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Accompagnement-Recherche-Formation pour la mise en oeuvre du Programme de formation de l'école québécoise

ACCOMPANIMENT OF THE EVALUATION OF LEARNING

To support learning and to recognize competencies

Booklet 6: Reflective Practice for the Evaluation of Competencies

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The series of six booklets that make up the document *Accompaniment of the Evaluation of Learning: To Support Learning and to Recognize Competencies* is part of the Accompaniment-Research-Training Project for the Implementation of the Quebec Education Program. This series of booklets is meant as a tool for reflection and intervention for the education community. It serves to further the understanding of certain concepts relating to the Quebec Education Program, to the evaluation of competencies, and to the development of coherent practices to accompany evaluation as a support for learning and recognition of competencies.

Note : We welcome your comments at the following address:
accompagnement@uqtr.ca

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Booklet 6

Reflective practice for the evaluation of competencies

As part of the implementation of the Québec Education Program, school personnel involved in evaluation are encouraged to consider and review evaluation practices. Such reflection clearly offers professional educators an opportunity to make changes to their practices. In that regard, Lafortune and Deaudelin (2001), building on the observations of St-Arnaud (1992) and Schön (1994), stress that there comes a point in a practitioner's professional life when any improvement in practice seems difficult and where the traditional intervention models fail to offer solutions for dealing with problematic situations. That is the point at which the practitioner becomes aware of the limitations of current practices. Making the commitment to a process of reflective practice may prove of particular interest in broadening the repertoire of knowledge, skills and attitudes, as well as for providing direction to a reflection on new ways of doing things. Reflective practice occurs on a continuum: as such, it consists of a number of professional acts including both reflection on practice and, as well, an analysis of interventions with learners whom the practitioner meets with on a regular basis. This reflection tends toward action, in the sense that it leads the practitioner to adapt her practices to make them more effective and responsive to her own models of intervention. (adapted from Lafortune and Deaudelin, 2001).

Those who develop a reflective practice can "use" reflection to adjust their action plans for effective intervention that is both targeted and better organised. Reflective practice has an impact on the developing reflective professional's self-image. Making the commitment to a process of reflective practice leads the intervener to develop a competent professional practice that promotes understanding and mastery of a variety of professional challenges, particularly those related to the accompaniment of the evaluation of learning.

This booklet comprises four sections. The first explains the three components of reflective practice adapted to the evaluation of learning. The second deals with reflective practice in terms of what can be done prior to moments of evaluation, in the action and on the action, but also with regard to feedback on the action. The third section presents the conditions for reflective practice in evaluation. And, finally, the fourth concerns reflective practice with regard to differentiation in evaluation.

Throughout this booklet, questions for reflection will be suggested, both for personal reflection on the concept of reflective practice and its accompaniment as well as to provide strategies for encouraging reflection by those being accompanied.

1. Three components of reflective practice

In the PARF, the meaning of a process of reflective practice has evolved to include three components: 1) reflection on and analysis of evaluative practices; 2) transferring learning for actions and feedback on experiences; 3) development of a constantly evolving model of practice. These elements will first be approached through a process of reflection on evaluative practices with a view to adapting them and making them effective, coherent and organised. Any reflection on evaluative practice must be situated in the context of other practices.

Questions for reflection
- **What sorts of processes did you use in considering your evaluative practices ?**
- **What sorts of processes were used in considering not only your own evaluative practices, but those of other colleagues ?**
- **How can a process of reflective practice focusing on evaluation be accompanied ?**

1.1. 1st component: reflection on and analysis of evaluative practices

Any analysis of evaluative practices, including reflection, implies an examination of their various aspects, such as actions taken or to be taken (actions, methods, tools, strategies, etc.), the competencies and skills developed, the knowledge constructed, and the attitudes adapted with regard to the different functions of the evaluation (aid to learning, recognition of competencies, and reporting on competencies). It also implies an ability to create links between these dimensions. For example, in the course of a team-cycle examination of the concepts of self-evaluation, co-evaluation and peer-evaluation, links could be established among the various tools identified and used for evaluating student learning (observation grids, portfolios, journals, etc.).

