

**SUAN SUNANDHA
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EAD 5628

Quality assurance for school development



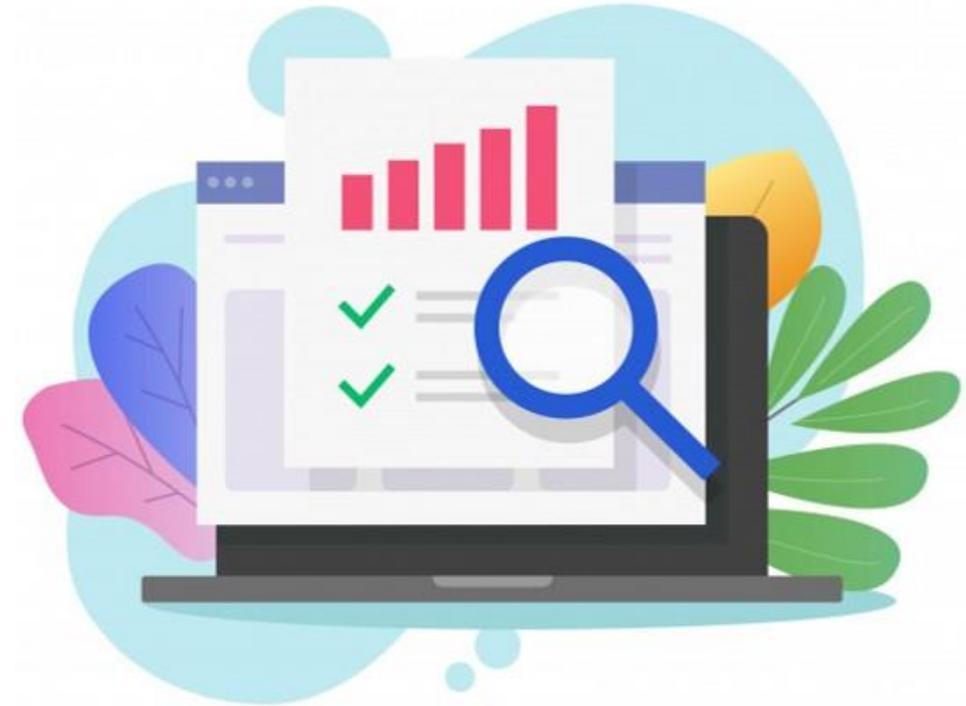
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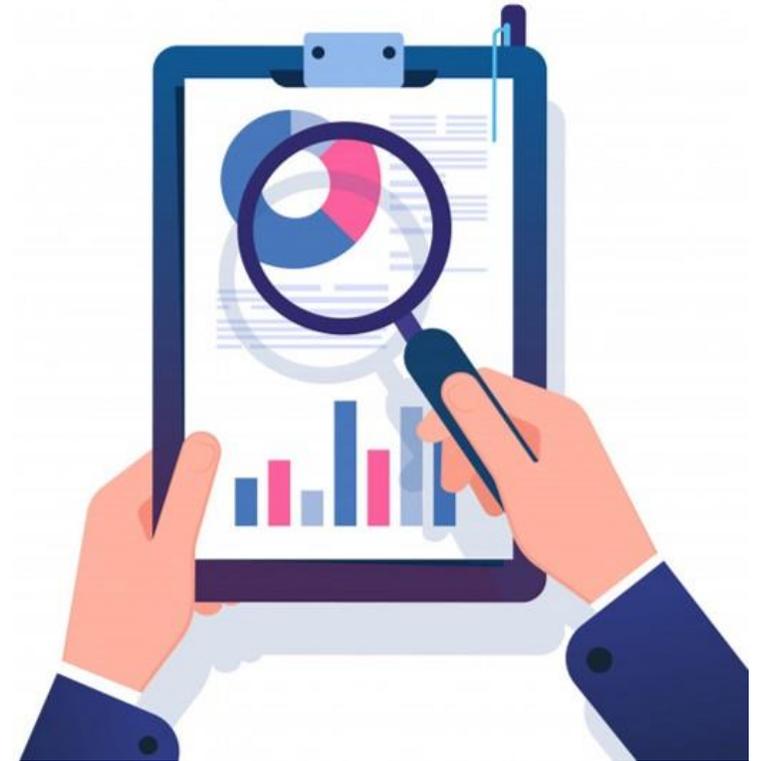
Research-based recommendations point towards a need for greater coherence and synergy in quality assurance approaches – in particular, the effective interplay between internal and external mechanisms – in order to ensure that they best serve school development and innovation.



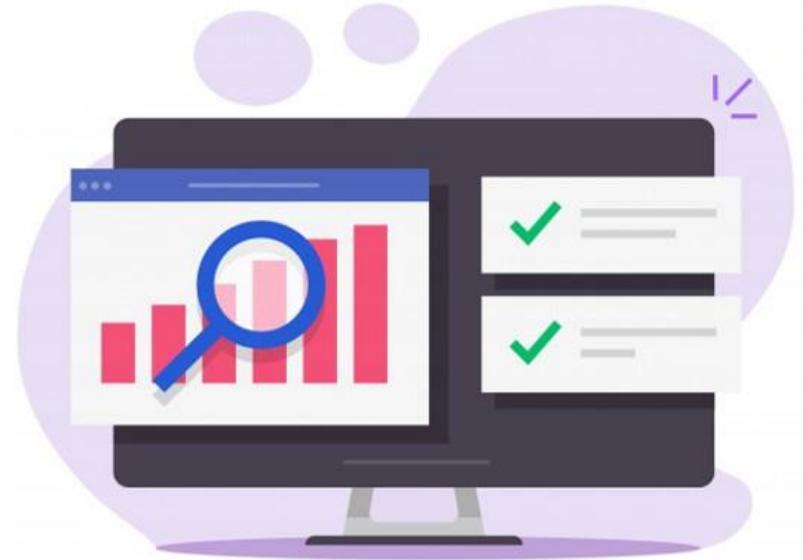


This includes the Council Conclusions of 2014 on quality assurance in education and training, which called for supporting a culture of quality enhancement and trust.

Conditions for effective quality assurance for school development include ensuring ownership of the process through meaningful dialogue and actions, and an opportunity for 'out of the box' thinking and creativity. The challenge for school education systems is to develop and sustain professional learning communities and cultures to support school development, with an emphasis on improvement more than quality 'control'.



Whilst the focus here is on the governance of school education systems, the ultimate aim of quality assurance is to ensure that learners have the best learning opportunities possible.

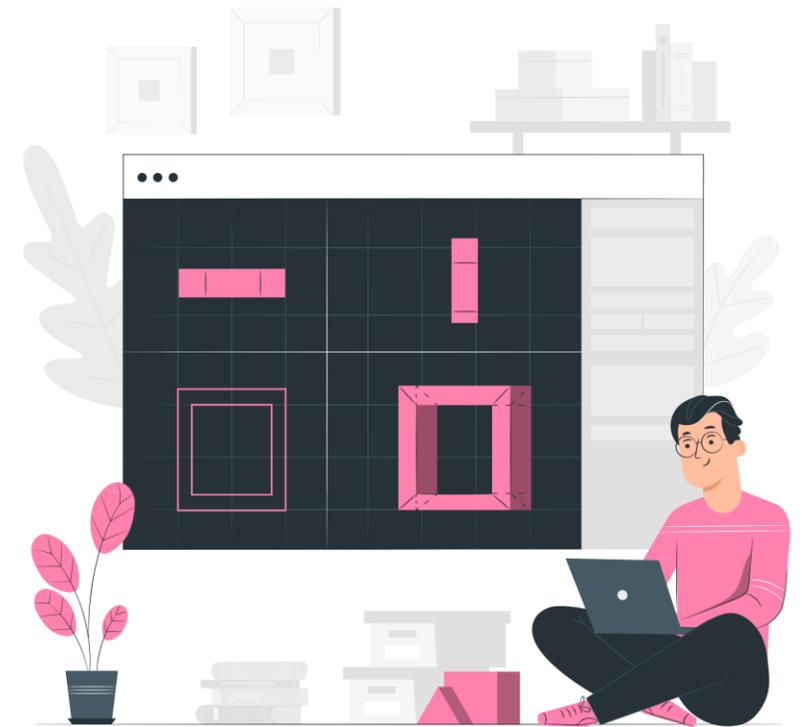


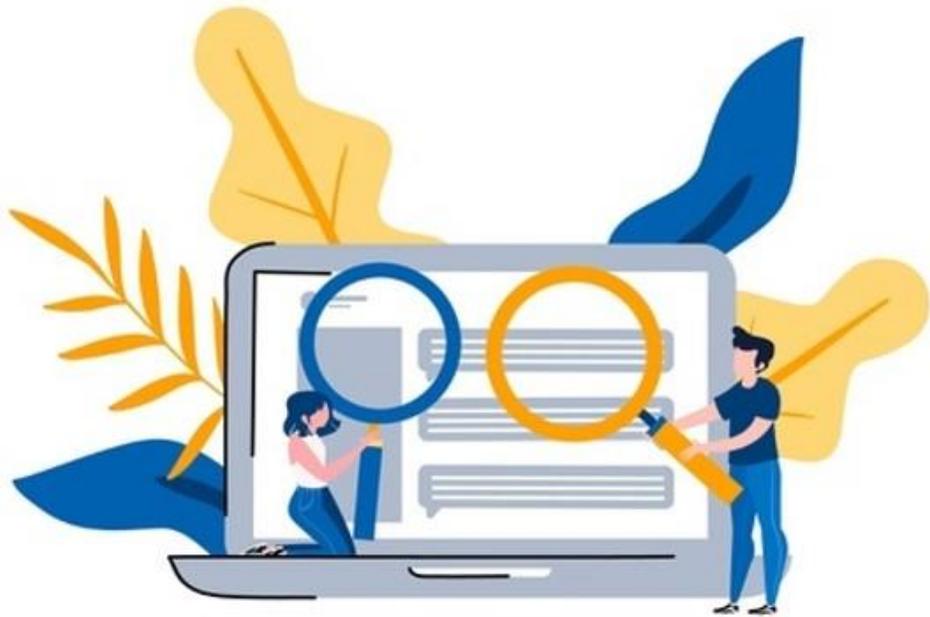
Guiding Principles



Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational programmes and processes to maintain and improve their quality, equity and efficiency. While the design of quality assurance mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) varies across national contexts, their common objective is to improve teaching and learning – with the ultimate goal to support the best outcomes for learners.

Quality assurance approaches can include mechanisms that are external and internal to schools. External mechanisms may include national or regional school evaluations and/or large-scale student assessments. Internal mechanisms may include school self-evaluation, staff appraisal and classroom-based student assessments. These mechanisms have different but complementary purposes.





Quality assurance is important for accountability as well as to support ongoing development of schools and of teaching and learning. Well-functioning systems have mechanisms to support and balance vertical and horizontal, internal and external accountability. Quality assurance that is focused on development supports schools to adapt to the changing needs of learners.

The focus is not only on improvement but also innovation – that is, the development or experimental testing of approaches in different contexts -- to support quality, equity and efficiency. Approaches to quality assurance may need to be adapted over time to better meet needs for feedback and decision-making across systems.



Context



Policy context – recent research School education systems are complex and vary greatly across Europe and the same is true of the quality assurance mechanisms that are embedded in and steer them. It is believed that one model of quality assurance cannot fit all systems; therefore it is more appropriate to explore the role of different stakeholders and the processes they follow at national and/or regional level.



Policy makers may then learn from varied experiences of their peers in other countries. This includes exploring the interplay among the different elements of a system, given that recent research-based recommendations point toward a need for greater coherence in approaches to quality assurance.





Many countries incorporate evaluations that are external and internal to schools, which can complement and reinforce each other. It is believed that school education systems that support the synergy of external and internal quality assurance mechanisms will have more resilience for the complex process of change.

While each system is different, countries share several common policy challenges and opportunities in their approach to quality assurance. These include how to:

- set goals and measure progress for education systems and student learning;
- design quality assurance for education systems that are increasingly diverse, decentralised and multi-level;



- support and encourage dialogue and cultures of trust between and among education stakeholders;
- ensure transparency of quality assurance data while also avoiding the pressure of high stakes approaches; and
- prioritise human and financial resources.



Many countries are engaged in continuing or recent reforms, ranging from a general introduction of quality assurance mechanisms, the introduction of specific measures, the adoption of national frameworks, or the formal incorporation of PISA results.





Building evidence: the purpose of quality assurance mechanisms Governments are increasingly concerned with assuring the quality of public services, including education. In education systems, schools are held accountable for helping all students to meet standards, and for effective and efficient use of resources.

