

Targedau / Targets	Sut rydych wedi gweithio ar hwn / How you have worked on this	Ceir enghraifft ar / An example can be found on
Targed/Target 1 Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with key terms in relation to education in Wales - 'Curriculum for Wales', 'Qualified Teacher Status' etc	I have ensured I used the correct term for 'Curriculum for Wales'.	This can be found in my introduction and literature review.
Targed/Target 2 Please ensure that you are supporting your assertions.	I have ensured to reference and support my assertions.	This can be found throughout.

Design and conduct a small-scale research study, and critically evaluate the impact of chosen research tools and data/findings on the learner and on your professional practice

Through the use of specialised research methodologies, this assignment aims to explore practitioners' and students' perceptions of assessment for learning. It is critical for a practitioner to conduct research in order to achieve high levels of success in the classroom (Rosenshine, 2012). Assessment for learning requires students' feedback to enhance pupil learning within the classroom (William, 2011). This approach to teaching enables pupils to become more involved with their learning process (Cambridge International Education, 2011). Assessment for learning is fundamental within the Curriculum for Wales as it assesses individuals progress and provides ongoing effective support to learners (Welsh Government, 2022). Throughout this study, the writer accumulated pupils' feedback on an aspect of assessment for learning, to ensure engagement and involvement in the research project. The purpose of this research is to determine "What are teachers' and year 6 students' perceptions of self-assessment in the classroom?" When conducting research, the author used the Mosaic approach to collect data through a number of means.

It was pivotal that the research tools were suitable for the participants and the research focus to ensure accurate and reliable data was collected (Brown, 2015; Clark, 2011). The research consisted of interviews for year 6 pupils and a questionnaire for practitioners. The study took place in a Primary School located in a small village, with approximately 130 pupils attending aged three to eleven ([REDACTED]). Before conducting the research study, the writer hypothesised that the learners would engage highly with self-assessment in the classroom and prefer to mark their own work. It was believed that pupils would find self-assessment helpful for their personal improvement and progression (Cornell University, 2023). It was anticipated that the teacher's perception of self-assessment would be mixed, with both good and negative judgements on this specific component. This was predicted since teachers used alternative types of assessment in the classroom.

Assessment for learning measures student progress while gathering data to understand the strengths and weaknesses of pupil learning (Harris and Hodges, 1995). It focuses on increasing learning in the classroom by involving students in the process (Chappuis and Stiggins, 2022). There are four elements of assessment for learning that may be implemented within classrooms. These are Questioning, Sharing Success Criteria, Quality Feedback, Peer and Self-assessment (Florez and Sammons, 2013). The elements encourage observations, reflection and feedback to enhance ongoing learning (Welsh Government, 2013). The Curriculum for Wales promotes assessment for learning as it aids progression within education for learners aged three to eleven (Welsh Government, 2022). The aim of assessment in the Curriculum for Wales is to facilitate teaching and learning in a holistic approach to blend partnerships (Welsh Government, 2020). According to an Estyn report, effective assessment for learning is recognised as crucial in boosting learning levels. It enables children to grasp what excellence entails so that they can improve their own work to achieve an excellent level (Estyn, 2018).

Assessment is vital to the education process. There are two types of assessment; formative and summative (OECD, 2008). Self- assessment is a type of formative assessment. Formative assessment monitors student learning on a continuous basis, by providing ongoing feedback to improve learning. It allows pupils to recognise their strengths and weaknesses to form relevant targets (Carneige Mellon University, 2023). Formative assessment ought to be an essential part of the teaching process including planning effectively, making flexible use of different techniques, seeing assessment as an ongoing classroom practice and early identification of difficulties in learning (Donaldson, 2015).

For formative assessment to be productive, learners should implement self-assessment to understand the main purposes of their learning to recognise what they need to achieve (Black and William, 1998). Formative assessment techniques meet diverse student needs through differentiation and adaption of teaching (OECD, 2008). However, it may indicate that formative assessment is minimised when not used correctly by teachers (Black and William, 1998). On the other hand, summative assessment contributes to the grading and assessment of a qualification, rather than developing confidence for learners to undertake peer and self-assessment (Jones, 2005). It evaluates student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing to grades or a standard benchmark (University of Greenwich, ND).

