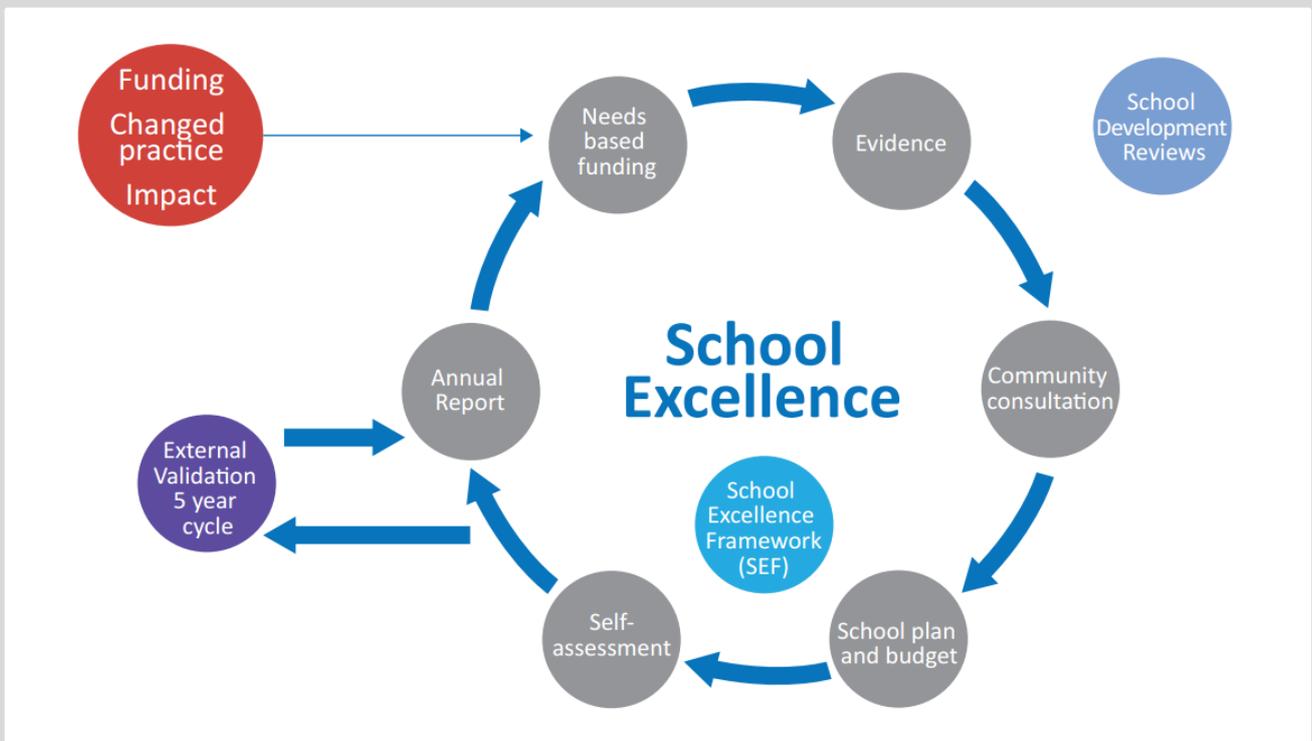


School Excellence implementation guidelines

Self-assessment



Implementation document for School Excellence policy

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Document history

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Context

As part of the ongoing school planning, self-assessment and reporting cycle of School Excellence, all schools self-assess their practices using the elements of the [School Excellence Framework](#) (SEF) across the domains of learning, teaching and leading.

General information

The statements of excellence in the SEF are central to guiding a school's reflection on each element to make on-balance judgements determined by the school. Once during a five-year cycle, schools undergo an external validation of the evidence of their school self-assessment.

Schools critically reflect on the impact of their milestone activities in the school plan at the mid-year reflection and annual milestone reflection points to inform their decision-making process for future directions.

Ongoing school self-assessment is recorded in the School Planning and Reporting Online (SPaRO) software.

- Evaluations of planned activities and the bi-annual reflections using the SEF are entered into the implementation and progress monitoring section of the school plan.
- Storage of data, evidence and self-assessment documentation is stored in the evidence bank.
- SEF self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS) is completed within the software.
- SEF S-aS is reported through the annual report component.

SPaRO is available to schools through the Department of Education staff portal. The software provides an online integration process for schools to efficiently plan, self-assess and report.

Enquiries

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1. School self-assessment

School self-assessment is pivotal to school excellence. It identifies impact and growth, providing information to assist decision-making and is achieved through three interwoven steps which guide the process:

- What did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- What happened as a result?

