

Tables

Table 1: Comparing the stated purposes of assessment

Please note that this table refers to the stated purposes of assessment in policy documentation. This does not always map onto the reality of how assessment is used. Where possible we have highlighted notable divergences.

Stated purposes	England	Finland	Estonia	Poland	Republic of Ireland	The Netherlands	Hong Kong	Ontario	Japan	New Zealand
To improve teacher training and/or curriculum	No May have some indirect impact though	No May have some impact though	No May have some impact though	No May have some indirect impact though	No Not a stated purpose, but the same body, NCCA, oversees curriculum & assessment, so likely some impact of assessment on curriculum planning	No May have some indirect impact though	Yes Particularly for TSA (see below) which acts as diagnostic tool to improve other system components	No Not stated as purpose, may have some impact as assessment agency EQAO (see below) can offer general policy advice	Yes NAAA (see below) used to inform curriculum planning	No May have some indirect impact though
Regional and system accountability	Yes Through league tables at GCSEs and A level and to target intervention, Ofsted considers results in inspection judgements, Progress 8 etc.	No Not a stated purpose; regional performance data is generated but it doesn't appear that this is used for accountability	No Not stated purpose, but state actively publishes school exam results which media + others turn into league tables	No Not stated purpose, but exam board publishes results broken down by region, inviting comparison – media can also focus on these.	No Not stated purpose, but can be a function due to media-generated league tables (via FOI) + school desire to improve	Yes Many accountability mechanisms, e.g., a 'compare schools' website w/ attainment data, Inspectorate focus on exam grades etc.	No TSA about providing 'support', but can have accountability function. Media generates HKDSE league tables. ¹	Yes Standardised test data publicly available via Education Quality & Accountability Office (EQAO), league tables produced by other orgs.	No NAAA is intended to be diagnostic, but can in practice have accountability function.	Yes Govt makes data widely available, schools held to account via media generated league tables, inspections etc.

¹ The gov't does not release HKDSE data on an institution level in an attempt to avoid ranking and comparison. However, the media and other organisations reach out to schools to gather up data and produce league tables.

	England	Finland	Estonia	Poland	Republic of Ireland	The Netherlands	Hong Kong	Ontario	Japan	New Zealand
School or regional improvement and informing resource allocation	No May have an impact but not a stated purpose	No May have an impact but not a stated purpose	No May have an impact but not a stated purpose	No May have an impact but not a stated purpose	No May have an impact but not a stated purpose	Yes Esp. if the Inspectorate considers a school underperforming	Yes TSA used to identify areas for intervention	Yes The EQAO (see below) can make improvement recommendations on the basis of some results	Yes NAAA used to identify areas for intervention	No Not a stated purpose, but school results a factor in govt deciding school needs additional intervention
Progression: Lower i.e. is it used to determine progression to senior secondary courses/routes /institutions	No Not a stated purpose but GCSE results clearly play a role in determining which options are available post-16	Yes Basic school education certificate required for progression; exemptions can be made	Yes Determines access to different post-16 schools (academic/vocational)	No Not a stated purpose, but in practice eighth-grade exam used to determine school track (academic/technical/vocational)	No Not a stated purpose but results can be used by school to set students/determine access to pathways	Sometimes End of primary assessment (12y) determines school track (vocational/general/academic) – if on vocational route (VMBO), lower sec exam determines pathway	No The TSA is not used for progression. Internal school exams may be used to set students.	No Not a stated purpose but schools may use results to set students/determine access to certain classes and pathways	No Not for NAAA. However, in practice, important regional & school based high school entrance exams (~15y) greatly impact progression	No Not a stated purpose but schools could use results to set students/determine access to certain classes and pathways
Progression: Upper i.e. is it used to determine progression to further study)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes²	Yes

² See below. No formal national assessment, but in practice the national university entrance exam is the de facto 'national exam' and has massive influence on progression. Individual universities' entrance exams are also important and have a similar effect.