In order to measure how pupils and practitioners saw the selected feature of assessment for learning, the researcher concentrated on self-assessment during the research study. Self-assessment enforces pupils to collect information regarding their own performance and progress during academic challenges (Andrade and Valtcheva, 2009). Tracking own academic progress enables pupils to take ownership of their learning, to meet one's learning needs in the classroom (Green, 2021). Self-assessment skills may result in increased confidence for learners to recognise their responsibilities independently, separate from the class teacher (Tennessee Department of Education, ND). In agreement to this, Dweck (2008) believes that the way someone views themselves shapes the way they perform. If a learner has cognitive confidence in themselves they will perform at a better standard (Pound, 2004). This process is known as 'Metacognition'; the knowledge and regulation of someone's own cognitive processes (Cunningham et al, 2015). Research by the Education Endowment Foundation found that metacognition is effective for pupil learning. It adds up to seven months of additional learning due to pupils monitoring and evaluating their own learning journey. By evaluating own learning, it enables understanding of success and failures in education, leading to significant progression (Sword, 2021). In opposition, the feedback received from self-assessment may be biased or difficult to understand (Carter, 2007). This is due to pupils having the opportunity to mark their work independently, which they may choose to change their answers. By doing this, progression and improvement is minimised.

Self-assessment encourages active learning within the classroom, as pupils are in a position to mark their own work independently. Active learning is an approach that actively engages pupils through discussions, role plays and problem solving. It places the responsibility on the learner with instructor guidance, to enable them to apply and transfer knowledge at a greater standard (Queens, 2023).

Active learning allows pupils to be more engaged with their own learning and to build knowledge through their experiences in the classroom (Arena Centre, 2019). However, given that active learning requires time in the classroom, some teachers may decide against using it. They might believe that a crowded curriculum makes it difficult to implement interactive and interesting teaching (Drew, 2023).

Montessori (1912) supports the idea of active learning and suggests that children learn by the virtue of their own experiences. The teacher provides motives for the learners which may be used for the pupils to access their own learning (Pound, 2004). In relation, the teacher may provide learners with a success criteria as guidance for the pupils, however self-assessment forces them to learn from their academic experiences. Piaget (1971) believes that children create knowledge through interactions between their own ideas and experiences (Brau, 2020). The writer believes that by using self-assessment in the classroom, pupils are able to use their academic experiences to learn and grow progressively with only support and guidance from teachers.

In contrast, Vygotsky (1934) suggests that children develop from the high interactions with adults or a more knowledgeable other (MKO). He believes that a child develops through interactions where adults provide them knowledge on how to think and the process of the tools to think with (Mcleod, 2023). This indicates the important role of a teacher in the classroom, which allows children to cognitively develop.

A mixed method approach was utilised when designing this research project. A mixed method approach combines quantitative and qualitative data through two different research tools, to be provide more in-depth findings (GOV.UK, 2020). Qualitative data appears in narrative form. It is collected from questionnaires, interviews or observations (Albertson, 2021). Quantitative data is seen as the opposite and appears in form of numbers where each data has a unique numerical value (Question pro, 2018). Combining the two types of data has the advantage of balancing out the drawbacks of each approach and resulting in study conclusions with solid supporting evidence (Bamberger et al., 2006). However, because it calls for additional resources and takes more time to complete, it can be challenging (GOV, 2020).

When collecting qualitative and quantitative data, the writer utilised the Mosaic approach. The mosaic approach is a multi-method approach which leads to deeper understandings of children's perspectives (Clark and Moss, 2001). However, it may be criticised for not being scientific enough, so data cannot be generalised accordingly (Dr. Brown, 2015).

This suggests that the data gathered may be seen as unreliable. The aim of the Mosaic approach is to gather pupil voice and experience (The open University, 2023). Pupil voice was significant in this research study as it is central to the 'Every Child Matters' agenda, which recognises the rights of children (Cheminais, 2013). Therefore, the pupils were asked their perspectives of using self-assessment in the classroom through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are data collections that involve open ended questions to explore further into a response (Miles and Gilbert, 2005). There may be limitations to these types of interviews such as not guaranteed honest answers from participants (Welsh Government, 2019). This suggests that the data may be not be noticed as credible to a researcher as it is not fairly reliable due to pupils being dishonest about their answers.

