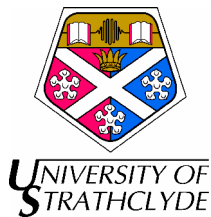Condie, Rae and Livingston, Kay and Seagraves, Liz (2005) Evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning programme. [Report]

Evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning Programme

Final Report

February 2005

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Acknowledgements

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Alford Primary School, Aberdeenshire
Banchory Academy, Aberdeenshire
Onthank Gaelic Unit, East Ayrshire
St Joseph's Academy, East Ayrshire
Merkland School, East Dunbartonshire
Westerton Primary School, East Dunbartonshire
St Ninian's High School, East Renfrewshire
Lochgelly West Primary, Fife
All Saints Secondary School, Glasgow City
Richmond Park School, Glasgow City
St Aloysius Primary School, Glasgow City
St Catherine's Primary School, Glasgow City
Dingwall Primary School, Highland
Tain Royal Academy, Highland
Arran High School, North Ayrshire
Woodlands Primary School, North Ayrshire
Greenfaulds High School, North Lanarkshire
St Dominic's Primary School, North Lanarkshire
Biggar High School, South Lanarkshire
Walston Primary School, South Lanarkshire
Cambusbarron Primary School, Stirling
Kildean School, Stirling
Stirling High School, Stirling
Brucehill Nursery, West Dunbartonshire.

Evaluation of the
Assessment is for Learning Programme

Executive Summary

The Assessment is for Learning Development Programme (AifL) was designed to bring together the various purposes of assessment into a single coherent framework which would answer questions of accountability, standards and the monitoring of progress and performance, but which also emphasised the role of assessment in supporting individual pupils' learning in the classroom.

The Assessment is for Learning Programme

The programme combined top-down and bottom-up development, using a project-based approach. Ten projects were identified which, together, addressed the aims of the programme, covering aspects of formative and summative assessment, recording and reporting. While the theme of each project was determined at national level, the precise nature of the work undertaken within individual schools or school clusters was determined by the staff in the schools working with local authority personnel. Most classroom-based projects followed an action research approach, with planning, reviewing, reflecting and modifying phases, culminating in a case study report. Schools that participated were given financial support, for example, to provide supply cover, materials and resources or staff development activities. Support was provided by local authority personnel, project development officers and members of education faculties (or their equivalent) in the universities.

The programme was designed to develop assessment practices that would better meet the needs of all concerned; the wide-ranging and multi-faceted nature of the initiatives required flexible and responsive management processes. The Assessment Action Group (AAG) maintained strategic oversight of the programme and its evaluation and included representatives of education authorities, schools, university faculties of education, parent groups, professional associations, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Learning and Teaching Scotland (LT Scotland) and the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). The Assessment Programme Management Group (APMG) was responsible for the 10 projects within the programme. Specific conferences, seminars and staff development events were organised nationally to provide opportunities for participants (practitioners and others) to meet, review and reflect on strategies and progress. These took place across the country in order to maximise access by authorities and schools.

The Projects

Project	Descriptor
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	To investigate effective classroom approaches to formative assessment and produce guidance for schools and teachers about assessment policies and practice to raise attainment.
2. Personal Learning Plans	To draw together existing work on Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) and other existing records and design a single recording framework.
3. Support for Management of Personal Learning Plans	To produce guidance for schools and teachers on management of the record-keeping process and PLPs, taking into account work on Progress File and Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs).
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	To produce guidance and exemplification for teachers on the range of assessment evidence to be gathered and retained for each aspect of the curriculum at each stage, and how to evaluate it.
5. Local Moderation	To investigate ways of 'sharing the standard' with other teachers, and to produce local portfolios of examples of assessed work across the various aspects of the curriculum.
6. New National Assessments	To create an online 'bank' of assessment materials, based on Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) tests and tasks, to replace the current National Tests.
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme	This project will continue and update the Scottish Executive Education Department's (SEED's) existing AAP monitoring programme. It will improve the monitoring of standards in the 5-14 Programme and give increased importance to the professional development of teachers.
8. ICT Support for Assessment	The aim of this project is to produce a framework document which will outline the key features/ requirements of software to be used in support of Personal Learning Plans. This document is intended to help local authorities in determining their own way forward with ICT.
9. Reporting to Parents and Others	To link reporting to the Personal Learning Plan framework and propose a common format for reports. Additional outcomes for this project include guidance for teachers on ways of working with parents, guidance for parents on the assessment process, and exemplars of good practice (e.g. video).
10. Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Additional Support Needs	To ensure that all the projects in the programme are inclusive of pupils with the whole range of educational and social needs.

The Evaluation

An evaluation of the AifL Programme was commissioned by the Scottish Executive and carried out by the Quality in Education Centre, University of Strathclyde. The evaluation began in January 2003 and aimed to determine the effectiveness of the programme in respect of its processes, products and short-to-medium term impact. It was undertaken in two main phases. Phase 1 involved analysis of existing documentation and questionnaires to the four main groups of participants – teachers, development officers, local authority co-ordinators and higher education representatives. Interviews were conducted with various key individuals. A sample of schools participating in each project was identified for further study, providing case study data across a range of projects. Phase 2 focused on the use of the outcomes of the projects by practitioners, managers and policy makers. It included analyses of reports and project materials from schools, further interviews with case study schools and a survey of schools including a number of Associated Schools Groups. (The programme had moved on to working with clusters rather than individual schools and the evaluation reflected this.)

Survey Samples

Participants	Phase 1	Phase 2
Local authority co-ordinators	29 out of 32	30 out of 32
Project development officers	9 out of 9	-
HEI representatives	11 out of 11	8 out of 10
Pilot schools	92 HT and 189 teachers, representing 102 out of 171 schools (59%)	77 HT and 130 teachers representing 87 out of 165 schools (53%)
Associated Schools Groups	-	45 out of 81 targeted ASGs (56%)

Twenty-six schools were visited for the case studies.

While the evaluation of the AifL Programme had specific aims, it remained responsive to changes in the overall programme and the design was modified as appropriate, reflecting the philosophy behind the programme itself which gave considerable freedom to schools and teachers to develop practice within their own context at a pace and in a manner that reflected local needs.

As evidence on the implementation of the various projects became available, the management team responded to expressed needs and feedback from those involved. Thus the data from the different phases report what was the case at the time; many of the issues identified by participants were addressed as they came to light through the evaluation and other mechanisms.

Key Findings

1.   The programme: an initial analysis (February to March 2003)

- While ten individual but linked projects formed the basis of the programme, the initial focus was on the development of Personal Learning Plans as a means of supporting a unified system of recording and reporting. The projects were devised as a means of making developments 'manageable', but all had a role in developing a coherent national system of assessment.
- All local authorities were involved in Project 1 and at least one other project. Over 170 schools and more than 500 teachers took part in the pilot developments. Each project had an associated project development officer and representative from higher education.
- While all participating schools were expected to undertake a baseline audit of assessment, not all did so, with some schools indicating that it was inappropriate and did not fit within the school development planning cycle.
- Milestones were set for schools to produce case study reports and examples of products and some schools found it difficult to meet these. However, as the Scottish Executive were concerned that schools grow and develop at a pace to suit their own needs and context, the timescales were treated flexibly. Because of this most projects at school level took a little longer than originally anticipated.
- Those involved in PLP projects varied in their understanding of the purposes of PLPs and the implication for developing ICT support. A common reporting framework was not produced as planned, with resultant consequences for the focus of Project 9, which was intended to build on that framework. Further development work on PLPs was undertaken, with a proposed framework being circulated for consultation in September 2004.
- From the documentary analysis conducted between February and June 2003, it appeared that involvement in Projects 1, 4 and 9 was focused exclusively on project-specific developments (viz: no mention of PLPs in relation to Project 1 or formative assessment in Project 4). On the other hand, some participants in Projects 2, 3 and 8 were recognising links with formative assessment.

2.   Phase 1 (January to December 2003)

The key participants
- Just under two-thirds of the pilot schools participated in the evaluation surveys, with a higher proportion of primary than secondary schools responding. All projects were represented and all but one local authority.
- Most local authority co-ordinators held multiple roles, which caused tension in time management and availability. In addition, many had not appreciated the scale of the programme.
- Development Officers were committed to the programme but were holding varied and demanding remits, particularly in terms of liaison across stakeholders.
- Higher education representatives had varied roles in terms of demands on their time and the activities in which they became involved. This was the least clearly defined and understood of the three central roles. Some felt integrated into the project while others felt more isolated.

Impact on practice
- Headteachers/senior managers indicated relatively clear strategic objectives for the staff and pupils as a result of their involvement in the project; teachers' objectives were more at the operational, day-to-day level.

- Almost two-thirds of schools indicated that they were already trying to develop assessment practices along the lines of the project(s) and so were building on existing strengths.
- The projects involved, variously, pupils across the pre-5 to S6 stages, although there was evidence of greater involvement at P5 to P7. There was an emphasis on literacy and numeracy or combinations of curricular areas, although other individual subject areas were also identified.
- Views on the impact of involvement with the AifL Programme were, in the main, positive with regard to changing practice, pupil involvement and relationships with parents (relevant to the specific project).
- Those who engaged purposefully with the programme, particularly those projects concerned with formative assessment strategies, showed considerable commitment and enthusiasm as a result of their involvement.
- A range of benefits was identified by both headteachers and teachers, depending on the individual project, with raised awareness, increased knowledge and understanding of assessment and increased collaboration across groups reported. Local authority co-ordinators, HE representatives and project development officers all noted that a key benefit of the programme had been enhanced teacher motivation and enthusiasm in the participating schools. The sense of ownership engendered by the 'bottom-up' element of the programme contributed greatly to this.
- The main challenge was time. There are two aspects to this. The first is concerned with the constraints resulting from school timetables and schedules that limit flexibility and responsiveness to initiatives. The second, for many teachers, is finding the time to become familiar with and access sources of information (e.g. LT Scotland) on assessment and implementing change. Other challenges included engaging all staff and maintaining enthusiasm.

Impact on meeting information needs
- Developments in assessment practices and procedures were beginning to meet information needs more effectively than previously for class teachers and pupils and, to a lesser extent, parents, with less progress towards meeting the needs of other teachers and the local authority. Many respondents indicated that it was too early to make judgements on the impact of the project in this area.
- Only 53 teachers from the sample had been working on PLPs, with the majority of them indicating that their use was demanding but manageable for both teachers and pupils. These teachers indicated that PLPs were meeting teachers' and pupils' information needs more than those of other groups. It was unclear how the use of PLPs in schools could meet the information needs of local authorities.

Convergence of assessment arrangements
- Lack of awareness/knowledge of projects other than those in which their authority was involved caused concern to LA co-ordinators with regard to future dissemination and implementation across authority schools.
- Reservations were expressed about the extent to which key groups and participants understood how the 10 projects linked together to form a coherent programme. Teachers knew very little about projects other than the one in which they were involved, although headteachers indicated they were more aware of the other projects.

AifL Programme issues

- *Collaboration and community of practice:* The three key support groups were beginning to work together and with policy makers, although each group identified limitations. Where working together occurred, it was reported as a positive and successful experience, albeit relatively novel. There was need for ongoing development of these relationships. Although teachers were benefiting from working more in collaboration with colleagues within their schools, many had not yet had the opportunity to liaise with colleagues in other schools or at conferences, and so were not yet participating in a wider community of practice. Face-to-face meetings (in groups or one-to-one) was the preferred method of communication in order 'to get work done'. The website and web-based forum had been used by a very small number of participants.

- *Funding:* The majority of schools had found the additional funding adequate for their purposes, with additional supply cover being the main resource purchased with it. Some schools had bought new information and communication technology equipment and various other resources and materials.

- *Sustainability:* Most schools considered that the initiatives would become part of school development planning and resourced from school budgets; only a small number considered that they would need extra funding.

- *Planning:* Similar themes were beginning to emerge across the groups of respondents. For example, local authority co-ordinators, headteachers and teachers, on reflection, felt that they would have benefited from a longer lead-in period and more information on the programme as a whole as well as on individual projects.

3.   Phase 2 (January to December 2004)

Developments and progress during 2003 to 2004

- Many local authorities had appointed additional staff to take forward AifL developments: 14 had appointed development officers during 2003 to 2004, with a further 6 in 2004 to 2005. Roles varied, but most were responsible for taking forward operational aspects such as organising in-service and supporting schools, while assessment co-ordinators focused on strategic management. In some authorities these roles were shared. Ten had not appointed additional staff.

- All authorities had delivered a programme of staff development on assessment-related issues. Participation in staff development across authorities varied from all schools in some authorities to one-fifth of primary and one-tenth of secondary schools in others. In about one-third of authorities more than 40% of primary teachers were involved. However, in the majority of authorities, fewer than 20% of secondary and special needs teachers participated. The main focus was formative assessment, with PLPs mentioned by a few authorities.

- The majority of authorities had engaged clusters of schools in Associated Schools Group developments, with 30% of identified school clusters becoming involved. Again the main focus was formative assessment.

- The HE representatives had all engaged in assessment-related research and all identified ways in which AifL had been introduced into Initial Teacher Education and other teacher education provision.

- In response to the school survey, 16% of the targeted schools reported that no further developments had taken place for a variety of reasons and so they could not complete the questionnaire.

- Only 53% of the original pilot schools responded to the survey. In the majority expansion of the original work had occurred or was planned, mainly through involving more teachers, other year groups and areas of the curriculum. Seventy-four percent of these schools reported undertaking developments of aspects of AifL other than the work of their original projects.
- Schools involved originally in Project 1 (formative assessment) were more likely to be expanding their original work. For those involved originally in other projects, formative assessment was the most frequently mentioned new development, followed by PLPs.

The impact on policy and practice
- Two-thirds of headteachers thought that the AifL Programme had substantially influenced their development planning, though primary headteachers thought this more than secondary headteachers.
- With respect to National Priorities, headteachers were more likely to indicate that AifL had impact on Achievement and Attainment than on other priorities, although primary headteachers were more likely than secondary headteachers to see AifL complementing all aspects of the curriculum.
- Involvement in AifL was encouraging the development or revision of school assessment policies.
- Headteachers and teachers agreed that there was increased awareness of research related to teaching, learning and assessment, clearer understanding of assessment, changes to classroom practice, more varied approaches to assessment in use, improved feedback to pupils and more meaningful discussion with pupils about their learning. Generally, this agreement was stronger for those who had been involved in Project 1 from the beginning.
- The greatest challenges to introducing change were time and engaging all staff. Time was at a premium both for preparing materials and engaging in dialogue with colleagues, due to competing priorities and also, in some cases, lack of supply cover. Agreement that there was resistance to new developments and difficulty in changing practice had increased since the first survey. Maintaining enthusiasm and engaging new staff was more challenging as the programme progressed.

The impact on pupil motivation and attainment
- Some teachers thought it was still too early to comment on benefits to pupils but, for those who did, there was broad agreement that pupils had become more actively involved in their learning, were better equipped to assess their own learning, had shown increased confidence and self-esteem and were themselves positive about the changes. There was less confidence in the ability of pupils to set targets and engage in peer-assessment. Generally, there was stronger agreement on all of these issues from those involved originally in Project 1.
- About a quarter of teachers indicated that they had evidence of improved pupil attainment, but the majority thought it was too early for this. This had changed little from the 2003 survey.

Staff development
- As noted above, local authorities had been actively involved in promoting staff development in assessment during 2003 to 2004.
- The main types of staff development in which people had participated were peer-delivered 'in-house' events, joint events with cluster schools and local authority-delivered courses. From the local authority perspective, peer development and events involving national experts had the greatest impact, followed by local authority-delivered events.

- There was broad agreement across all participants that progress had been made in providing extensive staff development, though with the cautionary note that much work was still required to reach the wider teaching community.
- The style of staff development encouraged in AifL and, in particular, by Project 1, took the form of 'action research' which involved recall days, discussing with colleagues, reflection and writing case study reports. There was evidence that not all headteachers and teachers had attended national events or contributed to case studies.

PLPs and meeting the needs of pupils, parents, teachers and others
- The development of PLPs had been slow, with only 15 authorities indicating that they were in the authority improvement plan. There were different opinions as to the purpose, and hence content, of PLPs, with local authority, HE and school representatives all contesting their suitability for recording and reporting purposes. Rather they were a tool to support learning and therefore related more closely to developments in formative assessment.
- The specific focus on PLPs in meeting information needs was not addressed in the second survey, due to the lack of widespread PLP development. However, a general question was asked on how all aspects of AifL met these needs. The greatest contribution was in meeting the information needs of pupils and the class teacher, with teachers, in particular, agreeing that developments had improved these aspects. About 40% of the headteachers and about a third of teachers thought that substantial progress was being made with regard to meeting the information needs of parents. Some thought it was still too early to make judgements on how AifL contributed to meeting information needs.
- Benefits to parents in terms of increased contact with the school and teacher, and better understanding of how they can help their child, were project-specific, with participants in Projects 2, 3 and 9 recognising these benefits and others indicating that this was not a focus of the development. Some indicated that relationships had always been good and AifL had had no impact; others recognised that improvements had occurred but not necessarily because of AifL.

Convergence of assessment arrangements
- An important aspect of moving towards a coherent system of assessment is the drawing together of the contributions of the separate projects. At the beginning of session 2004-2005, both headteachers and teachers reported a lack of awareness of projects other than the one in which they had been involved. They knew more about formative assessment and PLPs but reported knowing little or nothing about Projects 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10; 70% of headteachers and 49% of teachers indicated that they had a clear understanding of how the projects linked together to form a coherent system.
- The issue of bringing together classroom assessment and more formal means of assessment such as National Assessments, AAP and 5-14 testing was less clear. At the time of the second phase of the evaluation there was a lack of clarity regarding the latter three, as the outcomes of the 'Consultation on Assessment and Testing: 3-14' had not been published. There was evidence of perceived conflict between formative assessment and the summative approaches of National Assessments and other tests and examinations.
- Local authority co-ordinators expressed concern about difficulties schools had experienced in the use of the online National Assessment Bank. Almost all headteachers thought that using the online National Assessment Bank meant additional workload and costs to schools, with only a quarter agreeing that it was easier to manage than the previous approach.
    .

AifL Programme issues

- *Collaboration and community of practice:* AifL developments had brought different groups together to work in new relationships, though not all within the same frame of reference. Both LA co-ordinators and HE representatives identified the opportunity for networking as a major strength of the programme. However, while authorities were working with each other and sharing ideas and some of the HE representatives were working cross-institutionally, relationships between local authorities and HEIs were still developing. The main sources of support for teachers remained within their own schools (management and other teachers), though schools were working more with other schools. However, cross-sector and wider networking was less developed for the original pilot schools. The Associated Schools Groups were beginning to encourage greater links within clusters and across sectors.

- *Practitioner-led developments:* The central role of the classroom teacher in taking forward developments and engaging in practitioner research was seen as a major strength of the programme, contributing to successful outcomes in many schools. This had led to high levels of commitment and enthusiasm. The process of 'growing policy', that is, allowing it to emerge rather than imposing it from the top down, was appreciated.

- *Funding:* The provision of funding to the pilot schools was recognised as a major strength of the programme, with almost 50% of headteachers saying they would not have undertaken any of the developments without it. The main use was for the purchase of human resources – for supply cover or to pay teachers to work in their own time.

- *Sustainability:* About half of the authority representatives indicated that AifL would be 'embedded' into teaching and learning policies and plans and that authority funding would be allocated to ongoing developments. Others thought that additional funding was necessary to maintain the level of development and to continue with developments in PLPs, use of ICT and reporting. Headteachers were also divided between those who thought they could sustain developments from their existing school budgets and those who saw the need for ongoing additional funding.

- *Monitoring progress:* Around half of the local authority co-ordinators indicated that AifL issues were integrated into existing quality assurance procedures.

- *Planning:* A recurrent theme from local authorities and headteachers was the mismatch between improvement and development planning and the funding cycle.

4. Conclusions

A number of key points emerged from the evaluation, some related to the design of the programme, others concerned with the outcomes.

- The combination of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches was effective, although the degree of choice allowed in determining projects makes it more difficult to generalise across the programme.
- Several factors were identified as contributing to the success in some authorities/schools. These included:
  - funding
  - supportive networks
  - staff development
  - expert input, at appropriate points.
- Small-scale research projects engage teachers, giving them a sense of ownership and control over developments and the management of change.
- Small-scale projects can result in fragmentation if the parameters are too wide.
- Funding to 'kick-start' the programme was greatly appreciated and primarily used for staffing. This allowed schools to devote significant amounts of staff time in the early stages of the project.
- Significant change occurred in schools and authorities that embraced the opportunities offered by the AifL Programme.

Careful consideration should be given to the following issues in relation to the ongoing development of AifL:

- An important factor in effective development is the way in which local authorities take ownership and strategic leadership of the initiative, following the model used initially with the pilot schools, i.e. practitioner development supported through dialogue with colleagues, wider networks and communities of enquiry.
- The co-operation and collaboration between authorities and schools with representatives from the faculties of education, as relevant, is beginning to show signs of developing constructively and is to be encouraged.
- There is a need to resolve uncertainties around the purpose and content of PLPs. This might be best achieved through practitioner development and encouraging dissemination through relevant networks, as is beginning to happen.
- There is a need to continue to develop understanding as to how different initiatives, including AifL, contribute to national priorities and, in particular, to improving teaching and learning with a view to engaging learners and raising attainment. This needs to be supported nationally.
- Similarly, understanding of how classroom assessment can serve both formative and summative purposes remains patchy, particularly with regard to how they relate to externally set and designed assessment. There is a polarisation of the two purposes which is not helpful in understanding, for example, how external assessment might contribute to formative assessment within the classroom.
- If the Toolkit is to be developed so that it is more readily used at school and ASG level, some provision of resources would be useful to enable local authorities/schools to contextualise it for local use and development.
- This is just a beginning, albeit a positive one. However, it may be necessary for the Scottish Executive to maintain a high profile for AifL, through national and regional events and ongoing publicity.

5.   Further research

Some issues that would benefit from further research were identified during the evaluation:

- Strategies to engage secondary schools more meaningfully in the programme
- The impact the programme has on pupils as more schools and teachers become involved
- The impact the programme has on teaching strategies and teaching cultures
- The impact of PLPs as a unifying concept to support the needs of pupils, parents and teachers
- The development of networks and communities of practice
- Staff development approaches most likely to lead to successful implementation of the programme in schools.

The above impacts of the AifL Programme should be assessed on a longitudinal basis, in an attempt to determine long-term changes in practice.

1. Introduction

This is the Final Report of the Evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning Development Programme. It is submitted by the Quality in Education Centre (QIE), University of Strathclyde, to the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). It reports on the development of the programme over the two years 2003-04, highlighting some of the successes and drawing implications for further development.

1.1 Setting the context

In the late 1980s and early 90s, the 5-14 Development Programme (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/about5to14/index.asp) led to the introduction of curriculum guidelines across the primary and early secondary years of schooling and a system of national testing in mathematics and English language (now National Assessments).

The expansion of the pre-school and nursery sector and the increased focus on standards across the school system led to a demand for more consistent and reliable information about pupils' performance and progress. In 1999, the Scottish Executive undertook a review of assessment in pre-school, primary and the early secondary years. The review identified two key assessment purposes. The first was concerned with the individual pupil and its purpose was to support learning, give feedback and identify the 'next steps' in learning. The second was that of accountability, to provide information for monitoring and evaluating by schools, local authorities and at national level. It concluded that a number of improvements would have to be made to existing practices in order that these twin aims of assessment could be realised.

Following the review, a SEED consultation exercise in 2000 identified a series of similar issues regarding assessment in schools (Hayward et al, 2000). The responses expressed concern that accountability (assessment for statistical and monitoring purposes) was dominating practice and becoming burdensome. Respondents asked for a common national format for record-keeping and reporting, and greater coherence within and across sectors. The view was that, at national level, the focus should be on key areas of learning, including numeracy and literacy, and that national tests should be improved in quality, leading to increased validity and reliability (although views were divided on how they might be improved).

In the Minister for Education's response to the consultation (SEED, 2001), he stressed the importance of assessment in improving learning and achievement and the need for a system that is coherent and effective in promoting learning and progress. The Assessment Action Group was established later that year and the Assessment is for Learning Programme was instigated.

1.2 Assessment: theory and practice

Assessment, particularly testing, was a significant element in the 5-14 Programme in Scotland and the National Curriculum developments in the rest of the United Kingdom. The publication of *Inside the Black Box* (Black & Wiliam, 1998) indicated that the concerns raised in Scotland regarding assessment were held elsewhere. In particular, the authors argued that if the government, its agencies and the teaching profession were seriously concerned to raise standards, there were a number of aspects of current practice that needed to be rethought, particularly the role of assessment and, more specifically, formative assessment i.e. 'when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet the needs [of pupils]' (p2).

Inside the Black Box contributed significantly to the debate on testing and assessment and a considerable number of publications on assessment in primary and secondary schools subsequently appeared (Torrance & Pryor, 1998; Wragg, 2001; Clarke, 2001). Many of these were concerned with putting the key messages from the Black and Wiliam review into practice. In particular, Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall and Wiliam expanded on the Black Box publications, focusing on four themes:

- Questioning
- Feedback
- Sharing criteria with learners
- Self-assessment

(Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall and Wiliam, 2003).

The various publications and inservice/CPD provision which followed identified a number of strategies for further development. Specific strategies were advocated for these aspects of the assessment process, such as 'wait time' when questioning (allowing pupils time to think and respond to questions) and 'two stars and a wish' for feedback (giving two positive points and making suggestions for one aspect that might be improved).

1.3   The Assessment is for Learning Programme

It was against this background that the Assessment is for Learning Programme was established with the key aims of:

- developing one unified system of recording and reporting within schools;
- bringing together current arrangements for assessment, and
- providing extensive staff development and support through its project-based approach.

It was anticipated that, if this were accomplished, the benefits would include:

- better feedback for pupils leading to improved achievement
- simplified systems and support for teachers, therefore reduction in workload
- clearer information for parents.

Essentially, the AifL Programme was designed to bring together the various purposes of assessment into a single coherent framework which would answer questions of accountability, standards and monitoring of progress and performance but which emphasised the role of assessment in supporting individual pupils' learning in the classroom. This meant reviewing existing practice, including national testing and monitoring procedures, as well as introducing and developing new ideas and strategies within schools. In the event, 10 projects were identified which, together, addressed the aims of the programme (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/).

These projects were interlinked, covering aspects of formative and summative assessment, recording and reporting. The 'new' dimension was the emphasis on formative assessment which, while it had been advocated in Assessment 5-14 (SOED, 1991), had made little impact on classroom practice (Swann & Brown, 1997). So, for the Assessment is for Learning Programme, the 'big ideas' about assessment are that learners learn best when...

- they understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them
- they are given feedback about the quality of their work, and what they can do to make it better
- they are given advice about how to go about making improvements
- they are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next, and who can give them help if they need it.

(http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/about/bigideas/index.asp)

The programme was novel in that it combined top-down and bottom-up development. Individual projects were determined at national level and developed within a national framework but the precise nature of the work undertaken within individual schools or school clusters was, in large part, determined by the staff in the schools, working with local authority personnel. Schools that participated were given financial support to use in ways they saw fit, e.g. supply cover, material resources, staff development. Most classroom-based projects were undertaken in ways that resembled action research, with planning, reviewing, reflecting and modifying phases, culminating in a case study report. This meant that plans changed as projects proceeded, both at local levels and in the overall management of the programme.

Support was to be provided by local authority personnel, project development officers and members of education faculties (or their equivalent) in the universities. This ws another novel feature of the programme – the collaboration of policy-makers, researchers and practitioners. In addition, members of key educational organisations were involved on various projects at various levels. Consequently, management was complex.

Figure 1.1: Management of the AifL Programme
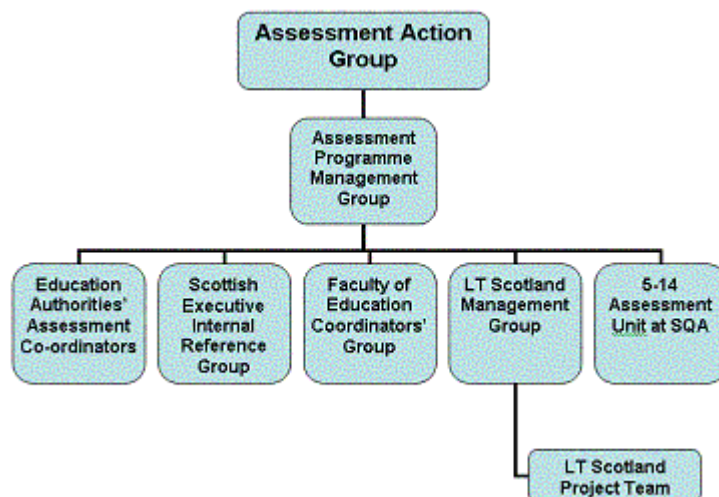
The programme was overseen by the Assessment Action Group (AAG) which had strategic oversight of the programme and its evaluation. It comprised representatives from education authorities, schools, university faculties of education, parent groups, professional associations, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Learning and Teaching Scotland (LT Scotland) and the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED).

The Assessment Programme Management Group (APMG), a subgroup of AAG, oversaw the management of the 10 projects within the programme, along with their evaluation. The remaining groups in the management structure had more specific remits. In particular, The Scottish Executive Internal Reference Group ensured that developments in assessment articulated well with other developments in education, and across Health, Social Justice, Social Work and Lifelong Learning, in the context of National Priorities, while the 5-14 Assessment Unit at SQA was responsible for the development of the Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) and the National Assessments 5-14.

The LT Scotland Project Team was responsible for the hands-on development of some of the projects and the Assessment is for Learning website while the LT Scotland Management Group oversaw their work.

Specific conferences, seminars and staff development events were organised nationally to provide the opportunities for participants (practitioners and others) to meet, review and reflect on strategies and progress. These took place across the country in order to maximise access by authorities and schools. In addition, many authorities organised similar events locally.

While the details of individual projects developed as work proceeded, the main elements of each have remained relatively constant. The AifL website describes the projects as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: The 10 projects

Project	Descriptor
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	To investigate effective classroom approaches to formative assessment and produce guidance for schools and teachers about assessment policies and practice to raise attainment.
2. Personal Learning Plans	To draw together existing work on Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) and other existing records and design a single recording framework.
3. Support for Management of Personal Learning Plans	To produce guidance for schools and teachers on management of the record-keeping process and PLPs, taking into account work on Progress File and Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs).
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	To produce guidance and exemplification for teachers on the range of assessment evidence to be gathered and retained for each aspect of the curriculum at each stage, and how to evaluate it.
5. Local Moderation	To investigate ways of 'sharing the standard' with other teachers, and to produce local portfolios of examples of assessed work across the various aspects of the curriculum.
6. New National Assessments	To create an online 'bank' of assessment materials, based on Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) tests and tasks, to replace the current National Tests.

7. Assessment of Achievement Programme	This project will continue and update the Scottish Executive Education Department's (SEED's) existing AAP monitoring programme. It will improve the monitoring of standards in the 5-14 Programme and give increased importance to the professional development of teachers.
8. ICT Support for Assessment	The aim of this project is to produce a framework document which will outline the key features/requirements of software to be used in support of Personal Learning Plans. This document is intended to help local authorities in determining their own way forward with ICT.
9. Reporting to Parents and Others	To link reporting to the Personal Learning Plan framework and propose a common format for reports. Additional outcomes for this project include guidance for teachers on ways of working with parents, guidance for parents on the assessment process, and exemplars of good practice (e.g. video).
10. Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Additional Support Needs	To ensure that all the projects in the programme are inclusive of pupils with the whole range of educational and social needs.

(http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/about/projects/index.asp)

2. The design of the evaluation

2.1 Introduction

In 2002, the SEED commissioned the QIE Centre to undertake an evaluation of the AifL Programme which would both encompass individual projects and look at the programme as a whole – product and process. It had already commissioned an evaluation of Project 1 (Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment) by the Institute of Education, London (Hallam *et al*, 2004) which was published online in October 2004 (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/ep1aldps-00.asp). In addition, Projects 2 (Personal Learning Plans) and 3 (Support for the Management of PLPs) were evaluated by independent researchers and the final report (Robertson and Dakers, 2004) was published online in 2004 (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/plpp02-00.asp).

The section sets out the aims of the evaluation of the AifL Programme, which took place over two years (2003 and 2004), the design of the different evaluation phases and the involvement of participants.

In the first phase of the evaluation the name of the programme changed from the *Assessment Development Programme* to the *Assessment is for Learning Programme* (AiFL)*.* Some early documents, therefore, are titled *The Assessment Development Programme* and are referred to by that name in this report. However, the programme is referred to throughout as *The Assessment is for Learning Programme.*

2.2 Aims and objectives

At the outset of this study in January 2003 the main aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of the AifL Programme in respect of its processes, products and short to medium term impacts.

The objectives of the evaluation at that time were to:

a) assess the extent to which the Personal Learning Plan developed within the programme is considered by pupils, parents, teachers and other education professionals to meet their perceived information needs
b) assess the degree to which the current diverse arrangements for assessment have successfully been brought into line with one another, and the extent to which the resulting convergence is considered beneficial by users of the assessment information
c) assess the extent to which involvement in the programme is perceived by participating teachers and head teachers to have been useful in staff development terms
d) assess the impact of the programme on assessment practices in schools, including the form, frequency and nature of the assessment and the use made of assessment results in guiding learning
e) assess the impact of the programme on pupil motivation to learn and on pupil attainment in key subject areas
f) identify the particular strengths and successes of the development programme and indicate how any weaknesses in the development process itself might be usefully addressed.

2.3 The Projects

The AifL Programme brought together 10 projects, designed to provide a comprehensive development of assessment practices at local and national level. The content of the projects ranged across gathering, interpreting, recording and reporting assessment evidence, some of which is of direct relevance to classroom practitioners and their managers and some of which is of considerable import to policy-makers and managers at authority and national levels. The original evaluation tender document identified 9 projects. The tenth, Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Additional Support Needs, was the last to be included, early in the evaluation.

The projects were implemented in stages. Projects 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 were introduced during the period April 2002 to March 2003, while the remaining 5 projects were introduced between September 2002 and April 2003 (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Phases and projects of the AifL Programme

Phase 1 (From April 2002)	Phase 2 (From September 2002)
Project 1: Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	Project 5: Local Moderation
Project 2: Personal Learning Plans	Project 6: New National Assessments
Project 3: Support for Management of Personal Learning Plans	Project 8: ICT Support for Assessment
Project 4: Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	Project 9: Reporting to Parents and Other Teachers
Project: 7: Assessment of Achievement Programme (ongoing programme)	Project 10: Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The evaluation involved seeking the views of key participants in the programme. For reference purposes these are listed in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Key participants in each project in initial developments

Project	Development Officers	Higher Education Representatives	Local Authorities	Schools
1 Formative Assessment	1	3	32	45[1]
2 Personal Learning Plans	1	1	6	15
3 Management of PLPs	1	1	6	15
4 Gathering and Interpreting Evidence	1	2	5	29
5 Local Moderation	1 (also HE representative)	1 (also took on role as DO)[2]	4	17
8 ICT Support for Assessment	1	1	15	16
9 Reporting to Parents and Other Teachers	1	1	7	21
10 Meeting the Needs of Pupils with SEN (ASN)	1	1	13	16
Total	8	11	ALL	174[3]

[1] 35 schools initially, with a further 10 commencing in February 2003, plus one school from the independent sector.
[2] A development officer was appointed at a later stage but initial developments were supported by the HE representative
[3] Over 500 teachers were involved in the projects

Projects 6 and 7 are national developments with national development teams involving teachers, higher education representatives, Scottish Qualifications Authority representatives and Scottish Executive statisticians. One National Development Officer acted as key AifL link for both projects 6 and 7. Some of the schools participating in AifL were active in the AAP; schools from Project 8 piloted the Online Assessment Bank for the new National Assessments.

2.4   Evaluation design

The evaluation of the programme was divided into two main phases. Phase 1 covered the period January to December 2003 and Phase 2 covered the period January to December 2004. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered during both phases.

Phase 1: January – December 2003

The first phase of the evaluation focused on understanding the nature of the projects, the extent to which they had met the critical milestones set and how they were meeting their stated aims. It involved:

- gathering, collating and analysing the project documents available in hard copy from project development officers and from the Learning and Teaching Scotland website
- surveying the views and experiences of the key stakeholders (sector representatives and local authority managers). Questionnaires were sent to 32 local authority assessment co-ordinators, 9 project development officers (one development officer managed both projects 6 and 7) and 11 higher education representatives
- surveying some of the schools involved in the AifL Programme. Questionnaires were sent to 174 schools. This list of schools was derived from information received from the project development officers. A questionnaire was sent to each school for a member of the senior management team and, based on information received from the schools, 340 teacher questionnaires were distributed.
- identifying schools within case study authorities and undertaking initial interviews.

Documentary Analysis

Two stages of documentary analysis were undertaken during Phase 1. The first stage, in February and March 2003, involved scrutiny of publicly available documents in both hard copy and electronically from the Assessment is for Learning website. The purpose of this was to identify key stakeholders and determine the involvement of authorities and schools in the various AifL projects. The questionnaires for the key stakeholders were informed by issues which emerged from this analysis: for example, the role of the key stakeholders and the extent of their involvement in AifL; their network of contacts in implementing the projects; the main means of communication and collaboration between key parties and their effectiveness; and progress being made towards project and programme aims.

The second stage of documentary analysis from March to May 2003 involved reviewing a wide range of documents related to each project. These were either publicly available from the AifL website or supplied by the national development

officers, and included school baseline audits, school action plans, school progress reports, reports of development officers' visits to schools and examples of 'products', if available. The purpose of this analysis was to identify emerging issues in relation to each project, to see if there were common issues, and to inform the questions to be included in the survey of headteachers and teachers.

Survey of key personnel

The Assessment is for Learning Programme is dependent on a variety of key stakeholder groups working together to enable teachers to implement and trial developments in the classroom. Important premises of the development programme are that it is informed by research, it is developing national priorities at a local level, and teachers are the key developers engaging in action research. In addition, policy makers, practitioners and researchers should work collaboratively to develop approaches which have a real impact on teaching and learning. Three key groups in this process are local authority assessment co-ordinators, project development officers and higher education representatives from the Faculties of Education.

The views of these groups were sought by questionnaire (see Appendix 1) in Phase 1 of the evaluation (May 2003), just over a year into the pilot projects. Survey responses were received from 29 out of the 32 local authority assessment co-ordinators, 9 development officers (one for each school based project [8] and one jointly for Project 6 and 7), and all 11 higher education representatives.

Survey of project schools

Views of those working directly with the projects within schools were sought through a series of questionnaires to teachers and headteachers (see Appendix 1). The questions sought information on involvement in individual projects as well as views on the overall programme.

A list of schools involved in Assessment is for Learning was drawn up from information supplied by the Scottish Executive Education Department, LT Scotland Project Development Officers and supplemented by information from the Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators. In total, 174 schools were identified, allowing data to be gathered on all of the projects that that were school-based (i.e. not Projects 6 and 7) from schools of varying sizes and in authorities across Scotland.

Directors of Education were asked to confirm the schools involved and permission was sought to contact them. Schools were then contacted with a request for information regarding the number of teachers involved in the school to enable the appropriate number of questionnaires to be sent. Responses were received from 92 headteachers from a possible 174 schools, and 189 teachers, representing 102 (59%) schools in total.

Identifying schools in case study authorities

Four authorities were selected to cover a range of factors such as rural/urban, remote/central and stage of implementation, and also to cover all projects. Initial interviews and further programme developments led to changes in the planned work. For further explanation see the section on case studies in Phase 2 below.

Phase 2: January 2004 – December 2004

The second phase of the evaluation was to focus on the use of the outcomes of the projects by practitioners, managers and policy-makers. This phase of the evaluation included:

- analysis of the degree of convergence of the systems of assessment
- collation, review and analysis of project materials received from schools, including their own evaluations
- interviews in the case study schools. In total, 26 schools were visited; in all cases a member of the senior management team and teachers involved in the project developments were interviewed. In addition, focus groups were held with parents in 5 schools and with pupils in 7 schools
- survey of a sample of the stakeholders. Questionnaires were sent to 32 local authority co-ordinators and 10 higher education representatives. The Development Officers were not included in this phase as there had been changes to the role and personnel since the first phase of the evaluation. Questionnaires were sent to 165 schools: this was based on a revision of the original database used in 2003. Some schools were removed as they had not actually taken part and several schools that joined the programme late were added
- survey of Associated Schools Group (ASG) co-ordinators. The development of ASGs had taken place during the session 2003 to 2004 in order to take forward AifL developments within local authorities, focusing in particular on local clusters of schools. Although not part of the evaluation proposal, it was decided that it was important to gain insight into the progress of ASGs and the work they had been engaged in. A list of 111 ASGs was received from SEED. Information received from local authority assessment co-ordinators suggested that some had not been able to undertake much development during 2003-04 and that some had not collaborated as clusters. It was therefore decided to focus on ASGs where it appeared there had been collaboration and in which progress had been made during 2003-04. Questionnaires were sent to 81 ASG contacts.

Documentary analysis

The documentary analysis was intended to review project materials, including schools' own evaluations. As schools were producing case studies of their project activities, a sample of these was collected for this phase of the evaluation. Fifty-four case studies were received via the project development officers or directly from schools. These were reviewed, with about half being studied in greater detail to assist in the selection of schools for visits and in preparation for those visits. The amount of information and extent of self-evaluation varied between case studies. However, they provided a useful insight into the nature of the work being carried out in the schools for each project.

Survey of key personnel and school staff

In Phase 2 of the evaluation, survey responses were received from 30 local authority assessment co-ordinators and 8 HE representatives. Responses were received from 77 managers from a possible 165 schools, and 130 teachers, representing 87 (53%) schools in total. Additionally, 45 (56%) responses were received from the 81 ASG contacts to whom questionnaires had been sent. The questionnaire data were

analysed using SPSSx. Open ended responses were analysed thematically (Appendix 2).

Case studies

In total, 26 schools were visited; in all cases a member of the senior management team and teachers involved in the project developments were interviewed. In addition, focus groups were held with parents in 5 schools and with pupils in 7 schools.

The original intention for the case studies was to focus on clusters of schools in 3 or 4 authorities to cover all projects involved in the programme. However, schools were not working in clusters on developments and it was proving difficult to gain sufficient access to all projects within only 4 authorities. Furthermore, evaluation of Projects 1, 2 and 3 by other evaluation teams meant that some schools were being approached by more than one evaluator. It was therefore agreed with SEED that QIE would focus on Projects 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10. Some of these projects were taking place in the authorities that had been identified initially. The advice of SEED and project development officers was taken with regard to schools that were displaying good practice and these were chosen for more in-depth study. The schools visited included one pre-5 centre, 13 primary schools, 9 secondary and 3 special needs schools.

For headteachers and teachers the interviews covered the following issues: a brief overview of the work that had been carried out under the auspices of AifL; the impact that involvement in AifL had on school policy; its impact on practice in the school; views on the support for development work; any aspect of the project which has not worked particularly well and why; sustainability of developments; extent to which developments have contributed to improvement in meeting the information needs of key stakeholders (see interview schedule in Appendix 3).

Pupil group interviews focused on the changes which had occurred as a result of their teacher being involved in the project. They were asked to explain what had been different, what they liked and disliked about it (if anything) and if they thought it helped with their school work. There were also some questions designed to explore their understanding of assessment.

The parent group interviews varied according to what their involvement had been, but broadly covered the issues of how they had found out about the project, what their involvement had been, what they had gained from involvement, ways in which it had helped them understand their children's learning, how it had helped their children, and what they wanted to know about their child's progress at school.

The data were analysed on a project basis, looking at the following themes for each project: how and why the participants had become involved in the project; key aspects of work developed as part of the project; next steps in development; impact on practice, impact on policy; introduction of other aspects of the AifL Programme other than their original projects; views on and understandings of the wider development programme; and the views of parents and pupils. In this report the data derived from the case studies are used to further illuminate findings from the surveys.

Interview with key stakeholders

Interviews were carried out with a number of key stakeholders representing local authorities, project development officers and higher education representatives. The

purpose of these interviews was to gain further insight into issues which were emerging from the surveys and to obtain the views of the respective groups on the whole Assessment is for Learning Programme.

Co-ordinators from 4 authorities were interviewed, one via email communication (see Appendix 3 for interview schedule). Two HEI representatives were interviewed, one at the beginning because of extensive involvement in the programme, and one towards the end of the programme.

A senior member of the LT Scotland development team and the development officer for Projects 6 and 7 were interviewed; additionally, 2 development officers at SQA with responsibility for the National Assessment Bank and the Assessment of Achievement Programme were interviewed.

Changes to the evaluation design

As the 10 projects in the AifL Programme were developed and implemented during the two-year period, changes occurred as a result of the action research nature of the classroom-based projects and the programme growing and developing. These changes led to alterations not only in the implementation of the AifL Programme itself, but, consequently, in the design of the evaluation from that set out in the tender document.

As Projects 1, 2 and 3 were subject to separate external evaluations, it was agreed that they should not be asked to contribute significantly to the surveys and should be omitted altogether from the case study element of this evaluation. As noted above (p11), the nature of the planned case studies also changed during the evaluation process. The original proposal was to identify school clusters in 3 or 4 local authorities and to concentrate on developments within those clusters. However, the AifL pilot schools, which were the focus of the evaluation, were not working in clusters as anticipated, and coverage of all projects was difficult to establish. Therefore a spread of schools across more authorities focusing on Projects 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 was targeted.

It was proposed that the second phase of the evaluation (2004) would focus on the use of the **outcomes** of the projects. Project specifications had indicated the production of guidelines, exemplification and dissemination of good practice as outcomes. So, for example, Projects 2 and 3 (PLPs) were to produce 'the design of a single recording framework' and 'guidance on managing the record-keeping process'; Project 9 had to make use of these to produce a 'reporting framework and format which links to the records within the PLPs'. The original timescales suggested that these products would be available for wider use by the end of 2003. Schools were producing case studies and examples of locally designed PLPs, but it was not possible within the timescales to produce material for wider dissemination. As noted in more detail in Chapter 3 of this report, the reality was that schools needed more time to encompass developments and produce their case studies and, as the growth process was emphasised as being important, deadlines were treated flexibly; additionally, it was proving particularly difficult to agree a framework for PLPs. A consultation document on a PLP framework was issued in September 2004.

LT Scotland were commissioned to draw together the materials from the case studies and to prepare a toolkit (www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess) to enable wider understanding of the issues emerging from the programme and to enable schools to implement the ideas. This web-based toolkit was not launched until September 2004 and therefore it was not feasible to include its use within the evaluation project.

Interviews and questionnaires in the second phase of the evaluation did focus on the extent to which participants were continuing developments of their own projects, their awareness of the outcomes of other projects and the extent to which they were taking on board wider AifL developments.

As a result of the separate evaluation of Projects 2 and 3 and the slower than anticipated development of PLPs, less emphasis has been given to objective (a) of the QIE evaluation: 'assess the extent to which the Personal Learning Plan developed within the programme is considered by pupils, parents, teachers and other education professionals to meet their perceived information needs'.

A further change to the evaluation design was the additional survey to Associated Schools Groups in the autumn of 2004. As explained above (p10) these were introduced during 2003 to 2004 to take forward developments in local authorities. They were not part of the original design of the programme and therefore were not included in the evaluation proposal. This illustrates the responsive nature of programme developments and hence the need for the evaluation team to be responsive to what should be the focus of the evaluation. The original design included further work with the case study authority schools at this stage, but with the agreement of SEED this was replaced by the ASG survey.

Thus, while the evaluation of the AifL Programme had a set of specific aims and a design to address these, it remained responsive to changes in the overall programme and plans were modified as appropriate. This reflects the philosophy behind the programme itself which gave considerable freedom to schools and teachers to develop practice within their own context at a pace and in a manner that reflected local needs. Regular meetings with SEED personnel reviewed progress and determined next steps in the evaluation process. An interim report was submitted in December 2003.

Sequence of evaluation activities

The evaluation was undertaken in two key phases to reflect the phases of the AifL Programme and school involvement. The sequence of activities undertaken by the evaluation team is outlined in Table 2.3 (January – December 2003) and Table 2.4 (January – December 2004). The final column in both figures indicates when reports were presented to SEED.

Table 2.3: Evaluation activities – January to December 2003

Timetable	Activity	Reported
January to March 2003	Analysis of initial documentation relating to projects. Familiarisation with each project, identifying key stakeholders and identifying themes to be addressed	March 2003
April to June 2003	Analysis of individual project documentation Developing and administering of questionnaires to key stakeholders: national development officers, local authority co-ordinators and representatives from faculties of education Developing and piloting of school (headteacher and teacher) questionnaires	June 2003
July to September 2003	Analysis of key stakeholder data	September 2003
October to December 2003	Administering of school questionnaires Initial analysis of school questionnaire data Initial visits to schools in 4 case study authorities	**Interim Report** December 2003

Table 2.4: Evaluation activities – January to December 2004

Timetable	Activity	Reported
January to July 2004	Survey data analysis Further analysis of schools' survey focusing on findings for individual projects. Analysis of project documents 54 case studies were received via the project development officers or directly from schools. These were reviewed with around half being studied in greater detail to assist in the selection of and preparation for school visits. Visit to case study schools Interviews were conducted in case study schools with headteachers, teachers, pupils and parents as appropriate to the objectives of the projects. Analysis of interviews. Interviews with assessment co-ordinators and other key stakeholders	April 2004
August 2004 to February 2005	Develop and administer surveys to key stakeholders, schools and Associated Schools Groups. Analysis of survey and all data gathered	**Final report** February 2005

3. The projects in the AifL Programme

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is based primarily on the documentary analysis undertaken during the first few months of the evaluation project (February to June 2003). It briefly reviews the emergence of the 10 projects, presents a description of the projects at the outset of the evaluation and notes significant developments which occurred during the evaluation. The documents analysed included publicly available materials from the Learning and Teaching Scotland website and materials provided by the project development officers including school baseline audits, action plans, progress reports and notes of meetings.

3.2 The project approach to developing assessment

From the inception of the *Assessment is for Learning Programme* (originally Assessment Development Programme) at the end of 2001, it was proposed that developments would be taken forward based on separate but linked projects, which would progress the thinking about assessment that had been developing over the previous 3 years by means of the reviews, consultations and reports referred to in Chapter 1 of this report. The main focus was on the development of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) as a means of assisting the development of a unified system of recording and reporting. Papers prepared for the Assessment Action Group meeting of 14 November 2001 report:

> *The views from the consultation and attention to the National Priorities suggest that the young person, and the record documenting his or her progress and achievements, should be at the centre of the new assessment system: the 'Child at the Centre'.*
>
> (SEED, 2001)

At this stage, 9 projects were proposed relating to the ongoing development of Personal Learning Plans, the use of the Progress File[1] to support pupils and teachers in completing PLPs, gathering and interpreting assessment evidence, local moderation, development of an assessment bank, a 'new look' Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP) pilot, teachers as AAP assessors, ICT support for record-keeping and reporting, and reporting to parents and other teachers. It was proposed that developments would take place over 3 time phases. Some projects would develop across all phases, while others would be shorter and some would be introduced at a later stage than others.

By March 2002 the Assessment Action Group had discussed and refined the plans for the development programme, in particular taking account of the work of Black and Wiliam on formative assessment. While the importance of assessment to support teaching and learning based on the teacher's professional judgement was referred to in the above mentioned reviews and reports and also the AAG documentation, it now appeared as a distinct project. A further project was added to specifically address pupils with Additional Support Needs (still referred to as 'Special Educational Needs' at the time of the documentation).

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[1] 'Progress File' was a tool designed for people of all ages from secondary school onwards to record achievements, analyse and record progress and plan for the future. Further information can be found at http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/curriculum/ProgressFile.asp.

The programme Action Plan in March 2002 presented 10 projects to be introduced in 2 phases, from April to December 2002 and from September 2002 to June 2003 (see Table 2.1 on p7). A third phase, from April 2003 to December 2003, was allocated to the ongoing development of all the projects, with wider introduction beyond the pilot schools from August 2003. These 10 projects remained the basis of the programme throughout the evaluation project and up to June 2004. The Action Plan highlighted that *'although the programme will need to be divided into manageable projects, they should all be seen to be contributing to one single system of assessment'* (SEED, 2002).

Jointly, these 10 projects were to address 3 broad areas:

- *the development of professional practice in classroom assessment and the range of information and evidence to be recorded in the PLP;*
- *procedures and support for teachers to ensure broad-based and accurate recording of evidence with shared understandings of standards;*
- *and the means to gather and exchange information about levels and trends in attainment with a particular focus on the use of ICT.*

(SEED, 2002)

To assist the drawing together of the separate projects into a coherent framework the relationship between the projects and to the programme as a whole was reconstructed so that developments could be taken forward during 2004 to 2005, and to provide an organising framework for the AifL Toolkit. They were grouped under the concepts of:

- Assessment FOR Learning
- Assessment AS Learning
- Assessment OF Learning.

The relationship is presented in Figure 3.1. Project 8 is not included, as ongoing developments in ICT are intended to span all areas of assessment and recording.

Figure 3.1: Grouping of 9 AifL projects into 3 assessment themes

Assessment FOR Learning Supporting classroom learning and teaching projects Focus: Formative Assessment	**Assessment AS Learning** Learning how to learn projects Focus: Personal Learning Planning	**Assessment OF Learning** Gathering and interpreting evidence projects Focus: Sharing the Standard
§ Formative assessment § Gathering and interpreting evidence § Partnership with parents § Inclusion of pupils with ASN	§ Formative assessment § Personal learning plans § Support for management of PLPs	§ Gathering and interpreting evidence § Local moderation § AAP (to become Scottish Survey of Achievement) § New National Assessments (bank)

3.3 People involved in the projects

Development officers were appointed for each project as part of the LT Scotland team, to manage the project and to support schools in the developments. Each local authority education department assigned the role of AifL assessment co-ordinator to a member of staff. The University Faculties of Education were asked to nominate members of staff to work with each project to contribute research evidence and support; and to encourage action research by practitioners (teachers). The authority assessment co-ordinators had invited/selected schools and teachers to be involved in the various projects.

Figure 3.2 summarises the key stakeholders involved in the initial project developments while Table 3.1 shows the involvement of each authority in the different projects.