Within the context of the European and National Quality Frameworks, systems focus on learning outcomes (defined as ‘statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do at the end of a learning process’). Learning outcomes are intended to ensure qualifications are transparent, and to support accountabilities .



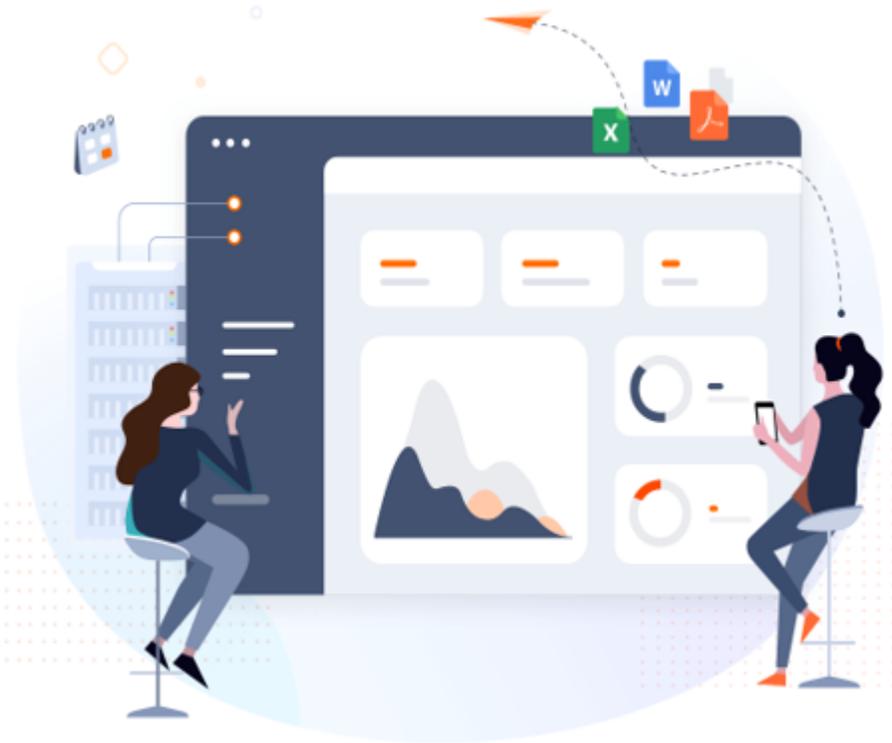
Decision makers may refer to quality assurance data to: ensure that schools are meeting standards set out in National Qualification Frameworks; distribute resources effectively and equitably; identify schools that are ‘at risk’ and in need of additional support; and to highlight and share ‘good practices’ more widely, with the purpose of stimulating and supporting school improvement. Both quantitative and qualitative data are important in this regard.



Increasingly, national governments are shifting greater control to the local level while maintaining responsibility for the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of the overall system. National policy mechanisms may include direct interventions, such as regulations, or indirect interventions, such as frameworks that may be adapted to local conditions .

At national and regional levels, it is important to have broad indicators of overall education performance. Quantitative data may be aggregated to make system-level decisions, for example, the equitable distribution of resources across regions and schools.





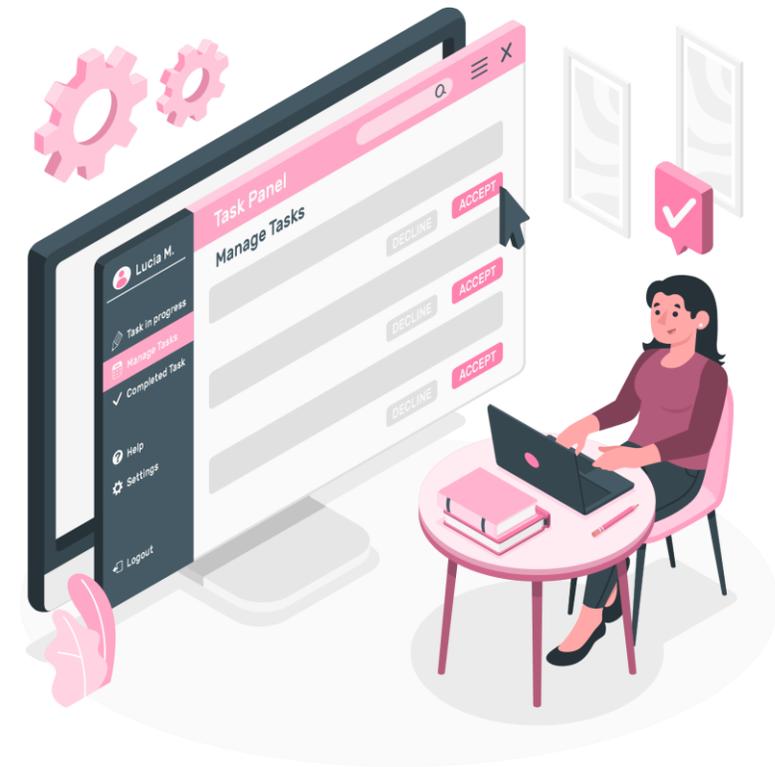
At the school level, disaggregated quantitative data may be used to identify areas where further investigation of student needs may be appropriate. Qualitative data also provide important context and allow a more nuanced understanding of the school's progress.



Countries are also increasingly allowing schools greater autonomy so they may better respond to local contexts and individual learner needs. Internal quality assurance mechanisms support evidence-based decision-making for internal accountability (that is, peer professional accountability) and school development.

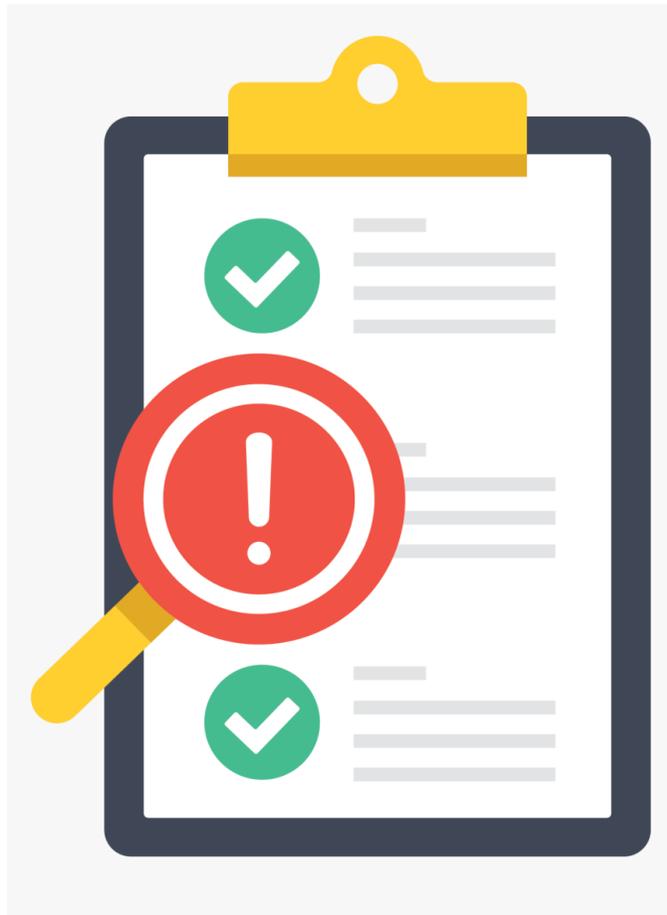
Most European countries have created frameworks that integrate some combination of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, which may include:

- Inspectorates
- National student assessments
- School self-evaluation
- Teacher appraisal



These mechanisms generate data on the overall performance of systems as well as the quality of schools and of the teacher workforce, as measured against learning outcomes and standards defined in National Qualification Frameworks.

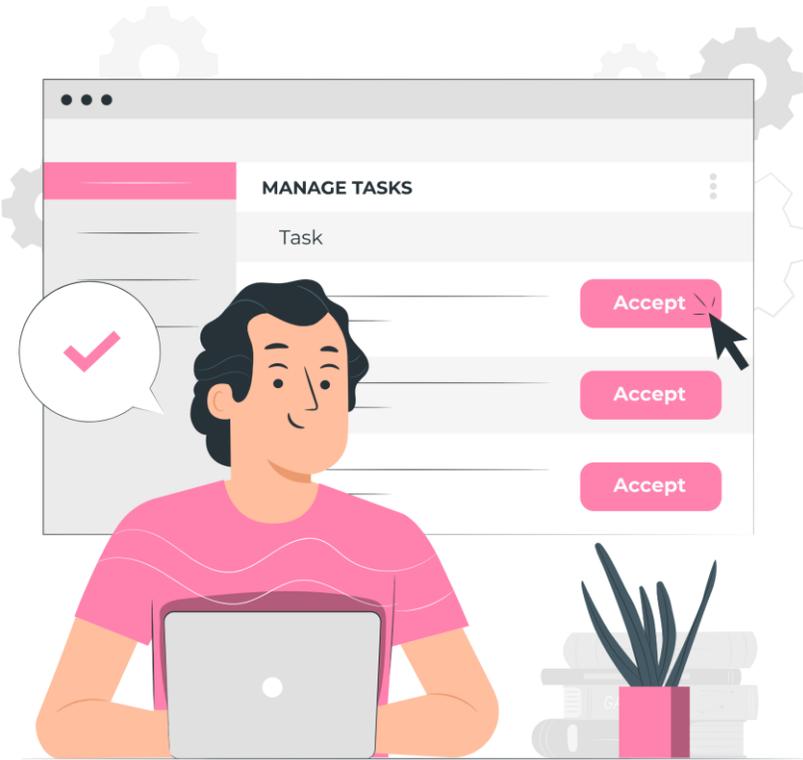




Ideally, a broad range of education and training stakeholders, including early childhood education and care (ECEC), general, vocational education and training (VET) and higher education (HE) cooperate to ensure continuity of standards across the sectors. At the European level, ongoing work on quality assurance is articulated across fields in education

Finally, it is important to note that quality assurance is an important complement to education research and knowledge. Quality assurance mechanisms provide data on current performance and help to identify areas of success as well as areas for system and school improvement.





Education research methodologies allow a much deeper view on ‘what works best for learning, for whom, and under what circumstances. Both quality assurance and education research support reflection on effective school development.