The [School Excellence Framework evidence guide](#) provides an outline of the self-assessment process that can be used as a model to assist schools in the self-assessment of their school plan.

Establishing ongoing reflective practices

School leadership teams develop reflective practices that facilitate the development of meaningful milestones and the monitoring of their achievement. (See also the School Planning section of the School Excellence implementation guidelines). These practices enable schools to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of planned activities. This process involves:

- monitoring milestones
- ongoing evaluation of quality of implementation and impact
- summative reflection using the SEF (including mid-year and annual reflections).

Evidence

The sourcing and use of evidence underpins the self-assessment process. Evidence is a general term that refers to qualitative and quantitative data that can inform a decision or course of action. Often the terms evidence and data are used interchangeably, however, they have distinct meanings. Data becomes evidence when it is used to prove something or support a conclusion.

School self-assessment is a process that promotes the effective use of evidence to guide judgements and decisions made by schools. As school leadership teams make judgements about what they have achieved, how well they are doing and what to do next, they are guided by the information they have analysed and evaluated. This means that schools integrate and interpret evidence from a wide variety of sources to support their decisions.

The SEF evidence guide provides [guidelines for using data](#) as well as a list of possible [sources of evidence](#) that may assist schools with self-assessment.

1.1 What did we do?

Monitoring milestones

The focus is twofold:

- to determine the effectiveness of implementation and the efficiency of the school's monitoring processes
- to assess whether the effort and resources being devoted to milestones are actually delivering on the intended purpose for each strategic direction.

School leadership teams actively consider the effectiveness of resources, including expenditure to check that funds and resources are allocated in a realistic and timely manner. Within SPaRO schools indicate whether the achievement of the milestone activity and resource expenditure is on track through the use of the traffic-light system of green (on track) / amber (implementation delayed) / red (off track).

Self-assessment provides a systematic and objective process to make judgements about the merit or worth of actions, in relation to their effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness. It is a process of ongoing, formative evaluation which engages teachers and leaders in evaluative thinking, a core competency of effective educational leadership.

Implementation and progress milestone monitoring – What did we do?

Question	Consider
What are we self-assessing?	The effective implementation of planned activities associated with each process.
How often should we do this?	Monitoring of milestones takes place at regular intervals as determined by the school e.g. 2, 3, 5 or 10 weekly intervals throughout the year as, but at a minimum of once per term.
What does this inform?	The implementation of the school plan and any adjustments to activities, resources and expenditure.

1.2 How well did we do it?

Ongoing evaluation of quality of implementation and impact

Point-in-time evaluations prompt school leadership teams to think beyond implementation and to focus on quality and effectiveness towards achieving the annual milestones* by reflecting on whether the planned activities are actually making a difference to school practices and learning.

The evaluation plan (as stated in school plan) outlines the broad strategies and types of evidence the school has identified that it will use to monitor progress towards achieving the improvement measures. School leadership teams action the evaluation plan and record the findings within SPaRO.

Point-in-time evaluations can occur as often as the school determines but at a minimum of once per term.

*Annual milestones are a subset of the three-year improvement measures. (See also the School Planning section of the School Excellence implementation guidelines).

Identify data

Through school planning, school leadership teams collate evidence of teaching, learning and leading practices as part of their regular and routine monitoring, to assess the impact of the planned activities. Schools are encouraged to utilise multiple sources of data to develop a holistic view. It is important to use both qualitative and quantitative data from existing sources including internal and external data.

Analyse and evaluate data

School leadership teams analyse the data to determine patterns and trends. This enables the school to evaluate whether the effort and resources being devoted to an activity are actually contributing to the achievement of the strategic direction as stated in the school plan.

School leadership teams identify selected pieces of data for analysis and annotation which will form evidence to support the school's self-assessment. These pieces of data should be stored in the evidence bank in SPaRO.

Plan the next steps

School teams consider ways to improve the school's current practices and their impact on learning, teaching and leading. They should consider the planned resources and expenditure; determine if it was realistic and timely; and then decide on next steps and future milestones from an evidence-informed position.

Ongoing evaluation of impact – How well did we do it?

Question	Consider
What are we self-assessing?	Are the activities having the expected impact towards the annual milestones?
How often should we do this?	Ongoing evaluation of impact can take place as often as the school determines but at a minimum of once per term.
What does this inform?	The annual report and adjustments to the school plan. It will also form part of the external validation submission where applicable.

1.3 What happened as a result?

Summative reflection using the School Excellence Framework

School leadership teams consider their achievements and progress for each of the strategic directions in the school plan and for each of the SEF elements. This enables critical reflection on school improvement efforts and supports informed decision-making.

