

Listening & Talking Component of SSLN 2014

Presentation of evaluation findings

SSLN Project Board

20th Nov 2014

Brief for evaluation

- Independent evaluation
- Examination of each step of the process
- Taking evidence from range of actors in the process:
 - SQA SSLN team – management and administration
 - Group Discussion Advisory Team
 - Education Scotland
 - Support Assessors
 - Local Authority Assessment Coordinators
 - School Coordinators
 - SG Education Analytical Service

Approach

A combination of:

1. Telephone or face-to-face interviews during June with individuals and/or groups as specified in brief
2. Drawing conclusions from the EAS analysis of the SSLN school evaluation questionnaire (administered online)
3. Analysing the results of an evaluation questionnaire which will be available online to Support Assessors (SAs)

Evidence Base

- Support Assessor questionnaires (88 responses)
- Support Assessor in-depth interviews (22 responses)
- School SSLN coordinator questionnaires (228 responses)
- School SSLN coordinator interviews (4 responses)
- Local Authority coordinator interviews (3 responses)
- GDAT member interviews (2 responses)
- Education Scotland (1 response)
- SQA SSLN team (2 responses)
- SG EAS team (1 response)

Recruitment

Challenges:

- Securing sufficient SAs to meet all the requirements for sample
- Problems in some LAs in relation to securing staff cover

Factors of success:

- Flexibility on part of SQA SSLN team
- Support from ADES
- Facilitation by Local Authority SSLN coordinators
- Support from LA literacy coordinators
- Support from individuals connected with SSLN

Training

Challenges:

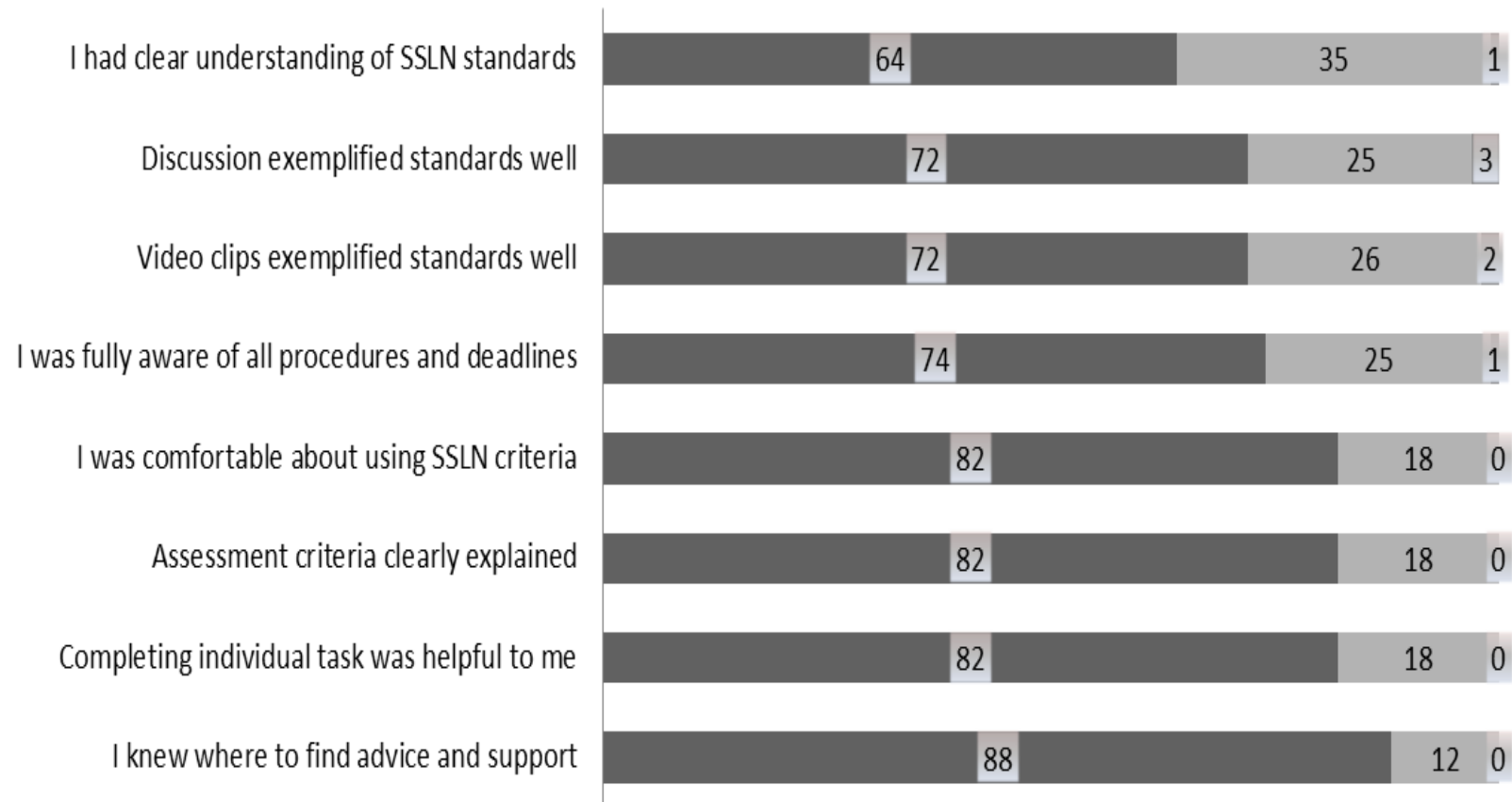
- Securing uniformity of judgement
- Building confidence and competence in SAs
- Securing accreditation with GTCS

Factors of success:

- Preparation of high-quality training resources (video clips and commentaries)
- Online engagement with materials prior to face-to-face training, that prepared SAs for collaboration on the day
- Careful design of the elements in the face-to-face training day to build SA confidence and competence
- Post-training online element, including webinar component

Face-to-face training

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■



Deployment of Support Assessors

Challenges:

- Not every geographic area had SA located in vicinity
- Balancing load on SAs across primary and secondary sectors
- Minimising travel and time out of school for SAs

Factors of success:

- Hard work on part of SQA SSLN team to manually plan deployments
- Flexibility by SQA SSLN team to respond to requests for change from SAs

Arranging Visits

Challenges:

- Reticence on part of some schools to respond to SA requests to visit
- Change of personnel in schools resulting in lost/misplaced information
- Heavy demands on schools at this phase of the school cycle (both primary and secondary)

Factors of success:

- Support and intervention from SQA SSLN team to contact schools
- Flexibility on part of SQA SSLN to find alternative solutions

Arrangements for Assessment

Challenges:

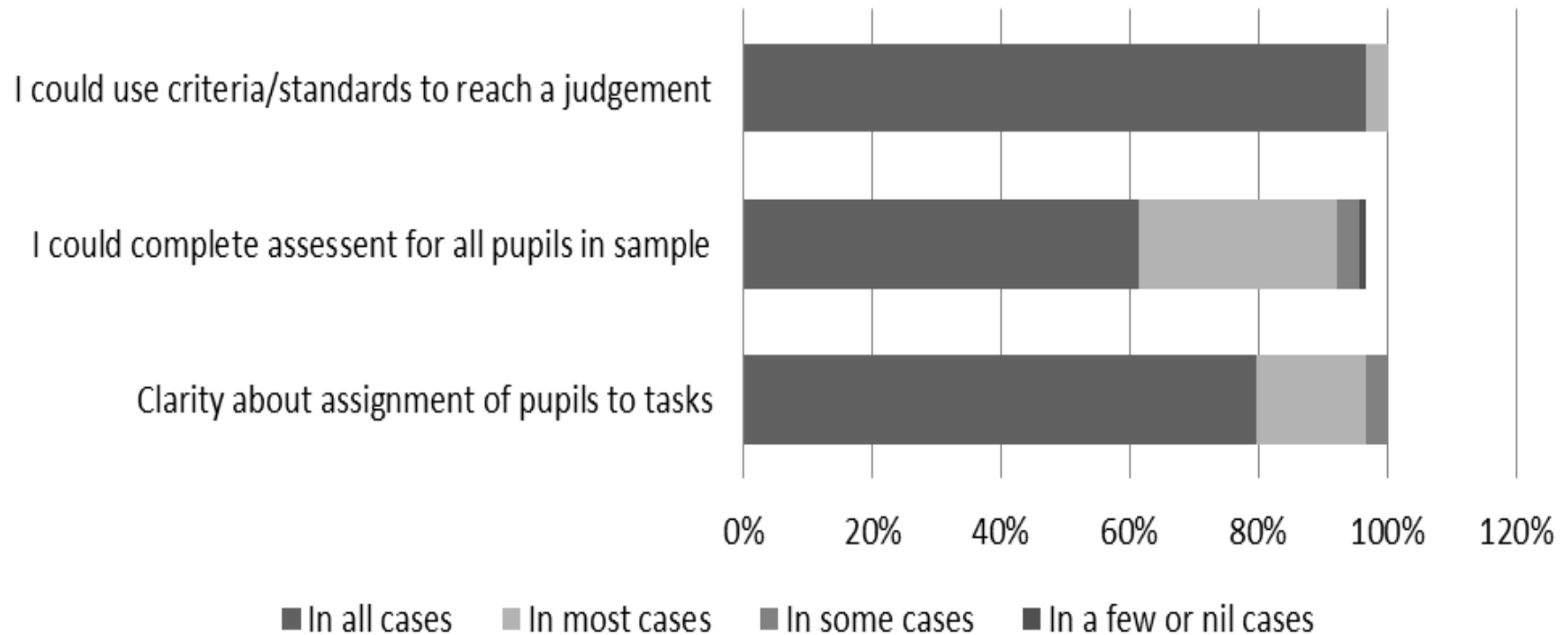
- Schools where purpose of SSLN not fully understood
- Schools where relevant information was not available on visit
- Schools where pupils were withdrawn at time of assessment or group composition different to that planned
- Pupil groups where discussions were very difficult to initiate, or terminated after brief conversation
- Pupil groups where the allocated task appeared to be outwith their normal contexts or experience

Factors of success:

SAs using their professional judgement and skills (they are teachers!)

Making judgements

Do you agree with the statements about the group discussion assessment?



Making judgements

Challenge:

SAs making consistent judgements across range of contexts

Factors of success:

High levels of SA confidence (post-training) in personal competence to make judgements

Clear criteria with well-designed recording mechanisms

Provision of complete assessment pack (tasks, prompt sheets etc) for each pupil group

Acceptance of SA judgements by teachers (in schools where there was an interest in process and outcomes)

Quality of Data

Challenge:

Data availability for the Listening and Talking component of SSLN 2012 was only 38%

Factors of success:

Careful design of recording mechanisms and data capture

SQA SSLN team performing first-pass validity checks and resolving discrepancies using other data sources available to the team

Comprehensive suite of validity checks carried out by SG EAS, with discrepancies resolved by SQA SSLN team

Building Capacity

in the assessment of Listening and Talking

- A cadre of Support Assessors trained and experienced in the assessment of Group Discussion
- Over 100 SAs committed to securing GTCS accreditation for their professional development through participation
- Schools where there was engagement with SA about the process and outcomes of the Group Discussion
- Set of high-quality resources (prepared for SA training)
- Good quality tasks that proved to be stimulating to pupils
- Clear set of criteria for making informed judgements about stage

Areas for improvement

- Ensuring that schools are cognisant of the nature of the SA visit to their school, including the treatment of pupils with ASN and/or ESOL
- Better preparation of SAs in relation to strategies for 'reluctant' groups
- Identifying software tools that might assist the deployment process
- Taking better advantage of SA presence in school to possibly support schools with other SSLN processes
- Making better use of the experience of SAs (and available resources) to build capacity in the system and help teachers develop and strengthen their practice

Possible Next Steps

- Continue with Status Quo (incorporating lessons from 2014)
- Assessment of Group Discussions carried out jointly by SA and teacher (contributes to building capacity in system and easing transition to teacher-led assessment)
- Assessment carried out by teacher, supported with resource packs and online training, with sample moderation by SQA

Over to you!

NB:

- The report has much more detail than this overview
- Where negative comments were received in the survey questionnaires, these are under consideration by SQA
- Uniformly high praise for SQA SSLN team – patience, support and prompt resolution of difficulties

Open for discussion.....