It also involves understanding those links and describing the reasons why certain methods or strategies have been chosen over others, as well as the way in which they are to be implemented: by anticipating students' reactions, discussion of possible causes of those reactions, explanation of difficulties, as well as successes, encountered, etc. We might add that the analysis of any evaluative practice is most effective when conducted with colleagues, where practices confront and are challenged by those of others and where other ways of analysing our own evaluative practices can be discovered (see booklet 5 on working in cycle-teams). All these actions allow the construction of a model of practice related to the evaluation of learning and, as well, the acquisition of a representation that strives for coherence between beliefs and practices, between thoughts and actions (Lafortune and Fennema, 2003 ; Lafortune, 2004a ; Thagard, 2000).

Reflecting on and analysing evaluative practices should, on the one hand, lead to a change in practices, and, on the other hand, explain any resistance to change associated with implementation of the QEP and its orientations regarding evaluation (MEQ, 2002, 2006).

Questions for reflection
- **What methods are used to evaluate student competencies ?**
- **What methods are best suited to evaluation as support for learning ?**
- **What methods are best suited to evaluation as recognition of competencies ?**
- **What changes might be made with regard to the evaluation of learning on the basis of the different functions of evaluation ?**
- **What accompaniment actions could be put in place to implement those changes to evaluative practices ?**

For accompaniment

For an accompaniment process, it would be a good idea to initiate a reflection on the meanings of "evaluation of competencies," "evaluation as support for learning," "evaluation for recognition of competencies," and "evaluation for competency reporting." A reflection could also consider any methods used to evaluate students' competencies according to the various functions of evaluation.

Another approach would involve examining the methods used to help students accept responsibility for their own learning through self-evaluation, co-evaluation (student-teacher), and peer-evaluation (student-student).

Yet another technique would involve keeping a record of methods, strategies and tools used in the evaluation of learning and recording those reflections in and on the action for reflection and analysis in the cycle-team. Those observations might deal with interventions, but also with the actions of students. It is therefore important to record any observations that students have made regarding their own actions. These can then be considered in the cycle-team for comparison of the various interpretations and the evaluation results suggested by team members for a given learning and evaluation situation.

The following table may serve as a basis for reflection on evaluative practices[2]. In it, those accompanied should indicate how often each of the methods is used. The results of this reflection should prove useful as a stimulus for group discussion.

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[2] Table taken from: Lafortune L. and C. Deaudelin (2001). *Accompagnement socioconstructiviste. Pour s'approprier une réforme en éducation*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, p.117.

Methods	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Regularly
1. Examination or test: evaluation of learning				
2. Examination or test: evaluation of skills				
3. Examination or test: evaluation of attitudes				
4. Oral presentation				
5. Observation grid				
6. Personal interview				
7. Small group interview				
8. Questioning in the learning process				
9. Presentation portfolio				
10. Learning portfolio				
11. Evaluation portfolio				
12. Personal journal				
13. Co-evaluation (student-teacher)				
14. Self-evaluation				
15. Peer-evaluation				
16. Collective evaluation (analysis of the group by itself)				

This reflection performed by resource teachers or school administrators can provide a snapshot of the frequency with which teachers use various evaluation methods. It can also assist in ascertaining teacher perceptions regarding evaluative practices.

Question for reflection
- **What is the best way to accompany teachers to ensure greater use of methods that are effective and consistent with the various functions of the evaluation of learning ?**

We can represent this process of accompaniment of reflection and analysis of evaluative practices with the following diagram:

Process for reflective practice in cycle or collegial teams[3]

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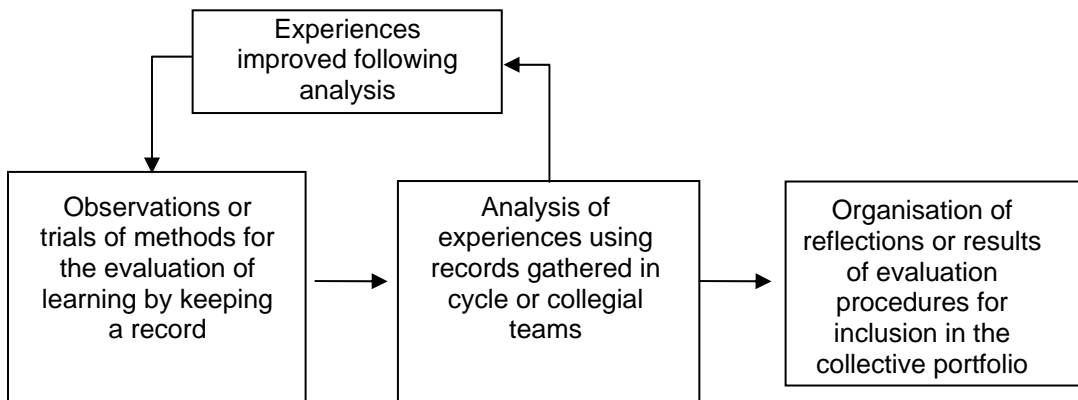
[3] Diagram adapted from Lafortune (2004b). *Travailler en équipe-cycle entre collègues d'une école*, Québecy, Presses de l'Université du Québec, p.234.

