learning? How do we know this benefits learning?

Use inspections to build schools’ capacity for improving their use of assessment

Schools in Turkey will need to be supported to move towards a less compliance-focused model of self-evaluation. One way to do this is by using school inspectors to review school’s self-evaluation practices. Self-evaluation in Turkey is more or less separate from school inspection but is a component of external school evaluation in the vast majority of OECD countries. As a minimum in most of these countries, self-evaluation results are shared with external evaluation bodies. In Scotland, where school self-evaluation is central to the school evaluation approach, a school’s self-evaluation, its effectiveness and planning for improvement are evaluated as part of the external evaluation process to support school
improvement (OECD, 2013[1]). Turkey should use the new framework for inspection to explicitly review schools’ self-evaluation processes.

In terms of assessment practice, when reviewing schools’ self-evaluation reports and improvement plans as part of inspections, inspectors should look for evidence of:

- How schools have used student assessment results, as well as appraisal and school evaluations to identify their development needs in terms of the use assessment.
- That schools have identified specific goals in how they use assessment and actions to achieve them. For example, an important goal for most schools in Turkey will be reducing the number of summative tests that teachers use. This will need to be supported by a school-wide strategy like encouraging teachers to participate in professional development external to the school and providing some opportunities for collaborative discussion and feedback from experienced teachers within the school so that teachers can practice using different types of assessment.

Strong leadership also has an important role in ensuring effective self-evaluations (OECD, 2013[1]). Turkey should consider how it can help its principals, who currently occupy a primarily administrative role, to develop the capacity to lead self-evaluation. This might include training on how to lead self-evaluations effectively. In the future, principal appraisal might also be adapted to review how effectively principals lead self-evaluations and give feedback for improvement. In Ontario (Canada) for example, principal appraisal includes indicators related to how self-evaluation is led by the principal (OECD, 2013[1]).

**Policy issue 5.3. Using system evaluation to help improve teaching, learning and assessment practices**

System evaluation draws on information from across the education system to monitor progress against national goals and identify where improvements can be made. Countries use a combination of qualitative and quantitative information about what is happening across their education systems for this purpose, such as data on students, teachers and schools, and information on school quality and student achievement. Over the past decade, Turkey has focused on expanding the information that is collected and reported. The ministry’s Information System (MEBBIS) now provides extensive data on school inputs and conditions, and the e-School Management Information System enables continuous monitoring of children’s school attendance to help reduce drop-out (UNICEF, 2012[32]).

The focus for system evaluation should now shift towards making greater use of the information that is collected to drive school improvement. This will require greater analysis of information to see what it reveals in terms of the teaching and learning challenges in Turkey’s classrooms and using these insights to direct support back to schools. One remaining but critical gap for system evaluation also needs to be addressed. In the absence of other data sources, the national Strategic Plan (like school evaluation) focuses on test marks from classroom assessments to monitor learning outcomes and quality. This review provides recommendations on how information from the new national assessment – ABİDE – and potentially the new Student Learning Achievement Monitoring Assessment, the Turkish Language Skills Study and Common Examinations – when developed, can provide more valid and reliable data for monitoring learning outcomes.
Recommendation 5.3.1. Ensure that targets for education support national priorities

The current Strategic Plan makes it a priority to improve the quality of teaching and learning, with the goal of raising student achievement. The latter is measured by students’ end of year marks from classroom assessments averaged across all subjects and all students in Grades 5 to 12, with the goal of increasing the average for each grade to 80 out of 100 by 2021 (MoNE, 2015[10]). This provides a clear target which gives national prominence to the importance of student outcomes and what happens in the classroom. However, as discussed throughout this report, the measure is unreliable – teachers’ classroom marks differ to some extent across classrooms and schools in all countries and ensuring reliability in Turkey will require significant investments, through initial teacher education, professional development, moderation and national learning standards as this report recommends. Classroom test scores are also not a valid measure of the competencies valued in the national curriculum, because as national research and the review team’s interviews illustrate, many teachers in Turkey do not have a strong understanding of how to assess the broad competencies in the national curriculum. Finally, focusing on test scores also reinforces teachers’ and society’s perceptions that it is summative marks that matter, undermining national efforts to limit teachers’ use of summative testing and promote the use of a wider range of assessments, including formative, to better support student learning.