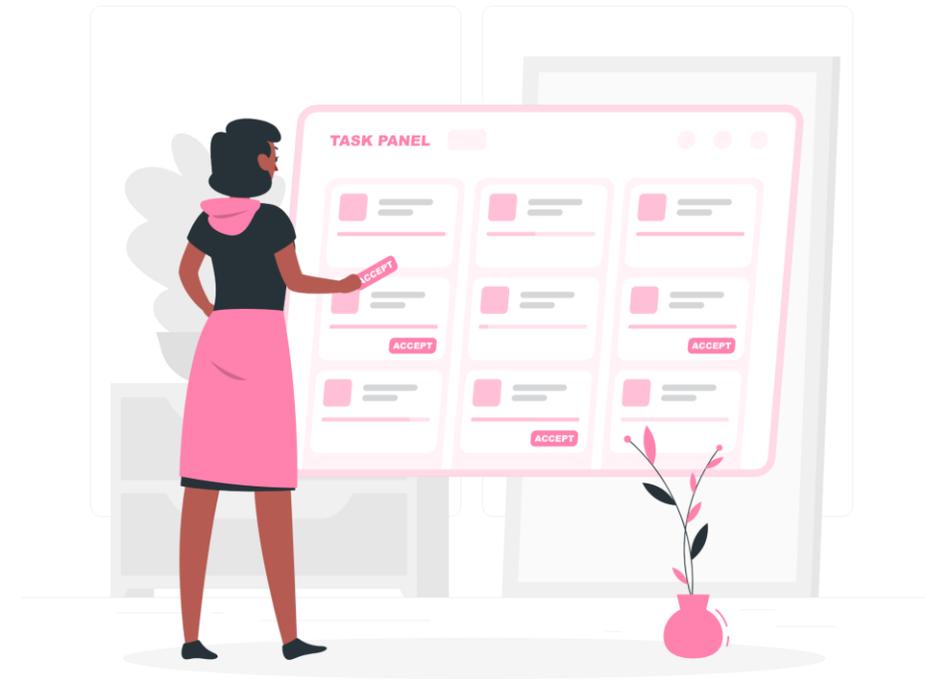
Accountability and improvement

Accountability and improvement



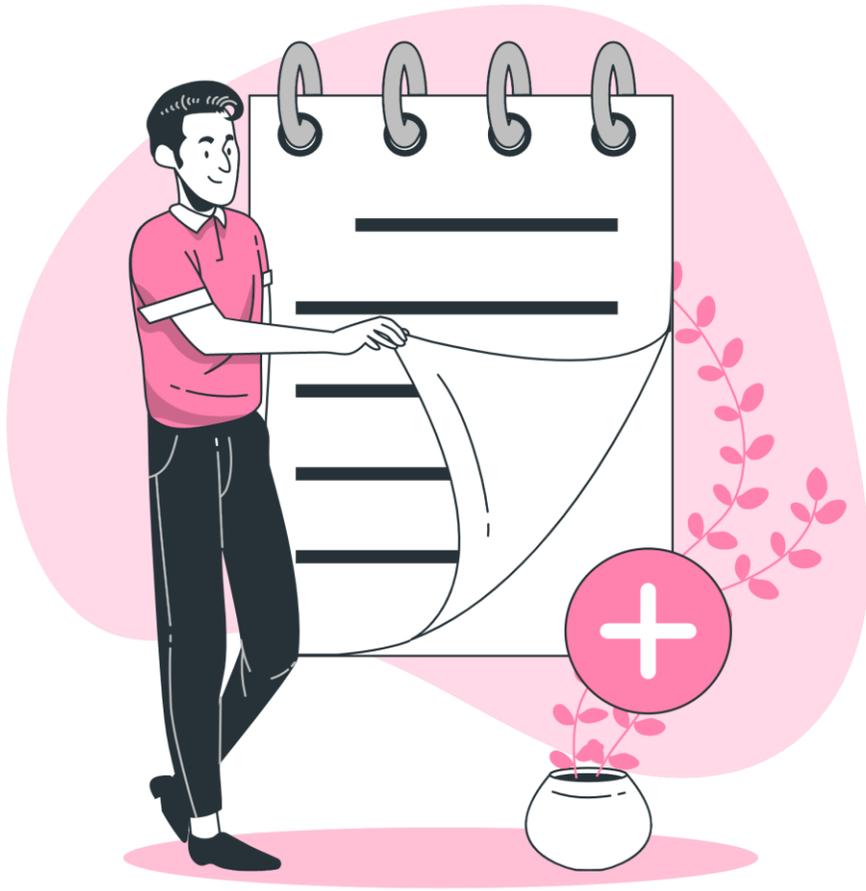
The different country approaches to quality assurance are apparent not only in how they integrate external and internal mechanisms, but also in how they balance their accountability and improvement functions. There are concerns that ‘high stakes’ approaches to accountability may undermine school development. High stakes may include denial of accreditation to schools that do not meet quality assurance standards, financial sanctions for schools, or impact on teachers’ careers or salaries.

Many countries publish the results of student assessments and school evaluations, which teachers may perceive as adding to stakes. Reliance on a limited number of high-visibility evaluations and assessments, and government or media-generated ‘league tables’, may also increase stakes.



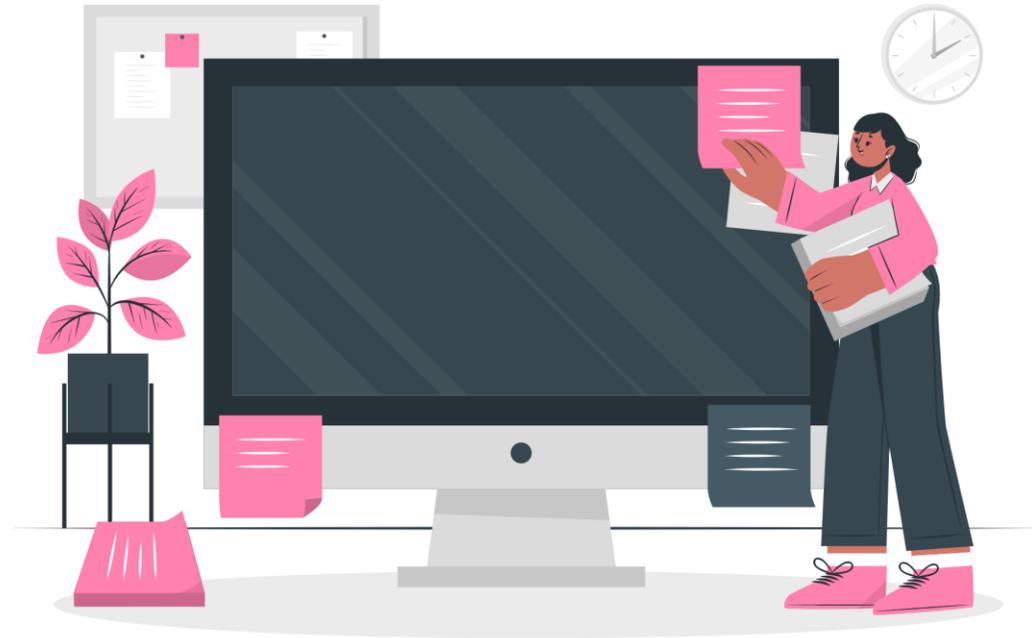
However, both accountability and improvement are important for ensuring the quality of processes as well as of outcomes. Mechanisms that include a focus on accountability typically include some kind of incentives to focus teachers' attention on central performance standards and the need to help all students succeed.





At the same time, a focus on improvement ensures that data are used to identify needs, adjust school strategies, and motivate improvements in instruction.

While there are concerns that high stakes may inhibit development and innovation and demotivate staff, countries have taken a variety of approaches to moderate their impact and to place greater emphasis on improvement. For example, a number of countries highlight the importance of moving away from quality assurance as ‘control’ to a more open and ‘trust based’ approaches.





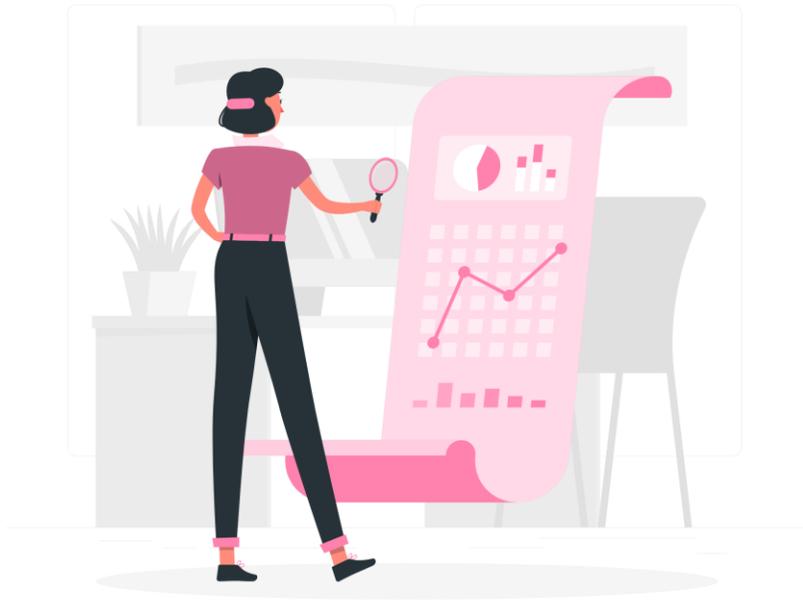
Publication of a range of data on school and teacher performance may also help to lower stakes associated with a single, high-visibility assessment or school evaluation, although this might not always be the perception.

The balance of accountability and improvement is also relevant to internal quality assurance. At the school-level, there is some evidence that strong teacher-to-teacher trust, a collective focus on improving instruction and learning, and teacher experience are associated with higher levels of student attainment.



In turn, teachers in more successful schools have stronger levels of trust, which indicates strong levels of internal control and accountability. Internal quality assurance mechanisms are most effective when they support teacher collective work and are focused on improving instruction.





Teacher appraisal, which may be conducted externally (inspectors or local administrators) and/or internally (school management or peers), is another area where it is important to balance accountability and improvement. It is important to clearly separate appraisal that is meant to help teachers to improve classroom teaching from appraisal for high-stakes decisions related to performance awards and/or career advancement.



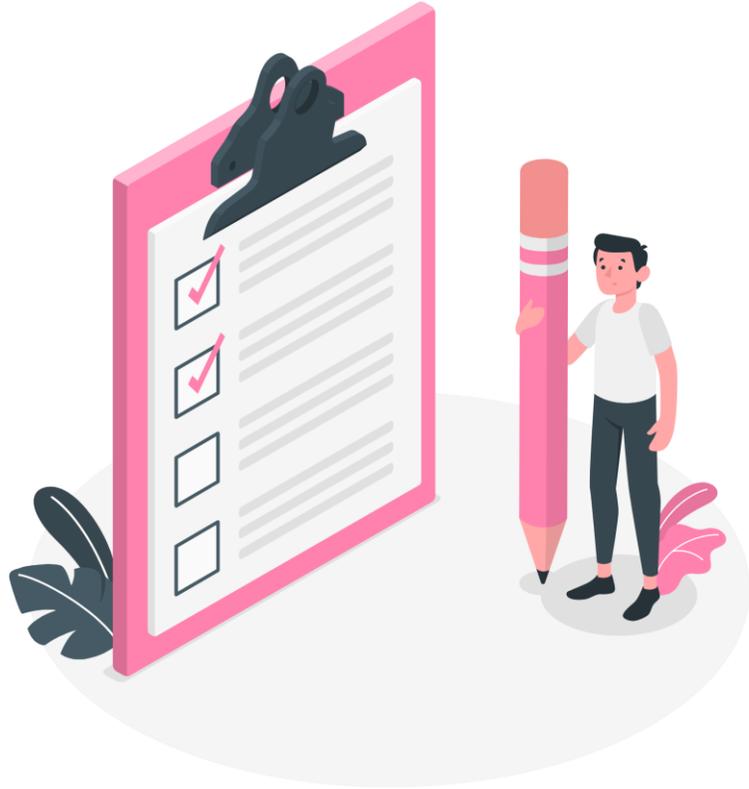
If teachers feel that there are career consequences attached to an appraisal process, they are less likely to be open about areas where they feel they need to improve, thus missing out on an important opportunity for feedback and support . For high–stakes decisions with career consequences, teachers should be encouraged to demonstrate their positive accomplishments.

Reviewing complex quality assurance systems – achieving coherence, adaptability and sustainability No single internal or external quality assurance mechanism can provide all the information needed for school accountability and development.



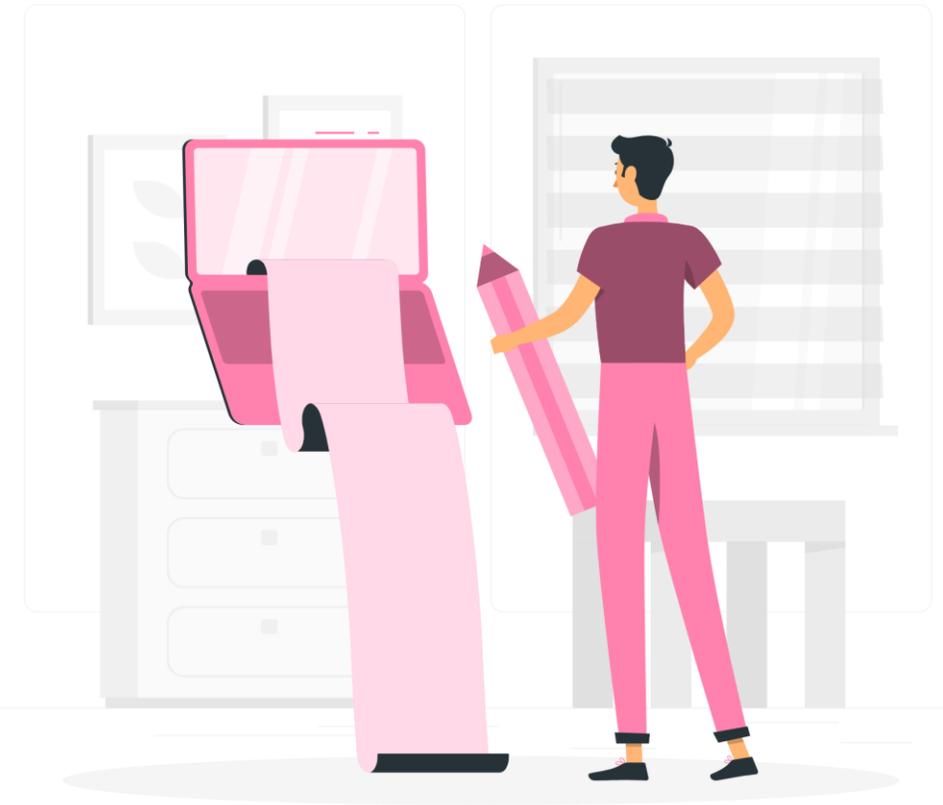
Taken together, the different mechanisms can provide important and complementary insights on school, teacher and student performance and support evidence-based decision-making.