1.2. 2nd Component: transferring learning for actions and feedback on experiences

In reflection and analysis regarding evaluative practices, it is not uncommon to question previous practices and imagine changes that could take the form of action in a subsequent intervention. We may well say "I can't believe that I didn't try self-evaluation" or "I'll make a point of introducing moments of reflection on learning as we did today." Nonetheless, in practice, the needs of the moment often override our best intentions. On other occasions, certain realisations result in changes to action in the short term that are not practical in the medium or long term. In the accompaniment of a process of reflective practice on evaluation, it is essential to anticipate actions and, especially, the feedback on those actions. In doing so, we take on challenges, meet them, and consider the manner in which we have done so. Moreover, when we do not succeed, we can then consider the factors that stood in the way.

Reflection on the move to action in evaluation is best done in the cycle-team; the team is helpful in suggesting new approaches, taking risks, experimenting - all directed toward change in the context of evaluation as support for learning and the recognition of competencies (see booklet 5 with reference to working in cycle-teams).

Questions for reflection
- **What actions were tried experimentally to evaluate students' competencies in the context of evaluation as support for learning ?**
- **What actions were tried experimentally to evaluate students' competencies in the context of evaluation as recognition of competencies ?**
- **What was the reaction of the students ?**
- **What discussion occurred in the cycle team ?**
- **What was different from previous practices? How ?**
- **What is the best way to accompany a teaching team in:**
  - **working together on the plan for the evaluation of learning ?**
  - **cooperating in the development of tools ?**
  - **discussing evaluation judgments together ?**
  - **examining student portfolios and discussing them in group ?**
  - **developing methods for integrating self-evaluation, co-evaluation and peer-evaluation into their practices ?**

For accompaniment

In an accompaniment process, it may be possible to develop the methods and tools for observing evaluative practices and identifying them on the basis of their function as either support for learning or recognition of competencies. These could involve any kind of questions asked of students and could take the form of self-evaluation or moments of reflection. This makes it possible for students to become aware of progress toward autonomy in the development of their competencies and to imagine an appropriate reinvestment.

The accompaniment could promote the development in the cycle-team of evaluation instruments as well as the conduct of team experiences for collective review.

Developing tools with teams of colleagues could involve sharing and proposals for changes to make tools more compatible with the requirements of evaluation in the education reform.

Within the cycle-team, it may be interesting to describe evaluative practices in order to get the feedback of both the accompanist and colleagues. For that to occur, it is essential that a climate of mutual trust and a tradition of working together exist. The process could begin with a discussion of methods used by colleagues in another school or school board, or based on accounts of actual experiences leading to a consideration of individual methods. The following is a possible schema for investigation with colleagues:

- discuss decisions regarding possible evaluations of portfolio content of students from another school;
- discuss the content of several student portfolios that might be submitted to colleagues for their opinions regarding evaluation;
- discuss portfolios of students of the same cycle;
- discuss ways to improve current evaluation methods for the development of competencies.

Another method of accompaniment is to develop rubrics. However, it is important to keep in mind that any rubric is not "useful" or "good" in and of itself, but depending on how it is used and what it can be used to evaluate. The tasks and situations assigned to students should aim to develop the competencies that are to be evaluated by these rubrics. In other words, a rubric is useful only if explanations are provided on how it is to be used and what it will be used to evaluate, always with an explanation of how it is suitable for the evaluation of any given competency.