Figure 3.2: Key stakeholders in each project in initial developments

DO = Development Officer
HE = Higher Education Representatives

Project 1
1 DOs
3 HE
32 authorities
45 schools (35 initially, with 10 joining in Feb 03)

Project 2
1 DO
1 HE
6 authorities
15 schools

Project 3
1 DO
1 HE
6 authorities
15 schools

32 Local authority education departments – plus one school from independent sector

Each with an assessment co-ordinator. Each authority involved in 2 or 3 projects

170+ schools
500+ teachers

Project 10
1 DO
1 HE
13 authorities
16 schools

Project 4
1 DO
2 HE
5 authorities
29 schools

Project 9
1 DO
1 HE
7 authorities
21 schools

Project 8
1 DO
1 HE
15 authorities
16 schools

Project 5
1 DO) same initially.
1 HE) DO appointed
          later
4 authorities
17 schools

Projects 6 and 7 are national developments with national development teams involving teachers, higher education representatives, Scottish Qualifications Authority representatives and Scottish Executive statisticians. One Development Officer acted

as the key AifL link person for both projects 6 and 7. Some schools were involved in more than one project because some participating in AifL were also active in the AAP and schools from Project 8 piloted the Online Assessment Bank for the new National Assessments.

Table 3.1: Local authority involvement in initial AifL projects

Local Authority	Project 1 Formative Assessment	Project 2 Personal Learning Plans	Project 3 Support for Mgt of PLP	Project 4 Gathering etc Evidence	Project 5 Moderation	Project 8 ICT Support	Project 9 Reporting to parents	Project 10 Special Needs
Aberdeen City	P			P		P		
Aberdeenshire	P			P				P
Angus	P				P			
Argyll and Bute	P					P		
City of Edinburgh	P							P
Clackmannanshire	P							P
Dumfries and Galloway	P		P			P		
Dundee City	P		P			P		
East Ayrshire	P						P	
East Dunbartonshire	P					P		P
East Lothian	P	P				P		
East Renfrewshire	P	P				P		
Falkirk	P		P			P		
Fife	P				P			P
Glasgow City	P		P				P	P
Highland	P	P						P
Inverclyde	P							P
Midlothian	P							P
Moray	P					P	P	
North Ayrshire	P			P	P	P		
North Lanarkshire	P	P					P	
Orkney	P			P		P		
Perth and Kinross	P		P			P		
Renfrewshire	P							P
Scottish Borders	P		P					P
Shetland Isles	P						P	
South Ayrshire	P	P				P		
South Lanarkshire	P				P	P	P	
Stirling	P			P		P		
West Dunbartonshire	P						P	
West Lothian	P	P						
Western Isles	P							P

3.4 Status of projects at start of, and key developments during, the evaluation project

This section presents, for each project, the project descriptor aim (as found in the programme Action Plan), any further statement of objectives in the documents, progress against milestones/timescale and early emerging issues discernible in the project documents.

At the start of the programme, schools participating in school-based projects were requested to complete a baseline audit which addressed issues of planning and practice of assessment and reporting. The audit tool was developed in order to help schools identify areas to be addressed in their project and so include them in their action plans. Some of the schools completed the audit but it was reported that it was not particularly useful as it fell outwith the normal school development cycle.

Project 1: Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment

> The aim of Project 1 is to 'investigate classroom approaches to formative assessment and produce guidance for schools and teachers about assessment policies and practice to raise attainment'.

Project 1 introduced and took forward strategies for formative assessment as proposed in the 'Black Box' materials (Black and Wiliam, 2001). This was supported through conference input by staff from King's College, London, and some teachers from England who had participated in developments in formative assessment with King's College. Project 1 teachers were encouraged to take part in action research and where possible to set up 'control groups' within their teaching context to see if any differences emerged between groups of pupils who were being introduced to formative assessment strategies and those being taught in the 'normal' way. Teachers were able to share their experiences through the 'recall' days organised by the development officer.

Thirty-five schools were involved in the first phase of the project: 16 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, 3 junior high, one 5-14 school and one special school. A second group of 10 schools became involved in April 2003: 2 primary and 8 secondary. Schools from all local authorities participated in Project 1. It was noted that the Project 1 schools had, in fact, completed their action plans before the audit tool became available.

It was proposed that the first phase schools would have submitted action plans by June 2002 and case study reports of developments in their schools by March 2003; the second phase group had a proposed date of June 2003 for the submission of their case study reports. Study of the documentation indicated that the majority of the schools had produced action plans as required, though of varying quality, with additional support from the development officer where required. Many were on track to produce the required case study reports, though, where there were delays, deadlines were being treated flexibly, with a small number of the original schools extending to June 2003 to report.

Analysis of the documentary evidence indicated a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment amongst teachers taking part in Project 1. Where there were delays or obstacles, these related to changes in school management, to the roles of the teachers or to external factors such as lack of supply cover and HMIE inspections. Changing classroom practice raised a number of challenges that caused schools to reflect and modify their plans, learning from the issues that arose through review and reflection. At this stage, there was no evidence of links being made to the other projects by the teachers involved and no mention of personal learning plans was noted.

Project 2: Personal Learning Plans

The aim of Project 2 is 'to draw together existing work on Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) and other existing records and design a single recording framework'.

Personal Learning Plans were a key aspect of developments in the New Community Schools initiative and the schools participating in the AifL project were able to draw on the existing work from that initiative. The outcome of drawing together the work of all the schools was to contribute to 'a single recording framework' which would be transferable on a national basis. This project was most closely linked to Project 3.

Seventeen schools were involved across 6 local authorities: 11 primary schools and 6 secondary schools. Only 3 schools completed the baseline audit; it was noted that most schools felt it was inappropriate as it did not fit within the school development planning cycle.

Schools produced action plans which identified key areas for development relevant to the personal learning planning process: making learning intentions and assessment criteria explicit, pupil self-assessment, identifying own learning needs, setting targets, planning next steps, and dialogue between pupils and teachers. Some of the schools were concentrating on personal learning planning in specific aspects of the curriculum: for example, language and maths; others were taking a whole curriculum approach. Some secondary schools focused on core skills with planning taking place within Personal and Social Education (PSE).

It was originally proposed that schools would produce case studies by March 2003. Again this timescale was treated flexibly, with schools aiming to produce a PLP framework by that date to be piloted with pupils and a revised PLP to be available by June 2003.

The documentary analysis revealed a number of challenges faced by the schools and also challenges to the overall aim of the project. There was a clear perception that working with personal learning plans was time consuming and led to an increased workload. Participants also had a range of views as to the purpose of PLPs: some held the view that it should address all aspects of learning including test results as well as personal objectives; others focused on specific curricular targets; others viewed them as being appropriate only for personal development and learning.

There was evidence of some clusters of schools working together to have a common approach within the cluster, particularly for P7 to S1 transition. There was also evidence that some schools were recognising the importance of formative

assessment practices in relation to PLPs. Some schools were looking for ICT solutions to PLP development.

Project 3: Supporting the Management of PLPs

The aim of Project 3 is 'to produce guidance for schools and teachers on management of the record-keeping process and PLPs, taking into account work on the Progress File and Individual Educational Programmes'.

The schools involved in Project 3 were to develop PLPs with a particular focus on the processes involved: for example, how learning intentions and criteria are made known to the pupils, how teachers engage in dialogue with pupils, how learning targets are agreed, how reporting to parents is carried out.

Fifteen schools from 6 authorities took part in Project 3: 4 secondary, 9 primary (3 incorporating nurseries), one nursery and one special school. Schools were at different stages in the process of developing PLPs – some were just starting and others were in the second or third year of development.

All schools completed the baseline audit and produced action plans. From a review of the audits and action plans it was clear that the main areas identified as being less developed were related to pupil self-awareness, pupil awareness of learning intentions and assessment criteria, individual progress and target setting. Some schools rated themselves highly on relationships with parents; others recognised this as an aspect which needed development and would be addressed as part of the project. As with Project 2, the focus for development varied from one or two aspects of the curriculum to the whole curriculum. Again as with Project 2, the original date of March 2003 for completion of reports was treated flexibly.

The documentary analysis revealed similar challenges to those noted in relation to Project 2. There was particular emphasis on differing departmental responses within secondary schools. References were made in the notes of meetings with schools to the relevance and importance of formative assessment.

Further developments of projects 2 and 3

To seek to address some of the issues emerging in relation to PLPs, a working group involving project development officers and a consultant developed a 'cross cutting skills' model. This was based on the OECD Key Competencies Framework linked to the 5-14 curriculum guidelines, with the aim of providing a *'manageable "spine" of curriculum outcomes for PLPs that all teachers could report against'* (SEED, 2003a, para 24). PLPs were developed around skills at 3 levels: P3-P5, P6-P7 and S1**.** These were piloted under the title of "Skills for Living" in 10 of the original AifL PLP project schools from September 2003.

A proposed framework for PLPs was developed and circulated for consultation in September 2004.

Project 4: Gathering and Interpreting Evidence

The aim of Project 4 is 'to produce guidance and exemplification for teachers on the range of assessment evidence to be gathered and retained for each aspect of the curriculum at each stage, and how to evaluate it'.

Schools involved in Project 4 were engaged in identifying opportunities for assessment within normal classroom practice so that assessment is seen as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Emphasis was on the whole assessment cycle as presented in the 5-14 curriculum guidelines: planning, teaching (including gathering evidence), recording, reporting and evaluating. Developments focused on identifying opportunities for assessment which went beyond pencil and paper tests: for example, observation of children completing tasks, products from class activities, verbal responses. Particular encouragement was given to using digital video as a means of capturing evidence. Establishing clear assessment criteria for each level of the curriculum to assist in the interpretation of the evidence was a key part of the process.

Materials presented at the introductory project seminar highlighted the fact that there are (approximately) 1776 attainment targets across the 5-14 curriculum, including all levels A to F. Clearly, for development purposes, each school had to select specific areas of the curriculum and levels as a focus for the project.

Twenty-six schools across 5 authorities took part in Project 4: one nursery, 17 primary, one junior high, 4 secondary and 3 special needs schools. All schools completed baseline audits and produced action plans. The main areas for development appeared to be clarifying criteria, producing assessment materials and exemplars of work which met the criteria. Some schools emphasised involving pupils more in understanding the criteria, in suggesting suitable evidence and in self-assessment.

Some of the curricular areas mentioned were: reading for information, writing, art, clarifying criteria for ICT and integrating the teaching of it with other subjects, PE and modern languages.

Most schools produced case study reports (or at least draft case studies) within the timescales required. As with other projects, a flexible approach was taken with schools who were not able to do this.

All participants received 'Black Box' literature but at this stage it was not clear that formative practice was a focus of developments. Rather the focus appeared to be on clarifying the criteria and using a wider range of evidence for summative judgements. No reference to PLPs was noted.

Project 5 – Local Moderation (Phase 2)

The aim of Project 5 is 'to investigate ways of "sharing the standard" with other teachers, and to produce local portfolios of examples of assessed work across the various aspects of the curriculum'.

As a second phase development, Project 5 was in its early stages at the beginning of the evaluation project. It was intended that this should build on the work of Project 4, focusing on teachers working together to reach a common understanding of the levels of attainment in different curricular areas and the criteria to be applied in making assessment judgements. Exemplars of work illustrating the criteria were to be developed. Building on the lessons learned from the Phase 1 projects, Project 5 schools were specifically requested to incorporate formative assessment strategies and consider how the criteria they were developing could be used formatively.

Four school clusters from 4 different authorities were identified to participate in Project 5, ie 4 secondaries and a total of 13 associated primaries. This approach was to allow for sharing of standards across schools and across sectors. None of the schools initially involved had been involved in Project 4, although some Project 4 schools subsequently took their developments further into the work of Project 5.

The school clusters produced action plans. Two of the clusters focused on aspects of language development and 2 focused on aspects of environmental studies/science. Although originally planned that Project 5 schools would report by November 2003, they extended beyond this into 2004.

Project 6 – New National Assessments

The aim of Project 6 is 'to create an online "bank" of assessment materials, based on Assessment of Achievement Programme tests and tasks, to replace the current National Tests'.

During the initial stages of the evaluation project, the development work on the new National Assessment Bank was ongoing. The previous bank of tests available to schools had been questioned on grounds of both validity and reliability. The bank was being improved through the incorporation of items used previously as part of the Assessment of Achievement Programme and new items. The principle of the bank is that schools can download assessments for a specific curricular area covered by national testing requirements, at the required level, when they need it. They have no choice as to which precise test they receive. Previously schools had selected tests from a catalogue and ordered them from SQA.

The launch of the new National Assessments had been planned for August 2003; however, due to various delays and issues of suitability of hardware and software in schools, this took place in December 2003.

In September 2003, a consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting: 3-14 was initiated (SEED, 2003b). The findings of this consultation and the Scottish Executive response were not published until November 2004 (SEED, 2004a and 2004b). During this period many participants expressed uncertainty regarding the future of National Assessments and the Assessment of Achievement Programme.

Project 7 – Assessment of Achievement Programme

The aim of Project 7 is 'to continue and update SEED's existing AAP monitoring programme, improving the monitoring of standards, progression between stages and change over time, and incorporating professional development for teachers'.

The Assessment of Achievement Programme was established in the mid-1980s with the aim of monitoring achievement in key areas of the curriculum at significant stages in the school career of pupils. Initially, the focus was on English language, mathematics and science at the Primary 4, Primary 7 and Secondary 2 stages of schooling. Each subject area was assessed on a 3-year cycle by means of a survey approach involving both assessment materials for pupils and questionnaires for schools. National representative samples of pupils in schools are drawn to participate in the AAP so it was anticipated that only a sub-sample of the AifL schools would have experience of it.

This pattern of monitoring was modified in 2002 when the surveys were moved to a 4-yearly cycle and the stages of pupils involved were changed to Primary 3, Primary 5, Primary 7 and Secondary 2. While the emphasis remained on English language, mathematics and science, the fourth year of the cycle could be used for other subject areas such as social studies (assessed in 2002). In addition, performance on core skills within the context of the subject area was included in the surveys. The role of the AAP and any future developments were addressed in the consultation exercise on Assessment, Testing and Reporting: 3-14.

Some of the AifL project schools participated in the AAP surveys that took place during 2002 to 2004, and some teachers were involved as field officers. This evaluation did not seek evidence directly from schools on their experiences of the AAP but rather has drawn on the internal evaluation undertaken by the AAP itself.

Project 8 – ICT Support for Assessment (Phase 2)

The aim of Project 8 is 'to investigate ways in which ICT can support assessment, record keeping and reporting, and ensure that developments are consistent with ScotXed and NGfL agendas'.

Project 8 was different from the other school-based projects in that, rather than asking schools specifically to develop new approaches, particularly to assessment, recording and reporting processes, the purpose was to investigate what software was already in use, how effective it was, gain schools' views on potential developments and produce a framework document describing software specifically for the purposes of supporting personal learning plans. This document could then be used in discussion with software providers. Views of local authority representatives were also sought as part of this process.

It was planned that one primary and one secondary school be involved from 16 authorities. In the end, a total of 16 schools (12 primary and 4 secondary) from 15 authorities took part in the exercise. The schools were different from those already involved in Projects 2 and 3. It appears that in at least one authority Project 2 and Project 8 schools worked together to ensure consistency.

Initially an audit was carried out of schools and authorities, followed up by meetings with each school at which an authority representative was present. Some schools already had in place electronic record keeping and reporting systems. Some of the early emerging issues related to ensuring that various Management Information Systems (e.g. school and authority, or even different systems within the school) were compatible in order to avoid having to enter data more than once. Specifically in relation to PLPs, the main challenges, as with Projects 2 and 3, included being clear on the purposes of a PLP and what targets were to be included (curriculum and/or personal). Software was required that enabled a wide range of targets to be effectively incorporated into an electronic system and allowed teacher, pupil and parent access as appropriate. A further challenge was keeping the focus on the process of developing and negotiating the PLP and keeping the IT system as a way of managing the information and not determining it. Some concern was expressed about the lack of clear links being established between schools involved in Projects 2, 3 and 8.

The framework document for ICT software was produced in March 2003.

Project 9 – Reporting to Parents and other Teachers (Phase 2)

The aim of Project 9 is 'to link reporting to the Personal Learning Plan framework and propose a common format for reports'.

The main developments in the project began early in 2003. The original aim was to take forward work based on a Personal Learning Plan framework (or single recording framework) which was proposed as an outcome of Project 2. As noted above, this had not been produced by the start of Project 9. The focus therefore shifted to reporting to parents in a broad sense, including written and face-to-face communications as well as formal reporting systems.

Twenty-one schools from 7 authorities were involved in Project 9: 5 secondary, one junior high, 11 primary and 2 nursery. All schools completed a sub-section of the baseline audit which related specifically to working with parents and a questionnaire was also used to gain parents' views on the effectiveness of the school reporting procedures. The outcomes of these two exercises were used to inform school action plans.

Action plans indicated a wide range of developments, including electronic reporting, trialling of new written reports, using email for communication with parents, involving parents in developing new policy, improving parents' evenings, organising more open events for parents, involving parents in children's learning, and consulting more with parents.

In addition to this project that was targeted at communicating with parents, the programme organised a series of 'Open Space' events for parents, informing them of the wider aims of the initiatives and seeking their views on developments.

Although the original date for case study reports was October 2003, the work extended into 2004, with case studies being produced early in 2004.

Project 10 – Meeting the Needs of Pupils with Special Educational Needs (Additional Support Needs) (Phase 2)

The aim of Project 10 is 'to ensure that all the projects in the programme are inclusive of pupils with the whole range of educational and social needs'.

Schools involved in Project 10 were invited to consider the developments occurring in the other projects and to use them within the context of young people with additional support needs. This category included those with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, those with English as second language, travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, and those learning through Gaelic-medium education.

Sixteen schools from 13 authorities participated in Project 10: 4 secondary, 9 primary and 3 special schools. Additionally an authority-wide service on English as an Alternative Language was included.

All schools carried out baseline audits and action plans. For many, the focus was on encouraging independent learning and improving the planning and management of assessment. The 16 schools chose to develop aspects of AifL as follows:

Formative assessment: 8 (all learning difficulties/physical disability)
PLPs: 4 (Gaelic; travellers; learning difficulties)
Reporting to parents, other teachers: 4 (Gaelic; learning support).

The main developments began early in 2003, though there was some delay with the Gaelic-medium developments. Schools continued developments into the following session with the production of reports in late 2003/early 2004.

3.5   Summary of key points

This chapter has provided an overview of the development and early progress of the 10 Assessment is for Learning projects.

- From the inception of the programme at the end of 2001, it was proposed that the developments be taken forward based on 10 separate but linked projects. Originally the main focus was on the development of Personal Learning Plans as a means of supporting a unified system of recording and reporting. Although multiple projects were devised to make developments 'manageable', it was considered important that they all be seen as contributing to a coherent national system of assessment.

- All local authorities were involved in Project 1 and at least one other project. Over 170 schools and more than 500 teachers took part in the pilot developments. Each project had an associated project development officer and representative from higher education.

- The school responses to completing a baseline audit varied, with some schools indicating that it was inappropriate and did not fit within the school development planning cycle.

- Milestones were set for schools to produce case study reports and examples of products. Some schools found it difficult to work within the time constraints; however, as growth and the developmental process were fundamental to the programme, the timescales were treated flexibly. Because of this the preparation of outputs for wider use took longer than originally anticipated.

- Those involved in PLP projects varied in their understanding of the purposes of PLPs and the implication for developing ICT support. A common reporting framework was not produced as planned, with resultant consequences for the focus of Project 9, which was intended to build on that framework. Further development work on PLPs was undertaken, with a proposed framework being circulated for consultation in September 2004.

- From the documentary analysis conducted between February and June 2003, it appeared that involvement in Projects 1, 4 and 9 was focused exclusively on project-specific developments (viz: no mention of PLPs in relation to Project 1 or formative assessment in Project 4). On the other hand, some participants in Projects 2, 3 and 8 were recognising links with formative assessment.

4. Findings (1) – Phase 1 surveys

4.1 Introduction

The first major stage of data collection involved a series of surveys of key players in the AifL Programme: local authority assessment co-ordinators, project development officers (DOs), higher education faculty representatives (HE representatives), headteachers and teachers from participating schools.

The findings are presented thematically across the groups of participants. Firstly an overview of the samples for each survey is presented. The themes thereafter are:

- the participants – who they are, how and why they became involved in AifL and what they did during the first year of the project (2002 to 2003)
- the impact of the AifL Programme on policy and practice: benefits and challenges
- communication and collaboration
- resources, funding and sustainability
- awareness of the wider AifL Programme.

For each theme, findings from the case studies have been used to illustrate or expand upon those from the survey.

4.2 Survey samples

LA assessment co-ordinators, project DOs and HE representatives

The survey of these three groups was carried out in May 2003. The main purpose of the questionnaires was to gather as wide a range of views as possible from key players in the development of the programme. The issues addressed included: their role in the AifL Programme; how they had become involved; the extent of their involvement; the main means of communication and collaboration between the key parties and their effectiveness; perceived benefits of the programme to date; and progress being made towards project and programme aims. This survey took place just over a year into the programme, when the second phase projects were still in early stages of development.

Responses were received from:

- 29 out of the 32 local authority assessment co-ordinators
- 9 DOs (one for each school based project [8] and one jointly for projects 6 and 7)
- 11 out 12 HE representatives.

School surveys of headteachers and teachers

The survey of schools was carried out in October 2003. The questionnaires addressed the following issues: the main objectives of the project within each school; how they heard about the project and became involved in it; how the developments related to existing school practices; the impact of the project on school policy, teacher practices and pupil learning; involvement of parents and carers; meeting of information needs; benefits and challenges of being involved; and awareness of other projects which are part of the wider AifL Programme.

Following the dates published in the Spring 2003 *Assessment is for Learning Newsletter*, the evaluation team had anticipated that most projects in schools would be nearing completion and that staff would therefore be able to respond to a wide range of questions on their involvement. However, as noted in Chapter 3, some of the second phase projects were, in fact, still continuing their development work, and therefore a number of these schools indicated that it was too early to take part in the survey.

A list of schools involved in the AifL Programme was drawn up from information supplied by the Scottish Executive Education Department and LT Scotland Project Development Officers and supplemented by information from the Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators. In total, 174 schools were identified, allowing data to be gathered on all of the projects that were school-based (ie not Projects 6 and 7) from schools of varying sizes and in authorities across Scotland.

Following agreement from Directors of Education, the 174 schools were contacted with a request for information regarding the number of teachers involved in the school to enable the appropriate number of questionnaires to be sent. After this initial exercise some 47 schools were omitted from the list for a variety of reasons. For example, 23 did not respond to the initial request for information and 7 Project 1 schools who did respond were omitted because Project 1 had already been evaluated by the University of London, Institute of Education. A further 8 were omitted because they had not become involved after all or had dropped out; 8 more indicated it was too early in developments; and one said the questionnaire did not suit their work and declined to complete it.

Therefore, there was potential to receive responses from 127 schools: that is, 73% of the original list. In the end responses were received from 102 schools, representing 80% of potential responses and 59% of the original list. Schools were represented as follows:

- 65 both senior management and teacher responses
- 22 management-only responses
- 15 teacher-only responses.

In 13 instances of 'management-only' responses, these were from schools where no classroom teachers had been involved: for example in some Project 8 schools, or where the respondent was the only teacher involved in a smaller school, or where teachers had left. A few explanations were given as to why there was no management response from some schools, e.g. the headteacher had left, was on secondment or sick leave. The breakdown of returns by sector is given in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Breakdown of responses to first AifL school survey by sector

Sector	No. of schools on original list	Anticipated response		No. of schools from which responses were received		
		n	% of original	n	% of anticipated	% of original
Nursery & Primary	104	84	81	66	79	63
5-14	1	1	100	1	100	100
Secondary	60	36	60	29	80	48
Special	9	6	66	6	100	66
Total	174	127	75	102	80	59

The figures indicate that not only were fewer secondary than primary schools participating in the programme, but in the early stages of the evaluation a higher proportion of secondary schools were not included in the survey, and therefore overall there was a lower rate of return from this sector.

Based on the information supplied by schools, a total of 131 senior management questionnaires and 340 teacher questionnaires were sent out. (NB: the number of management questionnaires is greater than the number of schools because of the 5-14 and special schools that cover both primary and secondary sectors). Ninety-two senior management (70%) questionnaires and 189 (56%) teacher questionnaires were returned. Distribution and return by project are given in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Distribution and return of questionnaires in first AifL school survey by AifL project

Project	Headteachers			Teachers		
	no. out	no. returned	% return	no. out	no. returned	% return
1. Formative assessment	28	21	75	66	44	67
2. Personal Learning Plans	14	10	71	44	16	36
3. Managing PLPs	15	12	80	61	35	57
4. Gathering and interpreting evidence	24	15	63	50	27	54
5. Local Moderation	16	9	56	21	14	67
8. ICT support	14	12	86	15	10	67
9. Reporting to Parents etc	12	9	75	47	18	38
10. Special Needs/ASN	8	4	50	36	25	69
Total	131	92	70	340	189	56

The Assessment of Achievement Programme (Project 7) is one of the projects within the AifL Programme, but with a national rather than local focus. One question asked for involvement during 2003 when the science survey was underway. Twenty-three schools (25%) were involved in the 2003 AAP Science survey.

4.3 The participants: who they are, how and why they became involved in AifL and what they did

Local authority assessment co-ordinators

Responses were received from 29 out of the 32 assessment co-ordinators. All were qualified teachers. They had varying lengths of experience in their current posts: 6 had been in post less than a year; 12 up to 3 years; and 11 more than 4 years. The majority had prior experience of assessment initiatives in their roles as school and authority managers and had been involved in implementing a range of programmes, including 5-14 assessment, Standard grades, national qualifications and early intervention programmes. Two reported little prior involvement in assessment initiatives.

Most (24) were nominated or 'identified' for the role of co-ordinator, while 4 had applied for the role and one had volunteered. The majority had wide-ranging responsibilities within their authorities, with only a few having a predominantly assessment remit. Some authorities had nominated senior staff to the role and they, therefore, had a wider range of responsibilities. This variation in seniority and range

of responsibility was reflected in the amount of time they estimated they spent on the AifL assessment co-ordinator role, which ranged from under 5% to around 50% of their time. For 21, 20% or less of their time was spent on AifL-related activities. In open-ended responses, several mentioned that they had too many other responsibilities and commitments to give sufficient time to the projects, either initially to help set up the projects or to give ongoing support. Keeping up with the reports and paperwork related to the programme was difficult in the midst of a busy remit. One indicated that involvement had *'taken up more time than we ever imagined'*.

The co-ordinators were asked to give a brief description of their involvement in AifL to date. The activities which were given are listed from the one most frequently mentioned to the least mentioned, with the figures in brackets being actual numbers. (While more respondents may well, for example, have liaised with the Scottish Executive, this was an open-ended question and respondents reported the activities which were most prominent in their thinking.) Activities involved:

- supporting schools involved in projects (20)
- developing authority plans for further AifL developments; Action Plan; 'roll-out' (16)
- promotion and awareness-raising of AifL with headteachers in non-project schools and relevant authority personnel (15)
- attending conferences and seminars (13)
- attending assessment co-ordinator meetings (9)
- liaising with project development officers (9)
- dealing with finance (6)
- liaising with SEED (4).

When asked directly about disseminating information about the programme, especially to schools other than those involved in the projects, 25 indicated they had done this. The following strategies and groups of people were mentioned:

- headteacher meetings/events (13)
- in-service events for teachers (11)
- local authority staff, eg senior managers/directorate, Quality Improvement staff/advisers (10)
- newsletters and leaflets to schools (paper and electronic) (8)
- principal teachers' networks (3)
- 5-14 co-ordinators' meeting (3)
- parents' information evening (1).

Even at this early stage in development there was considerable effort being made to promote the AifL Programme both within the authorities and to schools.

Project Development Officers

Nine DOs completed the questionnaire. Seven teachers on secondment; one was already project co-ordinator for the Assessment of Achievement Programme, which became incorporated into AifL and one was an HE representative who took on the project co-ordinator role. Their teaching backgrounds were: 3 primary; 4 secondary; and 2 primary/special needs. All bar one had previous experience of assessment initiatives and all had experience relevant to the focus of their particular project.

Seven were full-time appointments; in the other two cases, one contributed about 5% of his time to other SEED work, and the DO who was also an HE representative

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indicated that less than 50% of her time was allocated to the development role. They were asked why they had taken on this role: 4 indicated they had been nominated or identified for the role with no further explanations; the others stated that their prior experience and interest in assessment and how it supported learning was a key reason for becoming involved. This gave them the opportunity to contribute their skills and experience to national developments and also to further develop those interests.

The key activities for the DOs involved visiting and supporting schools; running seminars and conferences; liaising with local authority co-ordinators; discussing issues with other development officers and the LT Scotland management team.

Higher Education representatives

Eleven HE representatives returned questionnaires – 3 for Project 1, 2 for Project 4 and one for each of Projects 2, 3, 5, 8, 9 and 10. They had different levels of responsibility and research experience within their faculties, ranging from senior staff with major management and research responsibilities to a lecturer who indicated he/she was not currently active in research. Nine had become involved after being nominated or asked by their institution, one applied for the role and one volunteered. Only 3 gave further explanations as to why they had become involved: one stated a particular interest in formative assessment and the work of Black and Wiliam; one indicated a strong commitment to assessment as part of learning and teaching and saw opportunities for research; the third declared an interest in the opportunity for networking and opportunities for further research and development.

The number of days they contributed to the programme varied from 2 to 65, with an average of 17.5 days. This wide variation of time spent on the projects reflected the fact that some HE representatives had wider overall programme roles and some were project-specific. Also at the time the questionnaires were completed the Phase two projects were in their early stages and staff were only beginning to be active.

HE representatives were also asked to outline briefly what their involvement had been. The activities below are listed from the most to the least frequently mentioned. (As with the local authority co-ordinators, this was an open-ended question in which respondents were likely to report the activities which were predominant in their thinking.)

- attend local and national meetings and conferences (7)
- work with development officers (7)
- meet with teachers in schools (6)
- provide research ideas, materials and resources (6)
- make presentations at seminars (3)
- provide feedback to own faculty (2)
- get involved in research (1)

Meeting with teachers in schools varied from one visit to one school to regular visits to schools with the DOs. Providing research-based materials also varied from carrying out literature reviews to passing on some findings to the development officer. It would appear that some HE representatives developed closer relationships with their project DO and had a clearer focus for their input than others.

The involvement of HE representatives raised a number of issues regarding their potential contribution to the AifL Programme. They were asked to comment on the

progress they thought had been made in relation to these activities. The responses are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Progress in relation to issues identified for HE representatives
(1 = not considered; 2 = discussion has taken place; 3 = some progress has been achieved; 4 = significant progress has been achieved)

		1	2	3	4
a)	Contributing to projects on the basis of research	1	4	4	2
b)	Demonstrating the relationship between research and practice	1	4	4	2
c)	Encouraging action research with practitioners	0	4	3	4
d)	Developing a community of practice jointly with practitioners and policy makers	3	5	2	1
e)	Collaborating with representatives from each Higher Education Institution	2	5	3	1
f)	Sharing information on the project/programme with key groups and individuals in your own organisation	0	1	7	1
g)	Integrating AifL developments into Initial Teacher Education programmes	0	5	3	2

Most respondents indicated that some progress was being made in all areas, although they were less positive about the development of a community of practice and collaboration across HEIs. Further comment was made on each point:

a) Several reported that they had provided background material on aspects of assessment to DOs to pass on to schools and 3 had undertaken general literature reviews. One reported writing a paper with another HE representative involved in AifL and one of the Development Officers..

b) In Project 1, the relationship between research and practice had been a central theme for one of the HE representatives, while the other felt that it was only in the initial stages that research had had a significant role. For other projects, research had been informing action as the projects developed but did not seem to have had a significant input at the start of the project during the planning phase.

c) The opportunity to engage in action research with practitioners, or to support practitioners in action research, had been realised for most respondents, although it was noted that in some projects (eg Project 8) there had been limited opportunity, and in others (eg Project 9) the participants were just getting started and it was still early for this to be realised.

d) The overall view was that developing a community of practice was a very laudable and important aim but that it was still very early to report on how successful this was likely to be. Experiences had differed and one respondent pointed out the need to establish shared aims and partnerships where trust underpinned the collaboration – problematic in the current competitive climate.

e) There seemed to be a willingness to collaborate within the group of HE representatives at this stage, although only one instance of a joint activity (writing a paper) was reported. Discussion was ongoing and it was felt that once the immediacy of meeting project deadlines eased and cross-cutting issues emerged, there would be the potential for greater collaboration.

f/g) Approximately half the respondents had had the opportunity to include AifL materials into Initial Teacher Education courses, while others had discussed it with appropriate colleagues. The ease with which this could be done depended on the position of the respondent in the faculty and whether he/she had the opportunity to influence the ITE curriculum directly or indirectly.

Schools: headteachers and teachers

Questionnaires were returned from 102 schools out of the 174 schools listed as participating in the pilot projects, representing a return of 59%. As noted above (p29), however, a pre-survey enquiry established that we could anticipate responses from only 127 schools, thus giving a return of 80%.

Questionnaires were completed by school managers and classroom teachers. Management responses came from headteachers and depute headteachers, especially in the case of secondary schools. For brevity, the term 'headteacher' has been used in this report, but should be taken to include other SMT representatives. Responses were received from schools in 31 authorities, with a spread of between one and 10 headteachers and 2 and 14 teachers per authority. The spread of respondents across the school sectors is given in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Sectors represented by respondents in first AifL school survey

	Headteachers		Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Primary and nursery	61	*66*	121	*64*
Secondary	25	*27*	54	*29*
Special needs	6	*7*	14	*7*
Total	92	*100*	189	*100*

A higher proportion of primary/nursery schools were involved in the programme than the other sectors and they represent a higher proportion of responses in the survey.

Distribution of respondents over the projects is given in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Projects represented by respondents in first AifL school survey

	Headteachers		Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Formative assessment	21	*23*	44	*23*
PLPs	10	*11*	16	*8.5*
Managing PLPs	12	*13*	35	*18.5*
Gathering evidence	15	*16*	27	*14*
Moderation	9	*10*	14	*7.5*
Use of ICT	12	*13*	10	*5*
Reporting to parents and others	9	*10*	18	*9.5*
Additional Support Needs	4	*4*	25	*13*
Total	92	*100*	189	*99*

Headteachers were asked to give information on school size by school roll and number of teachers in the school. Schools in the sample ranged from those with rolls of under 20 to those of over 1000, with over 50% having between 100 and 500. Only 3 secondary schools had fewer than 500 pupils and only 4 primaries had over 500. The sample represents a cross-section of the size of schools to be found across Scotland. In parallel, the number of teachers per school varied from one to 100. The majority of primary schools had 20 or fewer teachers with only secondary schools having more than 50.

How and why schools became involved can be viewed from 2 perspectives: the approach taken by the authority to engaging them in the programme and the participants' views on why they agreed to be part of it.

The assessment co-ordinators were asked to indicate how pilot schools had been identified to take part in the programme. Different approaches were adopted for different projects within the same authority, but broadly 5 main approaches were described:

- the school was known for 'good practice', being positive and enthusiastic about new developments (17)
- the headteacher volunteered the school's involvement (10)
- assessment was in school's development plan or some relevant initiative was already in place (9)
- involvement seen as important in relation to HMIE recommendations or development needs identified by the authority (4)
- schools selected by authority (with no further explanation) (4).

One co-ordinator, who had not been involved when schools were nominated for Project 1, commented: *'… it is unfortunate that the secondary chosen had not been a school which was strong in new developments. There has been a rather negative spin throughout from this participating school which is very unfortunate'.* Balancing this comment with the number of references to selecting schools known to be enthusiastic about new developments suggests that pilot schools did need to be selected carefully for the benefit of future developments.

The majority of headteachers (82%) had heard about the programme from the local authority AifL co-ordinator. Other sources were the LA newsletter/circular (2%), through a headteachers' meeting (3%), other teachers in the school (1%) or other colleagues (3%). In the end, 82% became involved because the LA co-ordinator or advisor asked them to take part, 12% volunteered and in 3% of cases, one of the teachers suggested it. Other reasons for becoming involved included: as a follow-up to an HMIE report, through contact with the project development officer, contact with the authority race equality officer, and hearing about the project from another headteacher in the school cluster.

The majority of teachers (88%) first heard of the AifL Programme from the headteacher or another member of the senior management team within the school. Some (8%) heard about it from the local authority co-ordinator directly and small numbers through other teachers within the school or colleagues outside the school.

Most teachers (90%) became involved because they were invited to do so by their headteacher, while 4% approached the headteacher with the suggestion that the school become involved. A number of teachers gave other reasons. Twenty teachers from Projects 1, 2 and 4 indicated that they had become involved because

they were interested in assessment and thought that the project seemed a good opportunity to develop new ideas and explore ways of assisting pupil progress. Ten indicated that assessment was part of their school development plan and a school priority or fitted in with other initiatives (Projects 1, 3 and 4). Seven teachers involved in Projects 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 saw it as an opportunity for professional development. Other reasons included: 2 teachers in one school had been told by the headteacher they *'were effective teachers with long experience'*; Project 9 participants recognised the opportunity to expand work with parents; and teachers from 2 schools indicated that money for the department and to buy equipment was an incentive.

The above data suggest that the majority of schools were selected and responded because they had a good track record and keen interest in developing new ideas. A small number were involved to address identified development needs.

Case study schools

All of the case study schools were approached by their local authority to participate in the programme. Most thought this was because they were considered to have strengths in aspects relevant to the individual project. Others suggested a degree of 'coercion', an area of weakness and taking advantage of the funding on offer for participation.

Headteachers were asked to indicate the number of teachers participating in the project in the school. One headteacher involved in Project 8 reported that no teachers had been involved as it was a management exercise only. Two secondary schools reported having over 60 teachers involved – one in Managing PLPs and one in Reporting to Parents and Other Teachers. Twelve respondents omitted to answer the question. The remainder reported as follows:

- 1 teacher – 16 schools
- 2 teachers – 28 schools
- 3 teachers – 9 schools
- 4 teachers – 8 schools
- 5 teachers – 4 schools
- 6 to 12 teachers – 12 schools.

In the majority of schools the development work was carried out by a small team of teachers.

The headteachers were also asked to indicate the number of stages/year groups that were involved in the projects. Ten primary school headteachers indicated that all year groups were included and 10 respondents (6 primary and 4 secondary) indicated that no year groups were involved (9 of those were involved in Project 8 and one in Project 9). Twenty-two schools involved one year group only and 26 involved 2 year groups: therefore 48 schools (52% of the sample) involved one or two year groups. The remaining schools involved between 3 and 6 stages.

In parallel to this, teachers were asked to indicate the number of year groups they were including in the projects: 114 (60%) of the teachers were working with one year group only; 41 (22%) were working with 2 year groups. The remainder were working with between 3 and 7 year groups.

The variation in numbers of teachers and year groups taking part in the projects suggested that schools were carrying out quite different scales of development.

A question for both headteachers and teachers sought to establish which of the stages within the sample were involved in the AifL projects. The feedback is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Stages involved in AifL projects

Stage	Schools (HT responses)		Teachers	
	n	*%*	**n**	*%*
Pre 5	8	*9*	16	*9*
Primary 1	21	*23*	35	*19*
Primary 2	20	*22*	25	*13*
Primary 3	20	*22*	25	*13*
Primary 4	21	*23*	20	*11*
Primary 5	26	*28*	28	*15*
Primary 6	29	*32*	36	*19*
Primary 7	36	*39*	37	*20*
Secondary 1	19	*21*	38	*20*
Secondary 2	16	*17*	26	*14*
Secondary 3	5	*5*	17	*9*
Secondary 4	5	*5*	11	*6*
Secondary 5/S6	4	*4*	8	*4*

There is evidence of greater involvement of primary schools at the upper primary stages (P5-7), while in secondary schools work focused on the S1-2 stages.

Both teachers and headteachers were asked to indicate which aspects of the curriculum were being targeted through the developments in each year group. For analysis the responses were grouped into broad curricular areas. The figures presented here represent the percentage of mentions made of each curricular area in relation to the total number of aspects named (see Table 4.7). Small numbers of headteachers and teachers did not complete this part of the questionnaire.

Table 4.7: Curricular areas being developed as part of AifL
(Percentage mentions of total areas named)

Curricular area being targeted	Headteacher (whole school) responses	Teacher responses
	%	**%**
Whole curriculum	16	6
English (literacy, reading, writing)	19	22
Maths/numeracy	11	17
Environmental studies/social subjects/ science	15	11
PSD/PSHE	5	1
Modern languages	1	0.5
Combinations of curricular areas	20	20.5
Other	8	16
Generic aspects (eg ICT applications, management of PLPs, reporting systems)	6	7

Those addressing the whole curriculum or, more frequently, combinations of curricular areas, were most likely to be taking part in Projects 2 or 3, that is, those developing PLPs. Only two headteachers involved in Project 1 indicated that they were addressing the whole curriculum. Those developing formative assessment strategies appeared to be focusing on specific areas spread fairly evenly across aspects of English, maths and environmental studies/social subjects; some (12 SMT responses), mainly at secondary level, indicated they were developing formative assessment in more than one subject area. Likewise those involved in gathering and interpreting evidence and in moderation were focusing on specific areas of the curriculum.

Case study schools

Case study schools also varied in the scale of the development tackled and in the project focus. Some teachers worked in teams, giving support and a sense of community to those involved, while others worked alone within the school ('ploughing a lonely furrow').

As in the survey, some schools targeted specific groups of pupils such as pupils with additional support needs or particular year groups, while others focused on individual departments/subject areas or cross-curricular issues. There were examples of almost every combination of these characteristics, reflecting the needs identified by the individual school at the start of the project.

Both headteachers and teachers were asked in an open question to describe the main objectives of the project within their own school. Thirteen headteachers (14%) and 27 teachers (14%) did not answer the question. Most headteachers identified 2 or 3 objectives, while most teachers identified one or 2 objectives. Headteachers generally expressed strategic objectives for staff, pupil and school development, while many teachers described their objectives in more operational terms. For example, in relation to Project 1, headteacher objectives included:

Example 1:
- To develop formative assessment strategies, especially increasing response wait time, using higher order questioning and giving feedback
- To increase pupil confidence and motivation
- To raise attainment

Example 2:
- Incorporate examples of formative assessment techniques into daily classroom practice and evaluate their impact
- Roll out programme of formative assessment practice to remainder of staff within the school.

Teacher objectives included:

Example 1:
- Increase wait time for responses
- Develop better quality questions
- Allocate time for oral feedback

Example 2:
- S1-S2 classes: question styles, wait time, traffic lights, strategies for assessing prior knowledge
- S5-S6: peer assessment, sharing exam criteria.

However, teachers also expressed more general objectives:

Example 3:
- To be more focused on assessment in order to determine next steps for learning
- To increase involvement of all pupils in their own learning.

In relation to Projects 2 and 3, again the expression of objectives varied. Some indicated that the objective was to develop a PLP: for example, *'to develop and pilot a suitable PLP to be used in a primary 3 class'*; others indicated the wider purposes of the PLP: for example*: 'to involve children in setting and achieving targets. To give greater information to parents regarding pupils' learning. To involve parents in setting their children's targets'.*

For analysis purposes the objectives were categorised and are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Objectives for involvement in projects as given by respondents

Main focus of developments	Headteachers (total 92)		Teachers (total 189)	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Teacher development: *(for example, raising awareness; developing knowledge and understanding of assessment; improving practice of both teaching and assessing; increasing confidence)*	21	*23*	96	*51*
Pupil development: *(for example improving pupil skills; improving grades; raising attainment; involving pupils more in their learning; encouraging them to take more responsibility; helping pupils learn faster; develop confidence and self-esteem)*	28	*30*	60	*32*
Development of assessment strategies: *(for example improve/develop/introduce new approaches or methods of assessment)*	33	*36*	*Not identified for teachers*	
Development of assessment instruments: *(for example, improve or develop new tests; devise prompts for use in assessing)*	10	*11*	*Not identified for teachers*	
Development of self and peer assessment: *(particularly in relation to pupil learning)*	11	*12*	*Not identified for teachers*	
Involvement of parents: *(for example, improve, develop, introduce new ways of working with/reporting to parents)*	19	*21*	29	*15*
Use of technology: *(for example, piloting/developing/ improving use of IT – hardware, software, other equipment)*	16	*17*	4	*2*
Other school issues: *(for example, improving record-keeping, reporting, primary-secondary liaison, management issues)*	10	*11*	24	*13*

It is interesting to note that a higher proportion of teachers than headteachers identified teachers' professional and personal development as being an important objective of taking part in the project. Headteachers were also more likely to express specifically assessment-focused objectives.

Thirty-three schools (35%) were involved in other initiatives which they saw as related to AifL. Fifteen (16%) identified other AifL projects, 4 (4%) cited New Community Schools and one (1%) mentioned ICT-related initiatives. Fourteen (15%) identified a range of other initiatives including: 'metacognition', 'Building Bridges', 'Thinking through Philosophy', 'accelerated learning', 'co-operative learning', 'assertive discipline' and, more generally, other local authority initiatives.

As part of preparation for participating in the projects and to assist in the development of action plans, it was intended that schools should complete a baseline audit. In the sample of schools responding to the survey only 54 (59%) had completed an audit. Of those who had completed it, 42 (80%) had found it useful.

4.4   Impact on policy and practice

One of the key aims of the evaluation was to determine the impact on policy and practice as a measure of the effectiveness of the programme.

Policy and planning issues

At this stage of the evaluation (May – September 2003) it was recognised that AifL might only be beginning to affect policy at authority and school levels although, as pointed out by one co-ordinator, *'many local authority service plans and school development plans would already have a focus on aspects of teaching and learning, especially assessment'*, and therefore the impact of the AifL projects could not be easily isolated.

The assessment co-ordinators reported a wide range of assessment issues and initiatives on which they were already working and which inter-related with AifL developments:

- 8 reported that AifL developments were relevant within their teaching, learning and assessment policies and plans
- 7 reported uses of baseline or standardised testing
- 5 mentioned existing developments of PLPs, either as part of new community schools, or as an authority-wide development
- 4 mentioned pupil tracking and target setting
- 2 mentioned developing reporting procedures
- 2 mentioned early intervention strategies.

Other developments mentioned were transition arrangements, involvement in AAP, agreeing standards within National Qualifications, moderation on levels of the 5-14 curriculum, co-operative teaching and learning, self-evaluation, and recording and collection of evidence.

Eleven co-ordinators reported that AifL Programme issues had not been included in teacher induction programmes, while 6 indicated that this was planned for the following academic year. Twelve stated that it had been included in some way, from 'being mentioned', 'referred to briefly' and 'information passed on' to half-day inputs on specific aspects such as formative assessment or National Assessments. One simply reported that it was part of in-service to probationers.

Seven assessment co-ordinators reported that AifL-related staff development had been provided in a variety of ways: for example, in twilight sessions, courses, conferences and seminars – some for management only, but others for all teachers;

4 indicated that development had not yet gone beyond the pilot schools; in 12 cases it was planned to introduce opportunities in 2003 to 2004 (see section 5.3 for a report on these developments).

Headteachers were asked specifically about school policies for assessment. Seventy-nine (86%) had a policy for assessment in place prior to involvement in AifL. Out of the 79, 46 (58%) had modified that policy in the light of their involvement. Of the 13 who did not have a policy in place, only 3 had subsequently developed one. Some 66% of primary schools with policies had made changes because of their involvement while 40% of secondary schools had revised their policy.

Views on how well AifL projects had linked to development planning were sought. For 44 schools (48%) the AifL project had linked very well, with 18 (20%) of the headteachers reporting good links. Nineteen headteachers (21%) felt it had linked 'only a little', 3 (3%) said 'not at all' and eight (9%) did not respond. Out of the 57 primary respondents, 13 (23%) responded negatively, while out of the 21 secondary respondents, 9 (43%) responded negatively.

Case study schools

The issue of linking initiatives such as AifL to development planning was more important for secondary schools who found it more difficult to take on board additional issues or activities which were not on the plan. Many primary schools welcomed the opportunity to become involved precisely because it was on their plans, with teachers commenting that it 'dovetailed with plans'. Some schools have incorporated assessment-related activities into the development plan as a result of their involvement in AifL.

Headteachers were also asked to indicate if they felt that project developments were contributing to meeting their National Priority targets. Their responses are given in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Meeting national priority targets

National Priorities	very much	much	only a little	not at all	no response
	%	%	%	%	%
Achievement and Attainment	20	26	37	2	15
Framework for Learning	18	40	21	8	13
Inclusion and Equality	24	24	26	9	17
Values and Citizenship	6	28	27	22	16
Learning for Life	14	37	28	6	14

If part of the aim of providing a coherent framework of assessment is to integrate developments with other aspects of SEED policy, then the majority of teachers and headteachers appear to see AifL making at least some contribution to meeting their National Priority targets.

Impact on practice

All key groups were asked to give their views on the extent to which involvement in the AifL Programme might impact on the practice of teachers in schools.

As a starting point, both headteachers and teachers were asked to what extent the developments introduced through AifL related to existing practice. The questions for the teachers were framed in relation to their personal practice, whereas the headteachers' questions referred to practice within the school. The questions have been combined in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Relationship between projects and existing practice

	HT		Teacher	
	n	%	n	%
The ideas introduced were completely new to the school and so we were/I was starting from the very beginning	14	15	41	21
We/I had been thinking about introducing new practices and so the ideas were already in our development plan/had been part of my planning	16	17	17	9
We were/I was already developing approaches in line with the project and therefore the project provided the opportunity to make further progress	44	48	65	35
Aspects of the project were well established (as part of my practice) but the project provided us with the opportunity/allowed me to develop new dimensions	14	15	53	28

The majority of respondents reported that ideas were already developing within the school or were already well established.

Further statistical analysis[2] identified no significant difference between sectors or projects with respect to the relationship of developments with existing practice. Although not statistically significant, it is interesting to note, however, that Reporting to parents and others was the only project in which both headteachers and teachers did not indicate that ideas were new – indeed the majority of headteachers reported that they were already developing approaches in line with the project and the majority of teachers thought aspects were already well established. The small number of Project 8 participants were more likely to indicate that ideas were new or part of planning, but not yet developing. Otherwise, the experience across the projects ranged from completely new to well-established in practice. Therefore schools and teachers had different starting points, and so it might be anticipated that different degrees of change might be experienced.

The local authority assessment co-ordinators and the project DOs were asked to indicate their agreement with three broad statements related to the aims of AifL. They were also given the option of indicating that it was too early to make any comment on progress. Table 4.11 summarises agreement and disagreement.

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[2] The teacher sample was analysed using analysis of variance for both sector and project differences. For the headteacher sample sector differences were analysed using analysis of variance, and project differences analysed using the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test due to the small group sizes related to each project ($p<0.05$ in all cases).

**Table 4.11: Views on the impact of AifL projects
(LA co-ordinators and LTS development officers)**

The projects are contributing to …	LA co-ordinators			Development Officers		
	Agree	Dis-agree	Too early	Agree	Dis-agree	Too early
	n	n	n	n	n	n
… developing understanding of approaches to assessment in schools	20	0	9	9	0	0
…. improved practice in assessment in schools	21	0	8	6	0	3
… improved recording and reporting of achievement	11	4	13	3	0	6

Comments from local authority co-ordinators indicated that it was difficult for them to comment at this point on anything other than the projects in which they were actually involved, and while *'a good start had been made in project schools with some staff' … there was still a long way to go'.* Five of the co-ordinators with schools involved in Project 8 expressed concerns over the lack of clarity and 'shifting goal posts' in this project.

The DOs also emphasised that their view of progress related to the schools who were actively involved in the projects. One indicated that progress *'was in the hands of the schools and sometimes they have just too much to do'.* The development officer for Project 3 reported that *'classroom practice has most definitely been enhanced. There is clear evidence in many cases that schools are now more focused in their planning and assessment which has resulted in improved learning and teaching and provided staff with clearer evidence of achievement and of pupils' needs, so as to compile more accurate and succinct records and reports'.* Overall, there was greater reservation about progress towards developing a more coherent system of assessment and a unified system of recording and reporting:

- 6 of the 9 DOs thought that the AifL projects would be effective in developing a more coherent system of assessment, with 3 saying it was too early to say; 20 local authority co-ordinators thought they would be effective and 9 thought it was too early.
- 4 of the DOs thought that the AifL projects would be effective in developing a unified system of reporting, while 5 thought it was too early; 13 authority co-ordinators thought they would be effective, 2 disagreed and 14 thought it was too early.

The HE representatives gave lengthy responses concerning progress towards achieving understanding assessment for learning and improving assessment practice in schools. They addressed theoretical issues as opposed to observations of practice – or possibly theoretical underpinnings as to why improved practice might be inhibited – and issues of understanding the process of embedding change in pedagogical practice. The tensions between formative and summative assessment were raised and the views expressed that while it might be possible to produce a unified system on paper, getting to the position where principles were widely embraced (or even understood) was very ambitious. This could not be achieved quickly. A recurring theme was the need to break down barriers, change teachers' attitudes and address the culture of assessment for accountability rather than learning. These views related in particular to the potential for formative assessment

to radically change practice. Teachers needed to understand the constructivist principles underpinning a formative assessment approach before they experimented with formative assessment techniques in the classroom. There was the possibility that, if this does not happen, teachers will revert to mechanical, output driven approaches to assessment rather than engaging with change.

All agreed that achievement of the programme aims was a *'massive task'* and that it would be a long term undertaking, requiring *'5 to 10 years of commitment, enthusiasm and ongoing support'* (LA) – and ongoing funding, as *'without funding it may fade'* (HE).

The issue of impact on practice was explored in much greater detail in the headteacher and teacher surveys, covering impact on teacher practice, benefits to pupils, involvement of parents and impact on information needs, both generally and in relation to PLPs.

Benefits in relation to staff development and changes in classroom practice

Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements on the various ways in which involvement might impact on the practice of teachers in schools. The statements were derived from aims of the projects and from comments noted in discussions with participants. The statements for headteachers were framed to allow them to comment on observed impact on teachers and for the teachers they were framed for them to comment from their own experience. The questions have been combined in Table 4.12. Respondents were given instructions that if they felt they could not express a view they should make a note to this effect or leave blank and explain if possible in an open section. The missing responses have been included in the table as NR.

Missing responses in the headteacher survey occurred mainly in relation to Project 8, with approximately half indicating that the implementation of the project had not involved any changes to classroom practice as it had been mainly a consultative exercise. The others had been actively developing PLPs and recording and reporting systems prior to involvement in Project 8 and linked this with their Project 8 work, and they responded to this question presumably in the light of the ongoing practical developments. One respondent from Project 8 strongly disagreed throughout, adding the comment: *'the project has not progressed at all. Our initial aims/plans were changed and we still await guidance on next steps. There is no communication'.* Likewise, a number of teachers involved in Project 8 did not respond to the question, for similar reasons.

Two schools from Project 3 and 2 from Project 9 did not respond to this question, with the Project 9 schools explaining that they had been focusing on improving reporting to parents and so there had been little change to classroom practice. One Project 3 school explained that their PLP was well established as part of New Community School developments and they had focused on involving parents in the process. Others indicated that where they had not responded it was because they felt it was too early to form a view. Similar reasons for non-responses for Projects 3 and 9 occurred more generally in the teacher survey.