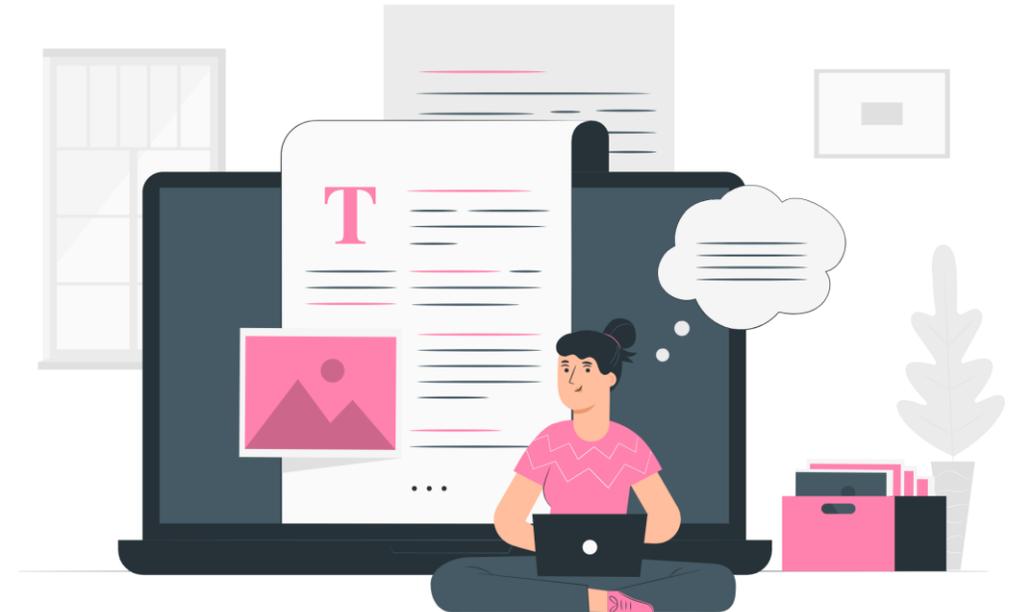


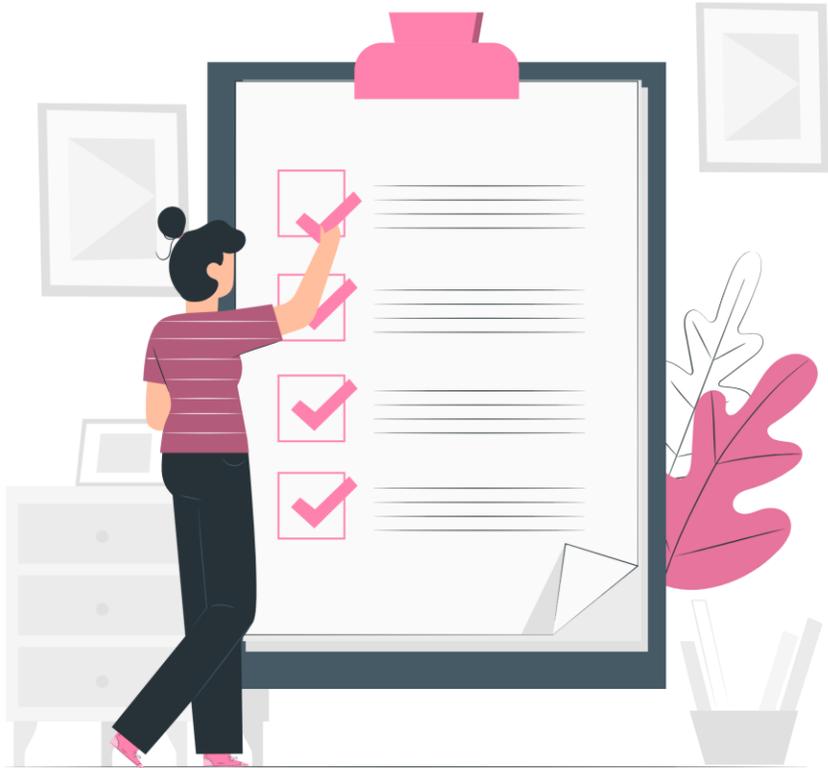
External quality assurance mechanisms aim to provide objective, valid and reliable data on school performance. For example, school inspectors, who are not part of the school community, bring objective viewpoints to school climate, the quality of development strategies, and teacher performance. As inspectors visit a range of schools, they also have the unique opportunity to share ideas on effective practice among schools.

Concludes that inspection visits, as well as other inspection processes, appear to have direct, immediate, effects on the quality and responsiveness of school's self-evaluation processes, and therefore school effectiveness. Importantly, inspectorates should be able to provide evidence that inspectors use the same criteria and standards to evaluate schools and teachers (inter-inspector reliability), ensuring that the approach is fair to all schools.



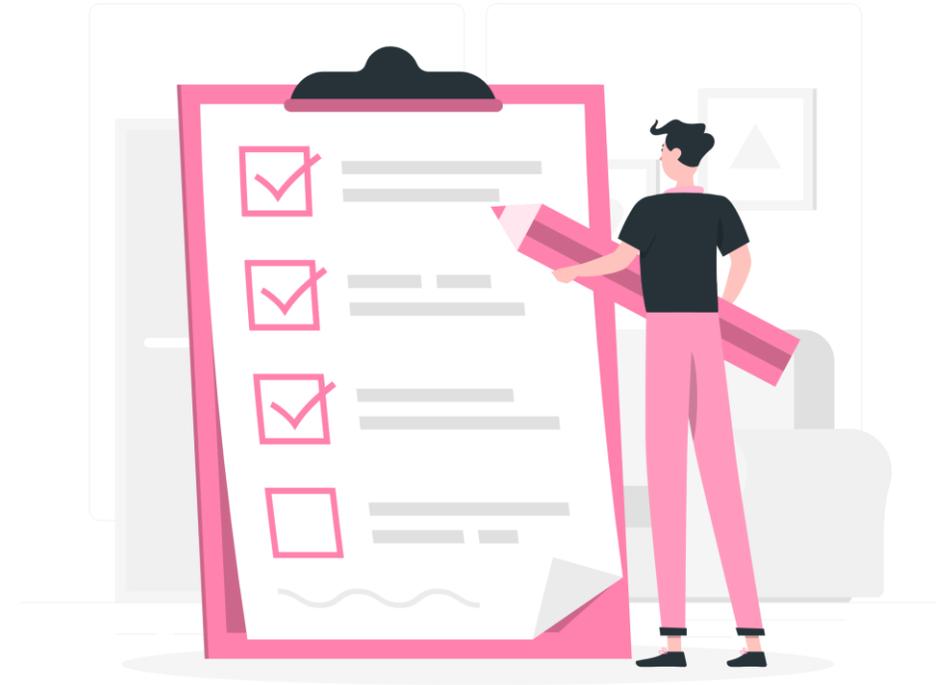
Policy makers may track equity of outcomes, areas for improvement, and progress over time. National (and international) student assessments provide valid and reliable data on the attainment of the general student population.





However, the results of student assessments alone cannot provide the rounded perspective needed to support policy decisions related to resource allocation, programmes to support inclusion, curriculum development, and so on. Policy makers are in a position to develop strategies to address a broad range of needs if data sources are combined.

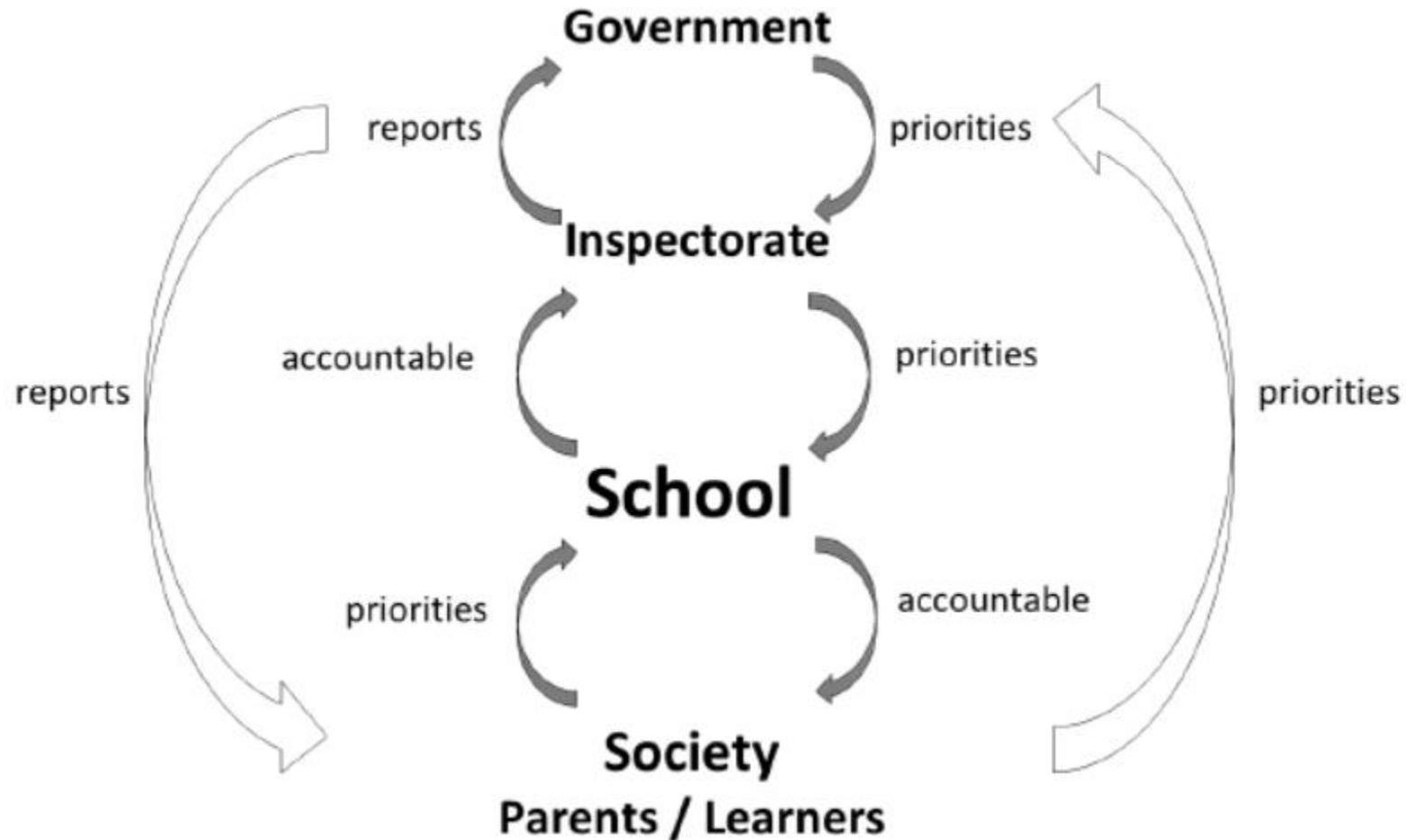
At the school and classroom level, teachers will need to gather more timely and detailed data to adjust teaching to student needs. Different types of assessments (including both summative and formative) implemented over time will provide a more rounded perspective on individual student progress and needs.





The following model was developed by members of the Working Group as a representation of typical relationships between system actors. This may provide a useful reference for reviewing the roles of stakeholders, decision-making processes, and the flow of data. Whilst there are variations, priority-setting is often done externally and imposed on the schools and the school is accountable in return.

Figure 1: graphical representation of the relation between different elements of the system in terms of accountability, reporting and priority-setting



Internal quality assurance, including school self-evaluation and teacher appraisal support teachers to take collective responsibility for student learning. While schools may have access to central guidelines for school self-evaluation, staff may need to develop a consensus on goals and criteria for the evaluation. Staff may also need training on how to gather and analyse data.

