

## The National Centre of Literacy and Numeracy for Adults

### Enhancing the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Implementation Strategy through Data-Driven Decision Making

A framework for developing organisational  
benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner  
outcomes – **User Guide**

November 2014

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# A framework for developing organisational benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes – User Guide

## Introduction

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This User Guide is to be read in conjunction with *A framework for developing organisational benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes – The Framework* (referred to as the “Framework”). The Framework assigns the responsibility of defining objectives and creating benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes to Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) and Industry Training Organisations (ITOs). This User Guide has been developed to provide these organisations with concrete guidance on how they can implement each component of the Framework.

The Framework has been developed from the position that, to identify whether an organisation has made a difference to learner outcomes for literacy and numeracy, the benchmarks must refer to explicit measurement of literacy and numeracy proficiency or practices. A justification for this stance is found in Appendix 1.

## Using this Guide

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The Framework document lists the following people as the users of the Framework and therefore as users of this Guide: Managers and leaders in TEOs and ITOs with a responsibility for one or more of:

- development of organisational plans and performance indicators
- development of departmental and programme plans and performance indicators
- organisational and/or programme self-assessment and quality assurance
- programme and/or qualification development
- embedding literacy and numeracy across the organisation.

Collaboratively, these people would provide the following expertise required for defining objectives and creating benchmarks at organisational and programme levels:

- organisational and departmental planning and development of performance indicators
- embedding literacy and numeracy, including: using the Learning Progressions, understanding the potential uses of the Assessment Tool and the data it can provide, mapping programme demands, and measuring learner outcomes
- curriculum knowledge of targeted programmes
- programme development and approval processes and requirements
- self-assessment and evidence-based practice.

This User Guide is organised in alignment with the five components of the Framework. It starts with defining aim and objectives at the organisational level, as the recommended first step to be taken by an organisation in creating benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner

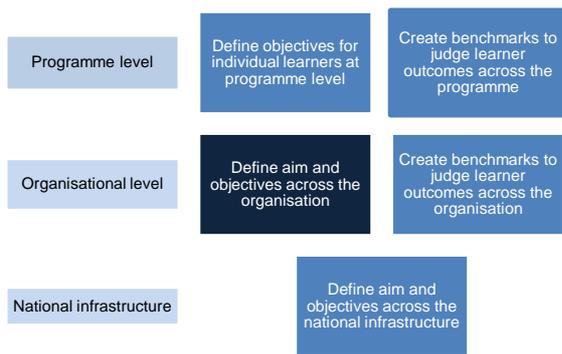
outcomes. Then the objectives at programme level are considered, followed by guidelines how benchmarks can be set at organisational and programme level, respectively. Finally, it is explained how the national infrastructure for tertiary education can direct and support the processes of defining aim and objectives and setting benchmarks in organisations.

The guidelines in this document are supported by examples. Five comprehensive examples are found in Appendix 4. Most examples used throughout the text are extracts from Appendix 4. This enables you as the user to consider each example not only as an illustration of the immediate guidelines, but also as a contributing factor to its larger context. Where this has been considered beneficial, additional, non-contextualised, examples are provided. Please note that examples are only intended to support your thinking about possibilities for your organisation. They are not all-inclusive. You would significantly limit your options if you used the examples as a list from which to pick and choose.

Before embarking on defining aim, objectives and benchmarks, it is highly recommended you read Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this User Guide. These appendices provide insight in the concepts of proficiency and practices and in choosing between a focus on achievement or on improvement. Understanding these terms is essential in developing objectives and benchmarks.

Finally, It must be emphasised that, where this document speaks of 'aims', 'objectives' or 'benchmarks', it only refers to aims, objectives or benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes.

## STEP 1: Define aim and objectives across the organisation



As explained in the Framework document, the main purpose of the Framework and this User Guide is to support the process of organisational improvement. It is envisaged that you will integrate benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes in your organisation's system of self-assessment, as described by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)<sup>1</sup>. The diagram in Figure 1 shows this self-assessment process. At its

centre are indicators of quality and value of educational outcomes, in this case the quality and value of learners' literacy and numeracy proficiency and practices outcomes.

Benchmarks are the criteria against which these indicators are judged. However, before the benchmarks can be set, it is important that the organisation is clear about what quality and value it has set out to achieve, that is, about its aim and objectives.



Figure 1: Self-assessment process (source: NZQA (2009))

<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Qualifications Authority. (2009). *Using evaluation to strengthen organisational self-assessment*. Retrieved from [www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)

## Developing an organisational aim for literacy and numeracy

The organisational aim for literacy and numeracy pictures what your organisation is intending to achieve through its engagement in (embedded) literacy and numeracy education.

Examples of such aims are shown in Textbox 1. Please note the explicit reference to literacy and numeracy in these aims.

### *Textbox 1: Examples of aims at organisational level (Extracted from Appendix 4)*

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to confidently participate in their communities (including whānau, work, study and other communities).

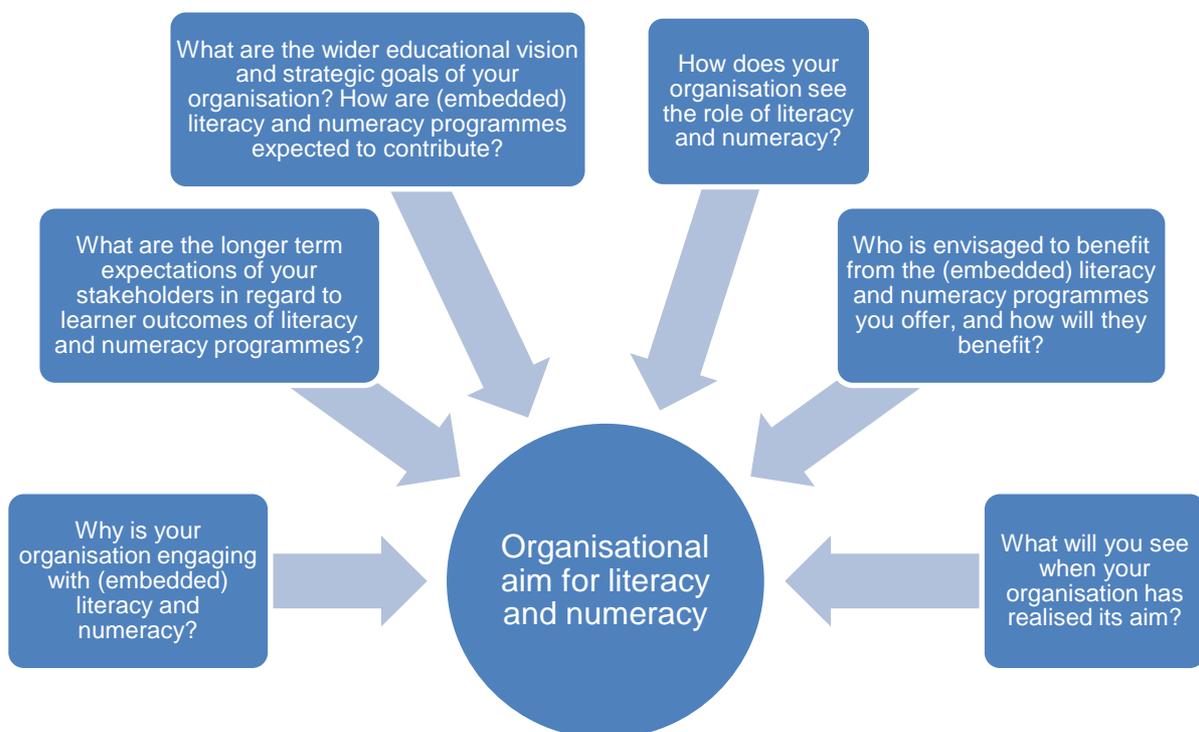
This organisation supports stakeholders by training (future) employees who have the literacy and numeracy skills that the stakeholder needs.

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to be confident in their chosen vocation.

Learners engage with embedded literacy and numeracy in all activities in this organisation to support the development of their knowledge and skills necessary for further study and employability.

Graduates from our organisation improve the productivity of their workplaces by employing effective literacy and numeracy practices.

For your organisation to define its aim, the questions in Figure 2 may be of assistance to you. Examples to help answer the questions are found on the next page.



*Figure 2: Questions to support development of an organisational aim for literacy and numeracy.*

- *Why is your organisation engaging with (embedded) literacy and numeracy?*

For example, is there a specific need in your community, such as high unemployment or many people with no or low-level qualifications? Do you need to align with specific government policies or strategies? Does your organisation have low completion rates? Have you identified specified learning needs across your learner cohorts? Do employers have specific expectations in regard to literacy and numeracy?

- *What are the longer term expectations of your stakeholders (industry, community, learners, policy-makers, funders) in regard to learner outcomes of literacy and numeracy programmes?*

Examples include, but are not limited to: improvement of workplace safety or productivity, more graduates finding employment, improvement of literacy and numeracy abilities across the nation, higher qualification completion rates.

- *What are the wider educational vision and strategic goals of your organisation? How are (embedded) literacy and numeracy programmes expected to contribute to this vision and these goals?*

The answer to this question positions literacy and numeracy in the bigger purposes of your organisation. Moreover, it enables you to bring the uniqueness of your organisation, as reflected in your vision and strategic goals, into your aim for literacy and numeracy.