Table 4.12: Views on benefits of involvement of teachers
(Statements combined from the headteacher and teacher questionnaires)

	Headteachers					Teachers				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a) The teachers involved in the project/I have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment	52	33	4	1	10	39	43	8.5	0.5	9
b) The teachers involved in the project/I have changed their/my classroom practice	33	44	9	1	14	23	48.5	17	0.5	10
c) The teachers involved are/ I am using more varied approaches to assessment	32	40	12	1	15	26	53	12	0	9
d) The teacher are/I am now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils	24	47	13	1	15	22	51.5	18	0.5	8
e) The nature and quality of feedback to pupils has improved/The way in which I give feedback has improved	31	45	7	1	17	30	53	9.5	0.5	7
f) Some teachers/I have found it difficult to adopt new practices	6	12	38	24	20	0.5	7	52	29.5	11
g) Teachers not directly involved in the project have shown an interest in adopting different approaches to assessment	8	52	11	2	27	12	44	13	1	30
h) Some teachers have shown resistance to the developments	1	13	44	26	16	3	20	41	16	20
i) Overall, involvement in the project has provided valuable staff development opportunities	46	39	4	1	10	30	47	10	1	12

Some further cautionary notes were added by headteachers that only a few staff had been involved and wider impact on the school had still to be developed. It was also noted that some staff had benefited more than others due to their willingness to change, for example: *'Not all changed their practice – although twelve teachers took part, in only one or two departments has practice changed'* (Secondary – Project 3); and *'Some staff have improved feedback to pupils. Others less so'* (Primary – Project 4).

Overall, however, the majority (over 70%) of both headteachers and teachers were in agreement or strong agreement regarding the benefits to teachers in terms of understanding assessment, changing practice, using more varied approaches, greater awareness of individual pupil needs, improved feedback and ongoing professional development.

The slight variations in responses between headteachers and teachers are illustrated in Charts 4.1 to 4.5.

Chart 4.1: Benefits to teachers – clearer understanding of assessment (percentages)
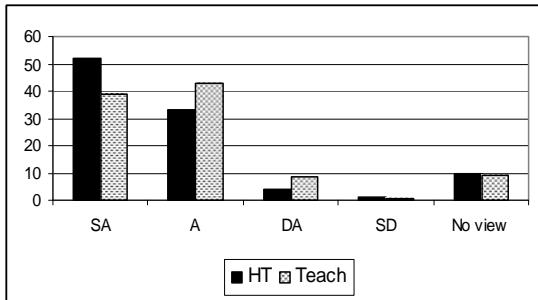
Chart 4.2: Benefits to teachers – change to classroom practice (percentages)
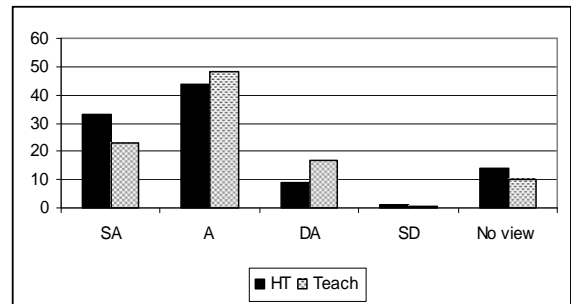
Chart 4.3: Benefits to teachers – more varied approaches to assessment (percentages)
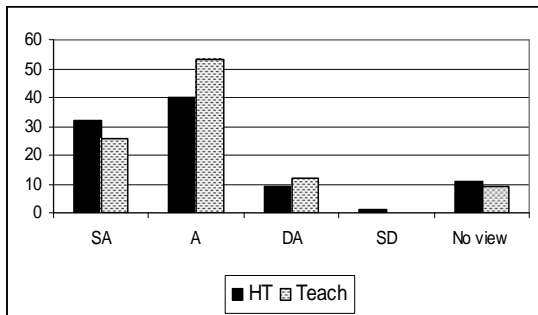
Chart 4.4: Benefits to teachers – improved feedback (percentages)

Chart 4.5: Benefits to teachers – valuable staff development (percentages)

Further statistical analysis of the headteacher data with respect to difference between projects (using Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney non-parametric tests because of low project-group numbers; $p < 0.05$) indicated that there was a significant difference in relation to improved understanding of purposes of assessment, changing classroom practice and using more varied approaches to assessment. This, however, occurred because the Project 8 participants who responded rated items more negatively than respondents from Projects 1 and 5, which is not surprising given the comments on Project 8 above.

Further statistical analysis of the teacher data (using analysis of variance) with respect to differences between projects identified significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in relation to changing classroom practice, using more varied approaches to assessment, being more aware of pupil needs and improving feedback. The differences in changing classroom practice occurred because Project 1 (formative assessment) respondents rated this more highly than respondents from Projects 3, 8, 9 and 10. This is perhaps unsurprising given that formative assessment specifically focuses on classroom practice while the others were focusing on management and reporting issues, although the explanation for Project 10 is less clear. A number of the Project 10 schools were working on formative assessment, though they had not been involved in the project long when the questionnaire was completed. The difference in relation to using a wider variety of approaches to assessment was again because Project 1 respondents were more positive in their responses than other respondents, particularly those from Projects 3, 9 and 10. The differences with respect to being more aware of pupil needs and improving feedback arose because those involved in Project 10 were more negative in their responses than Project 1 respondents. Later discussions with Project 10 participants revealed that, due to the nature of their work, they are already very much aware of their pupil needs and specialise in formative feedback, and participation in the project had not improved this.

Sector differences were considered using analysis of variance ($p < 0.05$) and the only difference that emerged in both headteacher and teacher data was showing resistance to new developments. The difference can be accounted for by stronger agreement from secondary respondents compared to primary respondents. Additionally, management respondents from secondary schools were more likely to agree that some teachers found it difficult to adopt new practices, though this difference was not found in the teacher data. These differences are displayed in Charts 4.6 to 4.9.

**Chart 4.6: Sector differences –
'Some teachers have shown resistance'
(Headteachers) (percentages)**
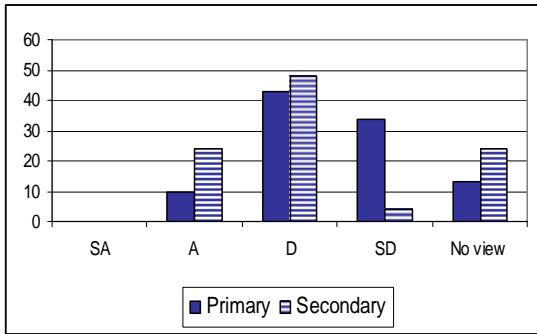
**Chart 4.7: Sector differences –
'Some teachers have shown resistance'
(Teachers) (percentages)**
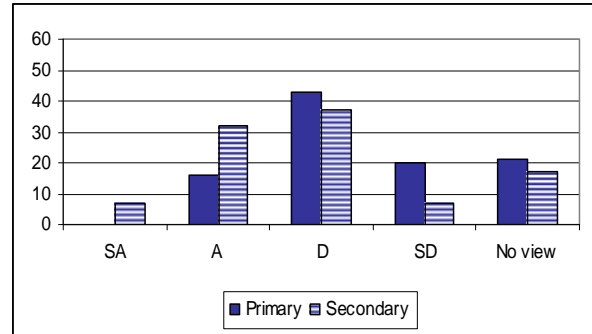
**Chart 4.8: Sector differences –
'New practice difficult for some'
(Headteachers) (percentages)**
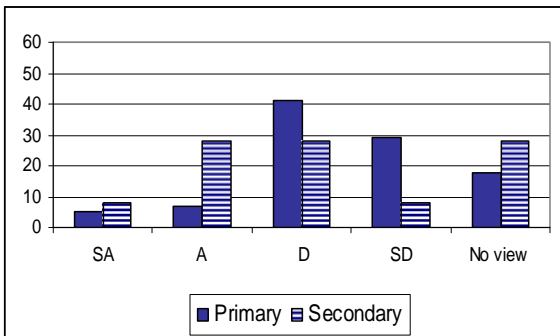
**Chart 4.9: Sector differences –
'New practice difficult for some'
(Teachers) (percentages)**

Evaluation of the Assessment
is for Learning Programme
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Quality in Education Centre
University of Strathclyde
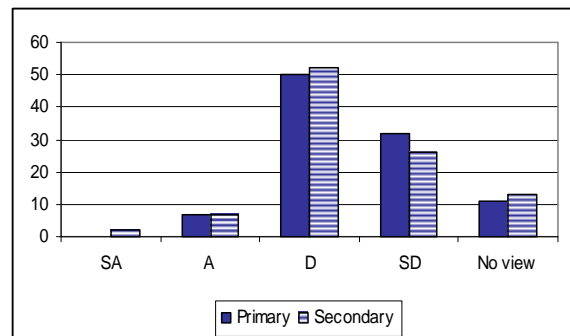
Benefits to pupils

A similar question focused on the benefits to pupils as a result of their involvement in the project. The statements were derived from purported benefits of formative assessment stratgies, supplemented by comments noted from participants. The responses from both headteachers and teachers are given in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Views on benefits to pupils

	Headteachers					Teachers				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a) Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process	32	49	1	0	18	35	46	5	0	14
b) Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning	23	50	5	0	22	23.5	56	5	0.5	15
c) Pupils are able to set realistic targets	9	56	8	0	27	10.5	50	16	1.5	22
d) Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment	9	50	14	0	27	15	47	19	1	18
e) Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom	5	30	30	1	33	5	39	34.5	0.5	21
f) The developments enhance the learning of all pupils	29	47	4	0	20	21	54	11	0	14
g) I have evidence that pupil attainment has improved through the project activities	*Teacher question only*					9	23	24	0	44
h) Pupils themselves report positive views of project activities	20	47	4	0	29	12	52	10.5	0.5	25
i) The approaches developed are not suitable for all pupils	1	13	47	19	21	5	27	41	10	17
j) Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem	13	53	9	0	25	12	60.5	10	0.5	17
k) Pupils are more motivated towards learning	17	57	3	0	23	13	58	12	0.5	16.5
l) The initiative has had little impact on classroom behaviour	5	23	32	12	28	3	30	37	8	22

Overall, there was agreement that pupils benefited on all aspects, though there was a higher level of non-response compared to the question on teacher benefits. However, headteachers and teachers who did respond indicated that pupils were more involved in learning, more motivated, better equipped to assess their own learning, positive about the project activities, showing greater confidence and able to set realistic targets. Peer assessment was less likely to have been developed than self-assessment.

The majority of headteachers involved in Project 8 indicated that they could not respond to this question due to limited pupil involvement. Only 3 Project 8 respondents completed this question. Non-responses were also higher in Project 3. However, non-respondents were found across all projects, with more choosing not to answer questions about behaviour, target setting, peer assessment and pupils' views on the projects. Explanations were in many cases that some of the activities had not yet been tried: it was still early days in developments and only a few pupils had been involved. With regard to behaviour, many indicated that behaviour was not a problem – some respondents answered the questions but indicated little change, while others did not answer the questions. One commented: *'improvements in behaviour may be more noticeable in some classrooms than in others. The classroom dynamics vary greatly and so does the impact of the strategies on pupil development'* (Primary – Project 1).

In the teacher responses, the majority of respondents from Project 8 and around half of Project 9 participants did not answer this question. A higher number of Project 3 participants also did not respond compared to the remaining projects. As with headteachers, the reasons were due to limited impact of the work of these projects on the issues referred to in the question. Teacher views of the impact on behaviour were similar to those of headteachers.

Of particular note is the high number of teachers who felt that it was too early or not appropriate to consider the potential of the projects to increase attainment, with only one-third indicating that they had evidence of this. This is illustrated in Charts 4.10 and 4.11.

Chart 4.10: 'I have evidence of increased attainment' (Teachers) (percentages)
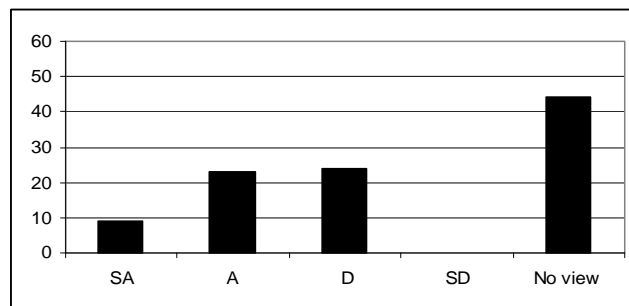
**Chart 4.11: Sector differences –
'I have evidence of increased attainment' (Teachers) (percentages)**
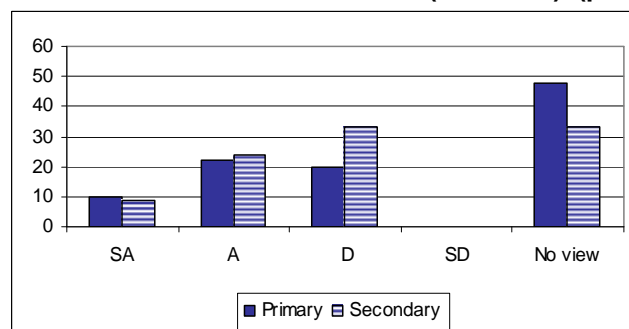
Some teachers found it difficult to identify hard evidence: *'There is not hard, quantifiable evidence … since there was no significant body of directly comparable work'* (Secondary - Project 1). However, as noted, one-third indicated that they had evidence of increased attainment. One teacher reported: *'I only projected about one-third of class to attain level A writing but one-half attained this level. I believe that the oral feedback was paramount in this'* (Primary – Project 1).

Both primary and secondary teachers referred to improved levels/scores compared with non-project comparator groups; this was mainly in relation to Project 1 but teachers involved in Projects 4 and 5 also reported improved test results, which they attributed to involvement in the project, for example, *'Many pupils attained level F writing in S1 as a result of project. Quality of imaginative writing definitely improved, particularly for those pupils who like a "checklist" to help them'* (Secondary – Project 5).

Others spoke in terms of having evidence to send to parents, having observed increased participation and motivation of pupils, and receiving comments from both parents and pupils.

Other comments from headteachers regarding benefits to pupils included:

'Involving children with significant learning difficulties in their own self assessment has been challenging and exciting. It is so good to see their full potential' (Special – Project 4)

'Children know exactly what they are learning, how well they are doing and what they need to do next. They are greatly motivated by their success in achieving small steps' (Primary – Project 2).

Further comments from teachers included:

'Children have become more aware of themselves as learners and also are developing awareness of how their input affects others (either negatively or positively) in the context of group/class work. They are becoming much more effective in identifying areas for improvement in terms of their own learning' (Primary – Project 1)

'The class with whom I have worked are a top S1 English class, so attainment has always been high. However, I have seen increased confidence in the class through the new approach' (Secondary – Project 1)

'Children were apprehensive at first as they had not much experience of target setting. However as the project developed they gained confidence and were able to comment on the benfits of target setting and evaluating targets. They were keen to set targets in other subject areas' (Primary – Project 2).

Further statistical analysis of the headteacher data (using Kruskal-Wallis) identified no significant differences regarding benefits to pupils between projects or sectors. Further analysis of the teacher data was undertaken though Projects 8 and 9 were omitted due to the small numbers who responded from these projects. Analysis of variance was carried out on the remaining projects. This revealed that, on all items except b, c, f and i in Table 4.13, teachers involved in formative assessment were more likely to be positive about pupil outcomes than those involved in Managing PLPs. This is perhaps not surprising due to the difference in purpose of the projects. In relation to sectors, teachers from special schools were less likely to agree that

pupils were able to set realistic targets and were more likely to agree that the approaches are not suitable for all pupils.

Case study schools

Teachers from some of the case study schools reported a wide range of benefits to pupils: pupils were more aware of what they need to do; they were more aware of their strengths and weakness; they were more focused on their skills; they were able to see their own progress; they were clearer on their targets and got a greater sense of achievement when they reached them; pupils were more independent of their teachers; there was greater learner autonomy. In one school the headteacher reported that pupils who had been introduced to target setting through Project 4 were going into other classes with the expectation of getting targets. This, she said, 'changes the ethos in the classroom'.

Involvement of parents/carers

One of the key aims of the AifL Programme is to involve parents and carers more actively in the progress of their children's learning. This is a particular feature of Personal Learning Plans and Reporting to Parents, but all projects had the opportunity to share with parents regarding their involvement in the AifL Programme. In both the headteacher and teacher responses, given below, where increased parental involvement is reported, schools are representative of all projects except Project 5. This project was still in its early stages and it was hoped that parental involvement would increase as it continued; plans for future involvement of parents was mentioned across all projects. However, higher proportions of respondents from Projects 2, 3 and 9 responded positively to the statements about parental involvement.

Some headteachers reported that involving parents had not been one of their aims. A number also reported that relationships with parents were strong and it was not easy to say that more had become involved, though the quality of communication may have improved.

Sixty-seven headteachers (73%) and 110 teachers (58%) reported that parents had been informed of the school's involvement in the project; 37 headteachers (36%) and 56 teachers (30%) reported that parents were also involved in the evaluation of the project. Thirty-three headteachers (36%) felt that the project had enabled parents/carers to become more actively involved in contributing to assessment and target setting for their children, while 56 teachers (30%) agreed.

Twenty-seven headteachers (29%) considered that 'many' parents of the children taking part in the project had become more actively involved in their children's learning, 6 (7%) thought it was 'about half' and 11 (12%) reported 'a few'. Teacher estimates varied slightly: 34 teachers (18%) considered that 'many' parents were now more involved, while for 20 (11%) it was 'about half' and for 13 (7%) it was 'a few'.

Thirty-four headteachers (38%) and 62 teachers (34%) reported that involvement in the project had resulted in changed practices in communicating with parents/carers. Examples provided included:

- Personal Learning Plans are given to parents and so parents are more informed, more involved and engage more in discussion with the teachers; PLPs have created a dialogue. (This was the most frequently mentioned change and occurred across Projects 1, 2, 3 and 9)
- parents are more willing to be involved in discussing assessment issues (Project 1)
- parents are asked to comment on pupil work on a regular basis (Project 1)
- workshops for parents have been organised (Projects 1, 3 and 9)
- a programme for sharing learning outcomes with parents has been initiated (Project 3)
- longer time given to PLP meetings than normal parent meeting (Project 3)
- clearer reports can be given to parents (Project 4)
- video-disc sent home to parents and used for discussion of progress (Project 4)
- consulting with parents on what they want reported (Project 9)
- parents have been involved in working groups (Project 9)
- arrangements for meetings with parents more informal (Project 9).

Case study schools

Two Project 9 schools had involved parents in focus groups, in one case to develop reporting policy and in the other to review parents' evenings. Parents valued being asked to take part and reported that it made them feel that they were being listened to, especially when they could see the changes discussed being put into practice. They felt it was important for the school because it gave them a cross-section of parental views before going to the wider parent group. They saw their involvement as a way of contributing to the school.

Others involved in Project 9 reported that it had made teachers more aware of parents' needs and enabled them to listen rather than assume they knew what parents wanted. For one primary school it had made them 'willing to adapt their strategies to reach out to the parent population'.

Impact on information needs (including PLPs)

A key element of the AifL Programme is to ensure that the information needs of pupils, parents, teachers and others are met. The headteachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought a range of information needs was being met by the AifL Programme, and the responses are reported in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Extent to which AifL has contributed to meeting information needs: (Headteachers)

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all	No response
Pupils	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
How well they are progressing through a level	16	34	22	9	19
How well they are developing skills	16	48	13	2	21
What progress they are making over time	18	44	15	2	21
Identifying next steps in their own learning	25	29	20	4	22
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements	21	29	22	2	26
Class teacher					
Knowledge of individual pupil progress	23	37	14	6	20
Recording of individual pupil progress	24	29	21	4	22
Planning next steps for individual pupils	24	38	13	4	21
Planning next steps for groups	21	34	15	5	25
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable	22	35	11	8	24
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class	12	38	21	6	23
Effectiveness of teaching approaches	17	39	13	8	23
Pupil performance against national standards	10	26	27	11	26
Other teachers					
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage	7	23	25	12	33
Aspects in which pupils need specific support	16	25	17	9	33
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school	3	8	6	25	58
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school	9	18	20	16	37
Parents and carers					
Understandable information about their child's progress	17	23	24	9	27
Specific strengths of their child's performance	22	25	18	8	27
Aspects which need support	21	24	19	8	28
Local Authority					
Monitoring progress of schools against targets	5	8	29	21	37
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan	10	19	22	14	35

The missing responses were mainly from the same schools throughout, with additional schools logging no response to some statements and, in particular, in respect of other teachers' and local authority needs. Those responding 'not at all' were spread across all projects, though from a limited number of schools. Many indicated that it was too early to know what impact projects might have on meeting many of the needs and some hoped that as the project progressed (for example PLPs) improvements would be made. Some suggested that they had in place good reporting systems and as such did not need to improve. One primary headteacher (Project 4) commented: *'As 4 teachers were involved, the above are difficult to answer. In one class the results are very positive but it varies after that to little or no impact'.* A primary head from Project 5 commented: *'We are still in the early stages of the project, but our transition information from P7 to S1 was more specific and related to next steps in learning'* .

At this stage the projects appeared to be contributing towards the needs of pupils and class teachers, with 50% or more of respondents agreeing they contributed much or very much to the items related to these groups (except for performance against national standards). Just under half thought that improvements were being made with regard to parents. Other aspects required further development.

These data are illustrated in Chart 4.12 in which the data from Table 4.14 has been summarised by calculating respondents' average ratings for each information user group and collapsed into agree, disagree and no view.

Chart 4.12: Progress towards meeting the information needs of various groups (Headteachers) (percentages)
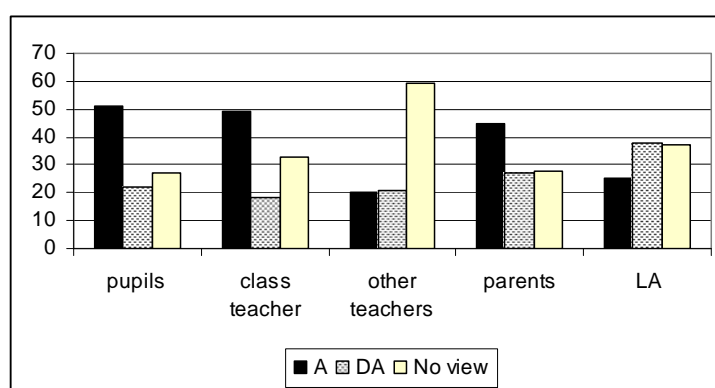
Teachers were asked in more detail about the implementation of PLPs and were asked to give their views on the extent to which PLPs were contributing to meeting information needs.

Forty-five teachers had been using PLPs prior to involvement in the AifL projects: that is, 30 from 'non-PLP projects' and 15 from 'PLP projects'. Seven out of the 30 non-PLP project participants indicated that PLPs were used as a feature within their AifL projects: these were integrated into the developments of Projects 1, 4 and 9. PLP projects which already had them in place either redesigned their PLP, extended it to other stages, eg nursery, developed it for other aspects of the curriculum or had begun to look at electronic support as part of their involvement in AifL.

The questionnaire was designed on the assumption that all those participating in Projects 2, 3 and 8 would be using PLPs. However, in reality a number of teachers did not actually use PLPs during 2002 to 2003, which was the development period covered by the questionnaire. A number had focused on designing the PLP or undertaking curricular audits to prepare for PLPs. As indicated before, a number of Project 8 participants had acted only in advisory roles and so did not use PLPs either. Therefore, although there were 61 respondents who were linked to PLP projects, only 47 felt able to answer the questions about the extent to which PLPs were assisting in meeting information needs. Six participants from other projects also answered this question. The respondents represented 23 schools: 16 primary, 4 secondary and 3 special.

With respect to demands on teacher time, 28% thought that PLPs were easily managed, 68% thought they were manageable but demanding and 4% thought they were excessively demanding. With respect to pupil time, 6% thought PLPs were easily managed, 75% thought they were manageable but demanding and 19% thought they were excessively demanding.

Issues which made them demanding included the development of the PLP before putting it into practice and the time spent with each individual child discussing targets. It was noted that children *'spend quite a lot of time thinking about targets'* and that checking and reviewing these were time-consuming. It was suggested that it could not have been done without additional support staff or cover being available; it was felt that meeting with pupils and target setting could not take place within normal class time. Where PLPs were being tried with some pupils, it was noted that the task could not have been done if all pupils had been involved.

One teacher commented: *'Well worth the input of time. As I become more accustomed to using them and the children more adept at self-assessment, time implications should be lighter'* (Primary – Project 8). On the other hand, another teacher from the same school commented: *'PLPs require a great deal of teaching and discussion with the pupils in order to get worthwhile, achievable targets. The pupils dislike them and find doing them a dreary task'.*

Only 6 teachers reported trialling PLP software and they reported it to be good or very good (Picasso, Filemaker Pro, and a local authority profiling system).

Teachers' perceptions of how much PLPs contributed to improving information needs are reported in Table 4.15.

At this stage of development (October 2003), teachers were more likely to agree that PLPs would contribute to meeting the needs of the class teacher, pupils and, to a lesser extent, parents, than to meeting the needs of other teachers and the local authority. The levels of non-response might be taken to indicate areas in which respondents had not yet used PLPs. It was unclear how the use of PLPs in schools could meet the information needs of local authorities.

As with the headteacher data, the data in Table 4.15 has been summarised and is illustrated in Chart 4.13.

Table 4.15: Extent to which PLPs have contributed to meeting information needs (Teachers)

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all	No response
Pupils	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*	*n*
How well they are progressing through a level	7	20	14	6	6
How well they are developing skills	6	28	15	2	2
What progress they are making over time	9	24	13	2	5
Identifying next steps in their own learning	17	17	11	7	1
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements	13	18	12	4	6
Class teacher					
Knowledge of individual pupil progress	17	18	11	5	2
Recording of individual pupil progress	19	19	8	7	0
Planning next steps for individual pupils	19	21	9	6	9
Planning next steps for groups	18	20	9	6	0
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable	8	21	9	6	9
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class	4	18	17	7	9
Effectiveness of teaching approaches	8	23	8	7	9
Pupil performance against national standards	0	14	13	11	15
Other teachers					
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage	7	17	5	8	16
Aspects in which pupils need specific support	11	10	5	11	16
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school	5	5	1	10	32
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school	7	11	2	7	26
Parents and carers					
Understandable information about their child's progress	12	10	11	5	15
Specific strengths of their child's performance	10	10	14	4	15
Aspects which need support	10	10	13	5	15
Local Authority					
Monitoring progress of schools against targets	1	4	3	10	35
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan	5	4	3	8	33

Chart 4.13: PLPs' contribution towards progress in meeting the information needs of various groups (Teachers) (percentages)
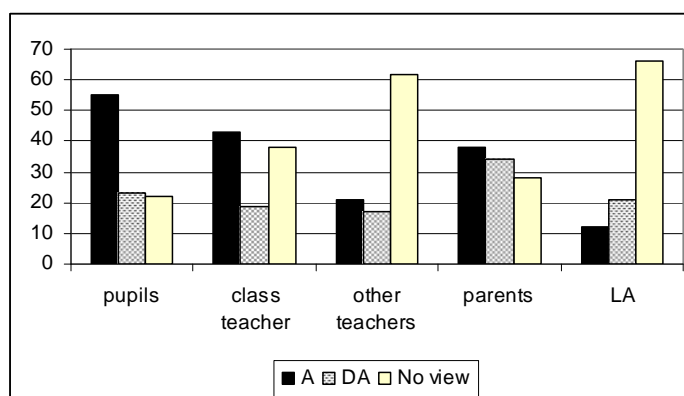
Benefits and challenges of AifL Programme and what might be done differently

In a series of open-ended questions, participants were asked to identify benefits and, in retrospect, what they might have done differently. Headteachers and teachers were also invited to identify challenges.

Benefits

Local authority assessment co-ordinators, project DOs and HE representatives gave a wide range of responses and the views reported are those where there was most agreement.

All three groups were in agreement that a key benefit of the programme had been enhanced teacher motivation and enthusiasm – the descriptions were numerous: re-energised, satisfied, confident, renewed enjoyment. One co-ordinator stated that is was good to watch teachers enjoying what they were doing. This was related to other benefits for teachers such as teacher control and ownership of developments, increased emphasis on and opportunity for teachers to reflect on their work, and the opportunity for teachers to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.

The benefit mentioned most frequently by local authority co-ordinators was the opportunity to network and share practice with other authority staff and DOs. The opportunity for teachers to work with those in other schools was also important. Local authorities mentioned the benefit of being involved in a national initiative as it gave direction and structure to authority planning and, in at least two cases, endorsed and lent support to what the authority was wanting to do: one co-ordinator reported that the high profile of a national project meant that non-AifL schools took note of what was happening in neighbouring AifL schools and so took the developments seriously. Local authorities also mentioned the benefits of receiving financial support.

Other benefits, though less frequently mentioned, were: greater pupil involvement in learning (DOs and HE representatives); development of research and action research based in schools (LA co-ordinators and HE representatives); the projects have produced evidence which will support change in practice in Scottish schools (DO).

School respondents were also given the opportunity in open-ended questions to list up to 3 benefits and 3 challenges of being involved in the project. An overview across all projects is given here, while a more detailed analysis on a project-by-project basis is included in Appendix 4. Projects 5, 8, 9 and 10, as second phase projects, were in earlier stages of development and so fewer responses were given in relation to benefits and challenges for these projects than for Projects 1, 2, 3 and 4.

For headteachers the key benefits identified were:

- raised awareness of issues of teaching, learning and assessment and of research (62)
- increased involvement of the pupils in learning, assessment and in supporting each other (33)
- staff development (31)
- working with others, including teachers from other schools and non-teachers (23)

- better links with parents (19)
- opportunity to reflect on practice (17)
- using technology more effectively (9)
- financial support for developments (5)
- being part of a national initiative (5).

A small number of other benefits were identified by individual schools, including improved primary-secondary liaison, improved approaches to reporting, increased parental understanding of how what they do at home helps their children learn and influencing the direction of the school plans.

In terms of benefits to themselves as teachers participating in the project, the key themes raised by teachers were:

- opportunities for development for the individual teacher (by far the most common issue, with 237 mentions)
- benefits in terms of working with others (58)
- opportunities for pupil development (38)
- increased pupil involvement in the assessment process (39)
- better links with parents/carers (22)
- improved use of technology (16).

Challenges

Headteachers were asked to identify up to three significant challenges in taking part in the programme. All but 6 schools identified at least one, with most giving 2 or 3. Responses were categorised into themes as follows:

- Lack of time (33)
- Pressure on timetables and schedules in order to fit project into existing programmes and keeping the project on track (26)
- Ensuring supply cover for staff involved (23)
- Staff ownership, or reluctance of some staff to be involved (20)
- Lack of clarity in what was expected of the project (14)
- Technical problems (8)
- Lack of support (4).

Twenty-six headteachers identified other challenges. A number of those involved in Projects 2 and 3 highlighted the challenges of finding an effective system to manage PLPs and to ensure progress and continuity from year to year. Others found involving parents challenging. Other issues mentioned were keeping all staff involved, involving new staff, and writing up the project report or case study.

Similarly, teachers identified a range of challenges that they had experienced as a result of their involvement in the project:

- having to change one's own practice and do things differently (110)
- management of time, timetables and schedules (73)
- availability of time (45)
- resistance of pupils to new ideas/ways of working (42)
- resistance of colleagues to new ideas/developments (15)
- making a presentation at a conference or seminar (10)
- technical problems (7).

Other challenges mentioned included 'getting started', getting parents involved and, for those involved in developing PLPs, identifying an approach suitable for all pupils and for continuity between years.

What might have been done differently?

In relation to what might have been done differently, all three groups of key stakeholders suggested that a longer lead-in time would have been beneficial. All felt that they needed a clearer understanding of the overall programme from the outset. DOs and HE representatives both thought that more time was needed to understand the underlying theories and principles before starting to work in schools. DOs and local authority co-ordinators both felt that the details of each project needed to be thought through in greater detail: in particular there was need for clearer milestones and guidelines before schools became involved. In respect of greater forethought, all three groups spoke about the relationship between the three projects related to personal learning plans (Projects 2, 3 and 8). Each had a different suggestion but the message was that better advance planning would have led to a more satisfactory outcome.

Other suggestions for change included ensuring that initiatives coincide with the development planning cycle and allowing a longer timescale for completion of projects and reporting. All three groups also suggested that earlier opportunities to make links across projects were important (see concerns below), but there were no suggestions as to how this might have been achieved.

Fifty-nine headteachers (64%) made comments. Those involved in Projects 9 and 10 mostly indicated that it was too early to say at this stage as they were still carrying out their initial plans. Most of the comments were project-specific, though a few were cross-cutting, for example:

- involved all staff or more staff (10)
- planned better, linking work to development plan (5)
- nothing (3) with one adding *'although it nearly killed us'* (Project 4).

Project-specific suggestions included:

- Project 1: limited the number of strategies used (1); informed parents more about project (1)
- Project 2: involve staff and pupils in target setting before doing PLPs (2)
  One secondary headteacher responded: *'I think a working model of a PLP, developed centrally, good or bad, may have been useful; a working model – to be altered etc. in light of experience'*
- Project 3: used ICT or given more time to developing ICT skills (3); involved more staff rather than SMT (3); allowed more time for work (2)
- Project 4: allowed more time for developments (6); kept non-participating staff and parents more informed (3); spent more time trialling the instruments (2); chosen different staff (1); allowed teachers to observe good practice in another school (1)
- Project 5: had more communication within school and across cluster schools (3); link to other formative assessment work (1)
- Project 8: headteachers commented mostly in relation to having a clearer structure and objectives for the project (9) – *'less talk and more action'*; one

suggested they should have waited until the findings of Project 2 had been published before tackling the question of ICT use for PLPs

- Project 9: involved parents at an earlier stage (1); allowed more time for developments (1); made use of website (1).

One hundred and twenty-six teachers (66%) made suggestions in response to the question about what they would have done differently. A wide range of comments were given, many project- and school-specific. Where questionnaires were received from several teachers in one school, similar points were often made. Twelve indicated that they would change nothing, with one stating: *'I was very pleased with the project'.* Points which were made across the projects included:

In-school issues:

- would have involved more staff within the school (12)
- would have liked more time to have been available for staff development or discussions with colleagues (7)
- would have tried to plan better initially – for example, more effective time-planning, more careful planning of project work (5).

External issues:

- would like to have been better informed at beginning – for example, clearer guidance about project timescales, workload and outcomes (12)
- would have liked more contact with others involved in the same project (9)
- would have liked to develop project over longer timescale – for example, started earlier, taken longer, allowed more time for preparation and planning (9).

In relation to Project 1, a number suggested that they would have focused initially on fewer formative assessment strategies, or just one; in relation to Projects 2 and 3, some suggested working with groups of children rather than individuals and a small number indicated they would have changed the format of the PLP; some also suggested they would have focused on different aspects of the curriculum. In Project 4 it was suggested that it would have been better to focus on a smaller number of children rather than including the whole class. For Project 8, one respondent suggested it would have been better to use a professional software developer. Several teachers involved in Project 9 said they would have changed the parent questionnaire. A number of more personal comments were made – one teacher would have liked to have video-recorded his/her own teaching more, and two felt they should have had more confidence in themselves.

4.5   Communication and collaboration

The opportunity to work with other colleagues from one's own school and from other schools was mentioned as a benefit of being involved in the programme. The AifL Programme is based on a variety of key groups working together to enable teachers to trial and implement developments in the classroom and to encourage them to engage in action research. It is considered important that policy makers, practitioners and researchers should work collaboratively to develop approaches that have a real impact on teaching and learning.

Local authority co-ordinators, project DOs, HE representatives and teachers were all asked about the effectiveness of the communication processes within the

programme, the contributions made by each key group and early views on the development of a community working collaboratively.

The local authority assessment co-ordinators reported working mainly with DOs, teachers and other authority co-ordinators, although one reported no contact with the relevant DO and 5 indicated they were rarely in touch with other authority assessment co-ordinators. However, 18 reported no contact with HE representatives. There was broad agreement that DOs, other LT Scotland staff, the Scottish Executive Education Department staff and teachers all provided strong and committed support for the developments. Seven disagreed that HE representatives had made strong contributions to the development of ideas and 11 disagreed that they had made a strong contribution to the development of practice, but this view is in some ways unsurprising as at this stage the majority of authority co-ordinators had not had contact with the HE representatives. Those from remote communities expressed a sense of isolation as it was not easy to attend national meetings and the website, which would have been helpful, had not *'taken off'*.

The DOs reported working mainly with teachers, local authority co-ordinators and other DOs. Three reported that they often had contact with HE representatives; for the remainder contact was occasional or rare. A majority of the DOs agreed that all other key parties had given strong support to the developments, though 3 out of the 9 thought that the HE contribution had not been strong in relation to developing ideas or practice. On the other hand, those who were often in touch with HE representatives considered working with them to be very useful. One DO reported that the HE representative had been very supportive, while another suggested that HE representatives *'have had limited input; they seem unclear of their contribution'*. The DOs agreed that the relationship with the local authority co-ordinators varied between co-ordinators. Some were perceived as having a *'hands-on approach'*, while others were *'remote'*; some were actively supporting schools while others were *'conspicuous by their absence'*, though all contact with them was useful or very useful.

The majority of HE representatives reported regular contact with the DO and two said that this was very effective and that a strong working relationship had developed, with frequent meetings. For others contact was more often by email, with meetings on a monthly or less frequent basis. Three indicated that contact was either when time was available or when they were at the same meetings. The main purpose for working together was to share ideas and to act as a *'sounding board'*. As with DOs, the HE representatives' relationship with local authority co-ordinators was variable. Three of the HE representatives said that they had regular contact with some but little contact with others. Other HE representatives indicated that they only had contact with them at seminars or, in three cases, no contact at all. Project 1 had more than one HE representative associated with it and they reported working closely with each other and collaborating to produce a paper; however, collaboration across projects was not taking place due to the fact that each was busy on his/her own project and that other responsibilities and commitments limited time availability. Five HE representatives reported contact with teachers when visiting schools, for example, to discuss the purpose and practice of formative assessment or gathering views on the project. They also met at seminars and conferences.

Although a small number of authority co-ordinators and DOs reported having contact with pupils and parents/parent groups, this was occasionally or rarely: 11 authority co-ordinators had been involved with pupils and 8 with parents; 4 DOs had had contact with parents and 4 with pupils. One DO responded that it was not part of her role *'to liaise directly with pupils and parents'*. The HE representatives did not report

contact with these groups at this stage although it was suggested that this would be useful.

Teachers were asked to indicate how useful they had found the various sources of support. Their responses are given in Table 4.16. They were asked not to respond if any group was not relevant or if they had no view, and the level of missing responses suggests that teachers had very little or no contact with some groups.

Table 4.16: Helpfulness of the various forms of support (Teachers)

	very helpful	helpful	unhelpful	very unhelpful	no response
	%	%	%	%	%
Project DO	24	34	4	0	38
LA assessment co-ordinator	14	23	7	0	56
Headteacher/senior manager	56.5	29	1	0.5	13
Other teachers in own school	59.5	20	1.5	0	19
Teachers in project in other schools	21	27	3	0	49
HE representatives	3	9	1.5	0.5	86
Parents and parents' groups	9.5	22	1.5	0	68.5

Thus, for most teachers, the project had been developed within their own schools with strong support from both management and other teachers; the 'community of practice' for development had not extended far. Just over 60% had had contact with project DOs and for the majority this had been seen as very helpful or helpful. About half appear to have had contact with teachers in other schools and again this was very helpful or helpful. 86% had no views on the role of the HE representatives, and this reflects the response of the HE representatives that teachers were not a group they had worked much with. The teachers reported contact with them in group meetings and at seminars. One teacher reported that he/she could not answer the question *'because my headteacher has been the first point of contact with other parties'* (Primary teacher – Project 8). The majority of comments added by teachers expressed their appreciation of the support from DOs, headteachers and fellow teachers and also how valuable contact with other schools in the project had been. Some of the negative comments, although few and far between, are revealing. For example:

'We were not given much direction as to what the final outcomes of the project were. Sharing ideas and resources was very good. We got some time out of class together, though not as much as we thought, and we felt we were "working in the dark" a lot as a group on the whole' (Primary teacher – Project 4)

'Lack of information and purpose to the project' (Primary teacher – Project 5)

'Normally when we use the term "unhelpful" we don't imply non-involvement, but involvement that is counter-productive' (Secondary teacher – Project 1; respondent recorded both the authority co-ordinator and the HE representative as missing).

For the local authority assessment co-ordinators, HE representatives and project DOs, the main means of communicating with other groups was phone, email, meetings of groups or one-to-one, and at seminars and conferences. Phone and email were useful for organising meetings, but face-to-face meetings were still the best way *'of getting work done'.* Some local authority co-ordinators mentioned the value of the regular assessment co-ordinators' meetings, though the remote

communities expressed concern at not being able to be present at all of them. One mentioned that while these meetings were an ideal opportunity to share ideas, this was often limited *'to those who are at the same lunch table'.* Teachers reported, overwhelmingly, that group meetings (89%) or one-to-one meetings (70%) were the best means of communicating and sharing ideas; 47% had found the seminars and conferences very useful or useful; however, 46% did not respond to this question, suggesting that at this stage almost half had not had the opportunity to attend these events.

All groups had made very little use of the AifL Programme website forum for communicating with others. Two HE representatives mentioned it, 5 DOs had used it for communicating with teachers, with 3 finding it useful; 11 local authority co-ordinators mentioned using it, all finding it useful; however, a further 12 local authority co-ordinators, although they did not appear to have used it, thought it had limited usefulness. Thirteen percent of teachers thought it was very useful or useful, 23% thought it was limited or not at all useful and 64% did not respond to the question. Comments indicated that many people did not have time to keep checking to see if there had been new postings and it was suggested that this would only work if there were email alerts notifying new information. Teachers expressed frustration at trying to access the forum and not succeeding, or not finding much there when they did. For example:

'I'd have liked more web/email exchange of info/ideas, but I wasn't finding much of direct relevance. When I tried to submit material I ran into difficulties. I daresay I should have persevered longer' (Secondary teacher, Highland – Project 1)

'Despite many hours attempting to use the website, I was constantly told that I was ineligible – even though sitting with my mobile phone pressing the requisite buttons!' (Secondary teacher, Dumfries and Galloway – Project 1)

'My attempts at trying to contact teachers from other schools via email and the website failed miserably' (Secondary teacher, South Ayrshire – Project 1)

'The website has not been given much room as it's difficult finding the time to complete our own project, complete classwork and view the website' (Primary teacher, South Lanarkshire – Project 5).

Case study schools

Attendance at project conferences varied from school to school. For example, in 2 schools where 4 teachers were involved, in one case only one teacher went to the conference, whilst in the other all 4 attended. Reasons for not attending related to inability to get time off and problems with staff cover.

Management and teachers thought that the website had been a good idea but it was limited. Schools had agreed to post materials but hadn't, either because of difficulty in accessing the site, eg username and password problems, or because of lack of time. Spending time on the internet was considered a luxury.

The programme has set up a process which has brought LT Scotland DOs, local authority staff and HE faculty of education staff together into a working relationship for the purpose of bringing change to classroom practices. Despite the limitations reported by each of these groups at this stage in the developments, due possibly to the constraints of time and other responsibilities rather than unwillingness, these groups had been working together and with policy makers at national level. One local authority co-ordinator reported that having a DO as a single point of contact was essential and HE representatives acknowledged the value of the *'energetic input'* from DOs. DOs and HE representatives both commented that local authorities were crucial to the ongoing implementation of the programme. HE representatives emphasised that links were being established between key groups and that this was progress. One considered that *'the programme is genuinely trying to produce a collaborative culture in contexts where competition is deeply embedded'*. While all parties reported coming into contact with other groups *'only at seminars and conferences'*, this in itself suggests that such events have been a vital part of bringing the different groups together.

At this stage teachers were working mainly in in-school communities with some external contact. However, there is evidence that some teachers did not have contact with DOs and many of the teachers did not benefit from attendance at conferences and seminars or working with teachers from other schools. While some were benefiting from getting the opportunity to work with their own school colleagues more than they would otherwise have done, they were not yet participating in a wider community of practice.

4.6 Resources, funding and sustainability

Headteachers were asked to indicate what additional resources had been required to implement the project. The main resources identified were:

- staff time including release from class and payment of supply teachers (72 schools, 79%)
- ICT equipment, including hardware (pcs and laptops) and software (24 schools, 26%)
- other equipment, including video cameras, digital cameras, noticeboards (15 schools, 16%)
- materials, including folders, paper, photocopying, books and storage (24 schools, 26%).

Therefore the main additional cost funded out of the programme was for supply cover to release teachers to undertake developments. There was no notable difference between projects or sectors in this respect. Funding to release teachers is an important issue for extending the programme into other schools, as supporting additional staff is costly and not necessarily sustainable.

Eighty schools (87%) considered that the funding received through AifL was sufficient to cover these costs, although 7 schools (8%) said that it was not. A few of these schools referred to the travel costs of attending meetings, while others speculated that they could have done more in terms of releasing staff if more money had been available. Twenty-one schools (23%) had experienced problems with the funding, mainly delays in receiving it, although the majority (76%) were content. Again there was no notable difference between projects and sectors in these responses. The 21 schools reporting problems with funding were spread across 14 authorities; therefore there was no apparent geographical factor.

When asked how they would continue to sustain developments in assessment once central funding stopped, 4 schools did not know and a further 12 said 'with difficulty'. Seven schools thought that no extra resource was required and 26 schools intended to integrate the developments into school planning and, similarly, 33 schools replied that they would use their own budgets. Ten schools anticipated that they would require some additional funding from the local authority. Again there was no notable difference between projects or sectors in the responses to this question. The majority of respondents appeared to be indicating that ongoing developments were sustainable without further funding.

4.7   Awareness of wider programme

Local authority co-ordinators and DOs were asked to what extent they understood how all the projects linked together and how well they thought other participants understood this.

Ten of the local authority assessment co-ordinators indicated that they did not have a clear understanding of how the 10 projects linked together and 13 thought that other participants did not understand this. This was an issue of concern to them, as they realised it was their responsibility to develop the full programme within their authorities and yet for the most part they had detailed information only on the projects running within their authorities. Some expressed the view that they felt limited by lack of knowledge of projects their authorities were not involved in. One suggested she *'felt at sea when quizzed by schools throughout the authority on how the whole programme is going to affect them'.*

All DOs indicated that they understood the relationships but only 3 of them thought other participants did. It was felt that major emphasis needed to be given to the inter-relationship of projects and how all the separate achievements in each school could be brought together into the bigger picture.

Headteachers and teachers were asked how much they knew about projects other than their own. Their responses are given in Table 4.17 and illustrated in Charts 4.14 and 4.15. In this data the responses relating to each school's own project have been excluded. All respondents know 'a lot' about their own projects and this question was designed to show awareness of other projects in the programme. The exceptions are Projects 6 and 7, for which all respondents have been included.

In September 2003, headteachers were more likely to know about other projects than class teachers. Sizeable percentages of teachers knew nothing or little about most other projects. Overall, participants were more aware of formative assessment and PLPs than other developments. This was to be expected, given that all projects had been given an introduction to formative assessment, if not the depth of input of the Project 1 participants. PLPs had been on the agenda for a number of years and new community schools had been developing them, therefore one might expect greater awareness of PLPs, if not of the actual project developments. The two national developments, AAP and NNAs, were familiar to most headteachers, but most teachers knew nothing about them.

Table 4.17: Awareness of other projects

	Know a lot		Know a little		Know nothing	
	HT	**Teach**	**HT**	**Teach**	**HT**	**Teach**
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	35	8	38	43	27	49
2. Personal Learning Plans	31	17	60	44	9	39
3. Supporting the Management of Personal Learning Plans	15	9	58	31	27	60
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	16	7	47	30	37	63
5. Local Moderation: sharing the standard	6	1	38	11	56	88
6. New National Assessments (NNA)	22	4	50	24	28	63
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP)	28	9	49	20	23	71
8. ICT Support for Assessment	13	2	56	20	31	78
9. Reporting to Parents and Others	17	8	53	27	30	65
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs	14	4	55	33	31	63

Chart 4.14: Awareness of other projects (Headteachers)
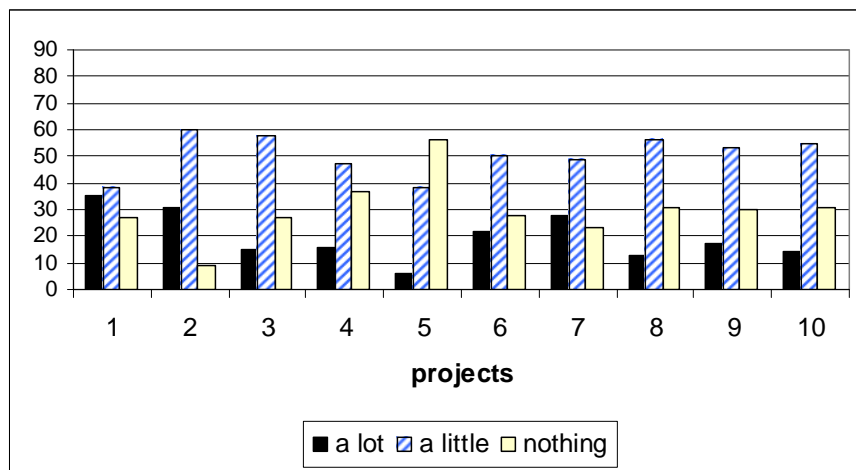
Chart 4.15: Awareness of other projects (Teachers)
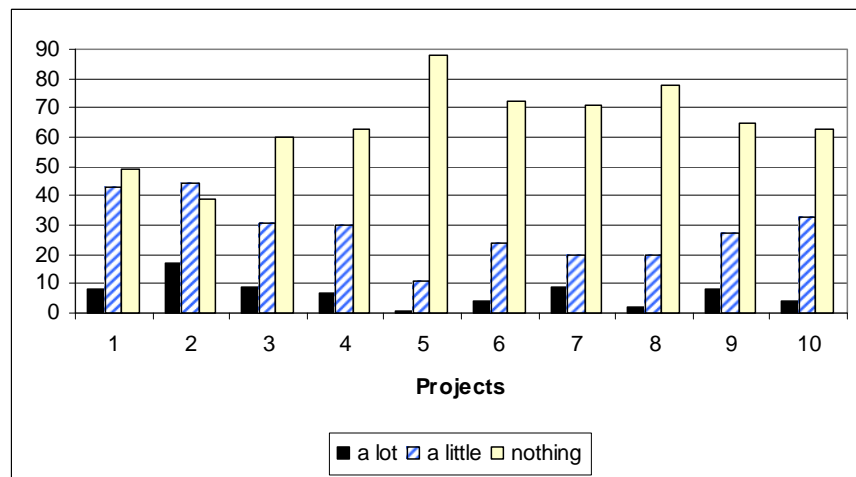
> *Case study schools*
>
> *Those leading the projects in schools were aware of being involved in AifL and of receiving funding to support the developments, but in some cases class teachers within the schools were not aware of either programme or project. In one school the project was based in one department and although other departments knew of the initiative, they were unaware that it was part of a national programme. Similarly with parents and, on occasion, pupils who, although aware that something was going on, were unsure of what it was.*

4.8 Summary of key points emerging from the first phase of the evaluation

The key points emerging from the first phase of the evaluation were reported in the Interim Report and formed the basis of the second phase. The key points are:

The key participants
- Most local authority co-ordinators held multiple roles, which caused tension in time management and availability. In addition, many had not appreciated the scale of the programme.
- DOs were committed to the programme but were holding a varied and demanding remit, particularly in terms of liaison across stakeholders.
- HE representatives had varied roles in terms of demands on their time and the activities they became involved in. This was the least clearly defined and understood of the three central roles. Some felt integrated into the project while others felt more isolated.
- Just under two-thirds of the pilot schools participated in the evaluation surveys, with a higher proportion of primary than secondary schools responding. All projects were represented and all but one local authority.

Impact on practice
- Headteachers/senior managers indicated relatively clear strategic objectives for the staff and pupils as a result of their involvement in the project; teachers' objectives were more at the operational, day-to-day level.
- Almost two-thirds of schools indicated that they were already trying to develop assessment practices along the lines of the projects and so were building on existing strengths.
- Pupils across the pre-5 to S6 stages were involved in some element of the programme, although there was evidence of greater involvement at P5 to P7. There was an emphasis on literacy and numeracy or combinations of curricular areas, although other individual subject areas were also identified.
- Views on the impact of involvement with the AifL Programme were, in the main, positive with regard to changing practice, pupil involvement and relationships with parents (relevant to the specific project).
- A range of benefits was identified by both headteachers and teachers, depending on the individual project, with raised awareness, increased knowledge and understanding of assessment and increased collaboration across groups reported. Local authority co-ordinators, HE representatives and project DOs all noted that a key benefit of the programme had been enhanced teacher motivation and enthusiasm in the participating schools.

- The main challenge was time. There are two aspects to this. The first is concerned with the constraints resulting from school timetables and schedules that limit flexibility and responsiveness to initiatives. The second, for many teachers, is finding the time to become familiar with and access sources of information (e.g. LT Scotland) on assessment and to implement change. Other challenges included engaging all staff and maintaining enthusiasm.

Impact on meeting information needs
- Developments in assessment practices and procedures were beginning to meet information needs more effectively than previously for class teachers and pupils and, to a lesser extent, parents, with less progress towards meeting the needs of other teachers and the local authority. Many respondents indicated that it was too early to make judgements on the impact of the project in this area.
- Only 53 teachers from the sample had been working on PLPs, with the majority of them indicating that their use was demanding but manageable for both teachers and pupils. These teachers indicated that PLPs were meeting teachers' and pupils' information needs more than those of other groups. It was unclear how the use of PLPs in schools could meet the information needs of local authorities.

Convergence of assessment arrangements
- Lack of awareness/knowledge of projects other than those in which their authority was involved caused concern to LA co-ordinators with regard to future dissemination and implementation across authority schools.
- Reservations were expressed about the extent to which key groups and participants understood how the 10 projects linked together to form a coherent programme. Teachers knew very little about projects other than the one in which they were involved, although headteachers indicated they were more aware of other projects.

AifL Programme issues
- *Collaboration and community of practice:* The three key support groups were beginning to work together and with policy makers, although each group identified limitations. Where working together occurred, it was reported as a positive and successful experience, albeit relatively novel. There was need for ongoing development of these relationships. Although teachers were benefiting from working more in collaboration with colleagues within their schools, many had not yet had the opportunity to liaise with colleagues in other schools or at conferences, and so were not yet participating in a wider community of practice. Face-to-face meetings (in groups or one-to-one) was the preferred method of communication in order 'to get work done'. The website and web-based forum had been used by a very small number of participants.
- *Funding:* The majority of schools had found the additional funding adequate for their purposes, with additional supply cover being the main resource purchased with it. Some schools had bought new information and communication technology equipment and various other resources and materials.
- *Sustainability:* Most schools considered that the initiatives would become part of school development planning and resourced from school budgets; only a small number considered that they would need extra funding.