Cycle-teams can provide a forum to discuss evaluation, evaluation methods, the use of ministerial texts, etc. The following are questions concerning evaluation that might be useful:

Questions for reflection[4]
- **What does evaluation mean to you ?**
- **Why do we evaluate ?**
- **What are the most common methods for evaluation? Why ?**
- **How can cycle-team evaluation work ?**
- **What is the meaning of: 1) self-evaluation; 2) co-evaluation; 3) peer-evaluation ?**
- **Why use 1) self-evaluation; 2) co-evaluation; 3) peer-evaluation ?**
- **What classroom methods encourage: 1) self-evaluation; 2) co-evaluation; 3) peer-evaluation ?**
- **What methods would you hope to develop or try out in a cycle-team ?**
- **What is the meaning of a competency developed for a given cycle? For example, what does "Write a variety of texts" mean in cycle 1 ? in cycle 2 ? in cycle 3 ?**
- **What strategies can be used to reach parents as part of this new evaluation concept ?**
- **How might specialists be involved in cycle-team evaluation ?**
- **What form should the competency report take for a particular cycle ?**
- **What information is essential for teachers of the next cycle to plan learning and evaluation situations that respect continuity ?**
- **What is the place of subject-specific competencies in evaluation ?**
- **What is the place of cross-curricular competencies in evaluation ?**
- **How can we imagine the evolution of our evaluative practices ?**
- **How can we discuss level of competency scales in collegial teams? in cycle-teams ?**

The following questionnaire can be used for individual reflection regarding cycle-team work on evaluation. The first level comprises activities involving the communication and exchange of information regarding evaluation. This level of engagement has no impact on function in the classroom. School personnel retain full control over evaluation in their classes. The second level of engagement involves discussion of shared information and methods of evaluation, without, necessarily, any collective decision. Collective decisions are an aspect of the third level of engagement. Teachers responding positively to the statements of this level accept to share responsibility for evaluation of their students as well as the possibility that they will be affected by others' ideas on evaluative practice. Fourth level statements imply an acceptance of peer observation and feedback and team-teaching; this necessarily involves sharing the "intimacy" of the classroom as well as responsibility for evaluation.
The following questionnaire is suggested[5]:

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[4] Questions adapted from Lafortune, L. with the collaboration of S. Cyr and B. Massé (2004b). *Travailler en équipe-cycle entre collègues d'une école*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, p.150-152.

[5] The questionnaire and table are adapted from Lafortune, L. (2004a). " Croyances et pratiques : deux questionnaires de recherche, de formation et d'autoréflexion ", in L. Lafortune (dir.), *Le questionnement en équipe-cycle. Questionnaires, entretiens et journaux de réflexion*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, p.97-143.

STATEMENTS **Very little** ....the statement is very rarely or hardly ever true **Little** ....the statement is occasionally true **Often** ....the statement is often true **Almost always** .....the statement is almost always true	What I have done				What I am prepared to do			
	Very little	Little	Often	Almost always	Very little	Little	Often	Almost always
1 Share information with colleagues on the evaluation results for particular students.								
2 Work in a team to develop evaluation tools.								
3 Discuss evaluation methods.								
4 Observe a colleague and be observed in the act of evaluating.								
5 Work in teams to develop methods for self-evaluation, co-evaluation and peer-evaluation.								
6 Work in teams to analyse evaluation experiences of all the members of the team.								
7 Discuss the evaluation methods to use for certain students with a view to intervention.								
8 Work in teams to develop evaluation methods for use in a continuous process over several weeks: observation, interviews….								
9 Exchange ideas on methods of evaluation.								
10 Provide feedback from observations in a colleague's class on the way evaluation is used as support for learning.								
11 In-class use of evaluation methods also used by others on the team								
12 Exchange rubrics or evaluation forms.								
13 Discuss evaluation methods suggested in various documents: usefulness of certain rubrics or evaluation forms, content of a portfolio…								
14 Ask a colleague for an opinion on student evaluations.								
15 Together, organise ways of using self-evaluation, co-evaluation, peer-evaluation.								
16 Share evaluation materials already developed.								
17 Discuss possible changes to evaluation practices prior to implementing them.								
18 Get feedback from classroom observation by a colleague on the way to use evaluation as support for learning.								
19 Work together to select evaluation forms suggested in various documents.								
20 In collegial groups, observe students in a given class working to solve problems or perform evaluation situations in the context of decision-making.								

The following table shows the above statements grouped by level. In an accompaniment process, it would be best to first use the questionnaire and then the following table for individual or group reflection on the replies.

