MADRASAH
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

ASSESSORS HANDBOOK

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Program

S Model for

Organisational Development

*Learning
Community*

*Communities
of Practice*

*Learning
Organisation*

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Program

(MAEP)

ASSESSORS' TRAINING MANUAL

Jamaadi-ul-Ula 1434 AH / March 2013

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> **"When we come in
> they should welcome us
> and
> when we leave
> they should know that we have left.
> What has happened
> there is created by them."**

SECTION 1 – NOTES

INTRODUCTION

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE)

Following the success of The World Federation Madrasah Retreat in February 2011, where over 25 madaris from Europe, East Africa, Middle East, North America, India and Pakistan were represented, a strategy document was prepared for the Madrasah Agenda of The World Federation. This document was approved at The World Federation Conference in May 2011. A key recommendation was the formation of a formal madrasah structure to ensure that the madrasah agenda is always at the forefront of our leaders and our global organisation.

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE) will be the vehicle that delivers and maintains the strategies for the madrasah programme. Its focus would be to attain harmony amongst the madaris and realise the vision by coordinating the four work streams – Curriculum Development, Teacher Development, Learning Resources and Assessment & Evaluation. A global structure would provide focus and become a central place for madaris to seek help and support in the running of their institutions.

> *The vision of the MCE is nurturing piety and its mission is to enable a learning environment that instils the values of the Quran and the Ahlulbayt (AS).*

A 'Curriculum Development' drive would provide a curriculum framework that can be tailored to individual madrasah needs and which would be reviewed periodically. It would lead to standardisation throughout the madaris globally. Constant evolution of the curriculum would make it relevant for present and future generations. Another benefit of this is that if parents or children were to relocate, the standardisation between the madaris would mean the child's learning would not be affected.

A focus on 'Teacher Development' would facilitate the provision of training to meet the needs of the madrasah teachers. It would also create a body that represents madrasah teachers globally, providing support and a forum for teachers to interact, share valuable experiences and learn. Improvement of 'Learning Resources' would create a comprehensive resource centre for teachers, parents and students where resources can be shared globally encouraging development of new ideas and innovation. It would also reach out to community members who would not otherwise have access to a madrasah education. 'Continuous Assessment & Evaluation' would create a learning environment for all where the students, teachers and institutions are examined and evaluated with a view to continually improve.

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Program (MAEP)

What is MAEP

MAEP is about raising standards in our madaris globally through an assessment and evaluation process that is designed, detailed and implemented by those working in the madrasah.

What MAEP is NOT about

MAEP is not a madrasah inspectorate system. Research has shown that the best way to improve performance of any system is through self assessment and evaluation of that assessment. Interventions through an inspectorate system are de-motivating and are not sustainable.

MAEP Principles

MAEP will comply with the following five principles:

1. It needs to be light touch. It should not be burdensome to the madrasah that is being assessed. It should not feel like encroachment on the independence of the madrasah.

2. It should be formative in its approach. The process is developmental and should not be perceived to be inquisitorial. The process is not about naming and shaming the madrasah. It is about supporting them to become the best they can. Hence there would be no league table of madaris performance.

3. It should be proportionate. It should not be focusing on issues with little or no relevance to the overall picture of purpose of assessment and evaluation.

4. It should be information driven. This is not about collecting data from the madrasah but supporting the madrasah to look at its own data and translate it into information for it to act upon.

5. It should be transparent and authentic. Whatever is done in the process is open for the madrasah to observe and we should be genuine about how we do it. There is no hidden agenda.

MAEP PRINCIPLES

Light Touch
Formative
Proportionate
Information Driven
Transparent
Authentic

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE) will uphold these principles as it assesses and evaluates our madaris.

How will MCE work?

1. We will respect everyone involved in the project, propagating a non- judgemental approach and encouraging expression of views and concerns.

2. We will be accommodating and will listen to others, whilst attempting to implement effective changes in our strategy.

3. We will aim to deliver a comprehensive approach which encompasses feedback from the community.

FRAMEWORK FOR MADRASAH ASSESSMENT

Types of assessments

There are two types of assessments:

Summative assessment: Summative assessment is comprehensive in nature and is used to check the level of learning at the end of the programme. Summative assessment is about determining the level of attainment reached by a student. It has an 'after the teaching' sense to it. For example, if upon completion of a course students will have the knowledge to pass a test, taking the test would be summative in nature since it is based on the cumulative learning experience. Thus summative assessments are carried out at the end of the programme to ensure students have met the programme goals and objectives.

This form of assessment is what students tend to focus on. It is an assessment on completion of a course or module, which says whether or not you have passed, and a grade is given. However, a summative assessment can also be formative, if the feedback offered is sufficient.

Formative assessment:
Formative assessment is often done at the beginning or during a programme, thus providing the opportunity for immediate evidence for student learning. Formative assessment data can be used to monitor the progress towards achieving learning outcomes, and can lead to curricular modifications when specific courses have not met the learning outcomes.

This form of assessment also goes on all the time - its purpose is to provide feedback on what students are learning: To the student it is to identify achievements and areas for further work; to the teacher it is to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching to date and to focus on future plans with setting targets for the learner. This form of assessment is developmental and gives the learner an opportunity to grow and develop in his/her learning journey.

In the madrasah context, a formative assessment gathers evidence and feedback from within the madrasah (through self assessment) which can then form a basis for the madrasah's further development. MAEP is based on formative assessment.

What is the purpose of madrasah assessment and evaluation?

MAEP aims to provide madaris with an independent and impartial evaluation of their effectiveness in imparting religious education, and assist them in achieving the highest standards. The process is designed to:

- identify current best practices in our madaris worldwide, which can be shared with other madaris.

- identify areas where improvements can be made, and help individual madaris make these improvements.

- understand the needs of madrasah students, staff and management, and work with the Islamic Education Department of the World Federation and the MCE to help madaris meet these needs.

The assessment process is based upon a range of evidence including self assessment, data provided by madaris and first-hand observation by the MAEP team.

How does assessment and evaluation promote improvement?

MAEP aims to promote improvement in a madrasah by:

- increasing the madrasah's confidence by identifying best practices and endorsing its own view of its effectiveness through self assessment.

- setting expectations: the four standards for madrasah assessment illustrate the standards of performance achievable by madaris.

- fostering constructive dialogue between the MCE and the madrasah.

- recommending methods and tools that madaris may employ to raise standards and become fully compliant.

- complementing the madrasah's self evaluation and promoting its rigour, thereby enhancing the madrasah's capacity to improve constantly.

That's What Everyone is Talking About!

What are the key features of MAEP?

MAEP has four standards for madrasah assessment (pages 12-15). MAEP's key features include:

1. Promoting improvement in madrasah governance. This will be achieved through compliance to standard 1.

2. Evaluating learning and how teachers are supported in delivering that learning. This will be achieved through compliance to Standard 2.

3. Evaluating the achievement and wider well-being of madrasah students, and assessing the extent to which madaris ensure that all students, including those most at risk, succeed. This will be achieved through compliance to Standard 3.

4. Fostering the engagement of the madrasah staff, management, parents and the local jamaat and get everyone involved in raising standards. This will be achieved through compliance to Standard 3.

5. Promoting effective partnerships between madaris to allow sharing of best practices, resources and access to appropriate tools and guidance where required. This will be achieved through compliance to standard 4.

Assessors will look at:

- how the madrasah is ensuring that the education meets the needs of the students.

- the quality of support to teachers so they can be the best they can.

- the management of the madrasah.

- the spiritual, social and cultural development of the students.

- the contribution made by the madrasah to the well-being of the students and staff.

- the contribution made by the madrasah to the local community (the Jamaat), the local wider community and the global KSI community.

The assessment and evaluation process must:

- support improvement.

- be proportionate.

- focus on the needs of the madrasah and its students.

- be transparent and consistent.

- be fair, accountable and authentic.

How would MAEP work?

