

Evaluation of Learning at the Secondary Level

Framework

Preliminary Version
Direction générale de la formation des jeunes

FOREWORD

This document is a preliminary version of the Evaluation of Learning at the Secondary Level: Framework. This version takes into account the validation of the draft Framework, which was carried out in Spring 2005.

The guidelines suggested in this version, notably in the chapters on grading and communicating of results, are consistent with the ministerial stipulations and should be considered pertinent. However, they do not take into account the Minister's announcement of May 24, 2006, concerning the proposal of the Table de pilotage du nouveau pédagogique with respect to report cards, nor do they take into account the proposals on grading and promotion conditions that were submitted for consideration in June 2006. The adjustments required in light of these proposals will be made to the first edition of the Framework, which will be released in Fall 2006. This first edition will also contain examples of tools for providing information to parents and students (report card and competency report) in order to reflect the wishes of the members of the Table de pilotage du nouveau pédagogique.

It should be mentioned that this Framework is a transitional document. In fact, certain elements concerning Secondary Cycle Two that are not discussed in this version will be discussed in the second edition. This is the case, among others, for the evaluation of the integrative project, the personal orientation project, the work-oriented training path as well as the certification of studies.

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APPENDICES:

- A common vision of evaluation of learning (diagram)
- The Québec Education Program for Secondary Cycle One (diagram)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

As the Québec Education Program (QEP) is implemented at the secondary level, questions concerning the evaluation of learning are being raised by the schools. The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning adopted in 2003 presents the orientations of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) that define the new view of the evaluation of learning (see the diagram in the Appendix). The plan for implementing the Policy presents a range of tools that will be used to help schools make the orientations operational. The Evaluation of Learning at the Secondary Level: Framework is one of these tools; its purpose is to provide guidelines on the evaluation methods and approaches to be used in the classroom. It is intended for school personnel involved in the evaluation of learning—teachers, principals, education consultants, coordinators, directors of educational services, etc.—and is in keeping with the evaluation framework provided for preschool and elementary education.

This document contains guidelines on learning and evaluation situations, the use of differentiation in evaluation, the cross-curricular competencies, grading, scales of competency levels, the communicating of results and the planning of evaluation. The Framework is designed to support the overall function of evaluation. It should be noted that the chapters do not always follow the order of the steps in the evaluation process, but start by presenting the aspects of learning and evaluation that are in a sense prerequisites for understanding other aspects. Thus, although planning is the first step in the evaluation process as described in the Policy, it is discussed in the last chapter of the Framework. The diagram on Page 3 presents the structure of the Framework.

It should be noted that the Framework is not intended to define a fixed procedure for the evaluation of learning. It provides several suggestions, on the basis of which schools can make operational choices when establishing their own evaluation standards and procedures. The guidelines provided in this document have come from various working groups set up by the MELS, made up of many representatives from the school system. They take into account the regional validation process involving all school boards, and a validation process involving different partners (evaluation specialists and representatives of various organizations).

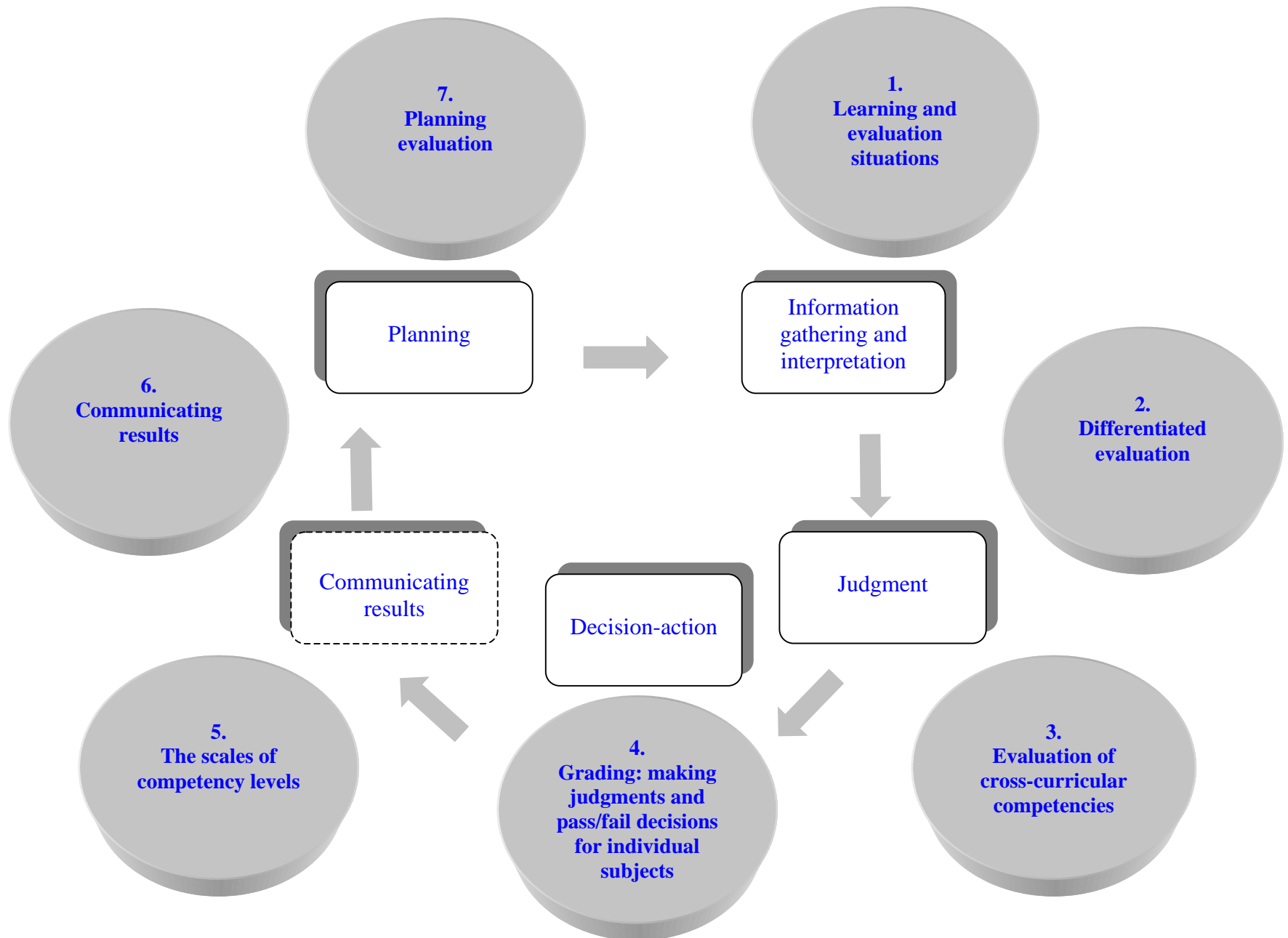
Since the Québec Education Program (QEP) is the main reference for the evaluation of learning, a diagram of its structure in Secondary Cycles One and Two is provided in the appendix. It gives an overall view of the learning targeted by the QEP. In the Framework, explicit connections are made between the QEP and the evaluation of learning. Furthermore, because one orientation of the Policy concerns the integration of evaluation into all aspects of the learning process, some chapters of the Framework include guidelines on learning to enable readers to better understand the suggestions on evaluation. However, these suggestions are not exhaustive, so it is essential to assimilate the QEP to have a complete idea of the learning targeted and the conception of learning it is based on. Here again, it is important to stress that the suggestions contained in the Framework can only be applied if the QEP itself is applied. In addition, the suggestions in the Framework are based on the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education*, in effect since July 2005. To make it easier to understand the suggestions, appropriate references have been included in the chapters of the Framework.

To take into account the changes to be made in evaluation practices, it is recommended that the suggestions of the Framework be applied gradually. Schools may take advantage of the development of local evaluation standards and procedures to establish their priorities for change. In addition, since it is essential to provide information, training and guidelines for the staff involved, it is important that schools create conditions conducive to this. The sharing of responsibilities on which the evaluation of learning is based also requires that the roles of the main people involved be reviewed, taking into account their responsibilities under the *Education Act*. From this viewpoint, collegial work methods are an interesting possibility because they enable those involved to find solutions to the challenges of evaluation, and to

choose, design and share evaluation instruments, etc. Where appropriate, this Framework suggests methods that allow for joint action in evaluation.

Note: This Framework applies to Cycle One (Secondary I and II) and Cycle Two (Secondary III, IV and V), taking into account the specific characteristics of each cycle. Thus, when the end of the cycle is discussed, this refers to Secondary Cycle One, and when the end of the year is discussed, this refers to Secondary III, IV or V.

**STRUCTURE OF THE FRAMEWORK AND
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PURPOSES AND
PROCESS OF EVALUATION**



CHAPTER I
LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The switch from objective-based programs to competency-based programs has had repercussions on the way in which learning and evaluation are considered. Learning and evaluation activities must now reflect the globality, as well as the integrative and evolutive aspects of a competency. The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, which is the main reference in this area, underlines the need to consider the two primary purposes of evaluation, support for learning and recognition of competencies.

A competency is defined in the Québec Education Program (QEP) as *the capacity to act effectively by drawing on a variety of resources*. This definition of competency suggests that students should be placed in situations in which they can develop and demonstrate a competency, and also in which the competency can be evaluated. From this point of view, evaluation during the cycle or year, in Secondary Cycle Two, should be seen as a way to help students learn, and to help teachers offer them the guidance they need. In addition, it is essential for students to participate in their own evaluation, since in this way they become aware of the knowledge they have acquired and the ways in which they apply it. Toward the end of the cycle or year, the purpose of evaluation becomes to render account of competency development, as part of the process to recognize competencies.

To judge competency development during a cycle, or the level of development reached at the end of the cycle, evaluation mainly involves designing situations that allow all students to demonstrate that they can draw on the resources they need to exercise their competencies. It is also necessary at certain times to verify, through a learning activity, whether the knowledge has been acquired.

The first part of this chapter presents the characteristics of a typical learning and evaluation situation, while the second part discusses the related evaluation tools. It is important to note that the objective of this chapter is not to establish a methodological guide, but rather to present general explanations and possibilities to help teachers design their own learning and evaluation situations. On its part, the MELS plans to publish situations in the various subjects of the QEP to provide teachers with a range of examples.

1. CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATIONS

If competencies are to be developed and evaluated, students must be placed in learning and evaluation situations that possess the characteristics detailed in this chapter. The term *situation*, as used here, means a set of one or more tasks that students must complete in order to reach a defined goal. Primarily, these situations offer students opportunities to develop and exercise one or more subject-specific or cross-curricular competencies. They are also used to monitor competency development in order to support learning; last, they are used to recognize competencies.

1.1 Significance of a situation

Under the QEP, situations must be significant. In general, a situation is significant if it

- is consistent with the aims of the QEP
- is based on students' interests and offers challenges within their reach
- demonstrates the usefulness of knowledge

The significance of a situation depends on various aspects. The way in which students relate to the situations in which they are placed is important, but so is the educational potential of the situations and their relevance to the QEP.

1.2 Constituting elements of a situation

A situation is made up of the following elements:

- a context linked to a problem
- a task or set of tasks and learning activities linked to knowledge

A context linked to a problem

A problem is presented to the students, or defined with their help, at the beginning of a situation and is used to unify the whole situation. It may involve solving a problem, dealing with a question or creating a production. It may be connected to everyday life, or to the public or scientific arena, and may involve cultural references proposed by the QEP. Without necessarily being present in all learning and evaluation situations, the broad areas of learning can often act as the general context for a problem. Here is one example of a problem based on a broad area of learning.

Example

The students are asked to find ways to reduce water consumption in their community. The problem can be approached through various subjects and lead to a range of tasks, and matches the focus of development *Construction of a viable environment based on sustainable development* in the broad area of learning *Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities*.

A set of tasks and knowledge-based learning activities

To allow students to examine a problem in more depth, a learning and evaluation situation is made up of complex tasks and knowledge-based learning activities. The following table summarizes the characteristics of the tasks and activities linked to knowledge.

**Table 1: Learning and evaluation situations
Complex tasks and knowledge-based learning activities**

Complex tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Target the mobilization of resources▪ Call on competencies as a whole (key features and criteria)▪ Lead to the acquisition of new knowledge
Knowledge-based learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Target the acquisition and structuring of the knowledge needed to complete complex tasks▪ Help enrich the students' store of knowledge (factual, procedural and conditional knowledge)▪ Call on specific aspects of a competency

When completing complex tasks, students become aware of the resources available to them, choose those that are relevant to a particular task and use them effectively in a given context. Complex tasks generally involve one or more competencies. Recognition of the students' competencies is essentially based on the completion of complex tasks.

In learning activities designed to acquire or structure knowledge, students are encouraged to see how they can be used to solve a problem, deal with a question or create a production. In these cases, the goal of the evaluation is to make the adjustments needed to allow learning to progress. The chapter on evaluation planning contains additional information on the links that must be established between the complex tasks and knowledge-based learning activities associated with a situation and between different situations.

Characteristics of a complex task

Complex tasks, which are crucial to competency development and evaluation, have the following characteristics:

- A complex task calls for a competency in its entirety.
- A complex task may result in different students using different approaches or creating different productions.
- A complex task presents a problem that the students have not previously solved. They are more likely to mobilize their resources in a situation if the problem is relatively new for them.
- A complex task must lead to a production: a text, a sequence of movements, a drawing, etc. This production is generally elaborate. (The goal is not necessarily to see if students get the answer right or wrong, but to assess the quality of their production using fixed criteria.) The production may vary from one student to another, and may be intended for a specific audience.
- A complex task allows a competency to be evaluated on the basis of the criteria given in the QEP, transformed into observable elements to match the characteristics of the production or process (see the examples of evaluation grids in Section 2 of this chapter).

- The requirements linked to the criteria are adapted to the time of the year and the students' prior learning. To ensure transparency, the students are informed of the evaluation criteria and related requirements, which can increase the opportunities for self-regulation.

Characteristics of knowledge-based learning activities

To be able to mobilize resources in a given situation, students must have access to a store of knowledge. This does not just mean factual knowledge (facts, concepts, rules, etc.) but also procedural knowledge (methods, processes, know-how, etc.) and conditional knowledge (strategies to transfer knowledge from one context to another), all of which must be mobilized in a complex task. Various kinds of activities can help students acquire and structure the knowledge that is necessary for the development of a competency. The activities include:

- activities to assimilate a concept, process, rule, formula, law, etc. (such as case studies or experiments)
- training activities (exercises of gradually increasing difficulty, often found in textbooks)
- activities to structure knowledge by establishing links between learning and the various contexts in which it is used (including synthesis or conceptual networks)
- etc.

These learning activities may take place at various times during a learning and evaluation situation. They become even more relevant if they are explicitly linked to the situations in which the knowledge must be mobilized. It can be conducted without instruments, by using questions and observations, or it can be done with instruments such as quizzes, short tests or various assignments. During the activities, evaluation is mainly used to support learning.

1.3 Scope of situations

To support the integrated development of competencies, as targeted by the QEP, students must be offered situations that require them to apply one or more competencies from a given subject, or situations involving several subjects. The situations will also involve one or more cross-curricular competencies. The various possibilities are shown in the table below.

Table 2: Variable-scope situations

A - Situations focusing on a single subject-specific competency
B - Situations focusing on several competencies from the same subject
C - Situations focusing on competencies from several subjects

A – Situations in which students apply a **single competency** require them to mobilize and combine various resources to solve a problem.

Example

In a Physical Education and Health class, the students establish a connection between their living habits and the effects of these habits on their health and well-being by completing a questionnaire. They use their critical judgment with respect to the opinions and information available on various topics related to health and well-being. They make a plan for engaging in regular physical activity and devise a strategy for changing a harmful living habit. Based on an evaluation of their approach and results, they identify improvements to be made or elements to preserve. The situation allows the students to develop the competency *Adopts a healthy, active lifestyle*.

B – Situations in which students solve a problem by applying **several competencies from the same subject** allow them to become aware of the relationships between the competencies.

Example

In Secondary English Language Arts, a situation in which the students must write a critical commentary on a novel and send it to a Web site for young people’s literature requires them to apply several competencies, including the subject-specific competencies *Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts* and *Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes*.

C – Situations in which the questions or problems dealt with cover **several subjects** reflect the complexity of real-life problems the students will have to face. They allow the students to understand how the approaches of various subject fields can be convergent or divergent. A genuine or realistic problem may provide the starting-point for a given situation.

Example

A school needs to reduce its heating costs, and the maintenance staff must examine the various energy sources available (oil, natural gas, hydroelectricity, solar panels, etc.). The students in the class are aware of the problem and offer to carry out research in order to define the best solution, based on relevant data. The students must apply competencies from several subjects:

- *Takes a reflective position on ethical issues* (Moral Education)
- *Constructs his/her consciousness of global citizenship* (Geography)
- *Seeks answers or solutions to scientific or technological problems* (Science and Technology)

Note: In these examples, the scope of the proposed situations varies, not only according to the identity and number of the subject-specific competencies involved, but also according to cross-curricular competencies and broad areas of learning targeted, if any.

1.4 Situations that vary depending on pedagogical intentions

Depending on the teacher’s pedagogical intentions, a learning and evaluation situation may be designed to help students develop their competencies, or to evaluate their degree of competency development. It is important to note that these situations are almost identical, and that the difference lies mainly in the way in which they are used.

It is a question here of the **dominant intention**. It would be erroneous to associate one type of situation exclusively with only one of the functions of evaluation, namely support for learning and recognition of competencies. In effect, a learning and evaluation situation that is designed to help students develop their competencies could assist the teacher in gathering information that will be useful in constructing a judgment related to the recognition of students’ competencies. Conversely, an evaluation situation that is designed primarily to evaluate the students’ level of competency development often leads to feedback that can assist students in their learning.

The following table shows the characteristics of the two types of situations according to the dominant pedagogical intention.

Table 3: Situation characteristics

	Learning and evaluation situation	Evaluation situation
Dominant intention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop competencies (complex tasks) ▪ Construct resources (knowledge-based learning activities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate competency development (complex tasks) ▪ The internal resources targeted by the situation were a focus of the learning process
Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Permit regulation ▪ Construct a judgment concerning the status of the development of competencies and on the levels of competency development attained 	
Evaluation tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With or without tools ▪ Analytical approach above all, to promote regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With tools ▪ Analytical or global approach
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During the cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During and at the end of the cycle
Student autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support from teacher and fellow students, as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generally without support: support is provided exceptionally and taken into account in judgments concerning the competency

Characteristics of learning and evaluation situations designed to develop competencies

Learning and evaluation situations are used throughout a cycle, primarily to develop competencies. The main goal of the situations is to foster learning, but the information gathered at the same time may be used to build up a judgment concerning competency development during the cycle. The situations offer strong potential for regulation.

- The tasks presented to students are generally complex, allowing them to activate all or most of the key features of the competency. At certain times, it may be appropriate to work specifically on certain features. Depending on the needs of the students and the requirements of the task, it is generally relevant to include, in the situation, learning activities that allow students to acquire new knowledge, to the extent that it is useful in completing the complex tasks at hand.
- To complete a task, students must mobilize previously acquired internal resources, and acquire new resources. In addition, a range of external resources, such as Internet and libraries, is generally available.
- Information may be gathered informally or using evaluation tools, preferably those that allow data to be gathered on each criterion. This approach, known as an analytical approach, makes it possible to inform students of the aspects that require improvement (see section 2).
- Various approaches may be used to support competency development: modelling, supervision, cooperative work, etc.

Characteristics of evaluation situations designed to evaluate competency development

Some situations during and at the end of a cycle may be used to evaluate competency development. These situations are known as *evaluation situations*. The complex tasks carried out during an evaluation situation are key elements in making a judgment on the degree of competency development during the cycle, or on the level of competency attained at the end of the cycle.

- The tasks presented to the students are complex, allowing them to activate all or most of the key features of the competency.
- To complete the task, students must mobilize several resources that should already have been acquired. The external resources to which the students are entitled are specified.
- Information is gathered formally, using evaluation tools. An analytical or global approach may be used, as required (see section 2).
- In general, the resources are mobilized without help from the teacher. If a student needs support, this fact is recorded and taken into consideration when a judgment is made on competency development.

It should be noted that the evaluation situations used to evaluate competencies during a cycle should be considered from the viewpoint of **regulation**. Among other things, they allow the teacher to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses, give feedback, and propose relevant suggestions for improvement.

1.5 Sequence of the phases in a situation

A learning and evaluation situation generally takes place over one or more periods, depending on its nature and the pre-determined plan. A situation can be divided into three phases: preparation, performance and integration (see Table 4). However, this model is an outline and, depending on the pedagogical intentions of the teacher, other models can be created by adapting or varying the outline. The teacher is responsible for organizing the situation in the classroom, taking into account the characteristics

of the students and the competencies of the subject concerned. The *Pedagogical Context* sections in the QEP provide additional possibilities for each subject.

Preparation

During the preparation phase, the problem is presented to the students to set the context. Various activities are proposed to activate their prior knowledge and to encourage them to express their understanding, doubts, hypotheses, etc. Last, the general plan for the situation is presented to them, or established with their help.

Performance

During the performance phase, the students carry out the tasks proposed. The resulting production may be presented to an audience (students in the class, students in other classes, parents, etc.), if applicable. The performance phase should include periodic pauses for feedback: to pool strategies, reflect on the knowledge mobilized and competencies developed, recognize the links between the subject or subjects and the problem, etc.

Integration

The integration phase provides an opportunity to encourage the students to reflect on what they have achieved, verbalize what they have learned from the problem (especially with regard to the educational aims of the broad areas of learning,) explain how the learning was acquired, describe the difficulties encountered and the methods used to deal with them, and discuss the possibilities for using the subject-specific learning they have acquired in other contexts.