Table 1: Grouping of statements on the basis of the level of engagement associated with proposed actions

No	Statements
	Level 1 : Share and exchange
1	Share information with colleagues on the evaluation results for particular students.
9	Exchange ideas on methods of evaluation.
12	Exchange rubrics or evaluation forms.
16	Share evaluation materials already developed.
19	Work together to select evaluation forms suggested in various documents.
	Level 2 : Discuss and organise
3	Discuss evaluation methods.
7	Discuss the evaluation methods to use for certain students with a view to intervention.
13	Discuss evaluation methods suggested in various documents: usefulness of certain rubrics or evaluation forms, content of a portfolio…
15	Together, organise ways of using self-evaluation, co-evaluation, peer-evaluation.
17	Discuss possible changes to evaluation practices prior to implementing them.
	Level 3 : Develop pedagogical activities together
2	Work in a team to develop evaluation tools.
5	Work in teams to develop methods for self-evaluation, co-evaluation and peer-evaluation.
8	Work in teams to develop evaluation methods for use in a continuous process over several weeks: observation, interviews….
11	In-class use of evaluation methods also used by others on the team.
14	Ask a colleague for an opinion on student evaluations.
	Level 4 : Observe one another and analyze together
4	Observe a colleague and be observed in the act of evaluating.
6	Work in teams to analyse evaluation experiences of all the members of the team.
10	Provide feedback from observations in a colleague's class on the way evaluation is used as support for learning.
18	Get feedback from classroom observation by a colleague on the way to use evaluation as support for learning.
20	In collegial groups, observe students in a given class working to solve problems or perform evaluation situations in the context of decision-making.

Accompaniment of reflective practice in a context of evaluation in the cycle-team promotes reflection and description of practices, supports analysis, and encourages co-construction and the sharing of experiences.

1.3. 3rd Component: Developing a model of practice

Reflective practice in evaluation also involves constructing or adapting a personal model of practice (Lafortune and Deaudelin, 2001). Such a construction or adaptation includes three elements: 1) conceiving and developing a definition and description of personal evaluative practices; 2) the ability to present the theoretical and practical aspects that led to particular actions; and 3) taking inspiration from existing models and adapting them in order to reorganise them into a coherent representation (text, diagram, table, drawing, categorization, list of characteristics or principles, etc.). Such construction and representation, especially when in relation with evaluative practices, is rarely (if not extremely rarely) practised by school personnel. It requires in-depth reflection on personal evaluative practices as well as an analysis of beliefs (views and convictions)

regarding evaluation as support for learning, as recognition of competencies, and as an report on competencies, always in relation to the actions taken. The unaccustomed nature of that process requires a group accompaniment and a commitment on the part of the accompanist to undertake such a process and to develop the expertise necessary for that type of accompaniment (adapted from Lafortune, submitted in 2006).

Questions for reflection
- **What are my evaluative acts ?**
- **In what way do they reflect the education reform ?**
- **How might I describe my concept of evaluation ?**
- **How might I explain my concept of evaluation as it relates to the spirit of the education reform ?**
- **What role can colleagues play to assist in reflection on evaluative practices and describing them as a coherent whole ?**

For accompaniment

At the beginning of an accompaniment process, those accompanied could be asked to jot down the ten words that best represent their concept of evaluation. These could then be compiled with similar contributions from the cycle-team. A record of both the individual lists and the compilation could be kept so that, several months into the process, the exercise can be repeated and the changes, both individual and collective, discussed. This is one way to investigate the progress of the team and, as well, the individual's progress within the team.

As part of the accompaniment, the evaluation methods used can be entered on a list. They can then be classified in a table:

Function of the evaluation	Methods used or proposed	Explanations
Aid to learning		
Recognition of competencies		
Report on competencies		

The reflection could continue with a discussion of the methods used and their usefulness in evaluating competencies (Which ones? How? Why?). In this way, it is possible to ensure that methods are consistent with the implementation of the education reform.

Finally, as part of this third component of reflective practice, it is important to stimulate exchange and discussion on descriptions of concepts of evaluation in its various forms. A collective description of evaluation can then be developed in the cycle-group.

2.   Reflective practice in the action of evaluation

2.1.   Before the action

In preparing an accompaniment process as well as in the development of the methods to be used with school personnel (as proposed in the first section of the text), it is important to anticipate the reactions of those being accompanied. Anticipation is an essential aspect of any accompaniment, since the accompanist has to make adjustments to actions. Without anticipation, it is difficult to make those adjustments consistent with the overall aims or, indeed, to make them at all. This is all the more true in the case of reflection on evaluative practices, since the sensitivity of the subject can rapidly lead to resistance, reticence and even refusal to participate.