- *Planning:* Similar themes were beginning to emerge across the groups of respondents. For example, local authority co-ordinators, headteachers and teachers, on reflection, felt that they would have benefited from a longer lead-in period and more information on the programme as a whole as well as on individual projects.

5. Findings (2) - Phase 2 surveys

5.1 Introduction

A second series of surveys was undertaken in September 2004. This included local authority assessment co-ordinators, higher education faculty representatives, headteachers and teachers in schools that had been part of the initial development projects, and local co-ordinators of Associated Schools Groups (ASGs).

The findings are presented thematically across the groups of participants. Following a description of the samples, the themes are:

- progress and developments during 2003 to 2004
- impact on policy and practice
- communication and collaboration
- resources, funding and sustainability
- development of a coherent and unified system of assessment.

The development of ASGs had taken place during the session 2003 to 2004 in order to take forward AifL developments within local authorities, focusing in particular on local clusters of schools. Although not part of the evaluation proposal, it was decided that it was important to gain insight into the progress of ASGs and the work they had been engaged in. The findings from the ASG survey are presented separately (section 5.8).

5.2 Survey samples

LA assessment co-ordinators and HE representatives

The purpose of the surveys of key players and schools was to review progress during 2003 to 2004, taking account of the increasing importance of the role of local authorities during that period. The questionnaire to local authority assessment co-ordinators addressed issues of the role of the assessment co-ordinators and changes to staffing, staff development, the impact of the programme at authority level, perceived benefits and challenges to authorities and schools, sustainability, issues of collaboration and communication, and the overall progress of the programme. The questionnaire to HE representatives addressed similar issues regarding the overall programme but focused on HE issues, in particular, the incorporation of AifL principles into HE programmes.

There had been changes to the LT Scotland development officers since the previous survey, many of the original DOs having gone back to teaching or to other posts. New development officers had been appointed in a range of roles to take forward the AifL Programme: for example, developing the Toolkit, ongoing dissemination and other events. It was decided that because of the change and variety of roles it would not be beneficial to include them in a survey.

Responses were received from 30 out of 32 authorities. Additionally, some authority representatives were interviewed. An interview was held with one of the co-ordinators who had not been able to complete the questionnaire, and therefore the views of 31 authorities have been included in the report.

Responses were received from 8 HE representatives, all of whom had completed the initial survey in May 2003.

School survey of headteachers and teachers

The school survey investigated the extent to which original developments had continued to progress within schools, aspects of other projects which were developing within the schools, issues of staff development and support, ongoing benefits and challenges of AifL, the meeting of information needs, awareness and understanding of the wider programme and its overall progress.

Questionnaires were sent to 165 schools. This was based on a revision of the original database used in 2003. Some schools were removed as they had not actually taken part and a few schools that had started later were added. All Project 1 schools were included in this survey.

Completed questionnaires were returned from a total of 87 schools (53%). Schools were represented as follows:

- 53 both senior management and teacher responses
- 24 management-only responses
- 10 teacher-only responses.

The explanations for the management-only responses were that, in 15 cases, no other teacher had been involved because it was a small school or because of the nature of the project (Projects 3 and 8); in other cases the teacher(s) had left or were too busy; in 5 cases no explanation was given. In the teacher-only responses, explanations included the headteacher leaving or being on secondment.

The non-return of questionnaires was followed up and 54 explanations (33% of target list) were received. These included:

- 18 who indicated that they had no time or were unwilling to complete the questionnaire for a number of reasons, eg HMIE inspection, work situations or too many external requests of this type
- 14 who reported that the headteacher or staff involved in the project had left, retired or were on long-term sick leave and, therefore, there were no further developments or the new headteacher was not in a position to complete the questionnaire; in one case the school had closed
- 12 indicated that no further AifL developments had taken place during 2003-04; one reported minimal involvement initially and no further work had taken place
- 10 cases where the questionnaires appeared to have gone adrift in the post, either not being received in the first place or not successfully returned to the research team.

It is not possible to know how many of the other non-respondents (24 schools) would give the same reasons but it is reasonable to speculate that they would be similar. It is noteworthy that 26 (16% of target list) indicated that for one reason or another no further developments had occurred.

The breakdown of responses by sector is given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Breakdown of responses to second AifL school survey by sector

Sector	No of schools in distribution	No of schools from which responses were received	
		n	*% response*
Nursery and Primary	102	52	*51*
5-14/16	2	2	*100*
Secondary	54	28	*52*
Special	7	5	*71*
Total	165	87	*53*

This represents a similar level of response to the first survey from all but the nursery/primary sector, which is lower.

Each school was sent one questionnaire for completion by a member of the senior management team or by the person who had had management responsibility for AifL developments during the session 2003-2004. Schools were asked, where possible, to identify two teachers who had been involved from the very beginning and two who had become involved in developments during 2003-2004. The team were aware that this would not be possible in all schools; for example, where all teachers had been involved from the beginning or where there were fewer than 4 teachers. Therefore the AifL contacts were asked to distribute the questionnaires (4 per school) as appropriate to their context. Distribution and return of questionnaires by AifL project is given in Table 5.2

Table 5.2: Distribution and return of questionnaires in second AifL school survey by original AifL Project

Project	SMT			Teachers		
	No. out	No. returned	*% return*	No. out	No. returned	*% return*
1. Formative assessment	44	26	*59*	176	56	*32*
2. Personal Learning Plans	16	7	*44*	64	13	*20*
3. Managing PLPs	14	6	*43*	56	4	*7*
4. Gathering and interpreting evidence	28	8	*29*	112	7	*6*
5. Local Moderation	16	5	*31*	64	9	*14*
8. ICT support	14	10	*71*	56	8	*14*
9. Reporting to parents etc	19	9	*47*	76	18	*24*
10. Special Needs/ASN	14	6	*43*	56	15	*27*
Total	165	77	*47*	660	130	*20*

Compared to the first survey, lower responses were received from all projects except Project 1, where more were received, and Project 9, where the same number of responses were received. For Project 10 more management responses were received but fewer teachers; for Projects 2 and 8 there was only a small drop; however, for Projects 3, 4 and 5 there were considerably fewer responses. For Project 3, in the first survey, 12 headteachers and 35 teachers returned questionnaires; in the second survey this was 6 and 4 respectively; for Project 4 in the first survey the figures were 15 headteachers and 27 teachers, but in the second survey there were only 8 and 7 respectively; for Project 5 in the first survey there were 9 and 14 responses but in the second survey only 5 headteachers and 9 teachers responded. Several of the Project 3 and 4 schools indicated that there had been no further developments during 2003 to 2004. In connection with Project 5, a local authority contact who had helped with the developments indicated that the

schools were unwilling to complete the questionnaires due to lack of feedback on the original work they had done and submitted to LT Scotland.

Ninety-six (74%) of the teachers had been involved from the beginning of the programme and 27 (21%), representing 18 schools, had become involved during 2003-2004. (There were 7 missing responses to this question.)

The proportion of respondents from each project is given in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Projects represented by respondents in second AifL school survey

Project	Headteachers		Teacher	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Project 1: Formative Assessment	26	*34*	56	*43*
Project 2: Developing PLPs	7	*9*	13	*10*
Project 3: Managing PLPs	6	*8*	4	*3*
Project 4: Gathering Evidence	8	*10*	7	*5*
Project 5: Moderation	5	*7*	9	*7*
Project 8: ICT	10	*13*	8	*6*
Project 9: Reporting to parents	9	*12*	18	*14*
Project 10: Additional Support Needs	6	*8*	15	*12*

On the original list of schools involved in the programme, one-quarter were participating in Project 1, therefore, more returns from Project 1 might be anticipated. However, 34% headteacher responses and 43% teacher responses from Project 1 represents a bias towards Project 1. Given the small number of returns from other projects, it is not possible to look at the data on the basis of each project or to make safe comparisons between projects; where appropriate, comparisons will be made between Project 1 and non-Project 1 data.

Of the 130 teachers who responded, 73 (56%) were from primary schools, 44 (34%) from secondary schools, 9 (7%) from special schools and 4 (3%) from 5-14/16 schools. One-third of primary respondents had taken part in Project 1, but almost 60% of the secondary responses were from Project 1. For Projects 2 to 10, therefore, the majority of responses were from primary schools.

5.3   Progress and developments during 2003-2004

The AifL Programme action plan had identified that aspects of the programme would be introduced beyond the pilot schools from August 2003, with local authorities playing a major role in the developments. Questions in the surveys to all respondents focused on changes and developments during 2003 to 2004.

Local Authorities

Staffing

A key aspect within local authorities had been the increase in staff involved in the development and delivery of the programme.

At the time of the first survey in May 2003, it was noted that the majority of local authority assessment co-ordinators had wide-ranging responsibilities within their authorities, with few having a predominantly assessment remit. Some authorities had nominated senior staff to the role and they, therefore, had many other

responsibilities. The variation in seniority and range of responsibility was reflected in the amount of time they estimated they spent on the AifL assessment co-ordinator role, which ranged from under 5% to around 50% of their time. At that time only one authority had appointed an assessment development officer whose main task was taking forward assessment developments and the AifL Programme.

In the 2004 survey, 14 authorities reported appointing additional development staff during 2003-2004, with a further 6 making such appointments for 2004-2005. The majority of these posts were secondments with time allocated to AifL developments varying between 15% and 100%. In those authorities, the co-ordinators holding a more senior management role estimated that they contributed, on average, around 15% of their time to AifL. The remaining 10 authority co-ordinators from whom responses were received indicated that no additional staff had been appointed; the amount of time they spent on AifL varied from 'tiny' to 50%.

The balance of activities between assessment co-ordinators and DOs, where appointed, varied between authorities. In 7 authorities it was reported that the co-ordinator had a strategic role only, with a focus on managing the finance and budget, developing and monitoring the AifL Action Plan, reporting to and advising others within the Education Service and attending national events. In those cases the DOs took responsibility for most of the operational aspects: for example, in-service developments, liaison with and support for schools, preparing materials, and wider dissemination of the programme to schools within the authority. In other authorities with more than one person appointed to take forward the AifL Programme, assessment co-ordinators took responsibility both for strategic planning and operational delivery. In some cases the DO had been appointed to undertake only specific aspects of the development: for example, *'co-ordinating the management of PLPs in a group of schools'*, *'project leader for Building Bridges'*, *'leading formative assessment developments'*. In most cases, both the co-ordinator and the DO shared a range of activities. In the authorities where no additional support staff had been appointed, the assessment co-ordinators reported managing both strategic and operational aspects of the programme.

The description of the respective roles was supplied in response to an open-ended question. It is interesting to note certain issues which emerged as priorities, although it does not necessarily mean that these issues are limited only to those who mentioned them:

- In 5 authorities integration of AifL principles with other initiatives was mentioned as a role of the co-ordinators and development officers. This was to ensure *'permeation across the curriculum'*; it was described as *'joining-up'*, *'linking'* and *'making connections'*. This was also an important issue for two of the authorities interviewed. In one, advisory staff were identifying common issues across initiatives; in the other, every cluster had a teacher whose remit was to develop effective teaching: formative assessment had *'become the springboard'* and this helped teachers engage with other initiatives.
- The most frequently mentioned aspect of the AifL Programme was formative assessment (all respondents); in 5 authorities PLP developments were highlighted; 2 mentioned moderation and 3 made specific reference to giving advice on National Assessments.

Staff Development

An essential component of AifL is staff development related to assessment, as contained in the original aims of the programme. During the early phases of the

programme this was provided primarily through LT Scotland and the project DOs. At the time of the first survey (May 2003), only 7 authorities reported having introduced staff development in connection with AifL beyond the pilot schools, with the majority reporting that this was being planned for 2003 to 2004. From 2003 on, while national events continued, local authorities took greater responsibility for staff development in AifL-related developments.

Respondents were asked to indicate what assessment-related development opportunities had been provided during 2003-04 and to indicate what impact they believed each type of event had had. Responses are given in Tables 5.4 and 5.5.

Six authorities had offered 3 of the following options; 12 had offered 4; 9 had offered 5 and 2 had offered all 6. Some additional activities were identified.

Table 5.4: Opportunities for assessment-related staff development offered by local authorities during 2003-2004

	No of authorities
Events using teaching staff involved in initial development projects	29
Events supported by LT Scotland development officers	20
Events provided by local authority officers	28
Events delivered by AifL HE Faculty Co-ordinators	2
Events with national experts (eg Shirley Clarke, Dylan Wiliam, Ian Smith)	21
Specific input to probationer training	26

Other staff development opportunities were also mentioned, including events for specific groups of people such as senior management teams, new PT curriculum posts and supply teachers; authority conferences and the development of authority websites (2 references).

Peer development and events delivered by national experts are seen to have the greatest impact, followed by local authority delivered staff development and input to probationer training.

Table 5.5: Views on the impact of each type of event (LA co-ordinators)
Respondents were asked to rate them - 1 = high impact to 5 = no impact:

	High impact ⟷ No impact				
	1	2	3	4	5
Events using teaching staff involved in initial development projects	15	13	0	1	0
Events supported by LT Scotland development officers	5	9	4	0	0
Events provided by local authority officers	8	16	2	0	0
Events delivered by AifL HE Faculty Co-ordinators	1	1	0	0	0
Events with national experts (eg Shirley Clarke, Dylan Wiliam, Ian Smith)	12	7	2	0	0
Specific input to probationer training	5	16	3	1	0

Local authority respondents were asked to indicate how many schools in the authority had been represented at staff development events and how many staff had

participated during 2003-2004. Figures are available for the number of schools that were represented at staff development events from 31 authorities and 28 gave figures for numbers of staff involved. These figures were compared with the data from the 2003 schools census to allow us to identify the proportion of school and staff who have participated. It should be noted, however, that in some cases the number of staff involved were estimates.

Overall, in these authorities, the percentage of schools represented at AifL staff development events during 2003-2004 was:

- 84% of primary/nursery schools
- 81% of secondary schools
- 63% of special schools.

Seventeen authorities reported that ALL primary schools had participated, with others reporting variations from over 80% to two reporting about one-fifth; 19 authorities reported ALL secondary schools being involved, with others indicating variations from 80% to as low as one out of 9 (11%). Five of the responding authorities do not have separate special school provision. Of those that do, 9 indicated that ALL special schools had taken part; others reported variations from 80% to none.

These figures suggest that across the country there has been high involvement of both primary and secondary schools but less of special schools, with more than half the authorities targeting all schools. However, not all staff in schools took part, so an understanding of the number of staff involved is important.

Overall, the percentage of staff taking part in staff development activities in the 28 authorities that were able to supply the information was:

- 41% in primary/nursery schools
- 20% in secondary schools
- 28% in special schools.

This varied from 100% of primary teachers in 2 authorities to 8% and 9% in two other authorities. One authority reported involvement of all secondary staff, whereas in 15 authorities the percentage of secondary teachers was in single figures. In special schools authority figures varied from all teachers in 2 authorities to none in 4 authorities.

Table 5.6 displays the figures for teacher participation.

Table 5.6: Proportion of staff involved in assessment staff development by sector

Percentage of staff participating	No of authorities		
	Primary/ nursery	Secondary	Special Needs
100%	2	1	2
80-99%	2	1	0
60-79%	3	0	1
40-59%	4	2	3
20-39%	11	8	4
0-19%	6	16	13
Total	28	28	23

The data collected did not indicate what kind of staff development each teacher took part in; this could vary from a half-day introduction to a series of in-service sessions which would provide more in-depth training, development and reflection. The figures indicate that some authorities were able to disseminate to larger numbers of teachers than others.

In about one-third of authorities more than 40% of primary teachers have been involved. However, in the majority of authorities fewer than 20% of secondary and special needs teachers have participated.

The views of headteachers and teachers from the original pilot schools on staff development are set out on page 84.

Associated Schools Groups

A major development of local authorities during 2003-2004 was to increase the number of schools involved in the programme, with a particular emphasis on members of Associated Schools Groups (ASGs) working together. Local authority responses to questions about the ASG developments are reported in section 5.8 along with the findings from the ASG school survey.

Monitoring of programme

All authorities, except one, had local arrangements for monitoring AifL developments. Three layers of monitoring emerged: authority level quality assurance, AifL-specific reporting and informal monitoring:

- Fourteen respondents stated that AifL issues were included within normal quality assurance procedures and would be monitored by Quality Improvement Officers/Education Officers/School Improvement Managers as part of their quality visits; progress would be monitored, for example, through school development plans and Standards and Quality Reports
- Eighteen respondents identified AifL-specific monitoring: for example, assessment action plans, progress reports and case studies on developments, monitoring of budgets
- Ten respondents mentioned that regular visits, meetings and liaison with schools provided the opportunity to monitor developments and engage in dialogue with practitioners.

Higher Education representatives

Involvement during 2003-2004

The respondents had spent varying amounts of time on the AifL Programme, ranging from *'very limited'* to *'too many days to count'*. One spent 6 days, two spent 10, one spent 12 and two spent 20 days. In addition to participation at HE representative meetings, involvement across the board covered attending conferences, undertaking research and evaluation, delivering CPD, informing colleagues and course development within their own institutions. The extent and range of involvement clearly varied according to the days available.

All had been involved in research related to the programme. Three were undertaking research which had no associated funding, 6 were involved in research which was

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funded through the AifL Programme and 3 identified further sources of funding, which in all cases came from faculty resources. The topics identified included investigations with learners, teachers, whole schools and trainee teachers: for example, learners' views of themselves as learners, investigations with teachers on change to their teaching, implementation of AifL within a school, resolving tensions between formative and summative assessment, BEd students' take-up of AifL as a development issue.

Four reported delivering CPD based on AifL. This included giving talks at practitioner CPD days and running workshops. Two respondents mentioned input to ITE, Chartered Teacher and other programmes.

Progress on issues identified for HE representatives within AifL

A range of issues was identified for the HE representatives' involvement in AifL. Respondents were asked to review a range of activities and indicate what progress they thought had been made during 2003-2004. Their responses are given in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Progress towards issues identified for HE representatives
(1 = not considered; 2 = discussion has taken place; 3 = some progress has been achieved;
4 = significant progress has been achieved)

		1	2	3	4
a)	Contributing to projects on the basis of research	0	3	4	1
b)	Demonstrating the relationship between research and practice	1	2	3	2
c)	Encouraging action research with practitioners	1	3	4	0
d)	Developing a community of practice jointly with practitioners and policy makers	1	3	4	0
e)	Collaborating with representatives from each Higher Education Institution	0	5	2	0
f)	Sharing information on the project/programme with key groups and individuals in your own organisation	1	2	3	2

Note: the selection of '1' was not all from one respondent - perceptions varied reflecting each individual's experience.

Collaboration between institutions appears to be the aspect where less progress was perceived to have been made, which reflects the views reported by HE representatives at the time of the first survey. The view was expressed that the climate of competition is still too great to develop a community of practice and also works against collaboration, though there was conviction that it needed to be pursued. One respondent indicated that he/she had not been used as a resource within their own department, while others were being used or were in the process of discussing it. One respondent indicated that agreement had been reached that an option module for the Chartered Teacher programme should be developed collaboratively with other HEIs.

A key aim for HEIs is to integrate AifL developments into Initial Teacher Education programmes. The HE representatives were asked about the extent to which AifL has led to changes in the pre-service teaching programmes in their institutions and to give some indication of how this had been introduced and what aspects.

Five indicated that it had contributed 'much', 2 'a little' and one 'not at all'. Six of the representatives indicated that they had responsibility for introducing AifL into ITE

courses and 2 had advised others on this. One HE representative indicated that they had responsibility both for introducing AifL to some courses and for advising others with responsibility for other courses. The responses are summarised in Table 5.8. In some cases, the respondent gave information for their own courses and indicated that other people should be contacted for other courses.

Table 5.8: Aspects of AifL introduced into ITE courses

University	Course	How included	What included
A	PGCE (Primary)	Lecture input as part of module	Formative assessment strategies, work with parents, attainment significant but not complete modules. Other issues raised.
A	BEd – final year	School Experience students can chose as focus for professional development paper	As above
B	Concurrent degree	Lectures, seminars, modelled through feedback on written work, micro-teaching and placements.	Formative assessment strategies, relationship of formative and summative assessment
C	BEd – final year	Professional studies and task for School Experience	Formative strategies and national assessment (tests *sic*)
C	PGDE (secondary)	Lectures, workshops and assignment	Formative strategies and formative/summative relationship.
D	BEd – first year	Two lectures plus tutorials in Learning and Teaching module	Formative assessment strategies
D	BEd – final year	Lectures, workshops in Teaching and Learning module and language programme; Professional Studies module.	National Assessments; relationship of formative and summative.
D	PGDE (primary)	Professional Studies lectures and tutorials	Moderation issues, relationship with parents, PLPs, FA strategies, formative and summative relationship, National Assessments.
E	PGCE (secondary)	Lectures; online learning activities; website address on reading. Module 2 – Assessment	Formative assessment strategies; moderation.
E	PGCE (primary)	Assessed formatively; staff model use of development feedback; self and peer evaluation.	Lesson planning and assessment
E	BEd – first year	Ditto	As above
E	ASN	Effective Learning and Teaching module	Partnership issues; formative strategies; PLPs.
F	BEd	Lectures, student experiences, assignment	PLPs; links with parents.
F	PGCE (primary and secondary)	Lectures, assignment	-

One respondent indicated that they were currently auditing with course teams across the BEd programme to look at the extent to which AifL principles are already embedded into modules. The representatives also reported developments to include AifL in non-award bearing courses, Chartered Teacher and MEd modules.

Schools: headteachers and teachers

Expansion of original project developments

Findings from the survey completed in October 2003 and interview data indicated that many of the original developments involved only a few teachers in a school (in some cases, only one), selected pupils and selected aspects of the curriculum. Some involved parents, others did not. Respondents were asked to indicate if they had extended the work of the original developments during 2003-2004. Responses from headteachers are given in Table 5.9 and from teachers in 5.10.

Table 5.9: Aspects of original projects which were developed during 2003-2004 or were being planned (Headteachers)

	Yes		Not yet but planned		No plans		Not relevant		No response	
	n	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*
More teachers in the school	47	*61*	12	*16*	6	*8*	4	*5*	8	*10*
More pupils in the same year groups	30	*39*	8	*10*	7	*9*	12	*16*	20	*26*
Additional stages/year groups	40	*52*	13	*17*	7	*9*	6	*8*	11	*14*
Other areas of the curriculum	28	*36*	14	*18*	11	*14*	8	*10*	16	*21*
Parents/more parents	19	*25*	21	*27*	10	*13*	4	*5*	23	*30*
(Secondary schools) More departments[1]	10	*33*	8	*27*	3	*10*	3	*10*	6	*20*

[1] Percentage for secondary departments based on secondary, 5-14/16 and special schools with secondary sections.

Only 10 headteachers indicated that no further developments had taken place, nor were any planned, in relation to the original project work. Six out of the 10 had been involved in Project 8 and reported that no further developments were relevant. Two were involved with Project 4 and 2 with Project 3.

Table 5.10: Aspects of original projects which were developed during 2003-2004 or were being planned (Teachers)

	Yes		Not yet but planned		No plans		Not relevant		No response	
	n	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*	**n**	*%*
More pupils in the same year groups	51	*53*	15	*16*	1	*1*	7	*7*	22	*23*
Additional stages/year groups	51	*53*	10	*10*	6	*6*	5	*5*	24	*25*
Other areas of the curriculum	48	*50*	6	*6*	8	*8*	8	*8*	26	*27*

Note: These responses are from the 96 teachers who were involved from the beginning and do not include those who joined developments during 2003-2004.

Expansion of original project work had occurred, or was still being planned, mainly through involving more teachers and additional year groups with teachers expanding to more pupils in the same year groups and into other areas of the curriculum. Thus, while local authorities were expanding the work into further schools, many of the original schools were continuing to progress within their own schools.

A higher proportion of Project 1 schools and teachers had extended the work, or were planning to, compared to non-Project 1 schools, with the exception of increasing involvement of parents (Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: Respondents having extended or planning to extend developments: comparison of Project 1 and non-Project 1 schools

	Headteachers		Teachers	
	Project 1	Non-Project 1	Project 1	Non-Project 1
	%	%	%	%
More teachers in the school	92	69	Not asked	
More pupils in the same year groups	65	41	87	56
Additional stages/year groups	81	63	85	49
Other areas of the curriculum	85	39	72	46
Parents/more parents	50	53	Not asked	
(Secondary schools) More departments	100	64	Not asked	

Respondents were asked to comment briefly on further developments that had occurred.

The majority of comments came from Project 1 participants – 14 headteachers and 27 teachers. Headteacher responses indicated, in half of the primary schools and the 5-14 school, that all teachers and all classes were using formative assessment strategies. Two commented that more teachers were involved and had attended training. Five of the secondary schools had provided whole-school in-service on formative assessment and teachers were adopting various strategies. One indicated that all departments were required to identify and adopt at least one formative assessment strategy. Ten of the primary teachers involved in Project 1 commented that they had initially focused on one aspect of the curriculum (for example, language comprehension, writing) but gradually introduced the strategies across all aspects of their teaching. One said *'it permeated itself'*. Eight of the secondary teachers indicated that, having tried formative assessment strategies with a particular year group, they had introduced them into further year groups, including standard grade and higher classes. Five (both primary and secondary) said they had introduced the strategies to all classes and 2 primary teachers who had taken on new stages (eg moving from P6/7 to P1) were introducing them to their new classes. One reported that he/she had moved to a new school and would be introducing them there. Two spoke of introducing them to additional staff and two mentioned expanding their repertoire of strategies.

Only 5 headteachers and 4 teachers commented on ongoing developments from Projects 2 and 3. One headteacher indicated that staff changes had seriously affected progress; others mentioned making changes to their PLPs; only one mentioned increasing the number of pupils using PLPs, from some pupils to all pupils in a class. Teachers reported that changes included ongoing revision of the PLP format to include specific targets and more areas of the curriculum.

Five headteachers and 6 teachers commented on Projects 4 and 5, with the main emphasis on using the assessment formats developed (for example assessment rubrics) in other areas of the curriculum.

Six headteachers commented on Project 8, all indicating that they had not extended the work of Project 8 directly but that they had taken forward work either in PLPs or in formative assessment or both. One secondary reported developing improved reporting systems. One teacher reported that he/she had been working on a PLP computing programme.

From Project 9, 7 headteachers and 7 teachers reported that they were involving more year groups and were continuing to find ways of sharing more with parents or involving them more. One teacher stated: *'When reports are being written we now consult with our children about where they think they are and how well they think they are doing and what they could do to improve their learning. I try to assess more areas of the curriculum in consultation with the children'* (Primary teacher).

Project 10 headteachers reported plans to involved more or all staff in their respective developments, be it formative assessment or reporting, and Project 10 teachers referred to adding further areas of the curriculum and involving more pupils.

Adoption of AifL-related aspects other than original project

All the projects are designed to work together to form a coherent system. The survey undertaken in October 2003 and later interviews identified that many schools were focused mainly on their own particular project. The questionnaire asked respondents to identify aspects of AifL, other than the main focus of their original project, which they had begun to develop during 2003 to 2004.

Twenty headteachers (26%) reported no new developments beyond the original project (11 primary, 8 secondary and one special school). Therefore 74% of respondents had gone beyond the original project and developed further aspects of the AifL Programme: 29 (38%) reported taking on board issues relevant to one other project, 19 (25%) reported developing aspects related to 2 other projects and 9 (12%) reported developing aspects related to 3 or more.

Table 5.12 below indicates the number of headteachers reporting developments beyond their original project.

Table 5.12: School developments in AifL project areas beyond original project (Headteachers)

	Primary	Secondary	5-14/16	Special	Total
	n	n	n	n	n
Project 1	19	6	1	1	27
Projects 2 and 3	11	4	0	1	16
Projects 4 and 5	6	2	1	0	9
Project 6	14	4	1	0	19
Project 7	2	2	0	0	4
Project 8	0	2	0	1	3
Project 9	7	0	0	0	7
Project 10	4	1	0	1	6

Note: Total column adds up to more than total number of schools in survey because of schools' development of more than one aspect.

The focus of developments in responding schools appears to be primarily formative assessment and PLPs. Fifty-one schools were not involved originally in Project 1

and therefore 53% of them had taken on board formative assessment. Sixty-four were not originally involved in Projects 2 or 3 and therefore 25% of them had moved on to PLP developments. Only 19 respondents referred to Project 6 at this point, but in a later question about National Assessments 62 (83%) reported using the New National Assessment Bank.

A parallel question in the teacher survey showed that teachers from 18 out of 37 schools not originally involved in Project 1 were now developing formative assessment, and that 10 out of 52 schools not initially developing PLPs had now taken this on board. Few schools were developing other aspects of the programme.

The findings on the expansion of original project work and the adopting of other aspects of the programme indicate that, during 2003 to 2004, the main focus of developments was formative assessment strategies. This confirms the findings from the local authority co-ordinators, all of whom referred to formative assessment as part of their authorities' developments. Commenting on the overall effectiveness of the programme, the HE representatives commented: *'Project 1 was seen as the area to be in'* and this tended to devalue the hard work of those involved in other aspects such as PLPs and moderation: *'It might have been better to begin the programme with all participants working on the formative assessment area and grow the other areas from there'.*

Case study schools

Many of the case study schools visited during early 2004 were beginning to develop formative assessment strategies. Three primary schools involved in project 4 were introducing formative assessment using the 'Black Box' materials. For one school an important influence was being paired with a Project 1 school for peer-evaluation. A primary school involved in Project 8 had been introduced to formative assessment at a local authority event in a Project 1 school. The headteacher and teachers emphasised that the greatest benefit of being part of AifL had been the early introduction to formative assessment which had led them to rethink both assessment policy and practice. Other Project 8 schools and some Project 9 schools reported taking part in in-service events with plans to introduce formative assessment more widely in the school during session 2004 to 2005.

Staff Development

Headteachers and teachers were asked which type of staff development they had participated in:

- 86% of headteachers and 84% of teachers reported peer-delivered staff development (in-school)
- 66% of headteachers and 52% of teachers had taken part in joint staff development with cluster schools
- 50% of headteachers and 48% of teachers had taken part in 'school-funded' staff development, eg courses, materials and guest speakers coming to the school
- 73% of headteachers and 60% of teachers reported taking part in local authority-delivered in-service, seminars and courses
- 43% of both headteachers and teachers had taken part in nationally-organised AifL activities.

Peer-delivered development and local authority staff development were the most frequently experienced and therefore were likely to have the greatest impact. This concurs with the views reported by local authority assessment co-ordinators. Lower proportions of secondary than primary teachers were involved in cluster developments (43%:63%) and in school-funded staff development (43%:52%).

Objectives developed and achieved

The responses to the survey in October 2003 showed that schools had a wide range of local objectives. These were summarised and in the 2004 survey respondents were asked to indicate which objectives they thought applied to their AifL activities and the extent to which they thought they had achieved them. The responses from headteachers and teachers are given in Tables 5.13 and 5.14.

Table 5.13: AifL objectives and extent to which they have been perceived as achieved (Headteachers)

Main focus of development	Number and percentage indicating this objective	Progress towards achieving objective (% of those selecting it)		
		not yet achieved	partially achieved	achieved
Teacher development *(for example develop teachers' knowledge, skills, understanding, confidence)*	67 (87%)	11	71	18
Pupil development *(for example develop pupil knowledge and skills, develop confidence and self-esteem, improve learning, increase motivation)*	63 (82%)	12	80	8
Assessment strategies *(for example improve/ develop/introduce new approaches or methods of assessment)*	67 (87%)	20	66	15
Assessment instruments *(for example improve or develop new tests or techniques in testing; devise prompts for use in assessing)*	47 (61%)	24	66	9
Self and peer assessment *(particularly in relation to pupil learning)*	64 (83%)	17	77	5
Involvement of parents *(for example improve/ develop/introduce new ways of working with or reporting to parents)*	58 (75%)	26	49	25
Use of technology *(for example pilot/develop/improve use of IT – hardware, software, other equipment)*	49 (64%)	32	53	15
Other school issues *(for example improve record keeping, review management issues, improve transition)*	43 (56%)	29	62	9

Table 5.14: AifL objectives and extent to which they have been perceived as achieved (Teachers)

Main focus of development	Number and percentage indicating this objective	Progress towards achieving objective (% of those selecting it)		
		not yet achieved	partially achieved	achieved
Personal and professional development *(for example raising awareness; developing knowledge and understanding of assessment; improving practice of both teaching and assessment.)*	124 (95%)	7	59	34
Pupil development *(for example improving pupil skills; improving grades; raising attainment; involving pupils more in their learning; encouraging them to take more responsibility; helping pupils learn faster)*	124 (95%)	10	64	26
Links with parents/carers *(for example involving parents more; improving ways of working with parents; improving reporting to parents)*	99 (76%)	32	40	29
Develop school procedures and practices *(for example profiling, reporting, moderation of assessment; primary-secondary liaison)*	88 (68%)	19	68	13
Self and peer assessment *(particularly in relation to pupil learning)*	110 (85%)	11	68	21
Use of technology *(for example, piloting/developing/improving use of IT – hardware, software, other equipment)*	86 (66%)	35	51	14

The main objectives related to staff and pupil development, with issues such as reporting, primary-secondary liaison, involving parents and using technology being recognised by fewer respondents, though remaining important. As in the first survey, a higher proportion of teachers than headteachers identified teacher development as an objective. Progress is being recorded in all areas, though the majority view appears to be that there is still considerable work to be done.

Other initiatives which interrelate with AifL

Twenty-six headteachers indicated that their schools were involved in other initiatives which interrelate with AifL. Ten mentioned aspects of other AifL projects: eg Project 8 schools now developing formative assessment, or Project 4 schools now developing PLPs and 2 involved in the Associated School Group developments. The other projects were wide-ranging: eg Building Bridges (4), Pupil Tracking (4), local authority initiatives (3), Critical Skills Training (2), National Priorities developments, PISA, an EU project on involving parents and Integrated Community School developments.

5.4 Impact on policy and practice

Policy and planning issues

Local authority co-ordinators were asked if developments related to AifL had been included in the authority Improvement Plan and to what extent they thought AifL was contributing to the achievement of National Priority targets. Headteachers were asked parallel questions about how AifL fitted in with their development planning, National Priority targets and the school's assessment policy.

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Improvement and development planning

Twenty-nine of the 30 LA respondents indicated that developments related to AifL are included in the authority's improvement plan. In two cases the issues were embedded within the authorities' teaching, learning and assessment plans and did not appear as specific, detailed items related to AifL. The remaining 27 respondents were able to identify elements of the AifL Programme which were included in the authority improvement plan. These are reported in Table 5.15. Nineteen respondents indicated that 4 or more of these were included and the remaining 7 identified 3 or less.

Table 5.15: Elements of AifL Programme included in local authority improvement plans

	No. of authorities
Formative assessment strategies	27
Relationship with and reporting to parents	21
The role of national testing/new national assessments	18
The development of PLPs	15
The use of technology in assessment and reporting	14
Evidence of attainment and moderation issues	13

Other assessment-related issues in improvement plans were reported: for example, pupil tracking, developing strategies to challenge able pupils, consulting with pupils and being involved in a research project in collaboration with HEIs.

Overall, 20 headteachers (27%) thought that being involved in AifL had 'very much' influenced their development planning, 31 (41%) indicated 'much', 22 (29%) thought 'a little' and 2 (2.7%) 'not at all'. The extent of influence varied between the primary and secondary sectors, as illustrated in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16: Extent of influence of AifL on school development planning

	Primary	Secondary
	%	%
Very much	35	9
Much	39	46
Only a little	24	41
Not at all	2	5

This reflects earlier findings that secondary schools in particular found it more difficult to take on initiatives outwith the development planning cycle and were more likely to become involved if new developments *'dovetailed'* with the existing development plan.

National Priorities

Local authority responses to the extent to which AifL was contributing to National Priority targets are reported in Table 5.17 and headteacher responses in Table 5.18.

Table 5.17: Extent to which AifL involvement has contributed to National Priority targets (LA co-ordinators)

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
	n	n	n	n
Achievement and Attainment	17	8	4	0
Framework for Learning	12	14	2	0
Inclusion and Equality	8	9	12	0
Values and Citizenship	4	11	12	1
Learning for Life	8	10	12	0

Table 5.18: Extent to which AifL involvement contributed to meeting National Priority targets (Headteachers)

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all	No response
	%	%	%	%	%
Achievement and Attainment	17	39	29	3	13
Framework for Learning	9	35	30	7	20
Inclusion and Equality	9	30	33	9	20
Values and Citizenship	4	27	38	12	20
Learning for Life	7	29	38	10	17

AifL was most likely to be seen as contributing to achievement and attainment targets, but with only just over half of the headteachers suggesting it was making a substantial contribution. The local authority respondents were more positive about the programme contributing to the framework for learning.

There were differences between primary and secondary headteacher responses (excluding 5-14/16 and special schools and missing responses). See Table 5.19.

Table 5.19: Contribution of AifL to National Priority targets: comparison of primary and secondary school responses

	Primary		Secondary	
	Very much/much	A little or not at all	Very much/much	A little or not at all
	%	%	%	%
Achievement and Attainment	70	30	50	50
Framework for Learning	70	30	33	67
Inclusion and Equality	53	47	43	57
Values and Citizenship	49	51	27	73
Learning for Life	56	44	18	82

Further statistical analysis using Pearson chi-square found that there was a statistically significant difference (p<0.5) between primary and secondary responses on Framework for Learning and Learning for Life.

This indicates that primary schools are more likely to see AifL developments complementing the whole curriculum, though they see the greatest contribution in relation to achievement and attainment and framework for learning. It was more likely that involvement in primary schools was contributing to changes in the learning and teaching environment. Secondary respondents, on the other hand, are most likely to see a contribution in connection to achievement and attainment.

Assessment Policy

Headteachers were asked to indicate, from a given list, the status of the development of their school's assessment policy, or to add an alternative statement. The responses are given in Table 5.20.

Table 5.20: The status of school assessment policy (Headteachers)

	Primary	Secondary	Special	5-14/16	Total
We have no plans to develop an assessment policy	2	1	0	0	3 (4%)
An assessment policy is in the planning stages	23	8	1	0	32 (43%)
An assessment policy has recently been devised drawing on AifL developments	1	1	0	0	2 (3%)
Our existing assessment policy has recently been modified drawing on AifL	5	2	3	1	11 (15%)
Our policy pre-dates AifL and we have no plans to modify it	3	2	1	0	6 (8%)
Our policy pre-dates AifL but we are currently reviewing or will be reviewing it soon in the light of AifL[1]	9	6	0	1	16 (21%)

[1] This statement was not in original question, but was the most frequent additional comment.

Other positions included two who were incorporating assessment within learning and teaching policies: indeed, one commented that he/she thought that AifL had a greater impact on teaching and learning than on assessment. One respondent indicated they were waiting on the local authority policy which was at draft stages and another commented that they were awaiting the outcomes of school mergers before reviewing policy.

These figures would indicate that AifL is leading schools to devise or review assessment policies.

Impact on practice

Local authority and higher education representatives were asked to identify the two greatest benefits and challenges of being involved in the AifL Programme, both from their own perspectives and their views on school perspectives.

As in the first-phase surveys, headteachers and teachers were asked to give their views on the impact of the programme in relation to teacher classroom practice,

benefits to pupils, involvement of parents and carers, and information needs, by responding to structured question grids, with the opportunity for adding comments at the end of each grid. Additionally, headteachers were asked about the effects of the changes with new National Assessments. A structured question on challenges, based on the first survey responses, was introduced. They were also asked to identify challenges in respect to further developing aspects of their original project work.

Benefits as reported by LA and HEI representatives

All **local authority assessment co-ordinators** emphasised that one of the greatest benefits to authorities had been the emphasis on enhancing teaching and learning. The focus on formative assessment as integral to the teaching and learning process had engaged practitioners and put the child at the centre. At least two authorities indicated that they had already established this as a priority within their planning and therefore the AifL Programme reinforced and complemented what they wanted to do. The introduction of new ideas, supported by research, had led to staff discussion, professional dialogue and changed practice. This in turn had led to renewed enthusiasm amongst teachers and enhanced the motivation of both staff and pupils.

The next most frequently mentioned benefit, reported by about half the LA co-ordinators, was the networking and sharing that had taken place at a variety of levels: local authority co-ordinators at a national level, cross-sector links (though this also proved to be a challenge), and schools working together with a genuine sharing of what worked and what didn't work.

The third most frequent theme was the provision of funding (mentioned by just under one-third of respondents). Regular and sustained funding had enabled authorities and schools to take forward developments.

Other benefits mentioned were: access to excellent training and development, access to national experts, the provision of clear direction in developing teaching and learning policy and improvement planning, and providing a focus of shared aims at all levels from the directorate to teachers. Two respondents mentioned that they had benefited through the opportunity to develop PLPs, though for many authorities this was emerging as a challenge rather than a benefit.

All **HE representatives** agreed that one of the key benefits to them had been the opportunity for networking and working with other groups of people. A range of links was mentioned: working with colleagues in other HEIs, listening to policy makers and practitioners, engaging with a wide range of practitioners from all sections of education, described by one respondent as *'a courageous team of policy makers, researchers and practitioners'.*

The next most frequently mentioned benefit for HE representatives was research related, including engaging with recent research in formative assessment, linking own research interests to AifL (curriculum change and transformational learning ideas in AifL) and also relating the work of AifL to a wider research agenda. More broadly, some of the HE participants also benefited from developing new knowledge and understanding in assessment and finding their own assessment practices challenged.

A further set of benefits accrued to education students. One reported that students who had been introduced to formative assessment in university were seeing the principles of formative assessment in use in schools, which convinced them of the

theory-practice interface. Another HE representative commented: *'I was very impressed that teachers were . . . changing practice and communicating much more with pupils. I see this as a benefit to me because student teachers are very much influenced by classroom practice, which does not always accord with the theoretical underpinning I may espouse. I can now talk about formative assessment in practice, and as it becomes more prevalent around Scotland, students will see better practice occurring in this respect'.*

Having the opportunity to influence policy makers through providing advice on supporting and influencing change was mentioned by one respondent.

Unsurprisingly, the **benefits to schools**, as expressed by the local authority co-ordinators, paralleled the benefits to authorities, with all respondents indicating that the greatest benefit was the focus on improved learning using child-centred approaches. The development had allowed teachers the time to reflect on their own practice. The approach taken of giving class teachers a central role in implementing change within their own classrooms was key in the success of the programme. This was described frequently as being 'bottom-up' or 'grassroots' development, which was 'structured but not straitjacketed'. This had enhanced motivation, encouraged professional dialogue, affirmed the professionalism of teachers and taken research into the classroom.

The next most frequently mentioned benefit was the opportunity for staff development, access to high quality support and advice and support gained through working collaboratively with colleagues (mentioned by almost a half of the respondents).

Funding going directly to schools was a strength mentioned by a third of the LA respondents. This was important as it made provision for additional staff and resources.

The HE representatives identified many benefits – some in broad terms, others related to teachers or to children. For example:

- *'change in pedagogy from behaviourist towards social constructivist models'*
- *'challenging sterile epistemologies based on transmission of content'.*

For teachers there was:

- improved motivation and enthusiasm
- opportunity to be empowered and to innovate
- development of reflective practice
- development of a research-informed approach to practice
- change in assessment practice
- opportunity to think through ideas and contextualise them in their own circumstances
- opportunity to engage in enhancing learning.

For young people there was:

- more ownership of their learning
- increased dialogue in the classroom, thereby enhancing learning
- more effective learning
- reports of improved standards and quality of work.

School responses: Benefits in relation to staff development and changes in classroom practice

Headteachers and teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements on the various ways in which involvement might impact on the practice of teachers in schools. The statements for headteachers were framed to allow them to comment on observed impact on teachers and for the teachers they were framed for them to comment from their own experience. Some statements were those used in the earlier survey, while others were added in the light of responses to the first survey. The statements have been combined in Table 5.21.

Table 5.21: Views on benefits of involvement of teachers
(Statements combined from the headteacher and teacher questionnaires)

	Headteachers					Teachers				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a) Being involved in a national initiative enhanced my professional status/the status of those involved	31	51	9	0	9	31	35	22	4	8
b) The teachers involved in the project/I have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment (eg formative and summative uses)	39	52	1	1	7	57	34	4	1	4
c) The teachers involved in the project/I have an increased awareness of research related to teaching, learning and assessment	35	55	3	0	8	39	52	6	2	2
d) The teachers involved in the project/I have changed their/my classroom practice	34	47	8	2	9	40	42	7	1	11
e)The teachers/I use more varied approaches to assessment	33	53	4	1	9	39	51	4	0	6
f) The teachers are/I am now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils	27	52	10	4	7	34	47	12	3	4
g) The nature and quality of feedback to pupils has improved/The ways in which I give feedback to pupils have improved	35	43	7	1	14	38	50	7	0	5
h) I engage in more meaningful discussion with the pupils about their learning	*Teacher question only*					34	46	9	0	11
i) Teachers are/I am more aware of what other schools are doing	13	44	30	1	12	9	45	36	5	5
j) There is improved primary/secondary liaison	3	26	43	7	22	3	22	34	8	33
k) Teachers/I have developed better links with parents	12	29	33	4	23	10	30	38	7	15
l) Teachers not directly involved in the programme have shown an interest in adopting different approaches to assessment	9	53	14	1	22	11	53	19	2	15
m) I engage more in discussion with colleagues, including those not directly involved in the programme, about teaching, learning and assessment	*Teacher question only*					16	53	22	2	7
n) Overall, involvement in the programme has provided valuable staff development opportunities	40	46	4	0	10	32	47	14	0	7

Strongest agreement, from both headteachers and teachers, was in relation to teachers' understanding of the purposes of assessment and awareness of research; they were using more varied approaches to assessment and introducing changes to their classroom practice. It is notable that teachers felt they were discussing learning more meaningfully with their pupils and giving better feedback. Teachers were more likely to disagree than headteachers that being involved in a national programme enhanced professional status (26% disagreement -v- 9% disagreement). Impact beyond the teachers' own classrooms produced lesser agreement, in particular about links to other schools and awareness of what they were doing, primary-secondary liaison and links with parents. These topics produced higher non-response rates and were therefore presumably identified as not relevant to their particular developments.

The negative responses to the first 7 statements about status and classroom practice of teachers were mainly from respondents whose initial involvements had been in Projects 3, 4, 8 and 9. The negative responses to awareness of other schools and improved primary/secondary liaison were drawn from all projects (including Project 5, which had focused more on cluster working as part of its process). The negative responses to improved links with parents were largely from Projects 1, 4 and 8: it was noted that involving parents had not been a particular feature of these projects.

Further statistical analysis was carried out. The non-Project 1 participants were collapsed into one group and compared with those originally involved in Project 1. There is, of course, the risk that the responses of some of the non-Project 1 group are 'contaminated' by the influence of now becoming involved in formative assessment strategies. For the headteachers this gave 26 in the Project 1 group and 51 in the non-Project 1 group. For the teachers there were 55 Project 1 participants and 75 non-Project 1 participants. Their responses were compared on each statement using a t-test.

This further analysis suggests that schools involved in Project 1 from the beginning were seeing stronger benefits in relation to understanding assessment issues and changing classroom practice. However, on wider issues such as working with other schools and improved primary-secondary transition, there was no difference between projects. On the first 5 statements in Table 5.21, which relate to understanding, awareness and changes in practice, Project 1 headteachers agreed significantly more strongly ($p<0.05$) than non-Project 1 headteachers, but with no significant results found in relation to the statements from (f) onwards. Project 1 teacher participants showed significantly stronger agreement on all statements compared to non-Project 1 teachers, apart from (a) enhanced professional status, (i) greater awareness of other schools, (j) primary-secondary liaison and (k) better links with parents. Indeed, non-Project 1 teachers showed a significantly stronger agreement in relation to statement (k).

In respect to sector differences, primary teachers were more likely to agree that they were now more aware of of what other schools were doing and that they had developed better links with parents, but there were no significant differences in headteacher responses.

Some of the additional comments made by headteachers explained negative responses: for example, *'good links with parents were already established'* and *'primary and secondary liaison has always been strong'*. Others commented that they were planning improvements in these areas. Two respondents stated that HMIE had given strong positive reports on the quality of teaching and learning and both attributed this to involvement in AifL (both Project 1). One said *'AifL strategies have been one of the most successful developments in our school. I am sure that our*

involvement in this programme has been of great benefit'. On the other hand, one respondent, originally involved in Project 4, commented *'Unfortunately some of our staff have gained little and made few changes'.*

Twenty-three teachers explained some of their responses, mainly where they had disagreed with the statements or where they chose not to respond. With respect to being more aware of individual needs of pupils and engaging in more meaningful discussion, 7 reported that they felt they already did this and AifL had not changed this. However, one secondary teacher commented in this respect: *'I am now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils. But this makes me more anxious! I feel I am not meeting some pupils' needs owing to class sizes'.* Five indicated that either primary-secondary liaison or links with parents were being improved but that this was not because of involvement in AifL but rather as part of school developments. Three respondents referred to the special nature of working in the nursery sector or working with asylum seekers and said that not all of the above statements were applicable. Three suggested that some aspects were development priorities for 2004-05 and it was too early to indicate what benefits they would experience. The remaining teachers who commented referred to the benefits of being able to reflect on their practice, having their awareness raised regarding good practice and it generally being *'a good experience'.*

The statements illustrated by charts in the phase 1 survey report are again illustrated for the phase 2 data in Charts 5.1 to 5.5. Although the phase 1 and phase 2 samples are not directly comparable, it is worth noting that, on all but the staff development opportunities, teachers were reporting stronger agreement on these benefits at the later stage (see Charts 4.1 to 4.5 for phase 1 results – p 46). This again suggests that the longer teachers have been developing approaches to assessment the more likely they are to see the benefits.

Chart 5.1: Benefits to teachers – clearer understanding of assessment (percentages)
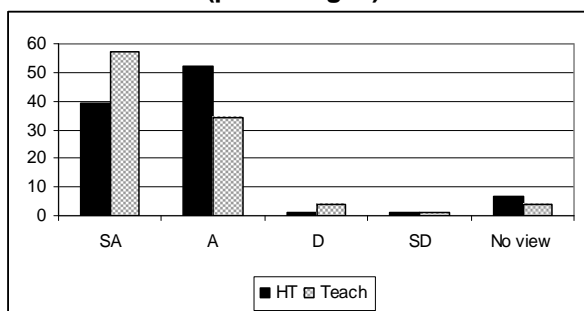
Chart 5.2: Benefits to teachers – change to classroom practice (percentages)
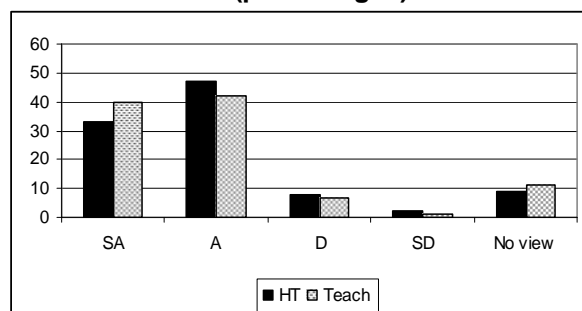
Chart 5.3: Benefits to teachers – more varied approaches to assessment (percentages)
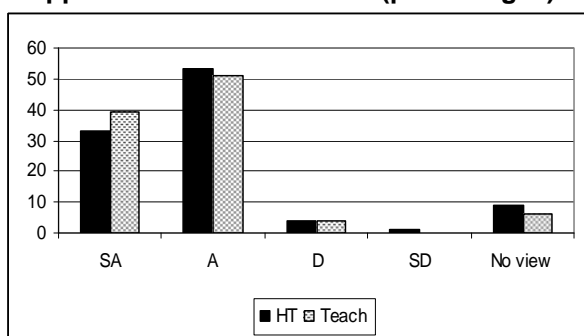
Chart 5.4: Benefits to teachers – improved feedback (percentages)
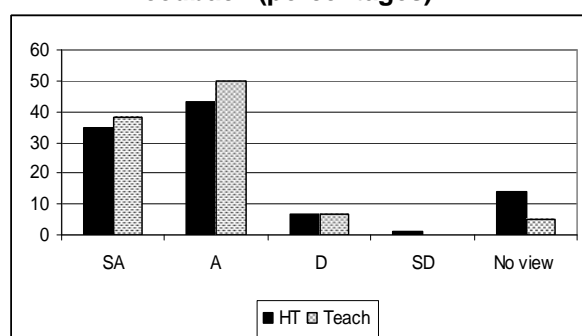
Chart 5.5: Benefits to teachers – valuable staff development (percentages)
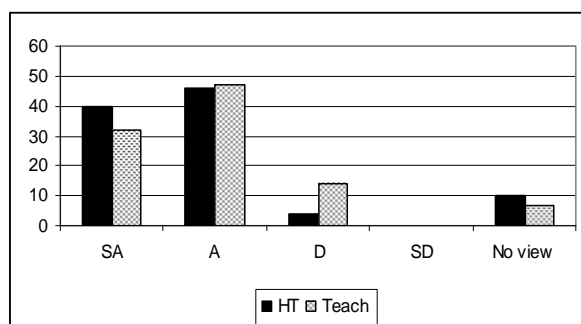
Benefits to pupils

Headteachers and teachers were asked to show their agreeement with a set of statements about the benefits to pupils. Their combined responses are shown in Table 5.22.

Table 5.22: Views on benefits to pupils
(Combined headteacher and teacher responses)

	Headteacher					Teacher				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a) Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process	27	55	3	0	16	37	45	9	0	9
b) Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning	23	53	8	0	16	34	42	12	0	12
c) Pupils are able to set realistic targets	12	51	13	0	25	15	40	26	3	16
d) Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom	5	34	35	0	26	13	33	29	4	21
e) Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment	18	51	9	1	21	20	50	17	0	13
f) The developments enhance the learning of all pupils involved	26	51	9	0	14	22	54	13	0	11
g) Pupils themselves report positive views of the assessment activities	14	55	9	0	22	22	43	15	1	19
h) The approaches developed are suitable for all pupils	20	49	13	1	17	22	42	21	3	12
i) Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem	10	52	14	1	22	23	49	12	0	16
j) I have evidence that pupil attainment has improved through the AifL developments*	*Teacher only question*					9	19	25	5	42

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The responses indicate general agreement with many of the benefits to pupils of being involved in the AifL Programme. The less positive responses and higher non-responses should be noted in respect of target-setting, behaviour and evidence of improved pupil attainment (teachers).

Disagreement with the statements tended to be spread across all the original projects (though the low level disagreement with the first statement was from Projects 9 and 10). It was noted by both teachers and headteachers that behaviour was not an issue and there was little need for improvement. A negative response to the question did not imply that behaviour had got worse! No explanations were added regarding target setting.

