



Standards
& Testing
Agency

Reception baseline assessment and reporting arrangements

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1 Summary

1.1 About this guidance

This guidance sets out the statutory requirements for the reception baseline assessment (RBA) and the associated reporting arrangements for the 2022/23 academic year. It is produced by the [Standards and Testing Agency](#)¹ (STA), an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE), and is relevant until the end of the 2022/23 academic year.

The assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) apply to the following schools with a reception cohort:

- maintained schools (including maintained special schools)
- academies (including free schools)
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) schools

1.2 Who is this guidance for?

- all staff responsible for administering the RBA
- headteachers and senior leadership teams
- governors and trustees

1.3 Legal status

The ARA contains provisions made in terms of Article 3 (as amended) of [The Early Years Foundation Stage \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) and Childcare Fees \(Amendment\) Regulations 2021](#)². These Regulations are made by the Secretary of State under powers provided for by [section 42 of the Childcare Act 2006](#)³. This document gives full effect to the provisions made in the Regulations concerning the RBA and has effect as if made by the Regulations. The ARA also contains guidance and information that does not form part of the law. Section 12 contains further guidance on legal requirements and responsibilities.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/organisations/standards-and-testing-agency

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/432/contents/made

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/section/42

2 Changes for 2022

2.1 Assessment materials

Schools will not automatically receive assessment materials for the 2022/23 academic year. The materials sent to schools in June 2021 should have been stored securely for reuse with the September 2022 reception intake.

Schools that are new to the RBA (such as newly established schools) will receive assessment materials at the beginning of the 2022 autumn term.

From the start of the autumn term, the administration guide, provided with assessment materials in June 2021, will also be available in the 'Documents' section of the Baseline ePortal (BeP).

If schools have any concerns regarding their assessment materials, they should contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

3 Reception baseline assessment

3.1 Overview of the RBA

The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and literacy, communication and language. It is delivered in English and is administered within the first six weeks of a pupil starting reception. The assessment has two components, each consisting of practical tasks using physical resources. There is an online scoring system for the practitioner to use as the pupil engages with the tasks. The RBA will be used to create school-level progress measures for primary schools, which will show the progress pupils in a school make from reception until the end of key stage 2.

3.2 Assessment framework

The [Reception baseline assessment framework](#)⁴ is written for assessment developers, though it may also be of interest to schools.

The framework sets out:

- what is assessed by the RBA
- assessment design and delivery

Teachers should not use the assessment framework to guide teaching and learning. Schools should continue to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage and Early Learning Goals until the end of the reception year.

3.3 Confirmation form

Schools must confirm their RBA contact details for the 2022/23 academic year by completing the RBA confirmation form sent to participating schools' email addresses (taken from [Get Information about Schools](#)⁵).

The form asks schools to provide:

- their headteacher's name and email address
- their nominated RBA lead's name and email address

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-framework

⁵ www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk

- the number of pupils anticipated in their upcoming reception cohort
- the date in the autumn term when their reception cohort will start school

Schools that do not have a reception cohort in the 2022/23 academic year should confirm this using the form.

If schools do not receive the RBA confirmation form, they should contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

3.4 Making adaptations to the assessment

The RBA has been developed to be an inclusive assessment, accessible to the majority of pupils on entry to school. It has been designed so that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those learning English as an additional language can participate.

Practitioners can make adaptations to the resources if they deem this necessary, for example enlarging these to a size appropriate for the pupil. Any adaptations should not advantage or disadvantage individual pupils and should be based primarily on early indication of what is normal classroom practice. Information on adapting resources can be found in the RBA administration guide provided with your assessment materials in June 2021 and will be available to download from the BeP from the autumn term.

Schools may find that some pupils are unable to access the assessment even with necessary adaptations. If this is the case, schools must record pupils as disapplied in the BeP (see section 7.1).

3.5 Modified assessment materials

Modified materials are available for pupils with visual impairments where adjustments to the standard resources would not be sufficient. These materials can be requested through the 'Resources' area of the BeP.

