

MDLI-G Standardisation

Data Protection Declaration – Information for Students, Parents and Teachers

About the MDLI-G Standardisation

A new literacy test trí Ghaeilge is being developed for students attending Irish-medium schools. This test is called the MDLI-G (*Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iar-bhunscoil – Gaeilge*). It is being developed by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and the Educational Research Centre (ERC).

As part of this work, we need to administer the test to a representative sample of students in schools around the country. This will allow us to develop “norms” for the test, meaning that teachers will be able to use the test in the future to compare their students’ achievement with that of students in Irish-medium schools nationally.

Identity and contact details of controller:

Educational Research Centre
DCU St Patrick’s Campus
Drumcondra Road Upper
Dublin 9
Ireland
Telephone: +353 1 837 3789
Email: development@erc.ie

For which purpose are data collected and processed?

Data collection and processing are necessary for the purpose of for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject (GDPR Article 6.1c) . In this instance, the ERC has a statutory function to provide an assessment support service to schools, and the development of MDLI-G is part of that service. (The ERC’s Establishment Order, which sets out its functions as a statutory body, can be viewed at <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/si/392/made/en/print>).

Which information is requested?

Information from students

Students are invited to complete the MDLI-G assessment, which is designed to provide screening and diagnostic information about their Irish-language proficiency in five areas of literacy: reading comprehension, reading speed, reading words aloud, spelling, and writing. They are also invited to complete a questionnaire in order to provide information about their gender, age, books in the home, and how they typically use Irish/other languages at home and at school. This will allow us to examine how the assessment works for different groups (for example, students of different genders; students who regularly speak Irish at home vs those who never do).

Student names are collected to streamline the test administration process. In some schools where the English-language PPAD-E assessment is administered, the ERC will request the school’s permission to match students’ MDLI-G test data to their PPAD-E test data (using their names). This is

to allow us to make comparisons at an aggregated level between students' literacy achievement in Irish vs in English.

Information from teachers

Irish teachers of sampled classes and the Múinteoir Tacaíochta don Ghaeilge are invited to complete questionnaires. The questionnaire for Irish teachers asks about teaching experience and professional development and the use and teaching of Irish in the school. The questionnaire for the Múinteoir Tacaíochta don Ghaeilge asks about the extent and nature of support provided to students who need additional help with Irish in the school, about the teachers' view of the relevance of various sections of MDLI-G, and about the current availability of support resources through Irish.

Participation

There is no obligation on any individual to participate in the study. However, we hope to obtain high participation rates as this will help to ensure that the test norms reflect the achievement patterns of a wide range of students in a variety of school settings, and that we have information from students and teachers about their educational contexts to help us interpret the test results.

- Students will not be disadvantaged in any way by non-completion of the test or student questionnaire. Teachers will not be disadvantaged in any way by non-completion of a teacher questionnaire.
- Parents and students are provided with information letters at least one week in advance of testing. A withdrawal form is provided which can, if desired, be completed by the parent (or parent/student together) and returned to the school coordinator.
- On the day of testing, students will be reminded that participation is optional.
- By not returning a withdrawal form *and* by filling in and returning a test and/or questionnaire, a study participant agrees to the collection and processing of the data therein.
- Withdrawal of agreement to the processing of data without stating any reason can be made by any participant up to 4 weeks after the tests have been administered.
- Any participant who wants to remove or amend their information can contact the Educational Research Centre (at development@erc.ie). If an individual withdraws from the study, no additional data will be collected from that individual.
- Queries related to how personal information is protected can be directed to the ERC's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@erc.ie).

What kind of data are collected?

Data from answers to the MDLI-G test questions and the questionnaires are collected and stored. For some parts of the test, this is in the form of a numeric score (e.g. 1/0). For other parts of the test, it is in the form of a score and the specific answer provided (e.g. if a student is asked to choose a word to fill a gap in a piece of text, the specific word they choose, as well as whether the response is deemed correct (1) or incorrect (0), will be recorded). Questionnaire items for students are all multiple choice and responses will be recorded in the form of numbers representing selections. Some teacher questionnaire items are multiple choice, with responses stored in numeric format, while others are open-ended. For open-ended questionnaire items, text entered will be stored as is and thematic codes may be assigned stored in numeric format.