The MAEP has four steps:

Step 1

The madrasah completes a self assessment form based on the Four Standards for Madrasah Assessment. This form helps the madrasah confirm whether it partially or fully meets the four standards. In reaching this judgement, the madrasah considers the lines of enquiry set out within the standards and the questions to help it reach a decision. If a madrasah reaches a conclusion that it "partially meets a standard", it would then need to provide a short action plan and a time frame by when it would fully meet the standard.

Step 2

The MAEP assessors' team would then visit the madrasah to assess compliance to the four standards. This team would comprise of 4 to 7 trained assessors, who would discuss the results of the self assessment with the madrasah management,

interview relevant people, observe a few lessons and speak to students, teachers and members of the community. Data collected during the visit would then be benchmarked by the team to enable them reach a judgment on the madrasah's compliance to the four standards.

Step 3

If, as a result of the visit, the judgement reached by the assessors is that the madrasah is "partially compliant" to a standard or standards, the MCE in partnership with the local regional federation would provide developmental support to the madrasah to become fully compliant through a madrasah capacity building development programme. The programme content would be designed by the madrasah which is partially meeting the standard.

If the madrasah is assessed to be fully compliant to the standard, the MCE would take no further action. There might be situations where the madrasah is compliant to the standard but to maintain continuous compliance MCE would suggest improvements that may need to be undertaken. In such situations, the madrasah would be asked to make improvements that will enable it maintain compliance. The MCE would also provide individual support to the madrasah for this purpose. The suggestions for improvements would be co-designed by the assessors and the madrasah.

Step 4

Once the organisation has been through the capacity building programme, it would be revisited by the MCE to assess the progress made on those standards where it was previously partially compliant.

Data from madaris to support MAEP

To support the evaluation process the madrasah will be invited to undertake a survey of parents and teachers to gather feedback on its performance. The data will be used in the discussions as part of the assessment and evaluation of standard 4. The survey has been designed by the MCE and will be given to the madrasah for distribution and collation of results prior to the MAEP team's visit. Only the overall results will be shared with the assessment team. In the future, we also plan to develop two other measures that could be used by the madaris to assess their own progress. Work on these questionnaires has already begun. Madaris will be invited to co-create the following methodologies:

- *Spiritual growth questionnaire:* This will be an online questionnaire to be completed anonymously by students of the madrasah in relevant age groups. This data will be used in the discussions as part of the assessment and evaluation of Standard 4.

- *Madrasah gross happiness questionnaire:* This will be an online questionnaire to be completed anonymously by students of the madrasah and their parents. The data will be used in the discussions as part of the assessment and evaluation of Standard 4.

Visits to the madaris

The madrasah to be assessed will receive a letter informing them that they have been selected for a visit by an MAEP team from the MCE. The madrasah would also be provided with details of assessors who will be visiting them to conduct the assessment. The team of trained assessors would comprise of at least four madrasah teachers with at least 5 years of experience in madrasah and an educationalist familiar with the madrasah system.

The MCE would then contact the madrasah to arrange a date and time of the visit. They would explain the nature of the visit and stress that it is to support the development of the madrasah so as to help it meet the four standards.

On the day of the visit, the assessors would request a tour of the madrasah. They would ask questions on the four standards and collate information on how the madrasah has assessed its compliance. They may request to see and make notes on the assessment record. The assessors are not allowed to take any policies or paperwork from the madrasah unless the madrasah agrees for them to do so.

The assessors would record the information provided by the madrasah on an assessment record. If the madrasah so wishes, it can request a copy of the assessment record and the assessors should share the same with them.

The madrasah would decide the number of people that meet with the assessors. There is no limit to this number. However, anything over 10 would be unnecessary The general rule of thumb is 10 teachers/staff OR 10% of the teachers/staff teaching on that day whichever is higher.

The assessors would also sit in a few classes and observe the interactions between the teacher and the students. They would speak with students and gauge their "happiness" of attending the madrasah.

Every madrasah visited would be asked to share with the assessors a minimum of one and a maximum of three "Good Practices" that are being undertaken by the madrasah that could be replicated elsewhere. The assessors would note these on the assessment record and this would then be part of the report on the madrasah. *The visit would last between 5-7 hours*.

Before leaving the madrasah, an initial feedback would be provided by the assessment team.

Note: For the pilot assessments, the assessors may need to make a visit to the madrasah prior to the actual assessment day to provide support and reassurance regarding the purpose and format of the assessment process.

Post visit process

The lead assessor would compile a final report of the assessment visit for submission to the MCE. The madrasah being assessed would be given an opportunity to comment on the report and correct any factual inaccuracies or errors in the data gathered by the team. The madrasah would have 15 days to send their comments to the MCE.

The Appeals Process

In the event that the madrasah is unhappy with the decision reached by the MCE, it has the right of appeal. The appeals process would be outlined to the madrasah appealing any decision. The methodology for this is not yet finalised. Once it is, madaris will be informed of it.

The four standards for madrasah assessment

Standard 1 : Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance.

Standard 2 : Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and / or experienced personnel.

Standard 3 : There are systems and processes in place to assess progress in the madrasah.

Standard 4 : Madrasah has a positive impact on the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society.

Standard 1: Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance

Desired outcome : *Parents and learners have confidence in the learning environment provided by the madrasah*

Hadith : *"I enjoin you to take action indeed, then to take it to its accomplishment, then to maintain its regularity, then to persevere in its performance, and then be pious" - Imam Ali (A) (Nahjul Balagha, sermon 176)*

Lines of enquiry

- Where relevant, madrasah has a governing document or terms of reference with clear lines of accountability

- There are written and easily accessible policies on health and safety, hygiene, child protection, disability, fire prevention and evacuation, and each policy has a clear system set out for monitoring implementation

- Madrasah undertakes regular monitoring to ensure compliance with health and safety, hygiene, child protection, disability, fire prevention and evacuation requirements.

- Madrasah teachers are CRB or local equivalent checked (police checks).

Evaluation of evidence that needs to be taken into account by the madrasah for self certification

Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance and the evaluation of whether this is undertaken is through self assessment using documents such as governing documents and various policies that are in place. There are effective processes in place for identifying, reporting and taking action on child protection issues.

Standard 2: Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and/or experienced personnel

Desired outcome : *Teachers feel supported to nurture their skills and constantly develope their abilities in supporting the learners*

Hadith : *"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave" – Holy Prophet (S)*

Lines of enquiry

- All volunteers and staff involved in delivering spiritual care receive appropriate supervision.

- There are policies on supervision and appraisal of volunteers and staff.

- Spiritual leadership is supported and developed within all disciplines.

- Volunteers and staff have access to personal development and training, including religious/scholarly training.

- Volunteers and employees continuously update skills and techniques relevant to their work.

- Volunteers and employees from all disciplines have access to, and participate in, activities to update the skills and techniques relevant to their work.

- Mentoring programmes for teachers.

Evaluation of evidence that needs to be taken into account by the madrasah for self certification

Madrasah ensures that services are provided by suitably qualified and/or experienced personnel. The evaluation of whether this is undertaken is through self assessment using documents such as up-to-date job descriptions for teachers and staff, personal development and training programmes organised by the madrasah, attendance records of staff and volunteers attending any training programmes, percentage of staff who have been appraised in a year, percentage of absenteeism. Policies on supervision of staff and volunteers are also examples that can be used by the madrasah to self assess whether they are compliant to this standard.

Standard 3: There are systems and processes in place to assess progress in the madrasah

Desired outcome : *The madrasah utilises appropriate assessment criteria to measure the learner's growth and development and supports all types of learning needs and learner's abilities.*

Hadith : *"Every container becomes cramped by what is placed within it except the container that holds knowledge, for surely it expands because of it" - Imam Ali (A) (Nahjul Balagha, saying 125)*

Lines of enquiry

- There are systems and processes in place to assess progress of the madrasah students.

- There are opportunities for children to be involved in leadership development through activities.