In accompaniment, some questions for reflection can assist in preparing to intervene in the evaluation of learning.

> *Questions for reflection*
> - **What methods can be employed to establish links between past experiences of the evaluation of learning and what is proposed in the education reform ?**
> - **What methods can be employed to ensure meaningful sharing by accompanied persons with regard to their evaluative practices ?**
> - **Why were those particular accompaniment methods selected for reflection on evaluative practices ?**
> - **Are the evaluative intentions of the accompanied persons consistent with the basic principles of the evaluation of learning ?**
> - **How is it possible to ask question? What questions should be asked? What answers can be anticipated ?**
> - **What could help direct those being accompanied toward a modeling of their evaluative practices ?**

This questioning provides the accompanist with an opportunity to reflect on preparation and, subsequently, give reason to subsequent actions and modes of intervention with those accompanied. Taking time to anticipate the time necessary provides an overview of the coming intervention as well as preparation to react and to regulate any actions during the course of the accompaniment. This preparation time also permits anticipation of certain questions and reactions those accompanied might express concerning suggestions. The accompanist would, therefore, be wise to anticipate any questions, reactions, or reflections before making suggestions regarding reflection or action. A number of choices can be imagined to best respond to any reactions or questions that may arise. To be prepared for such eventualities, the accompanist might reflect on the following aspects:
- anticipate any questions the accompanied person may have regarding the evaluation;
- anticipate the answers to those questions;
- anticipate reactions to suggested reflections, discussions, and actions;
- consider possible adjustments to the action;
- consider what may be found difficult and what easy;

- reflect on strengths and limitations so as not pursue a course without appropriate preparation;
- prepare explanations of the conceptual plan using ministerial documents and other texts;
- prepare by nourishing personal pedagogical culture without presuming to know everything about evaluation

Anticipation could be said to "predict the unpredictable," which becomes all the more important in the case of a subject as complex as the evaluation of learning.

Finally, in analysing feedback from those accompanied, the accompanist might consider the following questions:

Questions for reflection
- **How can I make my feedback more reflective ?**
- **How can I ensure that my feedback stimulates questioning of evaluation without creating too much resistance ?**
- **How can I invite those accompanied to give feedback to colleagues regarding their evaluative practices ?**
- **How can I be sure that the feedback provided is related to the different functions of evaluation ?**

A lack of planning, or of a proper examination of the issues, could have negative consequences for students and teachers: difficulty making judgments about competencies, limited possibilities for differentiation, insufficient consideration of cross-curricular competencies, etc. […] To ensure the continuity of learning and evaluation from one cycle to the next, as well as within each cycle and year, evaluation planning may be entrusted to the school team, a cycle team, a group of teachers teaching the same subject, or a single teacher (MELS, 2006, p.98).

2.2.   In the action

During any action of accompaniment, particularly when related to evaluative practices, reflection is useful: for distancing oneself from the expected preparation and from that which is anticipated; for adjusting actions to situations; for understanding the cause of any problems as well as any resistance; for stepping aside; and, finally, for regulating the process without feeling constrained by predetermined actions but, at the same time, keeping in mind the intended goal (Perrenoud, 2003).

All this may seem to represent a difficult challenge, but in the action one can ask questions such as the following, always keeping in mind that it is not necessary to effect major changes without a quick analysis in the action.

Questions for reflection
- **What reactions are anticipated from those accompanied ?**
- **What are the reactions of those accompanied ?**
- **How can I interpret those reactions ?**
- **What observations can be made from 1) the proposed actions, 2) those accompanied 3) the situation, 4) oneself ?**
- **Should any adjustments be made ? How ? Why ?**

2.3. At the conclusion of or after the action

The reflection on the action of accompanying evaluation can take place at the end of the intervention with those accompanied; however, it usually involves the extension of a reflection that has already begun during the course of the action, even if unconscious or unannounced. Doing so at the conclusion of the action and collectively requires that time be provided at the end of the meeting for collective review. Such a review is essential to establishing the results of the discussions, the actions to be taken, and to prepare for the next meeting by asking how reflection on the evaluation of learning could be pursued.