Test and questionnaire information cannot, in and of itself, be used to identify individual respondents by name. However, a student ID is recorded to uniquely identify each student. The relationship between this ID and the student name may be known to the MDLI-G school coordinator (a teacher in

the school), the person administering the test (normally a member of school staff), the NEPS/ERC staff who will visit some schools to observe the assessment, the test development team in the ERC, and the ERC's subcontractors (our data entry partners). A class ID is used to identify the Irish teacher of each selected class, while a school ID is used to identify the Múinteoir Tacaíochta. While teacher names are not collected formally, if teacher names are supplied by schools as class identifiers and/or are mentioned informally throughout administration, they may be known to the MDLI-G school coordinator (a teacher in the school), the person administering the test (normally a member of school staff), the NEPS/ERC staff who will visit some schools to observe the assessment, and the test development team in the ERC.

Where, how and for how long are data from the MDLI-G Pilot stored?

MDLI-G data are stored securely in pseudonymous form, that is: processed in such a manner that the personal data can no longer be attributed to a specific data subject without the use of additional information (any such additional information being kept separately and subject to technical and organisation measures to ensure that the personal data are not attributed to an identified or identifiable natural person). These data cannot be accessed by any external persons or systems. Moreover, any ERC employees who access the data for processing have been suitably briefed on what constitutes an acceptable treatment of data and have signed a confidentiality agreement.

The data are stored as follows:

Response data are stored indefinitely so that they remain available for reference/analysis.

Personal data are stored until October 2025 to allow us to complete data checks and document pilot administration procedures. At that point, the data are anonymised so that there is no possibility of an individual participant being identifiable.

Linking of data

Students' achievement data in MDLI-G (and PPAD-E, if applicable) is linked to their responses to the MDLI-G questionnaire and to the responses of their Irish teacher and their school's Múinteoir Tacaíochta don Ghaeilge to their respective questionnaires.

With whom and how are data from the MDLI-G Standardisation shared?

As part of initial processing, the ERC may share some data from the MDLI-G Standardisation with its subcontractors (e.g. for data entry for paper questionnaires). All subcontractors have signed a Data Processing Agreement and confidentiality agreement with the ERC. Personal data will be temporarily visible to NEPS quality monitors while they are in the school, but will not subsequently be accessed by them. Pseudonymised test and questionnaire data (but no linking personal data) may be shared with NEPS during the data entry, data coding, and data analysis process (for example, to aid discussions of which responses to a reading comprehension item are given credit). All data associated with this project will be stored on servers located in the EEA (in Ireland with back-ups held on alternative servers in Europe).

Following the scoring of the test data, MDLI-G test data for participating students are shared with the MDLI-G school coordinator in their school (a teacher in the school). This is to allow schools to use results from the MDLI-G standardisation to inform decisions about how best to support students' literacy learning at individual and group level. Results shared may include recommendations for

appropriate interventions based on whether students' scores in particular test domains fall within specified percentile ranges.

Anonymised, aggregated data may be used as the basis for conference presentations or research articles (for example, in peer-reviewed journals). No individual or school will ever be identifiable from such outputs.

Automated decision-making and profiling

Automated decision-making, including profiling, as referred to in Article 22 GDPR is not conducted. However, as described above, students' test results that are shared with schools may include recommendations for appropriate interventions based on whether students' scores in particular test domains fall within specified percentile ranges. This is not considered to constitute automatic decision-making as the interpretation and enaction of these recommendations is at the discretion of the school. MDLI-G results cannot be used as the sole basis for decisions on – for example – reasonable accommodations in state examinations, although they may constitute one piece of evidence used in an application for this.

Rights of data subjects

Data Subjects are entitled to the rights set out in Articles 15-21 GDPR.

Data Subjects have the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority. The relevant authority in Ireland is:

Data Protection Commission
21 Fitzwilliam Square South
Dublin 2
D02 RD28
Website: www.dataprotection.ie