Set goals that aim to raise performance

Turkey should set targets for learning that focus on demonstrating progress against the learning standards that this review recommends the country develops (see Chapter 2). This will mean using assessment data that is valid and reliable for the national monitoring of learning outcomes. Creating prominent national goals for learning (rather than high test marks) will also help to galvanise change in teaching and learning by focusing education actors and society on the competencies that children and young adults are expected to develop at school. This might include:

- Setting long-term goals for improvement against international benchmarks. A goal over the next three cycles of the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) or by 2030 might be to reduce the share of 15-year-olds students who do not develop basic competencies, i.e. Level 2 or lower in the PISA framework. The European Union has a similar target – that less than 15% of 15-year-olds in Europe have low basic skills by 2020 (European Commission, 2018[33]).

- Using data from the new national assessments – in particular ABİDE – to set goals and monitor progress in the next strategic plan. Goals might focus on increasing the share of students in primary and lower secondary education who meet national standards over the duration of the strategic plan. This can be complemented by data at the end of compulsory education from the Temel Yeterlilik Testi - Basic Proficiency Test (TYT) national examination.

These goals and progress can be made visible through a website that communicates national targets and progress in clear, accessible terms. For example, New Zealand reports the share of students at or above National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics in primary nationally on an annual basis, as part of a visual one-page document that sets out progress in key education measures (Ministry of Education, 2016[34]). This would complement the information campaign that this review suggests Turkey might develop to educate parents
and society on the importance of competency development for life and work (see Chapter 2).

Provide the public with a more comprehensive picture of school performance

At present, the only information that students and parents have about schools are examination results and their own perceptions of their prestige. Turkey should identify other kinds of qualitative information that it could make available to help students and parents identify schools with the teaching and learning environments that are best suited to their individual needs in the context of recent change to high school placement. In Turkey, schools are required to share their self-evaluation reports with parents and students in the form of a letter or report, which risks making self-evaluation a high-stakes exercise for schools. Instead, Turkey should consider making summaries of the self-evaluation reports publicly available (OECD, 2015[4]). The country could also consider making school inspection reports publicly available, as they are in 16 OECD countries (OECD, 2015[4]). As the latter provide an external perspective on school quality, they would be particularly valuable for students and parents in Turkey given the limited availability of public assessment information. Additional steps to improve the value and accessibility of external and internal school evaluation reports include:

- Using templates to ensure that reports are structured and written in a way that is accessible for students and parents.
- Highlighting information about teaching and learning that are of particular interest for parents and students. For example, inspection reports might provide a qualitative judgement on the quality of the teaching and learning in the school and the progress that students make, while omitting any assessment data from the report that is made publicly available.

Recommendation 5.3.2. Help schools use evaluation information for improvement

Through the system of school evaluation and centralised electronic systems like MEBBIS and e-School, schools in Turkey report lots of information to provinces and the ministry. Greater analysis of this information by the ministry and provinces would help to identify and understand more deeply the common challenges that schools face in improving teaching and learning. This analysis could then be used to target central support to where it is most needed and help schools to develop more effective improvement strategies.

Undertake more central analysis to inform policy

As a first step, the ministry can undertake much more analysis of assessment data from examinations and in the future from national assessments (ABİDE, the Student Learning Achievement Monitoring Assessment and the Turkish Language Skills Study), to identify which groups of students are vulnerable to low performance. This would be complemented by greater analysis of information from school evaluations, and the background questionnaires from the national assessments to identify the contextual factors, including school-level factors like teaching and assessment practices, that are associated with lower performance. The information can be used to inform national planning and policies as well as being shared with the provinces to help them examine further and address the challenges that their schools face locally.
Since 2018, the ministry has begun publishing Education and Evaluation Reports, which examine the VET and general education sectors, with the aim of supporting data-based policy making and greater transparency in the system ((MoNE, 2018[35]), (MoNE, 2018[7]), (MoNE, 2018[10]), (MoNE, 2019[37]), (MoNE, 2019[38])).