- There is an overarching curriculum that is followed.

- Teachers teach with lesson plans and schemes of work.

- There are assessment processes in place for assessing the progress of teachers.

- There are learning resources that teachers and students can access to enhance their teaching and learning respectively.

Evaluation of evidence that needs to be taken into account by the madrasah for self certification

Madrasah ensures that it has in place systems and processes to assess the children's progress. Measures that a madrasah could use to evaluate progress could include items such as teacher to student ratio per madrasah day, number of trained teachers, number of teaching days per year, presence of an overarching curriculum, lesson plans, schemes of works, classroom activities, student attendance records. There are opportunities for youth to lead on projects for the community.

Standard 4: Madrasah has a positive impact on the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society locally

Desired outcome : *The learner is able to transform his learning to the positive development of his local jamaat and neighbourhood.*

Hadith : *"O Shia community - be an adornment for us amongst the people and not a disgrace for us. Speak the good word to people, guard your tongues and restrain yourselves from mindless chatter and offensive speech" - Imam Al-Sadiq (A) (Saduq's Amali 326 no. 17)*

Lines of enquiry

- There are systems and processes in place to measure the impact of the madrasah on the lives of the children, the parents, the community and the wider society.

- Survey of parents on effectiveness of the madrasah.

Evaluation of evidence that needs to be taken into account by the madrasah for self certification

Madrasah undertakes impact assessment of their work. This could be done through questionnaires, feedback, local events, parents' meetings, etc. Madrasah reviews regular feedback from parents in its effectiveness.

Self evaluation by madaris

The madrasah's self assessment and evaluation is necessary to:
- Highlight the madrasah's strengths and areas of development.
- Help identify possible assessment trails when planning an assessment visit.
- Provide a basis for substantiating judgments during the assessment process.

Rigorous self-evaluation is at the heart of effective madrasah improvement. The accuracy and clarity of the madrasah's self-assessment helps to identify its strengths and areas of development and its capacity to improve. It also helps the assessment team reach a conclusion on whether the madrasah is compliant in relation to the four standards. A self-assessment questionnaire will be sent to the madrasah being assessed prior to the MAEP team's visit. The lead assessor will be in contact with the madrasah to provide guidance on completing the self-assessment and answer any queries or concerns.

In addition to the self-assessment questionnaire, madaris may also provide their annual reports and any related documents which provide a detailed understanding of the madrasah's successes and areas where assistance is required to raise standards. The provision of this information to MCE is optional. However, it would, if it is available to MCE, be helpful in the assessment process.

During the assessment visit, the MAEP team will focus on the impact that the madrasah's self-evaluation has in driving improvement and demonstrating the madrasah's capacity to improve. It may also be appropriate for assessors to refer to the madrasah's self-assessment in sections of the report where, for example, the madrasah's action has strengthened an aspect of provision through clear identification of an area for development.

Assessments by the MAEP team

The MCE will coordinate the assessment process as follows:
- Communicate with the madrasah before the visit
- Provide guidance to the madrasah on completing the self-assessment
- Provide guidance to the madrasah on distributing and collating the staff, parent and student questionnaires
- Organise the visit
- Follow up on the madrasah's action plan to become fully compliant and maintain compliance

The Assessors' Team

The MAEP assessment team would comprise of 4 to 7 trained assessors. Each assessor will be assigned a particular standard to assess. Assessors must gather relevant evidence throughout the duration of their visit to the madrasah to enable them form a judgement about the madrasah's compliance to that standard. At the end of the assessment process, each assessor must share their findings with the lead assessor.

When assessing, it is of paramount importance for the assessors to remember that they are at the madrasah as part of the assessment team, and their only role is to assess the madrasah, regardless of their previous experiences or other official positions they may hold within the community.

The Lead Assessor will

- Be appointed by the MCE
- Represent the Head of the MCE at the assessment process

The role of the lead assessor

1. Pre Assessment Madrasah Briefing

The assessment visit will have maximum impact when interaction and feedback between the assessors and the madrasah staff is of high quality.

The lead assessor should speak to the madrasah head prior to the visit and brief him/her about the visit procedure. The madrasah head and staff should be clear about their role and involvement in the assessment process. The head and senior staff must be encouraged to

- discuss the trails emerging from the self assessment
- participate in joint lesson observations
- meet with the assessors at various points during the visit
- observe and contribute to the MAEP team meetings during the visit
- prepare an action plan for improvement (with assistance from the assessors if required)

The madrasah staff may be unable to observe the interviews as confidential issues may be raised by the interviewee. The assessment team must be aware of this, and understand the scope of the interview and possible challenges they may face during/after the interview:

- How do we deal with confidential information given to us during the interview?
- How do we deal with criticism/complaints about the madrasah from students/ parents?
- How do we maintain the trust of the interviewee as well as the madrasah?
- How, and with whom, do we record, share and store information from the interview?

2. Pre Assessment Team briefing

The lead assessor must brief the assessment team about the madrasah being assessed. The team must be aware of the history of the madrasah, the local sensitivities, potential challenges etc. The team must also be aware of the self assessment results and the information received from the questionnaires.

The team must agree on the individual roles of each assessor, but must be flexible in their approach as the lead assessor may have to reassign tasks at short notice.

The team must have a timetable in place before the day of the visit to ensure that sufficient time has been allocated to complete the assessment and provide feedback to the madrasah.

3. Post Assessment

The lead assessor must

- Collate all information from assessors and compile the final report for submission to the MCE
- Organise a debriefing session with the assessment team to discuss the overall performance of the team and the assessment process

Where appropriate, the lead assessor may submit a debriefing report to the MCE.

This report would highlight:

- areas where further training is required
- areas that need review
- concerns raised during the assessment process about the assessment team/ process.

Reaching judgements

After meeting with the madrasah management, staff, parents and students, the assessors will have to collate the evidence they have obtained and reach a judgement.

Assessors have five options:

Option 1 The madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant to the standards.

Option 2 Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is partially compliant.

Option 3 Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant.

Option 4 Madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is partially compliant.

Option 5 Madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant, but to maintain compliance, assessors have suggested improvements that need to be implemented by the madrasah.

Option 6 Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant whereas the judgement reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant, but to maintain compliance, assessors have made recommendations that the madrasah may consider for implementation.

Where options 2 or 4 have been selected by the assessors, the madrasah would have to provide an action plan to enable it become fully compliant.

Self assessment by the madrasah \ Judgement reached by the assessors	Partial Compliance	Full Compliance
Partial Compliance	Option 2	Options 3 and 6
Full Compliance	Option 4	Options 1 and 5

Timeline for the assessment process

Day 1: MCE notifies the madrasah that they have been designated for an assessment visit and request them to complete the self-assessment questionnaire.

Day 7: MCE calls the madrasah Head to.
- enquire how they are getting along with completing the self assessment questionnaire.
- offer guidance on completing the questionnaire.
- respond to any queries/concerns raised.
- request the madrasah to distribute questionnaires to parents, staff and teachers, and collate results.

Day 21: Self assessment questionnaire submitted by madrasah to MCE.

Day 28: Data from parents and staff through the questionnaires is begun to be collated by the madrasah in preparation for the visit. The results need to be ready for the assessors when they visit.

Day 34: MCE briefs the assessment team on the madrasah being visited, and shares the information from the self assessment form with the team to enable them prepare for the madrasah visit. MCE will appoint a lead assessor for the team.

Day 35: Madrasah to share results from the questionnaires with the assessors. Assessors visit madrasah, interview students, staff, parents, management and community members and share their findings with the madrasah at the end of the assessment process. Madrasah compiles report on assessors feedback (form is in the appendix) and send it to MCE. This information will be shared with the assessor as part of his/her personal development plan.

Day 42: Assessors compile a report of their visit to the madrasah. Each assessor to take a lead of a Standard and compile the report of the standard for the lead assessor.

Day 49: Assessors submit their reports to the lead assessor for compilation of final report.