Ten headteachers commented that it was too early to comment on benefits to pupils some because they were still at early stages of development of formative assessment (for example original Project 4 and 8 schools), or because PLPs were still in their early stages.

It was noted by one headteacher that pupil confidence was good without the project, and another commented that it was *'difficult to link improvement in self-esteem to any one thing – usually a variety of factors are influential'*. Another noted that *'Confidence and self-esteem have been significantly raised in pupils with "learning difficulties"'* (Project 1).

The majority of additional comments from teachers related to improved pupil attainment, with those who had been involved in Projects 1 and 5 from the beginning being the most likely to offer examples of 'evidence'. Those from other projects were more likely to say it was too soon to know if attainment would improve. The responses to the statement on the grid about this issue varied little from the first phase survey, as illustrated in Chart 5.6.

Chart 5.6: 2003 and 2004 survey responses – 'I have evidence of increased attainment' (Teachers) (percentages)
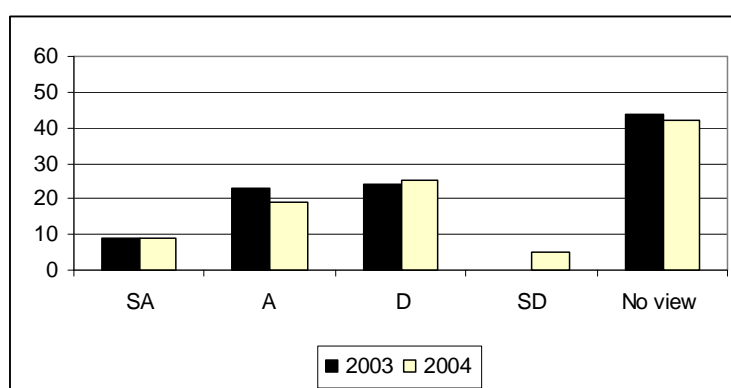
Three teachers suggested that pupil attainment had improved but they were not sure that this could be attributed to AifL alone, as other developments could also have contributed. Six secondary teachers referred to better than expected results at Standard grade and a further two mentioned higher levels achieved in national assessments and other unit assessments. For example:

- *'Standard grade class improving writing skills in particular, most achieving a level above that expected'*

- *'From profiling achievements/grades of my Standard grade class I have clear evidence that their grades have improved'*
- *'I had 2 S1 classes – a control group and a test group. The test group made the greatest improvements when formative assessment methods were used and then out-performed the control group when they sat the end of unit summative assessment'*
- *'Last year 90% of pupils in my class moved up a level in reading and writing' (primary).*

Others spoke of *'improved jotter work', 'better discussion skills'* and *'improved classroom ethos'.*

Further statistical analysis based on the two project groups (non-Project 1 and Project 1) and primary/secondary sectors was undertaken. Project 1 headteachers agreed more strongly to a significant level on items (b), (c), (d) (e) and (h) in Table 5.22 compared to non-Project 1 headteachers. Project 1 teachers agreed more strongly to a significant level on all items in this question. This again reflects the findings of benefits to teachers and the suggestion that it takes time for benefits to become evident. One Project 1 respondent stated: *'After two years we are now beginning to see the benefits as it becomes an integral part of teaching and learning'.*

There were no significant differences between sectors in the headteacher responses. Primary teachers agreed more than secondary teachers to a significant level on items (a), (e), (f) and (h) in Table 5.22. Although representatives of special schools could not be included in the statistical analysis due the low numbers responding (as low as 4 on some items), they generally tended to respond more negatively than primary teachers on benefits to pupils. One respondent spoke specifically of working with pupils with disabilities: *'My pupils have many disabilities which can be a barrier to the AifL Programme and I still firmly believe that this is not taken fully into consideration by the professionals who develop "assessment practice" and deliver the courses. The Special Sector should not be sidelined as it deserves the respect accorded to the mainstream and primary schools, and to the professionals who work in it.'*

Case study schools

Three of the special schools visited all emphasised that formative assessment was fundamental to special needs education and that adjusting what and how they teach to meet pupils' needs is very much part of normal practice. In one school the teachers reported that the Project 1 formative assessment strategies had 'worked better than they had anticipated' and being involved in the project had given them further ideas and strategies. In particular, the use of video-evidence was valuable. However, teachers from two of the schools agreed that the strategies were not suitable for all pupils. For example, some pupils could not physically manage 'traffic lights' and some pupils are not able to 'look inwards' and therefore self-assessment is not possible. On the other hand, another teacher reported that with wait time, his pupils were thinking more and not just waiting on him to give more information. They were beginning to attempt an answer rather than just saying they 'didn't know'.

Involvement of parents/carers

Respondents were again asked to state their agreement with a range of statements relating to the involvement of parents. Their responses are given in Table 5.23.

The high levels of non-agreement and non-response are notable in relation to benefits to parents. With respect to the first two statements, agreement was mainly from respondents who were originally involved in Projects 2, 3 and 9, all of which had a focus on involving parents. For the remaining statements, agreement, disagreement and non-responses were spread across all projects.

About one third of headteachers gave further explanations. Three said quite simply that parental involvement was not part of the project (Projects 1 and 8). Four indicated that they were already good at this before AifL and 4 suggested that it was difficult to attribute improvements in this area to the AifL Programme. The majority of comments (10) indicated that this was a matter still to be addressed and that some were planning further developments in the current year. Three indicated that it was still too early to evaluate benefits to parents.

Table 5.23: Benefits observed in relation to parents
(Combined headteacher and teacher responses)

	Headteacher					Teachers				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a) Parents/carers have more frequent and regular contact with the school/I have more frequent and regular contact with the parents/carers of the children I teach	8	20	39	0	34	4	15	48	6	27
b) Parents/carers are more aware of their child's progress	10	31	23	0	35	7	31	31	2	28
c) Parents/carers have a better understanding of how they can help their child learn more effectively	10	31	25	0	34	9	28	31	3	29
d) Parents/carers can help their children with target-setting and making progress towards the targets	4	27	30	0	39	9	21	33	4	33
e) Parents/carers are more able to ask the teacher how they can help their children/I find that parents/carers are more able to ask me how they can help their children	7	31	30	0	33	7	22	35	4	32
f) Parents/carers have been invited to assist in school developments	12	26	17	1	44	*Headteacher only question*				
g) Parents/carers' views are sought and contribute to decisions about school issues	9	43	9	0	39	*Headteacher only question*				
h) I find that I engage in more meaningful discussion with parents/carers about their children's learning	*Teacher only question*					5	35	29	3	28

Thirty teachers added comments. In the majority of cases (20 out of the 30 - including Projects 1, 5, 8 and 10 – there were no comments from Project 4 teachers), they indicated that involving parents was not a particular feature of their project and therefore this aspect was not relevant or that relationships had always been good and AifL had had no impact. One acknowledged that this was an area for improvement. The remaining respondents involved in Projects 2, 3 and 9 indicated that this was very much dependent on parents – that the issues mentioned had improved for those who had chosen to become more involved.

Further statistical analysis (Mann-Whitney for headteacher responses due to low number of secondary representatives and t-test for teacher responses) revealed that primary headteachers and teachers were more likely than secondary participants to agree, to a significant level, that parents have a better understanding of how to help their children learn and are more able to ask the teacher how to help.

Case Study Schools

One Project 9 school involved pupils in self-evaluation and encouraged them to be present along with their parents at the parents' evening. The self-evaluation involved reviewing their school report with their teacher at the end of P6 before taking it home, and drawing up their own plan which highlighted strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers believed that it had boosted the children's confidence and they appreciated that their opinions really mattered. It had enabled them to be open about the things they found hard and made them willing to ask for help. A parent at the school thought that the self-evaluation exercise had made her daughter feel more mature in her own judgements. They had discussed it at home and this had helped her understand her daughter better, saying 'it is good to see how she thinks about herself'. Attendance of her daughter at the parents' evening had been beneficial in that she was less anxious and hearing her teacher talk positively about her made her 'feel brilliant and that made me feel fantastic'. Importantly it had allowed parent, teacher and child to discuss an issue that needed to be cleared up. Pupils found discussing their report with their teacher before they took it home much less worrying than the previous practice of taking the report home in a sealed envelope.

Impact on information needs

A key element of the AifL Programme is to ensure that the information needs of pupils, parents, teachers and others are met. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought a range of information needs was being met by the AifL Programme. Headteacher responses are reported in Table 5.24 and Teacher responses in Table 5.25.

Table 5.24: Extent to which AifL has contributed to meeting information needs (Headteachers)

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all	No response
Pupils	%	%	%	%	%
How well they are progressing through a level	10	40	21	7	22
How well they are developing skills	12	43	20	4	22
What progress they are making over time	14	40	17	4	25
Identifying next steps in their own learning	17	40	16	5	22
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements	10	39	21	5	25
Class teacher					
Knowledge of individual pupil progress	16	44	16	3	22
Recording of individual pupil progress	10	42	21	3	25
Planning next steps for individual pupils	12	49	16	1	22
Planning next steps for groups	12	48	14	3	23
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable	10	46	17	3	25
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class	8	40	23	4	25
Effectiveness of teaching approaches	14	40	18	4	24
Pupil performance against national standards	7	31	26	10	26
Other teachers					
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage	8	27	33	5	27
Aspects in which pupils need specific support	8	34	29	4	26
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school	4	21	23	14	38
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school	4	27	22	16	31
Parents and carers					
Understandable information about their child's progress	7	34	18	9	33
Specific strengths of their child's performance	5	39	16	8	33
Aspects which need support	5	34	22	7	33
How they can help their child learn	4	35	20	9	33
Local Authority					
Monitoring progress of schools against targets	3	22	26	16	34
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan	4	34	21	8	34

Table 5.25: Extent to which AifL has contributed to meeting information needs (Teachers)

	Very much %	Much %	Only a little %	Not at all %	No response %
Pupils					
How well they are progressing through a level	15	38	24	7	16
How well they are developing skills	17	42	21	5	15
What progress they are making over time	16	39	21	4	20
Identifying next steps in their own learning	19	32	29	3	17
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements	17	30	31	4	18
My needs as a class teacher					
Knowledge of individual pupil progress	19	48	15	9	9
Recording of individual pupil progress	20	35	25	11	9
Planning next steps for individual pupils	20	45	21	7	7
Planning next steps for groups	19	41	18	11	11
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable	16	45	22	8	9
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class	15	42	21	12	9
Effectiveness of teaching approaches	20	51	12	9	9
Pupil performance against national standards	10	33	25	13	19
Other teachers					
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage	5	29	24	15	27
Aspects in which pupils need specific support	7	29	23	12	29
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school	4	15	15	11	55
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school	5	16	21	15	44
Parents and carers					
Understandable information about their child's progress	12	22	19	14	33
Specific strengths of their child's performance	13	22	16	14	35
Aspects which need support	13	21	16	15	35
How they can help their child learn	12	19	20	15	34
Local Authority					
Monitoring progress of schools against targets	5	17	12	9	57
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan	8	19	12	6	55

The missing responses were mainly from the same schools throughout, with additional respondents logging no response to some statements and, in particular, in respect of parents' and carers' and local authority needs.

The greatest contribution to date appears to be in improving meeting the information needs of pupils and the class teacher, with teachers, in particular, agreeing that developments had improved these aspects. However, headteacher figures showed greater reservations with more non-responses suggesting that overall there is still some way to go to meeting those needs. Less than half the headteachers and about a third of teachers thought that substantial progress was being made with regard to parents.

As with the first phase survey, these data were summarised by calculating respondents' average ratings for each information user group and collapsed into agree, disagree and no view. The summary results are displayed in Charts 5.7 and 5.8. The data for the teachers is not comparable with the first phase survey as, on that occasion, teachers were responding specifically about PLPs. In the second

survey they were responding generally in relation to any aspect in which they were involved.

Chart 5.7: Progress towards meeting the information needs of various groups (Headteachers) (percentages)
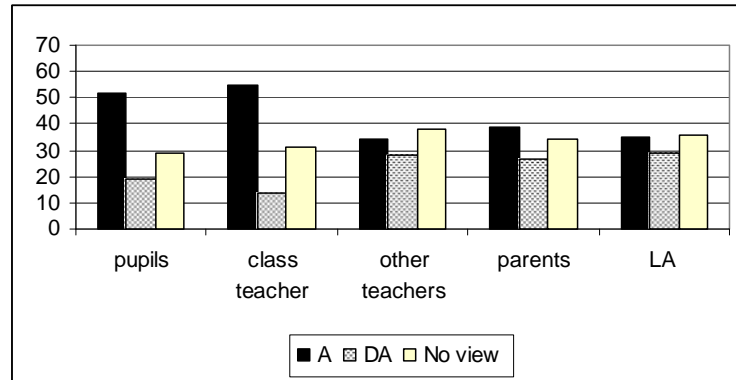
Chart 5.8: Progress towards meeting the information needs of various groups (Teachers) (percentages)
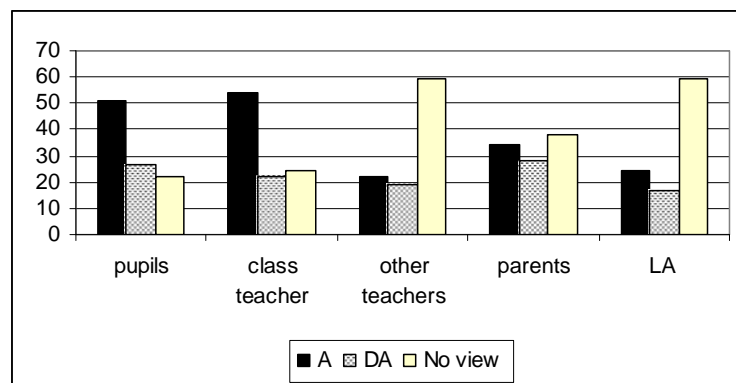
Only 16 headteachers added additional comments, with the majority (10) indicating that it was too early to make judgements on many of the issues. Pilot work was still to be extended and evaluations made. Five indicated that they were positive about many of the information needs being met but that these were not directly related to the AifL projects. One Project 8 representative reported that the original involvement did not support the school at all with these issues.

> ### *Case Study Schools*
>
> *A secondary and 4 of its cluster primaries involved in Project 5 devised an assessment grid for skills in a science unit with a description of what was required at levels C, D and E. A pupil friendly version was prepared for pupils in P6 and P7. At the start of the unit the children coded the grid using 'traffic lights': Green – 'If you think you are good at this skill'; Orange – 'If you think you need help'; Red – 'If you can't do this skill at all'. The pupils thought that this was helpful for a number of reasons: 'it allowed the teacher to know who to help most'; 'you filled it in at the beginning and then you went back and changed it if you had made progress and so you could see when you got better'. They also indicated that it helped them focus on the things they were not good at and that it showed them that they could help themselves and not 'just get the teachers to help'. Some said that at first with self-assessment they would 'colour it green' just to say 'I can do it'. However, when they realised they had to produce evidence that they could do it, they stopped doing that.*
>
> *Another secondary school involved in Project 5 focused on developing clear criteria for aspects of 5-14 expressive arts devising exemplars from P6 to S2 across levels B to F. The detailed exemplars showed clearly ways in which they met or did not meet the criteria for the levels. Art students studied the exemplars and criteria before starting a piece of work so they knew what they were aiming for and they were also used formatively for self-assessment to identify where they needed to improve. The students felt this was important because 'in art everyone draws differently' and you needed to be able 'to apply the criteria to your own work'. This was better than getting a grade because 'a grade isn't enough to help you improve – you need to know what you have to do to make it better'. They did, however, still need the advice and support of the expert [the teacher].*

New National Assessments

Headteachers were asked about their school's use of the new National Assessments.

Forty-one schools (53%) had transferred to using assessments from the National Assessment Bank; 7 schools (9%) had continued to use only the National Test papers and booklets that they had in the school; 24 had used both approaches (31%). Therefore, in total, 63 schools (82%) had used the National Assessment Bank.

Those who had used the National Assessment Bank were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statements in Table 5.26.

Table 5.26: Views on using National Assessment Bank
(Percentage of the 63 respondents who had used it)

	SA	A	D	SD
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*
We found downloading the tests straightforward	24	47	14	16
Copying the number of tests required was an added administrative workload	75	23	2	0
Copying the number of tests required was an additional cost to the school	78	20	0	2
We had problems accessing the system, eg network crashing, slow downloads	24	29	36	10
The website is easily understandable	22	66	12	0
It is easy to obtain the relevant level of test in the desired curriculum area	27	55	16	2
The National Assessment Bank is easier to manage for the school than the previous approach	9	18	47	25

Just under one-third reported that downloading tests was not straightforward; 98% indicated that using the National Assessment Bank meant additional workloads and costs to schools; just over half indicated that there were system problems. There was broad agreement that the website was easily understandable and that it was easy to obtain the relevant test. However, overall, almost three-quarters disagreed that the National Assessment Bank was easier to manage than the previous method.

Challenges as identified by LA and HE representatives

The **local authority assessment co-ordinators** identified a wide range of challenges faced by authorities, though over one-third reported that engaging secondary schools was a major challenge.

About half the respondents identified a range of organisational and management challenges: for example, difficulties in fitting AifL developments into the funding and planning cycles, due partly to the difference between the financial and academic years; working to the tight deadlines established by SEED; supporting schools in the use of the new National Assessment Bank – what one respondent described as '*the mess of National Assessments'* and another *'a disaster'.*

Other challenges mentioned might be considered under the theme 'competing priorities' (identified by just over half the respondents). This includes the allocating of time to AifL developments alongside other aspects of the co-ordinators' roles and locating it alongside other initiatives which have to be developed at authority and school level (eg health promoting schools, enterprise).

Five respondents mentioned competing priorities within the role of assessment and '*the conflict between formative and summative assessment'.* For example, *'Many teachers, while they see the benefits, are still driven by the examination agenda and the pressures put upon them by pupils, parents, SMT, LA and SEED'.* Another respondent stated that a major challenge is *'the national examination agenda which continues to focus on "excellence" as five Higher passes and not on individual pupil achievement and attainment. Teachers and pupils continue to be given the message of failure if they do not correspond to this agenda'.* Another described it as the challenge of *'effecting a huge cultural shift from the target-setting, attainment driven agenda'.*

Other challenges to authorities included *'implementing an integrated approach which has so far only existed as a series of discrete initiatives, ie the ten projects'.* Another respondent referred to this as the *'lack of opportunity for "big picture" thinking and planning'.* Another referred to the challenge of getting involved in aspects other than formative assessment. Several respondents mentioned that developing PLPs would be challenging.

Remote and rural authorities again mentioned the geographical challenge with respect to networking, time involved in travel, and the tendency for events to be held in the central belt.

As with other groups, finding time was the greatest challenge to all the **HE representatives**. This was expressed in terms of having *'enough time to read to do justice to the project', 'to carry out the work', 'devoting the time it deserves'.* One respondent mentioned the low level of funding available limiting time that could be spent and another indicated that *'although funding is given to the institution there is no 'days' allocation specified and so it just gets added on top of the usual workload'.*

Two respondents from outwith the central belt mentioned the problem of distance and extra travelling time required to participate in meetings; two mentioned the challenge of introducing or initiating change within their institutions. The other challenges were individual responses: for example, *'finding a way to contribute effectively'; 'understanding the structures and systems within other organisations such as SEED and LT Scotland'; 'gaining access to schools for research';* and *'being involved in a programme that is learning as it grows; working with others to keep so many aspects of the programme moving yet knowing that losing any one group would put the whole programme at risk'.*

Local authority co-ordinators identified three main issues as **challenges faced by schools**. The first was incorporating AifL alongside competing demands, as mentioned in challenges to authorities (mentioned by two-thirds of respondents). This included trying to meet the tight timescales set for the AifL projects when other school initiatives and events might have been a priority. One authority representative suggested that the DO for one project had been *'very rigorous'* with *'already over-worked staff'.* It was also suggested that there was conflict between covering the 5-14 curriculum and providing quality learning.

The second main challenge was encouraging all staff to become involved (mentioned by almost a half of respondents). While those involved initially had benefited greatly, there was still a lot of work to be done to *'engage hearts and minds'* and to encourage teachers to *'let go of old ways'.* It was noted that headteacher resistance could be a problem in some schools.

The third main challenge for schools involved in the development projects had been finding staff cover. The money had been available, but respondents from 11 authorities indicated that release had been limited due to lack of supply cover.

Other challenges for schools included complying with spending guidelines once funding had been received, keeping the momentum going, developing PLPs and understanding the *'bigger picture'.*

Three main themes were also identified by the HE representatives as challenges for schools. As for everyone, there was the issue of time in the light of competing priorities and other initiatives. There was a need for time to reflect and engage in

dialogue with colleagues. Two further related themes were to do with embedding the new practices (of formative assessment) in schools in a systematic way but also grounding them in an understanding of the literature and going beyond the 'tips for teachers'. These were expressed as *'getting everyone on board in a supportive way', 'incorporating it systematically into whole school practice'; 'embedding the principles rather than seeing the "frills" ';* and *'changing pedagogy'.*

A further challenge was the pressure of the *'standards agenda with its emphasis on accountability and paper trails'*; another person described this as the challenge of balancing *'assessment for learning and accountability'.* PLPs were also challenging schools. The view was expressed that getting the balance right between assessment for learning and assessment for accountability and taking on board PLPs were both *'now more hopeful than they once were'.*

Challenges as identified by schools

The survey carried out in September 2003 had an open-ended question on challenges in relation to involvement in the AifL Programme. These were incorporated in a list to seek the extent of agreement with them. The responses from headteachers and teachers have been combined in Table 5.27. Additionally, headteachers and teachers who had been involved from the beginning were asked to identify what the 2 main challenges had been in extending the work of AifL during 2003 to 2004. The responses to this open-ended question have been used to explain some of the responses to the structured question.

Agreement, disagreement and missing responses were for the most part spread across all the original projects, suggesting that the challenges were more likely to reflect local and school circumstances. This was confirmed by further statistical analysis, which revealed no significant differences between the original Project 1 and non-Project 1 respondents, with the exception of the first statement in Table 5.27: headteachers from non-Project 1 schools were significantly more likely to agree that it was difficult to manage timetables and schedules to incorporate new developments. The high level of non-response should be noted with respect to technical problems regarding the website, suggesting that many had not attempted to use it and so could not comment. There were also high non-responses regarding involving parents and preparing the case study and conference presentations, again possibly reflecting less involvement in these aspects. It should be noted that Project 8 schools had not been asked to write a case study and therefore none responded.

For headteachers, areas where there was the greatest agreement was finding time for working with colleagues, problems caused by lack of supply cover and, in particular, finding time to use the LT Scotland website. For teachers, aspects which drew greatest agreement related to time – to discuss with colleagues, to use the LT Scotland website, and to discuss with pupils. In the open-ended responses, the most frequently mentioned challenge by headteachers was finding time. This was mentioned 50 times by respondents, sometimes just the word 'time!', or with explanation: for example, time to liaise with other staff, time to develop materials, time to provide development to teachers not involved in the original project. Time was an issue because of extra work: for example, preparing materials and copying for PLPs. It was also an issue because AifL developments had to compete with other initiatives and other priorities in the school development plan (mentioned specifically by a further 19 people from all projects). However, one respondent mentioned that the reduction in class contact in the current year had made it easier to find time to work on developments and another commented: *'during the project and since I have*

been non-class committed. This made a huge difference to the time available for new developments' (Project 3).

Table 5.27: Challenges encountered during involvement in AifL
(Headteacher and teacher responses combined)

	Headteacher					Teacher				
	SA	A	D	SD	NR	SA	A	D	SD	NR
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
a.i) It was difficult to manage timetables and schedules to incorporate new developments	9	40	39	0	12	*Headteacher only*				
a.ii) It was difficult to fit in new developments with existing teaching plans	*Teacher only*					12	35	41	5	7
b) It was difficult to find time to meet with colleagues to discuss and plan developments	29	53	12	1	5	27	45	23	0	5
c) Teachers had difficulty finding time to engage pupils in discussion – as groups or one-to-one	16	29	40	1	14	19	39	27	6	9
d) Lack of supply cover when needed	38	35	18	1	8	22	20	36	4	18
e) There was resistance to or lack of interest in new developments by some staff	4	34	42	14	7	6	35	41	10	8
f) Some staff found it difficult to adopt new practices/I found it difficult to change my classroom practice and do things differently	4	48	30	5	13	5	37	37	11	10
g) There was a lack of clarity of what was required in initial stages of developments	18	31	34	3	14	19	29	35	5	12
h) Overcoming technical problems trying to use the LT Scotland AifL website	4	23	43	0	30	5	27	22	3	43
i) Finding time to try to use the LT Scotland AifL website	27	43	12	0	18	24	38	8	0	30
j) Some pupils were reluctant to try out new ways of assessing	0	10	53	13	23	1	19	49	9	22
k) It was difficult involving as many parents as we would have liked	14	26	23	1	35	9	32	22	1	36
l) Preparing to take part in conference/give presentation was stressful	7	27	39	3	25	14	26	22	5	33
m) Writing up case study/report for pilot project was excessively demanding	10	14	49	3	23	12	17	30	3	37

Unsurprisingly, for teachers across all the projects, 'time' was the greatest challenge – with 56 mentions. Some simply gave the one-word response, 'time', while others elaborated a little. Restrictions lay in finding time to plan, to read, to prepare materials and resources, to discuss PLPs generally and, more specifically, to discuss targets with children, developments with colleagues, to extend developments, to involve more staff and to liaise with other schools. However, one respondent commented: *'Our headteacher was extremely supportive and gave us both time for discussions, visits to other schools and even downloaded and bought relevant reading materials'* (Project 1 – primary).

The aspect with which there was greatest disagreement was that pupils were reluctant to try out new ideas.

In the first survey, statements about teacher resistance to new developments and difficulties in adopting new practices were included in the section on 'benefits to teachers', where it was noted that there was a difference between primary school and secondary school responses (page 48), with secondary schools more likely to agree that there was resistance and difficulties in adopting new practices. Because of the number of respondents who identified these issues as challenges in the first survey, these statements were included in the second survey with other challenges. Within this context, both headteachers and teachers showed greater agreement than before, although overall disagreement remains higher than agreement. This time there was no difference in responses between sectors. The changes are illustrated in Charts 5.9 to 5.12.

Chart 5.9: 'There was resistance to new developments by some staff' (Headteachers) (percentages)
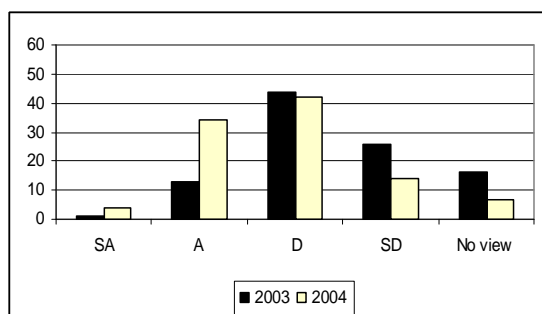
Chart 5.10: 'There was resistance to new developments by some staff' (Teachers) (percentages)
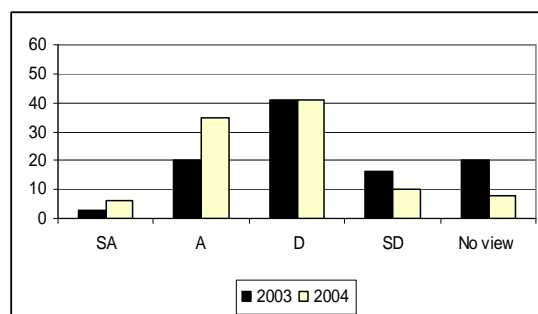
Chart 5.11: 'Some staff found it difficult to adopt new practices' (Headteachers) (percentages)
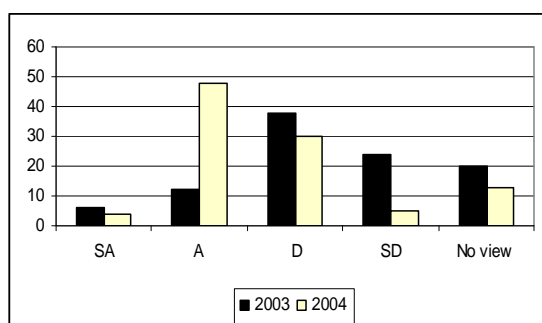
Chart 5.12: 'I found it difficult to change my classroom practice' (Teachers) (percentages)
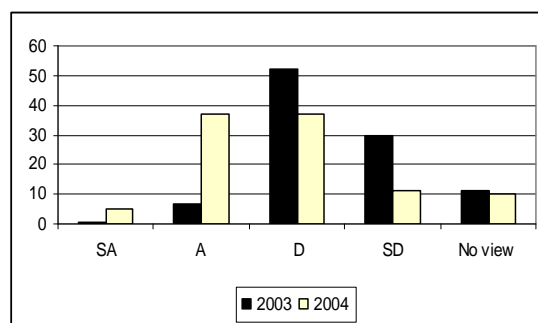
Without further investigation it is difficult to know why there should be such a perceived increase in difficulty in adopting new practices and staff resistance. However, developments were a year further on, and the schools had been maintaining developments without the same degree of external support such as DO visits, recall days and national events. The teacher sample included teachers who had not been part of the original developments, although they were not any more likely than the others to agree with the statements or not to respond. These results do, however, support the views expressed by local authority co-ordinators, HE representatives, headteachers and teachers that involving all staff – *'engaging hearts and minds'* – was a major challenge facing schools.

In the open-ended responses 20 headteachers referred to the challenge of continuing to develop staff. This was in terms of getting all teachers on board and ensuring consistent approaches across all staff (particularly with reference to formative assessment strategies, both in original Project 1 schools and others who were adopting formative assessment); some staff were reported as being resistant, for some there was the *'temptation to go back to old habits'* and for others there was the challenge of *'keeping it at the forefront of our thinking'* in the light of the many other demands and priorities. Several reported a drop in enthusiasm amongst staff since their initial involvement. Others spoke more broadly of the need for further staff-development and ongoing training, with 2 mentions of developing staff in the use of software for PLPs. Eleven headteachers referred to particular staffing issues including: the arrival of new staff and 'having to start from scratch'; key staff leaving, meaning that developments were not taken forward; new headteachers; staff illness; and shortage of staff.

Some 25 teachers suggested that aspects of changing practice were challenging. Most referred to developing formative assessment strategies, with some specifically naming approaches such as wait time or allowing the children to undertake self- and peer-assessment. Working with formative assessment strategies with younger children (P1 and P2) and those with additional support needs, and dialoguing with those whose first language was not English, were all seen as challenging. Further challenges included developing child-friendly language for learning intentions and PLP targets and giving feedback to, and developing individual criteria for, large classes. Others used broader statements such as *'changing methodology and style'*; comments included *'…embedding it into lessons which have been taught in a similar way for several years'* and *'it is hard to wing it with formative assessment – you need to be properly prepared'*. One respondent from Project 5 indicated that it was challenging *'to involve children more'*. Nine respondents, 7 from the secondary sector, reported that they had found it difficult to involve other members of staff – *'to convince them of the value of formative assessment'*.

Additional comments were made by both headteachers and teachers regarding the use of the website, case studies and presentations. Comments on the website indicated that they had not used it, with some saying they did not know there was one; one nursery respondent said they had no internet in the nursery. Comments about the case studies were either that the individual had not been involved in writing the case study or were positive comments about the exercise, for example:

- *'The case study was a lot of work but we felt it to be worthwhile in relation to the amount we had gained by being involved in the project'* (Project 4 - special)
- *'The case study and conference/workshop presentations have been invaluable in helping me to consolidate my practice and explain strategies to others'* (Project 1 - secondary)

- *'I was initially daunted by the case study, but did not find it onerous in the end'* (Project 1 - secondary)
- *'I found writing the case study was one of the most useful pieces of self-evaluation ever asked of me'* (Project 1 - secondary).

A range of other issues, perceived as challenging, were mentioned by a small number of respondents:

- lack of information about other projects and seeming lack of coherence (6), though one respondent thought the volume of information about AifL was overwhelming
- the new National Assessment Bank (5)
- union guidelines on working with PLPs
- conflict between developing formative assessment and introducing more summative assessment through the new National Assessments (especially English) and also raising attainment through improved exam performance.

These issues reflect concerns raised by local authority co-ordinators, and the final point was an emerging concern also noted by HE representatives.

5.5   Support and collaboration

Contributions of stakeholders and sources of support to teachers

Local authority co-ordinators and HE representatives were asked to indicate the extent to which a range of stakeholders had made an impact in introducing change to schools. Respondents were asked to rate each group of stakeholders listed in Table 5.28 according to how they perceived their impact.

Respondents did not feel able to take a view on all stakeholders, with the HE representatives in particular being reluctant to rate other stakeholders for a number of reasons: collaboration was the main focus and people collaborated in different ways, so a view could not be taken on a whole group; they had insufficient evidence to make any judgement as they did not know enough about the roles of others, eg the LA co-ordinators, and it was difficult to get an overview of the various contributions. It was generally agreed by the HE representatives that all groups had had some impact.

The responses from the local authority co-ordinators are given in Table 5.28.

Table 5.28: Views on impact of stakeholders on changing practice in schools (LA co-ordinators)

(1 = high impact to 5 = no impact)

	High impact				No impact
	1	2	3	4	5
LT Scotland Development Officers	3	9	2	9	3
Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators	11	11	7	0	0
Local Authority Assessment Development Officers (where relevant)	11	6	1	1	0
HE representatives	1	2	3	5	10
Expert speakers at conferences/in-service events	11	13	2	1	1

In the survey of LA co-ordinators carried out in May 2003 there had been strong agreement that the LT Scotland DOs provided strong and committed support for the developments. At September 2004 views were more ambiguous with respect to the LTS DOs, with a perception that they had a reduced impact. However, their role had changed since the early phases of the programme and different DOs were in post. During 2003-2004 they had more of a co-ordinating than a delivery role. Therefore the change in the extent to which they were perceived as having a high level of impact on changing practice in schools is unsurprising. One assessment co-ordinator reported that the LT Scotland staff continued to support the co-ordinators in their roles and therefore this in turn affected practice in schools, but the relationship is not as direct as it was at first.

The role of the HE representatives has been more of an advisory one to SEED, with only a few becoming involved in delivery of in-service or in direct involvement with the authorities. It is therefore unsurprising that they have not been perceived as contributing directly to change in practice in schools. One respondent commented on the impact on Initial Teacher Education, suggesting that probationers were now arriving with knowledge of the programme. Interviewees had emphasised that the HEIs' role in preparing new teachers for the use of formative assessment was a key aspect of sustainability.

The impact of expert speakers was seen as high (confirming the view on effectiveness of their role in staff development – see p76), and the role of the authority staff themselves was very important in introducing change.

Teachers were asked to indicate how important they perceived various players were in taking forward AifL developments during 2003-2004. Their responses are reported in Table 5.29.

Table 5.29: Importance of various contributors to AifL developments during 2003-2004 (Teachers)

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	No role to play	No response
	%	%	%	%	%
School management	68	22	5	2	4
Fellow teachers in own school	62	29	6	0	3
Teachers from other schools	16	42	22	15	5
Local authority co-ordinator	19	31	24	16	10
LT Scotland development officers	19	35	21	14	11
Expert speakers at conferences/in-service events	22	48	15	4	11
Faculty of Education representatives linked with projects	6	32	25	22	15

The most important sources of support for teachers remained within their own schools, but the input of experts was acknowledged as being the next most important influence in taking forward developments.

Effectiveness of approaches to dissemination

Views on the effectiveness of various communication and dissemination activities within AifL were sought. Responses from the local authority co-ordinators are reported in Table 5.30.

Table 5.30: Views on effectiveness of AifL communication and dissemination (LA co-ordinators)
(1 = very effective to 5 = ineffective)

	High impact			No impact	
	1	2	3	4	5
LT Scotland website	0	9	15	6	0
Publications, eg AifL Newsletter/Update	2	14	11	3	0
Open Space events	3	11	8	5	0
Regional seminars/conferences/ dissemination events	6	20	2	1	0
National seminars/conferences	9	16	2	2	0

The local authority assessment co-ordinators clearly viewed the regional and national events as being highly effective in impact.

The more remote authorities mentioned not being part of Open Space events. Some suggested that national events were more useful for co-ordinators but that the main dissemination to schools was effective only at local level and through local network meetings. Four respondents raised concerns over the national events: two indicated they were repetitive; one suggested it was too much sharing among the 'converted'; and one was concerned about the cost due to the expensive venues. Once again the issue of travel and cost for more remote authorities to attend national events was raised and it was suggested that progress could be made through the use of video-conferencing.

Comments from LA respondents were that the website needed greater publicity, it was not updated regularly, it did not provide much useful help, and it was not user friendly. The limited usefulness of the website reflects responses given by both headteachers and teachers. Less than a quarter of headteachers had used the website to share information with other schools (see Table 5.31) and both teachers and headteachers had agreed that finding time for this was a challenge (see Table 5.29).

The HE representatives shared the views that regional and national events had the greatest impact, with the website and newsletters being less effective. Few commented, but one respondent summarised the position as follows: *'dissemination is limited by the time of people to participate. The website was fine, but many teachers lacked the time to check it out. National seminars were inspirational but addressed a captive audience which was small. Properly organised regional events have more potential, but will only work if there is subsequently time, support and resources (and maybe a carrot'.*

One respondent saw the benefit of being able to use the case studies as they appeared on the website as a useful teaching tool for students, but regretted that there was little in the way of video resources for university teaching. It was felt that

slow development of the case study materials was hindering the opportunity for wider dissemination and also for giving assessment issues a Scottish context (for teacher education purposes).

Working collaboratively

The AifL Programme was designed to encourage and support collaboration between key players including local authorities, higher education institutions, LT Scotland and SEED. Respondents were asked to comment on the progress they thought had been made to date on this aspect of the programme.

The majority of local authority co-ordinators reported that effective collaboration had been established in working with SEED and LT Scotland, with closer links being formed than previously existed. Three authority respondents indicated that this was less than it might have been because they themselves had not particularly sought support or had only had contact at national meetings; one said it was an area they needed to develop. A remote authority indicated that it was difficult to maintain after initial enthusiasm. Another respondent suggested that, at times, tensions had arisen between authorities and SEED which could have been managed more effectively, and two experienced the relationship as authoritarian and challenging rather than collaborative.

The aspect of collaboration most frequently mentioned as beneficial was the way in which authority co-ordinators had come together at the assessment co-ordinator meetings which had provided a forum for them at a national level. This had led to collaborative working and sharing of ideas, and several mentioned networking of neighbouring authorities. There was mention of the benefits of sharing materials between authorities.

The majority of respondents stated that they had had little or no contact with the HE representatives and that they were unclear as to what their role was or what they had to offer. Three suggested that this might improve in the future and one reported plans for collaboration on research.

The HE representatives gave a wide range of responses to this, ranging from those who thought progress had been limited and superficial to those who thought substantial progress had been made:

- Four mentioned formal collaboration through meetings, with one especially mentioning the Toolkit focus group, but more spontaneous collaboration was more difficult to develop, partly through lack of time and opportunity for professional exchange. One commented *'that we do not always know each other as well as SEED think we should'*
- One respondent reported only very superficial collaboration: *'it will take time for trust and relationships to build'.* Another said it had been limited: *'barriers still exist between different agencies, especially in respect of philosophies; differing agendas in terms of the purposes of assessment mean that people speaking the same language and using the same terminology can often mean very different things. However, there has been progress and at least people are talking to one another'*
- One reported significant progress: *'there is a community in development, with a better understanding of each other's goals, aspirations, constraints and requirements in the area of assessment for learning rather than assessment for summative purposes'*

- One person suggested that there had been little progress between local authorities and HEIs, but that this was improving. Others mentioned links with local authorities for specific purposes, such as research and CPD provision
- One person noted that real progress had been made but that it was not uniform. They made the important observation that we tend to treat local authorities and HEIs as if they were single bodies but they are not and therefore collaboration will vary between organisations: *'the numbers who are part of the learning community are growing'*.

A question to headteachers focused on the issue of liaison between schools, locally and as part of national networking. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list what type of liaison they had been involved in and their responses are reported in Table 5.31.

Table 5.31: Inter-school liaison and networking (Headteachers)

	Primary	Secondary	Special	5-14/16	Total
	n	n	n	n	
(Primary schools) with other primaries	37	0	0	1	38 (70%)[1]
(Secondary schools) with other secondaries	0	11	0	1	12 (39%)[2]
Liaison across the local cluster involving both sectors	24	13	0	2	39 (51%)
National networking, eg contact with other schools involved in the same project within own local authority or in other authorities	17	6	3	1	27 (35%)
Using LT Scotland Assessment is for Learning website to share ideas electronically	12	6	0	0	18 (23%)

[1] % of primary schools; [2] % of secondary schools

One respondent reported networking through conferences for Gaelic-medium teachers, while another mentioned that liaison and networking took place during the project activities, but that these were no longer happening. One Project 4 respondent indicated that no one else was working in the same area of curriculum development and they felt they were *'ploughing a lonely furrow'*. A Project 5 primary headteacher reported that there were no plans to develop the work further and that the excellent partnership that had been developed with the secondary school had ended with the final report. The related secondary commented: *'unfortunately the primary secondary liaison in our project was temporary and has now lapsed'*.

Clearly AifL developments have brought different groups together to work in new relationships, though not all within the same frame of reference. Authorities were working with each other and sharing, some of the HE representatives were working cross-institutionally, but relationships between local authorities and HEIs were still developing. Schools were more likely to work with other schools, with the support of the authorities. However, cross-sector and wider networking was less developed for schools.

5.6 Funding and sustainability

Funding

Substantial funding was made available to schools to take forward development and this was noted by various stakeholders as a major strength in the programme. School managers were asked to indicate the extent to which the funding was essential in taking forward developments and the main uses of that funding. Responses are given in Tables 5.32 and 5.33.

Table 5.32: Extent to which funding was important to schools in implementing the programme

	Primary	Secon-dary	Special	5-14/16	Total
	n	n	n	n	
It was not important. We would have carried out the work anyway	3	2	0	0	5 (7%)
It helped. We were able to make progress with developments which would have taken us longer without the funding	18	12	2	1	33 (43%)
It was essential. Without the funding we would not have undertaken any of the developments	24	9	3	1	37 (48%)

The funding was clearly fundamental to taking developments forward. One headteacher reported: *'the funding was valuable in ensuring that the teacher responsible for the project had time out of class and resources. We really valued this'* (Project 9).

Table 5.33: Use of funding by schools

	Primary	Secon-dary	Special	5-14/16	Total
	n	n	n	n	
Obtaining supply teachers/cover	42	19	4	2	67 (87%)
Paying teachers to work in their own time	21	7	2	1	31 (40%)
Sending teachers on staff development activities	23	8	2	2	35 (46%)
Purchase of equipment, eg computers, video-cameras, software	26	15	3	2	46 (60%)
Purchase of other materials, eg books, folders, storage	24	9	4	0	37 (48%)
Travel costs to national events	20	11	3	1	35 (46%)

Other reported uses of funding included photocopying, inviting guest speakers to school, paying for 'lets' for meetings with parents, and lunches!

Thirty-six respondents indicated that they had received funding to continue developments during 2003 to 2004. The majority (20) reported ongoing AifL funding from SEED/LT Scotland; 10 received funding from their local authority; and the remainder referred to funding related to other initiatives such as Building Bridges and CPD developments or the school's own budget.

Sustainability

Local authority co-ordinators and school managers were asked about the sustainability of developments.

Fourteen of the LA respondents referred to the fact that practices and standards advocated by AifL were, or would be, embedded within learning, teaching and assessment policies and plans and would therefore be monitored through the normal quality assurance processes. Some described it being *'embedded'* or *'mainstreamed'* and, as such, authority funding would be allocated to ongoing developments.

However, a number of LA respondents expressed different views. Ten respondents (including 4 who referred to 'embedding' developments) suggested that developments, including in-service and staff development, required dedicated staff. Funding had made this possible, but without funding it would be difficult to maintain dedicated staff. The developments and in-service would continue, but at reduced levels.

While formative assessment might be *'mainstreamed'*, it was considered that other aspects of developments such as PLPs, ICT aspects of PLPs and reporting would continue to need additional funding.

Five respondents suggested it would be difficult to sustain developments at all without additional funding and two indicated that as yet they were unsure about future plans.

Forty-seven headteacher replies were given:

- The majority (28) indicated that the main resources would be from existing school budgets, particularly staff-development and CPD budgets. One said this could be achieved through *'good use'* of school budgets, while another commented that they *'would find it somehow'*. At least half a dozen suggested that the development would, of necessity, be limited and less than that supported via the AifL Programme
- 7 suggested that there would be local authority funding available, particularly for the development of PLPs, as they had become/were becoming an authority priority
- Another 7 suggested that without funding there would be no developments, again with specific reference to PLPs
- 5 respondents suggested that funding for other initiatives would also be relevant to taking forward AifL developments: for example, Building Bridges and FLaT funding.

5.7   Developing a unified and coherent system

Awareness of wider programme

An important aspect of moving towards a coherent system of assessment is the drawing together of the contributions of the separate projects. For the system to be recognised people need to be aware of and understand its constituent parts.

Headteachers and teachers were asked how much they knew about projects other than their own. In Table 5.34 the responses relating to each respondent's original project have been excluded. All respondents know 'a lot' about their original project, and this question was designed to show awareness of other projects in the programme. The exceptions are Projects 6 and 7, for which all respondents have been included. These data are illustrated in Charts 5.13 and 5.14.

After formative assessment, headteachers/SMT members were most likely to know about PLPs and the new National Assessments, though one-fifth and one quarter, respectively, reported knowing nothing about these two areas. Respondents reported knowing little or nothing about Projects 3, 4, 5 and 8, re-emphasising previous findings that wider awareness of the programme was slow to develop.

Teachers were somewhat reluctant to agree that they knew a lot about the work of other projects, though the much lower percentages indicating that they knew nothing about formative assessment and developing PLPs compared to the previous survey (see page 67) are in keeping with the ongoing developments which were reported.

Table 5:34: Awareness of other projects

	Know a lot		Know a little		Know nothing	
	HT	Teach	HT	Teach	HT	Teach
	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	33	19	47	43	20	27
2. Personal Learning Plans	27	9	53	62	20	20
3. Supporting the Management of Personal Learning Plans	11	6	41	29	48	56
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	2	7	54	35	44	46
5. Local Moderation: sharing the standard	8	8	30	11	62	69
6. new National Assessments (NNA)	28	12	47	43	25	35
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme (AAP)	11	9	54	43	35	35
8. ICT Support for Assessment	4	3	43	27	53	57
9. Reporting to Parents and Others	19	6	46	35	35	45
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs	8	6	45	19	47	61

Chart 5.13: Awareness of other projects (Headteachers)

■ a lot ▨ a little ▢ nothing
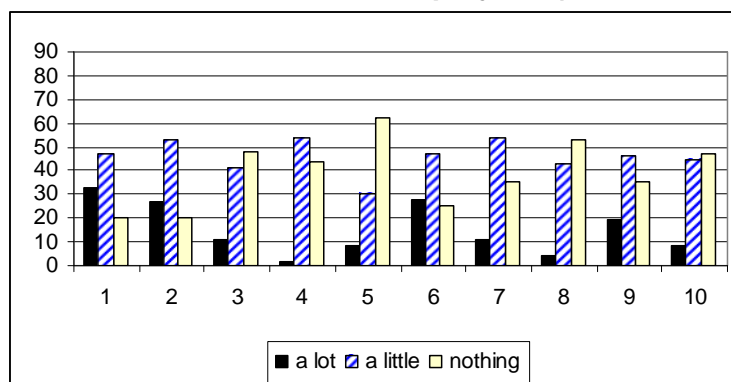
Chart 5.14: Awareness of other projects (Teachers)

■ a lot ▨ a little ▢ nothing
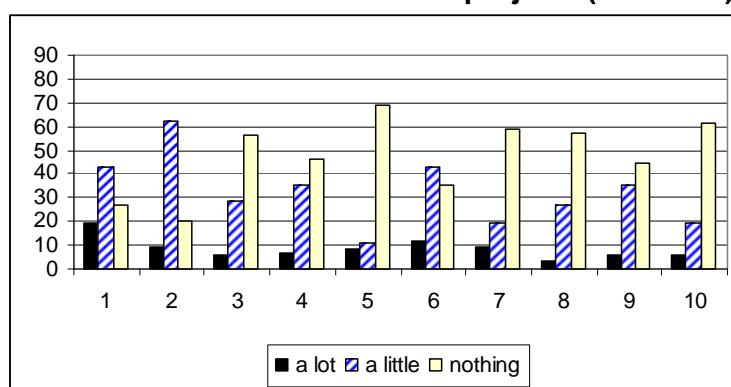
Differences in responses between those who had been involved from the beginning and those who had become involved during 2003-04 were investigated using a chi-square test. The only significant difference was in relation to Project 9, where a higher than expected proportion of the new participants said they knew nothing, compared to the others. Other differences, although not statistically significant, may be worth noting. Of those from schools which were not originally involved in Project 1, a higher percentage of teachers who had recently become involved indicated that they knew a lot about Project 1 compared to those involved from the beginning (36% compared with 20%). This would reflect schools' keenness to develop formative assessment. The responses of the two groups of teachers were almost exactly the same with respect to Projects 2 and 4; in relation to Projects 3, 5, and 8 a higher percentage of those involved from the beginning noted that they knew a little compared to the percentage of recent teachers who noted that they knew nothing.

Understanding how projects link together

Headteachers were asked about their understanding of how the AifL projects linked together to contribute to the development of a unified and coherent system of assessment, and whether participating teachers had a clear understanding of this:

- 4% strongly agreed they had a good understanding of how the projects linked together
- 66% agreed
- 26% disagreed
- 4% strongly disagreed.

With respect to their teachers:

- 5% strongly agreed that their teachers understood how the projects linked together
- 53% agreed
- 28% disagreed
- 10% strongly disagreed.

This suggests that almost one-third of headteachers were not clear on the 'bigger picture' of how the projects relate to each other and have potential for developing into a coherent system, and that almost two-fifths thought their teachers did not understand this.

The teachers were slightly less positive than the headteachers:

- 5% strongly agreed
- 44% agreed
- 37% disagreed
- 6% strongly disagreed.

Of those who had been involved from the beginning, 54% agreed they had a clear understanding of how the projects linked together, while 42% disagreed. Teachers who had become involved more recently were slightly more negative in their response: 37% agreed they had a clear understanding, while 48% disagreed.

It was considered by some of the assessment co-ordinators that too many projects were begun simultaneously and had not been drawn together to form a unified system; it was suggested that *'explanations in the beginning were complex in the extreme - too complex';* another described it as *'scary'.* One stated: *'it is like a 3 year programme for 10 projects and at the end we have one and a half – formative assessment and a bit of PLPs'.*

Progress towards aims of the AifL Programme

The AifL Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs. All respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought that progress had been made towards the following three aspects, (ADP Action Plan, SEED, 2002) which contribute to these aims:

- The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)
- The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment
- The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement).

They were invited to add further comments.

Each of these aspects will be presented giving an overview of the responses of each stakeholder group. Both numbers and percentages are presented for comparison

purposes, though some groups (HE representatives and LA representatives) are small and would not normally be presented as percentages. The ASG co-ordinators' responses have been included here to form part of the wider picture.

A cautionary note is given here. The respondents to school surveys represent about half of the original schools involved in the programme. These schools, for the most part, have shown a commitment to ongoing development of their original project involvement, with more than half of them also taking on further developments connected to other aspects of the AifL Programme. Some of the schools who did not respond to the survey indicated that this was because there had been no further AifL developments during 2003 to 2004; therefore, we might assume they would have responded more negatively regarding overall progress. The ASG respondents also represent less than half the total ASGs identified as existing in 2003 to 2004; they were targeted because they appeared to be working collaboratively and making progress. It is difficult to generalise to the wider population, but with a bigger sample we might anticipate less positive responses.

The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)

The responses of the various groups are presented in Table 5.35.

Table 5.35: Progress towards a unified system of recording and reporting

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress	No response
Local authority co-ordinators	4 (13%)	5 (17%)	20 (67%)	1 (3%)	0
HE representatives	0	5 (63%)	3 (37%)	0	0
Headteachers	10 (13%)	23 (30%)	28 (36%)	8 (10%)	8 (10%)
Teachers	20 (15%)	51 (39%)	26 (20%)	9 (7%)	24 (19%)
ASG co-ordinators	2 (4.5%)	17 (38%)	15 (33%)	2 (20%)	2 (4.5%)

Overall, only a small proportion reported that they thought good progress had been made in this area; local authority assessment co-ordinators were most likely to think that little progress had been made.

Some local authorities had taken forward the development of PLPs as identified in the role of the authority personnel (p75) and in the focus of ASGs (see section 5.8). About half had PLPs as part of the improvement planning process. However, developments in this area appeared to be slow. One LA respondent commented that this seemed to be the least developed aspect of the programme. In a question seeking views on limitations of the programme, 12 of the assessment co-ordinators expressed concerns about PLPs. For some the concern was a lack of sharing of good practice and the outcomes of the original PLP projects and their view was that national guidance would be beneficial. There was concern that there was pressure to develop PLPs without having a clear picture of what they were to achieve or sufficient understanding of formative assessment to support their development. Others noted that there was potential for conflict between locally developed approaches to PLPs and any national guidance which may emerge.

The issue of the purpose of PLPs continued to be questioned, with one LA co-ordinator asking: *'is a PLP a recording and reporting tool, or is it a means of encouraging learning and enabling pupils and their parents to understand their learning processes, strengths and needs? Can it serve both functions?'*

One HE respondent expressed the same concern: *'This for me is where some serious tensions exist. The developing of a unified system of recording and reporting is not what a PLP is. The PLP is a plan that is about learning and is personal. The very notion that it is about recording and reporting is contrary to the spirit of assessment is for learning and moves the whole process back to assessment is for measurement. This also causes anxiety amongst teachers who see it, in this form, as another workload issue'.*

On the same point, one headteacher commented that PLPs were for pupil use and that reports to parents were a different issue. This was strongly supported in a response from an ASG co-ordinator, who indicated they had reports which were *'distinctly separate from PLPs. These are two separate entities and … they should stay that way. The pupil report is by the teacher of the pupil; the PLP is by the pupil for his/her personal development and is therefore biased. Both can work side by side and complement/supplement each other, for the pupil's benefit'.*

Another headteacher commented that parents wanted a report as well as the PLP. One added a further comment: *'the most important aspect is not recording results/levels but in using AifL strategies to assess learners' needs DURING lessons and adapt teaching strategies to meet pupils' needs and next steps'.*

The underlying conflict of the purpose of PLPs and the delay in the production of a national framework (which was circulated for consultation after this evaluation survey had been completed) undoubtedly contributed to the views that there had been limited progress in this area.