Make on-balance judgements

Summative school self-assessment requires school leadership teams to work collaboratively to:

- reflect on the statement of excellence for each element of the SEF
- consider the school's evidence
- arrive at an on-balance judgement.

School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS)

The School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS) is designed to support schools to capture the 'point-in-time' judgement that has been informed by their ongoing self-assessment processes using the School Excellence Framework. It is to be completed annually in School Planning and Reporting Online (SPaRO) by the end of Term 1. (See Appendix 1)

The statements of excellence in the School Excellence Framework are central to guiding the school's reflection on each element. School leadership teams consider the school's evidence in light of these statements of excellence to arrive at an on-balance judgement of the school's progress for each element of the SEF. Where a school's practices are not described by Delivering, Sustaining and Growing or Excelling, the school selects 'Working towards Delivering'.

For schools undergoing external validation, the SEF S-aS is used as part of a school's submission. (See the external validation section of the School Excellence implementation guidelines).

Information from the SEF S-aS is aggregated and de-identified to provide a report to the Secretary of Education.

Summative reflection using the SEF – What happened as a result?

Question	Consider
What are we self-assessing?	Are the strategies having the expected impact towards the annual milestones – as a subset of improvement measures? What are our on-balance judgements of our practices for each element of the SEF?
How often should we do this?	School leadership teams prepare a summative evaluation based on the self-assessment using the SEF at a minimum of twice per year: mid-year and annually.
What does this inform?	The annual report and adjustments to the school plan. It may also inform external validation processes.

2. Actions following school self-assessment

Following school self-assessment, schools use the findings to:

- adjust the milestones in the school plan to capture progress in delivering school excellence
- inform their annual report

School self-assessment is periodically validated by an external panel of peers once in a five-year cycle.

3. Further Information

A package of tools is available to support schools as they undertake Self-assessment.

- The [School Excellence Framework](#) provides a clear description of the key elements of high quality practice across the three domains of learning, teaching and leading.
- The [School Excellence evidence guide](#) website is designed to support schools to undertake their annual self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework.
- The [Evaluation Resource Hub](#) is a reference to evaluative thinking and logic modelling.
- The [5 Essentials for Effective Evaluation](#) is a reference for users when selecting and evaluating sources of data and evidence.
- The [School excellence and accountability](#) website contains a range of information and tools to support schools undertaking self-assessment.

Appendix 1 – User Guide: School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey

About SEF S-aS and SPaRO

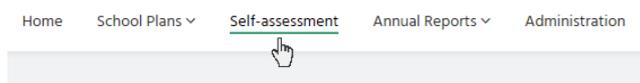
The School Planning and Reporting Online (SPaRO) software has been designed to assist schools in completing all aspects of the School Excellence policy including school planning, self-assessment, reporting and external validation. This guide will assist schools to complete their School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS) in SPaRO.

SPaRO is accessed through My Applications in the staff portal with the title School Planning and Reporting Online (SPaRO). Within AMU, principals can assign themselves access at the **principal** level. Principals can then assign **contributor** access (editing rights) or **staff** access (read-only rights) to other users in their school.

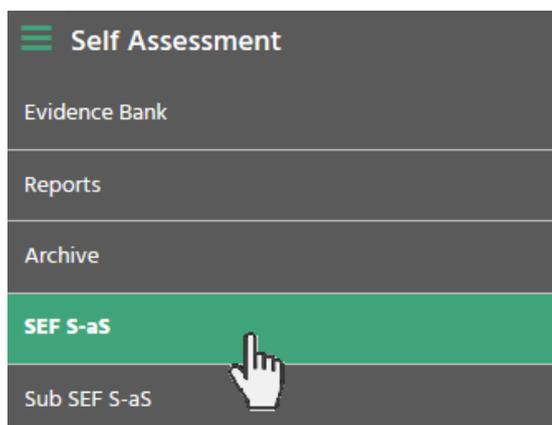
Note: The principal is the only user with rights to approve and submit a SEF S-aS.

Starting your SEF S-aS

- Select the 'Self-assessment' tab in SPaRO



- Click 'SEF S-aS' from the left menu



- Click 'Create New <calendar year> Survey'



- Read the information on the instruction page. Click 'Next →' to begin.

Note: External links to the School Excellence Framework, School Excellence Policy and the Evidence Guide for School Excellence are provided.

- Confirm your school name, school code and contact details. You can delegate contributors to each element of the survey by clicking '+Delegate contributors' on this page. You may add multiple contributors to each element by typing their email address into the field provided in the 'Add Contributor' column. When completed, click 'Save'. To exit, click 'Close'.
- When you have confirmed your details and added contributors (if applicable), click 'Next →' to start your survey.

