



PART II

Student Assessments



Chapter 4: Standardized Assessments

In Newfoundland and Labrador, students take part in several provincial, national, and international standardized assessments. Provincially, students complete two different types of standardized assessments: Provincial assessments and public examinations.

(1) *Provincial assessments* - Each year, students in Grades 3, 6, and 9 are assessed in either reading and writing or Mathematics on an alternating basis¹. These assessments are developed based on the provincial curriculum. This provides a common standard to assess a student's proficiency in a specific subject area. Chapter 5 will describe student performance on the 2014/15 provincial assessments.

(2) *Public examinations* - In high school, public examinations are required in selected academic/advanced Level III courses in mathematics, sciences, social studies and languages. These differ from regular school-based exams in that all students across the province registered in the course write the same exam. Once completed, all exams are returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for grading by an independent marking board. Chapter 6 will focus on the results of the June 2015 public examinations.



On a national and international level, students regularly take part in four international and one national assessment. Table 4.1 provides an overview of these assessments. Performance on these assessments shows how students in Newfoundland and Labrador compare to other Canadian jurisdictions, and how their performance changes over time. Chapters 7 and 8 will explore student performance on the two most recent assessments - International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) and Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP).

¹ During 2012/13, the provincial assessment schedule was changed. Prior to this, students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 were assessed in two subject areas (English Language Arts and mathematics) each year. These subjects are now assessed on a rotating schedule. In 2012/13, English Language Arts was the subject assessed, followed by mathematics in 2013/14, English Language Arts in 2014/2015 and the pattern continues.

Table 4.1: International and National Assessments Overview

	International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS)	Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP)	Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)
When did it start	2013	2007	2000	2001	1995
Cycle	Every 3 years	Every 3 years	Every 3 years	Every 5 years	Every 4 years
Date of last assessment	2013	2013	2015	2016	2015
When were the results published?	Fall 2014	Spring 2014	December 2016	2017	December 2016
Date of next assessment	2016	2016	2018	2021	2019
Who was assessed?	Grade 8 students	Grade 8 students	15 year old students (around Grade 10)	Grade 4 students	Grade 4 and/or Grade 8 students
What was assessed?	The extent students know about, understand, and are able to use information and communication technology (ICT).	Knowledge and skills in science, reading and mathematics. The 2013 assessment focused on science.	Knowledge and skills in science, reading and mathematics The 2015 assessment focused on science.	General reading skills defined as the ability to understand and use information presented in the written format required by society and favoured by the person.	Student achievement in mathematics and science