Bringing together current arrangements for assessment

The responses of the various groups are reported in Table 5.36. These issues were the focus of the consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting: 3-14 which was launched in September 2003, but whose findings were not published until November 2004. The evaluation surveys took place before publication of the consultation outcomes, and this is reflected in the responses and comments made.

Table 5.36: Progress towards bringing together current arrangements for assessment including AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress	No response
Local authority co-ordinators	2 (7%)	18 (60%)	7 (23%)	3 (10%)	0
HE representatives	3 (63%)	5 (37%)	0	0	0
Headteachers	18 (23%)	28 (36%)	20 (26%)	4 (6%)	7 (9%)
Teachers	17 (13%)	48 (37%)	23 (18%)	7 (5%)	35 (27%)
ASG co-ordinators	5 (11%)	18 (40%)	14 (31%)	6 (13.5%)	2 (4.5%)

Overall, respondents were more positive regarding progress in this area than in progress towards a unified recording and reporting system.

However, 7 LA respondents noted that the Consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting: 3-14, part way through the programme, and waiting for the outcomes of the consultation, had made it difficult to determine what progress should be made; this was noted as a particular limitation of the programme.

The HE representatives also expressed concern over the timing of the AifL Programme with respect to related consultations and reviews (viz: Consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting: 3-14 and the Curriculum Review) and how they would link together. Furthermore, it was considered that there had been a *'rushed approach'* to implementing National Assessments, which had caused anxiety in schools. Several local authority co-ordinators also referred to the National Assessments and *'the heartache they had caused'.*

However, an HE representative suggested that closer collaboration between the AAP team and the National Assessments team at SQA had laid the groundwork for developing a more coherent approach (pending the Ministerial announcement on assessment and testing).

In this context, one of the local authority co-ordinators raised the point that there were major issues to be resolved between a system of reporting in the 5-14 curriculum which is heavily norm-referenced and an approach based on formative assessment and PLPs. This was an issue raised by local authority co-ordinators in identifying challenges to local authorities and schools, and also by HE representatives and teachers. Ongoing work is required to clarify the relationship between formative and summative assessment and how the whole teaching, learning and assessment process can build into a coherent system including enhanced learning and nationally-delivered assessment.

The provision of extensive staff development and support

The responses of the various groups are reported in Table 5.37.

Table 5.37: Progress towards the provision of extensive staff development and support

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress	No response
Local authority co-ordinators	20 (67%)	10 (33%)	0	0	0
HE representatives	2 (25%)	6 (75%)	0	0	0
Headteachers	17 (22%)	44 (57%)	8 (10%)	2 (3%)	6 (8%)
Teachers	39 (30%)	52 (40%)	21 (16%)	2 (2%)	16 (12%)
ASG co-ordinators	13 (30%)	20 (44%)	8 (18%)	1 (2%)	3 (6%)

The high level of positive responses from local authority assessment co-ordinators reflects the amount of staff development undertaken by authorities and reported in section 5.3 of this report.

Few additional comments were made in relation to staff development. One HE respondent suggested that a new understanding of staff development was emerging that focused on practitioner-led developments and action research. More generally, the view was expressed that, while those who had been involved had greatly benefited, there was still much to be done to reach the wider teaching community.

Strengths of programme

Local authority assessment co-ordinators and HE representatives were asked to indicate what they saw as particular strengths of the programme.

For LA co-ordinators, the allocation of sustained, sufficient funding to both schools and authorities was the most frequently mentioned strength of the programme. It was appreciated that it was 'ring-fenced' but, beyond that, schools could use it in ways which they perceived as relevant to their needs. One respondent appreciated the *'creative use of funding via ASG projects'*. HE respondents agreed that supplying resources to the pilot schools was a major strength.

Both LA and HE respondents agreed that the leadership given by SEED was important. The HE representatives focused on the inclusive approach taken by SEED, involving different groups, encouraging dialogue between the groups, consulting with and developing communication with and between groups. The LA respondents noted the support from the Minister for Education and Young People, the appointment of dedicated staff, the high-level promotion of the programme and the establishing of good communication between SEED and authorities. This was partly achieved by the establishing of strong networks (assessment co-ordinators' meetings) and by the encouragement to work collaboratively at all levels.

Both groups also mentioned the 'bottom-up' approach which valued the practitioner, practitioner development and practitioner research as a major strength of the programme. The process of 'growing policy', that is allowing it to emerge and develop rather than imposing it from the top down, was appreciated.

Concern

A concern was expressed regarding the management of the programme. Ten LA respondents referred to the issue of the mismatch between academic and financial years and the conflict of priorities caused by initiatives being introduced outwith the development planning cycle. This was a point reinforced by interviewees who reported that money was received in January and had to be spent by the end of March.

5.8 Associated Schools Groups (ASGs)

Local authority perspective

A key feature of developments during 2003-2004 was to increase the number of schools involved in the programme, with a particular emphasis on members of Associated Schools Groups (ASGs) working together.

Differences in size and geography of local authorities mean, of course, that there is huge variation in the number of school clusters within authorities, from 3 in Clackmannanshire to 23 in Edinburgh and 29 in Glasgow and Highland. Three authorities reported including all their clusters in ASG developments. Fifteen authorities reported involving 3 or 4 clusters as ASGs, representing between a half and a third of secondaries and their associated primaries in these authorities. The respondents identified a total of 427 school clusters, 128 (30%) of which had become involved in AifL as Associated Schools Groups.

Alternative arrangements to geographical clusters (ie secondary and related primaries) were reported. Groups of primaries were working together but not in collaboration with the related secondary; in rural authorities it was not possible to bring all cluster primaries to work together because of distance and so sub-groups were formed; some worked together on the basis of size, eg fewer than 5 teachers; some ASGs worked on the basis of common interest, eg maths or language developments; secondary subject-based groups were formed, with all secondaries in the authority collaborating.

Data collected from assessment co-ordinators as a separate exercise indicated that 78% of ASG activity focused on formative assessment; 6% were focusing on formative assessment and PLPs together; 5% were developing PLPs; and 10% were considering moderation issues/'sharing the standard', in particular from P7 to S1.

The LA respondents were asked to give an indication of the progress they thought had been made by the ASGs. This is reported in Table 5.38.

Table 5.38: Progress made by Associated Schools Groups (LA co-ordinators)

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
Developing Assessment Action Plans	12	13	4	1
Achieving objectives of Action Plans	12	14	3	1
Working collaboratively as ASGs	16	11	3	0
Raising awareness of assessment issues in schools	20	8	2	0
Improving assessment practices in schools	12	15	2	1
Improving liaison between sectors	10	17	2	0

The negative ratings came from a small group of authorities, who explained their responses. In one case it was indicated that an ASG had found it difficult to plan as a group and it was felt that they would have liked the authority to develop the plan for them. In another authority it was also mentioned that those involved tended to look continuously for guidance rather than taking ownership of the project. A third authority co-ordinator indicated that the ASGs would have benefited from more central support which could not be given at the time. Other respondents indicated that progress had varied, with some ASGs 'floundering' or 'not getting off the ground', some 'raising awareness' and others 'embracing the project'. The authority co-ordinator who indicated that no progress had been made in improving assessment practices in schools indicated that the work developed in the ASG schools would be shared within the ASG clusters in 2004-05 and then disseminated to other clusters in the authority.

It is clear, however, that the majority of authority staff with AifL responsibility are confident that progress is being made. Some respondents pointed out that ASG developments did not fit in with cycle of improvement planning and, while schools were keen to be involved, it was difficult to organise, develop and implement plans within the prescribed timescales. The developments in the ASGs would continue into 2004-2005. As with those who recorded negative responses, respondents who identified that progress was being made also noted that some ASGs had made better progress than others.

Responses from ASG co-ordinators

The sample

A list of 2003-2004 ASGs was supplied by SEED – there were 111 ASGs on the list. Local authority co-ordinators were contacted to supply information about key contacts for each ASG. Information received from assessment co-ordinators indicated that a number of ASGs 'had not got off the ground' during 2003-2004 and that in some cases there had been no collaborative working between schools in the ASGs. It was decided to focus on ASGs where there had been collaborative working between schools and across sectors and where something had 'got off the ground' during 2003-2004. One assessment co-ordinator did not supply any information regarding the ASGs in their authority and therefore they were not included in the survey.

Questionnaires were sent to 81 ASG contacts (73% of ASGs on list). Forty-five (56%) responses were returned, with a further 3 contacts indicating that they could not complete the questionnaire as they felt they had not made sufficient progress to answer the questions. Responses represented 40% of the ASGs on the original list. Twenty local authorities were represented in the returns.

The contacts were asked to complete the questionnaire on behalf of the whole ASG and, if possible, to consult with colleagues from other schools on responses.

Organisation of ASGs

The size of the school clusters from which the ASGs were formed varied from 3 schools to 25 schools. The respondents were asked how many schools from the cluster group formed the ASG for AifL developments and how many of those nominated were active. (Eight of the returns had incomplete data and so are not included in this summary, which therefore reports on responses from 37 ASGs.)

- 19 reported that all schools were involved and all actively participated; 15 of those were from clusters of 6 or fewer schools; the others had 7, 8, 9 and 12 schools.
- 8 reported three-quarters or more of the cluster schools actively participating, with 6 reporting just one school not involved.
- 8 reported between a half and three-quarters of the cluster schools active; all of these included 7 or more schools in the cluster.
- 3 reported less than half of the schools active – in one case this was one school out of 3 (therefore, in effect, not a cluster).
- in 8 cases it was reported that some schools began working with the ASG but did not remain active.
- in 6 cases a smaller number started out and more became involved over time.

Overall a total of 232 schools were reported as participating across the 37 ASGs for which data was provided.

Although there were some larger clusters that engaged all schools and retained participation (7, 8, 9, 12 representing all schools in the cluster and 22 out of 25 schools in one case), it would appear that groupings of 6 or less were more likely to gain and retain the involvement of all.

Six reported working in ASGs formed on a non-geographical cluster basis. These were focused on subject developments across the authority – for example secondary schools working together on home economics, maths, aspects of English and modern languages.

Twelve (26%) reported that there had not been any cross-sector working; the majority 32 (72%) reported cross-sector collaboration (one missing response). In some cases, cross-sector working was not intended; for example, a group of secondary schools working on one subject area; or a group of primary schools working together on 'sharing the standard' on maths levels. However, it was reported in at least one case that the secondary school could not participate as originally intended because of other commitments and therefore the primary schools had worked on their own. The number of times that the groups met to discuss AifL developments varied widely from once to 11 times. However, 60% of the respondents indicated that they met between 3 and 6 times.

Focus of ASG developments

The respondents were asked to give a brief outline of the main focus of their ASG developments:

- The majority (34) reported focusing on **formative assessment** strategies, either as the sole focus (26) or in conjunction with other aspects of AifL developments: 4 with PLPs, 2 with moderation/evidence gathering and 2 with a particular focus on bridging the primary to secondary curriculum

- For 7 ASGs the prime focus had been **moderation/sharing the standard**, with 2 specifically mentioning the primary to secondary transition. One authority-led cluster focused on developing maths criteria for levels A to C for sharing with parents

- Three ASGs (in the same authority) reported focusing on developing 'a model of **effective teaching and learning from P6 to S2**' across subject areas. Although not clear initially, later in the questionnaires it was explained that formative assessment is a core element of this

- One ASG reported developing resources for the **new National Assessments** (5-14) in Writer's Craft.

Table 5.39 reports on the year groups and aspects of the curriculum that were targeted across the sample.

Table 5.39: Year groups and curriculum areas targeted in the ASG developments

Year group[1]	No of ASGs	Curriculum areas[2]
Pre 5	3 (7%)	Combination of different areas of curriculum
P1	22 (49%)	All (4); aspects of English (3); maths/numeracy (2); social subjects (1); combinations of curricular areas (11).
P2	23 (51%)	All (4); aspects of English (3) maths/numeracy (3); social subjects (1); science (1); combinations (10).
P3	24 (53%)	All (4); aspects of English (3); maths/numeracy (2); social subjects (1); combinations and other topics (12).
P4	24 (53%)	All (4); aspects of English (3); maths/numeracy (3); social subjects (1); combinations and other topics (12).
P5	27 (60%)	All (4); aspects of English (3); maths/numeracy (3); social subjects (1); combinations and other topics (15).
P6	37 (82%)	All (4); aspects of English (5); maths/numeracy (5); social subjects (1); combinations and other topics (17).
P7	40 (89%)	All (5); aspects of English (6); maths/numeracy (4); social subjects (2); modern languages (2); science (2); combinations and other topics (18).
S1	30 (67%)	All (2); aspects of English (5); maths/numeracy (3); social subjects (2); modern languages (2); science (2); combinations and other topics (13).
S2	26 (58%)	All (2); aspects of English (6); maths/numeracy (3); social subjects (1); modern languages (2); science (2); combinations and other topics (9).
S3	10 (22%)	All (2); aspects of English (3); science (1); combinations and other topics (4)
S4	7 (16%)	All (2); aspects of English (1); combinations and other (2).
S5/S6	6 (13%)	All (1); aspects of English (1); social subjects (1); combinations and other (2).

Note 1: The number of year groups targeted in the work of the ASGs varied from 1 to 14, with 22 ASGs (50%) targeting between 6 and 9 year groups; 29 worked across P7 to S1 year groups.

Note 2: Some respondents did not detail the areas of the curriculum being targeted. Therefore the curriculum area numbers do not add up to the number of ASGs.

The main target groups within the ASGs were clearly P6 and P7 pupils, with very low levels of pre-5 and upper secondary participation. Developments were most likely to be occurring across the curriculum – if not in its entirety, certainly in more than one area (noted as 'combination of curriculum areas' in the table).

Key objectives for ASG developments

The statements of objectives varied from high level objectives such as *'raising pupil attainment'*, *'improving motivation of pupils'*, *'raising staff awareness of formative assessment strategies'* and *'developing school/cluster policy on teaching and learning'* to more specific objectives such as *'introducing learning intentions'* and *'introducing traffic lighting and two stars and a wish'*. Examples of objectives include:

Example 1: Obj1: raising attainment through formative assessment
          Obj2: marking less to achieve more
          Obj3: sharing learning intentions "targets and goals"

Example 2: Obj1: adoption of core formative assessment strategies
          Obj2: develop as school policy
          Obj3: share strategies with cluster schools

Example 3: Obj1: using success criteria/learning intentions
Obj2: use of traffic lighting
Obj3: thinking time

Example 4: Obj1: to produce resources and develop pupils' experiences in self- and peer-assessment across the cluster
Obj2: to increase class teacher awareness of assessment strategies
Obj3: to increase opportunities for cluster colleagues to work together

Example 5: Obj1: increase range of effective teaching/learning methodologies in use in classrooms
Obj2: improve attainment
Obj3: improve motivation of pupils and active participation in learning

Example 6: Obj1: to train pupils in self-assessment
Obj2: pupils can accurately identify their strengths and needs.

The extent of achievement of these objectives was broadly split between achieved and partially achieved, with very few indicating that any of their objectives had not yet been achieved.

Formative assessment

The respondents were asked to indicate which formative assessment strategies were being incorporated into developments. They were asked to identify strategies under generic headings and give examples of specific practice in the named areas. The responses have been categorised into the projects which reported the main focus as formative assessment and those which did not (see Table 5.40).

Table 5.40: Aspects of formative assessment being introduced through ASG activities

Aspects of formative practice	FA main focus (34)	FA not main focus (11)
Sharing learning outcomes with pupils	32	7
Sharing/agreeing assessment criteria with pupils	29	3
Discussing/agreeing criteria with other teachers	22	10
Questioning	31	3
Feedback	28	3
Self-assessment	28	4
Peer-assessment	23	3

Discussing and agreeing criteria with other teachers was recorded more in relation to 'sharing the standard' and less by those focusing on formative assessment strategies, though one might expect that teachers working collaboratively would also be discussing such things with colleagues. Peer-assessment appears to have been adopted less widely than the other strategies.

The number of strategies being adopted across each ASG varied. Some respondents indicated that each school was trying out some aspects so that across the cluster all strategies would be attempted. Others were introducing only one or

two aspects before expanding to include more. The number of strategies reported as being used is given in Table 5.41.

Table 5.41: Number of formative assessment strategies being developed within ASGs

No of FA strategies	FA main focus (34)	FA not main focus (11)
1	0	1
2	0	1
3	0	6
4	4	0
5	8	1
6	5	2
7	16	0

Examples of practice

Sharing learning outcomes with pupils: The majority of respondents indicated that sharing learning outcomes/intentions was a feature of developments, though only about two-thirds gave examples. The most frequently named strategies for sharing learning outcomes were 'WALT' (We are learning to …) and 'WILF' (What I'm looking for …), though respondents focused more on the process of sharing: for example, discussion at the beginning of the lesson, sheets with learning outcomes, use of whiteboard or wall displays with targets outlined. In relation to sharing learning outcomes, 10 respondents either referred to WALT and WILF together or only to developing success criteria. Only 4 respondents seemed to make a clear distinction, noting WALT as part of sharing learning outcomes and referring to WILF in relation to sharing assessment criteria with pupils.

Sharing/agreeing assessment criteria with pupils: Fewer respondents indicated that this was part of practice compared to sharing learning outcomes/intentions and only a half gave examples. As noted above, both WALT and WILF were named, though only a few, as indicated, distinguished WILF in relation to assessment criteria. The process of sharing was referred to, eg class discussion, discussion with other pupils ('buddies'), use of poster displays. One respondent noted that for secondary pupils the criteria might be class/teacher generated or the 'official' SQA criteria for S3 to S6. Several indicated that discussing criteria with pupils was being piloted or was still to be developed.

Practitioners may be used to thinking of the two aspects together and the question therefore might have made an unnecessary distinction; the numbers in the sample are small and therefore conclusions cannot be drawn. However, further investigation might be useful into the extent to which there is lack of clarity between learning intentions and the criteria by which judgements about the achievement of learning at the required level are made.

Discussing/agreeing criteria with other teachers: This was of slightly less importance to ASGs where formative assessment had been the main focus, but for the others, in particular moderation (sharing the standard), this was one of the prime purposes of the development. Again about half the respondents gave examples. For both 'formative assessment' and 'non-formative assessment' ASGs, discussion of criteria happened most often in cluster meetings, with several (12) mentioning that working groups had been established for that purpose. Discussions had also taken place

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within schools between teachers teaching the same stages or in secondary schools at departmental meetings (6 mentions). Two ASG representatives referred to discussion particularly in relation to *'National Tests, new National Assessments and their relationship to the 5-14 guidelines'*. Other approaches mentioned included preparing a folder of exemplars to be shared among teachers, discussions over examples of pupil work to agree levels and shadowing across sectors.

Questioning: Just under half the respondents gave examples of strategies being adopted in relation to questioning. These were:

- Increased think/answer/wait time (11)
- Increased use of open questions (5)
- 'No hands' (4)
- Discussion/use of 'fat' and 'thin' questions (3)
- Development of 'key' or 'clever thinking' questions related to subject (2)
- Peer/group discussion before answering
- Linking questions to learning intentions
- Share-it boards
- Traffic lights.

Feedback: A small number of respondents (4) indicated that this was an aspect still being developed. Less than half the respondents gave examples of approaches being developed in relation to feedback. These were:

- 2 stars and a wish (6)
- Comment only marking (4)
- Comments specifically linked to targets/criteria (2)
- Next steps feedback
- Using constructive feedback (rather than good or well done)
- Review at end of lesson
- Notes home
- Formative use of summative tests
- Thumbs up
- Individual discussion
- Comment bank for homework.

Self-assessment: Four respondents indicated that self-assessment was just being tried out/piloted in some of the cluster schools and so could give no examples. Less than half commented on the use of self-assessment. The following approaches were given:

- Traffic lights (9)
- Thumbs up (2)
- Making use of learning outcomes and criteria to check their own work
- Checklist to tick if they have achieved target and show work to support it
- Learning logs
- Spots on jotters
- 2 stars and a wish
- Commenting on their own work before giving it to the teacher
- Prompts on posters in class to remind pupils
- Teacher/pupil interview for PLPs.

Peer-assessment: It was noted that some schools were just starting to develop peer-assessment. Less than a third of respondents (13) gave examples of approaches to peer-assessment. These were:

- Marking in pairs or buddies (using criteria) (6)
- Exchange jotters for comments (2)
- Traffic lights (2)
- Discussion in pairs/groups (2)
- Group feedback
- Testing each other's knowledge with prompt cards
- Role play.

Influence of formative assessment on use of National Assessments

Ten respondents indicated that the use of formative assessment had influenced decisions about when pupils completed National Assessments, though 5 indicated that they could not comment for all schools in the cluster; this issue had not been discussed at ASG meetings.

Responses reflected teacher and pupil development. In-service and ASG meetings with ongoing discussion between teachers had increased teacher awareness and they were now *'more able to make a judgement about when pupils were ready to move on to the next level'*, while *'using writing criteria has highlighted to staff the need for specific criteria to be met'* (both comments from respondents based in primary sector). One respondent suggested that there must now be evidence in written work and in assessment logs before National Assessment is allowed. It was noted that *'self-assessment has enabled teachers to highlight areas within which pupils are not confident'* (secondary respondent).

Some indicated that pupils were now more aware and able to make judgements about their own readiness for example, *'pupils now more involved in planning their own targets and projecting when they will sit tests'* and *'pupils more aware of what is expected in reaching/covering the criteria in responses'* (both comments from respondents based in secondary sector).

Impact of ASG developments

Staff development

It was reported that members of the ASGs had taken part in a variety of assessment-related staff development activities. The responses are reported in Table 5.42. Over half of the respondents reported that members had participated in 4 or more of the undernoted activities.

Table 5.42: Staff development undertaken by ASG teachers during 2003-2004

	No. of ASGs
Peer staff development (ie events which allowed sharing between teachers in own school)	37 (82%)
Joint events organised for ASG members with other practitioners, eg teachers involved in pilot projects, local authority staff, LT Scotland development officers	40 (89%)
Joint events organised for ASG members with other guest speakers	19 (42%)
Local authority in-service, seminars, courses etc. with high profile guest speakers, eg Dylan Wiliam, Shirley Clarke, Ian Smith	39 (67%)
Other local authority events	20 (44%)
Nationally organised AifL activities	19 (22%)

Peer- and ASG-focused development were the most frequent types of staff development, though participation in local authority events, especially with high profile speakers, was important. Members were less likely to take part in national events.

Other staff development mentioned was regular contact with and advice from the local authority assessment development officers.

Progress of ASG activities

Respondents were asked to give an indication of the degree of progress they felt had been made by the ASG 'to date', that is up to around October 2004. Responses are given in Table 5.43.

Table 5.43: Progress made by ASGs
(number of responses)

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
	n	n	n	n
Developing Assessment Action Plan(s)	24	11	2	4
Achieving objectives of Action Plan(s)	16	14	6	4
Working collaboratively as an ASG	27	12	3	1
Raising awareness of assessment issues in the ASG schools	24	16	3	1
Improving assessment practices in schools	10	28	4	1
Improving liaison between sectors	19	17	4	2

Twenty-seven ASG contacts added comments on progress. The majority of these were positive, highlighting the strength of collaboration in some groups and that the above points were the focus of ongoing developments for 2004-05. Examples of comments are:

- *'In the session 03-04 all schools dipped into the ideas suggested in the training days … but the work lacked structure. We now have a cluster action plan … and this has given a boost to the project and will making monitoring progress and sharing ideas much easier'*
- *'The ASG has worked really well and has completed its initial task. This is now to be delivered to another cluster group'*

- *'While progress in schools may be variable, a positive response to strategies is common. New approaches now firmly embedded in many teachers'/schools' classroom practice'*
- *'The high school departments and the primary schools involved now all see formative assessment strategies as being "everyday" methodology. Strong cross sector links have been formed which are ongoing'*
- *'Materials developed will be used with the whole cluster in 2004-05'.*

Some indicated that work began in individual schools and collaboration and cross-sector development was only beginning to occur. Others indicated that although AifL is on the ASG plan, the work was still in initial stages. The one respondent who, it was noted at the beginning, was from the only school in the cluster, reported 'no progress' on all items.

Monitoring of developments

Twenty-six ASGs had arrangements for monitoring AifL developments. The responses varied in detail, with some outlining levels, eg in school (HT responsibility), within the cluster (cluster co-ordinator responsibility) and within the authority across the clusters (assessment co-ordinator) – each gathering and passing on information on progress being made. Others referred to some aspects of the responsibility at the different levels.

The most frequently mentioned level of monitoring was at cluster level (19), with representatives of each school reporting at cluster meetings on progress. Some reported that this was informal; in one case the cluster had produced a monitoring and evaluation sheet to be used by everyone.

The next most frequently mentioned level of monitoring was related to local authority responsibility (11). This was through reporting to the assessment co-ordinators and other quality improvement officers/educational development officers. For some it was part of the normal improvement planning and review process rather than a special focus on AifL.

Some mentioned monitoring within the schools (7). Several mentioned that developments were monitored as part of the normal school monitoring and evaluation process; two mentioned classroom observation by senior management and peers and one mentioned teachers keeping diaries indicating both progress and setbacks.

Benefits

Forty-three of the ASG contacts identified benefits of working as an ASG to take forward AifL developments.

Two main themes emerged: *sharing good practice, expertise and ideas* and *collaborative working*, though the two are clearly very closely linked.

Sharing good practice (23): Many of the responses did not elaborate on the benefits of sharing good practice, but where they did it related to the exchange of ideas and learning from each other. The opportunity to discuss was important. Six mentioned the importance of sharing leading to the development of a uniform approach or cohesiveness in teaching and learning across the schools involved in the ASG.

Collaborative working (22): Nine of the respondents specifically mentioned the development of new and/or improved links between primary and secondary teachers in terms of 'creating links', 'removing barriers', 'real advances in primary-secondary liaison' and 'new professional relationships'. Five specifically mentioned the benefits of collaboration in terms of continuity of the teaching and learning experience of pupils: for example, *'working to reduce the discontinuity between primary/secondary in terms of practice, methodology and curriculum'.* Other benefits of collaborative working included the mutual support it provided and the increased motivation of staff to start and stay on track.

Six mentions were made of *benefits to pupils,* including increased motivation and involvement in learning, pupil skill development, better understanding, greater awareness of how they learn and how to self-evaluate.

Other benefits given included:

- Funding allowed time to discuss the programme (4)
- Increased awareness of AifL
- Focus on improved teaching and learning
- Change in learning and teaching practice
- Refreshing to go over 5-14 guidelines
- Production of materials which would be used in other schools
- Sharing of financial resources.

Challenges

Forty-three of the ASG contacts named challenges in working as an ASG. The majority of these were *logistical challenges,* though some related to issues of *professional practice*.

Logistical challenges: Unsurprisingly, *time* was the most frequently mentioned challenge (24). This was primarily related to finding time and agreeing times to meet, due to the complexity of timetables and difficulties in getting everyone out of their schools at the same time. A further 6 mentioned the problem of getting together as a group, though did not relate it to time. There was also a lack of time for school representatives to feed back within their own schools what they had discussed/learned at the cluster meetings and events. One person said that they would have liked more time to be able to visit other schools and observe what others were doing.

Distance was a hindering factor in rural communities, with implications for time and cost.

ASG organisation and planning was seen by some as challenging. One person reported difficulties in getting someone to agree to be the ASG co-ordinator, with a resulting lack of leadership and agreement on a joint focus. Three others also reported a lack of agreed focus; this was because of the difficulty in balancing whole-group and individual school priorities and also having no cluster agreement with individuals choosing their own priorities. One reported that their cluster grouping was too large and that this made it difficult *('and arguably less than appropriate')* to develop a common approach.

Three respondents mentioned conflict with *other priorities* and 'top down' demands. With respect to three clusters in one authority, it was reported that the timing of the receipt of information and funding did not allow schools to include the work in their development plans.

Staff changes were also mentioned as a factor that led to AifL having lower priorities in some schools.

Professional practice: At the individual level a small number (3) mentioned that taking on board new research and its implications for practice in the classroom was challenging, but more (10) expressed concern about convincing other teachers: for example, maintaining the motivation and enthusiasm of teachers who had been introduced to new ideas, involving more staff and convincing them of the benefits.

Two primary-based contacts referred to the challenge of working with the secondary schools – one because it required seeing *'a different view'*, and another who said, *'Primaries are used to working together, the challenge has been to persuade the secondary to participate in a two-way relationship rather than be the "Big Brother" '.*

Next steps

Forty-one ASG contacts responded to the question about 'next steps' in relation to the ASG for 2004-2005:

- One respondent indicated that the ASG had been disbanded due to staff changes and that another cluster would be using the materials and assessing the work (moderation of maths)

- 10 respondents indicated only that they would be continuing the work of the ASG, and for some plans had still to be discussed/developed

- 23 respondents reported that the work would be extended in a variety of ways: for example, develop more materials; introduce more/new strategies; extend to other areas of the curriculum, other levels, other subjects, other departments (in secondary schools), further year groups; spread the work to other clusters or schools (2 specifically mentioned 'rolling out of PLPs' to other schools)

- 12 respondents mentioned ongoing staff development, both for existing participants and also to involve more teachers

- 2 mentioned the development of cluster policies for teaching, learning and assessment.

At the time of the questionnaire survey some groups were clearly more advanced in their planning than others, though all were planning ongoing developments.

Key issues from ASG survey

Local authority perspective
- Across the country around 30% of school clusters had become involved in the AifL Programme as Associated Schools Groups, with some authorities including all clusters and others between a half and a third (depending on authority size). A small number of non-geographically based clusters were formed: for example, around a common interest such as maths or language developments, or on a subject basis at secondary level.
- The majority of ASGs were focusing on developing formative assessment, with around 10% developing PLPs (some jointly with formative assessment) and 10% focusing on 'sharing the standard'.
- Progress of the ASGs was variable, from 'floundering' to 'embracing the project'. Overall, authority co-ordinators thought progress was being made, despite the difficulties of not fitting in with the planning cycle and tight prescribed timescales.

ASG survey
- The survey targeted ASGs where collaborative working across sectors had been reported by assessment co-ordinators. Responses represented 40% of the total list of ASGs and 20 authorities.
- Cluster size varied from 3 to 25 schools; while some large clusters retained the involvement of all or most of the schools, the optimum size for gaining and retaining involvement was groupings of 6 or less.
- Formative assessment was the main focus of developments, with a small number developing aspects of moderation. ASGs in which the main focus was not formative assessment were also developing some formative assessment strategies. The main stages involved were P6 and P7 and, to a lesser extent, S1.

Impact
- Peer in-school staff development and joint cluster activities had been the main types of staff development, with over 80% of ASGs participating in such events.
- Progress towards ASG objectives and the extent of collaboration varied, with over half reporting good progress in developments and around 10% reporting little or no progress. Collaborative working had made good progress in over two-thirds of the ASGs and improved cross-sector liaison in about half. Developments would continue in 2004 to 2005.
- Sharing learning intentions/outcomes and questioning strategies were the most frequently reported formative assessment strategies being developed, with peer assessment being the least frequent.
- For a small number, formative assessment practices were influencing decisions about when pupils completed National Assessments.
- The main benefits of being involved in the ASG developments were sharing good practice, expertise and ideas, and collaborative working. These had led, in some cases, to cohesiveness in teaching and learning across the ASG schools and to continuity of the learning experience for pupils across the primary-secondary transition. Benefits to pupils included increased motivation and involvement in learning.
- The main challenges were logistical issues in terms of time, organising and planning, and in some rural communities, distance. Changing professional practice was also a challenge, both in terms of maintaining the motivation and enthusiasm of teachers and involving more staff and convincing them of the benefits.

5.9 Summary of key points emerging from the second phase of the evaluation

Developments and progress during 2003 to 2004

- Local authorities had appointed additional staff to take forward AifL developments: 14 had appointed development officers during 2003 to 2004, with a further 6 in 2004 to 2005. Roles varied, but the majority were responsible for taking forward operational aspects such as organising in-service and supporting schools, while assessment co-ordinators focused on strategic management. In some authorities these roles were shared. Ten had not appointed additional staff.

- All authorities had delivered a programme of staff development on assessment-related issues. Participation in staff development across authorities varied from all schools in some authorities to one-fifth of primary and one-tenth of secondary schools in others. In about one-third of authorities more than 40% of primary teachers were involved. However, in the majority of authorities, fewer than 20% of secondary and special needs teachers have participated. The main focus was formative assessment, with PLPs mentioned by a few authorities.

- The majority of authorities had engaged clusters of schools in Associated Schools Group developments, with 30% of identified school clusters becoming involved. Again the main focus was formative assessment.

- The HE representatives had all engaged in assessment-related research and all identified ways in which AifL had been introduced into Initial Teacher Education and other teacher education provision.

- In response to the school survey, 16% of the targeted schools reported that no further developments had taken place for a variety of reasons and so they could not complete the questionnaire.

- Only 53% of the original pilot schools responded to the survey. In the majority expansion of the original work had occurred or was planned, mainly through involving more teachers, year groups and other areas of the curriculum. 74% of these schools reported undertaking developments of aspects of AifL other than the work of their original projects.

- Schools involved originally in Project 1 (formative assessment) were more likely to be expanding their original work. For those involved originally in other projects, formative assessment was the most frequently mentioned new development, followed by PLPs.

The impact on policy and practice

- Two-thirds of headteachers thought that the AifL Programme had substantially influenced their development planning, though primary headteachers thought this more than secondary headteachers.

- With respect to National Priorities, headteachers were more likely to indicate that AifL had impact on Achievement and Attainment than on other priorities, although primary headteachers were more likely than secondary headteachers to see AifL complementing all aspects of the curriculum.

- Involvement in AifL was encouraging the development or revision of school assessment policies.

- Headteachers and teachers agreed that there was increased awareness of research related to teaching, learning and assessment, clearer understanding of assessment, changes to classroom practice, more varied approaches to assessment in use, improved feedback to pupils and more meaningful discussion with pupils about their learning. Generally, this agreement was stronger for those who had been involved in Project 1 from the beginning.

- The greatest challenges to introducing change were time and engaging all staff. Time was at a premium both for preparing materials and engaging in dialogue with colleagues, due to competing priorities and also, in some cases, lack of supply cover. Agreement that there was resistance to new developments and difficulty in changing practice had increased since the first survey. Maintaining enthusiasm and engaging new staff was more challenging as the programme progressed.

The impact on pupil motivation and attainment
- Some teachers thought it was still too early to comment on benefits to pupils but, for those who did, there was broad agreement that pupils had become more actively involved in their learning, were better equipped to assess their own learning, had shown increased confidence and self-esteem and were themselves positive about the changes. There was less confidence in the ability of pupils to set targets and engage in peer-assessment. Generally, there was stronger agreement on all of these issues from those involved originally in Project 1.
- About a quarter of teachers indicated that they had evidence of improved pupil attainment, but the majority thought it was too early for this. This had changed little from the 2003 survey.

Staff development
- As noted above, local authorities had been actively involved in promoting staff development in assessment during 2003 to 2004.
- The main types of staff development in which people had participated were peer-delivered 'in-house' events, joint events with cluster schools and local authority-delivered courses. From the local authority perspective, peer development and events involving national experts had the greatest impact, followed by local authority-delivered events.
- There was broad agreement across all participants that progress had been made in providing extensive staff development, though with the cautionary note that much work was still required to reach the wider teaching community.
- The style of staff development encouraged in AifL and, in particular, by Project 1, took the form of 'action research' which involved recall days, discussing with colleagues, reflection and writing case study reports. There was evidence that not all headteachers and teachers had attended national events or contributed to case studies.

PLPs and meeting the needs of pupils, parents, teachers and others
- The development of PLPs had been slow, with only 15 authorities indicating they were in the authority improvement plan. There were different opinions as to the purpose, and hence content, of PLPs, with local authority, HE and school representatives all contesting their suitability for recording and reporting purposes. Rather they were a tool to support learning and therefore related more closely to developments in formative assessment.
- The specific focus on PLPs in meeting information needs was not addressed in the second survey, due to the lack of widespread PLP development. However, a general question was asked on how all aspects of AifL met these needs. The greatest contribution was in meeting the information needs of pupils and the class teacher, with teachers, in particular, agreeing that developments had improved these aspects. About 40% of headteachers and about a third of teachers thought that substantial progress was being made with regard to meeting the information needs of parents. Some thought it was still too early to make judgements on how AifL contributed to meeting information needs.

- Benefits to parents in terms of increased contact with the school and teacher, and better understanding of how they can help their child, were project-specific, with participants in Projects 2, 3 and 9 recognising these benefits and others indicating that this was not a focus of the development. Some indicated that relationships had always been good and AifL had had no impact; others recognised that improvements had occurred but not necessarily because of AifL.

Convergence of assessment arrangements
- An important aspect of moving towards a coherent system of assessment is the drawing together of the contributions of the separate projects. At the beginning of session 2004-2005, both headteachers and teachers reported a lack of awareness of projects other than the one in which they had been involved. They knew more about formative assessment and PLPs but reported knowing little or nothing about Projects 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10; 70% of headteachers and 49% of teachers indicated that they had a clear understanding of how the projects linked together to form a coherent system.
- The issue of bringing together classroom assessment and more formal means of assessment such as National Assessments, AAP and 5-14 testing was less clear. At the time of the second phase of the evaluation there was a lack of clarity regarding the latter three, as the outcomes of the 'Consultation on Assessment and Testing: 3-14' had not been published. There was evidence of perceived conflict between formative assessment and the summative approaches of National Assessments and other tests and examinations.
- Local authority co-ordinators expressed concern about difficulties schools had experienced in the use of the online National Assessment Bank. Almost all headteachers thought that using the online National Assessment Bank meant additional workload and costs to schools, with only a quarter agreeing that it was easier to manage than the previous approach.

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AifL Programme issues
- *Collaboration and community of practice:* AifL developments had brought different groups together to work in new relationships, though not all within the same frame of reference. Both LA co-ordinators and HE representatives identified the opportunity for networking as a major strength of the programme. However, while authorities were working with each other and sharing ideas and some of the HE representatives were working cross-institutionally, relationships between local authorities and HEIs were still developing. The main sources of support for teachers remained within their own schools (management and other teachers), though schools were working more with other schools. However, cross-sector and wider networking was less developed for the original pilot schools. The Associated Schools Groups were beginning to encourage greater links within clusters and across sectors.
- *Practitioner-led developments:* The central role of the classroom teacher in taking forward developments and engaging in practitioner research was seen as a major strength of the programme, contributing to successful outcomes in many schools. This had led to high levels of commitment and enthusiasm. The process of 'growing policy', that is, allowing it to emerge rather than imposing it from the top down, was appreciated.
- *Funding:* The provision of funding to the pilot schools was recognised as a major strength of the programme, with almost 50% of headteachers saying they would not have undertaken any of the developments without it. The main use was for the purchase of human resources – for supply cover or to pay teachers to work in their own time.

- *Sustainability:* About half of the authority representatives indicated that AifL would be 'embedded' into teaching and learning policies and plans and that authority funding would be allocated to ongoing developments. Others thought that additional funding was necessary to maintain the level of development and to continue with developments in PLPs, use of ICT and reporting. Headteachers were also divided between those who thought they could sustain developments from their existing school budgets and those who saw the need for ongoing additional funding.
- *Monitoring progress:* Around half of the local authority co-ordinators indicated that AifL issues were integrated into existing quality assurance procedures.
- *Planning:* A recurrent theme from local authorities and headteachers was the mismatch between improvement and development planning and the funding cycle.

6. Discussion and implications

6.1 Introduction

The Assessment is for Learning Programme is probably one of the most ambitious developments in Scottish education in the past 25 years, involving all sectors across all 32 local authorities. The programme evolved and shifted in response to the experiences of teachers and schools working on the projects, while holding on to the key purpose of providing teachers with a coherent assessment system that would provide both for individual needs and accountability. The evaluation, which began shortly after the programme was introduced to schools, monitored and took account of these changes although the original aims of the evaluation (p6) remained relevant. They were:

a) assess the extent to which the Personal Learning Plan developed within the programme is considered by pupils, parents, teachers and other education professionals to meet their perceived information needs
b) assess the degree to which the current diverse arrangements for assessment have successfully been brought into line with one another, and the extent to which the resulting convergence is considered beneficial by users of the assessment information
c) assess the extent to which involvement in the programme is perceived by participating teachers and head teachers to have been useful in staff development terms
d) assess the impact of the programme on assessment practices in schools, including the form, frequency and nature of the assessment and the use made of assessment results in guiding learning
e) assess the impact of the programme on pupil motivation to learn and on pupil attainment in key subject areas
f) identify the particular strengths and successes of the development programme and indicate how any weaknesses in the development process itself might be usefully addressed.

This chapter discusses the key findings from the evaluation, assesses the extent to which the aims were achieved over the 2 years of the study and draws implications for further development. The discussion addresses each of the aims in turn.

6.2 Discussion

The AifL Programme targeted the day-to-day practice in Scottish schools, the fundamental relationship between learning and teaching. The evaluation set out to gather evidence of the impact of the AifL Programme on practice in schools and to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the programme design. Drawing together the evidence from the evaluation has been complex, in part due to the breadth and diversity of the projects undertaken within the programme and in part due to the responsive way in which the programme has been managed, i.e. responding to feedback as it progressed and modifying plans accordingly. As a result, the data in this report describe the development of the AifL Programme as it engaged schools and authorities and how the various groups of participants recognised and responded to issues as they arose. This section considers the key findings and considers the implications for further development.

Overall, the evidence indicates that impact varied with project and across sectors and authorities. Most projects began later than intended, for a variety of reasons, and did

not complete to the anticipated timescale. This was in part due to the extensive preparation that was needed (audit, action plan, consultation with DOs and LA co-ordinators), particularly in determining where the focus within their own school should be (area of the curriculum, [st]ages of pupils, etc). Schools that had 'assessment' in the development plan seem to have been more prepared to address the issues than schools where other priorities were already in place. In terms of the aims of the evaluation, a number of headteachers and teachers felt that it was 'too early' to judge the impact of the programme. However, there was evidence that, in some schools and authorities, involvement in the programme had begun to change practice.

Meeting the needs of pupils, parents, teachers and others

One of the key aims of the AifL Programme was the development of Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) to the extent that they would meet more effectively the information needs of a range of stakeholders. The development of PLPs was relatively slow within the context of the wider programme. In the September 2004 survey, only 5 local authority assessment co-ordinators mentioned developing PLPs as part of their remit, while half had PLPs in the authority improvement plans. Those schools with PLPs in place from earlier initiatives, such as being part of New Community Schools, continued to develop them. As confirmed in the separate evaluation of PLPs (Robertson and Dakers, 2004), there was wide and varied practice across schools: some focused on curricular issues while others concentrated on personal development and interests; some were used to support pupils' personal reviews of their learning only and not used as part of the reporting process; in other schools they became part of reporting to parents. One of the key issues to be resolved was both the purpose and content of PLPs. Table 5.35 indicates that progress was limited in this area.

In the October 2003 survey, teachers who had been involved in the development of PLPs were asked to comment on the extent to which they thought PLPs met the information needs of pupils, the class teacher, other teachers, parents and LAs. Many thought that it was too early to make a judgement, particularly with reference to other teachers and local authorities; the percentages who thought they had helped were 20% and 10% respectively. However, around 50% thought that they did improve the ways in which pupils' information needs were met and just over 40% thought they helped with the class teacher's information needs. A similar percentage thought that the use of PLPs contributed to meeting parents' information needs. Headteachers in the survey gave similar patterns of responses to the questions on information needs as met through the AifL Programme in general and not specifically PLPs.

A year further on, in September 2004, the question was repeated, but with the focus on the whole AifL Programme rather than on PLPs only (as a result of the lack of widespread adoption in the interim). About 50% of both headteachers and teachers thought that developments were contributing to pupil and class teacher information needs; between 30% and 40% thought developments were contributing to parents' needs; between 20% and 30% thought the needs of other teachers were being assisted; and between 20% and 30% thought there was improvement towards meeting local authority information needs. Again for many it was still too early to comment, or their work had not been directed at the needs of certain of the stakeholders. However, there did seem to have been some growth in the belief that the initiatives had improved the situation and that it was worth continuing.

Convergence of assessment arrangements

The programme was designed to encourage links across projects, working towards a more coherent system of assessment (internal and external, across the school system). For many, in each of the surveys, it was still too early to make a confident judgement on the extent to which coherence had been achieved.

A key aim of the AifL Action Plan is to rationalise national testing, the 5-14 survey and the Assessment of Achievement Programme but, more fundamentally, to be coherent it should also include links to classroom- and teacher-led assessment, bringing formative and summative purposes and strategies together to provide an overall framework for the assessment and monitoring of performance and progress, at a range of levels. This requires a *'constructive alignment between aims, learning and teaching processes and summative assessment methods to ensure effective learning'* (Biggs, 1996). In the case of the AifL Programme, this means aligning curricular standards/outcomes which are the focus of teaching with what is assessed, be it in the class, externally set (NAB) or externally administered (AAP or, in future, the Scottish Survey of Achievement), i.e. pupils should only ever be assessed on what they have been taught, rather than being taught the things on which they are to be assessed. Careful consideration needs to be given as to how summative measures (internally or externally set) feed back into the system and can, therefore, be used formatively.

Seeing the programme as a whole and being aware of the inter-relationships between projects is necessary to appreciate how each contributes to a more coherent system of assessment. By September 2004 many participants were still indicating a lack of awareness of some of the projects; they were most likely to know about Project 1, formative assessment, and Project 2, PLPs. While the PLP is envisaged as a unifying force, bringing all of the strands of assessment together, as long as tensions remain about its purposes, audience and format it cannot effectively bring about this unification.

Respondents were more positive about the progress being made on bringing together the arrangements for the external assessment components – the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 Survey of Attainment. The Consultation on Assessment, Testing and Reporting occurred during the evaluation and uncertainty over its outcome may have contributed to the hesitancy that some groups showed in their responses during the evaluation. The Ministerial Response to the Consultation (SEED, 2004) has since been published and should clarify some of the uncertainty felt by teachers and schools.

Overall, about two thirds of headteachers and half of the teachers were aware of how the projects linked together to contribute to a coherent system.

Usefulness of staff development activities

Staff development was provided in various forms and from a range of sources. Overall, respondents from all groups agreed that good progress had been made in providing staff development (Table 5.37). There were some issues of travel to national or regional events for those in more remote areas, but those who could get to them found them useful. In particular they enjoyed meeting with other teachers working on AifL and learning from them. Many authorities ran sessions in addition to those provided centrally, some appointing or seconding teachers to co-ordinate and develop AifL-related activities.

The nature of the staff development provided changed over time. Initially, when Project 1 was established, the team from King's College, London, provided more direct support. Teachers involved in the project were assigned 'buddies', and regular recall days and conferences to support dialogue and discussion were set up. They were further encouraged to engage in reflection through keeping diaries and, if possible, in establishing 'control' groups to identify benefits of implementing formative assessment strategies. The grant provided by SEED was used to provide cover and release staff for development work, or to pay for work in teachers' own time, outwith school hours. Participants in other projects likewise had the support of development officers, conferences and funding, but had less academic and research-based input. This was a considerable level of commitment to pilot schools that could not, however, be sustained as the programme expanded to encompass all 10 individual projects and schools beyond the initial pilot schools.

The developments were driven by the teachers, once the initial agreement to participate was in place, and followed a form of 'action research' where reflection on practice, planned change and evaluation characterised the approach taken. Where a number of teachers within a school or cluster participated, this encouraged a sense of collegiality and the beginnings of a community of practice.

The changes expected of teachers were quite significant, impacting upon their understanding of assessment and daily practice in fundamental ways rather than providing a 'quick fix' towards improvement in, for example, the quality of feedback to pupils. The programme essentially set out to change the culture in schools in relation to assessment practice, and consequently learning useful tips and handy routines was insufficient.

Responses in 2004 indicate that a considerable amount of staff development was under way (pp75-78), although some authorities were doing a lot more than others in this respect. The overall view was that there was still a great deal to do if the programme was to impact upon the wider teaching community and lead to changes in the system as a whole.

The impact on practice

For several projects, an implicit if not explicit aim was to change practice in classrooms in quite significant ways. For practitioners this can be challenging, if not threatening, but overall there was strong agreement from headteachers and teachers that being involved in AifL had led to changed practices. There was evidence that achieving change had been challenging, indicating the extent to which teachers' existing beliefs about assessment (and how children learn) were being questioned.

Both formative assessment and the effective use of PLPs imply substantive changes to classroom practice requiring a strong learner-centred focus. The Draft Framework for Personal Learning Plans states:

> *In schools, such personal and group variations have to be accommodated within a largely agreed curriculum. Through purposeful conversation, personal learning planning tailors provision to the needs and characteristics of each individual. Personal learning planning acknowledges, too, that learning takes place in all aspects of our lives.*
>
> (Education & Software Consultants Ltd, 2004, p3)

Thus PLPs in particular require a much clearer focus on the individual than previously, and teachers reported this as challenging. In Projects 4 and 5, the concept of evidence and need to consider a range of different types of evidence, as well as the need to make the criteria explicit, were demanding for many teachers.

For some teachers, getting to grips with formative assessment, with its implications for the way children learn and teachers teach, was disconcerting, while others saw only opportunities. Where it was taken on board and fundamental changes in practice occurred, important changes included: better understanding of pupils' learning; improved dialogue with pupils and parents; and better feedback. Some did not engage with the deeper issues and adopted some of the strategies and routines (e.g. traffic lights, two stars and a wish and wait time) more superficially, without really engaging with the underpinning theories and philosophy.

There is evidence that, for many teachers, the tension between formative and summative assessment remained, primarily because they appeared to see them as 'either/or' concepts rather than as part of a continuum where the same evidence could be interpreted in various ways depending on the purpose of the assessment event.

The evaluation did not investigate directly the extent to which teachers' pedagogy changed as a result of their involvement in AifL, although some sense of this comes through in some of the comments from teachers in the separate evaluation of Project 1 (Hallam *et al*, 2004).

The impact on the pupils

The programme anticipated 5 key benefits for pupils as a result of developing practice in formative assessment in particular: raised attainment/standards, especially for lower achieving pupils; greater involvement in learning; improved behaviour; increased motivation; and raised self-esteem/confidence.

Overall, there was general agreement that the pupils had benefited from the initiative. Teachers reported pupils' apparent enjoyment of the activities and greater involvement in their own learning and progress. In terms of attainment, about one third of teachers reported that they had evidence of improved attainment, including class/national test results, the quality of pupil work, increased participation and improved discussion. Those pupils who were involved in self-assessment, setting targets, using learning outcomes and in reflection on their performance and progress developed a greater awareness of their own learning and raised confidence in their abilities.

Increased motivation and attainment amongst pupils was one of the aims of the programme, but not all projects were designed with this as an explicit aim, although all might be seen as contributing implicitly. For example, Projects 8 and 9 did not directly involve pupils in all participating schools and so might be considered as those least likely to impact on motivation and attainment. However, the involvement of parents in Project 9 would be expected to have some influence on pupil motivation, albeit indirectly perhaps. Where projects did impact directly on pupils, there was some evidence of improved motivation and attainment, but fewer teachers considered that behaviour had been influenced. Many reported that their classes were generally well-behaved anyway, limiting the opportunity for improvement.

The AifL projects

One of the key strengths of the programme has been its ability to reflect upon and respond to feedback from the schools and local authorities as work on the individual projects has developed. Three dimensions to assessment have now been identified: Assessment 'AS Learning', 'FOR Learning' and 'OF Learning'. The projects within the AifL Programme can be clustered under these headings.
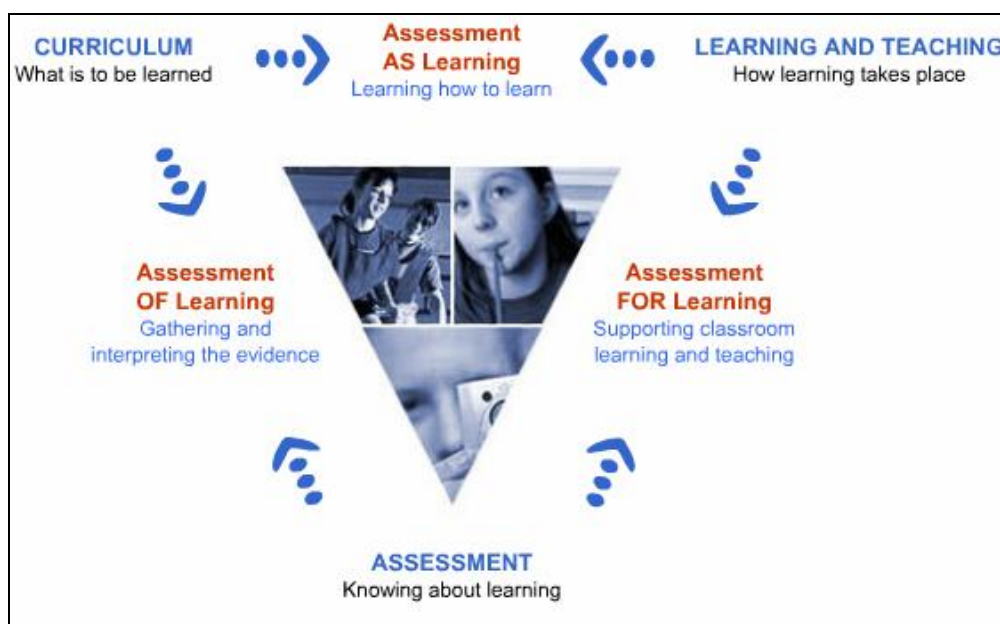
Some issues were identified in relation to specific projects within the programme. The PLPs were developed as a means of developing coherence; most developments would come together in the compilation and monitoring of learning plans. Due to the slow development of outcomes from Projects 2 and 3, these did not really develop as intended and are still at an early stage of development in some schools. There has been some feedback that indicates that teachers found them time consuming and a significant addition to their workload. The diversity of approaches taken by different authorities and schools makes it difficult to predict the extent to which they will provide a unifying focus for assessment activities.

As many reported, it is too early to draw conclusions regarding the success of PLPs in binding together the various assessment purposes. The extent to which Projects 2 (PLPs), 3 (Managing PLPs) and 8 (ICT to Support PLPs) were working together to establish the new system was difficult to determine and there was some evidence of them progressing independently.

The AifL Development Programme

A key aim of the evaluation was to investigate the extent to which the conception and design of the overall programme and the strategies and tactics used to engage and sustain teachers' involvement had been effective. Generally, the focus on assessment was seen as relevant, and the prominence given to the role of the teacher and to the school's needs were important dimensions in commending it to practitioners. However, there was, among some, a lack of understanding about the purposes of the overall programme and varied understanding about the way in which the ten projects linked together to form a coherent programme. There are indications that some people found the bundling of the 10 projects into a single programme

somewhat confusing. This is an area that SEED have acknowledged and are working towards clarifying with, for example, the 'as', 'for; and 'of' approaches and the Assessment Toolkit (www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess). This is a longer term aim which will take time and persistence if the extent of impact on practice to date is any indication.