Are the aggregated results published?	Yes At national, regional, school level	Yes At the national and regional level	Yes At national and school level	Yes At national and regional level	Yes Only at nation-wide level	Yes At national, regional and school level	Yes Only at nation-wide level	Yes At provincial and school level	Yes³ At regional, but not necessarily institution level	Yes At a national, regional and school level
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³ For the NAAA, MEXT publishes national averages and mean subject scores for each of the seven regions of Japan, and ranks the 47 prefectures accordingly. Education policymakers in all 1,718 municipalities have the discretion to publish the results of individual school-mean test scores under their jurisdiction or not

Table 2. Comparing the structure of assessment systems

		England	Finland	Estonia	Poland	Republic of Ireland	The Netherlands	Hong Kong	Ontario	Japan	New Zealand
Stages of formal assessment	Lower	GCSE / BTEC (14-16y)	Basic school education certificate (14-16y)	Basic School Graduation Certificate inc. Grade 9 national exams (up to 16y)	Eighth-grade exam (14-15y)	Junior Cycle Profiles of Achievement (JCPA) (12-15 y)	No formal assessment in academic (VWO) or general (HAVO) schools. Vocational (VMBO) schools = VMBO diploma (16y)	Territory-wide System Assessment (TSA), (14-15 y)	Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) ⁴	National Assessment of Academic Ability (NAAA) (15 y) + important regional high school entrance exams	National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) L1 (age 15)
	Upper	Academic: A-levels (17-18y) Vocational: various options	Academic: Matriculation Examination + General Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate (17-18y) Vocational: various – awarded by provider	Academic: Upper secondary school leaving certificate inc. national exams (16-19y) Vocational: various options	Academic: ‘Matura’ exam (age 18y) Vocational: Vocational exams (Vocational students can also sit Matura)	Academic: Leaving Certificate (for most pupils). Vocational: various options	Academic: VWO diploma (17-18y) General: HAVO diploma (16-17y) Vocational: post-16 MBOs have institution-	Hong Kong Diploma or Secondary Education (HKDSE) (17-18 years) Vocational: Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE)	Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) Vocational: various options	None. However, in practice, the Common Test for University Admissions (CTUA), the national university entrance exam, is the de facto assessment. ⁵	NCEA L2 (age 16) L3 (age 17) – academic & vocational University Entrance (UE) – separate academic qual based on NCEA L2 & 3 performance

⁴ This is assessed at Grade 10 but is a compulsory component in the OSSD. If students do not pass this assessment, they can complete the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC) at Grade 12 in order to meet the literacy requirements for the OSSD.

⁵ To graduate from upper secondary school, students must obtain a certain number of credits, gained by attending and passing courses. Credits are awarded by schools, following guidance from the Ministry, with ‘passing’ determined with in-school assessments. This could be considered a ‘national assessment system’ in some way, however, in practice, the CTUA dominates the Japanese schooling system and is the assessment most schools are ‘working towards’. Individual/groups of universities’ own entrance exams are also very important.

		England	Finland	Estonia	Poland	Republic of Ireland	The Netherlands	Hong Kong	Ontario	Japan	New Zealand
							specific quals				
Technical or vocational secondary-level pathway available?		Yes¹ Qualifications available in lower. Distinct pathways at upper	Yes Various assessments available via approved providers	Yes Post 16 Vocational education and training programmes	Yes Vocational exams available in vocational secondary schools	Yes Typically post 16, separate leaving certificate qualification available	Yes Separate schools post-12 with vocational exams	Yes Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE) post-16	Yes Three programmes available post 16	Yes Vocational qualifications available via Colleges of Technology post-15	Yes NCEA includes 'unit standards' alongside 'achievement standards' that align with vocational pathways
Last age of compulsory education		16 (full-time); 18(education/training)²	18³	17	18	16	16⁴	15	18	15	16
Are subjects for formal assessment compulsory, elective, or a mix? <i>(NB: this applies to academic rather than vocational track unless otherwise stated. 'Formal' refers to assessment that is required by</i>	Lower Stage	Mix 3 core GCSEs (maths, English, and science). ~9 typically taken, BTEC (vocational) options available	Compulsory Up to 20 compulsory subjects assessed in school, plus at least one multidisciplinary learning module	Compulsory 3 core subjects assessed by Grade 9 exam: Estonian, maths, one student elective. 15 other compulsory subjects assessed in school by teachers	Compulsory 3 core subjects assessed by 8th-grade exam (Polish, maths, foreign language).12 other compulsory subjects not formally assessed.	Mix 4 core subjects (English, Irish, mathematics, history) + schools may make others compulsory, then electives.	Mix No formal assessment for VWO and HAVO; VMBO terminal exam has 5 compulsory subjects: Dutch, English, maths, PE, arts + ~5 other subjects	Mix 3 compulsory subjects examined in TSA (Chinese, English, and maths); ~8 other core subjects not formally assessed	Mix Standardised mathematics and literacy assessments compulsory; 9 core subjects compulsory but not formally assessed	Compulsory NAAA tests Japanese, mathematics, science. 7 other compulsory subjects not formally assessed (though will be assessed via important school entrance exams)	Mix Compulsory literacy and numeracy assessments within NCEA L1 No compulsory subjects, but in practice many schools make English, maths, science compulsory

