

# Chapter 7

## PISA Quality Monitoring

### INTRODUCTION

PISA data collection activities were undertaken in accordance with strict quality assurance procedures. The quality assurance procedure that ensures the PISA 2018 data meet technical standards consists of two components: first, to develop and document procedures for data collection; and second, to monitor and record the implementation of those procedures. Chapter 6 describes the procedures which national centres were required to follow while this chapter considers the second part of the process – monitoring quality.

While the aim of quality control is to establish effective and efficient procedures and guide the implementation process, quality-monitoring activities were implemented to observe and record any deviations from those agreed procedures during the implementation of the survey. These activities included:

- Field Trial and Main Survey Review Questionnaires
- National Centre Quality Monitor (NCQM) visits and consultations
- PISA Quality Monitor (PQM) visits for the Main Survey.

### FIELD TRIAL AND MAIN SURVEY REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES

After the implementation of the Field Trial and the Main Survey, National Project Managers (NPMs) were asked to review and provide feedback to the international contractors on all aspects of their field operations. This information is used to guide future implementations of the assessment.

The Field Trial Review and the Main Survey Review Questionnaires were submitted via the PISA portal on a flow basis. The review questionnaires were due 4 weeks after the submission of the national database. The data from these two questionnaires were compiled into reports, which were released after Field Trial and after the Main Survey.

The Field Trial and Main Survey Review Questionnaires were organised around the different activities that took place during the Field Trial and Main Survey phases of the assessment. A rating system was used to review NPMs' level of satisfaction with:

- use and clarity of key documents and processes: the clarity of key documents and manuals
- communication with the international contractors
- review of the usefulness of the PISA Portal
- review of the quality of communication by activity
- review of the quality of the meetings and the presentations at the meetings by activity
- security arrangements: confirm whether or not any security or confidentiality breaches occurred
- sampling plan: review the sampling tasks, the sampling software, and the sampling process
- translation/adaptation/verification: review the translation, adaptation and verification processes to see if they were implemented in accordance with PISA technical standards and to a satisfactory level

- test administration: review school-level materials and the process for adapting them, the webinars given on test administrator training and gaining co-operation, and other test administration procedures
- coding: review coder training, coding systems, and coding occupational categories

data management: review data management processes, including data entry, data importing, and data submission were made available to all monitors upon receipt of their signed confidentiality agreement. Self-training involved reading the materials and completing a quiz. The quiz was reviewed by survey operations staff who provided feedback on incorrect responses. After completing this self-study, PQMs were required to participate in two trainings: a webinar conducted by the survey operations contractor to review their role and responsibilities, and a Test Administrator training conducted by the National Centre to familiarise PQMs with national procedures and policies. While attending the national Test Administrator training, PQMs filled out an observation form, called the Test Administrator Training Observation Form, and submitted it to the survey operations contractor. This form documented information about the number of Test Administrators that were trained, the duration of the training, and the content of the training.

At the same time, the international survey operations contractor provided support and addressed any issues or concerns via email, telephone, WhatsApp or Skype. The PQMs and the international survey operations contractor collaborated to develop a schedule of test administration site visits to ensure that a range of different schools was covered and that the schedule of visits was both economically and practically feasible. The international survey operations contractor paid the expenses and fees directly to each monitor.

The School Co-ordinator in each school was responsible for providing a link between the NPM and the school, its students, parents, teachers, and principal, as well as organising a suitable venue for the testing. The international survey operations contractor supplied each PQM with a list of schools he or she was scheduled to monitor. This list included the contact information for the School Co-ordinator for each school so the PQM could obtain details for the test day.

The majority of school visits were unannounced to the Test Administrator. This, of course, was not possible where the Test Administrator and the School Co-ordinator were the same person (School Associate).

### **Information collected in PQM visits during test administration**

A Data Collection Form (DCF) was developed for PISA Quality Monitors to record their observations systematically during each school visit. The form covered the following areas:

- preparation for the test session
- conducting the assessment
- administering the questionnaire
- general questions concerning the test session.

PQMs recorded all key test session information using a hard copy of the Data Collection Form. After each session, the monitor entered the data from this form into PDF version that was submitted to the international survey operations contractor by email. This form provided detailed data on test administration, including:

- session date and timing
- deviations from standard test procedures
- conduct of the students
- testing environment.

This information was used to check that the implementation in each school was in accordance with the PISA Technical Standards. The information was also called upon if the sampling or data management teams had any concerns or questions about the data and data collection process.

## DATA ADJUDICATION

All quality assurance data collected throughout the cycle were entered and collated in a central data adjudication database. Comprehensive reports were then generated for the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for consideration during the data adjudication process (see Chapter 14).

The TAG experts used the quality-monitoring reports from the central data adjudication database to make individual evaluations for each country/economy on the quality of field operations, translation, school and student sampling, and coding. The final reports by TAG experts were then used for the purpose of data adjudication that took place prior to the release of the data in 2019.