Day 55: Final assessment report submitted to the madrasah and the MCE by lead assessor.

Day 65: Deadline for the madrasah to inform the lead assessor and MCE of any factual inaccuracies in the assessment report.

The indicative timetable

The madrasah must prepare an indicative timetable for the madrasah visit and share this with the assessment team as well as the MCE being visited. This timetable is intended to help the madrasah with the practical arrangements of an assessment. It provides the madrasah with information about the visit, interviews that assessors need to conduct in the course of the assessment and the records that assessors may request during the visit. The timetable can be adapted to suit the individual circumstances of each madrasah and assessment team.

Pre-planning is essential to make efficient use of the assessment visit.

Arranging the time-table

- Schedule interviews for a period of 20 minutes and allow 10 minutes between interviews.
- Allow time for salat and meals.
- Identify appropriate time during the visit to observe lessons with minimal disruption to classes.
- Allow sufficient time to look at the course notes.
- Identify job roles of each member of the assessment team to avoid duplication and maximise efficiency.
- At the start of the visit, allow sufficient time to brief the madrasah head about the visit and introduce members of the assessment team.
- At the end of the assessment visit, allow sufficient time to prepare a draft report (headlines only) and share the team's findings with the madrasah.

Madrasah preparation for assessment

The madrasah being assessed is encouraged to inform its parent jamaat, management, staff, students and parents that it is carrying out an assessment in partnership with the MCE to help raise standards, so that individuals wishing to contribute their views on the madrasah are able to do so.

The madrasah will decide how, and to what extent, members of the local jamaat are able to engage in the assessment process. The madrasah must inform the staff and students about the MAEP team's visit, and what will take place during this visit.

This will allow them to prepare for the visit so that they are able to fully engage in the assessment and evaluation process. On the day of the visit, the assessors will request a tour of the madrasah. They will ask questions on the four standards for assessment and collate information on how the organisation has assessed its compliance.

They may request to see the policies of the organisation and make a note of this on the assessment record. The assessors are not allowed to take any policies or paperwork from the organisation.

The madrasah could, where possible, keep all its records updated prior to the visit:

- Student attendance.
- Staff attendance.
- Madrasah curriculum and notes.
- Madrasah Development Plan.
- Lesson plans.
- Child protection policy.
- Health and safety policy.
- Anti bullying policy.
- Staff training / CPD (Continuous Professional Development) courses.

The assessors will record the information provided by the madrasah on an assessment record. If the madrasah so wishes, it can request a copy of this record and the assessors will be happy to share the same with them.

The MAEP team will not make impromptu visits, and the madrasah being assessed is not under inspection or scrutiny. The role of the assessors is to facilitate the madrasah to carry out its own assessment and chart an action plan to raise its own standards.

Questionnaires

Guidance for madaris

A self-assessment questionnaire will be sent to the madrasah 4 weeks prior to the MAEP team's visit. The madrasah must complete and submit this questionnaire to the MCE within 14 days to enable the assessment team to review the madrasah's findings and prepare for the assessment visit.

Questionnaires will also be sent to the madrasah being assessed to be distributed to a proportion of its students, staff, parents and the local jamaat. The madrasah is requested to hand these out without delay, and collate the results for submission to the MCE within 14 days.

It is not necessary for every student, parent and member of staff to complete a questionnaire – a representative proportion of the madrasah population would be sufficient. However, people who are requested to complete a questionnaire must be selected at random and without any bias to ensure a fair and accurate result. It is also essential that an equal number of male and female respondents are selected, and all age groups and ethnicities are represented.

Parents' questionnaire

The madrasah should not decide which parents are to complete the questionnaire, but instead distribute it to all parents. A deadline should be set by the madrasah for parents to return the completed questionnaire. The madrasah should then collate the results, and use them for assessing compliance to Standard 4.

The assessors' team will not ask to see the completed questionnaires from parents, but will use the collated results to assess the madrasah's compliance to Standard 4.

An example of one is in the Appendix.

Teachers' questionnaire

Completion of the teachers' questionnaire is entirely voluntary and may be completed by any member of staff wishing to participate in the assessment process. The results of the teachers' survey will be used by the assessment team for assessing compliance to Standard 4.

The Parents' and teachers' questionnaires can be found in the appendices section on pages 226-227.

Spiritual Growth and Gross Happiness questionnaires for Students

In the future, we plan to develop these two measures that could be used by the madaris in assessing their progress.

Madaris will be invited to co-create these questionnaires.

Data Handling and Retention

The assessors will not remove any documents from the madrasah without permission from the Head of the madrasah.

All information gathered throughout the duration of the assessment will be shared with the madrasah involved. Parts of the final assessment report may be published by the MCE for the benefit of other madaris, provided the madrasah agrees with the publication of its report.

All information gathered during the assessment visit and interviews will be held in strict confidence by the MAEP team and the MCE.

Protocol for managing conflicts of interest

Members of the MAEP team must not be part of, or closely related to individuals at the madrasah being assessed. If an assessor feels that there may be any potential conflict of interest, he/she must raise this with the Lead Assessor.

The Lead Assessor must ensure that members of his team do not have any potential conflicts of interest with the madrasah under assessment, and where necessary, arrange a replacement to avoid any bias.
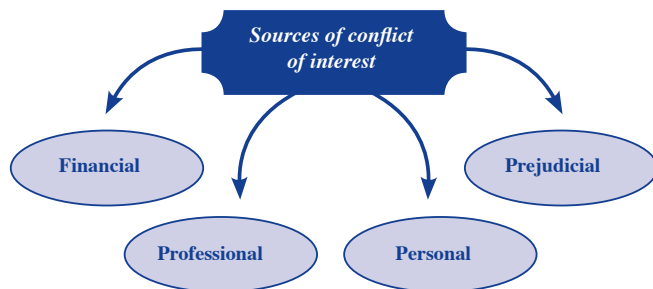
What is a Learning Organisation?

Learning is at the core of any educational institution, and a very commonly used definition of learning is "a change in behaviour". The Madrasah as an educational institution was established centuries ago, and its core agenda is to impart Islamic learning and nurture piety in the students. Over time, it has been observed that learning in madaris is confined only to a few teaching methods by the teachers/mu'allims, and only to the classroom.

With the recent literature on learning in an organization, it is quite evident that learning should be at all the levels of the organization i.e. personal, interpersonal and organizational levels.

In order to achieve this vision it is important to consider learning as a process, not just a product. It should be an ongoing and continuous process. Madrasah Centre of Excellence is facilitating the process of helping the madaris to introduce the element of a Learning Organization in their operation so as to ultimately help them transform into a 'Learning Madrasah'.

In his seminal work "The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of a Learning Organisation", Peter Senge describes five essential disciplines for enabling and facilitating a learning organisation.

These are as follows:

Shared Vision

Building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there.

Personal Mastery

Personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience and of seeing reality objectively. Personal mastery is when an individual has a clear vision of a goal, combined with an accurate perception of reality. The gap between the vision and the reality sets up a "creative tension" that energizes the individual. In practising personal mastery, the individual acquires the necessary capacities and creates whatever methods and rules are necessary to realize the vision.

Mental Models

We have to understand who we are in order to see what direction we would like move in as part of our professional development. Identifying the madrasah's values and the perceptions about it is an essential part of this process.

Team Learning

Team learning is the discipline by which personal mastery and shared vision are brought together. The discipline of team learning starts with a dialogue. Establishing actual communication in groups requires that members define each other as colleagues and that each person dares to be vulnerable and to admit to ignorance, otherwise no learning can take place.

Systems Thinking

An action on one part of the madrasah will have an impact or consequence (intended or unintended) on another part of it. We have to understand the correlation between actions and consequences, and that they can occur in different time spans.