A number of strengths and limitations in specific aspects of the programme were identified in the evidence gathered during the evaluation.

Diversity of practice

The various projects were implemented in diverse ways within schools and authorities, with both positive and negative outcomes. On the positive side, the way in which projects were introduced to schools fostered a sense of ownership of and investment in the process which, in turn, encouraged commitment and perseverance. In particular, schools/teachers commented positively on having a say in the focus and priorities for their own school/class. In addition, the AifL Programme management team proved to be responsive to the issues raised by schools and this was greatly appreciated.

Overall, the central role of the classroom teacher in taking forward developments ('grass-roots' or 'bottom-up' development) was perceived as a considerable strength, as were the opportunities provided for engaging in reflection and discussion with colleagues and others. In some projects, where discussion across stages, schools or sectors was necessary, this was a new experience for many of those involved. Thus the **process** by which projects were developed was perceived as bringing people on board and giving a sense of purpose to their work.

On the negative side, this very diversity means that, overall, the picture can appear somewhat fragmented and haphazard and this, in turn, makes it difficult to generalise either within or across projects. The highly tailored nature of each individual school project makes it more difficult for teachers in other schools to see the relevance of the outcomes to their own situation. The **products**, in terms of case study reports and lessons learned, are far more difficult to bring together into an overview of assessment in practice, generating guiding principles for the school and classroom. This is needed, however, to counteract what is, understandably, a fairly fragmented implementation.

While teachers became involved in their own projects, often deeply, they showed a lack of awareness of the other AifL projects and little understanding of the elements and purposes of the wider programme. In some projects, parents and pupils were aware of the developments and their intended aims but, in most, they remained unaware.

The diversity of projects added to the complexity of compiling the Toolkit (www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess). The Toolkit was designed as *'a dynamic resource that will evolve and develop as the programme progresses'* and includes project case studies, descriptions of classroom activities and a glossary. Two issues arise here. Firstly, teachers need to log on to the website, and many were not doing so during the period of the evaluation. Secondly, having logged on and accessed the materials, they need support in teasing out the key messages for themselves, their pupils and their school.

Funding

The availability of funds, which schools could allocate according to need, was perceived as a significant strength of the programme. Used mainly for staffing cover, this gave teachers time to plan, discuss and work together away from the pressures of the classroom, fostering a sense of commitment and community. The funding allowed projects to get off the ground but this raises the question of sustainability – the extent to which projects will continue to flourish in the absence of central funding. Where assessment was incorporated within improvement and development planning, schools felt that ongoing developments should not need additional external funding. However, some schools and authorities were of the view that further funding was required to continue to develop aspects like PLPs; not all were prepared to fund assessment activities from their own budgets, if such funding were to be needed. There are implications for the long term impact of the programme if some authorities do and some do not continue to support the development, whether financially or otherwise. The varied impact and patchy development observed during the pilot phases will continue, perhaps leading to greater disparity between schools across authorities.

Staff development and support

In terms of learning, teaching and assessment, practitioners saw the focus on learning and teaching, the place of assessment within the teaching and learning process and the role of the teacher as considerable strengths. While the Assessment 5-14 Guidelines argued that *'assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching'* (SOED, 1991), the AifL Programme has begun to demonstrate how that might be achieved. Considerable resources, in addition to the funding given to schools, were invested in staff development, using a range of strategies.

Bright spots for teachers were the national and regional conferences mounted through AifL. These provided opportunities to compare notes, form alliances and learn from each other, and were highly valued. In general, local events were seen to have greater impact, perhaps because more people were able to access them and become involved. One of the important issues emerging from the evaluation is the importance of 'hot' information in generating interest and commitment, i.e. the feedback and advice from colleagues and other practitioners across the country is seen as far more relevant and immediate (and trustworthy) than when presented as 'cold' information in printed reports and guidelines.

In the latter vein, a key resource for communicating with teachers and others is the AifL website (www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess), hosted by Learning and Teaching Scotland. This was used in a limited way by teachers and was not a significant source of support or information while they were working on their projects. It is worth considering how the website might become more relevant to practitioners. It may, however, be more useful in distributing information, guidance and advice to those not originally involved in the programme.

Competing demands on schools and teachers

A recurrent theme was the need to balance AifL developments with other initiatives, both in terms of competing for time and with regard to the nature of the demands being made. A recurrent challenge for authorities and schools was finding time amongst the pressures of other priorities and initiatives. The framework provided by the National Priorities helps to see links between initiatives in that several have similar or related aims towards one or more of the priorities. It is of concern that

many teachers see new initiatives as competing and discrete rather than complementary developments, thereby failing to perceive their inter-relatedness.

The timing and timescales of the initiatives also influenced development. Both local authorities and schools (particularly secondary schools) reported difficulties in taking on board new developments outwith the development planning cycle. Some disruption was experienced when cycles of activity did not coincide with receipt of funding, sometimes due to the schedule of payments (based on the financial year rather than project phase) or because of delays in the money actually arriving in the schools.

In secondary schools, involvement tended to focus on individual departments and was less visible across the school than in primaries. Overall, secondary schools were less responsive than primary schools, although secondary teachers were more likely to report that they were already addressing assessment issues, or planning to do so, than were primaries. Projects in primary schools were more likely to involve a greater proportion of the teachers and have a higher profile generally. Secondary schools have traditionally looked to external assessment and certification as the cornerstone of practice. This may explain, in part, their lower level of involvement with classroom-based elements of the programme. Particular consideration should be given to ways of engaging secondary schools more meaningfully.

Local authorities responded differently to the demands of the programme, providing variable levels of support to schools and teachers. This became more apparent towards the end of the evaluation when thoughts were beginning to turn to longer term support, once the initial impetus of the AifL Programme diminished. In one of the case study authorities, for example, a primary headteacher was seconded to co-ordinate staff development across the schools within the authority, while in others the role remained, essentially, one of liaison. The data collected from the local authorities was used to identify levels of commitment to the AifL Programme (see Appendix 5). The analysis suggested that over half the authorities had shown considerable or high levels of commitment to developments, with just under a half showing lower levels of commitment. The approaches adopted by authorities and those most likely to lead to successful implementation in schools are matters which require further investigation.

Given the multi-faceted nature of the programme and the degree of change required, it was not surprising that few schools and authorities were able to meet the relevant milestones. The Scottish Executive responded sympathetically to this, extending deadlines for reports, etc. for schools and allowing schools to set their own pace, within limits. This willingness to listen and respond to feedback was appreciated by project teams.

Theory, policy and practice

A significant feature of the programme was the bringing together of people from three different aspects of education – policy makers, researchers and practitioners – in close proximity. Like other aspects of the programme, this has had varied success and has been dependent upon the attitudes and inclinations of those involved. The role of the higher education representatives has been the least well defined. In some projects and authorities they have worked closely with the practitioners, bringing research findings and related materials to their attention (see p62 for detail). It is unclear as to the extent to which teachers took on board the theoretical underpinnings of the projects they tackled; some did and some did not.

There is little or no tradition of researchers working closely with practitioners (and policy makers) on national initiatives; they have tended to contribute to the initial design or to the evaluation. While it has had limited success to date, it is an aspect of the programme that might be further developed in other initiatives. All three groups have a legitimate place in the management of change in education. However, how this approach can continue to be supported in the future is an important question.

The interplay of theory and practice is also evident in the use of the Black and Wiliam report and materials (1998) to underpin much of the early work of the programme, particularly in the area of formative assessment. Evidence from interviews and discussions with teachers indicates considerable awareness of the 'black box' materials and how they relate to formative assessment. Authorities and schools subsequently drew on expertise such as that of Shirley Clarke for staff development activities. More generally, involvement in AifL has triggered a number of dissertations on assessment from teachers undertaking postgraduate study at the University of Strathclyde, and anecdotal evidence indicates a similar pattern in other universities. A review of these documents should add to the research evidence on the impact of the programme.

6.3   Looking to the future

The Scottish Executive aims to have the principles of the AifL Programme in place in schools across Scotland by 2007. This poses two key challenges: firstly, to sustain the work already under way and, secondly, to bring in those schools not already involved. It is important to note that AifL is an attempt to change the culture in schools regarding assessment and that doing so takes time, certainly longer than the period of existence of the programme. The evidence raises a number of implications for further activity.

Sustaining progress

There is a danger that, having engaged with the AifL Programme, some schools and teachers will feel that they have 'done it' and that assessment is now 'fixed'. The evidence indicates that there is still a considerable way to go, even within those schools who readily took on the challenge of one of the projects, with indications that maintaining motivation and progress can prove difficult. It is a change of culture within schools that is the ultimate aim, not just a change in practice in a few teachers.

There are the beginnings of communities of practice, within and across schools and authorities, and these should be nourished to encourage a shared understanding of teaching, learning **and** assessment and the inter-relationships between them. These communities should include policymakers and educational researchers, bringing together a range of expertise and acknowledging the interaction of theory, practice and policy in the classroom. The programme has shifted focus to associated school groups or clusters, increasing the likelihood of collaborative working and, in turn, shared understanding.

In terms of support and staff development, the Toolkit provides a resource to draw on and dissemination events continue to be organised centrally. More positive developments include instances where local authorities have taken the programme on board and appointed staff to manage and co-ordinate further development in assessment. It is important that schools and authorities take ownership of the developments if they are to develop further.

Faculties of Education have a role to play in ensuring that newly qualified teachers have a clear grasp of formative principles and the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment. Responses from the HE representatives indicated that progress was being made in this area, with views that it was important for faculty staff to model the processes as well as promote them.

Involving all schools

Getting the teachers onside will be an important factor, particularly in the secondary school sector. In the majority of instances, those involved had volunteered to participate in the programme (though a few were considered in need of the staff development that involvement would bring, according to their authorities). This was most effectively achieved where schools were given freedom in choosing the focus of the project (e.g. stages, curricular area). However, it did result in a degree of diversity that makes commonality of practice difficult to attain. Some balance between choice and conformity of approach needs to be established – in the words of one local authority co-ordinator, 'structured but not straitjacketed'.

Change is more likely where the teachers are convinced of the potential benefits that an initiative can bring and where the emphasis is on their practice, their day-to-day concerns with learning and teaching. This was a successful aspect of involvement with the programme and one which might be usefully exploited in future phases: 'hot' information, i.e. from colleagues, friends and the more informal, personal sources, has been shown to be more effective in changing practice than 'cold', i.e. printed guidelines or websites. This is part of the strategy behind the case studies, but the involvement of those who have worked through a project and gained from it would provide the programme with 'champions' to drive the work forward. Local authority representatives and school respondents both indicated that staff development delivered by peers, that is teachers who were involved in initial developments, was the most frequently experienced type of development and was also the type most likely to have a high impact.

A reported strength of the formative assessment project was that it offered teachers strategies that they could use in their classrooms and which they could see made a difference. The implication is that they saw themselves as agents of change in improving the learning opportunities for their pupils, rather than objects to be changed. Leat and Higgins (2002) describe such developments as 'powerful pedagogical strategies', a key feature of which is that they provide 'practical and manageable steps that can be undertaken by professional teachers in the course of their work' (p72). Curriculum development is not achieved through the production of large-scale packages but through engaging teachers in developments which they see as manageable and over which they feel they have control (p74).

Some projects have resonated with teachers more than others. Formative assessment seems to have been accepted readily, at least in the primary sector, along with some of the associated strategies. However, the tensions around PLPs and the different models that have been produced make this an area which needs to be tackled fairly quickly, particularly given the hope that they will act as a unifying entity in establishing coherence across the projects within the programme.

The success of the programme in bringing together practitioners, researchers and policy-makers has been limited and, in part, down to personalities and the willingness of development officers and higher education representatives to engage. Where collaboration was in place, the benefits indicate that this should remain an integral part of the next phase of the programme but should be more carefully monitored, with

the role of the higher education representative in particular clarified and tailored to meet the needs of individual associated school groups and their projects. There seems to be some uncertainty as to whether the higher education representative is just that, representing the sector, or had been selected because s/he had particular expertise to bring to bear. This should be considered for future phases.

More work is required to allow schools to appreciate the range of assessment purposes addressed within the AifL Programme and how the 'bits' fit together. This is not readily appreciated from the vantage point of the classroom where, perhaps, only one project is known in any detail and there is little experience of most of the others.

6.4   In conclusion

The AifL Programme was more ambitious and wide-ranging than almost any previous government initiative. It aimed to change both the culture in schools and the practice in classrooms with regard to assessment, a complex concept that is often not well understood.

The process was effective in involving teachers, giving them ownership, responsibility and a degree of professional autonomy in determining the outcomes. Where projects were taken on board in this spirit, they were successful and benefits accrued to pupils, parents and teachers, as relevant. It is a process that is generally considered an appropriate one for small-scale change, for the seeding of new practices within a community which will grow more widely. It has been successful, but at the cost of generalisability across Scotland. However, to revert to more traditional approaches of top-down delivery requiring implementation will run the risk of losing goodwill and commitment. The challenge to SEED and to local authorities is to encourage networks of practitioners who will continue to challenge, to encourage reflection and to promote change in schools.

The products that have emerged from individual projects are impressive in their scope and nature, as evident in the Toolkit. However, the very diversity of the outcomes makes it difficult to draw out guiding principles for schools contemplating becoming involved.

6.5   Summary of key points

A number of key points emerged from the evaluation, some related to the design of the programme, others concerned with the outcomes.

- The combination of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' approaches was effective, although the degree of choice allowed in determining projects makes it more difficult to generalise across the programme.

- Several factors were identified as contributing to the success in some authorities/schools. These included:

    o funding
    o supportive networks
    o staff development
    o expert input, at appropriate points.

- Small-scale research projects engage teachers, giving them a sense of ownership and control over developments and the management of change.

- Small-scale projects can result in fragmentation if the parameters are too wide.

- Funding to 'kick-start' the programme was greatly appreciated and primarily used for staffing. This allowed schools to devote significant amounts of staff time in the early stages of the project.

- Significant change occurred in schools and authorities that embraced the opportunities offered by the AifL Programme.

Careful consideration should be given to the following issues in relation to the ongoing development of AifL:

- An important factor in effective development is the way in which local authorities take ownership and strategic leadership of the initiative, following the model used initially with the pilot schools, i.e. practitioner development supported through dialogue with colleagues, wider networks and communities of enquiry.

- The co-operation and collaboration between authorities and schools with representatives from the faculties of education, as relevant, is beginning to show signs of developing constructively and is to be encouraged.

- There is a need to resolve uncertainties around the purpose and content of PLPs. This might be best achieved through practitioner development and encouraging dissemination through relevant networks, as is beginning to happen.

- There is a need to continue to develop understanding as to how different initiatives, including AifL, contribute to national priorities and, in particular, to improving teaching and learning with a view to engaging learners and raising attainment. This needs to be supported nationally.

- Similarly, understanding of how classroom assessment can serve both formative and summative purposes remains patchy, particularly with regard to how they relate to externally set and designed assessment. There is a polarization of the two purposes which is not helpful in understanding, for example, how external assessment might contribute to formative assessment within the classroom.

- If the Toolkit is to be developed so that it is more readily used at school and ASG level, some provision of resources would be useful to enable local authorities/ schools to contextualise it for local use and development.

- This is just a beginning, albeit a positive one. However, it may be necessary for the Scottish Executive to maintain a high profile for AifL, through national and regional events and ongoing publicity.

6.6   Further research

Some issues that would benefit from further research were identified during the evaluation:

- Strategies to engage secondary schools more meaningfully in the programme
- The impact the programme has on pupils as more schools and teachers become involved
- The impact the programme has on teaching strategies and teaching cultures
- The impact of PLPs as a unifying concept to support the needs of pupils, parents and teachers
- The development of networks and communities of practice
- Staff development approaches most likely to lead to successful implementation of the programme in schools.

The above impacts of the AifL Programme should be assessed on a longitudinal basis, in an attempt to determine long-term changes in practice.

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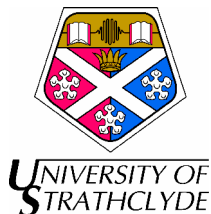
Evaluation of the
Assessment is for Learning Programme

Final Report - Appendices

February 2005

Dr Rae Condie
Dr Kay Livingston
Liz Seagraves

Contents

Appendix 1

2003 questionnaires

(Only the questionnaires for primary teachers and headteachers/members of the senior management team have been included in the Appendix. The same questionnaire, with appropriate adjustments for the secondary sector, was sent to secondary schools.)

Evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme

Assessment is for Learning

Questionnaire for Teachers in Primary Schools

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning (AiFL) Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive. As part of the evaluation we are seeking the views of headteachers and other senior management in schools on a range of aspects of the Programme. **This evaluation is an integral part of AiFL.** Please complete and return this questionnaire using the enclosed FREEPOST label.

The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual respondents will not be identified in any reports, either internal or for publication.

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire please contact us by phoning 0140 950 3732 or by emailing liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk.

Name:

School:

Authority:

1. About your project

In which project are/were you involved? …………….……………….……………….……………….………………..		
Please tick which year group you are/were working with on the project		**Which curricular areas are/were being targeted?**
Pre-5		
Primary 1		
Primary 2		
Primary 3		
Primary 4		
Primary 5		
Primary 6		
Primary 7		
How many pupils are/were in the class? ………… How many are/were involved in the project:? …………		
Please describe briefly the main objectives you aimed to achieve through the project:		

2. Becoming involved in the project

2.1 How did you first hear about the Assessment is for Learning Programme?

Please tick one box

From local authority assessment co-ordinator/adviser	
From authority newsletter/circular	
From the head teacher or other senior management	
From other teacher(s) in my own school	
Informally from other colleagues outwith the school	
Other: *(Please specify)*	

2.2 Why did you become involved?

The head teacher/other senior management asked me to become involved	
Having heard about it, I approached the head teacher about being involved	
Other: *(Please specify)*	
Please add any further comments you wish to make about your reasons for becoming involved in the project:	

2.3   How did the developments introduced via the project relate to your teaching practice?

Please tick the statement which best describes your view

The ideas introduced were completely new and so I was starting from the very beginning	
I had been thinking about introducing new practices and so the ideas were already part of my planning	
I was already developing approaches in line with the project and therefore the project provided the opportunity to make further progress	
Many of the aspects of the project were already a well established part of my practice, and the project allowed me to develop new dimensions	
Other: *(Please specify)*	

2.4   What were your expectations at the outset of the project? What did you hope to achieve?

3.   Support for the development work

An important aspect of making the Assessment is for Learning Programme effective is working together and sharing information and experiences. During the pilot project you will have had support from various groups of people and will have used different ways of communicating with them. We are interested in knowing who were your main sources of support and how effective you found the means of communicating. Please tick in the column as appropriate and also please add any examples and comments that explain your responses. If you feel you cannot comment insert 'Don't know' (DK), or 'Not relevant' (NR) as appropriate.

3.1 How helpful have the following people been in supporting the development of the project?

	Very Helpful	Helpful	Unhelpful	Very Unhelpful
Project Development Officer				
EA assessment co-ordinator/adviser				
Head teacher/other senior management				
Other teachers involved from my own school				
Teachers involved in the project from other schools				
HE representatives				
Parents and parent groups				
Other: *(Please specify)*				
Examples and comment				

3.2   What ways have you used to be in touch with others involved in the project?

	Group meetings	One to one meetings	Phone	Email	Web-site (forum)	Seminars/ confer-ences	Other *(please specify)*
Project Development Officer							
EA assessment co-ordinator							
Other teachers involved from my own school							
Teachers involved in the project from other schools							
HE representatives							
Parents and parent groups							
Other: *(Please specify)*							

Examples and comment

3.3   How useful would you say the different means of communication have been in working together?

	Very useful	Useful	Limited usefulness	Not at all useful
Group meetings				
One to one meetings				
Phone				
Email				
Website (forum)				
Seminars/Conferences				
Other: *(Please specify)*				

Examples and comment

4. Impact of project

4.1 What benefits has being involved in the project brought in relation to your own **development** and **practice**? Consider each of the statements and tick if you agree or not. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
I have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment				
I have changed my classroom practice				
I am using a wider variety of approaches to assessment				
Involvement in the project confirmed my existing practice				
I am now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils				
The ways in which I give feedback have improved				
I found it difficult to adopt new practices				
Some teachers have shown resistance to new developments				
Other teachers not involved have shown an interest in trying out new ideas				
Overall, involvement in the project has provided valuable staff development opportunities				
Please give some examples to illustrate your responses.				

4.2 What benefits have you observed in relation to the **pupils**?

	SA	A	D	SD
Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process				
Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning				
Pupils are able to set realistic targets				
Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment				
Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom				
The developments enhance the learning of all pupils involved				
I have evidence that pupil attainment has improved through the project activities *				
Pupils themselves report positive views of the project activities				
The approaches developed are not suitable for all pupils				
Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem				
Pupils are more motivated towards learning				
The initiative has had little impact on classroom behaviour				

Contd

Examples and comments:
(* if you have evidence of improved pupil attainment, please attach details to this form)

4.3 In what ways has the project encouraged the involvement of **parents and carers**?

a) Have parents/carers been informed of the school's involvement, and hence their children's participation, in the project?   yes ☐ no ☐

b) Has school practice in relation to communicating with and reporting to parents/carers changed as a result of being involved in the project?   yes ☐ no ☐

If yes, please give an example of one key way in which this has changed.

c) Has the project enabled parents/carers to become more actively involved in contributing to assessment and target setting for their children?   yes ☐ no ☐

d) Have parents/carers been (or will they be) involved in the evaluation of the project?   yes ☐ no ☐

e) How many parents/carers would you estimate have become more involved in their children's learning as a result of the project?

- Many of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- About half of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- Only a few of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- None of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐

If you wish, please add any explanations of your responses.

4.4   What have been the main benefits to you as a teacher of taking part in the project? Please identify up to three.

1.

2.

3.

4.5   What have been the greatest challenges to you as a teacher in taking part in the project? Please identify up to three.

1.

2.

3.

4.6   In retrospect, what do you think you would have changed or done differently to make the project more effective?

4.7   To what extent has involvement in the project met your early expectations? (refer to question 2.4)

4.8   Now that the pilot stage is complete, what do you see as the next steps in taking forward project developments?

5. The use of Personal Learning Plans

If you have been involved in project 2, 3 or 8 please answer question 5.1.
If you have been involved in projects 1, 4, 5, 9 or 10 please answer question 5.2.

5.1   **For projects 2, 3 and 8.**

a)   Were Personal Learning Plans in use in your school prior to your involvement in AifL?   yes [ ]   no [ ]

b)   If **yes**, was this with selected pupils or all pupils?   selected [ ]   all [ ]

        If some pupils only, which ones and why?

        What further development has taken place as part of the AifL project?

c)   If **no**, what development has taken place as part of the AifL project?

5.2   **For projects 1, 4, 5, 9 and 10**

a)   Were Personal Learning Plans in use in the school prior to involvement in the AifL?   yes [ ]   no [ ]

b)   If **yes**, was this with selected pupils or all pupils?   some [ ]   all [ ]

        If some pupils only, which ones and why?

c)   Were Personal Learning Plans a feature of your AifL project?   yes [ ]   no [ ]

d)   If **yes**, please describe how they were used in relation to the project.

All projects: If you have been using PLPs as part of your project, please answer questions 5.3 to 5.5. Otherwise go to question 6.

5.3   Have you been using a software package to manage Personal Learning Plans?   yes ☐   no ☐

If **yes**, which package? …………………………………………………………………………………

How effective have you found this package for your purposes?

Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor

5.4   Please give your views on time implications in using the Personal Learning Plans with pupils

	Excessively demanding	Manageable but demanding	Easily managed
Teacher time			
Pupil time			
Comment			

5.5   On the basis of your experience in relation to your AifL project, to what extent have Personal Learning Plans contributed to an improvement in meeting the following **information needs**?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Pupils				
How well they are progressing through a level				
How well they are developing skills				
What progress they are making over time				
Identifying next steps in their own learning				
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements				
My needs as class teacher				
Knowledge of individual pupil progress				
Recording of individual pupil progress				
Planning next steps for individual pupils				
Planning next steps for groups				
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable				
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class				
Effectiveness of teaching approaches				
Pupil performance against national standards				
Other teachers				
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage				
Aspects in which pupils need specific support				
Effective collating and presenting of information for transition from nursery to primary school				
Effective collating and presenting of information for transition from primary to secondary school				
Parents and carers				
Understandable information about their child's progress				
Specific strengths of their child's performance				
Aspects which need support				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Local Authority				
Monitoring progress of schools against targets				
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan				

6. The wider Assessment is for Learning Programme

The AifL Programme comprises 10 projects. The Programme aims, through these projects, to improve assessment practice in schools, to develop a unified system of recording and reporting and to bring together diverse arrangements for assessment.

6.1 At this stage, we are interested in finding out how much you think you know about the projects. In the list which follows, please delete the project your school is involved in and answer in relation to the other projects.

1	=	I know nothing about this project
2	=	I know a little bit about this project but not how it relates to our school
3	=	I know a lot about this project and have a clear understanding of how it relates to our school
4	=	We are ready to adopt approaches developed by this project in our school.

	1	2	3	4
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment				
2. Personal Learning Plans				
3. Supporting the management of Personal Learning Plans				
4. Gathering and interpreting evidence				
5. Local Moderation				
6. New National Assessments				
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme				
8. ICT Support for Assessment				
9. Reporting to parents and other teachers				
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs				

6.2 Below is a list of possible sources of information about the AifL projects. Please rank those that have been most significant for you in finding out about the other projects. Rank your first three choices only with the most significant = 1.

Source	Rank
Assessment is for Learning newsletters	
Assessment is for Learning website	
Own project seminars/conferences	
Other project seminars/conferences	
Discussion with DO for own project	
Discussion with DO for other projects	
Informal contact with teachers on other projects	
Local authority circulars	
Local authority in-service/development events	
Educational newspapers	
Other *(please indicate)*	

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme

Assessment is for Learning

Questionnaire for Headteachers/Senior Managers in Primary Schools

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning (AiFL) Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive. As part of the evaluation we are seeking the views of headteachers and other senior management in schools on a range of aspects of the Programme. **This evaluation is an integral part of AiFL.** Please complete and return this questionnaire using the enclosed FREEPOST label.

The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual respondents will not be identified in any reports, either internal or for publication.

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire please contact us by phoning 0140 950 3732 or by emailing liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk.

Name:

Position:

School:

Authority:

Number of pupils on school roll:

Number of teachers: **No:**   **FTE:**

1. About your school's project

1.1 In which project is/was your school taking part ? ………………………………………………………………..	
How many teachers took/are taking part in the pilot project? ………….……….….……………………………..	

Please tick the classes involved in the project:		Which curricular areas are/were being targeted?
Pre-5		
Primary 1		
Primary 2		
Primary 3		
Primary 4		
Primary 5		
Primary 6		
Primary 7		

Please describe briefly the main objectives of the project within your school:

1.2   Was your school involved in the 2003 AAP Science Survey?   Yes [   ]   No [   ]

2.   Becoming involved in the project

2.1   How did you first hear about the Assessment is for Learning Programme?

Please tick one box

From local authority assessment co-ordinator/adviser	
From authority newsletter/circular	
At head teachers meeting	
From teacher(s) in my own school	
Informally from other colleagues outwith the school	
Other: *(Please specify)*	

2.2   Why did your school become involved?

Please tick all that apply

The local authority assessment co-ordinator/adviser asked us to take part	
Having heard about it, I approached the authority about being involved	
A keen member of staff suggested we become involved	
Other: *(Please specify)*	

2.3   How would you describe your personal involvement in the running of the project?

Please tick the option which best describes your view

I am very involved, taking part regularly in meetings with school staff and other external meetings related to the project	
I have close involvement within the school but leave external liaison to other teacher(s)	
I maintain managerial oversight including external liaison but leave day to day issues to teachers	
I have delegated all aspects of running the programme to other member(s) of staff	
Other: *(Please specify)*	

2.4   How did the developments introduced via the project relate to existing school practice?

Please tick the option which best describes your view

The ideas introduced were completely new to the school and so we were starting from the very beginning	
We had been thinking about introducing new practices and so the ideas were already in our development plan	
We were already developing approaches in line with the project and therefore the project provided the opportunity to make further progress	
Aspects of the project objectives were well established but the project provided us with the opportunity to develop new dimensions	
Other:	

2.5   Is the school involved in other initiatives which interrelate with AifL?   yes ☐   no ☐

        If yes, which initiatives?

3.   Impact of the project

3.1   Did you have a **school assessment policy** prior to starting the project?   yes ☐   no ☐

        If yes, has your involvement led to any changes in your policy?   yes ☐   no ☐

        If no, have you now developed an assessment policy?   yes ☐   no ☐

3.2   Did you undertake a **baseline audit** prior to or soon after becoming involved in AifL?   yes ☐   no ☐

        If yes, was this a useful exercise?   yes ☐   no ☐

In questions 3.3 to 3.6 please respond to statements where you have a view. If there is a statement you cannot respond to please write 'no view' across the response columns and note briefly your reasons in the space provided. You may also use the space to add any other comments related to the question.

3.3 What benefits has being involved in the project brought in relation to **staff development** and changes in **classroom practice**? Consider each of the statements and tick according to your agreement. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
The teacher(s) involved in the project has/have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment				
The teacher(s) involved in the project has/have changed their classroom practice				
The teacher(s) involved is/are using more varied approaches to assessment				
Involvement in the project confirmed the existing practice of the teachers				
The teacher(s) is/are now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils				
The nature and quality of feedback to pupils has improved				
Some teachers have found it difficult to adopt new practices				
Teachers not directly involved in the project have shown an interest in adopting different approaches to assessment				
Some teachers have shown resistance to the developments				
Overall, involvement in the project has provided valuable staff development opportunities				
Comment:				

3.4 What benefits have you observed in relation to the **pupils**?

	SA	A	D	SD
Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process				
Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning				
Pupils are able to set realistic targets				
Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom				
Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment				
The developments enhance the learning of all pupils involved				
Pupils themselves report positive views of the project activities				
The approaches developed are not suitable for all pupils				
Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem				
Pupils are more motivated towards learning				
The initiative has had little impact on classroom behaviour				

Contd

Comment:

3.5   In what ways has the project encouraged the involvement of **parents and carers**?

a)   Have parents/carers been informed of the school's involvement, and hence their children's participation, in the project?
yes ☐   no ☐

b)   Has school practice in relation to communicating with and reporting to parents/carers changed as a result of being involved in the project?
yes ☐   no ☐

If yes, please give an example of one key way in which this has changed.

c)   Has the project enabled parents/carers to become more actively involved in contributing to assessment and target setting for their children?
yes ☐   no ☐

d)   Have parents/carers been (or will they be) involved in the evaluation of the project?
yes ☐   no ☐

e)   How many parents/carers would you estimate have become more involved in their children's learning as a result of the project?

- Many of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- About half of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- Only a few of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐
- None of the parents/carers of the children who are taking part in the project ☐

If you wish, please add any explanations of your responses.

3.6 On the basis of your experience in relation to your AifL project, to what extent has the project contributed to an improvement in meeting the following **information needs**?

Pupils	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
How well they are progressing through a level				
How well they are developing skills				
What progress they are making over time				
Identifying next steps in their own learning				
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements				

Class teacher	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Knowledge of individual pupil progress				
Recording of individual pupil progress				
Planning next steps for individual pupils				
Planning next steps for groups				
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable				
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class				
Effectiveness of teaching approaches				
Pupil performance against national standards				

Other teachers	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage				
Aspects in which pupils need specific support				
Effective collating and presenting of information for transition from nursery to primary school				
Effective collating and presenting of information for transition from primary to secondary school				

Parents and carers	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Understandable information about their child's progress				
Specific strengths of their child's performance				
Aspects which need support				

Local Authority	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Monitoring progress of schools against targets				
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan				

Comment on meeting information needs:

3.7   **National Priorities Targets**

a)   To what extent has involvement in your AifL project helped you to meet your school's National Priorities targets?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Achievement and Attainment: To raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results				
Framework for Learning: To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning				
Inclusion and Equality: To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages				
Values and Citizenship: To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society				
Learning for Life: To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition				

b)   To what extent has the AifL project linked in with your school development planning?

Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all

3.8   **Resourcing** the project

a)   What additional resources were required to implement the project?

b)   Was the funding received adequate to cover these resources?   yes [ ]   no [ ]

    If no, please explain.

c)   Did you have any problem over the receipt of funding?   yes [ ]   no [ ]

If yes, what were the problems?

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d)   Once the direct funding from the Scottish Executive ceases, how do you anticipate you will be able to sustain the new developments?

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3.9   What have been the main benefits to the school of taking part in the project? Please identify up to three.

```
1.

2.

3.
```

3.10   What have been the greatest challenges to the school in taking part in the project? Please identify up to three.

```
1.

2.

3.
```

3.11   In retrospect, what do you think you would have changed or done differently to make the project more effective?

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3.12 Now that the pilot stage is complete, what are the next steps in taking forward the project developments?

4.   The wider Assessment is for Learning Programme

The AifL Programme comprises 10 projects. The Programme aims, through these projects, to improve assessment practice in schools, to develop a unified system of recording and reporting and to bring together diverse arrangements for assessment.

4.1   At this stage, we are interested in finding out how much you think you know about the projects. In the list which follows, please delete the project your school is involved in and answer in relation to the other projects.

1 =   I know nothing about this project
2 =   I know a little bit about this project but not how it relates to our school
3 =   I know a lot about this project and have a clear understanding of how it relates to our school
4 =   We are ready to adopt approaches developed by this project in our school.

	1	2	3	4
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment				
2. Personal Learning Plans				
3. Supporting the management of Personal Learning Plans				
4. Gathering and interpreting evidence				
5. Local Moderation				
6. New National Assessments				
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme				
8. ICT Support for Assessment				
9. Reporting to parents and other teachers				
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs				

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.
If you wish to add anything else feel free to do so in the space below.

Evaluation of Assessment Development Programme

Questionnaire for Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators

We are undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme (ADP) on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). As part of the evaluation, we are seeking the views of the Education Authority Assessment Officers on a range of aspects of the Programme and hope that you can take a few minutes to complete and return this questionnaire. We realise that projects are at different stages of development and this may affect the way in which you answer the questions. The information you supply at this stage is important to enable us to establish baseline data for the evaluation. We shall be following up on these questions over time.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence. We ask for your name to enable us to contact you for further clarification and discussion but we will not identify individual respondents in any report, either internal or for publication.

Please either complete this questionnaire electronically and email to liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk or print it out and mail it to:

> The QIE Centre
> Faculty of Education
> University of Strathclyde
> Jordanhill Campus
> 74 Southbrae Drive
> GLASGOW
> G13 1PP

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire, please contact us either at the above email address or by phoning 0141 950 3186.

Please return the questionnaire by Monday 19 May 2003.

Name:

Authority:

1.   Background information about your role in the Authority

1.1   What is your post within the Education Department? …………………………………………………..

1.2   How long have you been in this post? ……………………………………………..…………………

1.3   Are you a qualified teacher?   yes ☐   no ☐

If 'yes', please complete these questions:

1.4   In which sector(s) are you qualified to   Primary ☐   Secondary ☐   Special
       teach?   Needs ☐

       If you are a secondary teacher, which subject (s)? …………………………………..…………..

1.5   For how many years did you   Less than 5 ☐   Between 5 ☐   More than 10 ☐
       teach?   years   and 10 years   years

2.   Information about you as Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinator

2.1   Why did you take on this role? For example, did you apply for it or were you identified by your local
       authority for the post?

2.2   What previous experience of assessment initiatives and/or activities did you have before taking on the
       role of Co-ordinator?

2.3   Have you been involved any other national curriculum development programmes?

        yes ☐ **no** ☐

        If 'yes', please indicate what:

        ┌───┐
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        └───┘

3.   Your work as a Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinator

3.1   How much of your time is spent on activities related to the Assessment Development Programme?

         (Please estimate approximate percentage)   ┌─────────┐
                                                       │   │
                                                       └─────────┘

3.2.   Please outline briefly what your other responsibilities in the authority are:

        ┌───┐
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        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
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        │   │
        └───┘

3.3   Please give a brief description of what your involvement in the ADP has been to date:

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        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        │   │
        └───┘

3.4 Please explain how the pilot schools from your authority became involved in the programme. For example, did the head teachers/teachers volunteer, or were the schools selected for specific reasons? If the latter, what were the reasons?

3.5 The effectiveness of the ADP projects depends on liaison between key stakeholders. We have listed some of these stakeholders below and we would like you to indicate:

- how you liaise with them
- how often
- the purpose of your communication with them, and
- how effective you think this has been.

Please tick in column as appropriate. If you have had no contact with a particular group then mark 'not applicable' (N/A). Please also add any examples of practice or comments which you feel are particularly relevant. **Please answer this question in relation to people actively involved in the ADP projects.**

(i) What ways have you used to be in touch with others?

	Group meetings	One to one meetings	Phone	Email	Web-site (forum)	Seminars/ confer-ences	Other (indicate what)
National Development Officers							
HE representatives							
Teachers							
Pupils							
Parents and parent groups							
Other LA co-ordinators							
Assessment Programme Management Group							
Other: (Please indicate who)							

Examples and comment

(ii)   How often have you been in touch with others?

	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
National Development Officers				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parent groups				
Other LA co-ordinators				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				

Examples and comment

(iii)   What are the reasons for being in touch?

	Planning	Developing materials	Progressing project activities	Disseminating information about project(s)
National Development Officers				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parent groups				
Other LA co-ordinators				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				

Examples and comment

(iv)   How useful would you say working with these groups has been in achieving the programme objectives?

	Very useful	Useful	Limited usefulness	Not at all useful
National Development Officers				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parent groups				
Other LA co-ordinators				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				

Examples and comment

(v)   How useful would you say the different means of communication have been in working together?

	Very useful	Useful	Limited usefulness	Not at all useful
Group meetings				
One to one meetings				
Phone				
Email				
Website (forum)				
Seminars/Conferences				
Other:				

Examples and comment

(vi)   Please add any comments you want to make about the process of communication and working with others in order to achieve programme objectives.

3.6   Have you been involved in disseminating information about the Assessment Development Programme to groups other than those currently involved?

yes ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, please indicate to whom and what has been done.

3.7   More specifically, we are interested in ways in which non-project schools get information about the Assessment Development Programme. Please tell us briefly how this has been happening in your authority.

4. Progress of Projects to date

4.1   In relation to the project(s) in which you are involved, please give your views on the progress to date. As authorities are involved in more than one project, we have included four sections to allow you to comment separately on each project.

Project 1: Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment

i)   How would you describe progress of   Ahead of   On   Behind
      this project against initial objectives   schedule   schedule   schedule
      and timescales?

ii)   If you think progress is behind schedule, what do you think are the main reasons for this? Please add any other comments which you feel are relevant to meeting objectives and timescales.

Project name: ....

i)   How would you describe progress of   Ahead of   On   Behind
      this project against initial objectives   schedule   schedule   schedule
      and timescales?

ii)   If you think progress is behind schedule, what do you think are the main reasons for this? Please add any other comments which you feel are relevant to meeting objectives and timescales.

Project name: ....

i)   How would you describe progress of   Ahead of   On   Behind
      this project against initial objectives and   schedule   schedule   schedule
      timescales?

ii)   If you think progress is behind schedule, what do you think are the main reasons for this? Please add any other comments which you feel are relevant to meeting objectives and timescales.

Project name: ....

i)   How would you describe progress of this project against initial objectives and timescales?

Ahead of schedule		On schedule		Behind schedule	

ii) If you think progress is behind schedule, what do you think are the main reasons for this? Please add any other comments which you feel are relevant to meeting objectives and timescales.

5.   Reflections on the Assessment Development Programme

5.1   Consider each of the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree with them. Clearly, you will only be able to respond based on your experience to date, but we shall be exploring these issues again at a later date.

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	D	SD
1	From the beginning I had a clear understanding of my role as an ADP assessment co-ordinator				
2	My understanding of my role has become clearer as the projects progressed				
3	The projects have had strong support from the LTS Management group				
4	The projects have had strong support from the Scottish Executive Management Group				
5	The projects have had strong support from the National Development Officers				
6	Teachers involved have shown a high degree of commitment to the project				
7	The Higher Education representatives on the project have made a strong contribution to the development of ideas				
8	The Higher Education representatives on the project have made a strong contribution to the development of practice				
9	A sense of community has developed amongst the participants				
10	I have a clear understanding of how all the ADP projects link together				
11	I think other participants have a clear understanding of how all the ADP projects link together				

5.2 We are interested in the progress that is being made towards the overall aims of the Assessment Development Programme. We acknowledge that it may be too early to say, but we would appreciate your initial views on the following points.

SA	=	Strongly Agree
A	=	Agree
D	=	Disagree
SD	=	Strongly Disagree
TE	=	Too early to say

		SA	A	D	SD	TE
1	The ADP projects are contributing to developing understanding of approaches to assessment in schools					
2	The ADP projects are contributing to improved practice in assessment in schools					
3	The ADP projects are contributing to improving recording and reporting of achievement					
4	The ADP projects will be effective in developing a more coherent system of assessment than that which currently exists					
5	The ADP projects will be effective in developing a unified system of recording and reporting					
Please add any comments you wish to make about progress towards these aims:						

5.3 To date, what have been the benefits of being involved in the Assessment Development Programme?

5.4 What do you think you would change in the way the programme has been organised to make it more effective?

6.   Links with other local authority responsibilities

6.1   To what extent is the Assessment Development Programme referred to in the Teacher Induction Training Programme?

6.2   To what extent has the Assessment Development Programme been included in CPD and other staff development opportunities?

6.3   What other assessment initiatives are being developed in your authority and how does the Assessment Development programme interrelate with them?

6.4   How does the ADP interrelate with other educational developments in the authority?

7. **What plans do you have at this stage for involving schools, other than the pilot schools, in the Assessment Development Programme?**

8. **Finally, please add any further comments you would like to make about any project in particular or the programme as a whole.**

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
It will form part of our initial evaluation of the first stages of the Assessment Development Programme. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming months.

Evaluation of Assessment Development Programme

Questionnaire for Higher Education Institution Representatives (Faculty Co-ordinators)

We are undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme (ADP) on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). As part of the evaluation, we are seeking the views of HEI representatives on a range of aspects of the Programme and hope that you can take some time to complete and return this questionnaire. We realise that projects are at different stages of development and this may affect the way in which you answer the questions. The information you supply at this stage is important to enable us to establish baseline data for the evaluation. We shall be following up on these questions over time.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence. We ask for your name to enable us to contact you for further clarification and discussion but we will not identify individual respondent in any report, either internal or for publication.

Please either complete this questionnaire electronically and email to liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk or print it out and mail it to:

> The QIE Centre
> Faculty of Education
> University of Strathclyde
> Jordanhill Campus
> 76 Southbrae Drive
> GLASGOW
> G13 1PP

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire, please contact us either at the above email address or by phoning 0141 950 3186.

Please return the questionnaire by Monday 19 May 2003.

Name:

1.   Background information about your role in higher education

1.1   What is your position within your Faculty (eg lecturer, senior lecturer)

1.2   Do you hold a role of responsibility within the Faculty (eg Dean, Vice-Dean, Head of Department)?

yes ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, what role(s) do you hold?

1.3   Are you a qualified teacher?   **yes** ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, for which sector are you qualified?   Primary ☐   Secondary ☐   Further Education ☐

1.4   What are your areas of subject expertise in the Faculty?

1.5   What is your main research focus?

1.6   Please add any other information about your background which you think is relevant to your role as an HE partner in the Assessment Development Programme:

2. **Information about you as a member of the Higher Education Research and Development sub-group**

2.1 Why did you take on this role? For example, did you apply for it or were you nominated by your Faculty?

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2.2 What previous experience of assessment initiatives and/or activities did you have before joining the ADP?

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2.3 Have you been involved any other national curriculum development programmes?

yes ☐ **no** ☐

If 'yes', please indicate what these are:

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3. **Your role on the Assessment Development Programme**

3.1 When did you begin working on the programme? …………………………………………………..

3.2 Approximately how many days have you contributed to the programme to date? …………..………

3.3 Please give a brief description of what your involvement has been to date:

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3.4   A range of aims was identified for the HE representatives on the ADP. We would like you to comment on various aspects of being involved in the programme. Please consider the issues listed below and indicate, in your view, the extent to which these have been realised to date.

   1 = not yet being considered
   2 = at the discussion stage
   3 = some progress has been achieved
   4 = significant progress has been achieved

   Please give examples to illustrate your response, or comment on the reason for your judgement.

a) Opportunity to contribute to projects on the basis of research	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

b) Opportunity to demonstrate the relationship between research and practice	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

c) Opportunity to encourage action research with practitioners	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

d) Development of a community of practice jointly with practitioners and policy makers	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

e) Collaboration of representatives from each Higher Education Institution	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

f) Opportunity to share information on the project/programme with key groups and individuals in your own organisation	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Examples and comment:				

3.4 continued:

g)	Opportunity to integrate ADP developments into Initial Teacher Education Programmes	1	2	3	4
Examples and comment:					

4. Reflection on the projects

In relation to the project(s) in which you are involved, please give your thoughts on the following points. Some HE representatives are involved in more than one project. We have included two sets of boxes to allow you to comment separately on each project.

Name of project: …………………………………………………………………………………………..

a) Progress against objectives and original timescales

b) The benefits gained to date on the project

c) Things that might be done differently

d) Efforts which have been made to make connections with other projects

Name of project ……………………………… ……………………………………………………………………………..

a) Progress against objectives and original timescales

b) The benefits gained to date on the project

c) Things that might be done differently

d) Efforts which have been made to make connections with other projects

5.   Reflections on the Programme

5.1   An aim of the Assessment Development Programme is to develop a coherent, integrated system of assessment in Scottish schools. This includes developing a unified system of recording and reporting and bringing together diverse arrangements for assessment. Although it is early days, please give your thoughts on the progress being made towards this aim and the potential for the ADP to achieve this in the longer term.

5.1 continued:

5.2   An aim of the Assessment Development Programme is to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve the recording and reporting of achievement. Although it is early days, please give your thoughts on the progress being made towards this aim and the potential for the ADP to achieve this in the longer term.

5.3   The effectiveness of the ADP projects depends on liaison between key stakeholders. We have listed some of these stakeholders below and we would like you to indicate:

- how you liaise with them
- how often
- the purpose of your communication with them, and
- how effective you think this has been.

National Development Officers:

Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators:

Other HE representatives:
Teachers:
Pupils:
Parents:
Others:

5.4   Please add any other comments about the ADP that you feel are relevant at this stage of the programme.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
It will form part of our initial evaluation of the first stages of the Assessment Development Programme.
We look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming months.

Evaluation of Assessment Development Programme

Questionnaire for National Development Officers

We are undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme (ADP) on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED). As part of the evaluation, we are seeking the views of National Development Officers on a range of aspects of the Programme and hope that you can take a few minutes to complete and return this questionnaire. We realise that projects are at different stages of development and this may affect the way in which you answer the questions. The information you supply at this stage is important to enable us to establish baseline data for the evaluation. We shall be following up on these questions over time.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence. We ask for your name to enable us to contact you for further clarification and discussion but we will not identify individual respondents in any report, either internal or for publication.

Please either complete this questionnaire electronically and email to liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk or print it out and mail it to:

> The QIE Centre
> Faculty of Education
> University of Strathclyde
> Jordanhill Campus
> 76 Southbrae Drive
> GLASGOW
> G13 1PP

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire, please contact us either at the above email address or by phoning *0141 950 3186.*

Please return the questionnaire by Monday 19 May 2003.

Name:

1.   Background information about you as a teacher

In which sector(s) are you qualified to teach?   Primary [   ]   Secondary [   ]   Special Needs [   ]

If you are a secondary teacher, which subject (s)? ………………………………………………..……

For how many years have you been teaching?   Less than 5 years [   ]   Between 5 and 10 years [   ]   More than 10 years [   ]

What roles and responsibilities do you hold in your own school (prior to secondment to the ADP)?

[   ]

Please add any other information about your background which you think is relevant to your post of NDO:

[   ]

2.   Information about you as National Development Officer

2.1   Why did you take on this role? For example, did you apply for it or were you identified by your local authority for the post?

[   ]

2.2   Have you completed any professional development/further study relevant to assessment in general and/or your project in particular within the past 5 years?

yes [   ]   **no** [   ]

If 'yes', please indicate what this was:

[   ]

2.3   What previous experience of assessment initiatives and/or activities did you have before joining the ADP?

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2.4   Have you been involved any other national curriculum development programme within the past 5 years?

                                                                                    yes ☐   **no** ☐

        If 'yes', please indicate what this was:

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3.   Your work as a National Development Officer

3.1   When did you commence your role as NDO?   ………………………………………………………………

        When does your contract end? ………………………………………………………………..……...

3.2   How much of your time is   100% ☐   Less than 100% but ☐   50% or less ☐
        spent on NDO activities?   more than 50%

If you do not spend 100% of your time on NDO activities please tell us what your other responsibilities are.

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3.3 Much of your work as NDO depends on liaising with other key stakeholders. We have listed some of these stakeholders below and we would like you to indicate:
- how you liaise with them
- how often
- the purpose of your communication with them, and
- how effective you think this has been.

Please tick in column as appropriate. If you have had no contact with a particular group then mark 'not applicable' (N/A). Please also add any examples of practice or comments which you feel are particularly relevant. **Please answer this question in relation to people actively involved in ADP projects.**

(i) What ways have you used to be in touch with others?

	Group meetings	One to one meetings	Phone	Email	Web-site (forum)	Seminars/ confer-ences	Other (indicate what)
LA Assessment co-ordinators							
HE representatives							
Teachers							
Pupils							
Parents and parents groups							
Other NDOs							
Assessment Programme Management Group							
Other: (Please indicate who)							
Examples and comment							

(ii) How often have you been in touch with others?

	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
LA Assessment co-ordinators				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parents groups				
Other NDOs				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				
Examples and comment				

(iii)   What are the reasons for being in touch?

	Project planning	Developing materials	Progressing project activities	Disseminating information about project
LA Assessment co-ordinators				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parents groups				
Other NDOs				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				
Examples and comment				

(iv)   How useful would you say working with these groups has been in achieving the project objectives?

	Very useful	Useful	Limited usefulness	Not at all useful
LA Assessment co-ordinators				
HE representatives				
Teachers				
Pupils				
Parents and parents groups				
Other NDOs				
Assessment Programme Management Group				
Other: (Please indicate who)				
Examples and comment				

(v)   How useful would you say the different means of communication have been in working together?

	Very useful	Useful	Limited usefulness	Not at all useful
Group meetings				
One to one meetings				
Phone				
Email				
Website (forum)				
Seminars/Conferences				
Other:				
Examples and comment				

(vi)   Please add any comments you want to make about the process of communication and working with others in order to achieve project objectives.

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3.4   Have you been involved in disseminating information to groups other than those currently involved, about:

(i) your project in particular?   **yes** ☐   **no** ☐

(ii) the Assessment Development Programme in general?   **yes** ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, please indicate to whom and what has been done.

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4.   Progress to date

4.1   How would you describe progress of   Ahead of ☐   On ☐   Behind ☐
        the project against your initial   schedule   schedule   schedule
        objectives and timescales?

4.2   If you are behind schedule, what do you think are the main reasons for this? Please add any other comments which you feel are relevant to meeting objectives and timescales.

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5.   Reflections on the Assessment Development Programme

5.1   Consider each of the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree with them. Clearly, you will only be able to respond based on your experience to date, but we shall be exploring these issues again at a later date.

SA   =   Strongly Agree
A   =   Agree
D   =   Disagree
SD   =   Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	D	DA
1	From the beginning I had a clear understanding of my role as a national development officer				
2	My understanding of my role has become clearer as the project progressed				
3	The project has had strong support from the LTS Management group				
4	The project has had strong support from the Scottish Executive Assessment Programme Management Group				
5	The project has had strong support from Education Authorities				
6	Teachers involved have shown a high degree of commitment to the project				
7	The Higher Education representatives on the project have made a strong contribution to the development of ideas				
8	The Higher Education representatives on the project have made a strong contribution to the development of practice				
9	A sense of community has developed amongst the participants				
10	I have a clear understanding of how all the ADP projects link together				
11	I think other participants have a clear understanding of how all the ADP projects link together				

5.2   We are interested in the progress that is being made towards the overall aims of the Assessment Development Programme. We acknowledge that it may be too early to say, but we would appreciate your initial views on the following points.

SA   =   Strongly Agree
A   =   Agree
D   =   Disagree
SD   =   Strongly Disagree
TE   =   Too early to say

		SA	A	D	SD	TE
1	The project is contributing to developing understanding of approaches to assessment in schools					
2	The project is contributing to improved practice in assessment in schools					
3	The project is contributing to improving recording and reporting of achievement					
4	The ADP projects will be effective in developing a more coherent system of assessment than that which currently exists					
5	The ADP projects will be effective in developing a unified system of recording and reporting					
Please add any comments you wish to make about progress towards these aims:						

6. **Finally, we realise that your project is ongoing but we would like to know what you consider to have been the main benefits so far.**

6.1   To date, the benefits of my project have been:

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6.2   What do you think you would change to make it more effective?

