Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Personalised assessments – FAQs for parents and carers

What are 'personalised assessments'?

In personalised or 'adaptive' assessments the questions are selected based on the learner's response to the previous question. If a learner answers a question incorrectly, they will get an easier question; if a learner answers a question correctly, they will get a more challenging question. This provides an individual assessment experience and tailors the level of challenge for every learner.

Welsh Government is introducing personalised assessments for numeracy and reading to replace paper-based National Tests. The National Numeracy Personalised Assessment (Procedural) and National Personalised Assessment Reading are both available online. Numerical reasoning will become available in 2020/2021.

What is the purpose of personalised assessments?

The purpose of the assessments is to help learners progress, through understanding what they can do, the things they need to work on, and their next steps.

The information from the assessments will add to what your child(ren)'s teacher knows about their reading and numeracy from their work every day in the classroom.

What are the benefits of personalised assessments?

Personalised assessments:

- are tailored for each learner
- provide an interactive experience to engage learners and assess the level of their skills
- provide information on learners' skills and development
- are flexible – schools can schedule at a time they consider to be most beneficial to help plan learning and teaching.

Why is Welsh Government introducing online personalised assessments?

Personalised assessments provide information on the reading and numeracy skills of individual learners and whole classes which teachers can use to plan next steps in learning and teaching. By moving online, we are taking advantage of the latest technology to provide a personalised assessment experience that adjusts the level of challenge for each learner.

Who will take the assessments?

If your child is in Years 2–9 studying in a maintained school in Wales, they are required to take the personalised assessments.

When will my child(ren) take personalised assessments?

Personalised assessments are being phased in over a three-year period, during which time the paper-based tests will be phased out. Your child will take the assessments once during the academic year. In response to requests from teachers, the assessments are also available to schools for an optional second use within the year so that they can see how learners are progressing.

The personalised assessments are replacing the paper-based tests in line with the timetable below.

Academic year	**Numeracy** (Procedural)	**Reading** (English and Welsh)	**Numeracy** (Reasoning)
2019/20	**online**	**online**	**paper**
2020/21	**online**	**online**	**online**

While the paper-based tests are taken at a set time during April/May, the personalised assessments can be taken at any point during the school year that your child(ren)'s school decides is most beneficial for their learning.

My child(ren) has/have additional learning needs – will the assessments be suitable?

Yes. There are modified versions of the assessments available for your child(ren). These include text enlargement, tab controls, and other adaptations. The assessments are compatible with standard assistive technologies.

Learners are not confined to questions linked to their year group or age. The 'adaptive' nature of the assessments means that each question is selected based on your child's response to the previous question. The level of difficulty will vary until your child's level is established at the end of the assessment.

Is any preparation for the assessments required?

No. Personalised assessments do not require your child(ren) to undertake any specific preparation.

The assessments are designed to be easy to use. Familiarisation assessments are available so that schools can ensure that children see and understand the question

types before they take an assessment, and are familiar with the navigation of an assessment.

How will my child(ren) access the assessments?

Your child(ren) will access the assessments at school, via Hwb, the Welsh Government's online learning platform.

What device will my child(ren) use to take the assessments?

The assessments can be taken on desktop computers, laptops and tablets. Children may take the assessments one at a time, in small groups or classes, according to teacher preferences and school facilities.

Will my child(ren) be required to take the assessments during a specific window?

No. Schools have the flexibility to schedule the personalised assessments at a point during the academic year that they consider most appropriate to gain benefits for learning and teaching. However, during the transition period, a test window remains in place for the paper-based tests.

Can I opt for my child(ren) to have paper-based tests once the personalised assessments are introduced?

No. Paper-based tests will be phased out as the personalised assessments go live for Numeracy (Procedural), Reading (English and Welsh), and Numeracy (Reasoning), in that order, in line with the timetable on the previous page.

Will parents and carers receive reports about their child(ren) following the assessments?

Parents and carers will receive feedback from schools on their child(ren)'s skills. This will provide a snapshot of your child's skills at the time each assessment was taken. This will include information on the most difficult questions they got right, some of the questions they got wrong, and possible next steps. Schools are encouraged to share information with parents and carers when the information is current.

Progress reports will also be provided, showing progress over time and the age standardised score for a child's most recent assessment. The score shows how well your child has done compared with other children in Wales born in the same year and month. Schools will decide when to share these reports with parents. In the 2019/20 academic year, progress reports for the reading assessment will not be available until the end of the summer term.

How long will the assessments last?

Your child(ren) will work through the questions at their own pace. The length of the assessments will vary for your child(ren) depending on how long it takes the system to establish the level of their skills. When the system has gathered enough information, the assessment will end automatically. The Numeracy (Procedural) assessment generally lasts between 20 and 40 minutes. The reading assessment generally lasts between 35 and 45 minutes. Teachers are able to pause the assessments, e.g. in order to give breaks to younger learners.

How can I find out more?

You can find out more information about personalised assessments at *hwb.gov.wales/personalised-assessments-for-parents-and-carers*
You can also follow us on Twitter @WG_Education.