More information on modified materials is available in the RBA administration guide provided with your assessment materials in June 2021 and will be available to download from the BeP from the autumn term.

4 Important dates for 2022

These dates may be subject to change. Any changes to dates will be communicated to schools through STA's assessment update.

Date	Action
Monday 16 May	Schools receive RBA confirmation form via email, requesting updated RBA contact details.
Friday 17 June	Deadline for all schools to complete RBA confirmation form.
Start of the autumn term	RBA contacts receive log-in details for the BeP. Schools can upload pupil data and administer assessments with pupils from the start of their autumn term.
Monday 19 September onwards	Narrative reports for pupils who have completed both assessment components are available for practitioners to download.
Tuesday 1 November	Deadline for headteachers to submit the headteacher's declaration form (HDF) on the BeP.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Headteachers' responsibilities

All references to headteachers include acting headteachers or anyone with delegated authority in the absence of the headteacher.

Headteachers have a duty to ensure that:

- the requirements outlined in the ARA are implemented in their school
- teachers and other staff comply with the ARA
- the deadlines in the ARA are met
- the needs of all pupils are considered, and suitable arrangements are put in place to enable pupils to take part in the assessment, where possible (see section 7.1)
- parents are issued with a [privacy notice](#)⁶ that explains how pupils' personal data is processed

Headteachers must:

- complete and submit the RBA confirmation form by Friday 17 June 2022
- ensure pupil data has been uploaded to the BeP for all reception pupils, including any who start reception later in the academic year
- work with practitioners to identify which pupils will take the RBA and whether there are any who should be disapplied from the assessment
- discuss with practitioners whether any pupils will need modified versions of the assessment and, if so, place an order through the BeP
- keep all assessment materials secure and confidential
- ensure that those administering the assessment are familiar with the materials and follow the guidance in the RBA administration guide
- ensure that assessments are administered in the first six weeks of participating pupils starting reception
- ensure that any pupils not participating in the assessment have an appropriate assessment status recorded in the BeP (see section 7.1)

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-privacy-privacy-notice

- notify STA of any incident that may have affected the integrity, security, or confidentiality of the assessment
- complete and submit the RBA HDF on the BeP by Tuesday 1 November 2022

Headteacher's declaration form

The HDF confirms that all assessments have been or will be administered according to guidance or that any issues will be reported to the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

The HDF will be available from the start of the autumn term and must be submitted by Tuesday 1 November 2022.

If you cannot complete the HDF, or have made errors in your submission, you should also notify the RBA helpline.

5.2 Teachers' responsibilities

Teachers and other practitioners administering the RBA must comply with the provisions of this ARA, along with [Annex B](#)⁷ of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, when carrying out assessment and reporting functions.

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

6 Assessment administration

6.1 When to administer the assessment

Practitioners must complete the RBA for participating pupils in the first six weeks after they enter reception. Assessments must continue throughout the academic year for any pupils who join reception and have not already participated in the RBA.

6.2 Staff administering the assessment

The assessment must be administered on a one-to-one basis by a practitioner who is known to the pupil. This does not need to be the class teacher, it could also be a reception teaching assistant or suitably qualified practitioner, such as an early years lead or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the preview assessment and assessment training videos on the BeP and the administration guide delivered with the assessment materials. This should be completed before administering the RBA to their pupils. Training can be completed individually, in groups, or across schools.

6.3 Uploading pupil data

Schools must upload data to the BeP for all reception pupils at the start of the autumn term before carrying out any assessments. The 'system guide', available via the 'Help' button on the BeP, gives detailed instructions on how to do this.

Pupil data uploaded before the start of the academic year will be treated as part of the 2021/22 reception cohort. This data will be removed from the BeP before the start of the new academic year.

It is recommended that practitioners use a Common Transfer File (CTF) to upload pupil data onto the BeP. The BeP will ask for pupil's personal details including a Unique Pupil Number (UPN).

Schools should continue to upload pupil data for any pupils who start reception later in the academic year and have not already completed the assessment.

