Educational Evaluation and Assessment in Luxembourg
Strengths, Challenges and Policy Pointers

STRENGTHS

The evaluation and assessment framework
➢ A change of paradigm in educational policy making shifting to a focus on outputs and equity
➢ The introduction of a competency approach to learning in schools
➢ The strong potential for the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MENFP) to steer evaluation and assessment activities
➢ Launching and evaluation of initiatives to generate innovation within the system
➢ Regular communication between the MENFP and schools
➢ Efforts to build evaluation and assessment capacity within Luxembourg

Student assessment
➢ Clear communication to a wider public on how recent changes affect student assessment
➢ Good initiatives to use student assessment to monitor and promote equity and support learning
➢ The shift to competencies has great potential to strengthen formative assessment practices
➢ Professional development support for teachers on student assessment
➢ Efforts to engage teachers and promote new student assessment development and use

Teacher appraisal
➢ Teachers have some opportunities to receive informal feedback on their performance
➢ Current reforms in fundamental education are strengthening teachers' autonomy and improving the professional dialogue among teachers
➢ Interactions with *inspecteurs* and *directeurs* provide opportunities for professional feedback
➢ A probationary period for teachers is well established
➢ There are requirements and provisions for the professional development of teachers

School evaluation
➢ Strong central steering of and support to school self-evaluation
➢ The first steps in providing information for school self-evaluation
➢ Restructuring the internal organisation of fundamental schools
➢ Availability of objective performance measures from national standardised student assessments

Education system evaluation
➢ Heightened political support for the use of evidence to evaluate the education system
➢ The introduction of a national monitoring system
➢ Growing attention to assessing a wider set of student competencies in education system evaluation
➢ Growing recognition of the importance of collecting feedback on the education system from key stakeholders

CHALLENGES

The evaluation and assessment framework
➢ Lack of evaluation and assessment framework and no common understanding of school quality
➢ The student is not at the centre of school evaluation and assessment policies
➢ Confusion over the purpose of and responsibilities for evaluation and assessment
➢ Little use of evaluation and assessment results and weak link to classroom practice
➢ Implementing the reform of competency-based learning

Student assessment
➢ Lack of clarity on the purpose of different student assessment initiatives
➢ Little evidence of systematic use of formative assessments
➢ National assessments signal major differences between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum
➢ Lack of transparency on methodological practices to develop and validate student assessments
➢ Weight of languages in student summative assessment disproportionately impacts some student groups
➢ Grading criteria are excessively prescribed by the MENFP, but there are concerns on the reliability of grading
➢ The key role of student self-assessment is overlooked

Teacher appraisal

➢ There is no profession-wide agreement on what counts as accomplished teaching
➢ Teacher appraisal is incipient, plays little role in improving teaching practices and is perceived as a threat
➢ Teachers could benefit from more pedagogical leadership and more instruments to provide formal recognition
➢ There are missing links between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development
➢ The absence of career opportunities for effective teachers undermines the role of teacher appraisal

School evaluation

➢ Lack of external school evaluations
➢ Lack of alignment of the elements in the school evaluation framework
➢ A lack of incentives, authority and evaluation culture hinder school use of evaluation findings for improvement

Education system evaluation

➢ Insufficient capacity for system evaluation
➢ Results on education system performance are underexploited
➢ Ensuring adequate alignment between education system measures and the competency-based learning objectives

POINTERS FOR FUTURE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation and assessment framework

➢ Establish a coherent framework for evaluation and assessment with the student at its centre and a focus on equity
➢ Clarify roles and responsibilities for evaluation and assessment
➢ Implement mechanisms to promote school use of evaluation and assessment results for improvement
➢ Evaluate the implementation of the competency-based student learning objectives
➢ Build evaluation and assessment capacity throughout the school system

Student assessment

➢ Improve teachers' ability to effectively use student assessment results
➢ Strengthen oversight of the development of national student assessments
➢ Prioritise strategies to reduce the influence of languages in summative student assessment
➢ Develop processes to increase consistency of grading in student assessments
➢ Ensure students are actively engaged with and proficient in assessment
➢ Ensure the necessary adaptations of standardised tests for students with special educational needs

Teacher appraisal

➢ Develop teaching standards and align them with student learning objectives
➢ Create a career structure with key stages and a system of teacher certification to determine career progression
➢ Establish a school-based component predominantly dedicated to developmental evaluation
➢ Ensure links between developmental evaluation and career progression evaluation
➢ Reinforce the instructional leadership of the *inspecteurs* and *directeurs*
➢ Strengthen the links between teacher appraisal, professional development and school development

School evaluation

➢ Implement an external school evaluation mechanism
➢ Establish reporting requirements to align the school development plan and national objectives
➢ Ensure better use of available information for school improvement
➢ Introduce incentives for school improvement
➢ Build capacity for school self-evaluation

Education system evaluation

➢ Devise a framework for education system evaluation
➢ Validate and further develop the monitoring system
➢ Improve reporting of system-level information to show progress against competency-based learning objectives
➢ Build education system evaluation capacity

FURTHER READING

This summary of strengths, challenges and recommendations is drawn from *OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Luxembourg*, published in October 2012.

The full Country Review report and further information about the OECD Review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes are available on the project's website: *www.oecd.org/edu/evaluationpolicy*.