**Encourage provinces to undertake more analysis to understand the challenges for schools in their region**

In the majority of provinces, information from schools does not seem to be fully exploited to help understand the challenges schools face, and where improvements can be made. An exception is the Provincial Directorate of Ankara, which reported to the review team how it analyses Temel Öğretimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş Sistemi – Transition from Elementary Schools to Secondary Schools Exam (TEOG) and university placement examination results from the province’s schools to identify those which are successful in raising learning outcomes. The insights are used to provide guidance and advice for other schools and encourage good practice sharing. The ministry might encourage more provinces to undertake this kind of activity, perhaps asking the new assessment centres to work with provincial staff to develop templates and data analysis skills to make more use of schools’ assessment data and identify priorities for improvement. The ministry can also encourage other provinces to make greater use of evaluation information by providing public recognition for provinces like Ankara to encourage good practice sharing across provinces.

Another simple measure that all provinces could be encouraged to undertake, as part of their existing quality review processes of school improvement plans, is to publicly recognise local schools. This should focus on recognising those schools that develop effective and innovative processes to improve teaching and learning, rather than just schools with good results. For example, this would include schools that are improving, reflected in a declining share of students who do not meet minimum national standards according to ABİDE data. It could also include schools that are employing innovative strategies in areas important nationally, like using peer assessment to create a positive learning environment, or projects to effectively integrate 21st century competencies into instruction and assessment. Recognition should focus on providing ways for these schools to share their strategies with others and avoid an unhelpful focus on using results for accountability purposes. Inspectors could also contribute to this process, by highlighting those schools that their inspections find are using self-evaluation and improvement plans well to develop specific and effective actions to better support learning.

**Develop principals’ capacity to act thoughtfully on evaluation information**

The ministry and provinces can help schools by undertaking greater analysis of evaluation information but school principals have a central role to play so that this information is used to identify schools’ development needs and put in place strategies for improvement. In order to do this, principals need a strong pedagogical background, including in assessment. They also need to be able to exert strong leadership to be able to bring all school actors on board with improvement strategies. This will be particularly important in Turkey where teachers and parents accustomed to regular summative testing will need to be convinced of the merits of moving towards a new approach that promotes more formative assessment and descriptive feedback.

Principals in Turkey currently have a primarily administrative role and the review team’s discussions with some principals indicated that they do not believe that it is their role to engage with teachers’ assessment practices. Encouraging principals to take on greater
leadership of assessment will require a major transformation of their current role. Sharing assessment roles across the school would provide principals with valuable support as they develop their roles as pedagogical leaders and enable them to draw on the knowledge and skills of experienced teachers. It will also help to ensure that the whole school community is involved in and takes responsibility for improving assessment practices. Sharing responsibilities across the school also helps school leaders to manage their increasingly complex role (Schleicher, 2012[39]).

**Provide targeted support to schools in greatest need**

The local context and school environment of some schools in Turkey mean that they face a range of risk factors for low performance and will require more support to improve learning outcomes. This includes schools in the less developed eastern provinces and rural areas where there is a concentration of students with high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and the least experienced teachers. It also includes the dense urban areas where double-shift classes are common at present, leaving teachers with little time and space to provide individualised feedback or differentiate learning to meet a wide range of learning needs.

Evidence from OECD countries suggests that policy makers can help tackle low performance in these kinds of schools by directing additional, tailored resources to support them (OECD, 2016[29]). In France, for example, a major reform of “l'éducation prioritaire” in 2017 for schools in the country’s most deprived areas focuses on integrating into daily routines the kinds of classroom and school-wide practices that have been found to be particularly effective in improving learning outcomes. These practices are set out in a guide for teachers and schools, which highlight key interventions such as quality teacher feedback on learning; changes to reporting that make specific what a student has achieved and where improvement is needed; regular use of diagnostic assessment; and close monitoring of students at-risk of falling behind and/or dropping out. Schools in these areas receive more support and resources to enable them to employ these approaches, like support to reduce class sizes in the first two years of primary by half; training and mentorship for teachers so that they can better adapt teaching to learner needs; and more flexibility in teachers’ time so that they can work together to identify effective strategies to help individual students (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2017[40]).