> *In a learning organisation, the staff are:*
> - Internally motivated and self directed
> - Goal oriented
> - Practical
> - Like to be respected
> - Bring collective life experiences and knowledge to learning

Madrasah as a learning organisation

The assessment process can give a greater insight into whether a madrasah fulfils the criteria of a learning organisation. The way we approach the assessment process as assessors can determine to what extent we want the madrasah to become a learning organisation. The four standards can become the drivers that help the madrasah become a learning organisation.

Examples of processes that can turn the madrasah into a learning organisation include:

- The madrasah management and teachers have a shared vision.
- Personal mastery manifested in the madrasah's teacher training programs.
- Values of the madrasah and the extent to which there is an understanding of what the madrasah is all about.

S Model for Organisational Development

Learning Organisation

Learning Community

Communities of Practice

Understanding the organisational culture of the madrasah

Organisational Culture

Organisational Culture is the unwritten beliefs, attitudes, values, and expectations about how people work within the organisation.

Aspects:

Visible Aspect of a Madrasah:

The visible aspect of an organisation such as madrasah covers features that can be seen by the public. Examples of this would be the teachers that teach, the syllabus taught and so on.

Hidden Aspects of a Madrasah:

The hidden aspect of an organisation such as a madrasah covers features of a it that cannot be seen by the public. Examples of that would be the values, the attitudes, the beliefs of the organisation and so on.

Organisational Culture theory:

There are two theories about Organisational Culture. One is the Iceberg theory by French and Bell, 1990, and the other one is the Organisational Onion theory by Schein, 1912. We are going to focus only on the Iceberg Theory.

Iceberg theory:

If you look at an iceberg, only one tenth of it is visible above the water. The remaining 9/10th is submerged beneath the water. French and Bell use this as a model to explain that only 10% of an organisation's aspects are visible (formal). The remaining 90% are not visible (informal).

Formal aspects of the organisation:

- Goals
- Strategy
- Structure
- Systems and procedures
- Products and services
- Financial resources
- Management

Personal Iceberg Metaphor
of the Satir Model

Behavior, Action, or Story

Coping (stances)   Waterline

Feelings
(joy, excitement, enchanted, anger, hurt, fear, sad)

Feelings about Feelings
(decisions about feelings)

Perceptions
(beliefs, assumptions, mind-set, subjective reality)

Expectations
(of self, of others, from others)

Yearnings (Universal)
(loved, lovable, accepted, validated, purposeful, meaning, freedom)

Self: I Am
(life force, spirit, soul, core, essence)

Satir, V., Banmen, J., Gerberm J. & Gomori, M, (1991). The Satir Model: Family Therapy and Beyond Palo Alto,

CA: Science & Behavior Books, Inc. © Carl Sayles, PsyD 2005

Informal aspects of the organisation:
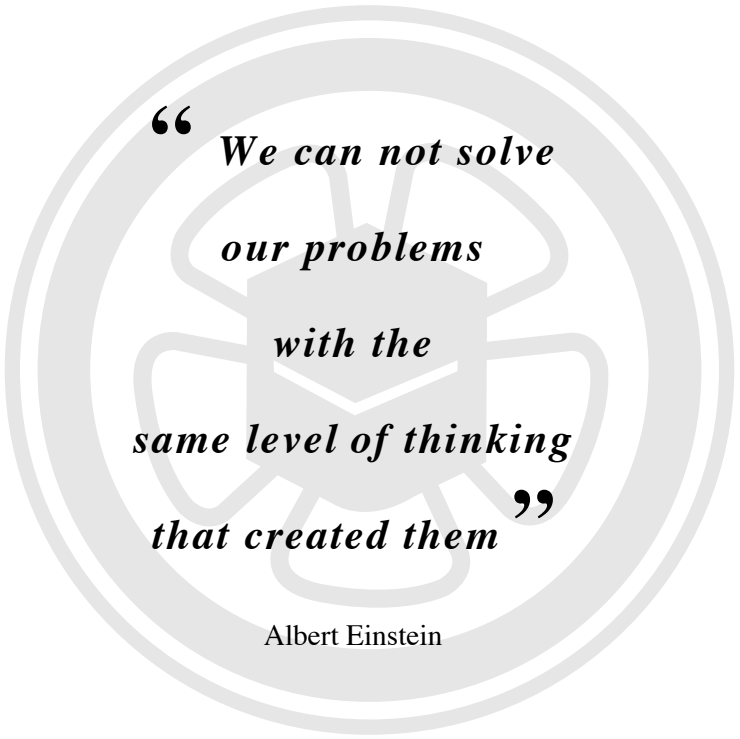
- Values, attitudes and beliefs
- Leadership styles
- Norms of behaviours
- Power and politcs
- Informal groupings

As assessors going into the madrasah, understanding its organisational Iceberg is essential in creating an assessment process which is supportive to the madrasah.

Just as organisations have icebergs, individuals also have icebergs. It is of paramount importance for assessors to appreciate their own icebergs because what is hidden beneath our own personal iceberg needs to be understood if we are to be effective assessors.

> **The skills that are required to understand the iceberg of the organisation include:**
> - Effective communication
> - Active listening
> - Questioning skills
> - Emotional Intelligence

> *"We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them"*
>
> Albert Einstein

SECTION 2
Essential Knowledge and Skills for Assessors

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR ASSESSORS

Effective communication is of paramount importance to the MAEP process. By effectively communicating the thoughts and ideas behind the process and our collective vision for the future of our madaris, we will succeed in implementing our goals, thereby avoiding communication breakdown, which may result in roadblocks standing in the way of our objectives.

Listening Skills

Research suggests that the average breakdown of communication is as follows:
- **Writing** – 9%
- Reading – 16%
- Speaking – 30%
- Listening – 45%

Given these figures, it makes sense for us to begin by focusing on our listening skills.

Despite spending such a large proportion of our time listening, the majority of us are not good listeners. According to the study quoted above, the average person only remembers between 25-50% of what they hear. Clearly, listening is a skill we can all benefit from improving. By becoming better listeners, we will improve the outcome of this project, and will enhance our ability to influence, persuade and negotiate. Furthermore, we will learn to avoid conflict and misunderstandings.

In order to become better listeners, we must practice active listening.

Active Listening is where a conscious effort is made to hear not only the words that another person is saying, but to understand the complete message being sent.

There are five key aspects to consider if we want to become active listeners.

Pay Attention	Show you are Listening	Give Feedback
Defer Judgement	Respond Appropriately	
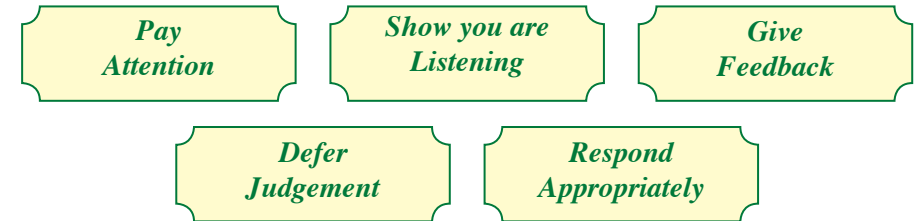
1) **Pay Attention:** Give the speaker your undivided attention.

   Acknowledge the message and recognise that non-verbal communication "speaks" loudly.

   - Look directly at the speaker
   - Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
   - Avoid distractions from the surrounding environment.
   - "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
   - Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

2) **Show that you are Listening:** Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.
   - Nod occasionally.
   - Smile and use other facial expressions.
   - Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
   - Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like "yes", "huh", "tell me more" and "because".

3) **Give Feedback:** Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.

Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is..." and, "Sounds like you are saying..." are great ways to reflect back.

Ask questions to clarify certain points e.g. "What do you mean when you say..?" or "Is this what you mean?"

Summarise the speaker's comments periodically.

Tip: *If you find yourself responding emotionally to what someone said, say so, and ask for more information: "I may not be understanding you correctly, and I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XXX; is that what you meant?"*

4) **Defer Judgement:** Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.

- Allow the speaker to finish.
- Do not interrupt with counter arguments.

5) **Respond Appropriately:** Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.