Table 4: Role of the teacher in a learning and evaluation situation

<p><i>Preparation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Present the problem – Activate prior knowledge and encourage students to express comments and questions – Establish the working plan – Specify the target production or productions and audience, if any
<p><i>Performance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Help students complete the complex task or tasks – Propose resource acquisition tasks, if necessary – Plan periodic pauses for feedback
<p><i>Integration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conduct a synthesis of the learning acquired – Encourage students to recognize ways to transfer the learning – Allow students to express their degree of satisfaction

1.6 Regulation: An underlying theme

The selection of regulation as an underlying theme for the development of competencies reflects a constant concern for improving the quality of students' learning and re-affirms the main purpose of evaluation as a support for learning. Effective regulation is based on certain conditions: the learning outcomes must be clear and allow regular checks to be made to see how close the students have come to the outcomes, and significant feedback must be provided. In addition, regulation allows the establishment of remedial measures to reduce the gap between a student's current situation and the expected outcome.

To improve the quality of students' learning, regulation must support students' learning process, and also direct teachers' pedagogical interventions, since pedagogical actions and their planning may require adjustment, both concerning the specific aspects of a situation and the more general aspects of the teacher's approach.

Since regulation can occur at various times, it can be divided into three types: proactive regulation, interactive regulation and retroactive regulation.

- **Proactive regulation** is based on observations made during previous learning and evaluation situations that are then used to direct future situations. Proactive regulation is used in differentiated teaching to match the interests and learning needs of individual students (see the chapter on differentiated evaluation).
- **Interactive regulation** is performed by the teacher during a situation, while the task has not yet been completed. The regulation can take the form of informal discussions that cannot be entirely planned, since they must respond to needs that emerge during the activities. The discussions provide students with immediate feedback and with information about the difficulty observed. Feedback can also encourage students who are already progressing well. Interactive regulation promotes perseverance and helps to increase student motivation, and it ensures rapid adjustment to students' learning. Therefore, it is a key element of the learning process.
- **Retroactive regulation** involves reviewing completed tasks. It occurs at a suitable time in the competency development process, and allows the teacher to adjust his or her pedagogical approach on the basis of the difficulties observed. Retroactive regulation is often used to correct difficulties that persist after interactive regulation has failed.

Teachers have a primary responsibility for regulation. However, students may, under certain conditions, make a contribution and gradually take responsibility for their own learning. Regulation, whether proactive, interactive or retroactive, is intended to help students progress and become more autonomous, so that they are eventually able to regulate their own learning. This is known as self-regulation.

Self-regulation develops, in particular, when students fully understand the task they must complete to demonstrate their competency, and the criteria used to judge their actions. Various methods can be used to help students assimilate the criteria, such as discussions of suitable tasks and activities for developing a competency or an analysis of examples to identify the features of a successful product or process. The dialogue helps students to refine their understanding of the evaluation criteria and to determine the aspects of their learning on which they should concentrate.

By asking students to consider their work and approaches, with or without the use of evaluation tools, they are encouraged to take charge of their own learning and to become more autonomous with regard to the adjustments they must make in order to become more competent. Giving students an active role to play in their own evaluation stimulates self-regulation. The students' participation in the evaluation process qualifies as support for learning, since the teacher remains responsible for making judgments for the purpose of competency recognition.

2. EVALUATION TOOLS FOR LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATIONS

To support and render account of competency development, teachers must gather information and interpret it at various times. During an activity, teachers do not always use formal instruments, but at other times, they must produce a formal assessment and use tools such as evaluation grids. Grids have been in use for several years, among other things, to evaluate written productions. Their use will now be extended to all subjects, since they allow the gathering of indispensable information on competency development from learning and evaluation situations.

Evaluation grids compare specific features of a process or realization with pre-determined criteria. In general, evaluation grids consist of a list of evaluation criteria and observable elements and offer a way to record observations, but they differ depending on whether they are used as part of an analytical or global approach.

The evaluation criteria given in the QEP are the main reference points for observations made in the context of competency evaluation. The evaluation criteria are generally formulated in the form of qualities whose degree may vary. They are of a general nature and concern the students' approach and final product. The evaluation criteria therefore provide possibilities for regulation and serve to develop evaluation tools that can be used to construct judgments on competencies during and at the end of the cycle.

Each observable element associated with an evaluation criterion corresponds to one distinct behaviour; it is linked to a concrete action and has the same meaning for all. There are a sufficient number of them to properly represent the evaluation criterion.

To avoid an excessive number of grids of various kinds for the same competency, tools should be developed that are broad enough to be used in a range of situations. This will avoid having to create a new grid for each situation, and a stable working framework will be established so that teachers can interact with students and can also discuss evaluation with colleagues who teach the same subject.

As mentioned earlier, the use of evaluation tools encourages students to play an active role in the evaluation process. It also helps provide students with precise, structured feedback. However, when the focus is on spontaneous intervention and the goal is not to record information to make a judgment, it may be preferable to use less formal approaches such as question-and-answer sessions.

2.1 Analytical grids

As part of an analytical approach, evaluation grids comprise a list of criteria accompanied by assessment scales. The results for each criterion allow the teacher to identify the strengths of each student, as well as areas for improvement, making this a diagnostic-type instrument that is especially useful in formative terms. The assessment scales may be non-descriptive, descriptive or dichotomous.

Grids based on non-descriptive scales

A non-descriptive scale is a continuum used to make a qualitative judgment (*very good, good, insufficient, etc.*). It is easy to create, since no description is needed for the individual levels. However, for this reason, users might associate different requirements for each level. Grids based on non-descriptive scales are often of limited use for regulation purposes, unless the judgments made in these grids have been justified or explained.

Example: Non-descriptive scale

Subject: Geography

Competency: *Interprets a territorial issue*

Criteria	Very clear	Somewhat clear	More or less clear	Not very clear
Reference to elements that are relevant to the territorial issue				
Expression of a well-founded opinion				
Other				

Grids based on dichotomous scales (or checklists)

A list of observable elements accompanied by a dichotomous scale is often called a checklist. The dichotomous scale records the presence or absence of a number of observable elements (whether or not an action happened, whether or not a method was followed, whether or not a feature is present, etc.). The coding is simple, just check the appropriate box. The checklist is relatively simple to develop and use, but it does not allow for nuances in judgment. It is mainly useful for self-evaluation, to help students realize what they have actually accomplished and the methods they used. It is suggested that the statements be made in first-person form (I).

Example: Dichotomous scale

Subject: Mathematics

Competency: *Solves a situational problem*

Criterion	Observable elements	Yes	No
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development of a solution	I discussed my approach and my result.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I described the methods used to validate my result.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other			

Depending on the context, this type of grid may also be combined with a class list, for greater convenience, as in the following example, where the appropriate box is simply checked off when an indicator has been observed.

Example: Dichotomous scale

Subject: Physical and Health Education
Competency: *Interacts with others in different physical activity settings*

Evaluation criteria →	Justification of team's chosen strategy		Performance of appropriate individual movements to achieve the group or team goal		Demonstration of fair play in different stages of the activity			Determination of elements that can be reapplied in subsequent activities	Evaluation of own contribution and that of his or her peers and of the strategy, based on results												
	Observable elements →	Names	Observable elements →	Names	Observable elements →	Names	Observable elements →	Names	Observable elements →	Names											
	Describes role of each player		Describes the actions and tactics selected		Performs actions on the basis of the strategy selected		Adjusts own actions according to those of partners and opponents		Encourages partners in their actions		Applies game rules and safety rules		Congratulates opponents when they perform well		Identifies elements worth maintaining in other activities		Determines own strengths and challenges		Assesses performance of peers		Identifies effective strategies and those requiring improvement

Grids based on descriptive scales

A descriptive scale is a continuum that sets out the characteristics and behaviours expected at each level, on the basis of observable elements. Because it gives explicit descriptions, it is the scale that offers the most scope for feedback and regulation. Descriptive scales are, however, harder to design.

Example: Descriptive scale

Subject: English Language Arts
Competency: *Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes*

Criteria	a	b	c	d
Adjustment of role as writer to purpose, audience, text and context	The student states the subject of the text clearly, and gives a clear opinion while targeting a specific audience. Arguments are well supported.	The student states the subject of the text, and gives an opinion while targeting a specific audience. Arguments are reasonably well supported.	The student states the subject of the text, giving an opinion that is sometimes confused and does not always target a specific audience. Arguments are not well supported.	The student states a vague subject for the text, giving a confused opinion that does not target a specific audience. The student presents only one argument.
Other				

2.2 Holistic grids

As part of a global approach, holistic grids comprise descriptive scales with approximately three to six levels that cover several criteria simultaneously. They are used to make an overall judgment, instead of focusing on individual criteria, and to give a clear idea of the quality of a student's process or final product. Although they can be used in the course of learning during an evaluation situation, they are not suitable for the identification of the difficulties experienced by individual students, because of their global nature. Therefore, holistic grids are of most use at the end of a cycle, and are mainly used by teachers.

Example: Holistic grid

Subject: Visual Arts

Competency: *Creates media images*

a: The steps in the poster creation process were carefully planned, and the finished poster demonstrates an understanding of visual codes. The composition of the various elements conveys an effective message to the target audience, in accordance with the communicative purpose. The image is unified and complete; the elements reinforce each other. The poster shows evidence of thought and originality.
b: The finished poster is consistent with the original plan, and demonstrates an adequate understanding of visual codes. The composition of the elements is balanced, and takes the target audience and communicative purpose appropriately into account. The overall result is effective. The poster shows evidence of careful work.
Other

It is important to note that the scales of competency levels used to render account of competency development for a competency report belong to this category of evaluation instrument. However, they focus on a whole competency, rather than on a single situation (see the chapter on scales).

2.3 Design process for evaluation grids

To design an evaluation grid, it is recommended that teachers work in teams in order to share their tools and take advantage of their joint experience. Whatever type of grid is chosen, the steps in the design process will be similar. The process described here is in seven steps, but can be adjusted as needed, since the quality requirements for an evaluation tool vary greatly depending on what is at stake and how it will be used. Thus, to help the students in his or her class review a production in a situation that is aimed mainly at developing a competency, the teacher can design a much simpler checklist than an evaluation grid associated with an end-of-cycle evaluation situation.

The following diagram illustrates the design process for an evaluation grid.

Design process for an evaluation grid

- A - Target a competency
- B - Determine the type of grid to be designed (analytical or holistic), select the type of assessment scale (descriptive or non-descriptive) and specify the number of levels
- C - Define the observable elements in relation to evaluation criteria (except for grids based on non-descriptive scales)
- D - Construct the assessment scale and specify the level of requirement
- E - Assemble the elements of the grid
- F - Test the grid
- G - Provide illustrations for each level (optional)

A - Target a competency

The choice of a single subject-specific competency makes it easier to select the elements of the grid, design it and apply it in the classroom. Cross-curricular competencies can be included in the same grid, or in separate grids (see the chapter on the evaluation of cross-curricular competencies).

B - Determine the type of grid to be designed (analytical or holistic) , select the type of assessment scale (descriptive or non-descriptive) and specify the number of levels

Several factors influence the choice of a specific type of grid:

- point reached in cycle: analytical grids may prove useful during and at the end of a cycle, whereas holistic grids are most useful at the end of a cycle
- balance between time available and pedagogical usefulness: descriptive grids generally take longer to design, but provide more explicit feedback
- prospective users: depending on whether or not students will use the grid themselves, the formulation of statements and presentation may change

The assessment scale is the last ingredient in the evaluation grid. It may be non-descriptive, dichotomous or descriptive. It is important to note that holistic grids necessarily use a descriptive scale.

The appropriate number of levels is selected on the basis of the goal targeted. A large number of levels makes the assessment more detailed, but takes longer to design and use. A scale with fewer levels makes it more difficult to identify differences in the quality of productions or processes. The number of levels generally varies from two (dichotomous scale) to six, depending on the intended use.

C - Define the observable elements in relation to evaluation criteria (except for grids based on non-descriptive scales)

The evaluation criteria given in the QEP are the main reference points for designing a grid to evaluate a competency. The grid generally includes all the criteria, to avoid a fragmented view of a competency. However, depending on the type of tasks involved, a grid may cover a few criteria. Once the list of criteria to be evaluated has been finalized, the designers provide an explicit definition of each criterion to ensure that it is clearly understood. In the evaluation grid, the criterion is not expressed as a complete

sentence but contains key words that distinguish it from other criteria. For example: recognition of the needs of others, design of a relevant approach, coherency of text, etc.

The purpose of having precise criteria defined by observable elements is so they will be unequivocally understood by all users. The observable elements should be written in the form of simple sentences in the present tense. In a grid used for a particular task, the observable elements are specific to this task. In a grid to be used in several situations, the elements are more general.

In an analytical grid, the observable elements are paired directly with the criteria with which they are associated. In a holistic grid, the observable elements for each level are combined to form a portrait (see the examples presented earlier).

D - Construct the assessment scale and specify the level of requirement

The level of requirement must be specified. For example, in a four-level grid, the second level could be considered satisfactory, and the result could be used when making a judgment concerning competency development. During a cycle, the level of requirement is determined for each task. At the end of the cycle, the end-of-cycle outcomes and the scales of competency levels (see the relevant chapter) can be used as reference points for specifying the level of requirement.

E - Assemble the elements of the grid

An evaluation grid must be simple and easy to use. The following aspects should be taken into account at the design stage:

- A space should be reserved for the following information: the student's name and group, the date, and comments.
- Whenever possible, all the information should appear on a single page.
- The criteria and observable elements should be grouped together, for easier comprehension.
- The level of requirement should be defined to facilitate interpretation of the results.
- Space should be set aside for observations of specific situations, when applicable

F – Test the grid

Experimentation and feedback from users can be used to fine-tune the grid. Once the grid has been drawn up, fellow teachers can be asked to use it, even for a small number of productions, and to make comments. This final check generally leads to adjustments to the grid.

G – Provide illustrations for each level (optional)

The team responsible for designing the grid can gather a sample of student work, or records of their approaches, to illustrate the various levels. The use of typical student work can then help ensure that the grid is used in a uniform way.

CHAPTER II
DIFFERENTIATED EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

Teachers have always noted differences between the students in their class and have tried to meet the needs of each one to the best of their abilities. Every teacher must, as part of his or her day-to-day teaching, face the difficulty of providing support for students who are all different, and the *Education Act* recognizes the right of teachers to select methods of instruction corresponding to the requirements and objectives fixed for each group or for each student entrusted to his or her care (section 19). In addition, teachers have an obligation to contribute to the intellectual and overall personal development of each student entrusted to their care (section 22). Teachers have, in general, already introduced an intuitive, spontaneous form of differentiation into their teaching. The challenge is now to set differentiation on a more formal footing and to plan it in advance, on the basis of a clear, shared pedagogical intention.

Pedagogical differentiation is a clearly stated goal of the Québec Education Program (QEP): “All students can learn and realize their potential This program . . . makes it possible to take into account the heterogeneity that characterizes all classrooms, and supports pedagogical differentiation, which is an essential condition for countering failure.” It is important to note that the choice of a competency-based approach, requiring the mobilization of internal and external resources, necessarily leads to a more open attitude toward difference as part of evaluation practices, since not all students draw on the same resources in the same way, or produce the same work. A proper assimilation of the QEP therefore leads naturally to the establishment of a differentiated approach.

Pedagogical differentiation also reflects the fundamental values of the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, such as equity, which “requires that evaluation practices take into account the individual characteristics of certain students or the common traits of certain groups to ensure that evaluation does not contribute to increasing existing differences.” One of the orientations of the Policy states that the evaluation of learning must respect differences. Teachers who observe differences between the abilities, learning methods and learning paces of their students should “use pedagogical differentiation.” Obviously, a proper understanding of the role played by evaluation in the learning process is necessary in order to appreciate the repercussions of pedagogical differentiation on evaluation practices. Differentiated evaluation supports both purposes of evaluation, i.e. support for learning and recognition of competencies. In the first case, diagnostic evaluation can be used to provide appropriate assistance or enrichment. In the second case, a judgment can be made about the level of competency attained by a student at the end of a cycle. In Secondary Cycle Two, evaluation is also used as the basis for decisions made concerning the certification of studies. In this chapter, the two purposes of evaluation will be discussed at the same time, in order to highlight the way in which they must exist side by side in evaluation practices.

This chapter addresses differentiation from the standpoint of the evaluation practices used with student groups as a whole. These practices must allow all students to exercise their competencies, regardless of their individual characteristics, since differentiation does not apply only to students with specific needs. Students with specific needs are, however, the group requiring the most attention, as discussed in this chapter.

1. PEDAGOGICAL DIFFERENTIATION AS APPLIED TO THE EVALUATION OF LEARNING

1.1 Definition of pedagogical differentiation

Pedagogical differentiation is primarily a way of thinking about teaching, learning and evaluation, a philosophy that guides all pedagogical practices. It is a way of using differences to advantage. The Conseil supérieur de l'éducation has stated that pedagogical differentiation is “a process that involves applying a range of methods and procedures to teaching and learning to allow students of all ages and aptitudes, with varying degrees of competency and know-how, to attain common objectives by different paths and, ultimately, achieve educational success.” [Translation]

In this document, the expression “differentiated evaluation” is used to describe the impact of pedagogical differentiation on evaluation practices. However, it is sometimes hard to distinguish between learning and evaluation because they are so closely linked, especially in learning and evaluation situations. Differentiated evaluation, then, is not a school of thought or a new approach to be placed alongside pedagogical differentiation; neither is it an evaluation method. It is not an end in itself, but rather a means that allows teachers to plan their work in a way that takes students' differences into account.

Note: It is clear that the goal of differentiated evaluation is to allow all students to demonstrate the competencies they have developed, but it does not refer to the development of individualized learning and evaluation situations. It does not lead to the lowest common denominator in learning and evaluation situations.

1.2 Principles of pedagogical differentiation applied to evaluation

Listed below are some of the principles on which differentiated evaluation is based.

- **Differentiation benefits all students**, from the most gifted to those experiencing the most difficulty. Individuals learn best when facing reasonable challenges. If a task is too difficult for students and cannot be completed even with assistance, they tend to withdraw and the net result is regression. Similarly, if the challenge is too easy or if a task does not represent a challenge at all, the students tend to lose their motivation. The ultimate goal of pedagogical differentiation is not just to reduce the dropout rate, but above all to encourage all students to use their full potential.
- **Differentiated evaluation must be planned in conjunction with differentiated learning.** As underlined in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning: “Coherence also requires that a close connection exist between what is being evaluated and the focus of learning.” Students should not have to deal with surprises in an evaluation situation. Therefore, the openness to differences shown in learning and evaluation situations must also be present in evaluation situations (for the difference between the two types of situation, see Chapter 1). In ministerial examinations, however, the rules governing the certification of studies must continue to be respected.
- **Pedagogical differentiation relies on a prior evaluation process.** In order to plan an effective differentiated learning, students' development and abilities must be evaluated first. It is difficult to set a “reasonable” challenge without knowing the extent to which students have already developed their competencies. This type of diagnostic evaluation is based on the observation of students, their processes and their work.

- **Teachers must share responsibility for the same cohort of students to allow for the application of pedagogical differentiation and related evaluation practices.** The switch to a cycle-based organization of learning is intended to introduce a school structure in which students will have more opportunities to learn. The collegial attitude promoted by a cycle-based organization, the pooling of ideas and the division of students into several different types of temporary groups allow for a wider range of differentiated approaches to learning and evaluation situations.
- **The active involvement of students is required for the introduction of differentiated evaluation practices.** Differentiation is facilitated by the development of students' ability to assess themselves, what they know and what their next learning challenge should be. All students should therefore be encouraged to develop their ability to self-evaluate and better understand the way they learn. However, participation by students in their own evaluation does not release teachers from their responsibility for judging the learning acquired by their students.

The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning specifies that the active role played by students in evaluation activities mainly occurs while they are learning. "The rationale behind this orientation finds its basis primarily in the context of evaluation to support learning" and "cannot be applied to evaluation for certification purposes or for the recognition of prior learning."

1.3 Three types of differentiated evaluation

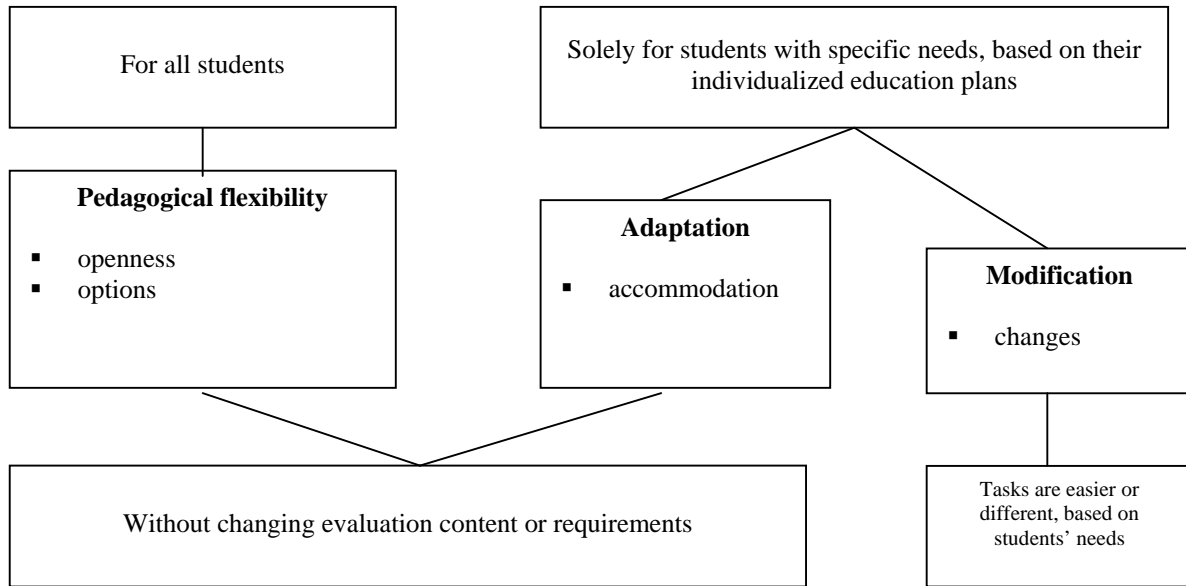
There are three types of differentiated evaluation: pedagogical flexibility, adaptation, and modification.