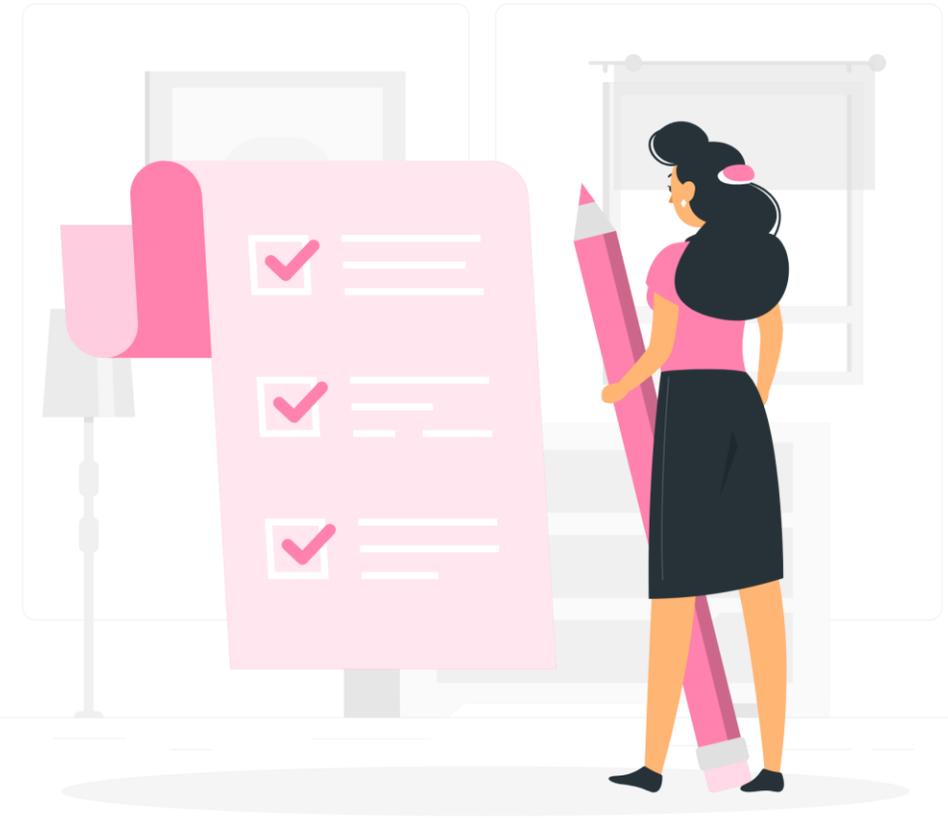
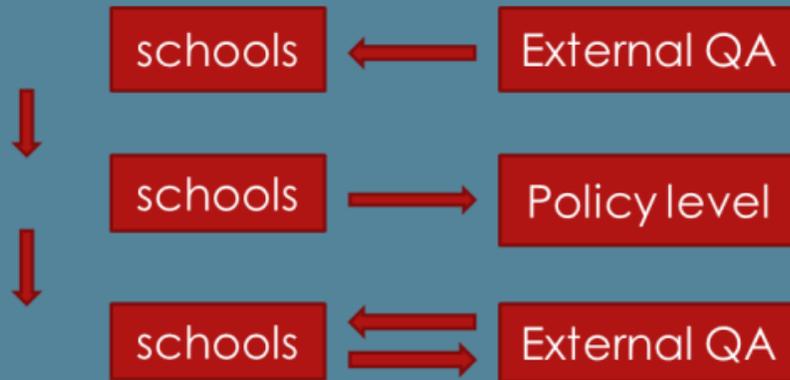


Figure 2: graphical representation of school development processes and questions to consider – developed by participants at the Peer Learning Activity, Estonia 2016

▶ initiatives should fit your starting point



- Do you have the tools you need?
- Do we use the same language?
- Do you have measures to inspire?
 - Networks
 - Peer learning
 - External inspiration
- Do you have support systems?

Ultimately, the synergy between external and internal mechanisms will help to ensure a healthy, dynamic quality assurance process.

'Quality assurance through Synergy between Internal and External Evaluation: its impacts on learning and teaching'.



The main focus is on quality assurance for improvement, with the aim of ensuring that every child develops his/her talents and abilities in order to contribute to the future.



Quality assurance for school development : principles in action

1

Coherence of internal and external quality assurance mechanisms



Systems should strive over time to achieve balance and coherence across different mechanisms that have been developed to meet the demands and expectations of stakeholders working both within schools and in the wider school education system.



Quality assurance approaches can encompass a range of mechanisms (tools, processes and actors) to monitor overall system performance, policy implementation, school and staff effectiveness, and individual student outcomes. School systems include various layers, operate in diverse contexts, and employ staff with a range of experience and competences.

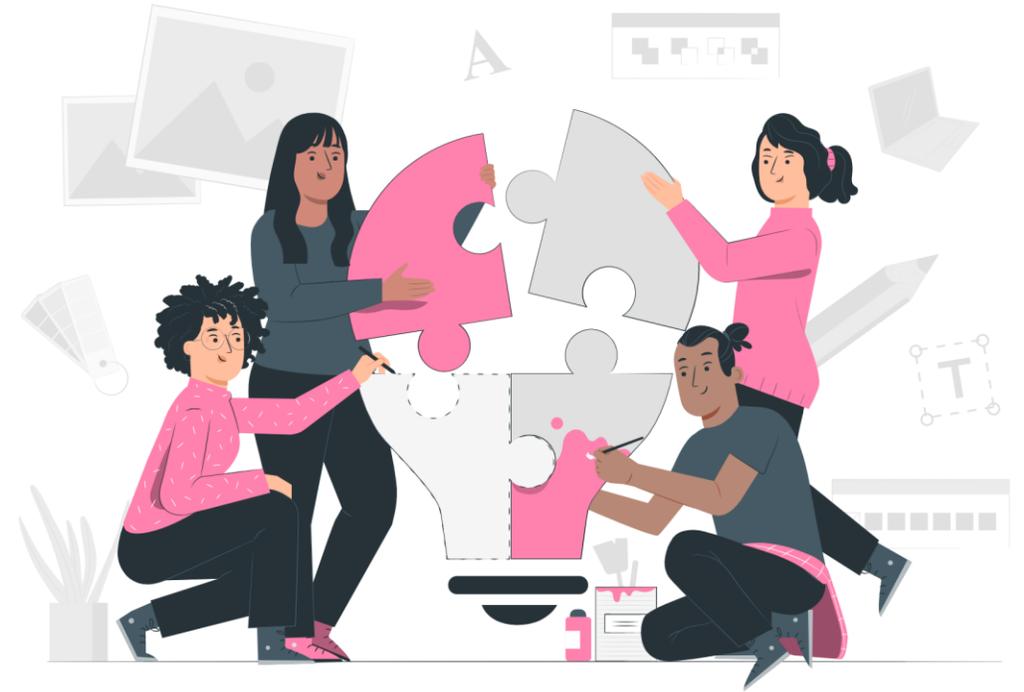
External mechanisms provide data important for policy-level decisions and resource allocation, while internal evaluations provide more detailed and timely data important for school-level development and to support teaching and learning. Schools and external institutions and actors may work together to define strategies and alternatives for school improvement.



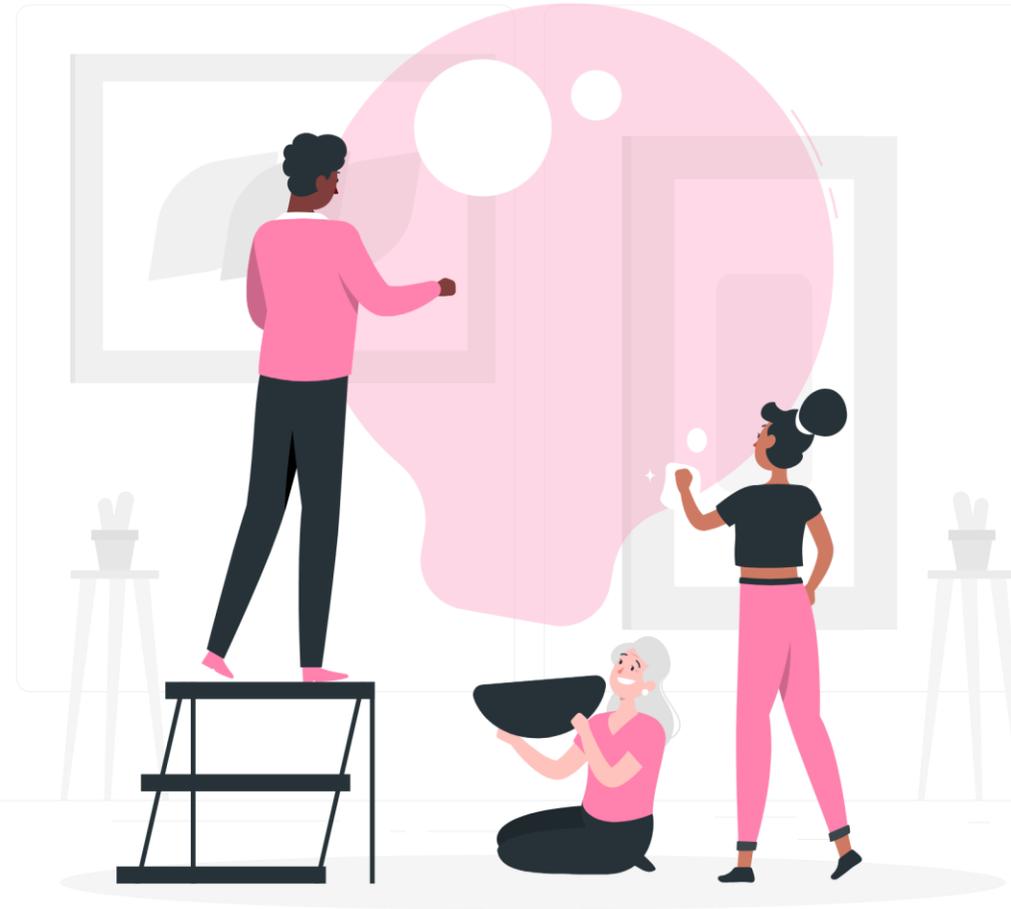


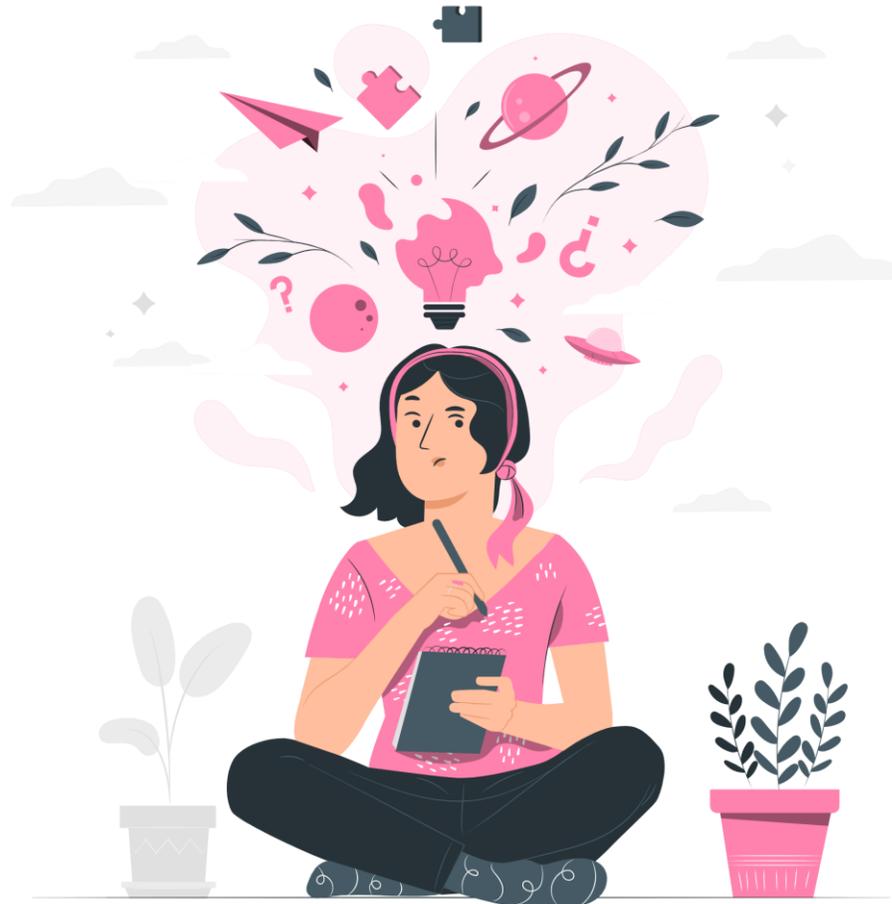
Policy makers and practitioners will need to gather data appropriate for their level of decision-making (e.g. aggregated or macro-level data for policy level decisions, and more detailed, micro-level data for school-level decisions).

Systems may also achieve greater synergies across the different mechanisms when their data help to complement and reinforce their respective areas of concern (for example, in links between inspection and school self evaluations).



At the same time, approaches to quality assurance may wish to avoid narrowly defined criteria and standards as well as a tight coherence or alignment of mechanisms in order to provide room for innovative approaches that may not fit within typical measures, and/or the softer, less-quantifiable goals for learning, such as measures related to the well-being of all in the school community.