- *How does your organisation see the role of literacy and numeracy?*

Is your organisation aiming to improve learners' literacy and numeracy *per se*, or to support learners' literacy and numeracy development as a means to achieve another goal?

- *Who is envisaged to benefit from the (embedded) literacy and numeracy programmes you offer, and how will they benefit?*

Are there any people or groups who you specifically target to benefit from your organisation's engagement with literacy and numeracy? For example, do your literacy and numeracy activities only involve programmes at certain levels, only programmes in certain fields (e.g. trades), only Māori, Pasifika and/or youth learners, only learners with low literacy and/or numeracy proficiencies, all programmes across the organisation?

How will these people or groups benefit?

- *What will you see when your organisation has realised its aim?*

What has changed in the community? With your stakeholders? With the learners?

Once you have answered these questions you can define your aim. The examples in Textbox 1 provide ideas on how to write an aim. It may be worth noting from these examples that each is explicit about purpose, about who benefits, and about the role of literacy and numeracy.

## Defining objectives for literacy and numeracy across the organisation

The objectives at organisational level provide the measurable steps towards realising the aim. As such, achievement of the objectives is the proxy measure for your organisation's effectiveness towards realising its aim. The number of objectives you choose will depend on the complexity of your aim.

Objectives at organisational level provide clarity and guidance for programmes as to their required specific literacy and numeracy focus. In this way, defining objectives will help you ensure consistency in the approaches to measuring learner outcomes across your organisation.

Considering the full range of programmes your organisation offers and/or is planning to offer, you can create the objectives through answering the questions in Figure 3. The questions, with some further guidance, are also found in the text below. Obviously, your answers are to be in full alignment with your aim for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes. This alignment is illustrated by the examples in Textboxes 2 to 6 at the end of this section.

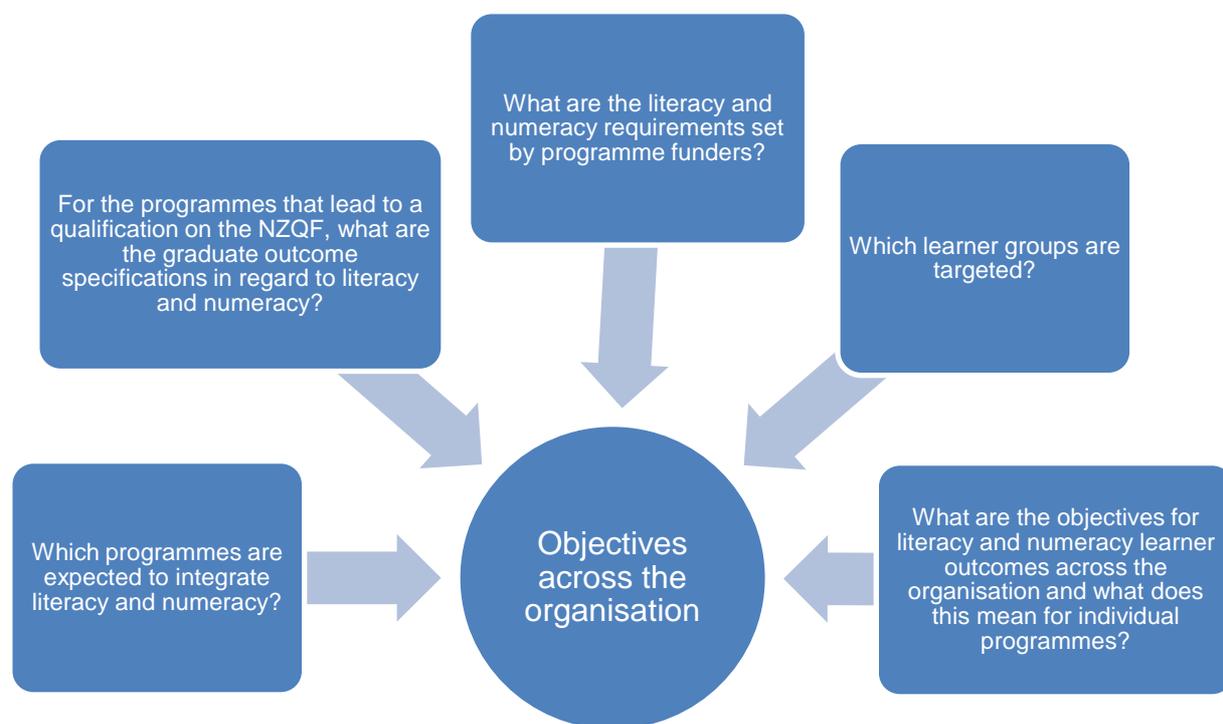


Figure 3: Questions to support development of literacy and numeracy objectives at organisational level

- *Which programmes are expected to integrate literacy and numeracy?*

For example: only programmes leading to qualifications at Levels 1-3; only programmes that are funded through the Youth Guarantee scheme; only vocational programmes; only intensive literacy programmes; all programmes in the organisation.

- *For the programmes that lead to a qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), what are the graduate outcome specifications in regard to literacy and numeracy?*

Specific literacy and numeracy requirements as stated in the graduate outcome specifications would have to be met, and therefore need to be integrated into your objectives.

- *What are the literacy and numeracy requirements set by programme funders?*

Funders may set specific requirements, e.g. statistically significant gain as measured with the Assessment Tool. These need to be integrated into your objectives.

- *Which learner groups are targeted?*

All learners in the selected programmes could be targeted, or only specific learner groups, for example, a specific focus could be put on one or more of the priority groups in the Tertiary Education Strategy: Māori, Pasifika and youth learners.

- *What are the objectives for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes across your organisation and what does this mean for individual programmes?*

- Are the objectives the same for or differentiate between the above programmes and/or learner groups?
- Do the objectives focus on learner proficiency, on practices or on a combination of these (for an explanation see Appendix 2)?
- Do the objectives focus on particular proficiencies or practices?
- Do the objectives focus on learner improvement, on learner achievement, or on both (for an explanation see Appendix 3)?

Although uniformity and specificity in objectives across all programmes and/or learner groups in the organisation may seem preferable for ease of measuring and monitoring, it could reduce the space available at the programme level to develop objectives that are relevant and meaningful to the programme and the learners. It is important for your organisation to find a workable balance between specificity and uniformity at organisational level and relevance at programme level.

*Textbox 2: Aim and objectives across an organisation (extracted from Appendix 4 – Example 1)*

*Aim:*

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to confidently participate in their communities (including whānau, work, study and other communities).

*Objectives across the organisation:*

Learners will improve their literacy and numeracy proficiency.

Learners will be able to demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy practices in a community or whānau-based task chosen by the learner.

*Explanation:*

All learners and therefore all programmes are targeted. The focus is on improvement of proficiency and on achievement of practices. No differentiation is made between programmes or learner groups and no further specification of proficiencies is given, leaving space for programmes to focus on proficiencies that are relevant to the learner. The practice is specified to a limited extent, to align with the aim.

*Textbox 3: Aim and objectives across an organisation (extracted from Appendix 4 - Example 2)*

*Aim:*

This organisation supports stakeholders by training (future) employees who have the literacy and numeracy skills that stakeholders need.

*Objective across the organisation:*

In all programmes learners develop the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification.

*Explanation:*

All learners in all programmes are targeted. The organisation has interpreted 'skills' as proficiencies that form the basis for the qualification. It therefore focuses on achievement of proficiency. No differentiation is made between programmes or learner groups. Further specification of proficiencies is determined by the requirements for each qualification.

*Textbox 4: Aim and objectives across an organisation (extracted from Appendix 4 - Example 3)*

*Aim:*

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to be confident in their chosen vocation.

*Objective across the organisation:*

Learners in all vocational programmes are able to complete authentic workplace tasks and explicitly demonstrate the literacy and numeracy proficiencies required to do so.

*Explanation:*

All learners are targeted, but only in vocational programmes, in alignment with the aim. The focus is on achievement of practices, as well as achievement of the proficiencies needed for these practices. No differentiation is made between programmes or learner groups. Further specification of proficiencies and practices is determined by the tasks that are relevant to the programme.

*Textbox 5: Aim and objectives across an organisation (extracted from Appendix 4 - Example 4)*

*Aim:*

Learners engage with embedded literacy and numeracy in all activities in this organisation to support the development of their knowledge and skills necessary for further study and employability.

*Objectives across the organisation:*

Learners achieve the literacy and numeracy practice objectives for their programmes.

All programmes up to and including Level 3 enable the majority of learners to improve their literacy and numeracy proficiencies as part of developing their literacy and numeracy practices.

*Explanation:*

This organisation specifically targets proficiency improvement in lower level programmes, to assist the learners in these programmes with developing their knowledge and skills for further study. The focus on practices in all programmes will help all learners develop skills for employability. Further specification of proficiencies and practices is determined by the tasks that are relevant to the programme.

*Textbox 6: Aim and objectives across an organisation (extracted from Appendix 4 - Example 5)*

*Aim:*

Graduates from our organisation improve the productivity of their workplaces by employing effective literacy and numeracy practices.