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<i>jurisdiction & directly counts towards qualification at relevant level)</i>	Upper stage	Elective 3-4 subjects (pupil choice), BTEC (cover a range of subjects)	Mostly compulsory 4 compulsory (mother tongue, second national language, foreign language, maths) + either a science OR humanities/social science. Can then take 1-3 electives	Mostly compulsory Compulsory Estonian, maths, foreign language exams, compulsory piece of teacher-assessed research or practical work; 15 other subjects must be studied and assessed by teachers, some electives available	Mix Matura = 3 compulsory subjects (Polish, foreign language, mathematics) + up to 5 electives	Mix English, Irish, mathematics compulsory (with some exceptions); + 3-4 electives	Mix VMBO & HAVO: Compulsory Dutch, English, mathematics + other compulsory subjects based on selected 'track' + electives. 8-10 total. MBO: varies by institution	Mix 4 compulsory = Chinese, English, maths, citizenship and 2-3 electives	Mix Total of 30 'credits' required for OSSD, of which 18 in 11 different compulsory subjects/groups of subjects + community service + 2x online learning credits	Mostly compulsory CTUA = Compulsory Japanese, mathematics, foreign language, then other compulsory subjects depend on preferred undergrad course; Schools teach 9 compulsory subjects; some electives possible.	Elective NCEA L2 and L3 have no compulsory subjects UE requires 10 'UE literacy credits' that can be gained from range of subjects + a certain number of credits in 'UE approved' subjects
What form does formal assessment take	Lower Stage	Mostly exams Largely exams, some practical in certain subjects (e.g. Science, Arts PE).	Mix Exams, project work, practical demonstrations	Exam Standardised national exam at Grade 9 + variety of in-school assessment also required	Exam	Mix Exams, project work, and teacher assessments	Exam VMBO diploma: school exam, which inc. practical component, and national exam.	Exam Standardised exam	Exam 2x standardised assessments mentioned above	Exam	Mix National lit & num tests; coursework inc. tests, projects etc. optional exams ⁶

⁶ Exams are available in all academic subjects. However, students can pass all levels of NCEA by not sitting these exams and instead passing a wider range of 'internal' coursework-based assessments. This is increasingly common, though will likely change with NCEA reforms currently underway.

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	Upper Stage	Mix Exams and some coursework	Mix Matriculation exam is national exam; wider range of in-school assessment used to award School Leaving Certificate	Mix Grade 12 national exam; school-assessed exam on rest of national curriculum, 1x school-assessed research or practical project	Exam Features oral component (assessed by teachers) + written component (assessed externally)	Mix Exams and some coursework	Exams VWO & HAVO = national exams + school-based exams	Mix Exam + school-based assessments (SBAs)	Mix Tests, exams, projects, portfolios, and observations set by school/school board	Exam CTUA is exam. In awarding 'credits' required for graduation, schools can use variety of assessments	Mix Coursework including tests, projects, presentations, etc.; semi-optional exams
What is the balance between normative and criteria based <i>(NB: This refers to academic assessment unless otherwise noted)</i>	Lower Stage	Criteria combined with normative 'comparable outcomes approach' to ensure grade boundaries consistent year-on-year	Criteria-based	Criteria-based	Criteria-based	Criteria-based	Criteria combined with use of the 'N-term' (normeringsterm) which ensures grade boundaries consistent year-on-year	Criteria-based	Criteria-based	Criteria-based	Mostly criteria based, with some norm referencing to keep external exam grade boundaries consistent each year
	Upper Stage	As above	As above	As above	As above	Criteria combined with normative adjustment of grade boundaries to ensure they are consistent year-on-year	As above	Criteria combined with normative adjustment of grade boundaries to ensure they are consistent year-on-year	As above	Criteria-based (both CTUA and in-school assessment for credits)	As above

