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Co-funded by the  
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# Guidelines and Toolkit for the Initial and Ongoing Assessment of the English Language Competency of Migrant Learners

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022



Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English  
Language Competency of Migrant Learners  
in Further Education and Training  
**Part 1: Research Report**  
2021

Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English  
Language Competency of Migrant Learners  
in Further Education and Training  
**Part 2: Guidelines**  
2021

Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English  
Language Competency of Migrant Learners  
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**Part 3: Toolkit**  
2021

Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English  
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in Further Education and Training  
**Part 1: Research Report**  
2021

- **Introduction and Rationale**
- **International Literature Review**
- **Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English Language competency**
- **Defining ESOL Literacy**

# Defining ESOL Literacy

*“ESOL literacy is an umbrella term used to describe a migrant learner who is new to literacy (and possibly also new to ESOL) and has little or no reading or writing literacy skills in English and/or their own native language, while their spoken English language competency may range from pre-A1 to C2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).”*

# Categorising ESOL Literacy

*(Burt, Peyton and Adams (2003)/UK Skills for Life Strategy)*

Emerging Literacy	Pre-literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the learner's native language have no recognised written form?</li> </ul>
	Non-literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the learner had any previous literacy instruction in the native language and/or English?</li> </ul>
<b>Benchmark:</b> <b>The learner has considerable difficulty in producing text and or understanding/interpreting text independently.</b>		
Consolidating Literacy	Semi-literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the learner received limited/interrupted literacy instruction in the native language and/or English?</li> </ul>
	Non-alphabet literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the learner a speaker of a language that typically uses a non-alphabetic script?</li> </ul>
	Non-Roman alphabet literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the learner a speaker of and literate in a language that typically uses a non-Roman script, such as Arabic or Cyrillic?</li> </ul>
	Roman alphabet literate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the learner is literate in the Roman script, then is the literacy difficulty linked to specific issues such as sound-syllable construction or correspondence, for example, dealing with phonics?</li> </ul>
<b>Benchmark:</b> <b>The learner show some level of skill and independence in reading and writing but in a way that is not aligned to the normal conventions of English and the use of the Roman script.</b>		
Established literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learner has no major difficulties with language production, understanding and/ or interpreting skills outside of those typically expected of a learner who is 'new to ESOL.'</li> </ul>



Initial and Ongoing Assessment of English  
Language Competency of Migrant Learners  
in Further Education and Training  
Part 2: Guidelines  
2021

- Rationale for development
- General principles
- Purpose of proposed assessment process
- Steps involved in initial assessment
- Guidelines on initial and ongoing assessment
- Special considerations underpinning guidelines
- Professional development
- Limitations of guidelines
- Impact of Covid-19
- Summary of recommendations

# Objective of the Guidelines

1. Provide migrant learners with an accurate assessment of their English language competency across the four core skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking.
2. Identify appropriate language supports, where required, to support migrant learners to develop their English language competency as part of their social, economic and cultural integration into local and wider Irish society.

# Process of Initial & Ongoing Assessment





# Structure of the Guidelines



# The Guidelines

Planning		
What to assess	When to assess	Who to assess
<b>Guideline 1:</b> Initial assessment should assess all four core skills	<b>Guideline 2:</b> Initial assessment should be a staged, ongoing process which spans the entirety of a learner's engagement on a programme of learning.	<b>Guideline 3:</b> Migrant learners accessing ESOL programmes or looking to access wider FET provision up to NFQ Level 4, will be expected to undertake an initial assessment, where appropriate, at point on entry and continue to undergo ongoing assessment as required.

# The Guidelines

Initial Assessment	
Administration	Tracking & Recording
<p><b>Guideline 4:</b> Initial and ongoing assessment should be administered by suitably qualified and experienced ESOL personnel.</p> <p><b>Guideline 5:</b> The initial and ongoing assessment process must be easy to administer and allow for an objective assessment of a migrant learner's core language skills.</p>	<p><b>Guideline 6:</b> Appropriate records should be maintained and continuously updated to help track learner progression.</p>

# The Guidelines

Ongoing Assessment	
Formative Assessment	Assessment for Progression
<p><b>Guideline 7:</b> ETBs should implement a process of informal assessment to complement the more formal assessment process as part of a meaningful approach to ongoing assessment.</p>	<p><b>Guidelines 8:</b> ETBs should conduct, where required, an appropriate end of course (summative) assessment with the express purpose of determining whether a learner is ready for onward progression.</p>

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**Part 3: Toolkit**  
2021

- **Individual ESOL Learning Plan**
- **Individual ‘Can Do Statement’ Tracking Forms**
- **Initial and Ongoing Assessment Toolkit**



# The Toolkit – Sample Reading

## 7.4.2 Pre-A1/A1 Level

Read the following text and answer the questions using either **one** word or a number.

Learner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Assessment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My name is Ali Sakar. I am 53 years old. I come from Baghdad in Iraq but now I'm living in Dublin. There are seven people in my family. My wife's name is Samina. She is from Najaf in Iraq. We have 3 sons and 2 daughters. Our sons' names are Abdul, Yusuf and Samir and our daughters are called Alaa and Fatma. I am a kitchen porter in a local hotel in Dublin city centre. I am also learning English with the ETB in the evenings to help me speak better English at work and in the shops.

1. What age is Ali?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Where is he from?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Where is he living now?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What is his wife's name?

\_\_\_\_\_

# The Toolkit – Sample Writing

## 7.6.4 B1 Level (B)

Learner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Assessment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a short text (80 – 100 words) about a popular/famous festival or celebration in your home country.

### In your text:

Explain what the festival/celebration is about.

Explain what people do and how they prepare for the festival/celebration.

Describe any special food/clothes associated with this festival/celebration.

Say if the festival/celebration is celebrated in Ireland or if it is similar to an Irish festival/celebration.