*Objective across the organisation:*

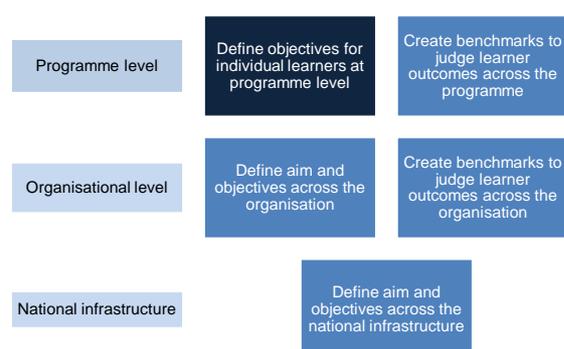
Learners are able to complete authentic workplace tasks competently, including demonstration of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

*Explanation:*

All learners are targeted. The focus is on achievement of practices. No differentiation is made between programmes or learner groups. Further specification of practices is determined by the tasks that are relevant to the programme.

## STEP 2: Define objectives for individual learners at programme level

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Learner outcomes come about when learners engage in programmes. The kinds of learner outcomes that are desired are reflected in the objectives of the programme. Any educational programme design process involves development of programme objectives.

The Framework expects this same process of defining programme objectives to also incorporate explicit learning objectives for

literacy and numeracy. Equivalent to any other programme objectives, literacy and numeracy specific objectives serve the purposes of:

1. guiding the literacy and numeracy-specific teaching and learning activities
2. communicating to learners and other stakeholders which aspects of literacy and numeracy learners are expected to learn in the programme
3. to enable measurement whether the programme has achieved the learner outcomes as it set out to do.

In the implementation of the Framework, the latter purpose is of particular importance.

### Defining programme objectives

Defining programme objectives for literacy and numeracy is similar to defining programme objectives in general. Programme objectives do not state every single literacy or numeracy activity of the programme. Instead, they describe the highest level and most complex aspect of proficiency or practice that learners are expected to demonstrate, which most likely, but not necessarily, occurs near the end of the programme.

Programme objectives for literacy and numeracy are first and foremost informed by the objectives across your organisation. These would include consideration of graduate outcome specifications of the relevant qualification to which the programme may lead, as well as the requirements for the programme set by funding agencies. Programme objectives are also guided by stakeholder expectations, which include, but are not necessary limited to, expectations expressed by local communities and employers, and the proficiencies, needs and expectations of the target group of learners for the programme.

Taking all these requirements and expectations into consideration, a first step in determining the programme objectives is for you to answer the questions in Figure 4, followed by the relevant more detailed questions in Table 1 and/or 2. Please note that your organisation's objectives may already (partly) answer these questions for you. To illustrate each scenario in Tables 1 and 2, references to the examples in Appendix 4 are included. It is important to note that your programme objectives could be a combination of scenarios, as Examples 1 and 3 in Appendix 4 show.

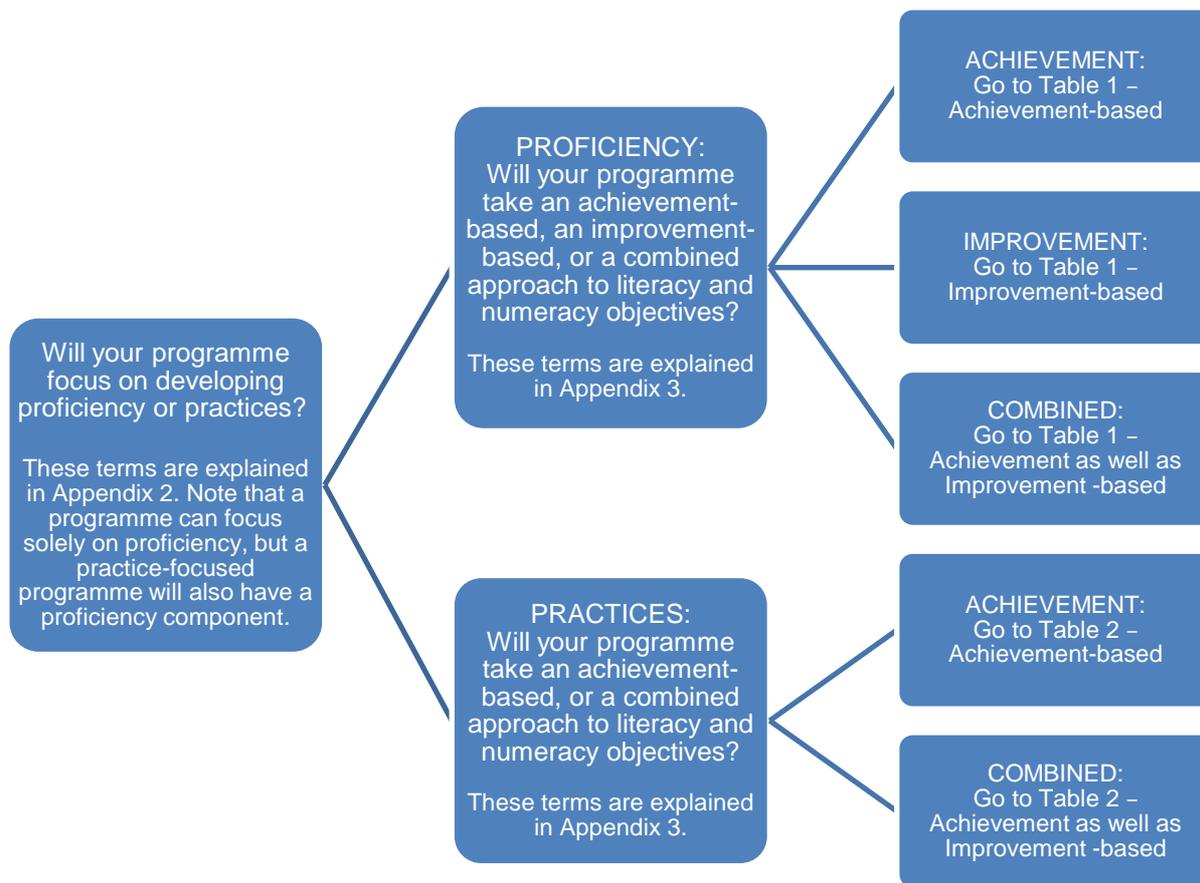


Figure 4: Process to help define programme objectives for literacy and numeracy.

Table 1: Guiding questions for defining proficiency-focused programme objectives for literacy and numeracy.

<b>Achievement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which literacy and numeracy proficiencies are learners expected to demonstrate near the end of the programme? Consider proficiencies in each of the seven strands of the Learning Progressions.*</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, at which step on the Learning Progressions are learners expected to demonstrate the proficiencies near the end of the programme?</li> <li>• Write the selected proficiencies as programme objectives that are: literacy and numeracy specific, relevant to learners and to the programme, measurable, and realistic.</li> </ul> <p>Example 3 in Appendix 4 demonstrates this type of programme objectives.</p>
<b>Improvement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which literacy and numeracy proficiencies are learners expected to have improved near the end of the programme? Consider proficiencies in each of the seven strands of the Learning Progressions.*</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, what is the criterion to decide whether a learner has improved?</li> <li>• How can these criteria be described in terms of the Learning Progressions?</li> <li>• Write the selected proficiency improvements as programme objectives that are: literacy and numeracy specific, relevant to learners and to the programme, measurable, and realistic.</li> </ul> <p>Example 1 in Appendix 4 demonstrates this type of programme objectives.</p>
<b>Achievement as well as improvement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which literacy and numeracy proficiencies are learners expected to demonstrate near the end of the programme? Consider proficiencies in each of the seven strands of the Learning Progressions.*</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, what are the levels of literacy and numeracy proficiency of the majority of learners who normally enrol in the programme? What is your evidence for this?</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, at which step on the Learning Progressions are learners expected to demonstrate the selected proficiencies near the end of the programme? Have you ensured that this step is higher than the majority of learners' proficiency at the beginning of the programme?</li> <li>• Write the selected proficiencies as programme objectives that are: literacy and numeracy specific, relevant to learners and to the programme, measurable, and realistic?</li> </ul> <p>Example 2 in Appendix 4 demonstrates this type of programme objectives.</p>

*\*While you must consider each strand, not all may be relevant to the programme. Only choose the strands, or specific progressions within strands, that are meaningful for the programme, taking into account the organisational objectives and the needs and expectations of stakeholders.*

Table 2: Guiding questions for defining practices-focused programme objectives for literacy and numeracy.