Pedagogical flexibility is used to offer planned options to all the students during learning and evaluation situations. It applies to the whole group rather than to individual students. On a day-to-day basis, this flexibility creates all kinds of opportunities for students in terms of content (different texts to read, for example), structure (individual work, teamwork, group work), processes (various levels of guidance, for example) and work produced. This flexibility means that learning and evaluation situations can encompass different options designed to match students' pace, style of learning and cognitive levels. However, these options must not affect the level of difficulty of the tasks to be performed, competency evaluation criteria or requirements.

Adaptation involves making adjustments or changes to learning and evaluation situations without modifying what is evaluated. It can lead to a change in the way students with specific needs experience these situations or can affect the procedure to be followed or the way in which texts are presented visually, for example, using a more spacious layout. Adaptation gives students access to the adjustments or accommodations they are used to enjoying without changing the content of evaluation situations, evaluation criteria or requirements. Adaptation does not involve reducing the requirements or modifying what is evaluated. For example, in the context of a geography evaluation, allowing a student with specific needs to listen to, rather than read, the introductory text or instructions would be considered an adaptation.

Modification involves changes to learning and evaluation situations that actually modify competency evaluation criteria and requirements for students with specific needs. The level of difficulty of the evaluation situation is modified accordingly. For example, reading the instructions or text to a student during a reading evaluation would be a modification. Another example would be assigning a student with specific needs an easier task or a situation that is different from that assigned to the group as a whole. In the case of ministerial examinations aimed at the certification of studies, such modifications cannot be made for a student.

Table 5: Three types of differentiation in evaluation practices



- Notes:**
- 1) Adaptations or modifications result from an analysis of the individual student’s needs and not from the fact that the student belongs to a particular category.
 - 2) Where adaptations or exemptions are granted to students with specific needs for ministerial examinations, the rules governing the certification of studies must be consulted.

Since the inclusion, in the *Education Act*, of the provisions governing individualized education plans, schools have had access to a tool to adapt educational services to student needs. Because it encourages parents and school staff to work together to find the best possible response to a student’s needs, the individualized education plan has become an indispensable tool for educational success. In connection with differentiated evaluation, the individualized education plan of a student with specific needs takes on added importance, since it spells out the decisions made concerning adaptation and, as a result, evaluation. Since the individualized education plan guarantees that educational actions will continue from one year, cycle or level of education to the next, it ensures that the whole process will not have to be repeated and that specific actions will continue to be applied. The personnel involved are thus made aware of the adaptations or modifications that have already been applied in previous years during learning and evaluation situations, along with the actions that have proven beneficial, and can use them to plan activities for the current year. In addition, each individualized education plan is revised periodically. The plan obviously plays a key role in differentiated evaluation, given that some of the decisions made concerning modification have a direct impact on a student’s course of study, as discussed below.

The following table shows some of the conditions that must be met when anything beyond pedagogical flexibility, in other words adaptation or modification, is being considered for a student with specific needs.

Table 6: Conditions for applying adaptation or modification to evaluation practices

- Ensure that all students are given an equal chance to demonstrate the learning they have acquired by systematically attempting to use the same evaluation situation for all students, combined with pedagogical flexibility, before resorting to adaptation or modification.
- Make decisions consistent with the individualized education plan when considering the use of adaptation or modification.
- Apply only the adaptation or modification required to allow students with specific needs to demonstrate their competencies.
- Periodically review the necessity of adaptation or modification for a given student; reevaluate and adjust the use of adaptation or modification to match the student's current needs.
- Plan adaptations or modifications on an individual basis, to match the specific needs of a given student rather than of a category of students.
- Select adaptations or modifications that have been used previously in a learning context.
- Ensure compliance with the rules governing the certification of studies.
- Ensure cooperation between all the teachers involved with a given student with specific needs, so that what one teacher permits in terms of adaptation or modification is permitted by all the teachers.
- Ensure that the student, the parents, the principal and the other staff involved are aware of the adaptations or modifications used.
- Ensure that students and their parents understand the implications that the proposed modifications may have over the long term with regard to the awarding of a Secondary School Diploma.

1.4 Roles played by staff and students

The issue of differentiated evaluation concerns the entire school team, as well as the school board. The principal and the teachers responsible for the student cohort in a cycle must work together to increase the effectiveness of the approaches they apply, following guidelines set by the school board.

Students are the persons most closely affected by differentiated evaluation, and as such have an active role to play. They perform their role fully by learning to identify the kind of help they need in order to maximize their potential, thus developing their ability to understand how they learn and react, adjust to difficulties, determine objectives for competency development, and set new challenges for themselves. They help establish measures designed to improve their ability to perform tasks as part of learning and evaluation situations. For example, all students will likely be interested in designing a personalized reference framework for mathematics, even though not all of them will use this framework during evaluation situations. Students with specific needs participate also, along with their parents, in preparing and implementing their individualized education plans, and establish the specific conditions (adaptations or modifications) that will allow them to perform successfully in learning and evaluation situations.

Teachers have primary responsibility for evaluation, and for direct interactions with students. Along with other teachers and complementary services personnel, they plan and then propose methods that permit a wider range of differentiation in learning and evaluation situations. When students make the transition from elementary to secondary school, the information available, especially in the competency report and the student's personal assistance file, can help teachers make certain pedagogical diagnoses. In this area,

the use of a report by elementary schools that describes the strengths and challenges of each student can help secondary school teachers organize pedagogical differentiation in the following cycle.

School principals must ensure the quality of the services provided in their schools, and see that evaluation standards and procedures are respected. On their part, complementary services personnel (psychologists, speech therapists, etc.) use their expertise and observations to provide support for the evaluation of certain students by interpreting their difficulties and identifying their specific needs, thereby helping teachers and students find solutions for specific problems. These staff members can suggest promising avenues for differentiation and, among other things, help draft individualized education plans for students with specific needs.

School boards establish the rules governing promotion from elementary to secondary school and from one secondary cycle to the next. They also have an important role to play on the advisory committee on services for students with handicaps and students with social maladjustments or learning disabilities. The committee must give its opinion to ensure that students with specific needs receive the services to which they are entitled, and that individualized education plans are drawn up for them.

The following table shows the roles of staff members and students in connection with differentiated evaluation.

Table 7: Description of various roles in connection with differentiated evaluation

Players	Roles
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperate in their own evaluation (during the course of learning): set themselves appropriate challenges and find the strategies they need to meet them. ▪ Develop an ability for self-evaluation as they progress towards autonomous learning. <p><i>For students with specific needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Help draft their own individualized education plan, along with their parents.</i> ▪ <i>Help define and implement specific conditions (adaptations or modifications) for learning and evaluation situations.</i>
Teachers in the cycle team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define, as part of the cycle team, learning and evaluation conditions that take differences into account. ▪ Plan and implement learning and evaluation situations that promote pedagogical flexibility. ▪ Give students feedback using preestablished evaluation criteria, or reformulate the criteria with students to enhance regulation. ▪ Encourage students to play a role in the evaluation process. ▪ Organize remedial and enrichment activities in collaboration with other teachers, as required. ▪ Prepare reports for students and parents (orally or in writing, using a portfolio, report card, competency report with reasons, etc.). <p><i>For students with specific needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Help draft individualized education plans and implement the measures they contain.</i> ▪ <i>Collaborate in implementing specific conditions (adaptations or modifications) for learning and evaluation situations, as defined in individualized education plans.</i>
Complementary services personnel (psychologists, psychoeducators, guidance counsellors, special education teachers, etc.)	<p>Depending on their field of expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support teachers. ▪ Observe students inside and outside the classroom. ▪ Work together and with parents. <p><i>For students with specific needs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Use consultation time to collaborate (pedagogical suggestions, determination of individualized objectives, etc.).</i> ▪ <i>Provide support for the diagnostic evaluation of certain students.</i> ▪ <i>Offer extra collaboration in terms of pedagogical interventions.</i>
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approve, following proposals by teachers, evaluation standards and procedures that take differences into account, and ensure that they are applied. ▪ Inform the teachers involved of the relevant data for certain students, and the measures already included in their individualized education plans concerning the adaptation or modification of evaluation practices. ▪ Exercise responsibility for establishing and evaluating individualized education plans while providing follow-up, especially concerning the specific conditions to be implemented for evaluation situations. ▪ Support teachers to ensure that the adaptations and modifications applicable to a given student are implemented jointly, especially concerning the specific conditions for evaluation situations.

1.5 Communications provided to students and parents

It is important to note that the adaptations or modifications established for students with specific needs must be carefully planned and recorded in an individualized education plan, as mentioned in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning: “For students with specific needs, . . . evaluation of learning is based on the individualized education plan.” If adaptations or modifications are necessary, the teacher involved, the student and the student’s parents must be aware that it will take more time to attain an acceptable level of competency, as described by the scales of competency levels. The student will continue to develop the competency at his or her own pace. This type of information must also be recorded in the report card. The principal must ensure that the student and the parents understand the implications of the modifications in terms of the student’s academic progress over the long term and the awarding of a Secondary School Diploma. The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning specifies: “Every standard report card must . . . contain the information required by parents to see whether their children are making progress, how they are doing so, and where they stand in relation to the expected outcomes of the education program.” Information on the student’s progress and on the work needed to attain the end-of-cycle outcomes is essential if the student’s precise situation is to be accurately reported.

Note: Report cards should specify the adaptations or modifications applied with regard to a student.

2. PEDAGOGICAL DIFFERENTIATION AND EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION PRACTICES

2.1 Practices with potential for differentiated evaluation

Evaluation practices currently tend to include a greater degree of differentiation, since this is inherent in a competency-based approach. Teachers must evaluate each student’s capacity to act effectively by drawing on a variety of resources.

Practices that give students more autonomy and help them develop their ability to examine their own learning processes are required to introduce differentiation into the classroom in a concrete way. Teachers observe students and use various tools to gather precious information (grids, interviews, portfolios, etc.) and record it (logbooks, anecdotal records, etc.) in order to make professional judgments. Teachers inform the students of the requirements for each learning and evaluation situation and ensure that they are properly understood. Evaluation is used as a form of instruction that encourages students to regulate their own learning, and the evaluation criteria of the QEP are used as guidelines to direct actions. These criteria are defined in collaboration with the students and reformulated by and with them, thereby providing support for the types of questions that allow for regulation. Feedback on the work students produce and processes that are based on the evaluation criteria helps students fine-tune their approach and “learn how to learn.” The feedback is often based on observations that are not made at the same time for all students, since they develop their competencies at different paces. The students learn to understand their own learning processes and, at the cognitive and affective level, are better able to mobilize the internal and external resources they need to develop their competencies.

For example, the portfolio encourages pedagogical differentiation and differentiated evaluation when it is properly used. Students are able to develop their ability to reflect on their own learning methods by thinking about their work and the challenges they have set for themselves. The portfolio promotes learning by allowing students to assess their own progress, and may be personalized depending on which assignments or work students choose to include therein, using various selection criteria (elements that demonstrate progress, that were created as part of a team, that show success in meeting a personal challenge, that illustrate particular difficulties, etc.). The elements in the portfolio are different in nature

(students' work, evaluation grids, checklists, photographs, graphic organizers, etc.). The relevance of the reasons given by the student to justify the selection of an element also provides the teacher with information on the student's progress, and gives him or her an even clearer idea of the learning the student has acquired. The portfolio constitutes a truly personal portrait of each student, clearly indicating what has been learned and what steps should be taken next.

2.2 Examples of differentiated evaluation

There are four possible ways to introduce differentiated instruction into learning and evaluation situations. Each possibility, or mechanism, may allow for differentiated content (the focus of the task), production (the products or results of the task), process (the approach taken to complete the task), or structure (the organization of the task).

Teachers can differentiate **content** or the focus of tasks. For example, in a learning and evaluation situation involving writing, the students could be offered two different topics that allow for the development of the same competency. In Mathematics, students might be asked to solve different problems, some of which require that they draw on more resources than others. In French, Second Language, students could be asked to write a media text targeting different audiences, which will be more or less elaborate according to their abilities. In Ethics and Religious Culture, the students might be asked to take a position on the ethical issue of their choice, while in Geography, a type of territory (for example, the metropolis) could be examined from the perspective of different cities. The situation may require a modification for a student with specific needs: part of the task could be omitted or the number of evaluation criteria reduced. In reading, for example, the number of evaluation criteria could be reduced, whereas in Music, the task could be modified in terms of instrumental technique for a student with a motor impairment. In this case, both the content and the process are differentiated.

Differentiation is also possible with regard to **production**, in other words the results of a task, the finished product or the student's achievement. For example, students may choose between two types of evaluation tasks that allow them to demonstrate their competencies in History and Citizenship Education: designing an information sorting tool, or producing a graphic organizer for the same social phenomenon. Some students may carry out research on different science and technology topics (wastewater treatment, recycling, etc.) to demonstrate their competency in applying scientific and technological knowledge. For the personal orientation project, students can share their thoughts in various ways (multimedia project, video, etc.). The duration of the task may vary from one student to another, with some going into greater depth. Moral Education projects may involve students producing either a poster, a sketch or a song. It is thus possible to differentiate both the product and the process, for example by allowing students to choose from a range of possible creations in Arts Education. Some adaptations, already tested and recorded in the individualized education plan of a student with specific needs, could allow a word-for-word transcription or a tape recording to be made of that student's answers during a learning and evaluation situation.

The **process**, or approach taken to complete a task, may also be differentiated. In Physical and Health Education, the students can choose an athletic discipline such as jumping, running or throwing. In this type of learning and evaluation situation, the content, product and process may all be differentiated. During a learning and evaluation situation in Geography, an adaptation could allow a student with major reading difficulties to be read the instructions and introductory text, while other students could use a computer to write their answers. The order of questions could be modified for students with specific needs. Other adaptations could concern scheduling: e.g. extra time to complete a task, division of the evaluation task into smaller units spread over time, etc.

Last, **structure**, or the way in which tasks are organized within a learning and evaluation situation, can also be differentiated. Teachers can seek out the best way to use the classroom or another room, with some students being given a reserved space, as far away as possible from sources of noise or distraction. To take advantage of differentiation of structure in connection with evaluation, it is necessary to distinguish between the two purposes of evaluation, support for learning and recognition of competencies. At all times during a cycle when evaluation is being used as a support for learning, it is possible and even advisable to have the students work in teams. Students must be encouraged to become gradually more autonomous as their learning progresses. At the end of the cycle, the purpose of recognizing competencies in the evaluation report becomes essential, and autonomous work should be promoted in the evaluation situation. However, being able to begin the situation as part of a team may help enrich the production of some students. For example, they might work as a team to find all possible ways of dealing with the topic proposed, and then split into pairs to plan their projects.

The table below shows some examples of differentiated evaluation based on the four aspects of learning and evaluation situations.

Table 8: Possibilities of differentiation based on four aspects of learning and evaluation situations

<p>Choices of solutions allowing differentiation of content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (F) Different texts ▪ (F) Different topics in connection with the competency to be developed ▪ (F) Research on content from other subjects ▪ (F) Different problems associated with the broad areas of learning ▪ (M) Texts with a lower difficulty level 	<p>Choices of solutions allowing differentiation of production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (F) Different types of products: poster, oral presentation, graphic organizer, etc. ▪ (F) Different media: computer, sound recording, writing, etc. ▪ (F) Different evaluation methods: various grids, etc. ▪ (A) Tasks completed, if necessary, with a computer but without using a grammar or spell checker ▪ (M) Fewer and shorter tasks
<p>Choices of solutions allowing differentiation of process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (F) Different ways students can participate in the evaluation ▪ (F) Different tools: hands-on materials, computers, visual references, etc. ▪ (F) Different evaluation approaches: grids, interviews, etc. ▪ (A) Listening to the sound recording of an evaluation ▪ (A) Different text layout: large-size font, more spacious layout, etc. ▪ (M) Underlining of key words or sentences in the instructions ▪ (A) Reading of the instructions or text (except for reading evaluations) ▪ (M) Reading of instructions or text (reading evaluation) ▪ (A) Word-for-word transcription of students' ideas (except for writing evaluation) 	<p>Choices of solutions allowing differentiation of structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (F) Individual, pair, team or group work (depending on requirements of situation) ▪ (F) Use of special areas in the classroom (close to the teacher, away from sources of distraction, etc.) ▪ (A) Use of different classrooms ▪ (A) Modification, as needed, of the group timetable (segmentation of the task over several periods, completion in the morning rather than the afternoon, or on a pedagogical day, extra time, additional breaks, etc.)

Legend

(F) Pedagogical flexibility

(A) Adaptation

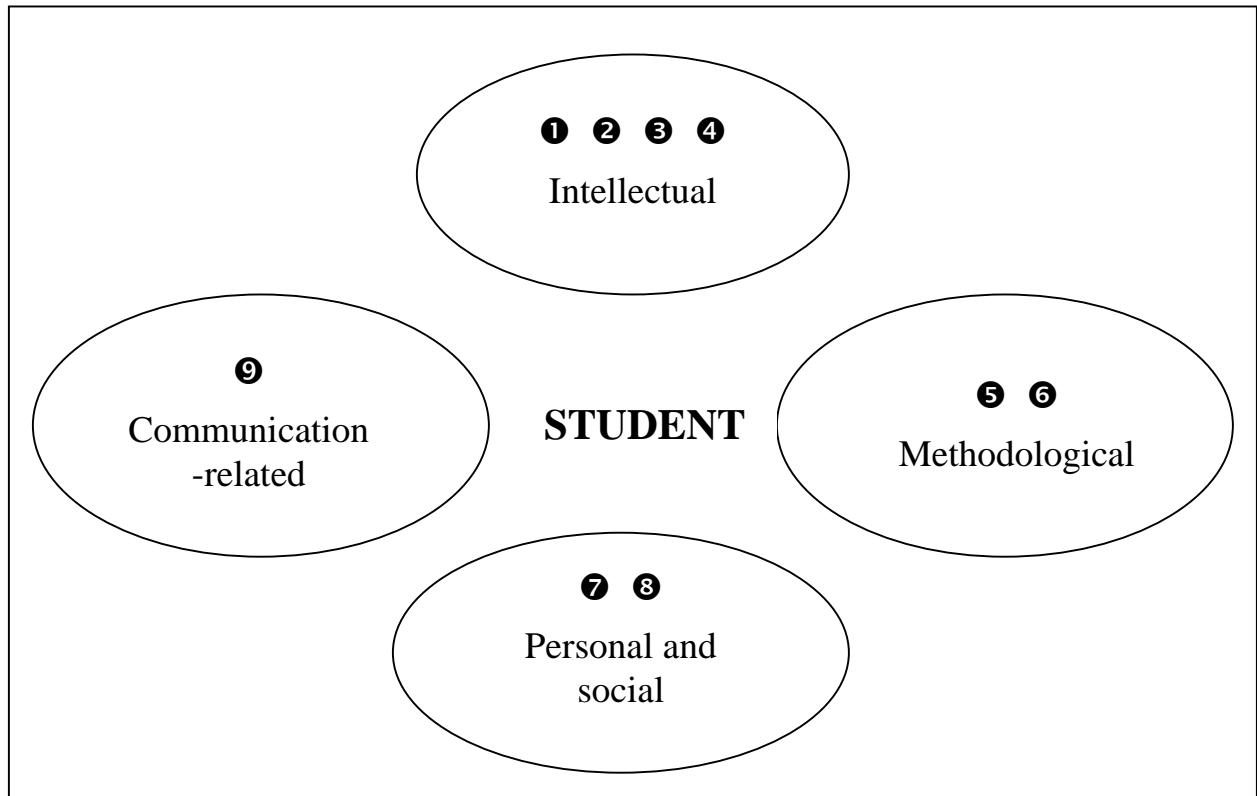
(M) Modification

CONCLUSION

Pedagogical differentiation is the best way of encouraging students, who are all different, to develop their competencies. The role played by evaluation in the learning process must be properly understood in order to gauge the effects of differentiation on the two purposes of evaluation: support for learning and recognition of competencies. Differentiated evaluation must be applied to benefit students, according to their abilities, and help them acquire fundamental learning. The application of differentiated instruction to evaluation practices benefits both students and teachers, and this framework for evaluation draws on the QEP and the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning to offer teachers suggestions for differentiation to guide and support their evaluation practices. To conclude, it should be pointed out that the different types of school organization associated with cycle-based learning may contribute to pedagogical differentiation.

CHAPTER III
THE EVALUATION OF CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

The four categories of cross-curricular competencies



1. Uses information
2. Solves problems
3. Exercises critical judgment
4. Uses creativity

5. Adopts effective work methods
6. Uses information and communications technologies

7. Achieves his/her potential
8. Cooperates with others
9. Communicates appropriately

INTRODUCTION

The cross-curricular competencies defined in the Québec Education Program (QEP) “*constitute the different types of tools that schools believe students need in order to adapt to a variety of situations and continue to learn throughout their lives.*” They provide a frame of reference for the development of general abilities, such as *solving problems* and *adopting effective work methods*, whose relevance is widely recognized in schools and in society.

The inclusion of these competencies in the curriculum will require a major effort to assimilate them. A range of approaches is being used to introduce cross-curricular competencies in schools where implementation has begun, and they are one of the key aspects of the changes to evaluation practices. Therefore, this chapter presents various approaches, and is designed to promote reflection rather than provide predetermined formulas. Some of the ideas are related to those found in other chapters, but in this chapter the main focus is on cross-curricular competencies and on the many questions raised by their evaluation.

