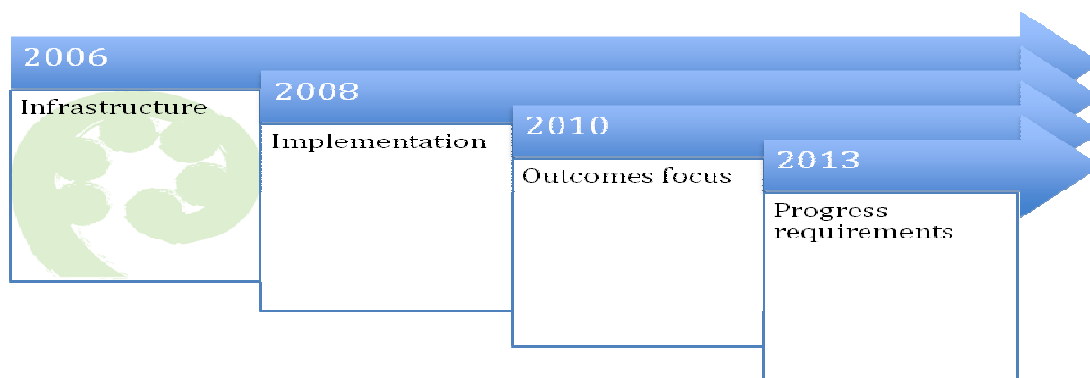


# HOW TO USE THE TEC LITERACY AND NUMERACY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Improving the literacy and numeracy of adult New Zealanders in tertiary education has significant social and economic benefits for the individual, for employers and ultimately for New Zealand. Strengthening the performance of providers to address literacy and numeracy remains a key TEC priority.

Since 2006, the TEC has engaged in a systemic approach to building the capability of the tertiary sector to strengthen the literacy and numeracy of learners at Levels 1-3 and entry level tertiary education. The components of a national, professional literacy and numeracy infrastructure are in place:

- Qualifications and professional development opportunities for educators
- Teaching and learning resources linked to the Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy and Numeracy
- The Literacy and Numeracy for Adults assessment tools.



## About the assessment tools

### 1. The Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool

- The Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (the Assessment Tool) should be used for learners at or beyond the first steps of the Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. Those below the first step of the Learning Progressions should be assessed using the Starting Points Assessment Guide.
- The Tool provides tertiary educators, institutions and TEC with robust information on learners' literacy and numeracy levels and evidence of their progress. The Tool contains a number of different types of literacy and numeracy assessments as summarised in the following table.

	Online Adaptive	Snapshot	Non-adaptive (including pen and paper)
Numeracy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reading	Yes	Yes	Yes
Writing	No	No	Yes
Vocabulary	Yes	No	No

- Providers and educators are encouraged to use the online **adaptive assessments** for reading and numeracy because the results are more robust and reliable. Over 2012, TEC will be reviewing the ongoing need for the paper-based assessments.
- The **Snapshot** is a shorter version of the adaptive assessment that is particularly suitable for progress assessments.
- The **Vocabulary Assessment** is most appropriate for students with very low reading skills i.e. working at Starting Points or at the lower steps of the Learning Progressions. It provides one way to assess learners who are not yet able to complete a reading assessment using the Assessment Tool.

Information from the Assessment Tool enables TEC to understand the performance of the various funds, while helping providers to use the results to inform and improve teaching and learning.

The TEC is working with evidence in the Assessment Tool to understand what learner progress is possible across a complex and varied sector. Over the next year the TEC will work to develop an indicator that will establish requirements for progress in 2013. These requirements will be evidence-based, achievable and clearly communicated to the sector.

Providers must use the TEC literacy and numeracy assessment tools but may also use their own assessments, in addition, as they see fit.

## **2. The Starting Points Assessment Guide**

This guide has been developed to support Starting Points: Supporting the Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy. It provides suggestions for assessing adults who are operating below the steps described in the Learning Progressions for Adult Literacy. The assessment procedures described in this guide are fine-grained and help to identify what a learner does and does not know in relation to the component skills of reading and writing in order to maximize the effectiveness of future instruction.

## **Guidelines for using the TEC assessment tools**

Educators with an interest in addressing literacy and numeracy will want to know about the skills of learners as they enter programmes in order to adjust their delivery. They will also be interested in measuring learner progress.