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Mode of assessment	Lower Stage	Mixed, but mostly paper-based	Mixed , determined by school	Currently paper, focus on transition to electronic	Paper-based	Mix of paper and electronic	Mix of paper and electronic	Paper-based	Mix of paper and electronic	Paper-based	Choice of either, transition to electronic being encouraged
	Upper stage	As above	Electronic Though in school assessment to gain Leaving Certificate is mixed	As above	Paper based Plus oral component of Matura	Mainly paper	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above
Standardised? If so, at what stages, and is it at the local/regional or national level?	Lower Stage	Mix Yes nationally for GCSE; No for BTECs	No Though national guidelines for assessment are followed	Mix National Grade 9 exams standardised nationally, various in-school assessment not standardised but follows guidelines	Yes nationally	Mix National exam component standardised, coursework and other components not but do follow guidelines	Mix VMBO national exam standardised nationally, in-school exam fairly standardised due to careful monitoring	Yes nationally	Yes Province-wide	Yes NAAA is nationally standardised	Mix Standardised literacy and numeracy assessment; Internal assessment not very standardised, external (exam-based) assessment somewhat standardised
	Upper Stage	Mix Nationally for A-levels, no for vocational routes	Mix Yes for matriculation exam, no for other assessments for Leaving	Mix National Grade 12 exams standardised, in-school assessment	Mixed Matura, yes, nationally, but oral in-school component, not as much	Yes Exams standardised, coursework not strictly, but is	Mix VWO + HAVO: national exam standardised, in-school	Yes Exams standardised, SBAs run by school but are fairly standardised	No Overall OSSD requirements are standardised but OSSD assessments	Mix Yes for CTUA, no for in-school awarding of credits or for vocational	Mix As above

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			Certificate or vocational routes, though they follow national guidelines	not standardised but follows guidelines	– though teacher assessors follow national guidelines	monitored by state	exam fairly standardised due to close monitoring MBO: no	due to close monitoring	not standardised, though guidelines are followed	routes, though for these guidelines are followed	
When were the last major policy reforms introduced)?	Lower Stage	GCSE 2017, 1996 for BTECs	2016	2014	2017 Eighth-grade exam replaces previous <i>gimnazjum</i> exam	2017 JCPA introduced	1999	2009	2007 Grade 9 Mathematics Assessment introduced	2013	2023
	Upper Stage	A levels/ As Levels/BTECs 2017 T-Levels, 2020	2016	2013	2019 Introduction of more courses and more coursework to reduce stress	2023-2025	As above	2012	2025 Move to more flexibility, more focus on financial literacy + other changes	2021 Latest version of national university entrance exam created	2012; New changes coming 2026⁵

¹ BTEC Level 1 and 2 (equivalent to GCSEs can be taken alongside or instead of them at age 16+). BTEC Level 3 (equivalent to A-levels and can be taken alongside or instead of them). Vocational qualifications can be taken but there is not a distinct pathway until upper secondary level. A new 'T-Level' was introduced in 2020 providing another vocational pathway.

² This is the age of compulsory full-time education and is sometimes called the school-leaving age. Most children attend school until this age, but it is legal to get full-time education elsewhere (e.g., home schooling). It is compulsory for young people to be in education or training (including apprenticeships) until the age of 18.

³ Or once upper secondary qualification completed

⁴ 16-18 year olds must secure basic qualification (HAVO or VWO) before leaving school.

⁵ Between 2022 and 2023. In 2024, full pilots of all T-MoA NCEA Level 2 Wāhanga Ako and all NZC NCEA Level 2 subjects will be conducted ahead of the implementation of all NCEA Level 2 Wāhanga Ako and NZC subjects in 2026.