<b>Achievement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which tasks are learners required to demonstrate near the end of the programme that demand effective literacy and/or numeracy practices?</li> <li>• Which literacy and numeracy proficiencies do learners require to enable these effective literacy and numeracy practices? Consider proficiencies in all relevant strands of the Learning Progressions.*</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, what is the minimum level of proficiency, in terms of steps on the Learning Progressions, required in order to enable these effective literacy and numeracy practices?</li> <li>• Write the selected tasks as programme objectives that are: literacy and numeracy specific (i.e. they specify the identified proficiencies and their levels), relevant to learners and to the programme, measurable, and realistic?</li> </ul> <p>Examples 1, 3 and 5 in Appendix 4 demonstrate this type of programme objectives.</p>
<b>Improvement-based</b>	<p>Not applicable, because literacy and numeracy practices are always embedded in the ability to perform a given task competently, and therefore are inherently achievement-based. It is not possible to have a sole improvement focus for literacy and numeracy practices.</p>
<b>Achievement as well as improvement-based</b>	<p>This scenario concerns practices that are achievement-based, but incorporate improvement of proficiency (as explained above; improvement of practices is not possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which tasks are learners required to demonstrate near the end of the programme that demand effective literacy and/or numeracy practices?</li> <li>• Which literacy and numeracy proficiencies do learners require to enable effective literacy and numeracy practices in the above tasks? Consider the proficiencies in all relevant strands of the Learning Progressions.*</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, what is the minimum level of proficiency, in terms of steps on the Learning Progressions, required to enable effective literacy and numeracy practices in the chosen tasks?</li> <li>• For each relevant strand, what are the levels of literacy and numeracy proficiency of the majority of learners who normally enrol in the programme? What is your evidence for this?</li> <li>• If needed, redevelop the tasks to ensure they require a higher level of the selected proficiencies, compared to the proficiencies of the majority of learners who normally enrol in the programme.</li> <li>• Write the selected tasks as programme objectives that are: literacy and numeracy specific (i.e. they specify the identified proficiencies and their levels), relevant to learners and to the programme, measurable, and realistic?</li> </ul> <p>Example 4 in Appendix 4 demonstrates this type of programme objectives.</p>

*\*While you must consider each strand, not all may be relevant to the task. Only choose the strands, or specific progressions within strands, that are embedded in the task.*

## Measuring the outcomes

With defining programme objectives it is important to ask: how can the achievement of these objectives be measured?

Because the above process ensures that the objectives for literacy and numeracy are now stated as regular programme objectives, they can be measured through regular assessment processes in the programme.

Learners successfully complete the programme if their assessment results show that they have met the objectives. If the learner's assessment results show that they have not met the objectives, this may imply that they do not successfully complete the programme, and/or that they are given further learning opportunities to work towards meeting the objectives, depending on the nature of the programme. This applies to literacy and numeracy objectives as much as to other objectives of the programme.

Table 3 suggests assessment methods for each of the situations in Tables 1 and 2. Where possible and meaningful these methods use the existing infrastructure available to your organisation, particularly the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (Assessment Tool). As this infrastructure is further developed, additional assessment methods may become available, including, for example, methods to assess additional aspects of proficiency or methods to assess practices.

Where the infrastructure does not provide ready-made assessment tools, your organisation is expected to develop its own assessment methods for literacy and numeracy. To avoid over-assessment, it is highly recommended to integrate these assessment methods as much as possible with already existing assessments in the programme, however making the literacy and numeracy expectations of the assessment explicit. It must be emphasised that all assessment methods, except the Assessment Tool, require pre- and post-assessment moderation to ensure validity, fairness, and consistent judgment about learner performance<sup>2</sup>.

The literacy and numeracy assessment results across the programme form the data to measure against the benchmarks at programme level and potentially, depending on the objectives, also at organisational level.

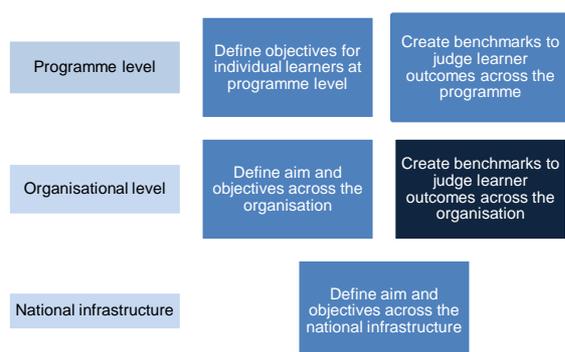
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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/assessment-and-moderation/tertiary-moderation/>

Table 3: Suggested assessment methods for the range of possible objectives for literacy and numeracy. All methods, except the Assessment Tool, require pre- and post-assessment moderation to ensure validity, fairness, and consistent judgment about learner performance.

	Assessment methods for	
	literacy and numeracy proficiency	literacy and numeracy practices
<b>Achievement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment Tool: for Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, and specific Numeracy progressions.</li> <li>• Proficiency assessments developed by your organisation: for all other strands and progressions of the Learning Progressions.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment is only required near the end of the programme.</p> <p>Assessment at the start of the programme is highly recommended to inform teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks that enable demonstration of achievement of the objective, including the <i>explicit</i> requirement of effective literacy and numeracy practices.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment is only required near the end of the programme.</p> <p>To ensure learners have the specified minimum proficiencies required to enable the necessary effective literacy and numeracy practices, achievement-based proficiency assessments as indicated under Achievement-based/proficiency are strongly recommended.</p>
<b>Improvement-based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment Tool: for Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, and specific Numeracy progressions.</li> <li>• Proficiency assessments developed by your organisation: for all other strands and progressions of the Learning Progressions.</li> </ul> <p>Assessments using the same method are required at the beginning and near the end of the programme to measure differences.</p>	Not applicable
<b>Achievement as well as improvement-based</b>	<p>Same as 'improvement-based' proficiency assessment. The assessment results of concern are now not only the differences between beginning and end of the programme, but also the end results per se.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To measure achievement: Tasks that enable demonstration of achievement of the objective, including the <i>explicit</i> requirement of effective literacy and numeracy practices.</li> </ul> <p>Assessment of achievement is only required near the end of the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To measure improvements: Use one or more of the 'improvement-based' proficiency assessment methods as explained elsewhere in this table.</li> </ul>

## STEP 3: Create benchmarks to judge learner outcomes across the organisation



Organisational benchmarks are the criteria against which the objectives across the organisation are measured.

In principle, benchmarks across the organisation take the form of either:

- At least X percent of the programmes/learners under consideration have achieved the objectives – percentages may vary depending on the target group.

The percentage is set to be challenging yet achievable for the organisation. It is based on historical data, in combination with the ambitions of the organisation as reflected in its aim.

If no historical data are available, the first year of implementation of this framework could be used to set a baseline.

or

- A (statistically significant) higher percentage of learners/programmes under consideration than in the previous year or period have achieved the objectives – again, percentages may vary depending on the target group.

Among the various reasons for choosing this option, this type of benchmark may be preferred if the ideal minimum standard as in the previous option is too ambitious for your organisation at the current time, and a longer term stepwise pathway is needed to reach the preferred minimum percentage.

Examples of both forms of benchmarks are shown in Textbox 7.

### *Textbox 7: Examples of different forms of organisational benchmarks*

In Example 1 in Appendix 4, the organisation has set the following benchmarks:

- Each year, at least 92 percent of all learners across the organisation make a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Each year, at least 92 percent of all learners across the organisation successfully complete a community/whānau based task.
- Each year, at least 50 percent of all learners across the organisation make a statistically significant gain on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

Alternatively, this organisation may consider these minimum percentages too high for the time being. Smaller-step benchmarks could be set as follows:

Across the organisation a higher percentage of learners compared to the previous year:

- Makes a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Successfully completes a community/whānau based task.
- Makes a statistically significant gain on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

When creating benchmarks across your organisation, you also need to provide directions and set expectations for the benchmarks across each programme. When doing so, the following questions are worth answering:

- *Which learner groups from which cohorts are included in the benchmarks?*

The benchmarks could include all learners in a programme, but they could also include specific target groups, for example, Māori, Pasifika, and/or youth learners. The benchmarks could include a single cohort, or a group of cohorts.

- *Are the benchmarks at programme level uniform across all programmes and learner groups, or are they programme or learner group specific? In case of the latter, what are the specifics for each programme or learner group?*

An example of differentiation between learner groups is found in Textbox 8.

- *For which types of programme objectives do we want benchmarks at programme level to be created?*

If learner numbers are small in a programme, you could decide not to define benchmarks at programme level, but only specify indicators, which are then used to measure against organisational benchmarks only. An example is found in Textbox 9. Also, not all programme objectives may require measurement against benchmarks. For example, a programme may have objectives for speaking and listening, because this is relevant to the particular programme, but these objectives may not be required by your organisation to be measured against benchmarks.

*Textbox 8: Example of differentiated benchmarks between learner groups (Extract from Appendix 4 – Example 4)*

**Organisational benchmarks:**

Each year at least 75 percent of learners who enrolled in a programme are able to competently demonstrate the literacy and numeracy practice outcomes for those programmes.

At least 60 percent of youth learners who enrolled in 2015 in each of the Level 1-3 programmes are able to competently demonstrate the literacy and numeracy practice outcomes for those programmes.

**Explanation:**

The 75 percent in the first benchmark is the organisation's desired rate of successful programme completion, which it has taken as a proxy for desired literacy and numeracy outcomes. However, the organisation has found that youth completion rates are generally lower than overall completion rates, particularly in lower level programmes. It has therefore taken the 2013 programme completion rate of Youth Guarantee learners as a proxy

baseline for its benchmark for youth learner outcomes in Levels 1-3 programmes. For 2015 60 percent was chosen, to encourage improvement compared to 2013. This figure will be evaluated at the end of 2015, with the intent of continuous improvement until youth learners in lower level programmes perform at the same level as learners overall.

*Textbox 9: Example of a benchmark at organisational level that does not necessarily apply to the programme level (Extract from Appendix 4 – Example 3)*

*Organisational benchmarks:*

At least 90 percent of learners in each vocational programme completed each year achieve the programme literacy and numeracy objectives.

