# Using the MYLNS Assessment Tools 2023

OVERVIEW

The MYLNS Assessment Tools have been developed by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) specifically for students receiving direct teaching support through the Middle Years Literacy and Numeracy Support (MYLNS) initiative.

The tools are aligned to the Victorian Curriculum and are available free via the VCAA’s Digital Assessment Library (DAL) and include:

* **MYLNS Assessment Tool for literacy (literacy assessment)**: covers the Reading and Viewing mode of the English Curriculum Levels 5-9, including the Language, Literature and Literacy strands.
* **MYLNS Assessment Tool for numeracy (numeracy assessment)**: covers all aspects of the Mathematics Curriculum Levels 5-9, including the Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry and Statistics and Probability strands.

Each Assessment Tool includes three sets of questions or testlets, comprising of 50-60 multiple choice and short answer items in total.

The Assessment Tools use multi-stage computer branched adaptive testing. This tailored assessment design encourages students to stay engaged with the assessment and allows for greater measurement precision of a student’s proficiency across a broad range of knowledge and curriculum content.

**MYLNS Improvement Teachers can use the Assessment Tools to:**

* Provide an additional validated source of data to make judgements about where students are in their learning against the achievement standards in the Victorian Curriculum.
* Assist in planning their direct support through differentiated curriculum implementation, with adapted instruction and interventions to respond to the needs of students (when triangulated with other data).

**TIMING OF THE ASSESSMENTS**

Schools are encouraged to administer the assessment to prioritised Year 10 students receiving support through MYLNS in Term 1 and again in Term 4 each year.

* **Term 1** – open between Week 7 and Week 9 (**14 March to 7 April 2023**). This will provide data to help determine where students sit against the achievement standards for the English or Mathematics curricula.
* **Term 4** – open between Week 7 and Week 10 (**13 November – 1 December 2023**). This will provide information on students’ performance against these achievement standards has changed over time.

Please note, the MYLNS assessment tool is not available outside the specified test windows.

**ACCESSING THE ASSESSMENT TOOL**

The MYLNS Assessment Tool is available on the VCAA’s Digital Assessment Library (DAL). Schools must be registered to use the DAL and can access the platform via this [link](https://dal.vcaa.vic.edu.au/teacher).

Detailed instructions and guidance on administering the MYLNS Assessment Tool is available in the DAL Platform Manual, which can be found in the ‘Help’ page (the question mark (?) icon on the top right of the screen) once logged in.

**How to access and administer the assessment:**

1. **For existing DAL users**
* Access the platform via this [link](https://dal.vcaa.vic.edu.au/teacher). You can start using the MLYNS Assessment Tools as soon as the test window has opened.
1. **For new DAL users**
* Principals to [**register**](https://vcaa.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7R1uVp9Mnd69bYW) **as soon as possible** to use the VCAA platform.
* **To register for the MYLNS assessment**, the principal will be required to complete the survey, nominating a primary contact, and accepting the terms of use for the online platform. The primary contact can be an Improvement Teacher, a Network Teacher, or the principal.
* **Within** **5-7 working days** **following registration**: the principal and nominated contact person will receive information from the VCAA regarding with instructions on how to log in and access the assessment.
* Log in to the platform and follow the checklists provided in the DAL Platform Manual from the ‘Help’ page to prepare for assessment administration.

## PREPARING FOR THE ASSESSMENT

Prior to conducting the assessment with their students, Improvement Teachers are encouraged to:

* familiarise themselves with the platform and review the DAL Platform Manual
* ensure that they are able to access the platform to check student details and set up test sessions for their students (according to the instructions in the DAL Platform Manual).

## ADMINISTERING THE ASSESSMENT

**When considering how to administer the assessment, Improvement Teachers should keep in mind:**

* the learning needs of the student, particularly students that are receiving direct support in both literacy and numeracy
* the time allocation to work with students
* each student’s timetable and the classes they are enrolled in
* the approach being undertaken to provide direct support to students participating in MYLNS (individual student support, small group work, in-class support)
* the need to complete a full testlet in each session to maintain assessment integrity if the assessments are administered across several sessions.

**Time given to complete assessment:**

* the assessment is untimed
* it is intended to be accessible for students with varying needs and their primary purpose is to assess what students know, rather than compare students
* however, it is recommended that at least 75 minutes be allocated for students to complete the three testlets that comprise each assessment, to ensure that students have sufficient time to complete the assessment in full
* 75 minutes has been recommended in consideration of the additional learning needs of students participating in MYLNS (Improvement Teachers may provide students with less or more time to complete the assessment depending on their individual needs)
* it is recommended that each assessment (including all testlets) be undertaken in a single session, where possible
* however, Improvement Teachers can decide to administer each assessment in separate sessions over the three week assessment window to maximise engagement and meet the needs of individual students.