This approach will also better support quality assurance in schools outside the mainstream system with alternative pedagogical approaches (for example, Montessori, Steiner-Waldorf schools and others)

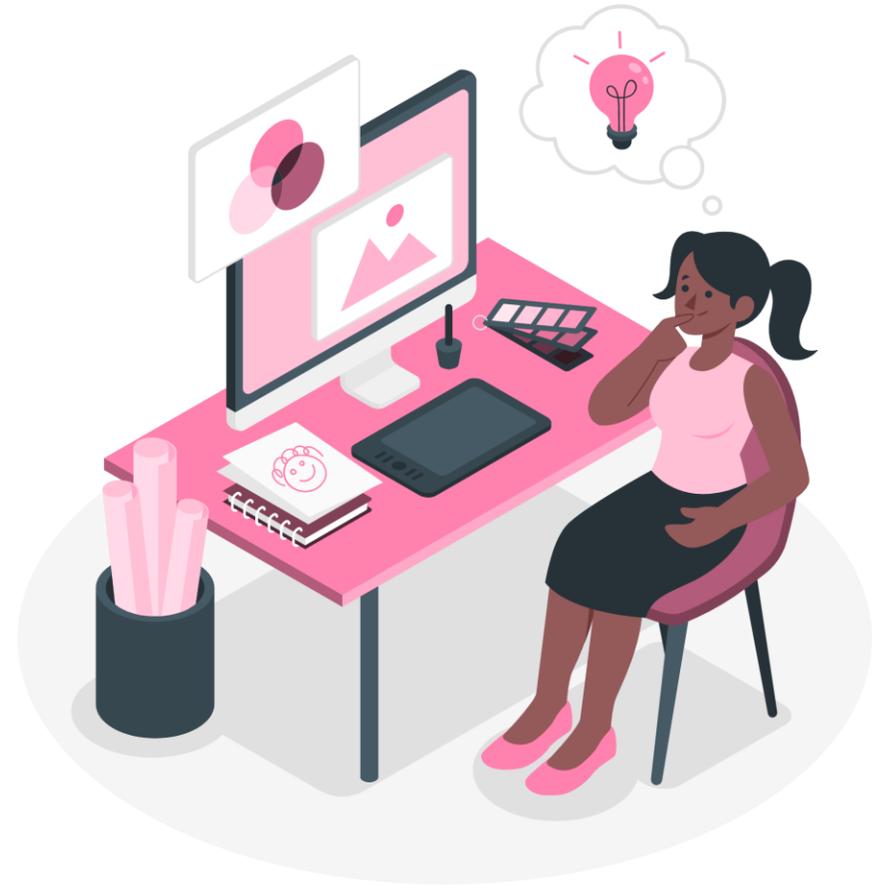


Quality assurance policies should support professional learning communities to make best use of quality assurance data for school and system development.

Quality assurance should support improvement in school education at all levels: local, regional and national. However, there is a consistent call for professional learning and attention to the development of human resources as part of quality assurance processes.



Professional communities that use internal and external quality assurance data to track policy implementation and impact are able to identify areas for school and staff development. Where possible, these types of feedback mechanisms should be designed collaboratively.

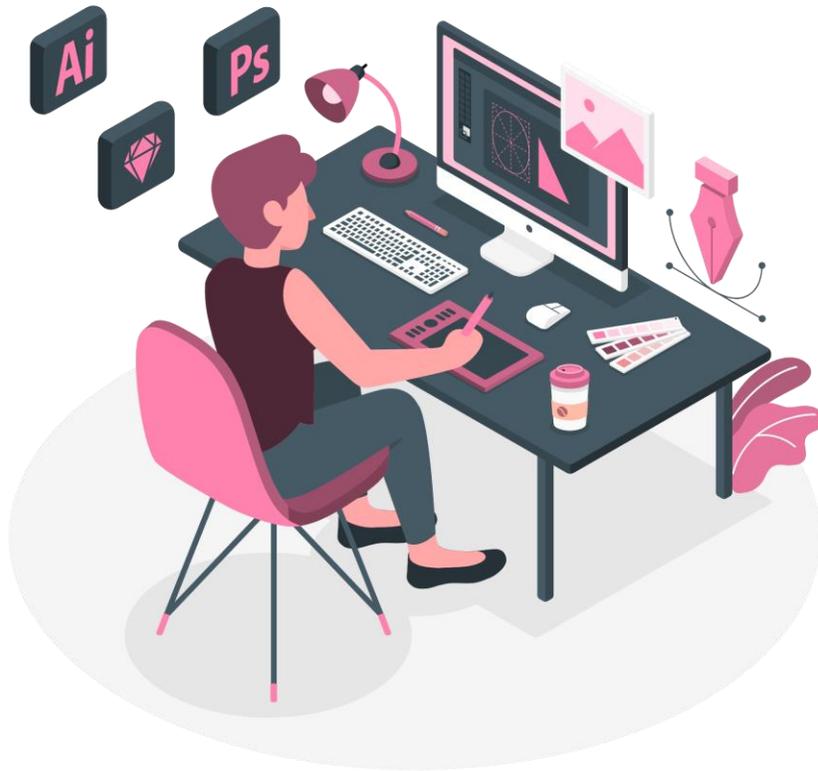




Professional learning communities provide an opportunity for colleagues to define, interpret and reflect on quality assurance data, and to adjust strategies and/or practices to better meet identified needs

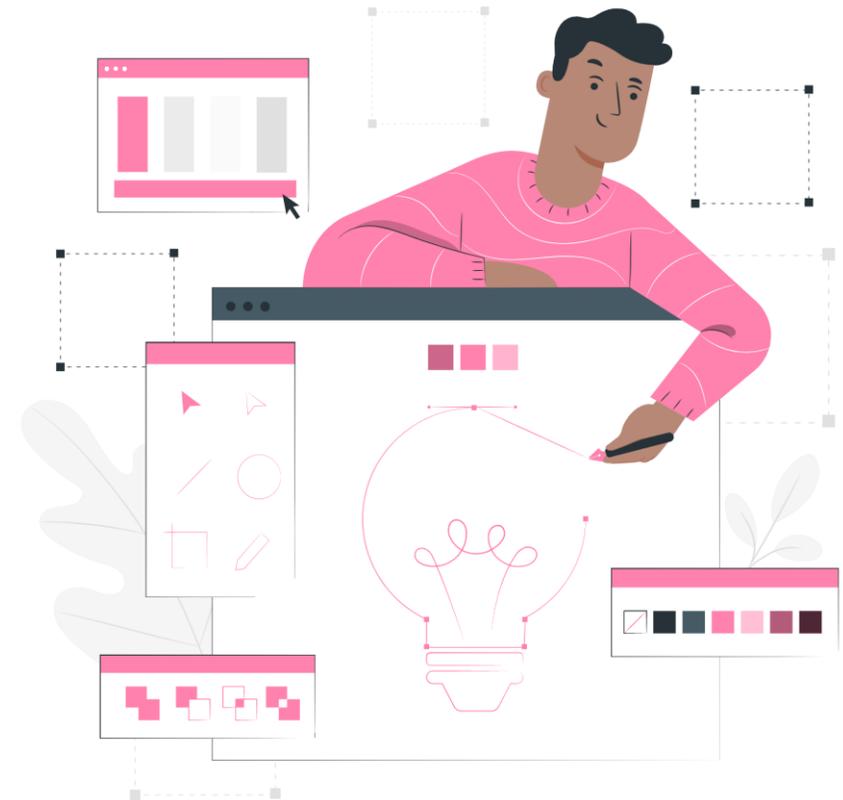


These communities are most effective when focused on student learning (rather than teaching), when members have established a shared understanding of data, and when members hold themselves accountable for improvements. Schools outside of the mainstream system (see Box 6 below) may adapt internal quality assurance mechanisms for their own professional learning needs, whilst also coordinating with external evaluators



Trust and respect between and among internal and external actors are fundamental for effective evaluation and school development

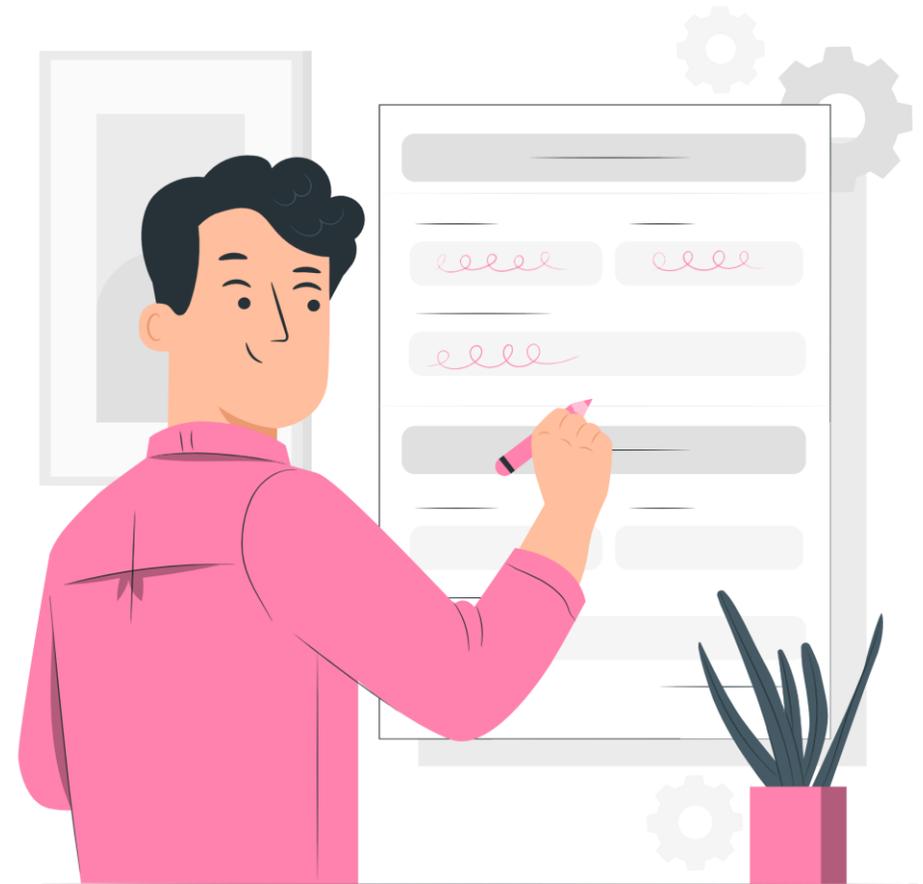
Increasingly, education systems distribute governance responsibilities across national, local and school levels. There is a more equal sharing of accountability for learner outcomes and engagement in and support for school development. Shifts to multi-level governance may also require shifts in system cultures and individual mindsets.





This may be enhanced through mutual commitment of internal and external actors to evaluation as a means to improve processes and outcomes. Trust in the quality of the evaluation instruments and the fairness and integrity of the system support are also vital.

Trust increases the likelihood that actors will invest their resources in cooperation and in developing and maintaining relationships (their social capital). Trust among key actors can also support the search for innovative solutions and exchange of ideas.



In education systems that have traditionally taken a top-down approach to quality assurance, with external inspections seen as ‘control’ of education systems, it will likely take some time to shift mindsets and perceptions regarding the intentions of different actors.



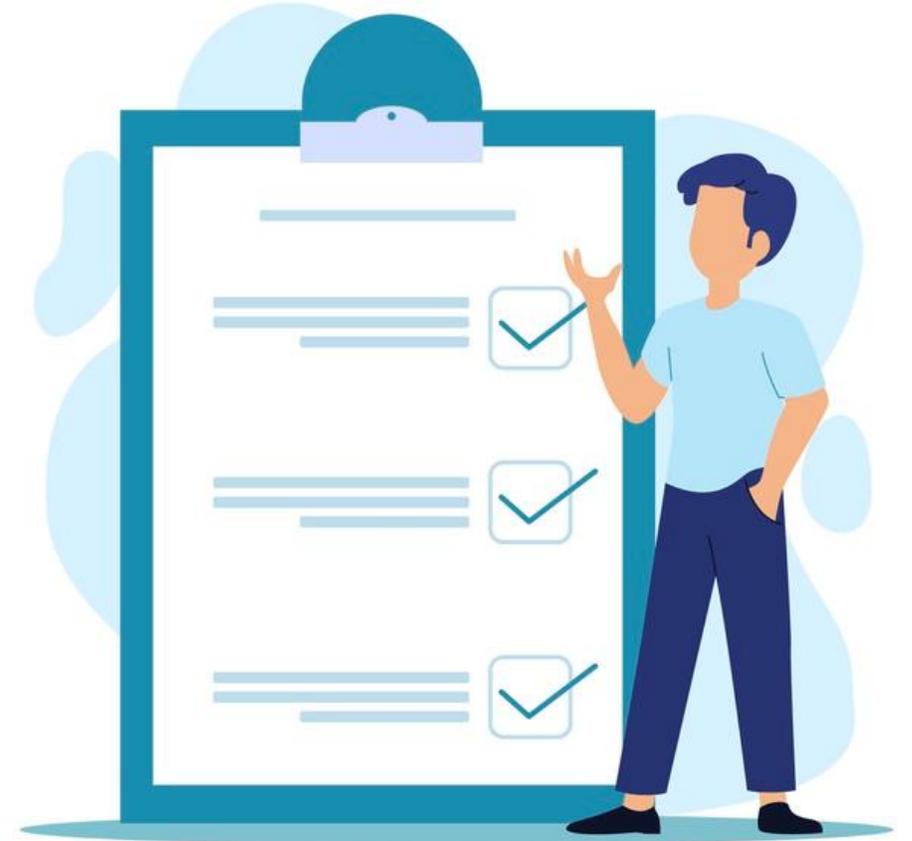
Moreover, in education that have been traditionally risk-averse, it may continue to be important to maintain some level of accountability and transparency of performance data. Quality assurance approaches will also need to strike the right balance between the importance of trust, and the need to verify outcomes.