Table 3. Comparing the assessment policy process

	England	Finland	Estonia	Poland	Republic of Ireland	The Netherlands	Hong Kong	Ontario	Japan	New Zealand
Who makes assessment policy at jurisdictional level?	Department for Education	The Ministry of Education and Culture	Ministry of Education and Research	The Ministry for Education and Science	Department of Education	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Education Bureau (EDB)	Ontario Ministry of Education (MoE)	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)	The Ministry of Education (MoE)
Who writes and regulates assessments at jurisdictional level?	Ofqual Establishes qualification standards, regulates exams (which are run by multiple exam boards), and sets rules.	The Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) Oversees core curriculum and assessment. Matriculation Examination Board (MEB) Responsible for matriculation exam.	Education and Youth Board (Harno) Sets and manages national exams, establishes rules & guidelines Estonian Qualifications Authority (EQA) (Kutsekoda) Oversees vocational and professional qualifications	The Central Examination Board (CEB) Sets and manages national exams	The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Develops curriculum, produces assessment guidance State Examinations Commission (SEC) Responsible for all aspects of exams, inc. quality assurance.	The Board of Tests and Exams (CvTE) Overall responsibility for exam regulation Central Institute for Test Development (CITO) Writes all national exams	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) Writes, sets, regulates TSA and HKDSE exams Vocational Training Council (VTC) oversees vocational assessments	Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) , oversees the standardised literacy & numeracy assessments Ontario MoE Oversees the OSSD, but individual schools and school boards write assessments	MEXT Oversees NAAA National Centre for University Entrance Examinations (DNC) writes and regulates the Common Test for University Admissions NB: Prefectural govts also influential in setting regional high school entrance exams	New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) Regulates and writes exams, provides guidelines and models for internal assessments (coursework)
Is there explicit encouragement of local adaptation?	No	Yes But not matriculation exam	Yes But not re: major Grade 9 & 12 exams	Some Not re: 8 th grade & Matura exam. Beyond this some flexibility, though not overly encouraged.	Yes JCPA in particular leaves much space for local adaption	Mix More so in vocational tracks, far less so in academic track	No Though teachers have some autonomy over SBA design	Yes	No	Yes

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Who is responsible for evaluation of the assessment system?	Ofqual	Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC)	Ministry of Education and Research, sometimes directing the Education & Youth Board	The Central Examination Board	NCCA	The Ministry + The Inspectorate of Education + Education Council	The EDB + the HKEAA + the Curriculum Development Council (CDC)	EQAO + The Ontario Auditor General + Ontario MoE	MEXT + Central Council for Education	Ministry of Education + NZQA
What mechanisms are used to evaluate the assessment system?	Research and analysis; consultation; monitoring and oversight; standard-setting; and evaluation and review	Research reports; audits; international comparisons	Reviews, research, consultation	Research studies, reviews	No clear formal review process, but research and analysis, engagement with stakeholder groups and boards with sector representatives	All organisations: Reviews, research reports, consultation Inspectorate: specific role in monitoring potential discrepancies between school & national exam results	EDB: Regular stakeholder review and consultation process, periodic system-wide reviews HKEAA: reviews and consultation CDC: reviews of curriculum & assessment settings	EQAO: reviews of standardised assessment(s) The Auditor General: Reviews EQAO, their assessments and processes The Ontario MoE: reviews OSSD	School and parent questionnaires; system wide-reviews	NZQA: Formal quality assurance processes ¹ MoE: Occasional system-wide reviews
Internal drivers of policy (within the assessment/ curriculum policy process)	Qualification standards and technology	Educational inequalities	The need for core competences, flexible, student-centred learning,	Educational outcomes	Educational outcomes and justice; fairness; student stress	Quality assurance and equity	Desire to decrease pressure on students; impact of China	Transparency and fairness;	Educational outcomes	Inequalities
External drivers of policy (outside the assessment/	Competing in a global economy	Social justice culture; 21 st century skills	Competing in a global economy	Competing in a global economy	PISA and other international standards	Competing in a global economy	Competing in a global economy	Fostering relevant skills (e.g. financial literacy); competing in a	Competing in a global economy, cultural factors	PISA and perception of decline; competing in a

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curriculum policy process)								global economy (e.g. more STEM pathways)		global economy

¹ NZQA reviews and quality assures the NCEA through a formal process known as the Managing National Assessment Review (MNA) which takes place at least once every 4 years. NZQA follows a standard consultation process for any changes to the NZQF, this process includes consultations with a range of educational professionals and stakeholders including those from the secondary schooling sector, university sector, Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITP) sector and Private Training Establishment (PTE) sector.