**Things to note for each assessment:**

* the full assessment should be completed to ensure precision of results and measure progress
* a minimum of two of the three testlets need to be completed to generate an assessment result
* within each testlet, students can move back and forth to review and change their responses or flag an item, until they have completed and submitted their responses to that testlet
* students will be blocked from revisiting a testlet once it is completed and they have moved to the next testlet
* once the assessment as a whole is submitted it cannot be administered again for that student.

## ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Schools are encouraged to administer the assessment to prioritised Year 10 students receiving support through MYLNS. There will be some instances where the assessment may not be appropriate for a student or may negatively impact their learning and engagement. This will be determined by Improvement Teachers on a case by case basis in consultation with Student Achievement Managers (SAMs).

## ACCESSIBILITY OPTIONS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The MYLNS Assessment Tool includes the following accessibility options to assist students with disability to undertake the assessments:

* accessible font and zoom
* calculator (clear contrast and large font size)
* keyboard accessibility (focus and tabbing)
* compatibility with operating system accessibility features (for example, on-screen reader).

It may also be appropriate for Improvement Teachers to make reasonable adjustments to enable students with a disability to undertake the MYLNS assessment. Examples of adjustments include:

* providing paper and pencils or pens for students to record their thinking during the assessment session
* modifying the duration and/or number of sessions for students to complete the assessments (for example, a student may be allowed to undertake the assessment over two or three separate sessions, even if all other students undertaking the assessments will sit the assessment in a single session only)
* allowing rest breaks
* allowing additional materials (for example, concrete materials such as counters, appropriate electronic devices or assistive technology).

Further information to help education providers understand their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Standards is available on the [Support students with additional learning needs](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/dselearning.aspx) website.

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Improvement Teachers may provide additional materials, resources and general support to students to assist them to undertake and perform at their best during the assessment. Additional materials and resources could include:

* materials that may support students during the assessment session or allow teachers to better understand student needs, such as pen and paper
* providing students with advice on general strategies for undertaking assessments (for example, advice about completing multiple choice questions using a process of elimination or other reasoning methods to come to an answer, to avoid guessing answers)
* providing some level of additional teacher support during the assessment (for example, to address focus, anxiety or assist with following directions):
* reading parts of the assessment instructions or questions
* assisting students to login or to save or submit assessments
* clarifying general instructions for specific assessment items.

The use of a calculator is:

* not permitted during the first testlet of the numeracy assessment
* allowed in subsequent testlets of the numeracy assessment - students will have access to a basic on-screen calculator on the assessment platform.

The use of a dictionary is:

* not permitted for the literacy assessment
* permitted, if necessary, to assist students with completing the numeracy assessments. Students may use a paper-based dictionary for this purpose.

When considering whether to provide additional materials and resources, Improvement Teachers should be mindful that the type and level of support does not compromise the student’s ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skill. This will help to maintain the integrity of the assessments and generate the most meaningful data possible to inform teaching and learning.

Improvement Teachers should also consider putting in place usual measures to avoid the potential for students to collude or cheat, ensuring that students are adequately supervised and do not have unauthorised access to resources such as the Internet and not providing corrective feedback during the assessment.

## ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Upon completion of the assessments, schools will have access to:

1. **Item Summary Report**

This report will be available immediately following completion of each student’s assessment. It will set out the student’s responses to each of the items they have completed and the relevant content descriptions in the Victorian Curriculum.

1. **Assessment Summary Report**

This report will be available to schools straight away following the completion of the assessment. It will provide an evaluation of the student’s capabilities based on their responses and reported against the achievement levels in the Victorian Curriculum, with a reference to the National Minimum Standards (NMS) in NAPLAN Reading or Numeracy.

## PRIVACY

The MYLNS Assessment Tool is delivered via the DAL platform operated by the VCAA. Only schools administering the assessments will have access to identified results and assessment data for their students.

The Department will not be provided with identified data at a student or school level but will be provided with de-identified data. The Department may use this de-identified data to inform evaluation of the MYLNS initiative at a broader, state-wide level.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Frontline technical support will be available for schools to access using a free call service or by email to assist with queries relating to:

* registration
* school set up
* platform functions
* enrolling students

**The service desk can be contacted on:**

* Phone: 1800 641 943
* Email: servicedesk@education.vic.gov.au

## OTHER ASSISTANCE & QUERIES ABOUT THE ASSESSMENTS

Regionally-based Student Achievement Managers (SAMs) are the first point of contact for Improvement Teachers.

For general inquiries regarding MYLNS, please contact the MYLNS Implementation team by email at MYLNS@education.vic.gov.au or on 03 7022 1700.

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