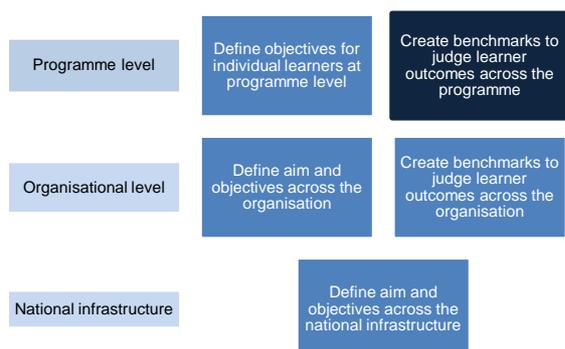
At least 90 percent of Māori learners across all vocational programmes completed each year achieve the programme literacy and numeracy objectives.

The latter percentage is only applicable to individual programmes in which the number of Māori learners is 10 or more.

*Explanation:*

The second benchmark will be applied across the organisation. It will also be expected to be applied to programmes, but only where this is meaningful. However, the data will still need to be collected at the programme level, in order to enable measurement against this benchmark at organisational level.

## STEP 4: Create benchmarks to judge learner outcomes across the programme



Benchmarks at programme level are the criteria which indicate whether the objectives have been achieved to an acceptable level across a programme. As noted at the end of Step 2, the results of the literacy and numeracy assessments in the programme form the data to be used for measuring against the benchmarks.

In principle, programme benchmarks take the form of:

- At least X percent of the learners in the group under consideration have achieved the programme objectives – percentages may vary depending on the targeted learner group; or,
- A (statistically significantly) higher percentage of learners in the group under consideration than in the previous year or period have achieved the programme objectives – again, percentages may vary depending on the target group.

Details of these benchmarks are strongly guided by benchmarks at organisational level, as described in the previous section. Examples of programme benchmarks and their relationship with organisational benchmarks are found in Appendix 4. Additional examples of programme benchmarks are shown in Textboxes 10 and 11.

*Textbox 10: Relationship between programme objective, assessment method and benchmark at programme level. This example concerns a proficiency objective.*

**Programme objective:**

Upon successful completion of this programme, a learner has improved their reading proficiency.

**Assessment method and criterion:**

A learner has achieved this objective if they can demonstrate statistically significant gain in Reading as measured with the Assessment Tool.

**Programme benchmark:**

At least 50 percent of all Pasifika learners in the 2015 cohorts of the programme have achieved the programme objective.

Or:

In 2015 a higher percentage of Pasifika learners across all cohorts in the programme have achieved the programme objective than in 2014.

**Explanation:**

The target group of this benchmark is Pasifika learners in the programme only, as has been decided at organisational level; all programme cohorts for 2014 have been grouped into one.

*Textbox 11: Relationship between programme objective, assessment method and benchmark at programme level. This example concerns a practice objective.*

*Programme objective:*

Upon successful completion of this programme, a learner is able to make a plan for a vegetable garden.\*

*Assessment method and criterion:*

A learner has achieved this objective if they can successfully complete a task in which they plan a vegetable garden, including all literacy and numeracy practices that are required for this task.

*Programme benchmark:*

At least 80 percent of all learners in the 2015 programme have achieved this objective.

*Or:*

In 2015 a higher percentage of learners in the programme have achieved this objective than in 2014.

\*Note: This objective would require further detailing in terms of explicit literacy and numeracy proficiencies required if it were to guide teaching and assessment. The details have not been included here for reasons of transparency of the example for the current purpose.

## A systemic approach

The Benchmarking Framework calls for a systemic approach to measuring learner outcomes for literacy and numeracy, in two ways. Firstly, the Framework is built on the principle of internal consistency, as explained in the next section. Secondly, the Framework is intended to be an integral part of your organisation's self-assessment system, as has been illustrated in Figure 1 on page 5. For this to occur, appropriate data are to be collected to enable measurement against the benchmarks. The second section provides suggestions for (existing) data that may be relevant to your organisation.

### Ensuring internal consistency

To ensure that all components of the Framework work together in a constructive way to achieve the organisation's aim, it is important that the benchmarks and objectives at organisational and programme level are consistent with each other. This internal consistency has already been emphasised in the previous sections of this User Guide. It is further illustrated in Figure 5, which is derived from example 2 in Appendix 4.

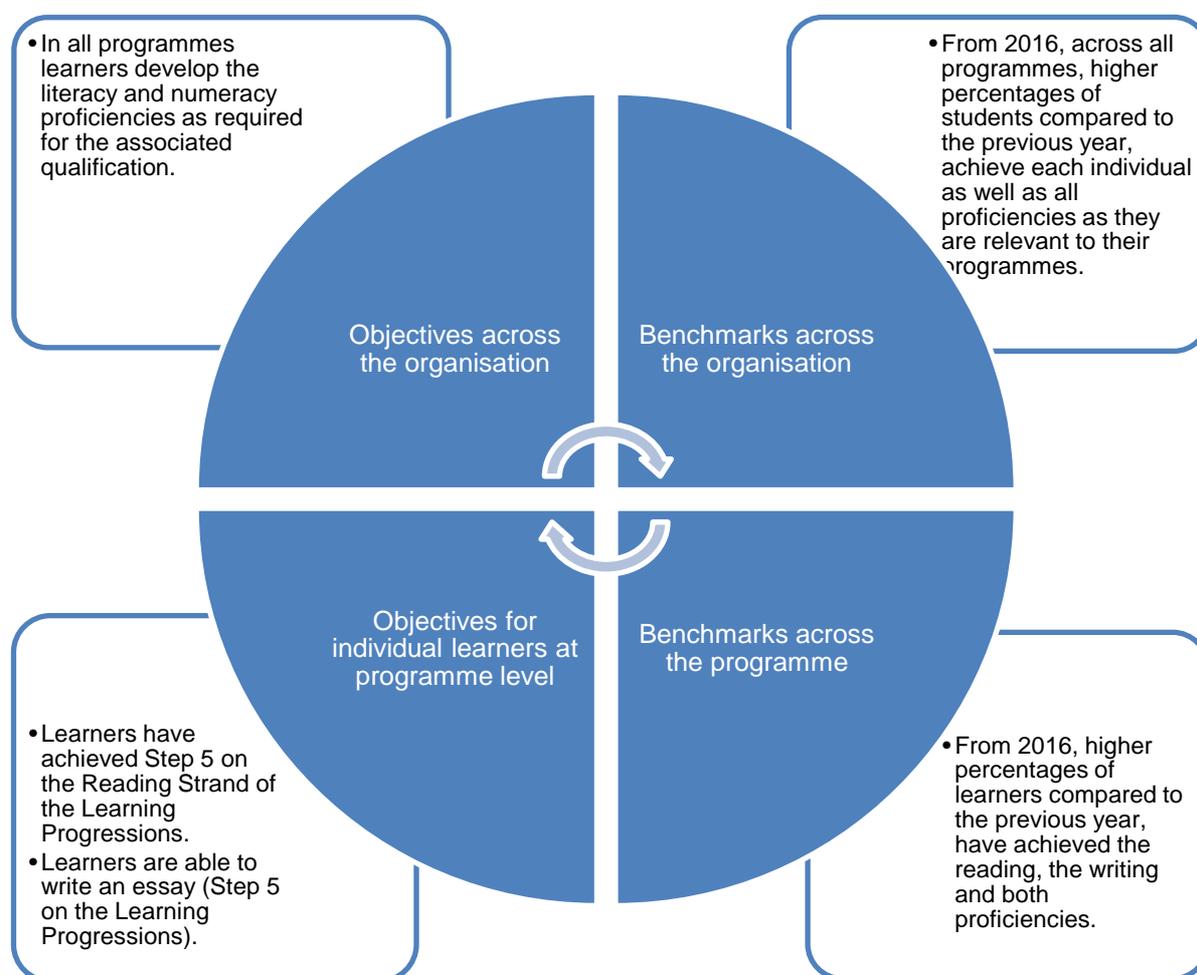


Figure 5: Example of required internal consistency in an organisation's implementation of the Framework (Derived from Appendix 4 – Example 2)

In Figure 4, the objective across the organisation is made relevant to the programme by selecting the proficiencies or practices that can be meaningfully taught in the programme. The benchmark across the organisation is (in this case proficiencies) derived from the objective across the organisation. The benchmark across the programme is then made consistent with both the benchmark across the organisation and the programme objective.

## Measuring the outcomes across a programme and an organisation

Once you have identified your objectives and benchmarks, you can integrate these into your self-assessment system, which involves collecting data to measure the learner outcomes against the benchmarks. Having defined objectives and benchmarks enables you to be highly selective about the data you require.

The data you would need to collect are specific to the particular benchmarks you have created for your programmes and your organisation, and are therefore likely to differ for different organisations; they may also differ between programmes in your organisation.

Appendix 4 shows relevant data that would be collected at programme and at organisational level for each of the examples.

The examples may make you realise that you are currently already collecting some of the data that you will need. For example:

- You are probably already gathering data from the Assessment Tool that you may be able to use.

You may already be gathering data on learners' achievement of programme objectives. With the extension of the programme objectives to include literacy and numeracy objectives, you could incorporate these objectives into your process of data collection.