Therefore TEC expects providers to assess learners at the beginning of a period of learning and to undertake progress assessments at intervals where there is sufficient time and opportunity for learners to make gains.

Providers should develop an organisation-wide plan for assessing learners' literacy and numeracy. The plan should ensure that:

1. assessments are planned to align with each individual learner's enrolment over their time of study
2. the key messages and delivery of literacy and numeracy assessments are consistent across the organisation
3. learners are not over-assessed (for example, where a learner completes a series of courses, assessing at the beginning and end of *every* course would be over-assessment)

- educators are aware that they can use assessments from other educators or providers, if the learner has been assessed within the last 90 days.

## Assessment expectations by fund

The following table outlines TEC's expectations for use of the assessment tools and assessment areas for monitoring and reporting.

Please note:

- Learners in embedded, intensive or workplace literacy courses should have at least one initial and one progress assessment, unless a learner is assessed at:
  - Step 5 or 6 for reading, or
  - Step 6 for numeracy, or
  - Step 5 or 6 for writing.
- The assessment areas used in progress assessments must be the same as those used for initial assessments. For example, if a provider administered initial assessments in writing and numeracy, then progress assessments in writing and numeracy must also be used. This ensures consistency in using the Assessment Tool and underpins reliable reporting on learner gain
- For embedded literacy and numeracy:
  - courses of 3 months duration or more are expected to provide sufficient opportunity for literacy and numeracy teaching and learning, and
  - the timing of initial and progress assessments should relate to the full duration of learner's enrolment in level 1 to 3 courses, not on a course-by-course basis. This takes a holistic, learner-centered approach and avoids over-assessment.
- Full uptake by providers and educators in using the TEC tools as outlined in this document, will be critical to informing TEC policy and funding decisions to be progressed in 2012. This includes the development and implementation of funding conditions relating to use of the tools, as well as consideration of how learner gain can be best identified, evaluated and reported. Comprehensive and accurate data from providers will ensure those processes are evidence-based and robust.
- From now on, TEC expects that at least 90% learners in embedded, workplace or intensive courses have initial and progress assessments, using TEC assessment tools. Poor uptake by providers will be used to inform future investment decisions.

*NOTE: Learners in embedded, intensive or workplace literacy courses should have at least one initial and one progress assessment, unless a learner is assessed at: Step 5 or 6 for reading, or Step 6 for numeracy, or Step 5 or 6 for writing.*

Fund Title	Expected minimum use of assessment areas for all learners (by NSN)	Expected assessment type
Literacy and Numeracy Embedded SAC Topup	Assess at least one area from reading, writing or numeracy.	Adaptive, Snapshot or non-adaptive.
Industry Training Organisations Embedded Literacy and Numeracy	Assess at least one area from reading, writing or numeracy.	Adaptive, Snapshot or non-adaptive.
Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Fund	Assess at least two areas from reading, writing and numeracy.	Full adaptive or non-adaptive <b>initial assessment</b> (this does not include Snapshot).  Snapshot assessment may be used for progress assessments.  Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment for learners not yet at the first steps of the learning progressions.
Intensive Literacy and Numeracy Targeted English for Speakers of Other Languages (ILN Targeted ESOL)	One assessment area from reading or writing and the Targeted ESOL Expected Outcomes (to be reviewed during 2012)	Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment or full adaptive or non-adaptive <b>initial assessment</b> or Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment for learners not yet at the first steps of the learning progressions. Snapshot assessment may be used for progress assessments.
Workplace Literacy Fund	Assess at least one area from either reading, numeracy or writing.	Adaptive, Snapshot or non-adaptive Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment for learners not yet at the first steps of the learning progressions.
Youth Guarantee (Embedded)	Assess at least two areas from reading, writing or numeracy.	Adaptive, Snapshot or non-adaptive Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment for learners not yet at the first steps of the learning progressions.
Foundation Focused Training Opportunities (Embedded)	Assess at least two areas from reading, writing or numeracy.	Adaptive, Snapshot or non-adaptive Starting Points Assessment Guide or Vocabulary Assessment for learners not yet at the first steps of the learning progressions.