In the QEP, no end-of-cycle outcomes are specified for the cross-curricular competencies. Evaluation is therefore discussed in this chapter mainly from the point of view of support for learning, in other words, using evaluation to encourage the development of cross-curricular competencies and as a lever to promote the development of subject-specific competencies. The chapter is divided into three parts, dealing respectively with:

- the inclusion of cross-curricular competencies in the planning of evaluation, whether for the overall planning of a cycle or the more detailed planning of learning and evaluation situations
- evaluation practices that promote the development of cross-curricular competencies
- the inclusion of cross-curricular competencies in reports made to parents

It should be noted that Section 30.1 of the Basic school regulation specifies that:

The student's competency report must include

...

(2) *an assessment of the student's achievement in one or more of the cross-curricular competencies, observed during the period concerned in keeping with the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement approved by the principal under subparagraph 4 of the first paragraph of section 96.15 of the Act;*

...

This provision will come into force in July 2007.

1. THE INCLUSION OF CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES IN THE PLANNING OF EVALUATION

The following information is intended to complete that presented in the QEP, and to facilitate the planning of evaluation situations that involve cross-curricular competencies.

1.1 Overall cycle planning

The development and evaluation of cross-curricular competencies is a shared responsibility. As stated in the QEP, *“From this perspective, it is important to avoid establishing an exclusive one-to-one relationship between a specific subject and the development—and hence the evaluation—of a specific cross-curricular competency.”* Given that cross-curricular competencies are inherent, to varying degrees, to the development of each subject-specific competency, there are important links between the development of cross-curricular competencies and that of subject-specific competencies. In dealing with subject-specific situations and solving the problems they raise, students adopt effective work methods, use information, apply critical judgment and use creativity. They use information and communications technologies (ICT) as needed and frequently cooperate with others, allowing them, as they deal with each situation, to communicate appropriately and achieve their potential.

Although it may be necessary, up to a certain point, to divide the cross-curricular competencies among the teachers in the cycle during the assimilation phase, all teachers must aim to include all the cross-curricular competencies in the planning process, in a way that is suitable for the subject they teach. A joint approach is needed to develop a shared understanding of the cross-curricular competencies and define a coherent approach. Here are some examples of approaches that have been tried out at the secondary level.

Table 9: Examples of ways to take cross-curricular competencies into account

Each teacher supports the development of cross-curricular competencies, but only records data on a small number of competencies.

- The teacher helps the students develop all the cross-curricular competencies, presenting suitable learning and evaluation situations for their development, and making instructive comments to individual students or to the group without recording them.
- The teacher records observations on selected cross-curricular competencies as specified in the plan established by the cycle team, using evaluation grids. Based on the observations made, the teacher includes an assessment of these cross-curricular competencies in each report card.

The cross-curricular competencies are evaluated by the students and teachers in all subjects using tools defined by or selected in the cycle team’s plan. The homeroom teacher reviews these evaluations periodically and asks the students to create a summary, which serves as the basis for the assessment of cross-curricular competencies included in their report cards.

The students and teachers evaluate cross-curricular competencies using a similar approach in all subjects, as defined by the cycle team. Cross-curricular aspects are included in the grids used in each subject. On the report cards, each teacher makes an instructive comment on the cross-curricular competencies, based on evaluations completed in the classroom (for example, one strength and one area for improvement).

The members of the cycle team define the planning and joint action process, and agree on the methods implemented to evaluate cross-curricular competencies. The cycle should be planned in a way that allows the members of the team to:

- assimilate the cross-curricular competencies in the QEP
- define ways to take cross-curricular competencies jointly into account
- agree on the tools to be used in evaluating cross-curricular competencies
- determine how the evaluation of cross-curricular competencies will be reported to parents
- schedule meetings, if necessary, to pool their assessments of the development of cross-curricular competencies by their students

The cycle team may also schedule specific times to allow students to complete interdisciplinary projects based on cross-curricular competencies. The organization of a science fair, or participation in *Arts and Culture Week in Québec Schools*, are activities that require students to apply work methods, cooperate with others and communicate appropriately. The same applies to extracurricular activities (student newspaper, radio, association, etc.). The cross-curricular competencies in the QEP can be targeted when planning activities such as these, to promote their development.

1.2 Planning of learning and evaluation situations

As mentioned in other chapters of this framework, the learning and evaluation situations that allow students to apply their competencies involve tasks that require students to mobilize their resources in a new context. The situations encourage the students to ask themselves questions and make decisions about what personal or external resources they will use—and how they will use them—to solve a problem or create a production. The situations call on various abilities that, in turn, are based on cross-curricular competencies.

To deal competently with a given task, it is not enough to have the necessary resources at hand—they must also be applied effectively. Students must examine the question of *how* the task is to be completed. Sometimes the answers are specific to the subject field concerned and involve, for example, a specific writing process (Secondary English Language Arts), scientific method (Science and Technology), or the creative dynamic (Arts Education). Others call on more general abilities and cross subject boundaries: how to use information, how to adopt effective work methods, how to cooperate with others, and how to communicate appropriately, for instance. These more general abilities have been specifically defined as cross-curricular competencies.

The cross-curricular competencies must be evaluated, because their development is closely linked to the development of subject-specific competencies. It is essential to refer to the passages of the QEP that deal specifically with the cross-curricular competencies, and also to the programs for each subject, especially under the heading *Connections with the Cross-Curricular Competencies*.

Cross-curricular competencies are developed and evaluated in specific contexts

The QEP is very clear on this point: cross-curricular competencies “*should be used and worked on in all the subject areas and in the broad areas of learning and, as such, should not constitute the focus of students’ work, in isolation from any program content.*” They should be developed in specific learning contexts, usually in relation to a particular subject. In other words, cross-curricular competencies are developed through the learning and evaluation situations presented to students, which take into account previously established plans and may be based on either of two approaches.

Table 10: Two approaches for addressing cross-curricular competencies in learning and evaluation situations

- Situations in which at least one cross-curricular competency is targeted (for example, cooperating with others to produce an informative text).
- Situations that address competencies in an integrated way by requiring students to apply several or all of the cross-curricular competencies (with appropriate support, the students can be given responsibility for deciding which competency is required at a given time).

It may be useful, in a particular situation, to target a specific cross-curricular competency to highlight, for all the students in the class, the dimension of the situation that requires the application of that competency. To illustrate this approach, the phase of a history project during which students locate documentary information can include an evaluation of the competency *Uses information* to give students feedback and help them hone their research skills.

In other cases, the cross-curricular competencies may be considered in a more general way. For example, students could be made responsible for using the cross-curricular competencies that are appropriate in a given situation. They must, of course, have received adequate preparation, and the approach must be used regularly and consistently in several different subjects.

Group work enhances the development of cross-curricular competencies

Students’ individual understanding of their actions in a situation is enhanced by their interactions with teachers and fellow students, and so cooperative work must have a significant role in the learning and evaluation situations that are planned. In order to cooperate, individuals must share a similar approach to problem-solving, communicate effectively, process information, assert their own identity while managing conflicts, organize their work and adopt work methods, apply their creativity, etc. The comparison of different points of view creates the perspective needed for the learning associated with cross-curricular competencies. This does not mean that the competencies can only be worked on collectively, but that this approach should be applied when planning learning and evaluation situations, since it is one of the key ways in which the cross-curricular competencies are developed.

2. EVALUATION PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

From the point of view of support for learning, the evaluation of students in learning and evaluation situations has a dual objective: to teach students how to act effectively in the type of situation concerned, and to encourage them to develop cross-curricular competencies. Some students display these abilities spontaneously; these are the students best able to mobilize their existing knowledge and know-how to

solve new problems. If the development of the cross-curricular competencies is neglected among the students who display them less naturally, the ability gap may widen.

2.1 Emphasize regulation

Regulation is the process by which students and teachers adjust their actions to allow learning to progress more smoothly. It is based on an evaluative appraisal, and may lead to corrective action, a change of strategy, a modified procedure or, on the contrary, a continuation of the same procedure.

Since the purpose of evaluation, as a support for learning, is to provide regulation, it is important to encourage students to make the necessary changes themselves while performing tasks. Increased autonomy is especially relevant in connection with cross-curricular competencies, and requires support from the teacher that can vary in length according to the individual students involved, based on their degree of autonomy.

2.2 Involve students

Students involved in evaluating their own cross-curricular competencies are more aware of what they need to do to develop these competencies. They may require assistance from their teachers to evaluate the development of their competencies, and thus identify their areas for improvement.

2.3 Use appropriate evaluation tools

The methods used to evaluate cross-curricular competencies vary, depending on the learning and evaluation situations concerned. Ongoing observation, interviews with or without a grid, or an analysis of processes and achievements using an assessment grid either specially designed for cross-curricular competencies or integrated into the subject-specific grid, are all possibilities. Feedback and assessments can be communicated to students as verbal comments or in writing (including written comments on work and productions).

For each cross-curricular competency, observable elements should be defined, based on evaluation criteria from the QEP as they are observed in the classroom. The elements must be clear, and understood by the students. They can even be defined in collaboration with the students. This way of approaching the criteria highlights how they can be used to facilitate regulation instead of serving as pass-or-fail benchmarks.

Observable elements for a cross-curricular competency are particularly useful for

- giving students concrete indications for regulation
- providing students with immediate feedback: what they are good at, what they should do more, what they could improve (this type of feedback does not have to be recorded)
- recording data from various situations
- giving instructive comments on a report card or other forms of communication (what students do well, what they could improve)
- developing a list of comments that can be used for communication

Example: Evaluation grid for a cross-curricular competency based on observable elements

Cross-curricular competency: <i>Cooperates with others</i>				
Evaluation criteria (QEP)	Observable elements	Student	Teacher	Comments
Active participation in the work of the team	I help plan the work.			
	I carry out the tasks assigned by the team.			
	I make positive contributions that move the team work forward.			
Contribution to improving the way the team works together	I facilitate the work of the team.			
	I identify points to improve the team's work for next time.			
(and so on for the other criteria)				
Assessment scale				
a Yes	b Sometimes	c No		

In this example, the observable elements provide suggestions for regulation. This grid can be used by the student, the teacher or both. Such a tool enables adjustments to be made while the situation is under way (interactive regulation) or when it is completed (retroactive regulation), and helps students deal with subsequent situations (proactive regulation). The adjustments are important not in themselves, but because they lead to more effective work in learning and evaluation situations and a better development of subject-specific competencies. Tools of this type may also cover several cross-curricular competencies, as in the following example.

Example: Self-evaluation sheet for cross-curricular competencies

Name: _____		Interdisciplinary project	Extra-curricular activity	Other (specify)	Other (specify)
Observable elements					
> Intellectual					
I use information.	▪ I am able to consult various sources of information.				
	▪ I use effective research strategies.				
	▪ I analyze the information I have gathered from a critical standpoint.				
	▪ I organize the information I have gathered in a logical way.				
	▪ I can use information in new situations.				
> Methodological					
I use information and communications technologies.	▪ I can use information and communications technologies (ICT) effectively in my learning.				
	▪ I can use ICT resources in new situations.				
	▪ I can use ICT to interact and troubleshoot.				
	▪ I can assess whether I am using ICT effectively.				
> Personal and social					
I cooperate with others.	▪ I can recognize the needs of others.				
	▪ I can adapt my attitudes and behaviours.				
	▪ I can actively participate in the work of a team.				
	▪ I can contribute to improving the way a team works together.				
> Communication-related					
I communicate appropriately.	▪ I can express a coherent message.				
	▪ I can use appropriate language.				
	▪ I can use the correct codes, practices, rules and conventions governing language.				
	▪ I can adjust my message to the communication context and to my audience.				
	▪ I can evaluate the effectiveness of my communication.				
My comments on what I have learned (strengths and areas for improvement):					

Assessment scale					
a Always	b Most of the time	b Sometimes	d Almost never		

Some teachers have mentioned that the use of a specific grid to evaluate a cross-curricular competency, as in the above example, sometimes creates an overlap with the evaluation of subject-specific competencies. Others have pointed out that it could cause the cross-curricular competencies to be considered separately, in themselves, instead of emphasizing their links with subject-specific competencies. It may therefore be more appropriate, for some teachers, to start with the context of a subject-specific learning and evaluation situation and to ask students to review their learning generally, with reference to the cross-curricular competencies. The following example illustrates this approach.

Example: Subject evaluation grid included regulation for cross-curricular competencies

Subject: Visual Arts Competency: <i>Creates personal images</i>			
Criteria (QEP)	a) Excellent	b) Good	c) Room for improvement
Personal use of visual arts language	I use a range of unusual elements in a personal way (colours, shapes, lines).	I use a range of elements (colours, shapes, lines).	I use a few elements.
(and so on for the other evaluation criteria for the subject-specific competency)			
Reflection on my cross-curricular competencies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solves problems To solve a problem, I have to try out various solutions. ▪ Uses creativity To be creative, I have to work flexibly and explore various possible approaches. ▪ Achieves his/her potential My actions have consequences in terms of success and failure. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How have my cross-curricular competencies helped me progress in this situation? – – – 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on this situation, what do I need to work on to develop my cross-curricular competencies? – – – 		

In this example, the evaluation based on the criteria for subject-specific competencies is extended to cover the more general regulation of cross-curricular competencies. With support from the teacher, students can use their cross-curricular competencies in other learning and evaluation situations, whether in the same or another subject.

3. CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES IN COMMUNICATIONS PROVIDED TO PARENTS

The inclusion of cross-curricular competencies in official reports, such as report cards and competency report is an important step, since the cross-curricular competencies are at the heart of the learning targeted by the QEP. The evaluation of a student’s cross-curricular competencies can be reported in several ways, depending on the pedagogical approach applied in the classroom. In addition, other forms of communication, as provided for in the Basic school regulation, can be used to inform parents about the type of learning made in the classroom to develop the cross-curricular competencies.

During and at the end of each cycle, the communications provided to parents are based on the significant data recorded in connection with the criteria of the QEP that reflect the progress made by the student in developing cross-curricular competencies.

3.1 Report cards and competency report

The evaluation of cross-curricular competencies recorded in the report card and competency report will often be in the form of overall assessments or instructive comments. The competencies concerned may be those targeted in the planning process, in which case the same competencies will be reported for all students. The competencies may also vary depending on the student concerned, if they are dealt with in the classroom in a more differentiated way. Only the cross-curricular competencies that have been targeted by significant learning and evaluated, and for which sufficient data are available, should be reported for a given period. Examples of three different approaches are given below, and may be freely adapted.

Table 11: Use of an overall assessment

Overall assessment of the cross-curricular competencies observed for the student:			
			Comments
➤ Uses information	A	Strength: Your child is able to consult a range of information sources and select those needed to complete the tasks proposed. Area for improvement: Your child needs to exercise more critical judgment concerning the information gathered.	
➤ Exercises critical judgment	C		
➤ Achieves his/her potential	B		
Assessment scale			
A	B	C	D
Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Clearly unsatisfactory

Table 12: General instructive comments

The following observations concern the student’s strengths and the areas that need to be improved in connection with cross-curricular competencies:	
<p>➤ Uses information</p> <p>Strengths: Your child is able to consult a range of information sources and select those needed to complete the tasks proposed.</p>	<p>➤ Exercises critical judgment</p> <p>Areas for improvement: Your child needs to exercise more critical judgment concerning the information gathered.</p>

Table 13: Instructive comments for each subject

<p>The following observations concern the student’s strengths, and the weaknesses that the student should work on in connection with cross-curricular competencies:</p> <p>Music</p> <p>➤ Competency: <i>Cooperates with others</i></p> <p>Strength: Your child plays a positive leadership role within the group.</p> <p>➤ Competency: <i>Solves problem</i></p> <p>Area for improvement: Your child needs to persevere more when faced with difficulties.</p> <p>History and Citizenship Education</p> <p>➤ Competency: <i>Uses information</i></p> <p>Strength: your child is able to consult a range of information sources and select those needed to complete the tasks proposed.</p> <p>➤ Competency: <i>Exercises critical judgment</i></p> <p>Area for improvement: your child needs to exercise more critical judgment concerning the information gathered.</p>

In the first two examples, the teacher responsible for a group of students (often called a *homeroom teacher* in secondary schools), may have the task of reporting the development of cross-curricular competencies by the students in the group. The teacher must consult the other members of the cycle team to justify or consolidate the assessment made. The examples would also allow the cross-curricular competencies to be evaluated by the cycle team.

The last two examples have the advantage of specifying the aspects that require improvement, and are especially suited to communications provided during a cycle. It should be noted that the instructive comments are based directly on the observable elements identified within the evaluation tools and on the observations made by the student concerned and the teacher. If these models are used, it is not necessary to list all the cross-curricular competencies on each report card or to divide them up arbitrarily, since the communication focuses on the aspects that are most significant for the student concerned to enhance the

student's learning, after considering the observations made for all the cross-curricular competencies. To facilitate the work, a list of instructive comments for each of the cross-curricular competencies could be made available for use by teachers.

With regard to the competency report, it should be noted that the cross-curricular competencies are also included in the subject-specific competency levels scales, to a varying degree depending on the competency involved (see the chapter on scales).

Whatever approach is selected, it should be discussed by the cycle team and become part of the evaluation standards and procedures adopted by the school.

3.2 Other forms of communication

In addition to report cards and competency report, the Basic school regulation specifies that other forms of communication will be presented to parents for each year in a cycle. These types of communication offer another opportunity to review the development of cross-curricular competencies and make parents even more aware of their importance in their child's educational success, while giving them the tools they need to follow their child's progress (see the chapter "Communicating Results").

CONCLUSION

If cross-curricular competencies are to be developed and evaluated, they must be properly understood. They must be assimilated by trying out various approaches, whether in connection with planning, evaluation practices or the preparation of communications. It will quickly become clear that the support provided for the development of cross-curricular competencies is also direct support for academic success. In addition, the evaluation of cross-curricular competencies provides a key opportunity to better understand the very notion of competency.

The following table presents an overview of possible approaches with regard to the evaluation of cross-curricular competencies.

Table 14: The evaluation of cross-curricular competencies considered as a support for learning

PLANNING	EVALUATION PRACTICES	COMMUNICATIONS
<p>Cycle planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ensure that cross-curricular competencies are taken into account collectively and coherently <p>Planning of learning and evaluation situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – integrate cross-curricular competencies explicitly into the learning and evaluation situations for a given subject; – encourage interaction 	<p>Introduce regulation into learning and evaluation situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – involve the students – use appropriate tools 	<p>Include cross-curricular competencies in the various types of communication provided for by the Basic school regulation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – make an assessment in the form of an instructive comment – present an overall assessment

CHAPTER IV

GRADING: MAKING JUDGMENTS AND PASS/FAIL DECISIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are regularly required to make decisions concerning the learning accomplished by the students in their class, and to provide various kinds of feedback, depending on the context. In addition, at the times determined by the school, teachers notify students and parents of academic results using various means, including report cards and competency reports. On the basis of observations made concerning a student's learning, teachers, schools or other authorities also make decisions and implement actions concerning the student's academic progress.

To ensure that information on student learning and the resulting decisions are reliable, the players in the school system generally define various guidelines concerning the types of observations that should be made about student learning and the way in which they should be formulated, recorded, organized and reported to students and parents. Taken as a whole, these guidelines constitute a system for grading and communicating results. This chapter examines the question of grading, and the next chapter looks in more detail at the communication of results.

From the outset, it is necessary to specify what exactly is meant by "grading" in this chapter. It does not refer solely to the assignment of percentage marks.

"Grading" refers to the methods and tools used to construct a judgment on the competencies developed by a student, and to make a pass/fail decision in a given subject based on the data collected, interpreted and analyzed.

First, this chapter looks at the underlying reasons for the change in grading practices, and the general characteristics of the new system. Second, various proposals concerning grading in Secondary Cycle One and Cycle Two are made for the benefit of players in the school system, describing how information on student learning with regard to subject-specific competencies is produced during and at the end of Cycle One, or at the end of the year for Cycle Two. For cross-curricular competencies, please see the corresponding chapter.

1. WORKING TOWARD A CHANGE IN GRADING PRACTICES

To understand why a change in grading practices is needed, it is necessary to take into account the changes in learning introduced by the Québec Education Program (QEP), the shift to cycle-based organization, and by the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning. The characteristics of any grading system are closely linked to the choices made in the area of evaluation, which are in turn dependent on the underlying approach to learning. It is also necessary to take into account the provisions of the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* concerning the reporting of academic results.

The competencies in the QEP are comprehensive, progressive and integrated, and take more time to develop. Therefore, evaluation must be considered in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. In other words, the evaluation of competencies must get away from simply adding up marks.

The use of a qualitative approach has many advantages. First, it provides students with particularly meaningful information on their learning, helping them to regulate it themselves. Second, it gives teachers scope to exercise their professional judgment, the main foundation of the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning. In contrast to the cumulative logic of objective-based programs, a judgment concerning the level of competency attained by a student at the end of a learning process cannot be based on the sum of interim judgments made on the status of the development of the competency during the learning process. The two purposes of evaluation, support for learning and recognition of competencies, are thus easier to distinguish.

Although qualitative grading is a logical extension of competency evaluation, it may still be useful, for various reasons, to apply quantitative grading, in particular to facilitate the processing of results for the certification of studies or to provide concrete information on secondary school students to educational institutions and employers. The proposals made concerning grading at the secondary level specify when and how qualitative results may be transformed into quantitative results.

2. FOUNDATION FOR THE GRADING SYSTEM

It is important to remember that the way in which a student's academic results are expressed is just one aspect of a grading system. Establishing a grading system involves more than deciding whether the observations made concerning student learning will be expressed as ratings or marks.