External Validation (EV) Schools

Schools that have participated in EV within the previous 12 months are able to review their validated SEF S-aS.

- Click 'Review submitted survey' to create a copy of the last submitted survey and review the element descriptors and on-balance judgements. Schools which use this option are able to edit their submitted SEF S-aS.

Completing your SEF S-aS

Each page of the survey contains descriptors for the fourteen elements of the School Excellence Framework.

- Read and select the descriptors that apply to your school. You can select multiple descriptors across the three stages of excellence. If no descriptors apply, you can leave them unchecked.
- Arrive at an on-balance judgement as a reflection of the descriptors and the **statement of excellence** for each element. You must select one for each of the fourteen statements of excellence to complete the survey.
- A progress bar at the top of the page indicates the sections of the survey. Green indicates a completed section, grey are awaiting completion.



Note: You can go to an element by clicking on the progress bar. Hover text will appear with the name of the element you are selecting.

- When all elements have an on-balance judgement recorded, complete the survey by clicking ' Complete Survey' at the top right of the screen. Principals must review and approve before submitting the survey (from the Status menu).

A PDF version of your survey responses may be printed at any time by clicking ' Print'. Printing your survey does **not** approve or submit the survey responses. Refer to 'Managing your SEF S-aS' for further detail.

Partially complete SEF S-aS

You can save and close a partially completed SEF S-aS and return to it at any time. You do not need to create a new survey. To return, click on the Status menu to open a list of available surveys. Select your survey from the list.

Managing your SEF S-aS Status

Schools can manage their SEF S-aS from the SEF S-aS Status menu.

Pending – A survey has been created but all elements have not been completed. As elements are completed, a progress bar appears for the SEF S-aS to give a quick reference for the overall level of completion.



Completed – All elements have been completed and have an on-balance judgement selected. The principal is able to ' Approve' the SEF S-aS from this list.

Approved – A survey that has been completed and approved by the principal is an internal document and responses may be altered. The principal may then ' Submit' or ' Unapprove' the survey.

Note: If changes are made to a survey that is 'Approved', or the principal clicks 'Unapprove', the survey will revert to 'Completed'.

Submitted – A survey may only be submitted by the principal. Submitting the SEF S-aS finalises the process.

Note: Once a survey is submitted, it is unable to be edited.

Further information

The Help menu icon () in the top right corner of the screen will display help text relevant to each page.

The Notes menu icon () in the top right corner of the screen will display any notes that you have made for the page.

Contact

General Enquiries for SPaRO

E: SPaRO@det.nsw.edu.au

Leadership and High Performance

T: 9244 5713

SEF S-aS Flow

Accessing SEF S-aS

- Go to SPaRO through My Application on the DOE staff portal
- Select the Self-assessment 'tab' in SPaRO
- Click SEF S-aS on the side menu.

Create SEF S-aS

- Click 'Create New Survey' on the Status menu

For EV Schools

Schools that participated in EV in the previous 12 months can review their responses by clicking 'Review submitted survey' to create a copy of the last submitted survey. Refer to External Validation SEF S-aS Flow.

Complete SEF S-aS

- Read the information presented on the information screen
- Delegate users (optional)
- Reflect on the statements of excellence in each element
- Consider your school's evidence
- Refer to the descriptors in confirming your school's thinking and select all descriptors relevant to your school
- Arrive at an on-balance judgement as a reflection of the descriptors and the **statement of excellence** for each element
- Complete all elements.

Submitting SEF S-aS

- The principal
- Selects the survey from the 'Completed' tab in the Status menu
 - Reviews the responses by clicking on the survey heading and selects 'Approve'
 - From the 'Approved' tab select 'Submit'
 - Once submitted the process is finalised.

External Validation SEF S-aS Flow

Accessing SEF S-aS

- Go to SPaRO through My Application on the DOE staff portal
- Select the Self-assessment 'tab' in SPaRO
- Click SEF S-aS on the side menu.

Review SEF S-aS

- Click 'Review submitted survey'
- Open the survey copy from the 'Pending' tab
- Review element descriptors and on-balance judgement.

Complete SEF S-aS

- Read the information presented on the information screen
- Delegate users (optional)
- Reflect on the statements of excellence in each element
- Consider your school's evidence
- Refer to the descriptors in confirming your school's thinking and select all descriptors relevant to your school
- Arrive at an on-balance judgement as a reflection of the descriptors and the **statement of excellence** for each element
- Complete all elements.

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- Selects the survey from the 'Completed' tab in the Status menu
 - Reviews the responses by clicking on the survey heading and selects 'Approve'
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 - Once submitted the process is finalised.