



***Association for Achievement and Improvement
through Assessment***

Leading in learning through Assessment

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13th April 2015

Orlando Soulsby
Assessment Policy
Standards and Testing Agency
Department for Education,
2nd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings,
Great Smith Street,
London, SW1P 3BT

Dear Orlando

Thank you for your email of 1st April and for the opportunity to outline how the Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment (AAIA) could contribute to the work of the Commission.

As you will have seen from our previous correspondence, many of our members work in an advisory capacity with schools and they have a wealth of experience over many years supporting schools in developing and implementing assessment policy and practice, both statutory and non-statutory. The wide experience and expertise within AAIA are increasingly being supplemented by the membership of teachers who are either joining as individuals or as part of school membership.

Recently, members have been working actively with schools supporting them in exploring the implications of the new National Curriculum for teaching, learning and assessment. Last September, AAIA launched a new section of its website devoted to [assessment without levels](#) containing a range of information and ideas. This section of our site receives many visits and a Google search using the words 'assessment without levels' indicates that it is the most frequently visited site for those seeking guidance.

In the light of our members' work and specifically in relation to the terms of reference and intended outputs of the Commission, AAIA would be interested in sharing thinking and practice relating to:

- the rationale for the removal of levels and the implications of this for teaching, learning and assessment;
- the purposes and types of assessment including an understanding of the distinction but also the inter-relationship between formative and summative assessment;
- how attainment and progress can be conceptualised not as incremental/linear but more as a process that results in embedded/consolidated knowledge, understanding and skills;
- the importance of ensuring embedded learning by all pupils and the role that assessment can play in this;
- how a culture of high expectations in schools can be encouraged and nurtured;
- summative assessment and the recording and tracking of progress that is directly related to the curriculum and to learning;
- ways in which attainment and progress can be shared effectively with parents;
- statutory assessment processes and the impact (often unintended) that these can have for on-going assessment processes in schools;
- the ways in which inspection processes can support the development of effective assessment practice in schools;
- the implications for initial and continuing professional development of teachers;
- how a range of best practice can be communicated to and shared between schools in a way that is engaging and supportive.

While a range of interesting and varied practice is developing in schools, there remain some underlying principles that should inform practice in relation to the above. AAIA would welcome the opportunity to discuss these with the Commission.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bartlett', written in a cursive style.

David Bartlett
AAIA Communications Officer
On behalf of the AAIA President and Executive