Grading is a code developed by the school system to interpret the students' results in the most uniform way possible. The grading system must give an indication of the process used to establish student results, to ensure that all the components thereof are known. It is an organized, structured transposition of the main observations made concerning student learning at various times, and clearly states how the data gathered on student learning are combined. The grading system contributes to effective regulation, as carried out by teachers and students, and to the reporting of information on competency development, to allow judgments to be made during and at the end of a cycle (or year) and to establish results for each subject.

The grading system that underlies the proposals made in the next section is based on the following principles and qualities:

Principles

- compliance with the regulatory framework: QEP, Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, Basic school regulation, etc.
- respect for the values expressed in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, especially justice, equity and openness
- sharing of responsibilities between the school system (schools and school boards) and the MELS

Qualities

- accurately reflects the learning accomplished by a student during and at the end of a cycle
- takes into account the characteristics of the two cycles of secondary education
- contributes to an effective use of information on student learning with a view to regulation and decision making concerning the student's academic progress
- is known by parents, students and all people working with students
- is easy to understand, in particular by students and parents
- meets the need for information of all people working with students
- is applicable in classrooms and schools
- meets the requirements of data processing for outside evaluation, under the responsibility of schools boards or the MELS

3. PROPOSALS FOR THE GRADING SYSTEM

The grading proposals for Secondary Cycle One and Cycle Two concern **subject-specific competencies** only. The proposals are structured so as to highlight the way in which judgments are constructed during and at the end of a cycle or year and how pass/fail decisions are made in a given subject.

3.1 Constructing judgments

The following proposals specify

- the type of judgments to be made during and at the end of a learning process
- the way in which judgments are constructed
- the ways in which judgments are expressed

At this point, it is useful to remember that the qualitative logic underlying competency evaluation requires the use of instruments that allow teachers to construct judgments with a view to supporting learning and recognizing competencies. As pointed out in the chapter on learning and evaluation situations, the gathering and interpretation of information, as well as the making of judgments, rely on the use of a range of tools (grids, scales, etc.). In addition, whether the tools are used for a single learning and evaluation situation, to make a judgment on the status of the development of the competencies during a cycle or year, or to evaluate the level of development of the competencies attained at the end of a cycle or year, the evaluation criteria and outcomes specified in the QEP must be used as references.

Judgments made in the course of learning

The following section explains how a judgment is constructed concerning the status of the development of the competency during a cycle or year, and how the result is reported on the student's report card, as prescribed by section 30 of the Basic school regulation.

Putting the feedback provided to students during the learning process to good use

The feedback given to students throughout the learning process is intended to inform them about their strengths and areas for improvement, to support their progress in terms of competency development, and to teach them ways to improve their learning methods or work. In addition, feedback helps teachers establish regulation measures and construct judgments concerning the status of the development of the competency.

From this point of view, it is important to use types of feedback and ways of recording it that allow for subsequent and effective application. In general, if feedback is to be significant and useful for students and teachers, it should be descriptive, although other types of feedback may be used in certain situations. For example, in an application exercise, the teacher can indicate how many of the student's answers are correct. The chapter on planning the evaluation process describes other possibilities and tools for recording feedback.

Transforming feedback into judgments concerning the status of the development of the competencies

The transformation of feedback into judgments concerning the status of the development of the competencies cannot be reduced to an arithmetical equation. First, the teacher determines which feedback offers the best possible reflection of the student's learning at the time the judgment is to be made. Since the judgment is made on the status of the development of the competency, it must be based mainly on tasks targeting the mobilization of resources. Feedback on learning activities, for example those targeting the acquisition of knowledge can be used to provide comments along with the judgment to explain, in particular, some of the student's strengths or difficulties.

Next, the teacher analyzes and brings together the relevant data. In order to harmonize all the feedback and produce a judgment concerning the status of the development of the competencies, the teacher must use a scale that allows him or her to compare, in a general fashion, the student's learning with expected outcomes. The scale below has four steps, but other scales of the same type could also be used. By establishing their evaluation standards and procedures, schools decide the type of scale to use in making judgments on the status of development of the competencies during a cycle or year.

Example: Scale used to make a judgment concerning the status of the development of the competency during a cycle or year

A	B	C	D
Student exceeds the requirements of the tasks	Student meets most of the requirements of the tasks	Student meets a few requirements of the tasks	Student meets no requirements of the tasks

The transformation of feedback on a range of learning—expressed in various forms—into a judgment concerning the status of the development of the competency can be achieved in various ways, depending on the type of evaluation grid used in the learning and evaluation situations. As pointed out in the chapter on learning and evaluation situations, the grids can be holistic or analytical, as illustrated in the two examples below.

Example: Making a judgment on the status of the development of the competency in the context of using the analytical approach

An analytical evaluation grid like the one below allows the teacher to establish, for each situation, the degree to which the student meets each of the criteria for a competency.

Subject: Geography

Competency: *Interprets a territorial issue*

Evaluation criteria	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Clearly unsatisfactory
	a	b	c	d
1. Reference to elements that are relevant to the territorial issue				
2. Description of the dynamics of the territorial issue				
3. Expression of a well-founded opinion				

For the competency *Interprets a territorial issue*, the teacher records his or her assessment of each of the three learning and evaluation situations, using the analytical evaluation grid above.

Evaluation criteria	Assessment relating to learning and evaluation situation			Judgment for all three situations	⇒	Status of the development of the competency
	LES	LES	LES			
Criterion 1	b	c	b	b		B
Criterion 2	a	b	a	a		
Criterion 3	c	b	b	b		

Next, the teacher uses the assessments for each criterion in each situation to make a judgment concerning all the situations, taking into account the data that provide the best possible reflection of the student's learning.

Taking into account the assessments of all the learning and evaluation situations based on each evaluation criterion, and using the scale for judging the status of the development of the competency, the teacher concludes that the status of the development of the competency *Interprets a territorial issue* corresponds to the rating B, because the student easily meets most of the requirements of the tasks proposed in the three situations.

Example: Making a judgment on the status of the development of the competency in the context of the holistic approach

A holistic evaluation grid like the one below allows the teacher to establish, for each situation, the degree to which the student meets all the criteria for the competency.

Subject: Visual Arts

Competency: *Creates media images*

a: The steps in the poster creation process were carefully planned, and the finished poster demonstrates an understanding of visual codes. The composition of the various elements conveys an effective message to the target audience, in accordance with the communication intention. The image is unified and complete; the elements reinforce each other. The poster leaves an impression of originality and careful work.
b: The finished poster is consistent with the original plan, and demonstrates an adequate understanding of visual codes. The composition of the elements is balanced, and takes the target audience and communicative purpose appropriately into account. The overall result is effective. The poster leaves an impression of careful work.
c: other

For the competency *Creates media images*, the teacher records his or her assessment of each of the three learning and evaluation situations, using the holistic evaluation grid above.

Assessment relating to learning and evaluation situations			⇒	Status of the development of the competency
LES	LES	LES		A
a	b	a		

Taking into account the assessment of each of the learning and evaluation situations, and using the scale for judging the status of the development of the competency, the teacher concludes that the status of development of the competency *Creates media images* corresponds to the rating A, because the student exceeds the requirements of the three learning and evaluation situations.

Judgments at the end of the cycle or year

Section 30.1 of the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* specifies the content of the competency report to be made at the end of each cycle or year.

The student's competency report must include

(1) an indication of the level of development achieved by the student for each of the competencies in the . . . programs of studies. At the secondary level, the assessment of the level of development is based on the scales of competency levels established by the Minister for the programs of studies . . .

Constructing judgments for the purpose of recognizing competencies is broadly based on the same logic as that used during a cycle or year. At the end of a cycle or year, teachers make a judgment concerning the level of competency development attained by the student, based on situations that reflect as closely as possible the learning achieved at the time the competency report is drawn up. In general, the situations in which the student was most recently able to mobilize resources in an autonomous way offer the best evidence of competency development, including one or more evaluation situations assigned by the school, the school board or the MELS. To support the judgment made, the teacher may also use significant records of the student's learning gathered during the cycle or year.

As mentioned above, the transformation of feedback into a judgment is not based on cumulative logic. The teacher analyzes and reconciles all the available data, and then assesses the student's learning in a general fashion based on the descriptions in the scales of competency levels, since section 30.1 of the basic regulation prescribes the use of these scales at the end of a cycle or year. Each scale has five levels, defined by a statement describing what a student who has reached that level is able to do.

5	Remarkable competency.
4	Assured competency.
3	Acceptable competency.
2	Underdeveloped competency.
1	Undeveloped competency.

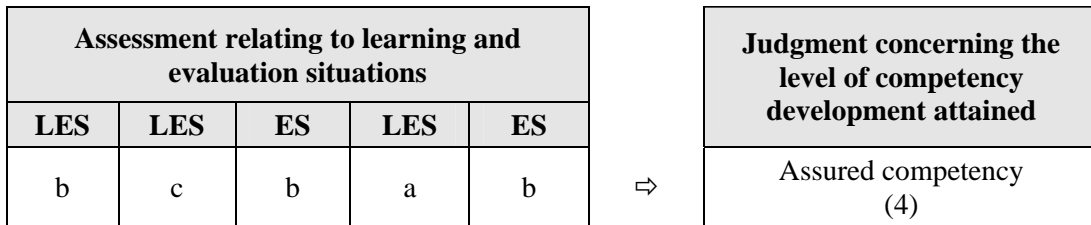
The example below shows how feedback is transformed into a judgment concerning the level of competency attained, using the holistic approach.

Example: Holistic approach

The holistic evaluation grid presented below is used by the teacher to establish the degree to which the student meets all the criteria for the competency, based on the three learning and evaluation situations (LES) and two evaluation situations (ES) used for the competency report.

Subject: Visual Arts

Competency: *Creates media images*



Next, the teacher makes a judgment concerning the level of competency attained by comparing the most significant data with the description set out in each step in the scales of competency levels. The teacher thus concludes that the student has attained an assured competency level (level 4) for the competency *Creates media images*.

Readers should refer to the chapter on the scales of competency levels for a more detailed idea of how they are used to prepare a competency report.

3.2 Making pass/fail decisions in a given subject

Section 30.1 of the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* stipulates that the competency report must include, in addition to the levels of competency attained, the results for each subject in the QEP and, where the student passes, the credits for the subjects.

The student's competency report must include

...
(3) *in the case of a student at the secondary level, the student's results in each subject taught and, where the student passes, the credits for the subjects. The results are expressed in the form of marks for second cycle students taking the general education path or the applied general education path at the secondary level.*

The logic underlying the judgments made concerning the competencies developed by a student means that pass/fail decisions in a given subject must be made using new methods. This section thus sets out the guidelines to be used by players in the school system to make pass/fail decisions. Out of a concern for fairness, the same reference must be used to ensure that the decisions of different schools are all made on the same basis. **The MELS will indicate, in its annual Directives, the pass/fail rules for each subject.**

This section presents the logic on which the pass/fail rules for each subject, to be defined at a later date, will be based. Examples demonstrate how the logic could apply to each subject. **The examples remain subject, however, to the final choices made concerning pass/fail rules in the annual Directives of the MELS.**

The proposals for transforming the judgments made on the levels of competency attained into a result for each subject in Secondary Cycle One and Secondary Cycle Two take the following elements into account:

- the rules governing pass/fail decisions in a given subject are based on the same logic as that used to construct judgments concerning the levels of competency development
- without lessening requirements, the new pass/fail rules for a given subject are realistic and fair for all students
- the new pass/fail rules will help parents, students, players in the school system, employers, etc., to have a common understanding of academic results, regardless of the subject concerned, as is currently the case
- the new rules are applicable and will not unduly complicate the task of teachers who are responsible for making pass/fail decisions and managing results

Section 30.1 of the Basic school regulation specifies that results must be expressed in the form of marks for second cycle students. However, given that there is no such prescription for Secondary Cycle One, schools are free to choose the way in which they express results. Therefore, in this section, two ways of transforming the judgments made on the levels of competency attained into a result for a given subject will be presented, according to whether the result is expressed as a rating or a mark.

In addition, in order to take the particularities of each subject into account, the mechanisms used to transform a judgment on the competency level attained into a result for a given subject will take various forms, according to whether the competencies for the subject are considered to be of equal or different importance, and whether compensation is permitted. In this context, compensation refers to a mechanism that allows a student to pass a subject without having achieved an acceptable level in all of the competencies. For example, a student could obtain an overall result of 60% in English Language Arts, but only a level 2 for the competency *Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes*.

3.2.1 Using **ratings** to express the result for a given subject

In the following approach, the result for a given subject is expressed as a rating established according to the levels of competency attained by the student. The example below shows how the pass/fail rules in a given subject would apply.

Example: Result for a given subject expressed as a **rating**

The competencies for the subject are of equal importance and compensation is not permitted

Pass requirement: A student who has attained at least level 3 (acceptable competency) on the scale of competency levels for all the competencies is considered to have passed the subject.

Subject result by levels of competency attained

Subject result		Levels of competency attained
A:	Excellent	(5-5-5) (5-4-5)...
B:	Very good	(5-4-4) (4-4-4)...
C:	Good	(3-4-4) (3-4-3) (3-3-3)...
D:	Poor	(3-2-2) (3-3-2)...
E:	Very poor	(2-2-2) (2-2-1)...

It should be noted that, according to this rule, profiles A, B and C are a “pass,” while profiles D and E are a “fail.” This means that

- a student who attains levels 3, 4 and 3 for competencies 1, 2 and 3, respectively, passes the subject, with the rating C and the mention *Good*
- a student who attains levels 3, 3 and 2 for competencies 1, 2 and 3, respectively, fails the subject, with the rating D and the mention *Poor*

3.2.2 Using **marks** to express the result for a given subject

This approach lends itself well to Secondary Cycle Two, since the Basic school regulation specifies that the result for a given subject must be expressed in the form of marks. However, it must also be applied by schools wishing to use marks to express results in Secondary Cycle One.

Using this approach, the relative importance of the competencies is reflected in their weighting, which may vary depending on the subject concerned. The weighting for each competency means that a certain number of points are assigned to each scale of the competency levels, and a student’s results for a given subject are expressed as the total number of points awarded for all the competency levels. To meet the requirements of section 34 of the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education*, the pass mark in all cases is 60%. The following example shows how the approach can be applied.

Example: Result for a given subject expressed in the form of **marks**

The competencies for the subject are of different importance and compensation is permitted

Pass requirement: A student who obtains a mark of 60% is considered to have passed the subject.

Conversion table for transforming judgments on the competency levels into a mark for a given subject

Subject-specific competency	Relative weighting	Competency levels				
		5	4	3	2	1
Competency 1	40%	40	32	24	16	8
Competency 2	35%	35	28	21	14	7
Competency 3	25%	25	20	15	10	5

Possibilities

The student has attained the following levels for the three competencies:

- Competency 1: level 4; number of points: 32
- Competency 2: level 3; number of points: 21
- Competency 3: level 2; number of points: 10

The student passes the subject, with 63 points out of 100.

An additional condition for passing the subject could be added to limit compensation. For example, for competency 3, level 3 could be set as the minimum standard to be attained. In this case, even though the student obtained 63 out of 100, he or she would fail.

It is important to remember that other pass/fail rules in a given subject may be adopted, depending on whether the subject-specific competencies are of equal or different importance, and depending on the level of compensation permitted. The annual Directives will specify the rules for each subject in this regard.

Pass/fail decisions and the certification of studies

In Secondary Cycle Two, the MELS administers uniform examinations in some subjects for the certification of studies. In other subjects, the evaluation is carried out locally by the school or school board.

To take into account the logic underlying grading and pass/fail decisions for Secondary Cycle Two, the MELS will establish a mechanism for calculating the final result in subjects for which a uniform examination is imposed. This mechanism will be presented in the second edition of the Framework which will deal particularly with evaluation in the context of certification of studies.

CHAPTER V
THE SCALES OF COMPETENCY LEVELS

INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, competencies cannot be evaluated without making judgments. In general, two kinds of judgments are needed: first, specific judgments concerning each learning and evaluation situation on which an evaluation is based and, second, more comprehensive judgments that summarize all the observations made in a range of situations, in particular when the time comes to prepare a competency report. This chapter focuses on the second kind of judgment, which concerns competencies in their entirety. It presents a tool to be used as a guideline to making end-of-cycle judgments: the scales of competency levels.

In secondary education, the decisions made on the basis of competency reports have major repercussions on the academic future of the students concerned. For example, they include decisions on promotion from one cycle to another, academic progress and the range of possible paths, and so on. It is important that the level of competency development indicated in the competency report be defined in a rigorous way. The scales of competency levels, based on the QEP, are intended to facilitate the preparation of competency reports by allowing teachers to judge students' competencies at the end of a cycle (or at the end of a year, in Secondary Cycle Two.) The use of scales is prescribed by the basic regulation:

30.1. The student's competency report must include

(1) an indication of the level of development achieved by the student At the secondary level, the assessment of the level of development is based on the scales of competency levels established by the Minister for the programs of studies; . . .

A similar tool was prepared by the MELS for use in elementary education in 2002, but the scales for secondary education differ in several regards. At the elementary level, the scales describe the major stages in the development of a competency as part of a continuum, since the main focus is on support for learning. They are not prescriptive in nature. Elementary school teachers can assess the students' academic progress by periodically using scales to determine their competency development. In secondary school education, the various levels on a scale describe degrees of competency development attained by students at the time teachers must produce the competency report for the purpose of competency recognition.

Since the scales are new, this chapter gives more information on what they are and how they are used.

1. A UNIFORM MODEL FOR ALL SUBJECTS

To ensure that the scales for all the subjects are presented in a uniform way, a model with five competency levels was selected. The upper part of the scale is divided into three levels that reflect different degrees of successful competency development in a given subject and that help to make appropriate judgments at the end of the cycle. The lower part of the scale is divided into two levels that reflect the competency development of students experiencing difficulties and can be used to make appropriate decisions in connection with their course of study.

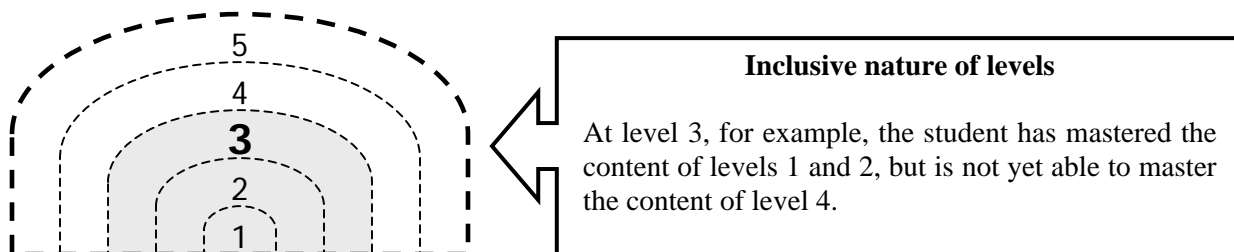
Table 15 summarizes the general model that was used to develop the scales of competency levels for all the subjects.

Table 15: Outline presentation of the scales of competency levels

LEVEL	Competency	Overall judgment at end of cycle
5	REMARKABLE	The student's competency exceeds the requirements.
4	ASSURED	The student's competency clearly meets the requirements.
3	ACCEPTABLE	The student's competency barely meets the requirements.
2	UNDERDEVELOPED	The student's competency fails to meet the requirements.
1	UNDEVELOPED	The student's competency clearly fails to meet the requirements.

The content of the levels is consistent with that of the QEP without repeating it literally, since the goal is not to define focuses of learning, but to provide a description of what a student should be able to accomplish once he or she has attained a given level at the end of the cycle. These descriptions refer both to the processes and methods used by the students and to their results or work.

In general, a level describes, in positive terms, the observable elements considered to be typical of students who have attained it. Taken as a whole, this description implies that choices have been made to highlight only certain features that are indicative of this competency level. The purpose of this description is to provide a general representation of the competency level and not to propose an exhaustive list of elements to be checked. Furthermore, and as shown in the diagram below, the levels are inclusive.



It should be noted that the descriptions contained in the scales of competency levels for the various subjects take the cross-curricular competencies into account, since their development is closely linked to that of the subject-specific competencies. The presence of elements associated with cross-curricular competencies within the scales for each subject highlights their importance in students' educational success and the fact that they must be specifically targeted by planned learning and evaluation situations.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCALES

The scales of competency levels were developed on the basis of a consensus among the teachers of each subject in order to ensure the quality of these scales and greater uniformity in their use. The teachers of each subject were therefore involved in formulating and validating the descriptions of competency levels. A LABRIPROF team from the Université de Montréal provided teachers with support during this process.

Elements formulated by small groups

Groups of practicing teachers (about seven) were formed to develop each scale, and were given the task of formulating roughly 100 elements (about 20 for each level). Each element is in the form of a statement that describes an action that can be observed when students carry out a complex task and that is likely to show, at the end of the cycle, that the student has attained a certain level of competency development.

Participation of a larger number of teachers of each subject

The elements were then integrated into questionnaires in which other teachers were asked to estimate the competency level required to carry out the action described by each element. More than 1 000 teachers of all subjects completed the questionnaires. The following example shows how the elements were presented in the questionnaire on the competency *Performs musical works*.

Example: Presentation of the elements in the questionnaire

Subject: Music

Competency: *Performs musical works*

At the end of Secondary Cycle One, a student who...	... shows a competency level that is ...				
	remarkable	assured	acceptable	underdeveloped	undeveloped
identifies notes on the staff by counting lines and spaces	5	4	3	2	1
detects false notes	5	4	3	2	1
assumes the role of section head	5	4	3	2	1

Analysis of responses

Different techniques were used to identify the most revealing elements for a competency level. Without giving a detailed account of the analyses that were carried out, it can simply be said that the analyses had two objectives: to choose the best elements and to situate them on one of the five levels. Only those elements on which the teachers agreed were selected. Then, it was a question of determining the

competency level with which each element could be matched. The questionnaire responses and the opinions of the teachers who were involved in formulating the elements were of crucial importance in this regard.