The researcher presented interviews to the three groups of four pupils to collect qualitative data. The class teacher selected the pupils to ensure the groups were picked appropriately. An interview is question-based with responses being as detailed as possible (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). An interview allows researchers to access topics that are potentially relevant to the children. These topics may not occur naturally in conversations (Wahle et al, 2019). The aim of the interview is to invite children to present their own perspectives and for researchers to take their views seriously (Indeed, 2022). This is to take elicit understanding and to present them in a child centred understanding (Bloom et al, 2020). Although interviews provide qualitative data, they can be a time-consuming process, especially face to face (Gibson, 2022). This indicates that the interviews may need to be planned and organised appropriately, to ensure all responses are collected in the allocated time. After conducting the interviews, the researcher transcribed the answers in a word document, keeping anonymity throughout (see appendix).

Another research tool identified in the research study is questionnaires. The questionnaires were emailed to the teachers in the research school via google forms. The data collected was produced into graphs from google forms after all responses were produced by the teachers. Questionnaires are a research instrument that consist of questions for the purpose of gaining information (Mcleod, 2023). Questionnaires are fast and efficient for collecting data in inexpensive means (Cint, 2022). They are completely private and anonymous, ensuring that data is more likely to be honest and reliable (Tutor, 2023). This conveys the advantages of using questionnaires during a research project as the answers are not seen to be biased. However, when completing questionnaires online, some questions may be misleading to the reader (Andrade, 2020).

It may be difficult for the respondents to answer the questions appropriately if they are not written in a specific manner (Survey Planet, 2023). This may possibly cause delays in a research study, as the respondents do not have access to the researcher (Ho, 2023). Therefore, it is essential that the questionnaires are constructed effectively to gain the best information possible.

It was crucial to make sure all ethical principles were strictly followed during the research investigation. Before conducting the study in School A, the researcher filled out an ethics form (see appendix). The school received a letter authorising permission for staff and student participation in the research (see appendix). In order to preserve the participants' rights and sense of dignity, it was crucial to adhere to ethical principles (World Health Organisation, 2021).

The Bera Guidelines (2018) were followed by the researcher during the study. The Bera Guidelines state the importance of consent, right to withdraw, assent, anonymity, transparency and privacy and data storage. Consent was requested at the start of the study via a letter given to the school, which showed that for any reason the participants can withdraw their consent at any time. The description on the questionnaire provided to staff, indicated the right to withdraw from the questions at any time if they did not wish to give their consent. The pupils involved in the interviews were requested for their assent to take part. The researcher ensured to explain to the pupils their right to withdraw at any time if the questions were deemed uncomfortable to them. The researcher provided the pupils with green and red cards. It was explained that if the pupil wanted to withdraw they could hold the red card to stop the interview. Another ethical guideline that was followed was transparency. It was essential to explain honestly to all participants and stakeholders, to inform them of the research aim and research outcome. This is so they are fully aware of the research study they are participating in. Furthermore, it was made clear that all members were kept anonymous throughout the questionnaires and interviews. In the transcriptions of the interviews, all pupils were kept anonymous by the writer, to ensure that the volunteers are protected in the study (Bera, 2018).

The research study showed that the majority of staff and pupils' perception of self-assessment was useful in aiding learners' progression. The response from the interviews suggested that pupils in year 6 enjoy self-assessing their work as it allows them to identify what they may need to improve on for future work (see appendix). One pupil said that a positive of self-assessment is 'to see my progression every day and see what I get right or wrong'.

This supports the idea that children tracking their own academic progress enables them to improve and meet their needs within the classroom (Green, 2021). The learners believe by doing this they gain more confidence when completing their work, rather than peer-assessment conducted from their friends. When asked “would you prefer to mark your own work or your friend mark it?”, the learners stated that peer-assessment provides extra stress and worry as they may feel embarrassed for getting answers incorrect. One pupil said “I don’t like my friend seeing my answers because they might laugh at me”. This suggests that confidence within the classroom is significantly important for pupils to be able to concentrate and improve.

However, some pupils indicated that they would prefer the teacher marking their work as they are more trusted and reliable. They believe that if a friend marks their work they could mark it incorrect, which may lead to them becoming upset. This corresponds with the idea from Vygotsky of having a more knowledgeable other to help improve learning. He states that having a MKO allows pupils to progress as they should have interactions with adults (Mcleod, 2023). A pupil stated that “if I mark my work and get something wrong I am confused on how to make it right but the teacher can help us improve”. This suggests the importance of a teacher in aiding pupils to progress in their learning.