- Be candid, open and honest on your response.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Treat the other person as he or she would like to be treated.

The Betari Box

It takes a lot of concentration and determination to be an active listener. Old habits are hard to break. The Betari Box is a model that helps us understand the impact our attitudes and behaviours have on the attitudes and behaviours of people around us.

Our attitude plays a large role in the behaviour we exhibit. When we're feeling motivated and positive, we smile, we compliment our team, and we empower those around us. When we're feeling negative, the reverse is often true – we can be impatient, we get angry at people, and we might even yell or argue. These behaviours often affect the people around us. They then turn those negative behaviours back on us, and the conflict gets worse.
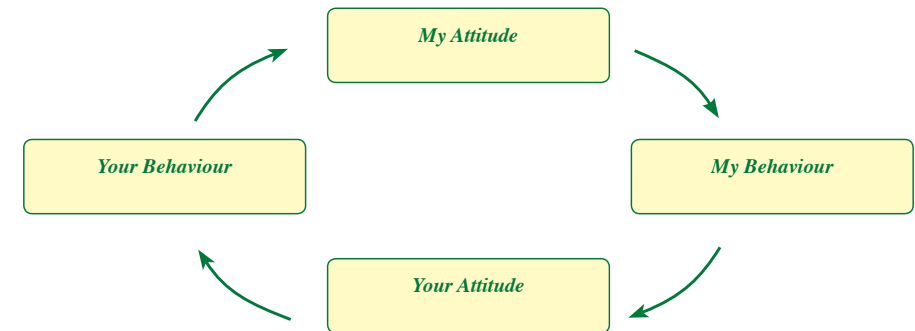
Although the idea of the Betari Box is quite simple, understanding it can help us learn to recognize when we're stuck in a negative cycle.

Key Points Regarding Active Listening:
L Look interested-give encouraging signs, create ease.
I Incisive questioning.
S Silence is OK. Not uttering a word is sometimes most effective. The use of pause is also effective.
T Test your understanding-paraphrase and summarize.
E Encourage through non verbal communication. Use your eyes to listen to "what" is being said and "how" it is being said.
N Neutralise your feelings-keep an open mind.

Rearrange the word
L I S T E N
and you get
S I L E N T

Questioning Techniques

Asking the right questions is at the heart of effective communications and information exchange and is of paramount importance when visiting madaris to assess existing policies and standards. By consciously applying the appropriate kind of questioning, we can gain the information, response or outcome that we want more effectively.

> **Questions are a powerful way of:**
> - Learning
> - Relationship building
> - Managing and coaching
> - Avoiding misunderstandings
> - De-fusing heated situations
> - Persuading people

Below are some common questioning techniques, and when (and when not) to use them.

1) Open and closed questions

A closed question usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. Closed questions are good for:

- Testing either your own or the other person's understanding e.g. "So, Tayammum has consistently been on your syllabus for Fiqh for the last five years?"

- Concluding a discussion or making a decision e.g. "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"

- Frame setting e.g. "Are you happy with the existing madrasah syllabus?"

A misplaced closed question, however, can kill the conversation and lead to awkward silences, so it is best to avoid these when a conversation is in full flow.

Open questions elicit longer answers.
They usually begin with "what..", and "how..", or, "tell me.." and "describe.."
An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings.

Open questions are good for:

- Developing an open conversation e.g. "How was your day?"

- Finding out more detail e.g. "What else do we need to add to the existing syllabus?"

- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues e.g. "What do you think about the World Federation's proposed initiatives?"

2) Funnel Questions

This technique involves starting with general questions, and then homing in on a point in each answer, and asking more and more detail at each level.

Tip: *When using funnel questioning, start with closed questions. As you progress through the tunnel, start using more open questions.*

Funnel questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail about a specific point e.g. "Tell me more about how you teach subject X".

- Gaining the interest or increasing the confidence of the person you're speaking with e.g. "Have you used resources from any other madrasah as a framework in the development of your syllabus?", "Did these prove useful?".

3) Probing Questions

Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail. Sometimes it is as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement they have made. At other times, you need

additional information for clarification, «When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I give you my final version?», or to investigate whether there is proof for what has been said, «How do you know that the proposed initiatives can't be implemented in these regions?».

An effective way of probing is to use the four methods (who?, what?, where?, when?), which can help you quickly get to the root of a problem.

Tip: *Use questions that include the word «exactly» to probe further: «What exactly do you mean by..?», «Who, exactly, wanted..?»*

Probing questions are good for:

• Gaining clarification to ensure you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly.

• Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something.

4) Questions to avoid

Assessors should avoid questions beginning with WHY. When you ask someone a 'why' question, often they feel they have to defend what they have said or done, make excuses or rationalize their behaviour. On the other hand, if you expressed the question as a 'how' question, then you get a better understanding of the process used by the person you are interviewing and thus you get more information and understanding.

5) Avoid multiple questions

These are ones that ask more than one question at once, which can lead to confusion. For example, "Are you clear on the specification and process for getting it improved?" What does an answer of yes or no tell us – is the respondent clear on both the specification and the process or just the specification or the process alone?

Such questions can also lead to real confusion in the minds of the respondents. For example, the question – "What were your experiences of coaching new starters and the existing team?" This is a very complex question; possibly asking the respondent to recall two completely different experiences, if not more.

Influencing

Influencing is about TRACing someone
To influence you need to be able to TRAC them

T Trust
R Respect
A Affection
C Commitment to the person

It is said that the above is more multiplicative than additive. Hence if any figure is 0, there is no chance of influencing them.

$$T \times R \times A \times C = \textbf{INFLUENCE}$$

As an assessor, your role is to influence and hence TRAC becomes critical.

Hence the respondent will be tempted to range across them all and there is a risk of each experience becoming confused with others and certainly the clarity of the individual experience may be lost.

Empathy skills

As assessors, it is essential to have skills in empathy.

Definition: *Mentally entering the feeling of a person, appreciating their perception and their understanding or "walking in someone else shoes"*

Difference between Empathy and Sympathy

A man is talking about his father's death, which had occurred a week earlier. As he talks about missing his father and his powerful love for him, the man's voice gradually becomes filled with anguish and then he bursts into tears in front of a friend who is listening to him.

If the friend uses sympathy, she might think, for example: He is remembering his father with pain. Poor Jabir. If the friend decides to verbalize her thoughts, she might say to the grieving man words such as: "I feel your pain."

If the friend uses empathy, she might think, for example: He is remembering his father with pain and also the pleasure of his love for him. If the friend decides to verbalize her thoughts, she might say to the grieving man words such as: "I feel your pain and also your great love for your father."

This sharing of the painful feelings of another person is characteristic of both sympathy and empathy. However, the person using sympathy would pay more attention to the pain than to the love for the father whereas the person using empathy would pay equal attention to the pain and love.

If the friend added "I'm sorry for your loss," this statement would also be characteristic of sympathy, but not of empathy. The person using empathy would share the grieving man's emotional pain, but not necessarily feel sorry for or pity him. Of course, one can use both sympathy and empathy, for example: "I feel your pain and also your great love for your father. I'm sorry for your loss."

How to develop empathy skills

- Listen in a way to ignite the human mind.
- Attention to the listener. This means listening with respect, interest and fascination.
- Show appreciation.
- Create ease by offering freedom from rush or urgency.
- Encourage by moving beyond competition: of personal voice, of personal ideas, of personal thoughts.

Introduction to Learning: Andragogy vs Pedagogy

Pedagogy and andragogy are used to describe the art and science of teaching. Teachers who take on a facilitating role by directing the students in the leaning process (e.g. adult and further education) are considered to be andragogic (student centred) and teachers who lecture to their students (e.g. child education in schools) are considered to be pedagogic (teacher centred).

Although the word "andragogy" was in use as early as 1833, Malcolm Knowles is generally credited with popularizing the concept in the United States in the 1970s. Knowles defined andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn," which he contrasted with the use of "pedagogy," which he says was originally concerned with helping children learn (as testified to by the etymology of the word).