For Perrenoud (2004, p.42) reflection on the action that occurs after the meeting presupposes "an ability to commit to memory observations, questions, doubts, or notions to return to at a quieter moment." Reflecting on the action of evaluation is to take one's own action as an object of reflection in order to compare it with that which has already been done and to ask what might have been done differently with a view to explain or criticize it. This can be done alone or with colleagues at the conclusion of the intervention, but also after the action. This applies equally to cycle-team meetings as well as to accompaniment meetings with an external party.

This variety of reflection can be transposed to evaluation actions with students. It allows a participant to step back from actions. This reflection is both retrospective and prospective with reference to evaluation. It is, first, retrospective, as the participant looks at the action in light of the evaluation of students' learning, but also in order to report on the outcome and to understand what has and what has not worked. At the same time, it is prospective in that sense that it prepares the participant to face similar situations in the future and to deal with unanticipated challenges. Applied to evaluation, it is particularly important in the context of communicating the results of evaluation, both to the students and to the parents.

Questions for reflection
- **How does reflection on evaluative practices, at the conclusion of or after the action, encourage change to those practices ?**
- **How might retrospective and prospective reflection on gestures of evaluation be encouraged.**
- **How can one accompany the reflection and action connected to communication of evaluation results to students and parents ?**

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3. Conditions for reflective practice in a context of the evaluation of learning

For any change in evaluative practices, in order to take into account the particular needs and challenges associated with accompanying the evaluation of competencies in education, involvement in a process of reflective practice is perhaps one of the best ways to ensure change occurs and is integrated into practices. That integration can be better ensured through conditions such as:

- Making sure that the accompaniment of the change in evaluative practices is given enough time so that those accompanied are able to integrate the various functions of evaluation, to reflect on their evaluative practices, to apply evaluative practices that have been discussed collectively, and to analyse the repercussions of their actions.
- Making sure that an action to accompany evaluative practices occurs in a context of change. It is therefore necessary that the accompaniment be given sufficient time and involve meetings for reflection, taking stock, action and collective analysis of evaluative practices.
- Respecting the time required for the process of change, particularly with respect to evaluative practices and ensuring that the change is actually initiated.
- Instituting change in evaluative practices in the spirit in which it was intended makes it possible to avoid interpretations that diverge too much from the basics of the predetermined change
- Proposing evaluation tools for discussion, analysis, adaptation within the group for subsequent application.
- Exploring various theoretical aspects of the evaluation of learning and the evaluation of competencies. A superficial understanding of concepts and practices is not conducive to creating moments of co-construction leading to a greater understanding of concepts and strategies.
- Conducting a project over more than one year permits a greater awareness that certain evaluation experiences are possible, more so, for example, than in a previous year.
- If an evaluation of evaluation experiences is envisaged, ensuring that the evaluation process occurs in a spirit consistent with the education reform (not restricted solely to school results or quantitative aspects) (Lafortune, submitted in 2006).

Questions for reflection
- **What conditions for accompaniment of reflective practice on methods of evaluation are relatively easy to implement ? Why ?**
- **What conditions for accompaniment of reflective practice on methods of evaluation are particularly difficult to implement ? Why ?**

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4. Reflective practice and differentiation: flexibility, adaptation and modification

Differentiation can be seen in a number of different ways. In all cases, however, it is important to reflect on our practices of differentiation or for taking difference into account. Taking difference into account, as part of a reflective practice process, requires an intention, a position, a feeling, a spirit, a way of thinking and acting that are integrated into actions of evaluation so that these become a constant aspect of our concerns (aid to learning and the recognition of competencies). Before, during and after the action, this implies anticipation, control (evaluation within the action), regulation (adjustments made

during the course of the action), and analysis of the action (before, during and after the action).

> *Questions for reflection*
> - **What are some ways to take difference into account ?**
> - **What methods can we use to reflect on the ways of taking difference into account ?**
> - **What influence will those methods have on our students' progress ?**
> - **What methods are there for questioning the influence of those methods on our students' progress ?**

It is necessary to take differences into account; but it is also essential to reflect on the methods we use to help students in their progress, to develop their full potential, to set them challenges…. That is not an easy context to create, since setting challenges and helping students meet them while proposing further challenges implies awareness of the way we intervene and judge students, which can be done hastily or on the basis of our own values (see booklet 4 on socio-pedagogical equity). Working in collegial teams (see booklet 5 on working in cycle-teams) becomes essential to any examination of evaluative practices that take difference into account.