Formulating the descriptions of the competency levels

The elements selected were divided into levels, thereby providing the basic information for formulating the scale descriptions. It should be noted that the descriptions of competency levels are in the form of structured paragraphs rather than as a list of behaviors. The following criteria served as guidelines:

- consistency between the description and the elements selected for a given competency level
- consistency between the scales of competency levels and the QEP
- logical organization of the information
- clear distinctions between the levels

Validation of the descriptions of competency levels

Once the descriptions of the competency levels were written, the scales were submitted for the consideration of experts and experienced practitioners, notably those who were part of the committees that formulated the elements. The validation process continues and will be expanded over the course of this year, prior to the publication of a consolidated document presenting the scales for all the subject-specific competencies in Secondary Cycle One.

3. USE OF THE SCALES

The scales provide a benchmark that helps teachers make an overall judgment about students' competency development at the end of the cycle. Teachers who monitor and evaluate student learning are mainly responsible for making these end-of-cycle judgments, however, it is recommended that the teachers of a given subject cooperate to establish a clear, shared definition of the levels on the scale (each level could be illustrated using examples from the classroom and identifying its characteristics).

A suitable process for the evaluation of competencies must be implemented to ensure that scales are used appropriately. Since competencies are manifested and developed in the context of learning and evaluation situations, it is difficult to make a judgment on the competencies if these situations are not an integral part of the instructive practices used throughout the cycle. In general, the situations used toward the end of the cycle will prove the most revealing.

Since the descriptions contained in the scales are relatively short, they cannot specify all the aspects that must be taken into account in making a judgment on competency. The QEP specifies the elements that should be considered to evaluate a competency in a more detailed way (key features, evaluation criteria, end-of-cycle outcomes, training content, etc.). Other evaluation tools are necessary to gather more specific, complete information and give students feedback during the learning process (evaluation grids, checklists, etc.). These tools are presented in the chapter on learning and evaluation situations.

In addition, since judgments on competency development are based on significant records of the student's learning, it is important that teachers keep such records and refer to them as required. There are several different ways to register, compile and record relevant data on competency development. To ensure that the judgments made are valid, the method used must be based on the competency evaluation criteria set out in the QEP.

For greater openness, teachers should present the scales to the students and ensure that they understand the descriptions of the competency levels and the way in which they will be used at the end of the cycle. In addition to a way of recognizing competencies, the scales are also a tool that the students can use to become aware of the learning they have acquired, their strengths and weaknesses, and what they have achieved.

An analysis of the observations made gives the teacher an overview of the student's competency, which can then be matched, at the end of the cycle, to one of the levels on the scale. It is important to remember that this is an overall judgment, and that the scales are not designed for analytical use. The goal is not to carry out a point-by-point comparison of the statements for a given level with the record of what the student has learned. Rather, it is a question of determining whether the student's competency matches the general idea expressed by the level.

Note: The competency report is not a mathematical calculation based on the results recorded during the cycle, but a judgment made concerning the level of competency attained by the student at the end of the cycle.

When the teacher prepares the competency report, the scales apply to all the students, including those whose competency level is underdeveloped or undeveloped. The students who might not go beyond the lower levels of the scale (1 and 2) should be identified as soon as possible during the cycle and receive appropriate support. In this case, a pedagogical diagnosis and proposed support measures could be included with the competency report (for example, in the context of an intervention plan). It should be noted that the variety of observations that may be associated with a competency that is *undeveloped* makes it difficult to provide a typical level 1 portrait. As a result, the description of this level might not exactly correspond to a student's actual competency level (in fact, students who have not attained level 2 are categorized as being in level 1). This description is therefore generally brief, but it usually indicates that the student is in need of ongoing support.

Finally, the judgments reported by teachers using the scales of competency levels can be used to describe the competencies of a group of students in a class, school or region, or of the student population in Québec as a whole, giving additional, highly useful data on educational success and the effectiveness of the means put in place to allow them to meet the learning targets defined by the QEP. Thus the scales can be used as tools for the regulation and monitoring of the education system as a whole, or of one educational institution in particular. Based on a reliable description of the competencies developed by the students in a given school, the principal and the school team can establish measures to promote educational success.

The following table shows an overview of suggested practices for the proper use of scales of competency levels.

Table 16: Overview of suggested practices for the proper use of the scales of competency levels

The teacher should:

- offer the students frequent opportunities during the cycle to demonstrate their competencies in various ways
- explain the scales and their use to the students and ask them to assess their competencies using the scales
- keep relevant records of student learning in sufficient quantity to form a basis for making judgments, using the evaluation criteria set out in the QEP
- build up a judgment gradually, and update it using the latest learning and evaluation situations
- make a general association between a student's competency and one of the levels on the scale, without carrying out a point-by-point comparison between the observations made and the statements for a given level
- report more detailed information as needed for certain students, for example, within the individualized education plan

CONCLUSION

The scales of competency levels are to be used by secondary school teachers when they are required to make judgments concerning students' competency development at the end of the cycle and to report these judgments in the competency report. At the end of the cycle, in order to make a judgment on the competency by means of the descriptions of competency levels, the teacher should be able to refer to a wide variety of work that was carried out by students at various points during the cycle and that reflects use of the competency in various contexts.

While these scales are designed mainly for the recognition of competency development, this does not rule out the fact that, indirectly, they play the more formative role of support for learning. By giving clear indications on the evaluation of competencies at the end of the cycle, they make it possible to adjust pedagogical approaches throughout the cycle in order to give students the opportunity to attain the highest possible level in terms of competency development. In addition, the scales can be used as a valuable means of communication between teachers in the two cycles or between teachers who teach different subjects to the same group of students.

The scales of competency levels will be updated to take into account the data gathered in various subjects further to the implementation of the QEP. However, it is already clear that the use of these scales will give teachers scope to exercise their professional judgment in the area of evaluation, thereby addressing one of the fundamental orientations of the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning.

Besides individual evaluation, the establishment of descriptions of competency levels also makes it easier to monitor the school system, particularly during implementation of a new program, since these descriptions provide benchmarks by which to assess the effectiveness of the measures for attaining the targets defined by the new program.

CHAPTER VI
COMMUNICATING RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning stresses that to evaluate also means to inform, and that, "in accordance with the principle of openness, informing students and parents is one of the objectives of the evaluation process."

In the context of the education reform, the communication of results is modified in order to address the need to provide information on the development of competencies, the place of judgment in school results and the logic underlying grading. The *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* provides indications to take into account changes to be made concerning the communication of results to parents and students. Section 29 defines the frequency and the content of communications:

In order to inform the parents of a student of the student's academic progress, the school shall provide

(1) at least 8 communications per cycle, including 5 report cards and an end-of-cycle competency report if the student is at the elementary school level or in the first cycle of secondary school; or

(2) at least 4 communications per year, including 2 report cards and an end-of-year competency report if the student is at the preschool level or in the second cycle of secondary school.

...

Thus, during the cycle or year, at pre-established times, the students and his or her parents, as applicable, are informed of the student's academic progress through such communication tools as report cards. In addition, the Basic school regulation introduces an obligation to produce a competency report and the possibility of using other forms of communication. All these changes influence the way one looks at the communication of results.

It is useful to recall that, according to section 96.15 of the *Education Act*, it is the school that makes decisions regarding the communication of results. These decisions should reflect choices made on the evaluation of learning, as described in the school's standards and procedures for evaluation. Thus, deciding on the types, the content and the timing of communications should be part of the overall process of reflection on the evaluation practices to be implemented, to which the school team contributes. In addition, in order to support the school in the communication of results, the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* provides indications on the form, the frequency and the content of communications, on which the school's decisions should be based.

Therefore, this chapter presents some principles on communicating results as well as guidelines for choosing and developing communication tools.

1. BASIS FOR COMMUNICATING RESULTS

Given the importance of information on learning for all recipients of such information, that is, students and their parents, teachers, other personnel, educational institutions and employers, the need for good information cannot be overemphasized. Several conditions must be respected in the choices the school makes on the form and content of the report card, the competency report and other forms of communication.

Conformity with MELS documents

There are three basic reference documents for the choice and development of communication tools: the QEP, the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning and the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education*. The guidelines provided in this framework may also be used to fuel reflection by people in the schools.

Quality of information

The quality of the information on student learning given to parents and students in the report card and the competency report is of the utmost importance, because they are the main recipients of this information and are most affected by it. Students themselves have the primary responsibility for their learning. The report card and competency report can help students take more responsibility for their education and make it possible for their parents to follow their progress in school and thus to play an active role in their success.

The information in the report card and competency report is also for teachers involved in subsequent years or cycles of the students' education. This information is useful in making decisions on the students' academic progress and providing them with appropriate support.

These types of reports are also used for admission to vocational training, general education for adults, and college and university studies. Employers are also likely to consult academic results when making hiring decisions.

Taking into account these recipients and their various information needs, the report card and the competency report must provide information that is clear, pertinent and sufficient in order to reflect the student's learning faithfully and not cause him or her any detriment.

Applicability for teachers

Teachers are responsible for providing the information that is communicated on the quality of the students' learning during and at the end of the cycle or year. The report card and competency report should be designed to be as user-friendly as possible.

The following table summarizes the main aspects to be considered by the school in choosing and developing communication tools. It takes into account the requirements of the Basic school regulation.

Table 17: Elements to be considered in communicating results

Aspects to be considered	Elements for verification	✓
Type and frequency of communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 8 communications are planned in Secondary Cycle One, including 5 report cards and 1 competency report. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 4 annual communications are planned in Secondary Cycle Two, including 2 report cards and 1 competency report. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications tools other than the report card and competency report are also planned. 	
Content of the report card and the competency report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The names of the school, the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) are clearly indicated on the report card and the competency report. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The report card and the competency report provide information on the student's attendance. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The report card and the competency report describe the student's learning with regard to the subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The report card provides information on the status of the development of the subject-specific competencies. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The competency report for Cycle One and for each year of Cycle Two provides information on the competency levels attained in terms of the scales of competency levels prescribed by the MELs for each subject. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The competency report provides the result in each subject; it is expressed as a rating or mark in Cycle One and as a mark in Cycle Two. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The competency report indicates the credits obtained in the subjects in Cycle One and in each year of Cycle Two. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The competency report in Cycle One indicates the decision as to whether the student is promoted. 	
Quality of the information given to parents (report card, competency report and other forms of communication)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information on their child's learning provided in the report card and the competency report is understandable, pertinent and sufficient. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information allows them to assess the quality of their child's learning and to follow his or her academic progress . 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The content and form of the report card and the competency report are user-friendly. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The other forms of communication provide adequate information on the child's learning. 	
Quality of the information for the student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The report card and the competency report allow the student to know his or her strengths and to appreciate his or her learning. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The report card and the competency report allow the student to identify his or her difficulties and to recognize the challenges facing him or her. 	
Applicability for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The content and form of the report card are practical. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The competency report gives teachers in the following year or cycle indications that allow them to provide the support needed for the student to continue learning. 	
Usefulness for other authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information is sufficient and informative with regard to a student's transfer to another school. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information is sufficient and informative with regard to a student's change of path. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information is sufficient and informative with regard to a student's admission into vocational training, general education for adults or college. 	

2. REPORT CARD

Among the communication tools proposed, the report card plays an important role because it provides regular information on students' learning. It fulfills one of the purposes of evaluation, which is to support learning.

The methodological suggestions provided below are essentially intended to guide schools in the choice and development of a report card that provides information of quality on students' learning. These suggestions have the advantage of providing common reference points in order to facilitate the uniform interpretation of data on students' learning in different institutions.

Since the Basic school regulation only prescribes the number of report cards that must be provided for parents and students per cycle or year, it is up to the schools to decide when in the cycle or the year to issue report cards. They should make this decision by considering the need for sufficient pertinent data to make a judgment on the status of the development of the competencies, and thus to determine the appropriate times to issue report cards.

Information on cross-curricular competencies

In the report card, information on cross-curricular competencies is separate from that on the subject-specific competencies. The report card for a given period should cover only the cross-curricular competencies in which there has been significant learning and evaluation, and for which there are sufficient data. As stated in the chapter on cross-curricular competencies, information on the learning in these competencies may take the form of a judgment or of instructive comments describing strengths and aspects to be improved. Please see that chapter.

Information on subject-specific competencies

Section 30, paragraph 15, of the Basic school regulation indicates the nature of the information on student learning that the report card must contain.

The report card must contain at least the following information:

...

(15) *the status of the development of the competencies in . . . the programs of studies, if the competencies have been evaluated.*

It is up to the cycle team to determine the subject-specific competencies on which information will be provided in each report card. In all cases, the frequency of the judgments on the subject-specific competencies should be established by considering the need for sufficient pertinent data. Thus, every report card does not need to provide information on all the competencies in all the subjects. However, since it is important that students and their parents always have a clear indication of the learning achieved and the learning yet to be achieved to meet the requirements for the end of the cycle or the year, the report cards that precede the competency report should include a sufficient number of definite judgments on the status of the development of the competencies. The overall planning of evaluation offers a good opportunity for the cycle team to think about this question and to make realistic proposals.

To make it easier for all the recipients, especially parents and students, to understand the information, it is recommended that the same wording for the competencies be used in the report card as in the competency report. However, schools may reword some of the competencies.

In addition, in order to enable students and parents to properly interpret information on the development of competencies, the scale that was used during the cycle and that relates the student's learning to the established requirements should be presented. Please see the chapter on grading for an overview of how to make a judgment during a cycle and examples of the scales to be used. However, it is important to remember that although it is useful to provide information on students' learning progress from one stage to the next, the data on students' learning in a cycle cannot be limited to this. The situation of the student as it relates to the requirements for the tasks chosen for reporting purposes must also be described in the report card.

The example below shows one way of providing information on the subject-specific competencies in Secondary Cycle One. It takes into account the fact that in Secondary Cycle One, at least five of the communications must be report cards.

Example: Presentation in report cards of judgments on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies

Subject area: Languages					
English Language Arts – Code 632-212 Teacher:	Report cards				
	1	2	3	4	5
▪ Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn	C	NE	B	A	B
▪ Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes	B	C	B	NE	B
▪ Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts	NE	A	A	A	NE
Absences	2	1	2	2	1
Assessment scale on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies					
A Student exceeds the requirements of the tasks					
B Student meets most of the requirements of the tasks					
C Student meets a few requirements of the tasks					
D Student meets no requirements of the tasks					
NE Competency not evaluated at this stage					

In this example, it is possible to observe the variation in the frequency of judgments, depending on the competency. It is up to the teachers of a subject to suggest the number of judgments to be made on each of the competencies during the cycle or year, as part of establishing the school's standards and procedures for evaluation. The frequency determined must allow teachers to provide sufficient information on the status of the development of the competencies in the report card. It should be noted that other forms of communication chosen by the school, which are discussed in Section 4 of this chapter, also provide information on students' learning. The example above shows the student's progress from one report card to the next.

Some teachers may find it useful to supplement their judgment on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies with specific comments on the student's strengths and challenges in the subject as a whole. The following example illustrates this possibility. It applies to Secondary Cycle Two and takes into account the fact that two of the four communications each year must be report cards.

It should be noted that schools may create, for each subject, a bank of comments that explain the judgments on the status of the development of the competencies. These comments may highlight the student's strengths or aspects to be improved in the subject. The use of such comments is intended to provide more detailed information on students' learning, thereby contributing to better understanding by parents. Computerization of the bank of comments will improve the efficiency of communicating results.

Example: Presentation in report cards of judgments on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies, with comments

Mathematics – Code 063-100 Teachers:		Report cards	
		1	2
▪ Solves a situational problem		C	
▪ Uses mathematical reasoning		B	
▪ Communicates by using mathematical language		B	
Effort and behaviour (Possibility of encoded comments)	Absences	1	
	Strengths and challenges Comments related to any of the subject-specific competencies (Possibility of encoded comments)		
Assessment scale on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies			
A Student exceeds the requirements of the tasks			
B Student meets most of the requirements of the tasks			
C Student meets a few requirements of the tasks			
D Student meets no requirements of the tasks			
NE Competency not evaluated at this stage			

Whatever the format of the report card decided by the school, it is important to realize that it alone cannot describe the student's actual learning. It is thus advisable to provide, along with the report card, some work by the student that teachers have used as the basis for their judgment on the status of the development of subject-specific competencies. For a student whose teachers are using an individualized education plan, it is useful to provide the plan along with the report card so as to make it easier for the parents or student to interpret the information.

It is also useful to identify the teacher responsible for the subject and to include indications of what may influence the quality of student learning, such as attendance, effort and classroom behaviour.

3. COMPETENCY REPORT

The competency report is used to recognize competencies. Section 30.1 of the *Basic school regulation for preschool, elementary and secondary education* provides indications on the content of the competency report that is to be produced at the end of the cycle or the year.

30.1. The student's competency report must include

- (1) an indication of the level of development achieved by the student for each of the competencies in . . . the programs of studies. At the secondary level, the assessment of the level of development is based on the scales of competency levels established by the Minister for the programs of studies;*
- (2) an assessment of the student's achievement in one or more of the cross-curricular competencies, observed during the period concerned in keeping with the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement approved by the principal under subparagraph 4 of the first paragraph of section 96.15 of the Act; and*
- (3) in the case of a student at the secondary level, the student's results in each subject taught and, where the student passes, the credits for the subjects. The results are expressed in the form of marks for second cycle students taking the general education path or the applied general education path at the secondary level.*

The purpose of the competency report is to inform student, parents, teachers and other players on the competency levels attained by the student, his or her success in the subjects studied and the credits obtained. In order to understand the nature of the judgments to be made for the competency report and to grasp how they are to be made, please see the chapter on grading.

The competency report may, if the school so decides, be separate from the report card used to report students' learning in the course of the cycle or year, or it may be combined with the report card. Having two distinct documents makes it possible to clearly distinguish the use of information in accordance with the two purposes of evaluation: to support learning and to recognize competencies. The information in the competency report is not the result of a combination of data from the report cards. This approach reflects the temporary nature of judgments made during a cycle. On the other hand, the use of a single document for both the report card and the competency report provides a complete overview of students' learning in the cycle or year.

Whatever the school decides regarding the format of the competency report, it must provide information on learning related to all the competencies in every subject. In addition, to allow all recipients to clearly understand the judgments, it is recommended that the scale used be included in the competency report. In addition, the competency report must describe the result in the subject and the credits obtained, where appropriate. It should be noted that the way the result in the subject in Cycle One is expressed may vary, as discussed in the chapter on grading. It may take the form of pass/fail profiles such as: A: excellent; B: very good; C: good; D: poor and E: very poor. It may also take the form of a mark out of 100.

Scale of competency levels	
Level	Competency
5	Remarkable
4	Assured
3	Acceptable
2	Underdeveloped
1	Undeveloped

In Secondary Cycle Two, the result in the subject is expressed in the form of a mark. Once again, please see the chapter on grading for methods of transforming competency levels into results in the form of marks in the subject.

The following examples illustrate some possibilities for the presentation of the information, depending on whether the competency report is a separate document or is combined with the report card, and depending on how the results in the subjects are expressed.

Example: Presentation in the competency report (Secondary Cycle One) of the levels of subject-specific competencies attained and of the result in the subject expressed in the form of a **rating**.

History and Citizenship Education – Code 087206 Teacher:	Competency report		
	Competency levels attained	Result in the subject	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examines social phenomena from a historical perspective 	4	C - Good	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interprets social phenomena using the historical method 	4		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constructs his/her consciousness of citizenship through the study of history 	3		
Your child's strengths and challenges Comments on any of the subject-specific competencies (Possibility of encoded comments)		Number of credits	6

It should be noted that it is possible to include comments on the student's strengths and challenges in the subject in the competency report, as well as in the report card in the course of the cycle or year. This information may be particularly useful for providing the student with appropriate support in the next cycle or year.

Example: Presentation in the competency report (Secondary Cycle Two) of the levels of subject-specific competencies attained and of the result in the subject expressed in the form of a **mark**.

Physical Education and Health – Code 043204 Teacher:	Report cards		Competency report	
	1	2	Competency levels attained	Result in the subject
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performs movement skills in different physical activity settings 	B	A	5	80
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interacts with others in different physical activity settings 	B	C	4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopts a healthy, active lifestyle 	C	B	3	
			Number of credits	4

Although the example above concerns Secondary Cycle Two, it is preferable to present the information in the same manner in Secondary Cycle One, if the school chooses to express the subject-related results in the form of a mark.

Where the competencies in a subject are weighted, the weightings indicated in the annual Directives must be indicated in the competency report. In addition, although points must be associated with the competency levels attained in order to transform them into a mark in the subject, it is inappropriate to present a quantified result for each of the competencies in the competency report.

Whether the Cycle One competency report and the report card are combined in a single document or presented in separate documents, information must be included on the decision regarding the student's promotion from Cycle One to Cycle Two. The following example shows one way of presenting this information.

Example: Presentation in the competency report of the decision regarding the student's promotion from Cycle One to Cycle Two

Decision regarding promotion	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Your child is promoted to Secondary Cycle Two.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child is promoted to Secondary Cycle Two with special support.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Your child will remain in Secondary Cycle One.

With regard to the cross-curricular competencies, in keeping with the Basic school regulation, the competency report must render account of the student's learning. Please see the chapter on cross-curricular competencies for possibilities in terms of communicating results.

4. OTHER FORMS OF COMMUNICATION

In order to take into account the context of the development of competencies, the Basic school regulation introduces the possibility of using other than the report card and the competency report. However, it is up to the schools to decide when to use them.

In Cycle One, the school could use these forms of communication for the first and the fifth communications. In Cycle Two, the first communication of the year might not necessarily be a report card. This would be justified by the fact that it is more difficult to obtain sufficient pertinent data on the status of the development of competencies after only a few weeks of the cycle or year.