Pedagogy: Teacher centred and subject centred.
Andragogy: Student centred. Focuses on strategies for teaching adults. It is a process of engaging adult learners in the structure of the learning experience.

Principles of Andragogy

- The need to know — adult learners need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking to learn it.
- Learner self-concept — adults need to be responsible for their own decisions and to be treated as capable of self-direction.
- Role of learners' experience — adult learners have a variety of experiences of life which represent the richest resource for learning. These experiences are however imbued with bias and presupposition.
- Readiness to learn — adults are ready to learn those things they need to know in order to cope effectively with life situations.
- Orientation to learning — adults are motivated to learn to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks they confront in their life situations.

The application for andragogy and pedagogy is beyond education. It can also be applied in other spheres including personal relationships, organizational relationships and others.

Pedagogy - vs - Andragogy		
	Pedagogical	*Andragogical*
What, how and when to learn	The teacher decides	The adult learner decides
Past experiences	Not a resource for learning	Rich past experiences as learning resource
Attitude	Passive and submissive	Driven by own development need
Orientation to Learning	Knowledge and subject based	Problem based and contextual
Dependency	Teacher dependent, self concept is dependent	Self directed and autonomous

| Process Elements		
Elements	*Pedagogical*	*Andragogical*
Climate	Tense, low trust, formal, aloof, authority oriented, competitive, judgmental	Relaxed, trusting, mutually respectful, informal, warm, collaborative, supportive
Motivation	External – grades, parents, teachers	Internally driven & personal pay offs
Process	Teaching and telling	Facilitation
Evaluation	By teacher With grades	By learner-collected evidence validated by peers, facilitators, experts Criterion referenced
Assessment	Summative	Formative

Application of Andragogy to the Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Process

The assessment process we have designed for madrasah is more andragogic in its approach. The madrasah is invited to examine the four assessment standards identified by the MCE and decide whether it is "fully compliant" or "partially compliant" to them.

Therefore, when the assessors undertake the assessment, it is essential that their "behaviour" throughout the assessment process is such that it creates an environment which is "trusting" and "mutually respectful." An assessment where the trust is "low" between the assessor and the madrasah will yield poor results.

Practical communication skills for madrasah assessors

As assessors, practical communication skills will become critical. The outer tools of communication, body language and voice depend upon what we are internally thinking and feeling. Research shows that 93% of what we communicate to others is down to the way we use body language and vocal tone. Only 7% of the communication is the content, the words themselves (Mehrabian, Albert (1971), Silent Messages).
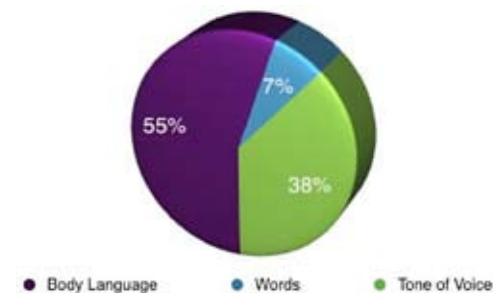
When body language and voice are incongruent with the words that are being spoken, the receiver gets mixed messages that alert her to possible hidden agendas. Therefore the WAY you use body language and voice will have a huge impact upon the message you give about the assessment process.

Preparing Body Language and Voice for the interviews

People have a natural inclination towards mirroring each other, especially when under pressure. Mirroring is the human way to build rapport. Put the people you are interviewing at ease by putting yourself at ease through these mind/body presencing techniques:

1. Become aware of your posture. Stand with your weight equally balanced on two feet. Feel a sense of weight dropping down from the shoulders so that the lower part of the body is doing the supporting role. Check that knees are not locked back. Feel that the head is balanced lightly on top of the spinal column, floating up towards the ceiling, crown of the head the highest point. Relax the jaw, relax the tongue in the mouth, breathe through the nose and feel the breath touch your centre.

2. Breathe and inspire yourself to a deeper sense of being present in your body. Place one hand on your upper chest, the other on your abdomen. Breathe slowly allowing the abdominal muscles to move freely with the breath. Don't force or strain. The hand on the upper chest is there to remind you that the upper chest does not lift as you breathe in. Take several breaths in this way, allowing a moment of full suspension of the in-breath before exhaling. At the end of the out breath, wait for the natural impulse to take the next breath in. Do not hurry this moment or force the breath.

3. Focus your eyes on an object across the room. Let your eyes and body be open to that object. Really take it in. On your next out breath let the air

travel towards that object. Stay aware of your physical presence; are there any parts of your body that have started to tense up and grip when you begin to focus outside yourself? At the end of the out breath stay connected to the object and wait for your next breath to come in. Observe that your next breath is inspired by that connection. Keep breathing into the flow, back and forth, easily and freely. Move around the room maintaining the sense of connectedness to yourself and to your environment. Notice what feelings and thoughts arise when you do these exercises. If you have a moment, write your observations down as part of your reflections. You can learn a great deal about your inner self, **your own iceberg**, through awareness of your body and breath.

Meeting the other with presence

"Looking at someone with presence is recognizing who they are. You will not only impact upon them but discover their authenticity" *(Patsy Rodenburg, 2009)*

When you enter any space, keep your breathing low and calm in your body. Engage with the other through breath, eye contact and your whole being, inner and outer. Feed your inner world with thoughts and feelings that focus on a positive meeting and be aware of any parts of your own body that resist those thoughts/feelings.

Let the tension go. Remember the mirroring principle – by releasing your own tensions, you will be facilitating the other person to be open and relaxed with you.

Show attentiveness to the other person. Notice if they seem uncomfortable in any way. Acknowledge what is present in the room. Observe them with empathy – to be able to stay with them - as in the **mirroring exercise.**

Be generous in your attitude. We communicate a judgmental attitude because we are internally criticizing ourselves. Show openness and genuine interest by giving non-verbal and verbal signals while you are listening. Listen by placing yourself imaginatively in their shoes. See the pictures, sense the information you are being given. This will help you to ask better questions and gather more information. Notice your own habits when you stop listening with deep attentiveness. Do you tend to move away from the conversation by taking a higher or lower **status attitude?**

Communication is a Performing Art

Step confidently into the role of the assessor by developing your understanding of the four archetypes. This is a way to discover different energies for different aspects of a creative communication process. Appreciation of the archetypes can help in two ways:

• Raise awareness of the archetype that you are least comfortable with and exploring it as an area for personal growth.

• Inhabit a particular archetypal energy to better facilitate a stage of the assessment process.

The archetypes have the following characteristics.

Artist – the signature of artists is not in what they do but in how intense their motivation is to manifest the extraordinary. Doing what you do in such a way that you create an emotional field that inspires others. The Artist is passionate, is open in her feelings and generates ideas. Her enthusiasm is infectious.

Good King - neutral, open, accepting, steady gaze, takes their time and space – not too much, not too little. When people need to be heard by you, and feel listened to, the Good King state is a good reminder – non-judgmental, not interested in espousing your own views, some nodding, open body language, if possible don't have any physical barriers between you – table etc.

Warrior – linked to invincibility and loyalty. Strength to protect, defend and fight for one's rights. Strong stance, fills the space, tree-trunk legs, stands firm, eye-level is above everyone's heads – nose in the air, chest puffed up. Makes big expansive gestures, lots of stillness and posing, possibly long 'er's to hold people's attention.

The Warrior archetype is as relevant to female psyche as to male. Women have long been defenders of their families and tribes.

Guardian - has a still calm presence. Focuses on the other and radiates warmth and compassion. Has gentleness into the voice. Not too loud and uses lower vocal tones. Body language is open. Draws people in and makes even the most difficult messages feel alright.

Suggested Reading

These two books contain a great deal of practical help for personal development. They also support a view of communication that is congruent with the value of respecting others.

1. **Crucial Conversations** by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler. (McGraw Hill, 2002).