In Turkey, areas that face the greatest socio-economic challenges could be supported by a similar programme of enhanced support. Measures might include:

- Making them a priority for the implementation of national reforms like ending double-shift schools and reducing large class sizes.
- Establishing the new assessment centres in these areas first, because schools in the less developed eastern regions tend to have fewer experienced teachers.
- Giving teachers more time specifically dedicated to working in school-level groups focused on identifying and monitoring students at-risk for falling behind and dropping out.
- Making the diagnostic assessments recommended in this report mandatory at the beginning of each year.
Conclusion

Creating an evaluation system in Turkey that better promotes learning and good assessment practices will take time but the country already has solid foundations to build on. These include strong traditions of teacher appraisal, school evaluation and system planning and monitoring. It also includes a society that cares deeply about education, both for the success of its young people and for national competitiveness. Turkey now needs to better orient the evaluation system and society in general towards broader learning goals and more effective use of assessment.
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| 5.1. Using appraisal to encourage and support teachers to employ good assessment practices | 5.1.1. Ensure that appraisal reflects the breadth and depth of assessment competency important for learning | ● Ensure that appraisal is coherent with national learning goals  
● Develop appraisal criteria that cover key competencies for assessment  
Illustrate assessment competencies with examples of effective practice  
● Develop specific levels of assessment competency for different stages in the teacher career path  
● Focus on quality when evaluating assessment practices  
● Use authentic evidence of classroom practice to identify underperformance |
| 5.1.2. Ensure that evaluators focus on authentic measures of teachers’ assessment practice | | ● Provide more guidance for evaluating assessment practices during classroom observation  
● Ensure that appraisal includes evidence of learning progress  
● Reconsider how the written examination for probation appraisal is used |
| 5.1.3. Use appraisal results to develop teachers’ assessment competency | | ● Ensure that appraisal provides teachers with useful feedback  
● Use professional development plans to link appraisal to professional development |
| 5.2. Revising school evaluation to support learning and effective assessment practices | 5.2.1. Ensure that the school inspection framework reinforces national objectives for learning and good assessment practices | ● Focus inspection indicators for learning outcomes on national learning standards  
● Introduce expectations for learning outcomes in Grades 1 to 3  
● Include indicators on the quality of assessment practices  
● Include indicators on school-wide strategies for improved use of assessment  
● Look for evidence of strategies to monitor and support students at risk of falling behind  
● Illustrate indicators with examples of effective practice  
● Provide schools with actionable recommendations |
| 5.2.2. Use self-evaluation to focus schools on developing their assessment capacity | | ● Create a single framework for self-evaluation based on core indicators in the inspection framework  
● Provide schools with space to add indicators  
● Use “challenge” questions to encourage critical inquiry  
● Use inspections to build schools’ capacity for improving their use of assessment |
| 5.3. Using system evaluation to help improve teaching, learning and assessment practices | 5.3.1. Ensure that targets for education support national priorities | ● Set goals that aim to raise performance  
● Provide the public with a more comprehensive picture of school performance |
| 5.3.2. Help schools use evaluation information for improvement | | ● Undertake more central analysis to inform policy  
● Encourage provinces to undertake more analysis to understand the challenges for schools in their region  
● Develop principals’ capacity to act thoughtfully on evaluation information  
● Provide targeted support to schools in greatest need |
Notes

1 Turkey is also participating in TALIS 2018. The results, that will be published in 2019, were not available at the time of drafting this review.

2 The Student Learning Achievement Monitoring assessment was introduced under the Ministry of National Education’s 2023 Education Vision. It is intended to provide schools with diagnostic information on students’ strengths and weaknesses in Turkish, mathematics and science. As of mid-2019, some 300,000 students in grades 4, 7 and 10 have participated in the assessment. The Turkish Language Skills Study assesses the competencies of students in four areas: listening, reading, writing and speaking. It has so far been conducted in 15 provinces prior to the nationwide placement exams, providing students with feedback on their Turkish language proficiency and suggestions on areas where they need to improve. The Common Examinations initiative refers to newly introduced joint examinations conducted at the provincial level. The purpose is to provide large-scale, comparable data on student performance as well as information for students themselves to better understand their proficiency gaps. The Ministry of National Education expects that the results obtained from these initiatives will be examined at the school level and used to inform the design of weekend courses to help students address areas of weakness. These initiatives were introduced after the analysis for this review was completed and are therefore not addressed in this report.
REFERENCES


CHAPTER 5. USING THE EVALUATION SYSTEM TO PROMOTE BETTER ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING


