

The Fourth Foundation: Active Reflection

Conducting highly effective reviews of student progress is not a simple matter. It requires high levels of organisation and commitment from students, teachers, as well as school and college leaders. Each school or college will have its own monitoring systems. At Alps, we believe that for monitoring to be truly effective, it should include the following Five Foundations of Effective Monitoring. The fourth foundation is Active Reflection. By active reflection, we are referring to the process of:

- Taking a step back from individual progress grades in order to see the bigger picture
- Evaluating the progress review data and gathering a view of whole student and whole course performance
- Exploring issues with students that have been identified and examining possible approaches that might help to overcome difficulties
- Exploring issues with departments and helping subject teams, through practical support, to realise potential
- Checking whether progress grades are being awarded in consistent ways across an institution
- Keeping student outcomes at the top of an institution's agenda for the whole year

Active reflection provides a way of taking quality improvement beyond a once a year post-examination review. It's about a leadership team taking collective responsibility for driving forward outcomes for students.

Key questions to consider:

- Are you confident that all subjects are awarding progress grades in a similar way?
- Is there any way of exploring whether subjects are awarding progress grades in a similar way?
- Do progress review arrangements allow you to get a view of the whole student?
- How effectively do pastoral teams respond where students are performing below expectation?
- Is special attention paid to those areas which caused concern in the most recent round of results, and does this attention focus on the progress of students in those subjects?
- Is the leadership team supporting those areas where performance has been below expectation?
- Is the leadership team playing an active role in driving forward performance in individual subjects?

Read on for our Fifth and Final Foundation to Effective Monitoring.