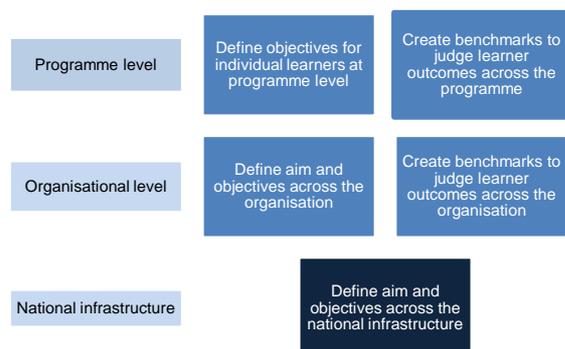
Because the literacy and numeracy objectives are regular programme objectives, one could argue that learners who successfully complete the programme will also have met the literacy and numeracy programme objectives. Hence the programme completion rate may seem a good and relatively easy indicator on which to base the benchmark.

Some caution must be taken, however. Firstly, if learners do not successfully complete the programme they may still have met the literacy and numeracy objectives, so a mechanism needs to be found to capture these data. Secondly, using the programme completion rate as the proxy measure for literacy and numeracy, does not necessarily provide further detailed information on each aspect of literacy and numeracy that your organisation may require for measurement against its benchmarks. In such a situation, specific literacy and numeracy data would still be needed.

- You may already be collecting data on learner achievement in individual assessments, for example in your learner management or information system. Identifying and extracting the specific assessments that measure learners' literacy and numeracy as specified in the objectives may provide you with the data you need for measurement against the benchmarks.

## Provide direction and support across the national infrastructure

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In the Framework, the role of the national infrastructure of policies, systems and processes is to provide constructive direction and support that enable organisations to define meaningful, achievable but challenging objectives and benchmarks. The direction and support are characterised by an explanation of purpose – what are the national goals to which literacy and numeracy should contribute, and of the explicit role that literacy

and numeracy should play in achieving these goals. In working with TEOs and ITOs towards achieving the national literacy and numeracy goals as effectively and efficiently as possible, each relevant component of the national infrastructure has a part to play. In particular, the following direction and support are expected to be of assistance to organisations.

Review of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (the Strategy):

- Incorporation of the Framework and the User Guide as part of the available infrastructure into the Strategy.
- Where relevant, embedding of the implications of the Framework into the Strategy.
- Revision of the TEC ELN Practices table<sup>3</sup> to align with the Framework and the User Guide. Key elements for revision are the acknowledgement that assessment of literacy and numeracy is now broader than just the use of the Assessment Tool, and that a whole organisation approach now includes the development of an aim, objectives and benchmarks at organisational and programme level. While full implementation of the Framework could be expected of organisations at the mature stage, those in the partial stage may need to have developed and be working towards objectives and benchmarks at programme level only, and organisations at the emergent stage may only just have begun this process.

Development and review of policies and strategies across the adult education and training sector:

- Explicit description of the role of literacy and numeracy in achieving the learner outcomes intended by each particular policy or strategy.
- Explicit description of the expectations placed on TEOs and ITOs in contributing to these learner outcomes.

Development, review and approval of qualifications and programmes of study:

- Requirement of explicit graduate outcome statements for literacy and numeracy in development, review and approval of qualifications on the NZQF. These statements will give useful direction to organisations in defining organisational and programme objectives.

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<sup>3</sup> Tertiary Education Commission (2012). *Table: Embedded literacy and numeracy (ELN) practices* (File Reference A760295). Wellington, NZ: Author

Some qualifications on the NZQF already have such statements which could be used as examples. Graduate profiles as developed by Ako Aotearoa (2014)<sup>4</sup> for Level 1 and 2 qualifications would also provide strong guidance.

- Requirement of explicit programme objectives for literacy and numeracy, as illustrated in this User Guide, mapping of these objectives against the Learning Progressions, and assessment against these objectives, as part of the criteria for approval of programmes of study leading to qualifications on the NZQF.

Self-assessment and external evaluation and review processes:

- Requirement of explicit organisational benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes and organisational self-assessment against these benchmarks as part of the external evaluation and review process.

Investment planning and other funding negotiation and approval processes:

- Requirement of explicit organisational benchmarks for literacy and numeracy learner outcomes as part of the investment planning process.
- Requirement by funding providers for adult education and training programmes that programmes have explicit objectives for literacy and numeracy, and that learners are assessed against these objectives.

Where these programmes lead to qualifications on the NZQF, requirements set by funding providers and on the NZQF should be aligned so they can reinforce each other.

- Sufficient autonomy within investment planning and other funding processes for organisations to create (embedded) literacy and numeracy programmes that are relevant to the organisation's mission and values.

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<sup>4</sup> Ako Aotearoa. (2014). *A foundation for progression: Graduate profiles for Levels 1 and 2 qualifications*. Wellington, NZ: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz>

## Appendix 1: A focus on benchmarks and outcomes for literacy and numeracy proficiency and practices

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Literacy and numeracy initiatives potentially contribute to many outcomes for learners. Not only can such initiatives assist in improving learners' literacy and numeracy proficiency and/or practices, but they may also lead to, for example: increased confidence and self-esteem; increased engagement and persistence in, and attitudes to, learning; achievement of credits, courses and qualifications; increased holistic well-being; improvement of the learner's employability and/or economic situation; improvement of the learner's social situation; or improvement of the performance of businesses and of the national or local economy.

Outcomes such as these are generally the result of a complex interplay of not only the literacy and numeracy initiatives but of many other interventions and events in learners' study, work and/or home lives. This makes it very difficult to use the success of these complex outcomes as a direct measure of the success of the literacy and numeracy initiatives. For example, improved holistic well-being may be influenced by a literacy and numeracy initiative in an educational programme, but is also likely to be influenced by the teaching methods used, by the support services provided, by the learner being able to find employment, by the learner's family support, etcetera. This does not make measurement of improved holistic well-being meaningless, but it is not a useful proxy measure of the impact of the literacy and numeracy initiative.

For this Framework the stance has been taken that identifying whether an organisation has made a difference to learner outcomes for literacy and numeracy, the benchmarks must refer to explicit measurement of literacy and numeracy proficiency and/or practices.

However, many organisations do not engage with literacy and numeracy initiatives for the sake of literacy and numeracy. Instead, they implement literacy and numeracy initiatives for the purpose of achieving a bigger and more complex outcome. The Framework acknowledges and provides the space for this, but it also challenges organisations to identify the explicit role of literacy and numeracy proficiencies and practices in achieving the desired bigger outcome.

## Appendix 2: Proficiency or practices?

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The Framework document defines literacy and numeracy proficiency as the ability to complete literacy and numeracy tasks as measured against the Learning Progressions. It defines literacy and numeracy practices as the literacy and numeracy that people use in their everyday work and life tasks, where a task cannot be completed successfully if the literacy and numeracy practices are ineffective.

Applying these definitions to the examples in Textbox 12, A1 and B1 could be considered proficiency objectives, although in its implementation A1 would require further specification

*Textbox 12: Examples of programme objectives with a focus on proficiency and objectives with a focus on practices.*

### *Example A*

Consider a programme leading to a vocational qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. Literacy and numeracy objectives could read:

A1: Upon completion of this programme, a learner is able to do a five-minute oral presentation in front of their class.

A2: Upon successful completion of this programme, a learner is able to apply a mid-way hair colour.

### *Example B*

Consider an intensive literacy and numeracy programme. Intended learner outcome could be:

B1: Upon successful completion of this programme, a learner has improved their reading proficiency as measured against the Learning Progressions.

B2: Upon successful completion of this programme, a learner is able to maintain their own financial administration.

Objectives A2 and B2 are examples of practices: literacy and numeracy are embedded and contextualised within the tasks of applying the hair colour and maintaining a financial administration, respectively. These tasks cannot be completed successfully if the learner's literacy and numeracy practices are ineffective. Many vocational tasks in which learners engage in their programmes incorporate literacy and numeracy practices, and vocational programmes are therefore likely to have a range of objectives representing literacy and numeracy practices.

It is also noted in the definition of literacy and numeracy practices as stated in the Framework document that effective practices require a minimum level of proficiency in one or more strands of the Learning Progressions. The practices in both examples A2 and B2 in Textbox 12 require a minimum level of proficiency in the *Read with Understanding* as well as the *Make Sense of Number to Solve Problems* strands of the Learning Progressions. These proficiencies are important to be identified and specified as they indicate the minimum level of proficiency that learners need to achieve within the programme. In other words, if a programme has objectives that refer to practices, these objectives must be mapped against the Learning Progressions to identify the minimum level of proficiency needed for the required effective literacy and numeracy practices. Examples of mapped practices are found in Appendix 4, Examples 3, 4, and 5.

Just achieving the minimum levels of proficiency will however be insufficient for learners to achieve a practice objective; learners will also need to demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy practices within the specific context of the task that requires the practices.

## Appendix 3: Improvement or achievement?

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A clear distinction must be made between objectives that focus on learner improvement versus those that aim for learner achievement.

In Textbox 12 in Appendix 2, objectives A1, A2 and B2 are achievement-based – they set a minimum standard which the learner is expected to achieve, no matter at which level of proficiency or practice they started. Example B1 is improvement-based: the desired level of proficiency at the end depends on the learner's starting point. Which of the two to select will depend on the organisation's aim, the programmes it offers and the expectations of its stakeholders, as well as on the purpose of the programme and the learners for whom the programme is created.