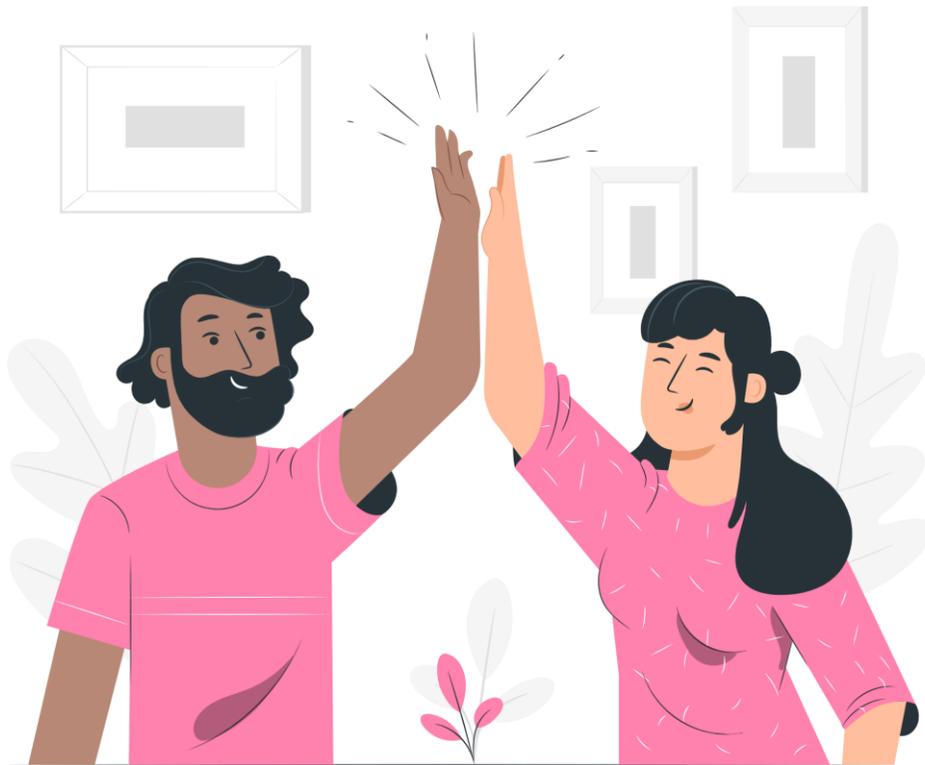




Risk is inherent to the process of innovation. Systems that support the synergy of external and internal quality assurance mechanisms will have more in-built resilience for the complex process of change. This includes shared attention to quality and outcomes; openness to new ideas; open channels of communication among internal and external actors; and capacity to respond quickly to identified needs.

Monitoring and evaluation are an integral part of the innovation process. Attention to data can allow innovators to take a more considered approach. Educational innovators may track the impact of new approaches on teaching and learning and make quick adjustments when necessary. This includes being alert to unintended consequences.



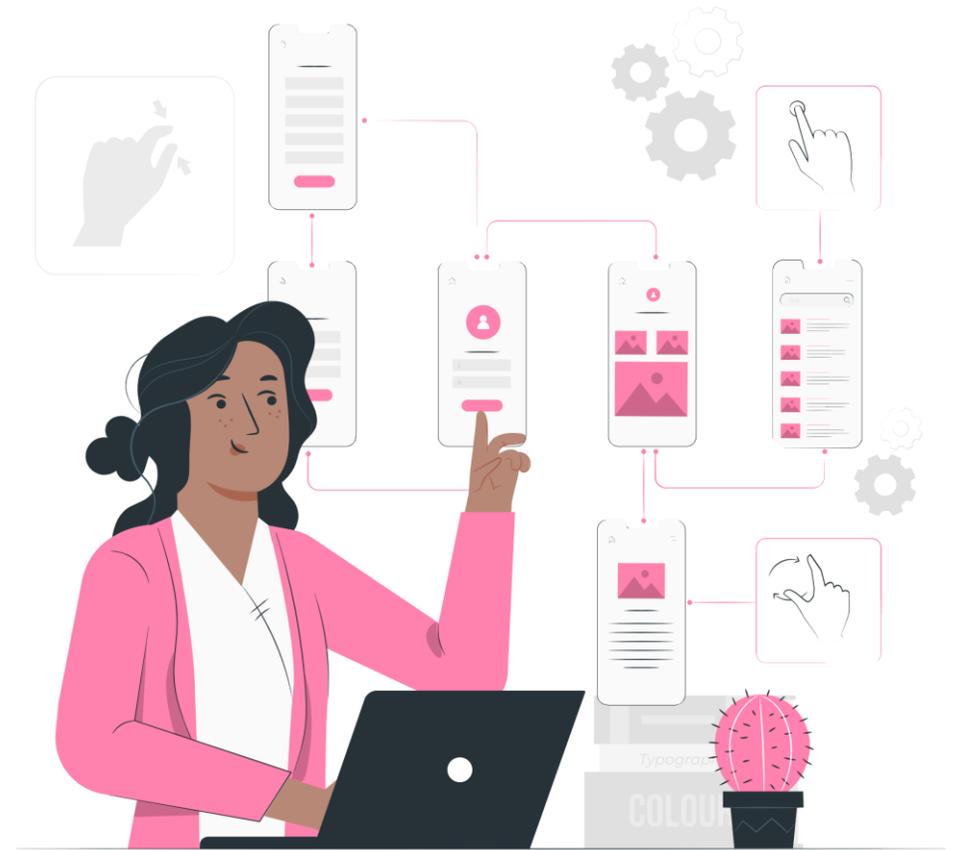


It is important to assess the impact of innovations, to make necessary adjustments, and to start the process again. This iterative approach ensures that while innovations entail risk, students will not be left to falter. Moreover, monitoring is not left to an annual, or even triannual school self-evaluation, but is ongoing.

Schools and teachers implementing innovative methods also need to gather more detailed data on a regular basis to monitor the impact of new methods and make adjustments than possible solely through external and internal quality assurance mechanisms.



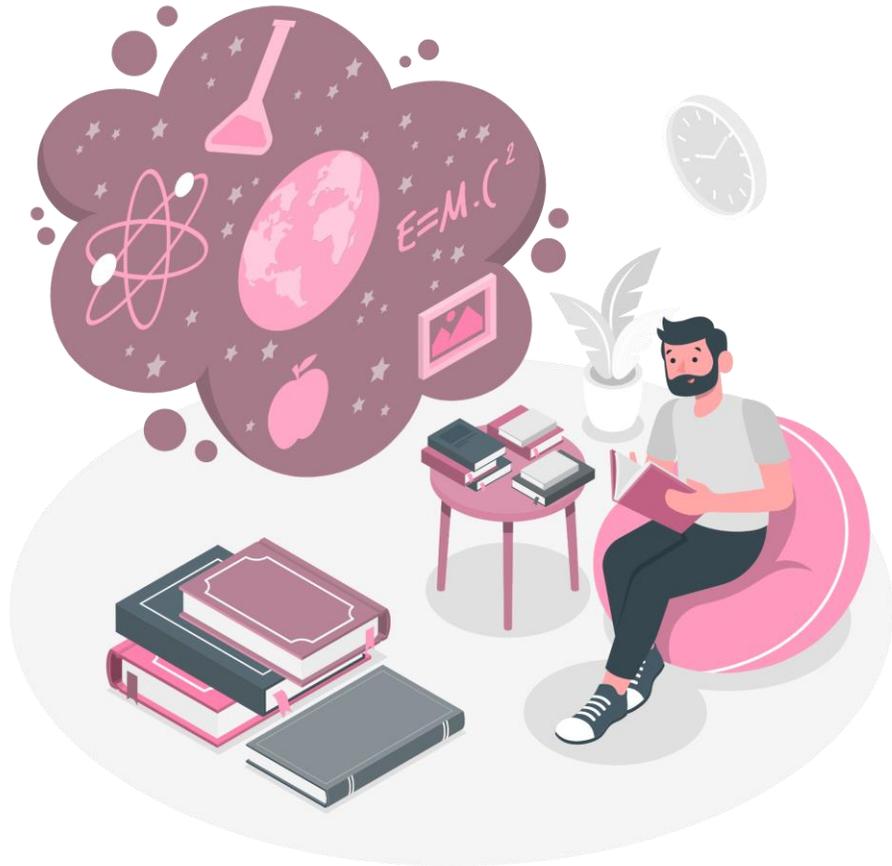
External and internal quality assurance typically operate on a longer feedback timeline, but are also important to highlight the impact of successful innovations for further dissemination and take-up, and track potential unintended longer-term consequences. The results of quality assurance may also be used to identify areas where innovations are needed





Quality assurance approaches should support the development of a common language and shared understanding among internal and external actors that the fundamental purpose of evaluation is to support school development.





Education actors and stakeholders typically come from different professional backgrounds and contexts. They frequently use different vocabularies to discuss quality assurance. To be effective, quality assurance should be accessible for all stakeholders.



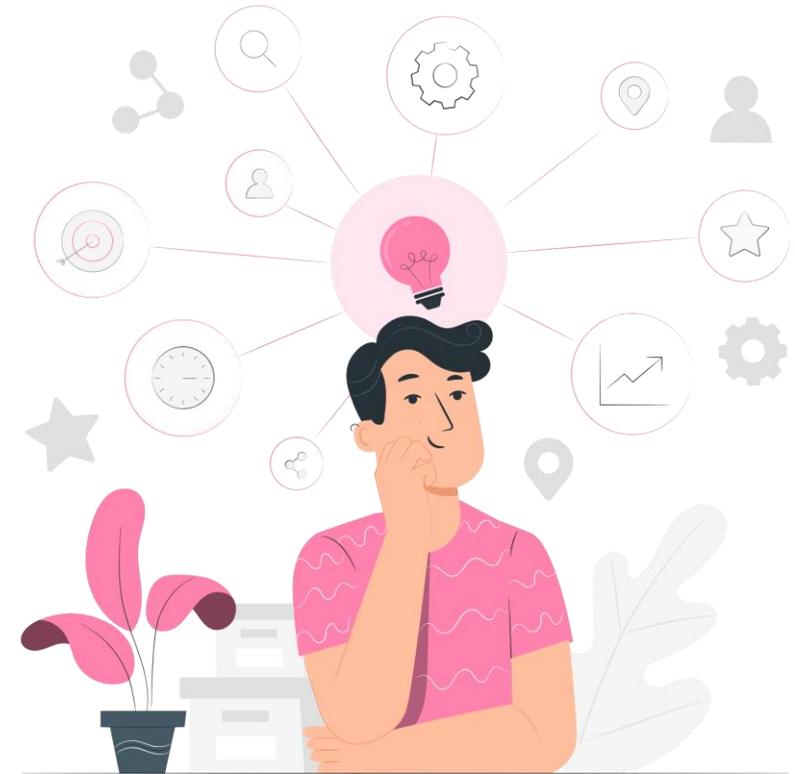
A shared language of teaching and learning – focused on learner needs and progress – should be at the heart of communications among all education stakeholders.

Communication based on a dialogic process of looking, listening and speaking may help to bridge differences. For example, stakeholders may also require explanations regarding what the quality assurance data cannot tell them about system and school performance, including the limits of existing measurement technologies.