6.4 Data collection and reporting

Practitioners must record a pupil's answers on the BeP. While administering the assessment, the practitioner must select 'Yes' if the pupil answers correctly or 'No' if the

pupil answers the question incorrectly. The data will be submitted automatically but practitioners should make sure to press the 'End' button at the end of each assessment component.

Narrative statements on how pupils performed in the assessment, across both components, will be available for practitioners to download from the reporting section of the BeP from Monday 19 September 2022.

No numerical score will be shared, and assessment data will only be used for the purposes of calculating the progress measure.

6.5 Security of assessment materials

Headteachers must ensure that confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained so that no pupil has an unfair advantage. Schools must continue to follow the confidentiality requirements on how to keep materials secure included with the assessment materials delivered in June 2021.

Assessment materials must not be used for any purpose other than administering the assessment.

6.6 Administration guidance

The assessment must be administered in accordance with the administration guide provided with materials in June 2021. This is to ensure that assessments are delivered consistently and fairly.

From the start of the autumn term, the administration guide will also be available on the BeP in the 'Documents' section. To access this area, select your account name in the top right corner and select 'Documents' from the drop-down menu.

The administration guide contains assessment-specific content and must be kept securely.

If you have any questions about the administration guide, please contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

6.7 IT guidance

Schools should check that their operating systems and internet browsers are compatible with the BeP and familiarise themselves with the online system guidance available in the 'Help' section.

Suitable operating systems include:

- Windows 10
- macOS 14+
- iOS 12.1+ (iOS 14+ preferred)
- Android 10+
- Chrome OS

It is strongly recommended that schools use the latest version of Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge to access the BeP. However, Safari and Firefox are also suitable.

7 Assessment participation

7.1 Participating pupils

Headteachers make the final decision about whether it is appropriate for a pupil to take the RBA. In exceptional circumstances, headteachers may decide that a pupil is unable to participate, even when making appropriate adaptations to resources, and should therefore be disapplied. In these cases, a headteacher should:

- discuss the pupil's circumstances and needs with their parents and teachers
- consult, if appropriate, with the school's SENCO, an educational psychologist, medical officer, or other specialist staff to consider whether modified resources may make the assessment accessible

To disapply a pupil, the headteacher should login to the BeP using their headteacher account and select the 'Headteacher' area. This must be done before the assessment begins, and the headteacher must confirm that the pupil cannot access either component of the assessment. Please see the 'system guide' for more detail on how to do this.

Pupils who change schools

If a pupil arrives at your school after completing both assessment components at another school, they do not need to be reassessed or their data uploaded to the BeP. However, if their data have been uploaded to your school in error you should change their overall status to be 'pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school'.

If a pupil leaves your school prior to completing the whole assessment, you should change that pupil's overall status to 'pupil has left the school without completing assessments'.

Delaying pupils

It may be appropriate for the headteacher to delay a pupil's assessment if they are unable to complete the assessment within six weeks of starting reception. For example, a pupil might not start school at the intended time due to deferred entry or a long period of illness. To delay a pupil's assessment, the headteacher must login to the BeP using their headteacher account and select the 'Headteacher' area.

Pupils who have been recorded as delayed before they complete the assessment will have an assessment status of 'delayed incomplete'. Pupils who have completed the assessment, after being marked as delayed, will have an assessment status of 'delayed complete'.

Assessment statuses

Schools must ensure all pupils have an assessment status in the BeP six weeks after entering reception. This includes pupils not participating in the assessment.

Schools will be able to assign one of the following statuses on the BeP:

- assessment complete
- delayed complete/delayed incomplete
- disapplied (unable to participate in the assessment)
- pupil has left the school without completing assessments
- pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school

If a pupil has been mistakenly set to 'pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school', or 'pupil has left the school without completing assessments', a headteacher can reset a pupil's overall status back to 'pupil enrolled at this school'.

8 Quality monitoring

To ensure the assessment is being administered according to the guidance, it will be observed by quality monitors. Schools will be contacted if they are going to receive a quality monitoring visit and must arrange a mutually convenient date and time.