Such reflective practice could focus on the application of the three forms of differentiation described in the secondary framework (MELS, 2006): pedagogical flexibility, adaptation, and modification.

> **Pedagogical flexibility** is used to offer planned options to all the students during learning and evaluation situations. It applies to the whole group rather than to individual students. On a day-to-day basis, this flexibility creates all kinds of opportunities for students in terms of content (different texts to read, for example), structure (individual work, teamwork, group work), processes (various levels of guidance, for example), and work produced. This flexibility means that learning and evaluation situations can encompass different options designed to match students' pace, style of learning, and cognitive levels. However, these options must not affect the level of difficulty of the tasks to be performed, competency evaluation criteria or requirements.

> **Adaptation** involves making adjustments or changes to learning and evaluation situations without modifying what is evaluated. It can lead to a change in the way students with specific needs experience these situations or can affect the procedure to be followed or the way in which texts are presented visually, for example, using a more spacious layout. Adaptation gives students access to the adjustments or accommodations they are used to enjoying without changing the content of evaluation situations, evaluation criteria or requirements. Adaptation does not involve reducing the requirements or modifying what is evaluated. For example, in the context of a geography evaluation, allowing a student with specific needs to listen to, rather than read, the introductory text or instructions would be considered an adaptation.

> **Modification** involves changes to learning and evaluation situations that actually modify competency evaluation criteria and requirements for students with specific needs. The level of difficulty of the evaluation situation is modified accordingly. For example, reading the instructions or text to a student during a reading evaluation would be a modification. Another example would be assigning a student with specific needs an easier task or a situation that is different from that assigned to the group as a whole. In the case of

ministerial examinations aimed at the certification of studies, such modifications cannot be made for a student (MELS, 2006, p.28-30).

Adopting practices of flexibility, adaptation and modification appropriate to the needs of each individual student presents a substantial challenge. Undertaking a reflective practice process to ask questions about what these concepts mean and how to apply them can help students by ensuring a coherent intervention. On the other hand, a reflective practice process can be harmful to other students who do not readily demonstrate their abilities, who rarely express themselves, who learn slowly at the beginning and require a certain amount of time to show what they have learnt, who do not fit our learning model, who take seemingly complicated paths to solving a problem, who resort to unusual strategies…. A reflective practice process conducted with a team helps, among other things, to provide a certain distance, to question hasty conclusions, and to modify certain interpretations.

Questions for reflection
- **What is meant by the terms 1) flexibility; 2) adaptation; and 3) modification as they apply to methods for the evaluation of learning that takes difference into account ?**
- **What does it mean to undertake a reflective practice process with regard to differentiation in evaluation ?**
- **How should a reflective practice process relating to differentiation in evaluation be accompanied ?**
- **How can cycle-teams best be accompanied in reflecting on their practices in differentiation in evaluation ?**

Certain elements associated with reflective practice are integrated into the conditions for the use of adaptations and modifications as proposed in the secondary reference framework (MELS, 2006). For example, careful review to assess the need for adaptation or modification can be associated with reflective practice if such a review is conducted regularly and explanations are provided to justify the choices presented to colleagues for discussion. In that framework, differentiation practices are submitted to colleagues for discussion, with a view to ensuring cooperation with the teachers of students affected by adaptation and modification.

Conclusion

In this document, we have dealt with four aspects of reflective practice applied to evaluative practices. The first explains the three components of reflective practice adapted to the evaluation of learning. The second deals with the moments from the development of evaluation methods to the feedback on the actions. Then the conditions of reflective practice particular to the evaluation of learning are presented. Finally, these ideas concerning reflective practice on actions of evaluation are considered in the light of differentiation, which, without a reflective practice process, risks prejudicing students throughout, and even beyond, their school careers. This concern requires a collective reflection on our own evaluative practices as well as those of others, in order to create, with the cycle-team, techniques of intervention in the spirit of the Québec Education Program.

The accompaniment of reflective practice adapted to changing evaluative practices consists of two overall aims:

- it involves an exchange of ideas that can lead to heated, even confrontational, discussions;
- it provokes the justification of beliefs and practices.

In pursuing those aims, participants can discover the pleasures of discussing evaluation, despite whatever differences may arise: "To agree to work in concert with your colleagues [on evaluation] is to accept to take the risk of abandoning your customary role, and, thus, of sacrificing a certain security (Valentin, 1997, p.16)."

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