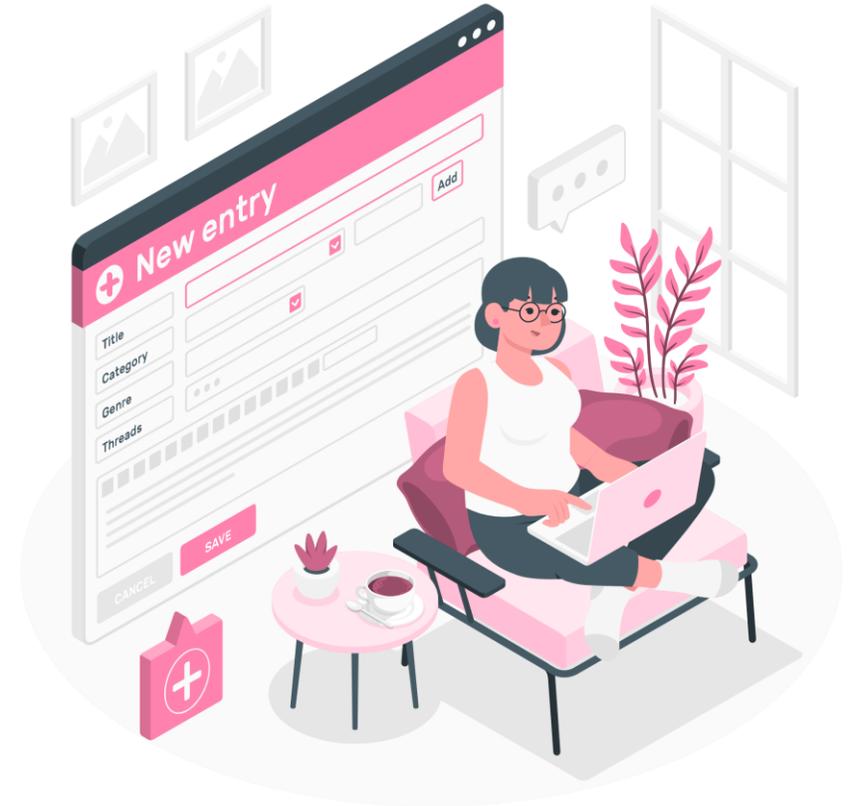
Networks between schools and with local and wider communities can support collective engagement, build social and intellectual capital and spark new synergies across school systems.



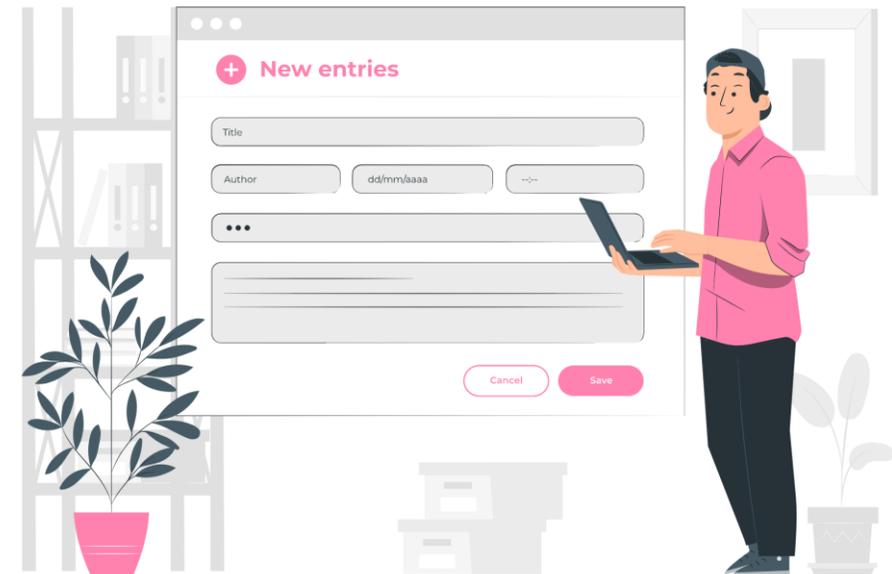


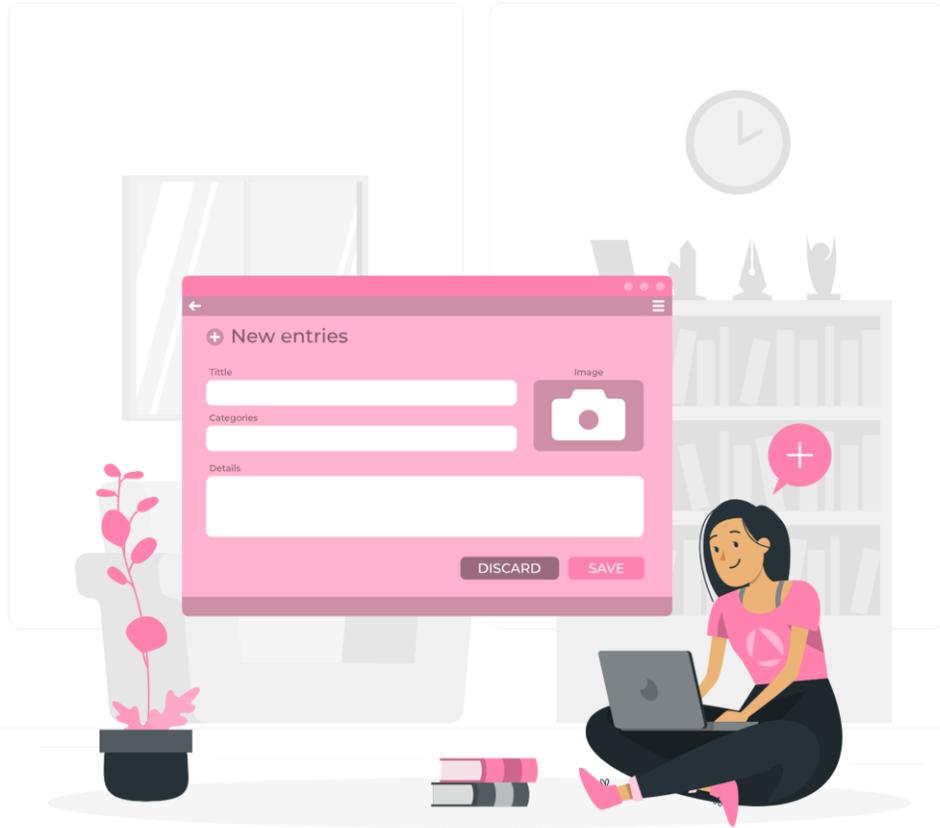
Networked professional learning communities, which bring together practitioners within a school or link or cluster institutions, can incentivise pedagogical and school development. Networks with clear objectives, that are well-managed, and which build on evidence (including quality assurance data) can effectively support collaboration for change.

Collaborative networks enable educational innovations and school developments to evolve more quickly as more stakeholders are involved in testing and improving approaches.



Research suggests that educational innovation networks are important both for the development of innovation as well as transfer of knowledge and practice across a wide range of stakeholders. Collaborative networks may create a pool of ideas and resources, and support dynamic exchange among participants.





Collaboration between schools and the wider community is also increasingly promoted as a way to ensure inclusion and provide appropriate support for all students. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may benefit from the support of multidisciplinary teams, crosssector networks and resource-sharing at the local level.



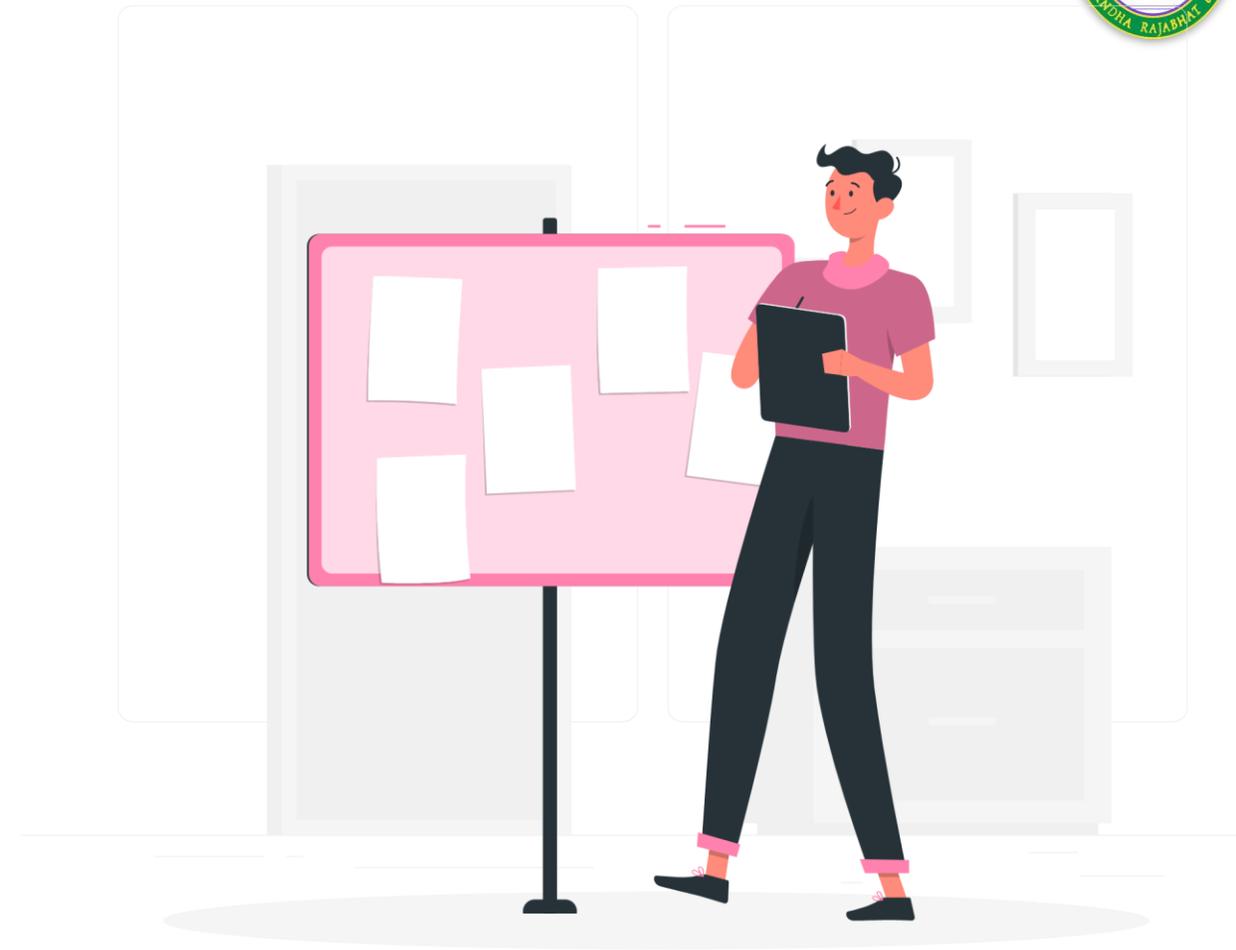
Investments in building capacity of key actors to generate, interpret and use data are crucial.

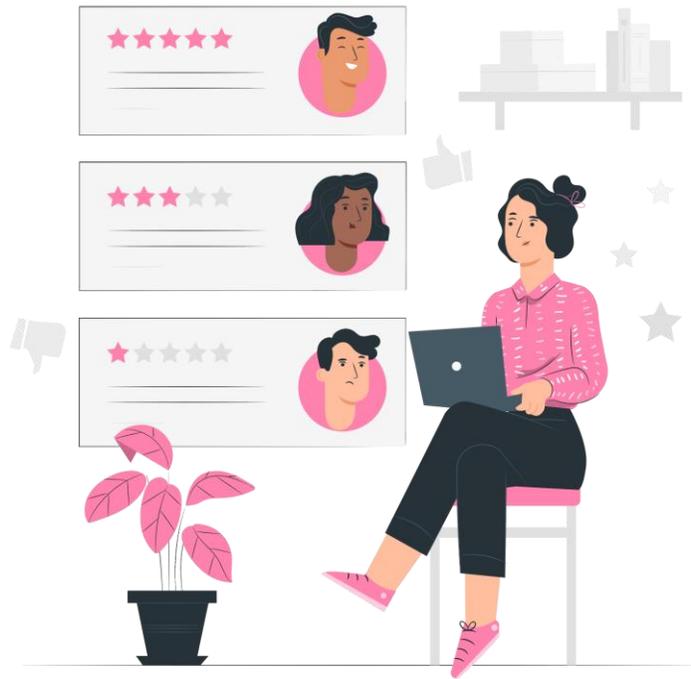


Investments in capacity-development of actors at school and local levels can help to develop technical knowledge on generating, interpreting and using quantitative and qualitative data, and developing internal support for evaluation. This is an important factor ensuring school self-evaluation supports school development.



Multiple types of data, gathered over time, are needed to develop a well-rounded picture of system and school development, including aspects such as well-being of all in the school community.





As well as existing in parallel, qualitative data can give added meaning to quantitative data and support broader stakeholder understanding. The tools, processes, and the level of detail for different internal and external quality assurance needs and for broader dissemination should be considered.