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```

6.3   Please add any further comments you would like to make about your project in particular or the programme as a whole.

```



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Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
It will form part of our initial evaluation of the first stages of the Assessment Development Programme.
We look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming months.

Appendix 2

2004 questionnaires

Evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme

Assessment is for Learning – Year 2003 to 2004

Follow-up Questionnaire for Teachers

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is continuing the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning (AifL) Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive. At this time last year, we sent out questionnaires seeking the views of teachers, headteachers and other senior management in schools on a range of aspects of the Programme. We received responses from your school and, as a follow-up to that survey, we are asking you to complete this questionnaire regarding ongoing developments in the Programme.

This evaluation is an integral part of AifL and therefore your response is vital.   Please complete and return this questionnaire using the enclosed FREEPOST label.

The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual respondents will not be identified in any reports, either internal or for publication.

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire please contact us by phoning 0141 950 3185 or by emailing liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk.

Name:

School:

Authority:

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1. School developments connected with the Assessment is for Learning Programme

1.1 Were you involved directly in the **AifL pilot project** in your school at some time during the period April 2002 to December 2003?   yes ☐   no ☐

1.2 In which project(s) was your school formally involved?

		Please tick
Project 1	Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	
Project 2	Personal Learning Plans	
Project 3	Support for Management of Personal Learning Plans	
Project 4	Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	
Project 5	Local Moderation: sharing the standard	
Project 6	New National Assessments	
Project 7	Assessment of Achievement Programme	
Project 8	ICT Support for Assessment	
Project 9	Reporting to Parents and Others	
Project 10	Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs	

1.3 We anticipate that since then, that is during the school year 2003-2004, your school will have extended assessment developments to include other elements of the AifL programme which were the focus of projects other than the one your school participated in at first. Please indicate which projects are the most closely related to further assessment developments you have taken part in and which year groups you have worked with. For example, your school may have originally participated in project 9 "Reporting to parents", but during last year you focused on developing formative assessment practices. In this question, we are interested in knowing that you have now taken part in project 1 related activities. Question 1.8 asks about extension of the original project work.

	Proj 1	Proj 2	Proj 3	Proj 4	Proj 5	Proj 6	Proj 7	Proj 8	Proj 9	Proj 10
Pre 5										
P1										
P2										
P3										
P4										
P5										
P6										
P7										
S1										
S2										
S3										
S4										
S5										
S6										

1.4 We are interested in finding out how much you know about each project. Please tick as follows:

1 = I know nothing about this project; 2 = I know a little bit about this project; 3 = I know a lot about this project.

	1	2	3
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment			
2. Personal Learning Plans			
3. Supporting the Management of Personal Learning Plans			
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence			
5. Local Moderation: sharing the standard			
6. New National Assessments			
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme			
8. ICT Support for Assessment			
9. Reporting to Parents and Others			
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs			

1.5 The projects are designed to contribute to the development of a unified and coherent system of assessment. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statement. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
I have a clear understanding of how the AifL projects link together				

1.6 The responses to our previous questionnaire identified that teachers had a wide range of local objectives, with most teachers identifying 1 or 2 key objectives. Examples of these are listed below. Please tick all objectives that you identify as applying in relation to AifL activities. Please indicate where you think you currently are in relation to these objectives.

Main focus of development	Please tick all relevant	Please tick the extent to which you have achieved the objectives		
		not yet achieved	partially achieved	achieved
Personal and professional development *(for example raising awareness; developing knowledge and understanding of assessment; improving practice of both teaching and assessment.)*				
Pupil development *(for example improving pupil skills; improving grades; raising attainment; involving pupils more in their learning; encouraging them to take more responsibility; helping pupils learn faster)*				
Links with parents/carers *(for example involving parents more; improving reporting to parents)*				
Develop school procedures and practices *(for example profiling, reporting, moderation of assessment; primary-secondary liaison)*				
Self and peer assessment *(particularly in relation to pupil learning)*				
Involvement of parents *(for example improving/developing/ introducing new ways of working with or reporting to parents)*				
Use of technology *(for example, piloting/developing/improving use of IT – hardware, software, other equipment)*				
Other objectives (please specify):				

1.7 An important aspect of the AifL programme is working together with colleagues from your own school and other schools and being supported by a variety of people. Please indicate how important each of the following have been in taking forward AifL developments during 2003-2004.

	Very important	Important	Of little importance	No role to play
School management				
Fellow teachers in own school				
Teachers from other schools				
Local authority co-ordinator				
LTScotland development officers				
				Contd

Expert speakers at conferences/in-service events				
Faculty of Education representatives linked with projects				
Other (please specify):				

1.8 In the pilot projects many teachers began developments with a selected group of pupils and focused on one area of the curriculum. **Following on from your involvement in the pilot project**, have you extended work you developed in this project to include any of the following? Please tick as appropriate. If you did not participate in the pilot project developments please leave this question blank.

	Yes	Not yet, but plan to	No plans	Not relevant
More pupils in the same year group				
Additional stages/year groups				
Other areas of the curriculum				
Please give brief details of ways in which you have expanded the work of the pilot project:				

1.9 An essential component of AifL is staff development. Originally, staff development was provided centrally through LTScotland and the Project Development Officers. In what assessment-related staff development have you participated during 2003-2004? Please tick all that apply.

	Please tick all that apply
Peer staff development (ie sharing with other teachers in own school)	
Sharing development with neighbouring/cluster schools	
School-funded staff development, eg courses, materials, guest speakers to school	
Local authority in-service, seminars, courses etc.	
Nationally organised AifL activities	
Other (please specify)	

1.10 What have been the two greatest challenges you have faced in extending the work of AifL during 2003-04?

1.
2.

2. Impact of Assessment is for Learning Programme

In questions 2.1 to 2.5 please respond to statements where you have a view. If there is a statement you cannot respond to please leave it blank and note briefly your reasons in the space provided. You may also use the space to add any other comments related to the question.

Consider each of the statements and tick according to your agreement. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

2.1 What benefits has being involved in the AifL programme brought in relation to your own **development** and **practice?** Consider each of the statements and tick if you agree or not.

	SA	A	D	SD
Being involved in a national initiative enhanced my professional status				
I have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment (eg formative and summative uses)				
I have an increased awareness of research related to teaching, learning and assessment				
I have changed my classroom practice				
I use more varied approaches to assessment				
I am now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils				
The ways in which I give feedback to pupils have improved				
I engage in more meaningful discussion with the pupils about their learning				
I am more aware of what other schools are doing				
There is improved primary/secondary liaison				
I have developed better links with parents				
Teachers not directly involved in the programme have shown an interest in adopting different approaches to assessment				
I engage more in discussion with colleagues, including those not directly involved in the programme, about teaching, learning and assessment				
Overall, involvement in the programme has provided valuable staff development opportunities				
Comment:				

2.2 What benefits have you observed in relation to the **pupils**?

	SA	A	D	SD
Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process				
Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning				
Pupils are able to set realistic targets				
Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom				
Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment				
The developments enhance the learning of all pupils involved				
Pupils themselves report positive views of the assessment activities				

Contd

	SA	A	D	SD
The approaches developed are suitable for all pupils				
Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem				
I have evidence that pupil attainment has improved through the AifL developments*				
Comment: (*If you have evidence of improved pupil attainment, please explain, or attach details to this form.)				

2.3 What benefits have you observed in relation to **parents/carers**?

	SA	A	D	SD
I have more frequent and regular contact with the parents/carers of the children I teach				
Parents/carers are more aware of their child's progress				
Parents/carers have a better understanding of how they can help their child learn more effectively				
Parents/carers can help their children with target-setting and making progress towards the targets				
I find that parents/carers are more able to ask me how they can help their children				
I find that I engage in more meaningful discussion with parents/carers about their children's learning				
Comment				

2.4 In response to the earlier questionnaire, people identified a number of **challenges** in relation to involvement in the AifL programme. Some of these are listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with them.

	SA	A	D	SD
It was difficult to fit in new developments with existing teaching plans				
It was difficult to find time to meet with colleagues to discuss and plan developments				
It was difficult finding time to engage pupils in discussion – as groups or one to one				
Lack of supply cover when needed				
There was resistance to or lack of interest in new developments by some staff				
I found it challenging to change my classroom practice and do things differently				
There was a lack of clarity of what was required in initial stages of developments				

Contd

Overcoming technical problems trying to use the LTS AifL website				
Finding time to use the LTS AifL website				
Some pupils were reluctant to try out new ways of assessing (eg peer assessment)				
It was difficult involving as many parents as we would have liked				
Preparing to take part in conference/give presentation was stressful				
Writing up case study/report for pilot project was excessively demanding				
Comment				

2.5 To what extent do you think the AifL programme has contributed to an improvement in meeting the following **information needs**?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Pupils				
How well they are progressing through a level				
How well they are developing skills				
What progress they are making over time				
Identifying next steps in their own learning				
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
My needs as class teacher				
Knowledge of individual pupil progress				
Recording of individual pupil progress				
Planning next steps for individual pupils				
Planning next steps for groups				
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable				
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class				
Effectiveness of teaching approaches				
Pupil performance against national standards				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Other teachers				
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage				
Aspects in which pupils need specific support				
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school				
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Parents and carers				
Understandable information about their child's progress				
Specific strengths of their child's performance				
Aspects which need support				
How they can help their child learn				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Local Authority				
Monitoring progress of schools against targets				
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan				

3.   The wider Assessment is for Learning Programme

The Assessment is for Learning Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs.   Please indicate the extent to which you think that progress had been made towards the following aspects which contribute to these aims.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)				
The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment				
The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement)				

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.

Evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme

Assessment is for Learning – Year 2003 to 2004

Follow-up Questionnaire for Headteachers/Senior Managers

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is continuing the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning (AifL) Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive. At this time last year, we sent out questionnaires seeking the views of teachers, headteachers and other senior management in schools on a range of aspects of the Programme. We received responses from your school and, as a follow-up to that survey, we are asking you to complete this questionnaire regarding ongoing developments in the Programme.

Although this is addressed to the 'Headteacher' or 'Senior Manager', we would like **the person who had the main responsibility for taking forward the work of AifL in the school during 2003 to 2004** to complete it.

This evaluation is an integral part of AifL and therefore the response from your school is vital. Please complete and return this questionnaire using the enclosed FREEPOST label.

The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual respondents will not be identified in any reports, either internal or for publication.

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire please contact us by phoning 0141 950 3185 or by emailing liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk.

Name:

Position:

School:

Authority:

Number of pupils on school roll:

Number of teachers: **No:**   **FTE:**

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1. School developments connected with the Assessment is for Learning Programme

We know that your school was involved in one of the Assessment is for Learning pilot projects at some time during the period April 2002 to December 2003.

1.1 In which project(s) were you formally involved?

		Please tick
Project 1	Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment	
Project 2	Personal Learning Plans	
Project 3	Support for Management of Personal Learning Plans	
Project 4	Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence	
Project 5	Local Moderation: sharing the standard	
Project 6	New National Assessments	
Project 7	Assessment of Achievement Programme	
Project 8	ICT Support for Assessment	
Project 9	Reporting to Parents and Others	
Project 10	Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs	

1.2 We anticipate that since then, that is during the school year 2003-2004, you will have extended assessment developments to include other elements of the AifL programme which were the focus of projects other than the one you participated in at first. Please indicate which projects are the most closely related to further assessment developments and which year groups have been involved. For example, you may have originally participated in project 9 "Reporting to parents" but during last year you also focused on developing formative assessment practices. In this question, we are interested in knowing that you have now taken part in project 1 related activities. Question 1.7 asks about extension of your original project work.

	Proj 1	Proj 2	Proj 3	Proj 4	Proj 5	Proj 6	Proj 7	Proj 8	Proj 9	Proj 10
Pre 5										
P1										
P2										
P3										
P4										
P5										
P6										
P7										
S1										
S2										
S3										
S4										
S5										
S6										

1.3 We are interested in finding out how much you know about each project. Please tick as follows:
   1 = I know nothing about this project; 2 = I know a little bit about this project; 3 = I know a lot about this project.

	1	2	3
1. Support for Professional Practice in Formative Assessment			
2. Personal Learning Plans			
3. Supporting the Management of Personal Learning Plans			
4. Gathering and Interpreting Assessment Evidence			
5. Local Moderation: sharing the standard			
6. New National Assessments			
7. Assessment of Achievement Programme			
8. ICT Support for Assessment			
9. Reporting to Parents and Others			
10. Meeting the needs of pupils with Additional Support Needs			

1.4 The projects are designed to contribute to the development of a unified and coherent system of assessment. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
I have a clear understanding of how the AifL projects link together				
I think teachers who participated in the programme have a clear understanding of how the projects link together				

1.5 The responses to our previous questionnaire identified that schools had a wide range of local objectives, with most schools identifying 2 or 3 key ones. Examples of these are listed below. Please tick all objectives that you identify as applying in your school in relation to AifL activities. Please indicate where you think you currently are in relation to these objectives.

Main focus of development	Please tick all relevant	Please tick the extent to which you have achieved the objectives		
		not yet achieved	partially achieved	achieved
Teacher development *(for example develop teachers' knowledge, skills, understanding, confidence)*				
Pupil development *(for example develop pupil knowledge and skills, develop confidence and self-esteem, improve learning, increase motivation)*				
Assessment strategies *(for example improve/develop/introduce new approaches or methods of assessment)*				
Assessment instruments *(for example improve or develop new tests or techniques in testing; devise prompts for use in assessing)*				
Self and peer assessment *(particularly in relation to pupil learning)*				
Involvement of parents *(for example improve/develop/introduce new ways of working with or reporting to parents)*				
Use of technology *(for example, pilot/develop/improve use of IT – hardware, software, other equipment)*				
Other school issues *(for example improve record keeping, review management issues, improve transition)*				
Other objectives (please specify):				

1.6 Being part of the AifL programme involves numerous management and liaison tasks. We are interested in how this responsibility is managed in schools. Please tick on the list below which tasks you undertake. If you do not do them yourself please indicate who does (eg headteacher, principal teacher, class teacher).

Key tasks	Please tick if you do this	If not you, then who does?
Organise in-school meetings		
Liaise externally with local authority assessment co-ordinator		
Liaise externally with LTScotland development officers		
		Contd

Manage funding		
Organise related staff development opportunities		
Meet with other schools in cluster		
Inform parents/carers of assessment developments		
Liaise with parents regarding reporting issues		
Other (please specify):		

1.7 Many of the pilot projects involved only a few teachers in a school (in some cases, only one), selected pupils and selected aspects of the curriculum. Some projects involved parents, others did not. **Following on from the pilot project** have you extended developments of this project to include any of the following? Please tick as appropriate.

	Yes	Not yet but planned	No plans	Not relevant
More teachers in the school				
More pupils in the same year groups				
Additional stages/year groups				
Other areas of the curriculum				
Parents/more parents				
(Secondary schools) more departments				
Please give brief details of ways in which you have expanded the work of the pilot project:				

1.8 An essential component of AifL is staff development. Originally, staff development was provided centrally through LTScotland and the Project Development Officers. In what other assessment-related staff development have staff from your school been involved since then? Please tick all that apply.

	Please tick all that apply
Peer staff development (ie in-house)	
Sharing development with neighbouring/cluster schools	
School-funded staff development, eg courses, materials, guest speakers to school	
Local authority in-service, seminars, courses etc.	
Nationally organised AifL activities	
Other (please specify)	

1.9 Working between schools and across clusters is important. Please indicate the extent to which your school has been involved in liaison with other schools. Please tick all that apply.

	Please tick all that apply
(Primary schools) with other primaries	
(Secondary schools) with other secondaries	
Liaison across the local cluster involving both sectors	
National networking, eg contact with other schools involved in the same project within own local authority or in other authorities	
Using LTS Assessment is for Learning website to share ideas electronically	
Other (please specify)	

1.10 National Assessments

Has your school used New National Assessments from the National Assessment Bank?   yes ☐   no ☐

Have you continued to use National Test papers/booklets which you have in the school?   yes ☐   no ☐

If you have used the National Assessment Bank, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

	SA	A	D	SD
We found downloading the tests straightforward				
Copying the number of tests required was an added administrative workload				
Copying the number of tests required was an additional cost to the school				
We had problems accessing the system, eg network crashing, slow downloads				
The website is easily understandable				
It is easy to obtain the relevant level of test in the desired curriculum area				
The National Assessment Bank is easier to manage for the school than the previous approach				

1.11 What have been the two greatest challenges your school has faced in extending the work of AifL during 2003-04?

1.
2.

1.12 Is the school involved in other initiatives/projects which interrelate with AifL?   yes ☐   no ☐

If yes, which ones?

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2. Impact of the Assessment is for Learning Programme

2.1 To what extent has the AifL programme influenced your school development planning? Please tick.

Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all

2.2 Please indicate the status of the development of your school assessment policy.

	Please tick one response only
We have no plans to develop an assessment policy	
An assessment policy is in the planning stages	
An assessment policy has recently been devised drawing on AifL developments	
Our existing assessment policy has recently been modified drawing on AifL	
Our policy pre-dates AifL and we have no plans to modify it	
Other (please specify)	

In questions 2.3 to 2.7 please respond to statements where you have a view. If there is a statement you cannot respond to please leave it blank and note briefly your reasons in the space provided. You may also use the space to add any other comments related to the question.

Consider each of the statements and tick according to your agreement. (SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree)

2.3 What benefits has being involved in the AifL programme brought in relation to **staff development** and changes in **classroom practice**?

	SA	A	D	SD
The professional status of those involved was raised by being involved in a national initiative				
The teachers involved in the programme have gained a clearer understanding of different purposes of assessment (eg formative and summative uses)				
The teachers involved in the programme have an increased awareness of research related to teaching, learning and assessment				

Contd

	SA	A	D	SD
The teachers involved have changed their classroom practice				
The teachers involved are using more varied approaches to assessment				
The teachers are now more aware of the individual needs of the pupils				
The nature and quality of feedback to pupils has improved				
Teachers are more aware of what other schools are doing				
There is improved primary/secondary liaison				
Teachers have developed better links with parents				
Teachers not directly involved in the programme have shown an interest in adopting different approaches to assessment				
Overall, involvement in the programme has provided valuable staff development opportunities				
Comment:				

2.4   What benefits have you observed in relation to the **pupils**?

	SA	A	D	SD
Pupils have become more actively involved in the learning process				
Pupils are better equipped to assess their own learning				
Pupils are able to set realistic targets				
Pupils have shown improved behaviour in the classroom				
Pupils are developing skills in peer assessment				
The developments enhance the learning of all pupils involved				
Pupils themselves report positive views of the assessment activities				
The approaches developed are suitable for all pupils				
Pupils have increased in confidence and show greater self-esteem				
Comment:				

2.5   What benefits have you observed in relation to **parents/carers**?

	SA	A	D	SD
Parents/carers have more frequent and regular contact with the school				
Parents/carers are more aware of their child's progress				
Parents/carers have a better understanding of how they can help their child learn more effectively				
				Contd

	SA	A	D	SD
Parents/carers can help their children with target-setting and making progress towards the targets				
Parents/carers are more able to ask the teacher how they can help their children				
Parents/carers have been invited to assist in school developments				
Parents/carers' views are sought and contribute to decisions about school issues				
Comment				

2.6 In response to the earlier questionnaire, people identified a number of **challenges** in relation to involvement in the AifL programme. Some of these are listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with them.

	SA	A	D	SD
It was difficult to manage timetables and schedules to incorporate new developments				
It was difficult to find time to meet with colleagues to discuss and plan developments				
Teachers had difficulty finding time to engage pupils in discussion – as groups or one to one				
Lack of supply cover when needed				
There was resistance to or lack of interest in new developments by some staff				
Some staff found it difficult to adopt new practices				
There was a lack of clarity of what was required in initial stages of developments				
Overcoming technical problems trying to use the LTS AifL website				
Finding time to try to use the LTS AifL website				
Some pupils were reluctant to try out new ways of assessing				
It was difficult involving as many parents as we would have liked				
Preparing to take part in conference/give presentation was stressful				
Writing up case study/report for pilot project was excessively demanding				
Comment				

2.7 To what extent do you think the AifL programme has contributed to an improvement in meeting the following **information needs**?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Pupils				
How well they are progressing through a level				
How well they are developing skills				
What progress they are making over time				
Identifying next steps in their own learning				
Confidence in their own judgements of their achievements				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Class teacher				
Knowledge of individual pupil progress				
Recording of individual pupil progress				
Planning next steps for individual pupils				
Planning next steps for groups				
Confidence that assessment judgements are valid and reliable				
Effectiveness of materials and resources used in class				
Effectiveness of teaching approaches				
Pupil performance against national standards				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Other teachers				
What a pupil has already achieved at an earlier stage				
Aspects in which pupils need specific support				
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from nursery to primary school				
Effective collating and sharing of information for transition from primary to secondary school				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Parents and carers				
Understandable information about their child's progress				
Specific strengths of their child's performance				
Aspects which need support				
How they can help their child learn				

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Local Authority				
Monitoring progress of schools against targets				
Achieving aims of authority's improvement plan				

Comment on meeting information needs:

2.8 **National Priorities Targets:** To what extent has involvement in the AifL programme helped you to meet your school's National Priorities targets?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Achievement and Attainment				
Framework for Learning				
Inclusion and Equality				
Values and Citizenship				
Learning for Life				

2.9 **Resourcing** the Programme developments

a) How important was the funding in implementing the programme? Please tick one response only.

It was not important. We would have carried out the work anyway.	
It helped. We were able to make progress with developments which would have taken us longer without the funding.	
It was essential. Without the funding we would not have undertaken any of the developments.	
Other (please specify)	

b) What did you use the funding for? Please tick all that are relevant.

Obtaining supply teachers/cover	
Paying teachers to work in their own time	
Sending teachers on staff development activities	
Purchase of equipment, eg computers, video-cameras, software	
Purchase of other materials, eg books, folders, storage	
Travel costs to national events	
Other (please specify) or other comment regarding funding.	

c) Did you received any funding to support assessment developments during 2003-2004? yes ☐ no ☐

If yes, what was the source of this funding? …………………………………………………………………..

d) How do you anticipate you will be able to sustain developments in assessment practices in the future, with respect to resourcing and funding?

2.10 In retrospect, what recommendations would you make to another school just beginning to get involved in the AifL programme?
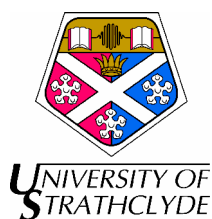
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2.11   What are your next steps in developing assessment policy and practice in 2004-2005?

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3.   The wider Assessment is for Learning Programme

The Assessment is for Learning Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs.   Please indicate the extent to which you think that progress had been made towards the following aspects which contribute to these aims.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)				
The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment				
The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement)				

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.
If you wish to add anything else feel free to do so in the space below.

Evaluation of Assessment is for Learning (AifL) Programme

Questionnaire for Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators/ Development Officers

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is continuing the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED).

Many local authority AifL assessment co-ordinators completed questionnaires for us in the early stages of our evaluation and we would be very grateful if you could help us once again by completing this questionnaire. It may be necessary to consult other members of staff to complete all the questions or indeed for it to be completed jointly depending on local arrangements. The main focus is on developments during 2003-2004.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence. We ask for names to enable us to contact you for further clarification if necessary but we will not identify individual respondents in any report, either internal or for publication.

Please either complete this questionnaire electronically and email to liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk or print it out to complete it and mail it to:

> The QIE Centre
> Faculty of Education
> University of Strathclyde
> Jordanhill Campus
> 76 Southbrae Drive
> GLASGOW
> G13 1PP

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire, please contact us either at the above email address or by phoning 0141 950 3185.

Please return the questionnaire by Monday 27 September 2004.

1.   Background information

If the questions in this section do not suit your local context, please explain in the spaces provided.

1.1 Local Authority

1.2 Name of person(s) completing questionnaire

1.3 Name of Local Authority AifL Assessment Co-
     ordinator

     Position/Title within education department:

1.4 Name of person appointed (if someone has been
     appointed) to assist in AifL developments in
     schools, eg Assessment Development Officer

     Date of appointment

     Previous role (eg teacher)

1.5 Role of AifL Assessment Co-ordinator during 2003-2004:

a)   How much of the Assessment Co-ordinator's time has been spent on activities related to the AifL
     programme?

     Please estimate approximate percentage

b)   Please give a brief description of what his/her involvement in AifL has been during 2003-2004

1.6 Role of Development Officer during 2003-2004, if someone was appointed to such a role:

a) How much of his/her time has been spent on activities related to the AifL programme?

   Please estimate approximate percentage

b) Please give a brief description of what his/her involvement in AifL has been during 2003-2004

2. AifL Developments during 2003-2004 and 2004-2005

2.1 An essential component of AifL is staff development. Originally, staff development was provided centrally through LTScotland and the Project Development Officers.

a) What opportunities for assessment-related staff development has your authority offered during 2003-2004?

	Please tick all that apply
Events using teaching staff involved in initial development projects	
Events supported by LTS development officers	
Events provided by local authority officers	
Events delivered by AifL HEI Faculty Co-ordinators	
Events with national experts (eg Shirley Clarke, Dylan Wiliam, Ian Smith)	
Specific input to probationer training	
Other (please specify)	

b) Please indicate your views on the impact of each of these by rating them (1 = high impact to 5 = no impact):

	High impact				No impact
Events using teaching staff involved in initial development projects	1	2	3	4	5
Events supported by LTS development officers	1	2	3	4	5
Events provided by local authority officers	1	2	3	4	5
Events delivered by AifL HEI Faculty Co-ordinators	1	2	3	4	5
					Contd

Events with national experts (eg Shirley Clarke, Dylan Wiliam, Ian Smith)	1	2	3	4	5
Specific input to probationer training	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5

c) How many teachers have participated in these staff development events during 2003-2004?
   (Please give approximate figures if exact figures are not readily available.)

Nursery/Primary		Secondary		Special	

d) How many schools were represented at these staff development events during 2003-2004?
   (Please give approximate figures if exact figures are not readily available.)

Nursery/Primary		Secondary		Special	

2.2 A key feature of developments during 2003-2004 was to increase the number of schools involved in the Programme with a particular emphasis on members of **Associated Schools Groups (ASGs)** working together.

a) How many school clusters are there in your authority (ie secondaries with associated primaries and special needs schools)?

b) How many of those clusters became involved in the AifL ASG initiative?

c) If you had other arrangements for organising schools into ASGs, other than on a local school cluster basis, please indicate briefly what that was.

d) Please give an indication of the degree of progress which has been made by the ASGs in your authority.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
Developing Assessment Action Plans				
Achieving objectives of Action Plans				
Working collaboratively as ASGs				
Raising awareness of assessment issues in schools				
Improving assessment practices in schools				
Improving liaison between sectors				

Comment on progress made by ASGs:

2.3 Do you have local arrangements in place for **monitoring** AifL developments?   yes ☐   no ☐

If yes, please indicate briefly what these are.

2.4 Please indicate briefly how developments will be taken forward during 2004-2005.

3. Impact of the Assessment is for Learning Programme

3.1 Have developments related to Assessment is for Learning been included in   yes ☐   no ☐
the authority Improvement Plan?

3.2 If yes, please indicate which of the following elements are named in the Improvement Plan.

	Please tick all that apply
Formative assessment strategies	
The role of national testing/new national assessments	
Relationship with and reporting to parents	
Evidence of attainment and moderation issues	
The development of PLPs	
The use of technology in assessment and reporting	
Other (please specify):	

3.3 To what extent do you think that AifL has contributed towards meeting National Priority Targets?

	Very much	Much	Only a little	Not at all
Achievement and Attainment				
Framework for Learning				
Inclusion and Equality				
Values and Citizenship				
Learning for Life				

3.4 What have been the two greatest **benefits** to the **local authority education service** of being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

3.5 What have been the two greatest **challenges** to the **local authority education service** in being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

3.6 What have been the two greatest **benefits** to **schools** of being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

3.7 What have been the two greatest **challenges** to **schools** in being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

3.8 How do you anticipate that the authority will be able to sustain developments in assessment practices in the future, with respect to resourcing and funding?

4. Reflections on the AifL Programme

4.1 The AifL programme was designed to encourage and support collaboration between local authorities, higher education institutions, SEED and LTS. What progress do you think has been made in this collaboration **during 2003-2004**?

4.2 In terms of changing practice in schools, please indicate your views on the impact **to date** of the following by rating each group of stakeholders listed (1 = high impact to 5 = no impact):

	High impact				No impact
LTS Development Officers	1	2	3	4	5
Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators	1	2	3	4	5
Local Authority Assessment Development Officers	1	2	3	4	5
HEI representatives	1	2	3	4	5
Expert speakers at conferences/in-service events	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify):	1	2	3	4	5

Comment:

4.3 Please indicate your views on the effectiveness of the communication and dissemination activities within AifL **to date** by rating the effectiveness of each form listed (1 = very effective to 5 = ineffective):

	Very effective				Ineffective
LTS website	1	2	3	4	5
Publications eg AifL Newsletter/Update	1	2	3	4	5
Open Space events	1	2	3	4	5
Regional seminars/conferences/dissemination events	1	2	3	4	5
National seminars/conferences	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify):	1	2	3	4	5

Comment on dissemination activities:

4.4 The Assessment is for Learning Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs. Please indicate the extent to which you think that progress had been made to date towards the following three aspects which contribute to these two aims.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)				
The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment				
The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement)				
Comment:				

4.5 Please identify two strengths of the Scottish Executive Education Department's approach to taking forward the work of the Assessment is for Learning Programme.
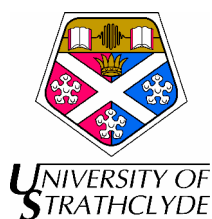
1.

2.

4.6 Please identify two weaknesses of the Scottish Executive Education Department's approach to taking forward the work of the Assessment is for Learning Programme.

1.

2.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
If you wish to add any other comments please feel free to do so.

Evaluation of Assessment is for Learning (AifL) Programme

Questionnaire for Higher Education Institution Representatives (Faculty Co-ordinators)

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is continuing the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED).

Many of the Faculty of Education representatives completed questionnaires for us in the early stages of our evaluation and we would be very grateful if you could help us once again by completing this questionnaire. The main focus is on developments during 2003-2004.

The information you provide to us will be treated in the strictest confidence. We ask for your name to enable us to contact you for further clarification and discussion but we will not identify individual respondent in any report, either internal or for publication.

Please either complete this questionnaire electronically and email to liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk or print it out to complete it and mail it to:

> The QIE Centre
> Faculty of Education
> University of Strathclyde
> Jordanhill Campus
> 76 Southbrae Drive
> GLASGOW
> G13 1PP

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire, please contact us either at the above email address or by phoning 0141 950 3185.

Please return the questionnaire by Monday 27 September 2004.

Name:

Did you complete the first questionnaire?   Yes/No (Please delete as appropriate)

1. Background information about your role in higher education

1.1 What is your position within your Faculty (eg lecturer, senior lecturer)

```
[                                                            ]
```

1.2 Do you hold a role of responsibility within the Faculty (eg Dean, Vice-Dean, Head of Department)?

yes ☐ **no** ☐

If yes, what role(s) do you hold?

```
[                                                            ]
```

2. Your role on the Assessment Development Programme during 2003-2004

2.1 Approximately how many days did you contribute to the programme during 2003-2004?

```
[          ]
```

2.2 Please give a brief description of what your involvement has been during 2003-2004.

```
[                                                            ]
```

2.3 Have you undertaken/are you undertaking research specifically related to the AifL programme?

yes ☐ no ☐

If yes, please describe briefly the focus of the research.

```
[                                                            ]
```

Please indicate the source of funding, if any, for this research:

	Please tick
There is no funding for this research	
It has been funded through the AifL programme	
It has been funded by another body. *Please specify:*	

2.4 Are you involved in delivering AifL related inservice/staff development to practitioners?   **yes** ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, please describe briefly what you have been doing.

2.5 A range of issues was identified for the HE representatives' involvement in AifL. We are interested in the progress you think has been made on these issues during 2003-2004. Please consider the activities listed below and tick as appropriate.

1 = not considered
2 = discussion has taken place
3 = some progress has been achieved
4 = significant progress has been achieved

If you wish to comment on any of these aspects please do so in the comment box at the end of the table.

		1	2	3	4
a)	Contributing to projects on the basis of research				
b)	Demonstrating the relationship between research and practice				
c)	Encouraging action research with practitioners				
d)	Developing a community of practice jointly with practitioners and policy makers				
e)	Collaborating with representatives from each Higher Education Institution				
f)	Sharing information on the project/programme with key groups and individuals in your own organisation				
Comment:					

2.6 What have been the two greatest benefits to you of being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

2.7 What have been the two greatest challenges to you in contributing to the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

3. Integration of AifL developments into HEI programmes

3.1 A key aim for HEIs is to integrate AifL developments into Initial Teacher Education Programmes.

	Very much	Much	A little	Not at all
a) To what extent has AifL led to changes in the pre-service teaching programmes in your institution?				

b) Are you the person responsible for introducing AifL developments into ITE courses?   **yes**   **no**

c) If not, have you advised the person(s) who has/have this responsibility?   **yes**   **no**

If you are in a position to answer the following 3 questions yourself, or fairly easily by asking someone else, then we would be very grateful if you could give us the information.   If, however, to find this out is excessively time-consuming please omit these questions and, if possible, indicate whom we should contact for this information.

d) Please indicate in the table below the courses which now have AifL developments included in the curriculum (eg BEd, PGCE), how this is incorporated (eg whole module/unit; one or two lectures; focus of placement) and whether it is assessed.

Course	Method of inclusion

e) Which aspects of AifL developments have been prioritised for inclusion in the courses (eg formative assessment strategies, relationship of formative and summative assessment, the role of national testing/national assessments, relationship with parents, evidence of attainment, moderation issues, the development of PLPs, the use of technology in assessment and reporting.)

Course	Aspects included

3.2 Please list below other programmes which have had elements of AifL introduced into them (eg MEd, Chartered Teacher units, other CPD courses), with a brief indication of what has been introduced.

Course/Unit/Module	Aspects of AifL introduced

4. Reflections on the AifL Programme

4.1 The AifL programme was designed to encourage and support collaboration between local authorities, higher education institutions, SEED and LTS. What progress do you think has been made in this collaboration **during 2003-2004**?

4.2 In terms of changing practice in schools, please indicate your views on the impact **to date** of the following by rating each group of stakeholders listed (1 = high impact to 5 = no impact):

	High impact				No impact
LTS Development Officers	1	2	3	4	5
Local Authority Assessment Co-ordinators	1	2	3	4	5
Local Authority Assessment Development Officers	1	2	3	4	5
HEI representatives	1	2	3	4	5
Expert speakers at conferences/in-service events	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify):	1	2	3	4	5

Comment:

4.3 Please indicate your views on the effectiveness of the communication and dissemination activities within AifL **to date** by rating the effectiveness of each form listed (1 = very effective to 5 = ineffective):

	Very effective				Ineffective
LTS website	1	2	3	4	5
Publications eg AifL Newsletter/Update	1	2	3	4	5
Open Space events	1	2	3	4	5
Regional seminars/conferences/dissemination events	1	2	3	4	5
National seminars/conferences	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify):	1	2	3	4	5

Comment on dissemination activities:

4.4 What have been the two greatest **benefits** to **schools** of being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

4.5 What have been the two greatest **challenges** to **schools** in being involved in the AifL Programme?

1.

2.

4.6 The Assessment is for Learning Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs.   Please indicate the extent to which you think that progress had been made to date towards the following three aspects which contribute to these two aims.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)				
The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment				
The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement)				

Comment on progress towards aims:

4.7 Please identify two **strengths** of the Scottish Executive Education Department's approach to taking forward the work of the Assessment is for Learning Programme.

1.

2.

4.8 Please identify two **weaknesses** of the Scottish Executive Education Department's approach to taking forward the work of the Assessment is for Learning Programme.

1.

2.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
If you wish to add any other comments please feel free to do so.

Evaluation of the Assessment Development Programme

Assessment is for Learning – Year 2003 to 2004

Questionnaire for Associated School Group Contacts

The Quality in Education Centre of the University of Strathclyde is undertaking the evaluation of the Assessment is for Learning (AifL) Programme on behalf of the Scottish Executive. We are interested in investigating the developments that have taken place during 2003 to 2004 through the Associated Schools Groups.

As the key contact for your ASG, we would ask you to complete this questionnaire with respect to assessment developments across the cluster of schools involved. You may find it appropriate to consult with other group members and agree an overall response to some of the questions.

This evaluation is an integral part of AifL and therefore your response is vital. Please complete and return this questionnaire using the enclosed FREEPOST label **no later than 5 November**.

The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual respondents will not be identified in any reports, either internal or for publication.

If you have any questions prior to completing the questionnaire please contact us by phoning 0141 950 3185 or by emailing liz.seagraves@strath.ac.uk.

Name:

Position:

School:

Associated School Group:

Authority:

Assessment is for Learning Developments in the Associated School Group

1.   About your ASG and AifL

1.1   How many schools are there in your local school cluster?

1.2   How many of those were originally nominated to be part of the ASG?

1.3   How many have become actively involved in the ASG?

1.4   Has there been cross-sector collaboration ie secondary school   **yes**   **no**
        and primaries working on a shared project?

1.5   If your ASG is not organised on the basis of a geographical cluster, please indicate how it is
        structured.

1.6   How many times did representatives of each member school meet as a
        group during 2003-2004?

2.   The work undertaken by the ASG

2.1   Please outline briefly the main focus of the ASG AifL developments.

2.2   Which year groups and curricular areas have been included in developments across the ASG?

Please tick which year groups have been involved.		Which curricular areas are/were being targeted?
Pre-5		
Primary 1		
Primary 2		
Primary 3		
Primary 4		
Primary 5		
Primary 6		
Primary 7		
Secondary 1		
Secondary 2		
Secondary 3		
Secondary 4		
Secondary 5		
Secondary 6		

2.3   Please describe briefly **up to three** key objectives you aimed to achieve through the project and indicate where you think you currently are in relation to these objectives.

Key objective	Please tick the extent to which you have achieved the objectives		
	not yet achieved	partially achieved	achieved

3.   We are interested in the range of formative assessment strategies which are being incorporated in developments.

3.1   Please tick which broad areas your ASG has focused on and give particular examples of strategies which have been tried in practice.

Area of development	Please tick all that apply	Examples
Sharing learning outcomes with pupils		
Sharing/agreeing assessment criteria with pupils		
Discussing/agreeing assessment criteria with other teachers		
Questioning		
Feedback		
Self-assessment		
Peer-assessment		
Other: *please specify*		

3.2   Has using formative assessment strategies influenced decisions about when pupils complete National Assessments?   yes ☐   no ☐

If yes, please explain briefly in what ways this has happened.

4.   Staff Development

In what assessment-related staff development have members of the ASG participated during 2003-2004? Please tick all that apply.

	Please tick all that apply
Peer staff development (ie events which allowed sharing between teachers in own school)	
Joint events organised for ASG members with other practitioners eg teachers involved in pilot projects, local authority staff, LTS development officers	
Joint events organised for ASG members with other guest speakers	
Local authority in-service, seminars, courses etc. with high profile guest speakers eg Dylan Wiliam, Shirley Clarke, Ian Smith	
Other local authority events	
Nationally organised AifL activities	
Other (please specify)	

5.   Monitoring

Do you have local cluster arrangements in place for **monitoring** AifL developments?   **yes** ☐   **no** ☐

If yes, please indicate briefly what these are.

6. Please give an indication of the degree of progress which has been made to date by the ASG.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
Developing Assessment Action Plan(s)				
Achieving objectives of Action Plan(s)				
Working collaboratively as an ASG				
Raising awareness of assessment issues in the ASG schools				
Improving assessment practices in schools				
Improving liaison between sectors				
Comment on progress made by ASG:				

7. Benefits and challenges

7.1   What have been the two greatest benefits in working as an ASG to take forward AifL developments?

1.

2.

7.2   What have been the two greatest challenges to working as an ASG to take forward AifL developments?

1.

2.

8. Next steps

What are your next steps in developing assessment policy and practice within the ASG in 2004-2005?

9.   The wider Assessment is for Learning Programme

The Assessment is for Learning Programme has two broad aims of providing a streamlined and coherent system of assessment and ensuring that parents, teachers and other professionals have the feedback they need on pupils' learning and development needs.   Please indicate the extent to which you think that progress had been made towards the following three aspects which contribute to these three aims.

	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress	No progress
The development of a unified system of recording and reporting (the PLP)				
The bringing together of current arrangements for assessment, including the AAP, National Tests and the 5-14 survey of attainment				
The provision of extensive staff development and support (to develop understanding of assessment for learning, improve assessment practice in schools and to improve recording and reporting of achievement)				

10.   If you feel there is any aspect of the developments which have taken place in your cluster which have been particularly successful, please give a brief outline below or attach relevant documents.

**Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire.
If you wish to add anything else feel free to do so.**

Appendix 3

Interview schedules

AifL: Parent interview schedule

[The parent interview schedule was modified for each school depending on the specific project and the nature of parental involvement]

(Name) school has been involved in a programme called Assessment is for Learning which is made up of a series of different projects. Your school has been looking specifically at ……………

I understand you have been kept informed about the project **OR** you have been helping/been involved in these developments in the school. We would like to find out your views on what has been happening.

1. How did you find out about the project/how did you become involved?

2. What have you been asked to do? **OR** What has been different about the way the school has communicated with you? **OR** How have you been kept informed of what has been happening?

3. What have you gained from being more involved? Do you feel there is more you could have done?

4. Do you think you understand more about what your children know/can do?

    Has it helped you know more about what your child is good at?

    Does it help you understand what they need to do to improve what they know/can do?

    Is there anything else you think would help you understand your child's needs?

5. Has it helped you help your child with school work?

6. What difference has it made for your child/children?

    Has it helped them to know what they are good at?

    Do you think it helps them understand what they know/are able to do?

    Do you think it helps them understand what they need to do to improve what they know/can do?

7. What do you want to know about your child's progress at school?

    How would you like to school to communicate with you?

    What would you like to happen now?

AifL: Pupil focus group schedule

[The schedule was customised for each group.]

I have been speaking to your teacher and s/he tells me that you have been doing x, y and z in the classroom over the past wee while. I am interested in knowing what you think about it.

1. Tell me about …
   a specific activity depending on project, eg when your parents came to the parents' evening and you were there; the way the teacher assessed you on your PE; how you showed you could write about a historic event; how you had your artwork assessed; target setting …..etc

2. Is this different from what you have done before in this class? ….. in other classes? …. with other teachers?   If yes, in what ways is it different?
   (eg explicit criteria, peer and self-assessment, some of the formative assessment tools, setting targets; preparation for parents coming in to school, different reports go home to parents, child present at parents meeting; way teacher does things)

3. Have you liked doing it this way? What have you liked most about it? Why?

4. Is there anything you haven't liked? Why didn't you like it?

5. Do you think it helps you with your school work? *(more interesting; understand it better; want to learn more; lets me know what I'm good at; shows me where I need to work harder).*

6. Would you like (assessment) in all classes to be like this?

7. Do you think it should happen like this in other schools too?

8. Their understanding of what assessment is:
   - How do you know how well you are doing in a subject (eg maths, reading, writing)
   - How does the teacher know how well you are doing?
   - How does the teacher let you know what they think?

AifL: Headteacher/Teacher interviews/focus groups

1. Brief overview of the work that has been carried out under the auspices of AifL:
   (i) pilot project;
   (ii) other aspects of AifL programme which have been taken on board eg developments in formative assessment. Why?

2. What impact has involvement in AifL had on school policy?
   - Do you have assessment policy? Has this been influenced by AifL? In what ways/why not? Can we have a copy?
   - Is assessment part of your development plan? Please explain what your assessment development plans are? Targets?
   - How do the AifL developments contribute to meeting National Priority targets?
   - How important an influence has AifL been on school policy? On local authority policy?

3. What impact has this had on practice in the school?
   - changes to what teachers do; *(kind of assessment; frequency of assessment, what they do with information which assessment provides)*
   - impact on children *(eg improved learning; clearer understanding of what is to be learned; motivation; attainment; independence and collaboration)*
   - relationship with parents

   Do you have any evidence of impact eg pupil/parent feedback, improved quality of work, grades?

   How important has AifL been in influencing the way things are done in the school?

4. Support for the development work:
   - time made available
   - staff development opportunities
   - contact with development officer
   - contact with other schools
   - funding

5. Any aspect of the project which has not worked particularly well? Why not?

6. Sustainability of developments
   - what do now?
   - resources to continue?
   - how much do you know about the other projects which make up the AifL programme?
   - how take account of other aspects of the AifL programme eg other projects, NAB assessments, AAP?

7. Extent to which developments have contributed to improvement in meeting information needs of key stakeholders?
   - pupils
   - class teacher
   - other teachers
   - parents
   - local authority

AifL: Local authority assessment co-ordinator interviews

March/April 2004

1. Overview (descriptive) of what has happened within the authority under AifL:

   a) pilot stages up to December 2003 – depending on which projects

   b) 2003/04 and 2004/05 Action Plan developments

   c) what will happen next? (What plans are there to introduce ideas beyond the pilot schools and new ones introduced in 2003/04? What plans to introduce elements from projects not already tried within the authority?)

2. Impact of these developments to date and ongoing impact:

   a) policy – What priority does assessment have within improvement plan? To what extent has this been influenced by AifL? Any aspects of AifL more influential than others? Where does this sit in relation to other priorities? Impact on teacher Induction and CPD developments? Relationship to National Priorities?

   b) practice – views on ways in which practice in schools have changed; impact of different projects. Differences between primary and secondary? How can secondaries be more involved?

   c) Future impact? Potential for changing culture in schools?

3. Development process:

   a) Programmes based on 10 projects each looking at 'part of the problem'; authorities each doing project 1 plus some others: effectiveness of this as way of exploring issues, changing practice, finding solutions?

   b) Roles of various participants: importance in implementing the programme; extent to which they have been able to work together; develop shared understandings and practice.
      - assessment co-ordinators: own role – time, priority; perceptions of the role in other authorities; usefulness of co-ordinators meetings (link in role of Mary Pirie)
      - development officers
      - other LTS officers
      - Faculty of Education input
      - Scottish Executive team

c) Funding mechanism: - via authority? straight to school? funding for further developments via Action Planning process

d) Views on integration/convergence of school developed aspects and national initiatives eg formative assessment, gathering evidence, sharing the standard, reporting to parents and NABs and AAP?

e) Place of PLPs in the scheme of things (if not already covered earlier in interview)? Authority plans for them, stage of development, fit with all other aspects of AifL.

4. Anything else?
Sustainability beyond SEED funding periods

Appendix 4

Benefits and challenges of being involved in AifL,
analysed by project

Summary of benefits of being involved in the AifL projects (Phase 1 survey)

Project	Headteachers	Teachers
1. Formative Assessment	• opportunity to reflect on effectiveness of practice leading to improvement • greater pupil involvement in learning – 'child at centre'; all pupils involved; enthusiasm • opportunity for staff development • opportunity for working together, discussing practice and sharing ideas • improved staff-pupil communication • being involved in a national initiative	Had highest number of respondents of all projects; the following are most frequently mentioned benefits: • better understanding of purposes and use of assessment • better able to assess children's understanding • more focused planning for teaching and assessment; clearer explanations of learning intentions • pupils more involved in learning • reflection on teaching practice • sharing with and learning from colleagues
2. PLPs	• greater awareness of assessment issues in general and formative assessment in particular • trialling or now having in place a 'functioning PLP' • children more involved in and enjoying target setting • parents better informed about and, in some cases, more involved in their children's learning. • One headteacher spoke of developing *'confident'* relationships between the home, pupils and school and *'fostering a good ethos'*.	• greater involvement of pupils in their own learning, or being clearer about learning intentions (this was the most frequently mentioned benefit) • developing a PLP • having the opportunity to work with colleagues • teachers evaluating their own practice and reflecting on it.
3. Managing PLPs	• opportunities for staff development • raised awareness of assessment issues • greater involvement of pupils in their learning • better links with parents.	• personal and professional development • increased understanding of assessment issues • opportunities to work more closely with children and hear their views • opportunity to discuss targets with parents
4. Gathering evidence	• the most frequently mentioned benefit was raised awareness of assessment issues including a better understanding of the purposes of assessment • awareness of a wider variety of assessment activities • better understanding of the 5-14 guidelines • *'having to think about planning, assessment and classroom management'*	• increased awareness of 5-14 documents • identifying a wider variety of ways to carry out assessment • seeing the value of involving children more in assessment and evaluating their own performance. • opportunity to work with others
5. Moderation	• the most frequently mentioned benefit was raised awareness of assessment issues • better understanding of formative assessment • the development of a tool to support formative assessment • working as a cluster led to better understanding of other sectors, other aspects of the curriculum and the sharing of information.	• developing own practice • introducing new approaches to assessment (rubrics, peer and self assessment) • gaining confidence in assessment; one mentioned *"having fun with pupils doing the project"* • being more reflective • the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues from other schools and across the primary-secondary divide.

8. ICT	Fewer benefits were given. Those given are mainly each from the perspective of one school/respondent: • *Very good for a school in our situation to be able to take part in a national project.'* (rural) • *'Finance to promote/progress PLPs within the school.'* • *'We have seen a way forward with PLPs.'* • *'Influencing direction of school plans.'* • *'Focussing our thinking. Taking action to implement plans more quickly.'* • Additionally, raised awareness of assessment issues and staff development	Views from teachers in 3 schools: • improved ICT skills • clearer pupil profiles • easy access to records of assessment • greater awareness of pupil target setting.
9. Reporting	• better links with parents, strengthened partnerships • parents have better understanding of how they can contribute • raised awareness in school of assessment and reporting issues	• better relationship with parents • better understanding of pupils' abilities and needs • personal development such as having time to read and discuss and *"developing personal knowledge through research".*
10. Special needs	Only 3 respondents: • improved awareness of assessment • improved teaching (1) • improved pupil awareness of targets (2)	• awareness of a wider range of strategies for assessment • encouragement to change practice • interest in seeking to continue to develop assessment practices • clearer goals in teaching subjects • pupils more aware of those goals.

Summary of challenges faced (Phase 1 Survey)

Project	Headteachers	Teachers
1. Formative Assessment	• time: competing priorities; to do everything; for staff development and working together; to work with pupils. • engaging interest of non-project staff and maintaining involvement of project staff (some resistant to change) • keeping focused • finding supply cover • sustain development after funding • writing case study • one headteacher reported: *"pressure to say it was a huge success before we had time to properly consider and evaluate changes".*	• time: to prepare; to give pupil feedback; to keep project records; project timescale short and pace too quick; pressure of writing report • changing teaching practice: getting started; understanding the strategies; giving better feedback; strengthening questioning; handing over to children; peer observation and self-assessment. • getting the children to change: improve questions; wait-time; self- and peer- assessment • motivating negative colleagues • giving presentation about work
2. PLPs	• time: completing work within the timescales of the project, making time available for development work and individual pupil meetings. • creating a model which was workable with P1 • translating next steps into 'child speak' • reluctance of some members in some departments to take on board a new initiative	• time both to develop the PLPs and to meet with pupils. • Developing a PLP to suit all ages • Making the PLP pupil and teacher friendly • Including everything without making too much additional work
3. Managing PLPs	• time: for teachers to work on project with minimal disruption to pupils; for parents and teachers to meet • format of PLP: finding one which works with all stages and provides continuity from year to year	• time: to do it for every child • finding user (parents and children) friendly language • helping children to assess themselves • getting parents genuinely interested
4. Gathering evidence	• time: *'lack of time'* and *'finding time'* for the purposes of planning and implementation and staff development; managing the project within existing commitments; meeting the project timescales. • encouraging and maintaining staff involvement • managing paperwork for planning and keeping evidence	• time: as for headteachers. • changing practice: eg adapting to using video-cameras in the classroom to capture evidence (both technology and classroom management); lack of expertise in dealing with new ideas and putting them into practice; planning assessment and keeping evidence; 'taking risks', eg handing over the initiative to the pupils; support for the rest of the class while working with the children in groups.
5. Moderation	• time: to discuss with staff, making time available to staff to develop project, time to reflect, time demands on pupils; the initiative came as "*an extra to an already demanding development plan.*" • lack of support initially • lack of staff cover	• time: as with HT • lack of clarity initially in purpose of initiative • working across sectors

8. ICT	• lack of clarity in the project; eg *"Changes to what Project 8 was looking at; remit changed mid-project; change in direction after initial involvement." "Trying to find out what we were supposed to be doing; getting resources to evaluate as promised."* • Variation in ideas in PLP across sectors involved in Project 8. • No clear idea of PLP structure as no liaison with Project 2.	For those actively involved in developments: • learning skills to use software • completing within project timescale • implementing PLPs For others (2): • not challenging; more of a chore
9. Reporting	• time: finding the time for staff to meet; the project was an *"additional task in a busy timetable"*; conflict with other school priorities; the amount of time "*devoted to attending/reading case studies/ conferences etc*";difficulties of completing project work within the prescribed timescale. • Increasing attendance and involvement of parents	• time: to carry out all aspects of the project eg preparing workshop for parents, *'doing research'* and *'analysing the parents' questionnaire'*. • change practice on reporting • running focus group with parents and working more closely with parents • involving more parents
10. Special needs	Only 2 responses: • time and supply cover for both	Responses from 5 schools: • the ability of the pupils to engage with the ideas or understand what was required; specific mention of the complexity of some pupil's learning needs or physical disabilities eg finding ways of making 'traffic lights' suitable either conceptually or physically. • encouraging pupil autonomy • time: to develop materials; other pressures.

Appendix 5

Indicators of commitment to AifL developments in local authorities

Levels of local authority commitment to AifL developments

There is evidence that authorities showed different levels of engagement with the AifL programme with some, in particular, demonstrating greater commitment to involving all schools and all staff. Indicators of greater commitment would include: the appointment of additional staff to assist the developments, the allocation of authority staff time to the programme, the range of staff development opportunities offered, the number of schools and, more importantly, the number of teachers who participated in staff development. Other indicators would be the extent to which elements of the AifL programme have been incorporated into improvement planning (with ongoing implications for inclusion in school development/improvement plans), the inclusion of AifL issues into standard quality assurance procedures within the authority, plans for ongoing developments and sustainability within authority budgets. A further indicator would be the extent to which teachers perceived that they had received support from the authority for developments.

The range of involvement of authorities in each of these factors during session 2003-2004 was reported in Chapter 5 (pp75-77). The factors listed above were used to draw up a profile of each authority for which data was held.

The profiles can only give an approximate indication of levels of commitment and further research is required to investigate, in depth, the factors which have enabled some authorities to show greater commitment than others. The factors selected are not infallible. For example, an authority whose co-ordinator indicated that less than 10% of their time was given to the programme, and that there was no additional staff appointed, would receive a low rating for this. It is, however, possible to imagine that AifL information had been disseminated widely amongst existing education staff such as Quality Improvement Officers or Education Officers and that the principles were being progressed without the need for additional appointments. Moreover, in such a scenario, more funding might have been made available directly to schools. Another example is that only the *range* of staff development opportunities has been used; the local authority survey did not seek information on the precise nature or length of each type of staff development offered, nor its quality. It is also important to remember that the data on which this analysis is based, with the exception of teachers' views, is from local authority co-ordinators' self-reporting. It refers to 2003 to 2004 and so does not take account of new developments in 2004 to 2005. This, therefore, is a rather blunt instrument which allows us to identify trends and patterns and to speculate on which factors might have an influence on the implementation of the AifL programme.

It was not possible to include all authorities in this exercise due to missing data: 27 authorities have been included. It is considered that levels of commitment were:

limited commitment	=	5 authorities
fair commitment	=	6 authorities
considerable commitment	=	9 authorities
high commitment	=	7 authorities.

In respect of the 4 authorities not included in the full analysis, based on interview data and extrapolating from the data that was provided, it is suggested that 2 of the 4 authorities would fall into the high commitment category, another into considerable commitment, and the final one into fair commitment. (There was one authority for which there was no data at all.) The main factors contributing to differences are the amount of dedicated time authority staff gave to the programme and the numbers of teachers who had participated in staff development. Additionally, those showing fair and high commitment were more likely to have included a wider range of staff development activities, be more positive about sustainability and have a wider range of forward plans. Teachers were also more likely to have commented that the local authority had had an important or very important role in assisting developments.