

Session 1: **Assessing to learn and learning to assess.** What should assessment look like in the languages classroom?

Handout 1 – What is assessment for learning?

How would you define assessment for learning?

“It’s about the way a teacher might assess a pupil in order to determine what that pupil or group needs to take their learning further. Then to use that information to change, modify, and tune the teaching to meet that need. “ (Professor Paul Black, *Interview with GTC, Assessment for Learning.*)

Assessment for Learning checklist (QCA)

To effectively use assessment for learning teachers need to:

- **know** their pupils well, know **why** pupils make mistakes.....
- encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning by providing opportunities for pupils to **describe**... the **strategies** they use.
- the **process** of learning has to be in the minds of both learner and teacher (QCA, *10 principles of Assessment for Learning*)

Improving learning through formative assessment depends on 5 deceptively simple key factors:

1. Modelling quality: showing pupils the learning strategies and goals
Communicating clearly what the pupils will be learning and how they can recognise their success – being clear about what a good piece of work is – looking at work that meets and doesn’t meet the criteria.
2. Dialogue and the provision of effective feedback to pupils
Giving pupils feedback that gives them specific guidance on how to improve their work.
3. A recognition of the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self-esteem of pupils
Appreciating how comments and feedback to pupils can create a positive or negative culture.
4. The active involvement of pupils in their own learning.
Giving pupils the opportunity to express their understanding – giving them the chance to think and express their ideas.
5. The need for pupils to be able to assess themselves and understand how to improve.

(adapted from Bourdillon and Storey 2002)