Quality monitoring visits will be used to ensure that practitioners have sufficient understanding of how to administer the assessment. Quality monitoring will not be carried out by local authorities (LAs) but by the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER), on behalf of STA.

9 Maladministration

The term 'maladministration' refers to any act that:

- affects the integrity, security, or confidentiality of the RBA
- leads to an outcome that does not accurately reflect a pupil's independent achievement

Potential maladministration can arise from misunderstandings about how to administer the RBA. To help avoid this, practitioners should ensure they are familiar with the training materials and must administer the assessment in accordance with the guidance.

Allegations of maladministration can be received from various sources, including parents, school staff or external organisations, for example, Ofsted. STA logs all allegations of maladministration and anyone reporting an allegation is asked for as much detail as possible so cases can be fully investigated. All information collected will be processed and retained in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the [Data Protection Act \(DPA 2018\)](#)⁸ and the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)⁹.

If practitioners do not comply with the provisions of this ARA, and other guidance, this could result in the school being investigated for maladministration.

⁸ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents

⁹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents

10 Reporting to parents

Schools should inform parents that they will be administering the RBA with all participating reception pupils. Schools have access to model [privacy notices](#)¹⁰ they can use as a basis for their own. Privacy notices should be shared with parents at the beginning of the school year. There is no legal requirement for schools to report RBA narrative statements to parents, although it may be helpful to use them as the basis of any feedback to parents. However, schools must share a pupil's RBA narrative statements with the child's parents if they request them.

¹⁰ www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-privacy-privacy-notices

11 Keeping and maintaining records

11.1 Pupils' educational records

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must ensure that educational records are maintained and disclosed to parents on request, as prescribed in the [Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)¹¹. Educational records include information about pupils (and former pupils):

- processed by, or on behalf of, the governing body or a teacher
- originating from, or supplied by, LA employees
- originating from, or supplied by, teachers or other employees of the school

Information processed by a teacher solely for the teacher's own use is excluded from the definition of educational records.

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must also keep curricular records on every pupil. Curricular records form a 'subset' of a pupil's educational record. They are a formal record of a pupil's academic achievements, skills, abilities, and the progress they make at a school. These records must be updated at least once every academic year.

Under the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018, schools are responsible for ensuring that the collation, retention, storage, and security of all personal information they produce, and hold, meets the provisions of the Act.

This includes:

- personal information appearing in a pupil's educational record
- any other information they hold that identifies individuals, including pupils, staff, and parents

Schools must consider the implications of the DPA, under which they are required to [register](#)¹² as a data controller with the [Information Commissioner's Office](#)¹³ (ICO). Many schools consult their legal advisers for guidance on their responsibilities under the DPA

¹¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1437/made

¹² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/480/contents/made

¹³ <https://ico.org.uk>

12 Legal requirements and responsibilities

12.1 How the arrangements apply to different types of schools

Maintained schools

This ARA applies to maintained schools, including maintained special schools, with pupils in a reception cohort.

Academies and free schools

This ARA applies to all academies and free schools with pupils in a reception cohort.

Ministry of Defence schools

This ARA applies to all MoD schools with pupils in a reception cohort. Overseas schools which are not MoD schools cannot participate in the RBA.

Maintained nursery schools

This ARA does not apply to maintained nursery schools, even if a nursery has pupils of reception age.

Independent schools

This ARA does not apply to independent schools or nurseries. Independent schools cannot opt into the RBA, even if the school has pupils of reception age.

Home-educated pupils

This ARA does not apply to pupils who are being educated at home.

12.2 Special educational provision

Schools should put in place the right support for pupils with special educational needs. Schools must also make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to their peers.

12.3 Regulatory concerns

If you have any regulatory concerns that have not been fully addressed by STA in line with the published procedures, you can raise them with the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). Ofqual regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

13 Further information

13.1 Useful website

Further RBA guidance is available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/reception-baseline¹⁷.

13.2 General enquiries

For general enquiries about the administration of the RBA, please contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171 or email receptionbaseline@nfer.ac.uk.

¹⁷ www.gov.uk/government/collections/reception-baseline



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