Numerous programmes, including, but not limited to, many individualised learning programmes, are improvement-based. Their purpose is to improve learners' abilities in whichever is the focus of the programme, irrespective of their abilities at the start of the programme. The measure for a learner's success is whether they have made improvements between the beginning and the end of the programme. For improvement-based programmes, it is most appropriate to also adopt an improvement-based approach to defining objectives for literacy and numeracy.

Most programmes leading to qualifications on the NZQF are inherently achievement-based. The measure for a learner's success in these programmes is whether, at the end of the programme, their abilities meet certain minimum standards (the graduate outcomes). These programmes have a fixed number of credits which is often translated into a fixed duration for the programme. As a consequence, there is limited space in the programme for assisting a learner group with a large diversity in their abilities at the beginning of the programme to all achieve the same standards at the end of the programme. Entry requirements or expectations are often put in place to limit the diversity. To keep in line with this achievement-based philosophy of the programme, it makes sense for these programmes to also adopt an achievement-based approach to defining objectives for literacy and numeracy.

This may suggest that if all programmes in an organisation are leading to qualifications on the NZQF the organisation can never aim for learner improvement in literacy and numeracy, even if it would desire to do so. This is not the case, but it would require a deliberate approach in programme development. If an organisation knows the literacy and numeracy proficiencies of learners who normally enrol in their programmes, they can set the objectives for literacy and numeracy at a higher proficiency level, and develop their programmes and tasks so that the majority of learners can achieve this higher level. Hence the focus in such a case would be on achievement of practices, as well as improvement of proficiency for the majority of learners in the programme. The example in Textbox 13 illustrates this.

*Textbox 13: A combined achievement of practices/improvement of proficiency approach*

In a programme leading to a Level 3 qualification in the field of agriculture it has been found, through the initial assessments using the Assessment Tool which learners in this programme have completed over the last three years, that the vast majority of learners begin the programme with a reading proficiency of Step 3 to 4 on the Learning Progressions.

The desire of the organisation is to improve the reading proficiency of all learners. To help achieve this objective of the organisation, the developers of the agriculture programme deliberately re-define the objectives for reading proficiency such that they map against Step 4 on the Learning Progressions. All learners will be expected to achieve these objectives.

## Appendix 4: Examples

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This appendix provides examples of a range of scenarios in defining organisational and programme objectives and benchmarks. They illustrate a diversity of options but are by no means intended to be a complete set of possible objectives and benchmarks.

To keep the examples clear and to the point, in each example only one programme is featured, and within this programme only one or two objectives are shown.

### **Example 1: A focus on improvement of proficiency and achievement of practices**

This example features any organisation offering intensive literacy and numeracy programmes. It illustrates the development of objectives and benchmarks that focus on improvement of proficiency as well as achievement of practices.

#### **Organisational aim**

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to confidently participate in their communities (including whānau, work, study and other communities).

#### **Objectives at organisational level**

- Learners will improve their literacy and numeracy proficiency.
- Learners will demonstrate effective literacy and numeracy practices in a community or whānau-based task chosen by the learner.

#### **Organisational benchmarks**

- Each year, at least 92 percent of all learners across the organisation make a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Each year, at least 92 percent of all learners across the organisation successfully complete a community/whanau-based task.

#### *Justification:*

This organisation works with learners for as long as it takes to achieve success. Historically on average 12 percent of their learners leave before this happens. They wish to reduce this to 8 percent.

- Each year, at least 50 percent of all learners across the organisation make a statistically significant gain on the reading or a numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

#### *Justification:*

Over the previous two years this averaged 45 percent, and the organisation wishes to improve on this.

## Programme objectives

During initial interviews learners complete the Reading and one of the Numeracy assessments using the Assessment Tool. They also complete proficiency assessments – developed by the organisation – across all strands of the Learning Progressions and use the results to identify their literacy and numeracy goals. An individual learning plan is prepared with specific literacy and numeracy proficiency goals as well as a community-based task to complete, for example, preparing a budget, reading bedtime stories to mokopuna, preparing for the Police Entry Foundation Skills Assessment.

Programme objectives	Required proficiencies	Assessment method
Learners improve their literacy and numeracy proficiencies.	Identified for each individual learner	Relevant organisational proficiency assessments. Assessment Tool (Reading and Numeracy)
Learners are able to complete a community/whānau-based task	Identified for successful completion of the task	Self-assessment by learners using a checklist incorporating explicit literacy and numeracy requirements, and developed collaboratively by learner and tutor.

## Programme benchmarks

- Each year, at least 92 percent of learners make a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Each year, at least 92 percent of learners successfully complete a community/whānau based task.
- Each year, at least 50 percent of learners make a statistically significant gain on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

## Data to be collected to measure against the benchmarks:

At programme level	At organisational level
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all programmes
Total number of learners who have made a gain on at least one organisational proficiency assessments in a literacy strand of the Learning Progressions.	As above
Total number of learners who have made a gain on at least one organisational proficiency assessment in a numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.	As above
Total number of learners who have successfully completed a community/whanau-based task.	As above
Total number of learners who have made statistically significant gains on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.	As above

## Comments

This organisation wishes to improve on previous years and has chosen the minimum percentages for its benchmarks as such. Alternatively, it may consider the desired improvement too high for the time being. Smaller-step benchmarks could be set as follows:

Across the organisation a higher percentage of learners compared to the previous year:

- Makes a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Successfully completes a community/whanau-based task.
- Makes a statistically significant gain on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

These benchmarks would translate to the following programme benchmarks in this example:

A higher percentage of learners compared to the previous year:

- Makes a gain on one or more organisational proficiency assessments in at least one literacy and one numeracy strand of the Learning Progressions.
- Successfully completes a community / whānau based task.
- Makes a statistically significant gain on the Reading or a Numeracy assessment of the Assessment Tool.

## **Example 2: A focus on achievement as well as improvement of proficiency**

This example features an organisation offering programmes that lead to qualifications on the NZQF. It illustrates the development of objectives and benchmarks that focus on achievement of proficiency.

### **Aim**

This organisation supports stakeholders by training (future) employees who have the literacy and numeracy skills that stakeholders need.

### **Objective across the organisation**

- In all programmes learners develop the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification.

### **Organisational benchmarks**

- All programmes in the field of trades and humanities offered in 2015 have been identified and documented, and are teaching towards the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification.
- For 2015: At least 60 percent of learners across all programmes in the field of trades and humanities have improved their proficiencies as relevant to the programme.
- All programmes offered from 2016 have identified and documented and are teaching towards the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification.

In 2015, data are collected in the trades and humanities programmes to identify the percentage of students who achieve each individual proficiency, and who achieve all proficiencies. These data are used to set a baseline for the achievement of each individual proficiency, and of all proficiencies in a programme.

- From 2016, across all programmes, higher percentages of students compared to the previous year, achieve each individual as well as all proficiencies as they are relevant to their programmes.

#### *Justification:*

This organisation is taking a stepwise approach towards achieving its objective. It has found that the highest learner need for developing literacy and numeracy proficiencies is in the trades and the humanity programmes, hence the initial focus on those programmes only, and on improving learners' literacy and numeracy proficiencies in those programmes, as that is deemed feasible in the short term. From 2016, the focus will be solely on proficiency achievement in all programmes.

The organisation is not yet clear what will be an attainable percentage for the benchmark. Therefore it will use the 2015 data as the baseline from which to determine the benchmarks for 2016 and beyond.

## Programme objectives

*Programme example: Diploma in Social Practice (Level 6)*

The reading and writing demands (at the end) of this programme have each been mapped at Step 5 on the Learning Progressions. Learners enrolling in the programme are assessed on their reading and writing proficiencies. It has been found over the last two years that over 70 percent of learners have a proficiency at Step 4 or lower in Reading and more than 90 percent of learners have a proficiency of Step 4 or lower in Writing.

<b>Programme objectives</b>	<b>Required proficiencies</b>	<b>Assessment method</b>
Learners are able to demonstrate proficiency at Step 5 on the Reading Strand of the Learning Progressions.	Reading strand – Step 5	Assessment Tool (Reading assessment)
Learners are able to write an essay.	Writing strand – Step 5	Essay which is mapped against the Learning Progressions

## Programme benchmarks

- For 2015: As many learners as possible have achieved each of the reading and writing proficiencies, and both proficiencies.
- For 2015: At least 60 percent of learners have improved their reading as well as their writing proficiency.
- From 2016: Higher percentages of learners compared to the previous year have achieved each of the reading and writing proficiencies, and both proficiencies.

## Data to be collected to measure against the benchmarks:

### *For 2015: Trades and humanities programmes only*

For each programme, evidence of identification and documentation of the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification has to be provided.

<b>At programme level</b>	<b>At organisational level</b>
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all trades and humanities programmes.
Total number of learners who have made a gain in each individual proficiency as relevant to the programme.	As above.
Total number of learners who have achieved each individual proficiency as relevant to the programme.	As above.
Total number of learners who have achieved all proficiencies in their programme.	As above.

### *For 2016: All programmes*

For each programme, evidence of identification and documentation of the literacy and numeracy proficiencies as required for the associated qualification has to be provided.

<b>At programme level</b>	<b>At organisational level</b>
2015 baseline data: Percentages of learners across the organisation who achieved each individual proficiency (separate percentage mark for each proficiency). Percentage of learners across the organisation who achieved all proficiencies in their programme.	Same as programme level.
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all programmes.
Total number of learners who have achieved each individual proficiency as relevant to the programme.	As above.
Total number of learners who have achieved all proficiencies in their programme.	As above.