The responses from the interviews also showed that pupils sometimes struggle during self-assessment and do not learn anything from it. They said “it goes too fast so I end up missing some answers and getting confused”. This implies that self-assessment may not be useful in pupil progression if children are unable to improve from it. In correspondence to this, another disadvantage that was collected from the pupils stated how self-assessment doesn’t show how the answers are wrong. This is supported from the idea that the feedback received from self-assessment is often biased or difficult to recognise (Carter, 2007). If the feedback is difficult to understand then pupils may struggle to improve for future work. Therefore, they may choose to change their answers to avoid disappointment.

Similar to this, when teachers were polled, they listed the drawbacks of self-evaluation. Teacher B said, “It is very difficult to be truly self-reflective as we are biased and sometimes oblivious to the problems that could promote possible improvement,” while Teacher A said, “It allows opportunities for pupils to change answers and you do not always gain a fair reflection of what they are capable of.” These limitations demonstrate that self-evaluation is a cognitive bias; individuals incorrectly place a high value on their competence in a particular task (Chen et al. 2013). The downside with doing this is that students lose out on chances to enhance their learning because they fail to be truthful while self-evaluating.

However, when asked “what are the benefits of self-assessment?”, Teacher C implied that self-assessment can create a growth mindset. A growth mindset is self-belief in current skills whilst accepting that there is room for improvement. This allows space for development and progression (The Dynamic Mind, 2022). Having a growth mindset is essential for development in education as it embraces challenges, learns from criticism and find inspiration in success (Edinburgh, 2022). In agreement to this, Teacher A said that “self-assessment allows pupils to take ownership into their learning and address misconceptions to make improvements, as opposed to a summative approach where there is little time to act upon it”. This links to how summative assessment contributes to the grading of a qualification instead of developing confidence for learners (Jones, 2005). Having confidence in the classroom, excels learning to an excellent standard in education. Studies show that learners with higher confidence are more willing to learn, so they are able to challenge themselves to have better resilience in difficult transitions (Gill, 2023). Finally, the questionnaire responses confirmed that practitioners use self-assessment in the classroom, at progression steps two and three. They believe younger pupils are unable to effectively self-assess, making it pointless in the classroom. Therefore, when self-assessment is utilised it enables pupils to take a more personal view into their own learning if modelled correctly.

In the future, the researcher would carry out the study in a number of different schools to gather a variety of viewpoints and reactions. By doing this, the questionnaire would provide a wide range of responses for the researcher from the teachers. The investigation should be expanded to additional schools in the future because School A only had four responses. The fact that questionnaires can be easily avoided and lost in clogged emails is a drawback of using Google Forms to create them. In order to prevent responses from being overlooked, the researcher would therefore create the questionnaires on paper if the study were to be done again. Participants may have easier access to paper questionnaires, which would promote more responses with higher quality (DeFranzo, 2012).

To conclude, in order to find out how teachers and students view self-evaluation, the researcher conducted a small-scale study. Two different research methodologies were used in the study's holistic approach to gather a variety of viewpoints and findings. The writer's theory was somewhat confirmed. There is no doubt that students participate and engage in self-assessment in the classroom and find it to be a beneficial tool. Nevertheless, numerous restrictions were found during the course of the research study as seen by both students and practitioners.

The primary obstacle identified was that pupils' self-reflections may be biased, which causes slower growth and improvement. Additionally, the benefits learned throughout highlighted how self-assessment motivates students to take charge of their own educational experiences, resulting in greater progression. The overall aim of the research study was to improve professional practise. According to Sharp and Hemsley-Brown (2006), teaching should evolve into an empirically grounded profession through a coordinated approach to research, particularly pedagogy. Pedagogy is the synthesis of instructional strategies and student performance evaluations (University of Minnesota, 2023). The principles of progression are essential to follow as a practitioner in Wales. They promote both depth and breadth of knowledge, foster understanding, and boost learners' productivity (Welsh Government, 2022). Using Pedagogy in Future Practice excels at meeting the four purposes of learners in Wales. The four purposes are inextricably related to evaluation for learning, which ensures that each child develops independently (Early Years Wales, 2020). Assessment for learning is critical to every child's learning path, emphasising the significance of the research study in determining self-assessment perspectives. Following the completion of the study project, it is clear that the writer sees the value of employing self-assessment in the classroom to boost learner development. Self-evaluation is seen as a favourable criterion for boosting students' confidence and growth mentality (Assessment Resources, 2014). Increasing confidence in the classroom is critical for advancement because students can positively reflect on their work without feeling embarrassed in front of their peers.

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