Further details on drivers of policy

England

Internal:

Concerns about the rigour and comparability of qualifications, the need to better prepare students for the demands of higher education and employment, and the desire to raise standards and improve educational outcomes.

Emphasis on minimising the quantity of coursework and other forms of internal evaluation in favour of end-of-course tests to increase the reliability and validity of results and limit the possibility of cheating or gaming the system. Desire to improve the use of technology in assessment to make tests more accessible to students with disabilities and lessen the administrative burden on instructors and examiners.

External:

COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a balance between assessment expectations and student flexibility and support.

Finland

Internal:

A growing concern over the 'increasing inequalities' in educational outcomes, leading to a push for more basic assessment practices that better consider students' individual needs and strengths. A greater emphasis on the development of '21st century skills', such as problem-solving, critical thinking. Increased attention to the use of technology in assessment, including the use of digital tools and platforms for assessment purposes.

External:

Finland's strong focus on equity and social justice have immensely influenced the development of assessment policies and practices in the country

Estonia

Internal:

Increasing recognition that learning outcomes are important and must be monitored through assessment. Estonia's assessment policies and changes are motivated by a desire to foster the development of core competencies, such as digital and civic abilities, which are regarded as critical for success in the 21st century. A national commitment to providing a high-quality equitable education for all students. Strong emphasis on formative feedback to inform students and teachers.

External:

Creating a highly skilled and competitive workforce

Poland

Internal:

The need to align assessment with educational objectives, to promote student-centred learning, and improve educational justice and inclusivity. The importance of balancing summative and formative assessment.

External:

Globally recognised educational standards. As a member of the European Union, Poland is subject to a range of international agreements and obligations that require it to maintain high standards of education and to ensure that its qualifications are recognised throughout Europe and beyond

Republic of Ireland

Internal:

The need to align assessment with educational objectives, to promote student-centred learning, and improve educational justice and inclusivity. The importance of balancing summative and formative assessment.

External:

PISA and other international standards

Netherlands

Internal:

The desire to improve the quality and relevance of education to meet the changing needs of society and the labour market. to address issues of equity and inclusion, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Greater emphasis on student-centred learning and personalised approaches to education, which has influenced the way assessments are designed and used.

External:

Competing in a global economy

Hong Kong

Internal:

Modernising the system by increasing pathways and accessibility through tuition-free vocational options. Widespread concerns amongst students, parents and educational professionals about the intense pressure that students.

External:

Hong Kong's history as both a Chinese and British territory (now a Special Administrative Region of China) means that its educational system and schools are a hybrid of British and Chinese traditions. Recent changes have moved away from a UK system towards a US and Chinese style system. Concerns about low PISA scores on psychosocial factors compared to high academic performance.

Ontario

Internal:

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) driving transparency, fairness, and supporting students from diverse backgrounds. Also, data-driven assessment making.

External:

BLANK

Japan

Internal:

Stronger emphasis on summative than formative assessment. A credit system was introduced by MEXT in the 1990s due to concerns about equity and access within the post-compulsory education system. Students who graduate (about 98% of all students) are awarded the Senior High School Graduation Certificate (sotsugyo shomeisho) and are eligible to sit for university entrance examinations.

External:

Tests in Japan are seen as valuable for the development of student's self-discipline and determination, influenced by the context of Japan's Confucian heritage influence. Juku – after-school tutoring schools (also known as cram schools) - are attended by over half of all Japanese students. This has raised concerns about equity as attending juku is expensive; the Japanese government has tried several policy responses to limit attendance at juku but has not been successful in decreasing their influence. Covid pandemic accelerated plans to integrate technology into classrooms. The most recent 'Course of Study guidance' (2020-22) aims to nurture student's cross curricular competencies (e.g.,

problem solving), partly in response to international criticism by academic experts and education professionals that independent/critical thinking and problem-solving have not been fostered in Japan's teaching approach or outcome-based assessment.

New Zealand

Internal:

Emerging concerns around educational inequality and early school leaving, and to ensure that the summative assessment system caters for the diverse needs of students. Some of the key reforms have been to increase the number of vocational 'standards' and pathways on offer, greater range and flexibility in subject/course choice and in forms of assessment/credit accumulation and the introduction of curriculum content and qualifications specifically to meet the needs, skills and aspirations of Māori and Pasifika students who represent more than one-third of the student population.

External:

Blank