### **Example 3: A focus on achievement of practices as well as proficiency**

This example features a small organisation offering vocational programmes. It illustrates the development of objectives and benchmarks that focus on achievement of practices as well as proficiency.

#### **Aim**

Learners in this organisation develop the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to be confident in their chosen vocation.

#### **Objective across the organisation**

- Learners in all vocational programmes are able to complete authentic workplace tasks and explicitly demonstrate the literacy and numeracy proficiencies required to do so.

#### **Organisational benchmark**

- At least 90 percent of learners in each vocational programme completed each year achieve the programme literacy and numeracy objectives.

#### *Justification:*

The organisation already has an objective of 90 percent programme completion across all learners. In line with this, the organisation has decided that the same completion rate should apply for the specific literacy and numeracy objectives that are embedded in each programme.

Additionally, the organisation desires for Māori learners to achieve as well as non-Māori learners and has therefore decided that:

- At least 90 percent of Māori learners across all vocational programmes completed each year achieve the programme literacy and numeracy objectives.

The latter percentage is only applicable to individual programmes in which the number of Māori learners is 10 or more.

## Programme objectives

### *Programme Example: Level 2 Construction*

<b>Programme Objectives</b>	<b>Required proficiencies</b>	<b>Progression</b>	<b>Assessment method</b>
Learners are able to complete an elementary construction project.	Make reasonable estimates in appropriate units for measurements required in the project.	Measurement progressions - Step 4 and/or 5	The learner completes the project and within the project successfully demonstrates each of the proficiencies.
	Choose appropriate measuring instruments and accurately measure during the project.	Measurement progressions - Step 4 and/or 5	
	Carry out metric conversions for measurements used in the project.	Measurement progressions - Step 4 and/or 5	
	Demonstrate with understanding percentage calculations if required in the project.	Proportional Reasoning progression - Step 5	
	Demonstrate with understanding ratio calculations if required in the project.	Proportional Reasoning progression - Step 6	
	Correctly pronounce and use specialised vocabulary used in the project.	Speaking and Listening strands - Steps 4 and 5	
Learners are able to complete a brief health and safety incident report.	Use grammar and punctuation to construct short simple sentences.	Writing Strand - Step 2	The learner writes an incident report demonstrating the specified literacy proficiencies.
	Identify the purpose for the report.	Writing Strand - Step 3	

## Programme benchmarks

- Each year, at least 90 percent of learners who enrolled in the programme achieve the literacy and numeracy objectives of the programme.
- Each year, at least 90 percent of Māori learners who enrolled in the programme achieve the literacy and numeracy objectives of the programme. This only applies if the number of Māori learners enrolled during this year is 10 or more.

**Data to be collected to measure against the benchmarks:**

<b>At programme level</b>	<b>At organisational level</b>
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all vocational programmes.
Total number of Māori learners who first enrolled.	As above.
Total number of learners who have achieved all literacy and numeracy objectives of the programme.	As above.
Total number of Māori learners who have achieved all literacy and numeracy objectives of the programme.	As above.

## **Example 4: A focus on achievement of practices incorporating improvement of proficiency**

This example features an organisation with a wide range of sub-degree programmes. It illustrates the development of objectives and benchmarks that focus on achievement of practices which incorporate improvement of proficiency.

### **Organisational aim**

Learners engage with embedded literacy and numeracy in all activities in this organisation to support the development of their knowledge and skills necessary for further study and employability.

### **Objectives across the organisation**

- Learners achieve the literacy and numeracy practice objectives for their programmes.
- All programmes up to and including Level 3 enable the majority of learners to improve their literacy and numeracy proficiencies as part of developing their literacy and numeracy practices.

#### *Justification:*

This organisation has decided to specifically work on proficiency improvement in lower level programmes, and focus on practices in all programmes.

### **Organisational benchmarks**

- Each year at least 75 percent of learners who enrolled in a programme are able to competently demonstrate the literacy and numeracy practice outcomes for those programmes.

#### *Justification:*

The 75 percent reflects the rate of successful programme completion.

- At least 60 percent of youth learners who enrolled in 2015 in each of Levels 1-3 programmes are able to competently demonstrate the literacy and numeracy practice outcomes for those programmes.

#### *Justification:*

The organisation has found that youth (learners under the age of 25 when they enrol) completion rates are generally lower than overall completion rates, particularly in lower level programmes. It has taken the 2013 programme completion rate of learners studying under the Youth Guarantee scheme as a proxy baseline for its benchmark for youth learner outcomes. For 2015 60 percent was chosen, to encourage improvement compared to 2013. This figure will be evaluated at the end of 2015, with the intent of continuous improvement until youth learners perform at the same level as learners overall.

- In 2015 and 2016, At least 50 percent of learners in Levels 1-3 programmes improve their proficiencies in at least one strand of the Learning Progressions.

*Justification:*

The 50 percent acknowledges that each programme is designed to only enable the majority of learners to improve their proficiency, and not all learners. The organisation will revisit this figure at the end of 2016.

## Programme objectives

*Programme example: Hospitality Foundation Skills Level 1*

It has been found, through initial assessments at the beginning of the programme, that the majority of learners who normally enrol in this programme show a proficiency at Step 2 as measured against the Speak to Communicate strand of the Learning Progressions, and a proficiency of Step 3 as measured against the measurement progressions. The programme objective has been defined at a level that enables learners to improve their proficiencies in these areas.

Programme objective	Required proficiencies	Progression	Assessment method
Learners are able to: serve beverages and food to tutors and peers and deal with a complaint.	Learners demonstrate knowledge of quantities measured in millilitres.	Measurement progressions Step 4	The learner takes part in role-play serving beverages and food and dealing with a complaint.  The assessment criteria explicitly include the literacy and numeracy practices required to complete this task competently.
	Learners choose appropriate vocabulary for audience and context.	Speak to Communicate Strand Step 3	
	Learners use appropriate gestures, tone, pace and intonation to improve communication.	Speak to Communicate Strand Step 3	

## Programme benchmarks

- At least 60 percent of youth learners who enrolled in 2015 in this programme have competently demonstrated the literacy and numeracy practices in the programme.

*Justification:*

The majority of learners in this programme are youth. The main focus is therefore on contributing to the organisational benchmark for youth learners.

- In 2015 and 2016, at least 50 percent of learners in this programme improve their proficiencies in at least one strand of the Learning Progressions.

*Note:*

In the example of programme objectives this would be Measurement or Speaking, but additional programme objectives may include other strands.

Programme benchmarks will be revisited for 2016 and beyond in response to changes to the organisational benchmarks.

**Data to be collected to measure against the benchmarks:**

<b>At programme level</b>	<b>At organisational level</b>
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all programmes.
Total number of learners who have competently demonstrated all literacy and numeracy practices in the programme.	As above.
For Levels 1-3 programmes only: Total number of youth learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all Levels 1-3 programmes.
For Levels 1-3 programmes only: Total number of youth learners who have competently demonstrated all literacy and numeracy practices in the programme.	As above.
For Levels 1-3 programmes only: Total number of learners who have improved their proficiency in at least one strand of the Learning Progressions.	As above.

## **Example 5: A focus on achievement of practices**

This example features an organisation offering programmes that are partly offered in an authentic work environment. It illustrates the development of objectives and benchmarks that focus solely on achievement of practices.

### **Organisational aim**

Graduates from our organisation improve the productivity of their workplaces by employing effective literacy and numeracy practices.

### **Objective across the organisation**

- Learners are able to complete authentic workplace tasks competently, including demonstration of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

### **Organisational benchmark**

- By the time they graduate, at least 90 percent of learners who initially enrolled in a programme have completed at least three authentic workplace tasks competently, including explicit demonstration of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

#### *Justification:*

This organisation has found that 90 percent of learners who enrol in the programme normally complete the qualification. The above 90 percent is aligned with this. Through its benchmark the organisation wishes to ensure that a minimum number of tasks is performed within the programme in which learners are explicitly assessed on literacy and numeracy practices before they can graduate.

## Programme objectives

*Programme example: Hairdressing (Level 3)*

The programme objectives include the desired ability to complete at least three authentic workplace tasks. Below, one example of such an objective is shown.

Programme objective	Required proficiencies	Progression	Assessment method
Learners are able to: professionally converse with a client to identify their hairdressing service needs.	Learners listen to understand and evaluate the client's needs, in order to determine relevant services	Listen with Understanding Strand - Step 5	The learner meets and greets a real client in a salon and holds a conversation to identify their hairdressing needs.
	Learners speak with confidence in response to the client, using professional vocabulary and sentence structures	Speak to Communicate Strand - Step 4	The assessment (observation) criteria explicitly include the literacy practices required to complete this task competently.

## Programme benchmark

- By the time they graduate, at least 90 percent of learners who initially enrolled in this programme have completed at least three authentic workplace tasks competently, including explicit demonstration of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

## Data to be collected to measure against the benchmarks:

At programme level	At organisational level
Total number of learners who first enrolled.	Sum of totals across all programmes.
Total number of learners who have completed at least three authentic workplace tasks competently, including explicit demonstration of effective literacy and numeracy practices.	As above.