It is up to the school to determine the form that these communications will take given its own evaluation standards and procedures. Whenever in the cycle or year the school chooses to use other forms of communication, it is essential that the information given to parents and students be structured and meaningful, and that it allow for necessary adjustments. In all cases, the school should keep a record of these communications (for example, a document indicating the date on which the teacher met with the parents, etc.) in the student's file.

Among other forms of communication, the student's learning and evaluation file and the logbook are relevant examples of communication tools that may be used alone or to supplement information in the

report card or competency report. These forms of communication may be used judiciously if they have already been part of classroom activity. Other types of communication may also be used, such as anecdotal record.

Learning and evaluation file

Whatever the format of the learning and evaluation file, it provides information on the student's main achievements and feedback from teachers and peers as well as from the student. The feedback, whether it is in the form of assessment grids or various comments, reflects the strengths and aspects to be improved in learning. The information presented also makes it possible to observe the progress made by the student. It is advisable to involve the student in preparing the learning and evaluation file, and he or she should be given specific information on the nature of the documents to be included therein.

Student's logbook

The logbook is a tool in which students may regularly record various information on their learning, and it may be used for communicating results in the course of the cycle or year. It allows students to regularly assess their learning experience by recording the learning they achieve, the questions they ask, the difficulties they encounter, the challenges they set themselves, their major successes, etc. The student's logbook is also a tool for discussions between teacher and student. If shown to parents, it allows them to follow their child's learning and informs them about the teacher's reactions. In order to provide information of quality on students' learning, the teacher should give students clear guidelines on how to write in their logbooks, which should also contain the teacher's own observations. They should also ensure that the information recorded by students in the course of learning is pertinent and accurate.

Anecdotal record

The school could also use an anecdotal record to provide an overview of the student's strengths and areas for improvement. The anecdotal record should include the teacher's comments on significant achievements or areas that need more work, as applicable.

Although the learning and evaluation file, the logbook or the anecdotal record can be provided to parents to inform them about their children's academic progress, teachers may use these communication tools in meetings with parents where students are present or give them out at the same time as report cards. Whatever method is chosen, these tools should provide an opportunity for parents and their children to discuss progress made in terms of learning. It should also be pointed out that the use of communication tools other than the report card and the competency report is not mandatory and that the school could use other report cards.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that a single communication tool cannot provide adequate information on the variety and complexity of learning at different points in the cycle or year. It is often necessary to supplement it with communication tools chosen by the school. In addition, since communicating results is in a sense a window on evaluation, tools should be chosen and developed that reflect as faithfully as possible student learning and how it is evaluated.

The table below illustrates the possibilities in terms of communicating results with regard to subject-specific competencies, for Secondary Cycle One and Cycle Two.

Table 18: Communicating results in Secondary Cycle One and Secondary Cycle Two

Types of communication	Nature of information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and evaluation file • Logbook • Anecdotal record <p>The information may be sent home or presented in parent-student-teacher meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of learning based on assessments of certain tasks (generally limited data). • Strengths, difficulties encountered and aspects of learning to be improved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report card <p>The report card may be accompanied by the learning and evaluation file and the logbook.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of the development of the competencies expressed as a rating, based, for example, on a scale of degree of satisfaction with regard to the requirements of the tasks (competencies for which sufficient pertinent data are available). • Student's strengths and challenges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency report <p>The competency report may be accompanied by the learning and evaluation file and the logbook.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency levels attained expressed through scales of competency levels prescribed by the Minister (all competencies). • Student's strengths and challenges. • The result in the subject expressed in Cycle One as a rating or a mark, and in Cycle Two as a mark. • Credits granted. • Decision on promotion from Cycle One to Cycle Two.

CHAPTER VII
PLANNING EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

The Québec Education Program (QEP), the cycle-based organization of learning and the orientations set out in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning, require a new approach to evaluation planning. First, it is important to note that the Policy reaffirms the importance of planning, both to determine how evaluation should be carried out and to ensure the validity of the judgments made concerning student learning.

Even though planning is the first stage in the evaluation process, as specified in the Policy, it is discussed in the last chapter of this framework. Before evaluation can be planned, all the elements connected to the evaluation of learning under the QEP must be properly understood, and these elements are dealt with in the preceding chapters.

This chapter sets out the methodological bases for the two levels of planning: overall planning and detailed planning. These bases define the overall logic and main elements that structure evaluation planning, and apply to both cycles of secondary education for the QEP as a whole.

Given the fact that planning is changed under the new vision of evaluation of learning, the indications given here are intended more as guidelines than rules. They may be applied gradually, to give teachers time to assimilate them and try them out in various ways.

1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PLANNING EVALUATION

Before looking at the methodological bases for planning evaluation, it is important to review the reasons that make it necessary to introduce a new approach.

The need to revise evaluation planning

For objective-based programs, designed in an annual format, teachers generally plan learning activities followed by evaluation activities to check whether the objectives covered in a given period have been attained. The learning sequence, and therefore the order of the evaluation activities, is generally determined by the teaching materials used. The evaluation of learning occurs at precise times: at the end of a module, stage, term or year. Decisions about the content of each evaluation and its weighting in the final result of each student are made by one or more teachers, the school team or the school board.

The introduction of the QEP, which makes competencies learning targets, as well as cycle-based organization, makes it necessary to review the current approach to planning used for objective-based programs. In terms of learning, planning must lead to an optimal development of competencies, and must contribute to the continuity and integration of learning. In addition, several orientations of the Policy modify the vision of evaluation planning: evaluation integrated into the learning process, the evaluation of competencies, the role of the teacher's judgment, the preponderance of evaluation as a support for learning, the sharing of responsibility for evaluation, etc. The methodological bases presented in Sections 2 and 3 of this chapter illustrate how this renewed vision of evaluation influences evaluation planning.

Planning as part of the evaluation process

As described in the Policy, planning is one of four stages in the evaluation process, which consists of:

Evaluation Process	
➤	planning
➤	information gathering and interpretation
➤	judgment
➤	decision/action

Rigorous planning of evaluation ensures that sound judgments are made concerning student learning. Planning has repercussions on the decisions and actions of all the individuals involved in the evaluation of learning, and therefore represents an essential stage in the evaluation process. It involves two main steps:

1. Establish the goal of the evaluation.
2. Choose the appropriate means of evaluation according to the chosen goal by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining the evaluation focuses in keeping with the QEP • establishing timing and methods to support the gathering and interpretation of information, and to support judgment and decision making

The two levels of planning

Planning described in this chapter has two levels:

1. Overall planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a continuum of learning and evaluation situations to develop and monitor competencies during and at the end of each cycle • Choose evaluation instruments • Establish guidelines for communications with parents and students
2. Detailed planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the learning targeted by each learning and evaluation situation • Structure complex tasks and knowledge-based activities • Choose and develop evaluation tools

The specific features of overall planning and detailed planning are discussed in Sections 2 and 3.

The way in which the methodological bases presented in this chapter are actually applied may vary from school to school. Although, logically, overall planning should be completed before detailed planning, it is possible that some schools may wish to start by experimenting with the detailed planning of some learning and evaluation situations to gradually assimilate new evaluation practices. Whatever they decide to do, it is essential that all those involved in the evaluation of learning begin to reflect on the issues as soon as possible. A lack of planning, or of a proper examination of the issues, could have negative consequences for students and teachers: difficulty making judgments about competencies, limited possibilities for differentiation, insufficient consideration of cross-curricular competencies, etc.

Shared responsibility for planning evaluation

The introduction of cycles, and of learning that crosses the borders between subjects, such as broad areas of learning and cross-curricular competencies, as well as the need for interdisciplinarity, have changed the division of responsibilities for planning evaluation.

To ensure the continuity of learning and evaluation from one cycle to the next, as well as within each cycle and year, evaluation planning may be entrusted to the school team, a cycle team, a group of teachers

teaching the same subject, or a single teacher. Responsibilities for planning evaluation vary depending on the level concerned, as summarized in the following table.

Table 19: Planning evaluation: A shared responsibility

Overall planning	Responsibility
Planning of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of broad areas of learning • Treatment of cross-curricular competencies • Treatment of subject-specific competencies 	Cycle team or school team Cycle team or school team Teachers of the subject concerned
Planning of evaluation tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of guidelines for evaluation tools 	Single teacher or teachers of the subject concerned
Planning communication of results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of evaluation standards and procedures related to the communication of results 	School principal (in accordance with teachers' proposals)
Detailed planning	Responsibility
Planning of a learning and evaluation situation	One or more teachers of the subject concerned

Flexible, progressive character of evaluation planning

Overall planning, like detailed evaluation planning, needs to remain flexible in order to be adapted to the learning realities faced by students. At certain strategic times during a cycle, on a regular basis, a check must be made to see how far students have progressed compared with what was planned, and to make adjustments as required. In particular, at the end of the first year of each cycle, the situation should be assessed and, if necessary, appropriate changes should be made to the plan for the second year of the cycle. Planning under the responsibility of individual teachers should allow changes to be made in response to specific student needs, or to deal with unexpected events, for example to take advantage of a situation that is in the news. An overly rigid approach could create constraints for both teachers and students.

2. OVERALL PLANNING OF EVALUATION

Overall planning involves, first, defining the continuum of learning and evaluation situations that will allow students to acquire the learning specified in the QEP, and to gather the records needed for support for learning and for recognizing competencies. This set of learning and evaluation situations structures the general treatment of learning and evaluation focuses at different times during the cycle or year. Overall planning also allows appropriate evaluation tools to be selected, and defines the communications to be provided to students and parents.

Decisions with regard to overall planning should preferably be made before instruction begins. However, some decisions may be reviewed to take into account observations made as instruction progresses.

Overall planning is placed under the responsibility of the school team, the cycle team or the teachers in a given subject, and becomes the foundation for detailed planning.

2.1 Planning a continuum of learning and evaluation situations

Since a single learning and evaluation situation cannot include everything needed to develop a competency, the situations must be designed and organized as part of a progression to allow students to build up the competency gradually.

The introduction of a set of learning and evaluation situations requires teachers to agree on the way in which students should acquire the learning at different times during the cycle or year. At this point, it is not necessary to detail each learning and evaluation situation. Instead, teachers must define a general outline for development and determine the scope of each situation in order to ensure a continuous progression of learning. The main features of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations are described below.

Planning learning and evaluation situations to allow students to acquire the learning prescribed by the QEP

By planning a set of learning and evaluation situations, teachers have an opportunity to reflect together on the way in which they wish to deal with the components of the QEP, namely, the broad areas of learning, the cross-curricular and subject-specific competencies, and the characteristic features of these competencies, including their key features, evaluation criteria, program content, end-of-cycle outcomes, etc.

All the components of the QEP offer possibilities for establishing a continuum of learning and evaluation situations. Some schools will choose to use the broad areas of learning, others the cross-curricular competencies, and others specific subjects. Whatever the choice made, it must lead to exhaustive coverage of the learning stipulated in the QEP. The following suggestions illustrate some of the possibilities.

Broad areas of learning

Since the broad areas of learning go beyond the boundaries of individual subjects, it is up to the school team or cycle team to decide how they will be dealt with when completing the overall planning of evaluation.

In the chapter of the QEP that discusses broad areas of learning, various ways of taking them into account are suggested. To understand the possibilities, readers should refer to the QEP itself.

Because they are the responsibility of all school staff, the broad areas of learning can be addressed in school and classroom life in a variety of ways: while teaching the subjects; by means of interdisciplinary projects; within the framework of the school's educational project; in everyday activities; in cooperation with the complementary educational services, and so on.

The planning of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations offers teachers an ideal opportunity to consider how the issues that arise from the broad areas of learning can be used to best advantage in individual subjects. From this point of view, various choices can be made concerning ways to take the broad areas of learning into consideration within learning situations. However, it is possible that some schools will decide to consider the issues associated with the broad areas of learning only at the detailed planning stage of learning and evaluation situations. In this case, the cycle team should regularly monitor the way in which the broad areas of learning are dealt with to ensure that the related learning content is sufficiently covered in all subjects throughout the cycle or year.

Cross-curricular competencies

The way in which the cross-curricular competencies are dealt with, in terms of their development and monitoring, must be decided in advance. The overall planning of evaluation enables teachers to decide how learning related to the cross-curricular competencies will be reported to parents and students, and to determine the related responsibilities in preparing for joint actions. Possible ways to deal with the cross-curricular competencies, especially at the planning stage, are given in Chapter 3.

Subject-specific competencies

There are various ways to use subject-specific competencies to ensure that they are developed and that students meet the end-of-cycle or end-of-year requirements. It is necessary that teachers of a given subject agree on a model for introducing the subject-specific competencies over the course of the cycle or year. By doing so, they will ensure the quality of their pedagogical interventions, provided that the students are given all possible opportunities to develop the competencies determined in the QEP.

Since the subject-specific competencies are closely linked, they are generally developed in a manner that takes their complementarity into account throughout the cycle or year. This means that the treatment of subject-specific competencies must not lead to fragmented learning. However, on pedagogical grounds, it is possible that the way in which they are dealt with varies during the cycle or year, or that they are not all targeted at the same time or with the same degree of intensity. In some subjects, at a given moment in a cycle or year, it may be appropriate to isolate a competency in order to emphasize the required learning. Then, gradually, the learning associated with the other competencies could be introduced in a range of combinations.

The following examples illustrate possible ways of dealing with competencies in specific subjects.

Example: Dealing with competencies in specific subjects

<p>In Social Sciences, the students must have acquired components of competency 1, <i>Examines social phenomena from a historical perspective</i>, before beginning competency 2, <i>Interprets social phenomena using the historical method</i>.</p>

In English Language Arts, some parts of the cycle could be devoted to the competency *Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn*. In addition, the competency *Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts* could be dealt with as a complement to the competency *Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes*.

In Mathematics, as in most other subjects, the competencies are generally dealt with simultaneously. However, it is possible, at times, to target specific competencies in order to highlight the related learning.

Although the manner of dealing with the key features and evaluation criteria associated with a subject-specific competency is a matter for detailed planning, it can be addressed succinctly when planning a continuum of learning and evaluation situations. This allows teachers to share their understanding of subject-specific competencies. By focusing on the manner of dealing with key features and evaluation criteria, the teachers can avoid putting too much or too little emphasis on certain aspects of the competency, and plan increasingly stringent requirements to take the progression of learning into account.

End-of-cycle outcomes and scales of competency levels

Since end-of-cycle outcomes are a fixed reference for defining the requirements for competency development, they must be taken into account as part of the overall planning of evaluation. Scales of competency levels are also a reference, since they establish the thresholds that must be met. Outcomes and scales of competency levels are useful in setting up learning situations that foster an ongoing progression of learning. Overall planning, once again, gives teachers an opportunity to share their points of view concerning student outcomes, and to define a few realistic reference points for the gradation of learning.

Program content

The establishment of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations also provides an opportunity for determining the way in which the program content for each subject will be taken into account. Decisions concerning the way in which program content will be taken into consideration over the cycle or year are based on the fact that program content is one of several resources needed for the development of subject-specific competencies, and not an end in itself. The discussions concerning ways of dealing with program content complete the decision-making process on the manner of dealing with competencies, which are the primary targets of learning and evaluation.

Planning adequate coverage of program content (knowledge, techniques, strategies, etc.) during learning and evaluation situations, by the teachers of the subject concerned, ensures that there will be no gaps or overlapping. It also helps ensure a suitable balance of learning at different times during the cycle or year, for both teachers and students. In addition, since teachers do not necessarily teach the same students over both years of each cycle, joint planning helps ensure coherence from one year to the next.

The manner of dealing with program content during each cycle or year is influenced by the construction of knowledge for a given subject. The establishment of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations must take this into account. For example, in Geography or *Français, langue seconde*, learning is often constructed on the basis of themes, whereas in Mathematics, Science and Technology, learning is constructed as a network.

During the overall planning of evaluation, after identifying the main learning and evaluation focuses, especially by looking at ways to deal with the components of the QEP, the teachers will have to define the characteristics of the learning and evaluation situations that make up the continuum. In particular, they will have to determine the type, number, timing, etc., of the situations.

The situations as a whole must be suitable for gathering relevant and sufficient data to make judgments concerning support for learning and recognition of competencies.

The Policy on the Evaluation of Learning defines the two purposes of evaluation: support for learning and recognition of competencies. The establishment of a continuum of situations requires that the type of data to be gathered be predetermined in order to justify judgments concerning competency development during and at the end of a cycle or year.

To gather relevant data on competency development, it is necessary to plan situations that require students to act and to mobilize their resources in a relatively autonomous way to complete complex tasks. The situations generally require the use of competencies in their entirety, and present the full range and complexity of the contexts in which competencies are applied. For example, in *English Language Arts*, the continuum of situations must cover all the situation families.

Although complex tasks are essential to promote competency development, other activities may be planned that focus on specific aspects of a competency, such as knowledge. Most often, these activities are integrated into other situations, but they can be planned independently. The gathering of data on the knowledge acquired by students will facilitate diagnostic evaluation and regulation. Although the information on knowledge must not be used to make judgments concerning competencies, it is useful in determining the strengths and learning difficulties of individual students.

Regardless of the way in which students acquire the knowledge underlying a competency, the overall planning of evaluation requires the teachers of a given subject to choose and use teaching materials. While discussing the possibilities, they can analyze ways to integrate exercises or applications that target the acquisition of knowledge.

To support a judgment concerning competency development during and at the end of a cycle or year, teachers must be able to rely on records that are relevant, and also sufficient. A planned continuum gives students many different opportunities to exercise and demonstrate their competencies. Because of the close links between learning and evaluation, situations whose dominant aim is learning can generally also be used to gather the necessary data. It is up to the teachers in a given subject to determine how many of these situations will be included, and at what times during the cycle or year.

However, as pointed out in Chapter 1, it is possible to plan situations whose dominant aim is evaluation at certain times during the cycle or year. For example, toward the end of the first year of a cycle, an evaluation situation can be used to verify the learning completed by a student and facilitate the transition to the next year in the cycle, while defining the support the student will need. It is also sometimes necessary, toward the end of a cycle or year, to include in the continuum an evaluation situation which, combined with the learning and evaluation situations that best represent the student's learning, will help ensure the validity of the judgments made for the recognition of competencies.

During the overall planning of evaluation, the teachers of a given subject can agree on the nature and amount of data that must be gathered, the times in the cycle when it will be gathered, and the way in which it will be considered in making judgments concerning the competency level attained. To ensure justice, the items taken into account to recognize competencies must be of the same nature for all the

students, but the items themselves may vary from one student to the next. Here is an example for Secondary English Language Arts.

Example: Nature of the items to consider in the recognition of competencies

Subject: English Language Arts

Competency	Nature of items	Situation types
<i>Reads and listens to written, spoken and media texts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Production, type A ▪ Production, type B ▪ Production, type C 	<p>Acquire information from everyday texts</p> <p>Support a critical assessment by applying criteria to literary and everyday texts</p> <p>Discover a literary universe by exploring narrative or poetic texts</p>
<i>Writes a variety of genres for personal and social purposes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Production, type A ▪ Production, type B ▪ Production, type C 	<p>Provide information by giving descriptions</p> <p>Support a point of view by providing justification</p> <p>Create plots</p>
<i>Uses language/talk to communicate and to learn</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Production, type A ▪ Production, type B ▪ Production, type C 	<p>Acquire information by listening</p> <p>Provide information by speaking individually</p> <p>Defend an idea in an oral interaction</p>

The continuum of learning and evaluation situations helps construct competencies gradually to allow students to meet end-of-cycle or end-of-year requirements.

When a set of learning and evaluation situations are established, the links between them must be highlighted to ensure that they are correctly placed in the cycle or year.

Several elements must be considered when organizing learning and evaluation situations. First, the situations as a whole must reflect the desired progression of learning. It is therefore necessary to consider the end-of-cycle or end-of-year requirements determined for each of the competency levels established by the scales to ensure that the situations chosen will allow students to meet the requirements, according to their abilities. Next, the targets of each situation must be sufficiently distinct to provide an increasing challenge for students and allow them to demonstrate significant competency development.

Other factors must be considered when defining the position of each situation in the cycle or year, such as the school timetable and the timing of the communications provided to parents or students. Especially complex learning should be introduced at times when the students are the most receptive.

