

# NATIONAL STANDARDS FACTSHEET

## Overall Teacher Judgment (OTJ)

No single source of information can accurately summarise a student's achievement or progress. A range of approaches is necessary in order to compile a comprehensive picture of the areas of progress, areas requiring attention, and what a student's progress looks like.

An OTJ draws on and applies the evidence gathered up to a particular point in time in order to make a judgment about a student's progress and achievement. Using a range of approaches allows the student to participate throughout the assessment process, building their assessment capability.

Evidence may be gathered through the following three ways:

- **Conversing** with the student to find out what they know, understand and can do.
- **Observing** the process a student uses.
- **Gathering** results from formal assessments, including standardised tools.

### Gathering, interpreting and using assessment information



Any point of the triangle provides an approach to gathering evidence of learning. The range of evidence gathered over the year builds dependability in progress and achievement decisions. An OTJ can be made when the teacher reviews all of the evidence in relation to a National Standard, rather than simply summarising the information.

When using assessment tools, teachers should understand the purpose of the assessment. They should know the curriculum content well enough to clearly understand what is being assessed and be confident it is being assessed appropriately. They should be aware of the difficulty of the assessment so that it fairly matches the level of the student, and know how to select an assessment tool, administer it and interpret the outcomes. They should also know how to support students to understand what is being assessed and why, as well as how to respond to the outcomes in a way that benefits their learning.

## Confirming dependability

Confirming the dependability of evidence from all sources is fundamental to reaching a valid and defensible OTJ. Students' performance will vary from day to day depending on:

- the nature of the assessment task
- the conditions in which the assessment is undertaken
- the purpose of the assessment
- the student's preparation
- the student's engagement and motivation.

When teachers experience some degree of inconsistency with assessment information, they should inquire into this further. If the inconsistency cannot be explained by normal variation in students' performance, then there may be a need to collect further information in order to reach robust judgments.

Moderation can help to improve the dependability of an OTJ as well as the evidence that informs and supports it. Teachers should moderate both their assessments and their overall judgments in relation to National Standards.

## Student participation

Students should actively participate throughout the assessment process and in determining their OTJ. They may be encouraged to comment on or even question the OTJ if they believe evidence of their learning supports a different judgment.

This is a vitally important characteristic of effective assessment for learning. It benefits the student's assessment capability by clarifying what they know, understand and can do, and what they need to learn next. All students can participate in the assessment process to some degree. As their assessment capability grows and develops, they can become more and more actively involved.

By including students in the judgment-making process, they will also feel confident in talking about their achievement and progress with their parents, family and whānau.

## Best fit assessment

In every classroom children are performing at different levels. Some children might be working well beyond their peers, and others will be working well below. Teachers know, through every day assessment, what a child knows and can do.

The National Standards are designed as a tool to inform teaching and learning so that the next steps for each child are clearly identified. If a teacher knows that the child is working well below the standard for the year they are in, the teacher would make an overall teacher judgment about the standard that is the best fit for that student. The same applies for a child working well above the standard for the year they are in.

Teachers should look at the evidence they have for each child as the first step. Then identify which standard is the best fit – regardless of which year they are in. They can then report where the child sits in relation to the National Standards for their year level.

Putting the child and the overall teacher judgment as a first step is important. It is not about automatically assessing each child in the classroom in relation to the standard for that year.

The aim, of course, is to identify what the child needs to learn next and what support they need to ensure they make progress. It will also enable teachers to identify and prepare extension programmes for children who are achieving beyond their year group.