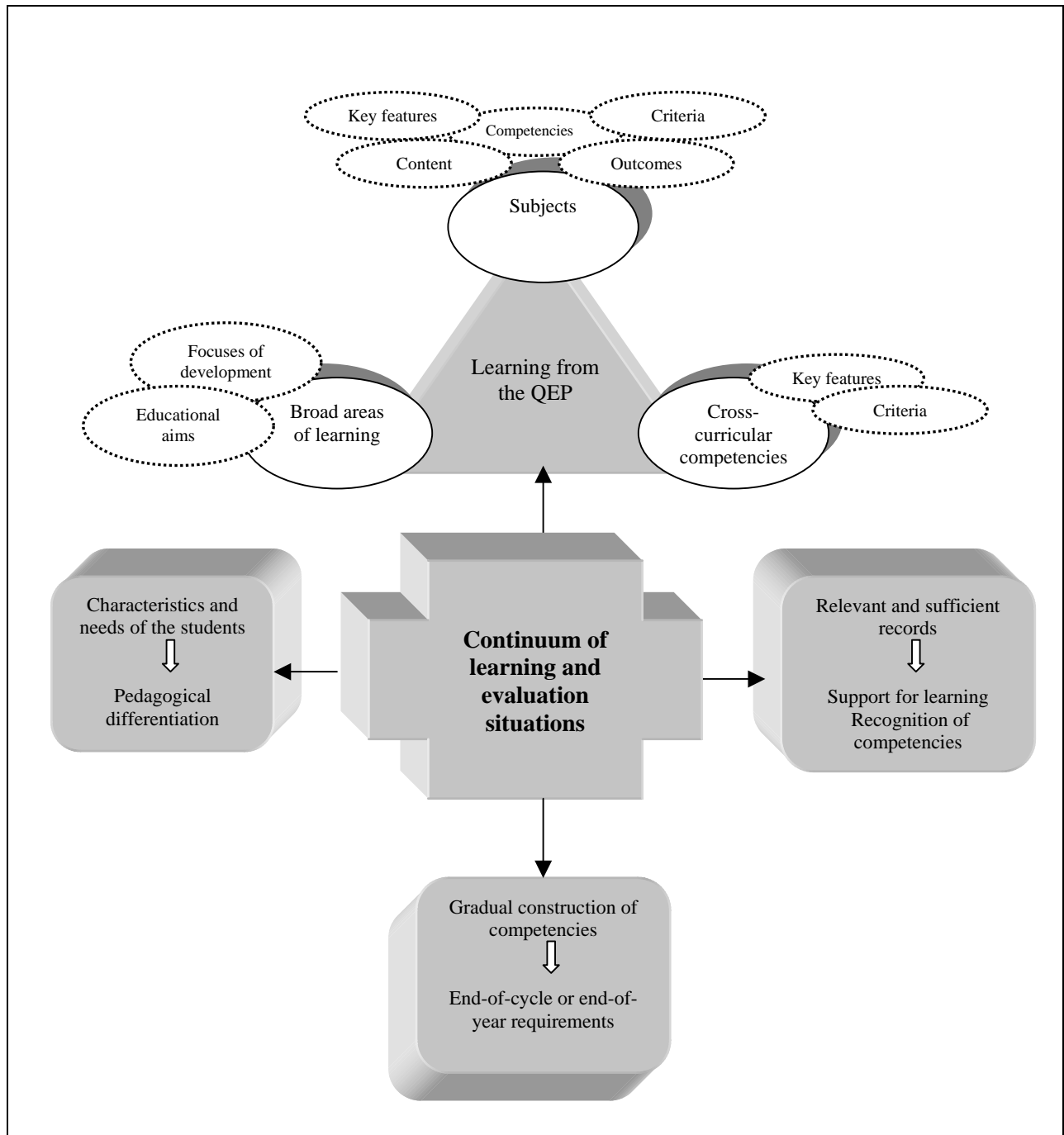
The continuum of situations takes into account the characteristics of the students concerned, especially their prior learning and their needs.

The importance of respecting differences in the field of evaluation, as specified in the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning and the special education policy, requires teachers, during the overall planning of evaluation, to look at ways to differentiate learning and evaluation situations to meet the specific needs of students. The chapter on differentiated evaluation contains specific and useful information on this topic.

More specifically, in order to plan a continuum of situations, teachers must have a realistic portrait of their students. It is therefore necessary for them to have access to the most recent competency report or individualized education plan, if any, for each student. In addition, teachers may consider it useful to include a situation in the continuum, at the beginning of the cycle or year, to verify their students' prior learning.

The following diagram illustrates the main features of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations.

Characteristics of a continuum of learning and evaluation situations



2.2 Planning evaluation tools

During the overall planning of evaluation, teachers can also set joint guidelines for the features of the tools they intend to use to gather and interpret information, and to make and record judgments. It may be necessary to analyze the tools available as a first step, to assess whether they can be used as they currently exist, whether they should be adapted or whether new tools should be designed.

Evaluation grids

Grids to be used in learning and evaluation situations are designed and planned during the detailed planning of evaluation, because they are linked to the tasks that make up each situation. However, during the overall planning of evaluation, teachers may agree on shared requirements for all situations, and outline generic evaluation grids. The grids designed by the teachers of a given subject can be used later by individual teachers to design specific grids for each situation. This approach gives teachers another opportunity to share their understanding of the evaluation criteria, outcomes and scales of competency levels of the QEP, besides allowing comparable requirements to be established by all the teachers of a given subject. The chapter on learning and evaluation situations offers useful suggestions for creating grids.

In addition, since students may play an active role in evaluation over the course of a cycle or year, teachers must also specify the characteristics of the tools to be given to students and the ways in which they will be used.

During the overall planning of evaluation, teachers must also decide on the tools that will be used to make judgments during and at the end of each cycle. The features of the tools and the ways in which they are to be used are specified in the chapters on scales and grading. Please refer to Chapters 4 and 5.

Tools for recording information

As part of the overall planning of evaluation, the school team, the cycle team or the teachers of a given subject must define ways to record information on student learning. A structured approach will ensure that the data gathered and interpreted will be used effectively to make judgments.

The tools used to record information come in a variety of forms, depending on whether the student or the teacher is responsible for recording information. Teachers must choose the tools best suited to the class concerned, and help the students design and use their own recording tools. Tools such as the following may prove useful: the student's learning and evaluation file and the teacher's record book. Used in a complementary way, they help improve the quality of the recording process and the credibility of the judgments made concerning competency development during and at the end of a cycle or year.

The tools to record information are used primarily to organize the information gathered on student learning in regard to competencies developed, since the judgments made during the cycle or year are based on their development. In addition, the tools support the feedback given to students concerning the situations in which they have developed their competencies, and the related evaluation criteria. Other information should also be recorded, such as the nature of the tasks or activities, their relative importance, if applicable, their degree of complexity, the degree of autonomy displayed by each student and, where applicable, the nature of the data evaluated partly by students and their peers.

Learning and evaluation file

At the secondary level, students can make a contribution to the recording of data on their own learning. The learning and evaluation file is an especially interesting tool, given that:

- it helps record significant data on student learning, in terms of knowledge acquisition and competency development
- it contributes to the value and recognition of students' various achievements and work
- it helps students become responsible for their own learning
- it gives students an opportunity to exercise critical judgment, especially by playing a complementary role alongside the teacher in the evaluation process

The learning and evaluation file usually includes elements such as:

- information on the subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies that the student is expected to develop in a subject or activity
- information on learning related to the broad areas of learning
- the evaluation criteria used to make a judgment about the quality of a student's learning in connection with specific competencies
- the student's work and achievements, or significant and representative records of the student's learning
- feedback (observations, assessments) by the student's teachers or other people involved in the student's education
- a self-evaluation by the student, together with the student's own thoughts and observations on what learning he or she considers he or she has acquired, developed, integrated and transferred, and where improvement is needed
- feedback and evaluation from fellow students, in connection with cooperative learning
- comments by the student's parents, where applicable

During the overall planning of evaluation, the cycle team or the teachers of a given subject may establish joint guidelines on the establishment of learning and evaluation files. The following example illustrates how information on student learning should be recorded in the learning and evaluation file.

Example: Recording Information on Student Learning

In this example, the teacher records assessments for each student in relation to the competency concerned and the related criteria, for each learning situation completed by the students. The teacher uses an assessment scale to give an opinion concerning each criterion. The data recorded will be used, in a later report, to make a judgment concerning the status of the development of the targeted competency. It is also possible to note the progress made by the student from one situation to the next.

Subject: Mathematics, Secondary Cycle One

Competency: *Solves a situational problem*

Name of student: _____ Group: _____					
Learning period: from _____ to _____					
Report no.: _____					
Learning and evaluation situations	Situation 1	Situation 2	Situation 3	Situation 4	Judgment concerning all situations
Criteria					
Oral or written explanation showing that the student understands the situational problem					
Mobilization of mathematical knowledge appropriate to the situational problem					
Development of a solution (i.e. a procedure and a final answer) appropriate to the situational problem					

Teacher’s record book

In contrast to the learning and evaluation file, which records the learning of one student at a time, the teacher’s record book is used for all the students in the class. It allows the teacher to record feedback regularly on the quality of the tasks completed in various learning and evaluation situations. This way of organizing feedback facilitates the transformation of assessments made in the course of learning into a judgment concerning the status of the development of subject-specific competencies, for use in a report. In addition, the record book can be used at all times by the teacher to help decide what regulation is required based on the situation of individual students or the group as a whole.

Other elements may also be recorded by teachers, such as

- the broad areas of learning covered
- the cross-curricular competency or competencies evaluated
- the key features of the competency

- the general characteristics of the complex tasks and learning activities offered as part of the learning and evaluation situations
- the degree of autonomy demonstrated by the student in completing the tasks, etc.

The following example illustrates how information can be recorded for a group as a whole.

Example: Recording Information on Learning for a Group as a Whole

In this example, the teacher records his or her observations in relation to the competency concerned and the related criteria. For each student, the teacher may record the presence or absence of observable behaviours.

Subject: Physical Education and Health, Secondary Cycle One

Competency 2: *Interacts with others in different physical activity settings*

Observations by teacher

Evaluation criteria →	Justification of team's chosen strategy		Performance of appropriate individual movements to achieve the group or team goal			Demonstration of fair play in different stages of the activity	Determination of elements that can be reapplied in subsequent activities	Evaluation of own contribution and that of his or her peers and of the strategy, based on results				
	Observable elements →	Names	Describes the role of each player	Describes the actions and tactics selected	Applies game rules and safety rules			Performs actions on the basis of the strategy selected	Communicates with partners	Shows fair play	Identifies elements worth maintaining in other activities	Determines own strengths and challenges
• • •												

2.3 Planning communications to parents and students

The cycle team must also plan the way in which student learning will be recorded in communications made during and at the end of each cycle. It will have to decide what will be reported at various times during the cycle or year, the intervals at which judgments are made depending on the characteristics of each competency, and the way in which the information gathered on competency development is presented in the reports. All decisions made concerning the communication of results must comply with the Basic school regulation. Please refer to Chapter 6, on communicating results, for more details.

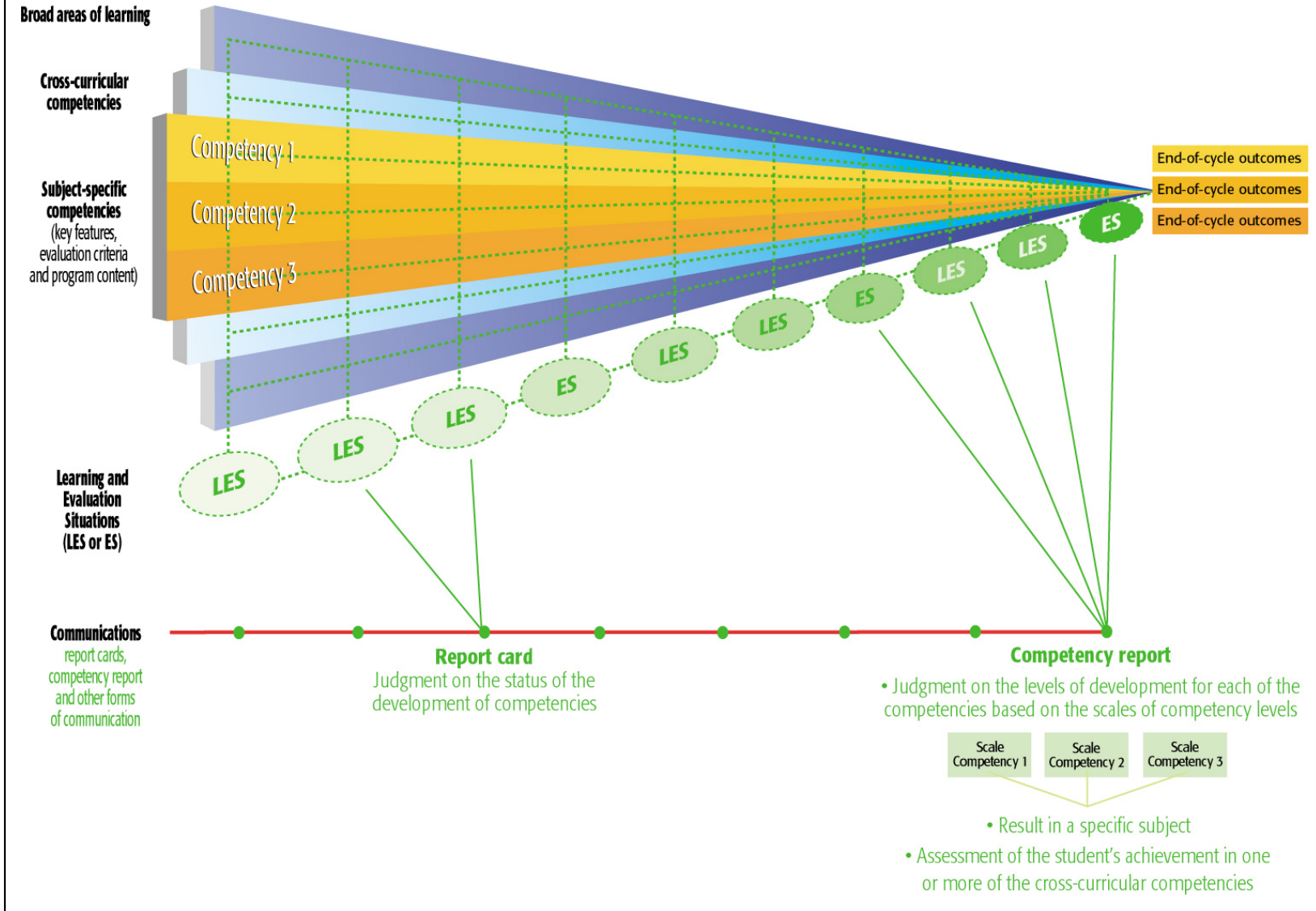
During the overall planning of evaluation, the cycle team must also determine what information on learning should be carried over from one year or cycle to the next to ensure smooth academic progress for each student.

2.4 An integrated vision of the overall planning of evaluation

The following diagram presents an overview of the elements to be taken into account in the overall planning of evaluation. The three elements on which the overall planning of evaluation is based are

- the continuum of learning and evaluation situations
- evaluation tools
- communications to parents and students

Planning learning and evaluation



3. PLANNING A LEARNING AND EVALUATION SITUATION

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a learning and evaluation situation comprises a set of tasks requiring the mobilization or consolidation of resources, and learning activities to acquire or structure resources.

A learning and evaluation situation can be planned based on subject-specific competencies, the broad areas of learning or cross-curricular competencies. In general, teachers plan learning and evaluation situations one at a time. They may also plan all the situations for a specific stage. The detailed planning of evaluation must take into account the choices made at the overall planning stage, and is under the responsibility of one or more teachers.

Whatever approach is taken when planning, it is necessary to define the learning targeted by the situation, and to establish the characteristics of the complex tasks and the activities that will allow students to acquire the learning. The tasks and activities take into account the interests of the students and contribute to the development of the subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies targeted, as well as the learning targeted by the broad areas of learning, if applicable.

The planning of a learning and evaluation situation also provides an opportunity to decide how to approach the key features and evaluation criteria for the competencies targeted by the situation. Although competencies must be dealt with globally by considering all of their key features, specific features may be targeted at certain times during the cycle because specific learning is required. Even when a key feature is isolated in this way, learning related to the other features may still be covered. However, since the development and exercise of a competency requires that connections be made between all of its key features, students should be offered sufficient opportunities to demonstrate that they have acquired the competency globally.

Since the key features and evaluation criteria are closely linked, the same principle applies to the criteria, which are an essential reference for evaluating a competency. A learning and evaluation situation can be useful to determine the criteria used to assess the various tasks of the situation and to select the evaluation grids to support the gathering and interpretation of information. The grids associated with the various tasks will be based on the generic grids designed as part of the overall planning of evaluation.

The following master grid and explanations illustrate the underlying logic and elements that structure the planning of a learning and evaluation situation in Mathematics.

Example: Planning a learning and evaluation situation

Subject: Mathematics

- This situation is based on a specific subject, and involves the three subject-specific competencies in Mathematics.
- The first column of the master grid shows the main tasks and activities of the situation and the related learning:
 - a workshop involving manipulation to explore the properties of the circle
 - a task, *Let's talk about circles*, which helps structure knowledge about the properties of the circle
 - a complex task, *Fugitive alert*, which requires students to mobilize resources related to the perimeter and area of a circle
 - a complex task, *Honorary distinctions*, which helps students consolidate resources, in particular by applying formulas.
- The master grid highlights the way in which the key features and evaluation criteria for the targeted competencies are dealt with in the learning and evaluation situation. It should be noted that, in complex tasks, although all the key features and evaluation criteria are considered, only some of them receive special emphasis. For example, for the competency *Solves a situational problem*, the focus is on the key features *Decodes the elements that can be processed mathematically* and *Shares information related to the solution*. All the criteria for the competency *Solves a situational problem* have been selected, compared with two for the competency *Uses mathematical reasoning* and one for the competency *Communicates by using mathematical language*.
- The tasks for the situation also reflect the decisions made concerning program content, as illustrated in the planning grid. The elements of the program content have been structured on the basis of prerequisites and recurrent concepts and processes in the various branches of mathematics involved, taking into account students' prior learning.
- The planning grid for a situation also gives information on the ways in which information is gathered and interpreted. For example, as part of the structuring activity *Let's talk about circles*, a mini-test on the properties of the circle is included. It should be noted that observations made at this time will be used for the regulation of learning, and must not be used to make a judgment on the development of the competencies concerned.
- The planning grid shows that the situation also involves a cross-curricular competency, *Cooperates with others*, and the broad areas of learning *Personal and Career Planning*—especially with regard to the focus of development *Familiarity with the world of work, social roles, and occupations and trades*—and *Citizenship and Community Life*. In addition, as with subject-specific competencies, the planning grid specifies the criteria used to monitor the development of cross-curricular competencies according to the different tasks for the situation. For example, in the competency *Cooperates with others*, two criteria are used in the activity *Honorary distinctions*, whereas for the complex task *Fugitive alert*, all the criteria for the competency are considered.

Master grid for planning a learning and evaluation situation

Tasks and activities of the situation	Key features and evaluation criteria for the competency			Program content	Evaluation means and tools	Broad area of learning and focus of development	Cross-curricular competencies	
	Solves a situational problem	Uses mathematical reasoning	Communicates by using mathematical language				Criteria selected	Evaluation means and tools
<p>Workshop involving manipulation</p> <p>Task to explore the properties of the circle</p>		<p>Emphasis on the key features <i>Establishes conjectures</i> and <i>Constructs proofs</i></p> <p>Criteria selected: 1 and 2</p>	<p>Emphasis on the key feature <i>Produces a mathematical message</i></p> <p>Criterion selected: 2</p>	<p>Geometry</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circle and sector (radius, diameter, chord, arc, central angle) - Measurement (perimeter) 	Observation without instruments		<p><i>Cooperates with others</i></p> <p>Criterion selected: 1</p>	Observation
<p>Let's talk about circles</p> <p>Task that structures knowledge about the properties of the circle</p>		<p>Emphasis on the key feature <i>Forms and applies networks of mathematical concepts and processes</i></p> <p>Criterion selected: 2</p>	<p>Emphasis on the key feature <i>Produces a mathematical message</i></p> <p>Criterion selected: 2</p>	<p>Geometry</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main segments and lines: bisector, perpendicular bisector - Circle and sector (radius, diameter, chord, arc, central angle) - Measurement (perimeter, area of circle) <p>Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geometric constructions 	Mini-test on the properties of the circle			
<p>Fugitive alert</p> <p>Situational problem (complex task) intended to mobilize knowledge relating to the perimeter and area of a sector of a circle</p>	<p>Emphasis on the key features <i>Decodes the elements that can be processed mathematically</i> and <i>Shares information related to the solution</i></p> <p>Criteria selected: 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Emphasis on the key feature <i>Constructs proofs</i></p> <p>Criteria selected: 4, and 5</p>	<p>Emphasis on the key feature <i>Produces a mathematical message</i></p> <p>Criterion selected: 2</p>	<p>Arithmetic</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality relation: meaning, properties and rules for transforming numerical equalities (balancing equalities) - Inverse operations: square and square root - Ratio and rate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratios and equivalent rates • Unit rate - Proportion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality of ratios and rates • Ratio and proportionality coefficient <p>Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognizing a proportional situation - Solving a proportional situation <p>Algebra</p> <p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality, equation and unknown <p>Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Numerical evaluation of an algebraic expression - Solving first-degree equations with one unknown - Validation of the solution by substitution 	<p>Analysis of student production (logbook) and observation using an assessment grid</p> <p>Co-evaluation</p>	<p><i>Personal and Career Planning</i></p> <p><i>Familiarity with the world of work, social roles, and occupations and trades</i></p>	<p><i>Cooperates with others</i></p> <p>Criteria selected: 1, 2 and 3</p>	

Tasks and activities of the situation	Key features and evaluation criteria for the competency			Program content	Evaluation means and tools	Broad area of learning and focus of development	Cross-curricular competencies	
	Solves a situational problem	Uses mathematical reasoning	Communicates by using mathematical language				Criteria selected	Evaluation means and tools
				Geometry Concepts: - Plane figures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle and sector (radius, diameter, arc, central angle) • Measurement (degree: angle and arc) • Measurement (circumference, area of circle) • Choice of unit of measure for lengths or areas Processes: - Geometric constructions - Finding unknown measurements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumference of a circle and arc length • Area of circles or sectors 				
Honorary distinctions Application situation (complex task) intended to consolidate knowledge about applying formulas (finding unknown measurements)		Emphasis on the key feature <i>Forms and applies networks of mathematical concepts and processes</i> Criteria selected: 2, 3, and 4	Emphasis on the key feature <i>Produces a mathematical message</i> Criterion selected: 2	Arithmetic - Equality relation: meaning, properties and rules for transforming numerical equalities (balancing equalities) - Inverse operations: square and square root	Analysis of student production	<i>Citizenship and Community Life</i>	<i>Cooperates with others</i> Criteria selected: 2 and 4	Observation
				Algebra Concepts: - Equality, equation and unknown Processes: - Numerical evaluation of an algebraic expression - Solving first-degree equations with one unknown - Validation of the solution by substitution				
				Geometry Concepts: - Plane figures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle (radius, diameter) • Measurement (circumference, area of circle) • Relationships between SI units of length • Relationships between SI units of area Processes: - Geometric construction				

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