2. **Power Presentation: Formal Speech in an Informal World: How to Put Presence into Your Presentation by** Patsy Rodenburg. (Penguin Books, 2009).

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

THE ART OF POWERFUL QUESTIONS

Catalyzing Insight, Innovation, and Action

by
Eric E. Vogt, Juanita Brown,
and David Isaacs

"If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes."
– *Albert Einstein*

When was the last time you sat through a meeting and said to yourself, "This is a complete waste of time!"? Was it yesterday, or even just a few hours ago? Why did that gathering feel so tedious? Perhaps it's because the leaders posed the wrong questions at the start of the session. Or, worse yet, maybe they didn't ask any engaging questions, and as a result, the meeting consisted of boring reports-outs or other forms of one-way communication that failed to engage people's interest or curiosity.

The usefulness of the knowledge we acquire and the effectiveness of the actions we take depend on the quality of the questions we ask. Questions open the door to dialogue and discovery. They are an invitation to creativity and breakthrough thinking. Questions can lead to movement and action on key issues; by generating creative insights, they can ignite change.

> "I Went For The Jugular Question."
> Arno Penzias,
> Nobel Laureate

Consider the possibility that every thing we know today about our world emerged because people were curious. They formulated a question or series of questions about something that sparked their interest or deeply concerned them, which lead them to learn something new. Many Nobel laureates describe the "Eureka!" moment of their discovery as when the "right" question finally revealed itself – even if it took them considerable time to come up with the final answers. For example, Einstein's theory of relativity resulted from a question that he had wondered about when still a teenager: "What would the universe look like if I were riding on the end of a light beam at the speed of light?" Einstein regularly practiced this kind of "thought experiment," which, over time, led to significant advances in the field of physics. Many years later, an empirical demonstration showed that light from distant stars actually curved as it passed through the gravitational force of our sun. Einstein's graduate students rushed to him as he was walking through the Princeton campus and exclaimed, "Dr. Einstein, light really does bend!" Einstein looked at them quizzically and said, "Of course!" He had come to this conclusion through exploring the question in his own thought experiment years before.

Another Nobel-prize winner, physicist Arno Penzias, when asked what accounted for his success, replied, "I went for the jugular question." Still practicing his questioning discipline today, Penzias recently commented at a Fast Company Conference, "Change starts with the individual. So the first thing I do each morning is ask myself, 'Why do I strongly believe what I believe?' Constantly examine your own assumptions." It's this type of self-questioning that keeps creativity alive.

In other key examples of the importance of powerful questions, a query by James Watson and Francis Crick, "What might DNA look like in a 3D form?" led to the discovery of the double helix and forever altered the scientific landscape. During the Tylenol crisis in the early 1980s, considering the question, "What is the most ethical action we might take?" enabled Johnson & Johnson to restore consumer trust and become a leader in corporate responsibility. And asking, "Where can I get a good hamburger on the road?" motivated Ray Kroc to create McDonald's, the fast-food chain that became an international icon. Even for ordinary folks, asking a question as simple as, "What does all this mean?" or "What can we do that could help shift this situation?" or "What haven't we thought of that could make a difference?" can have a startling impact on creating new knowledge and insight.

Why Don't We Ask Better Questions?

If asking good questions is so critical, why don't most of us spend more of our time and energy on discovering and framing them? One reason may be that much of Western culture, and North American society in particular, focuses on having the "right answer" rather than discovering the "right question." Our educational system focuses more on memorization and rote answers than on the art of seeking new possibilities. We are rarely asked to discover compelling questions, nor are we taught why we should ask such questions in the first place. Quizzes, examinations, and aptitude tests all reinforce the value of correct answers. Is it any wonder that most of us are uncomfortable with not knowing?

The aversion in our culture to asking creative questions is linked to an emphasis on finding quick fixes and an attachment to black/white, either/or thinking. In addition, the rapid pace of our lives and work doesn't often provide us with opportunities to participate in reflective conversations in which we can explore catalytic questions and innovative possibilities before reaching key decisions.

These factors, coupled with a prevailing belief that "real work"consists primarily of detailed analysis, immediate decisions, and decisive action,contradict the perspective that effective "knowledge work"consists of asking profound questions and hosting wide-ranging strategic conversations on issues of substance.

The reward systems in our organizations further reinforce this dilemma. Leaders believe that they are being paid for fixing problems rather than for fostering break through thinking. Between our deep attachment to the answer – any answer – and our anxiety about not knowing,we have inadvertently thwarted our collective capacity for deep creativity and fresh perspectives. Unfortunately, given the unprecedented challenges we face both in our own organizations and as a global community, we need these skills now more than ever.

Are there organizations that do place a high value on questions? Consider this:In Germany,the job title Direktor Grundsatzfragen translates as "Director of Fundamental Questions."As a German colleague said:
"Yes,there's a job title of Direktor Grundsatzfragen. Some of the larger German companies have an entire department of Grundsatzfragen. These are the people who are always thinking about what the next questions will be. Of course, these people are only in the German companies headquartered in Germany, such as Daimler, Bayer, Siemens, or SAP. If the German company is acquired by a U.S.company, they usually eliminate the Grundsatzfragen positions."

The German understanding and appreciation of Grundsatzfragen may stem from a culture that highly values philosophy and the ongoing questioning of priorities and the meaning of life.Even today, this focus is reflected in some unique aspects of high-school education. In the German Gymnasium, from the ages of 14 to 17, students are typically assigned to study groups with 30 of their peers.
In the words of one graduate, "We work intensely together in every subject, and then in the second year, we meet Goethe (the famous 19th-century German philosopher), and we question our entire world for two years. We emerge with a greater appreciation for the power of questions and the power of conversation."

As we enter an era in which systemic issues often lie at the root of critical challenges, in which diverse perspectives are required for sustainable solutions, and in which cause-and-effect relationships are not immediately apparent, the capacity to raise penetrating questions that challenge current operating assumptions will be key to creating positive futures. As Einstein said, "The problems we have cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that created them."And in her book The Art of the Question, Marilee Goldberg adds, "A paradigm shift occurs when a question is asked inside the current paradigm that can only be answered from outside it." It's this kind of paradigm shift,based on powerful questions, that may be necessary to create truly innovative solutions to our most pressing concerns.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS AND KEY OUTCOMES		
Who	**Question**	**Outcome**
Watson and Crick	"What might DNA look like in 3D form?"	Discovery of the double helix
James Burke, CEO, Johnson & Johnson	"What is the most ethical action we might take?"	Restoration of consumer confidence
Ray Kroc	"Where can I get a good hamburger on the road?"	Creation of McDonald's

What Makes a Question Powerful?

In a wonderfully evocative description, Fran Peavey, a pioneer in the use of strategic questions, observes:

"Questions can be like a lever you use to pry open the stuck lid on a paint can. ...If we have a short lever,we can only just crack open the lid on the can. But if we have a longer lever, or a more dynamic question, we can open that can up much wider and really stir things up ....If the right question is applied, and it digs deep enough, then we can stir up all the creative solutions."

While you may not immediately know the characteristics of a powerful question, it's actually quite easy to recognize one. For instance, if you were an Olympic judge scoring the power of questions on a scale from one to ten (with ten being the highest), how would you rate the following queries?

1. What time is it?
2. Did you take a shower?
3. What possibilities exist that we haven't thought of yet?
4. What does it mean to be ethical?

We have tested questions such as these in several different cultures. In the process, we've discovered that, despite cultural differences, people quite consistently rate questions one and two as being less powerful, and questions three and four as being more powerful. Clearly, powerful questions are ones that transcend many boundaries.

Not long ago, we hosted a conversation with a group of international colleagues about what makes a compelling question. Here are some of their reflections:

> "A Paradigm Shift Occurs When A Question Is Asked Inside The Current Paradigm That Can Only Be Answered From Outside It."
> Marilee Goldberg,
> The Art Of The Question

Finn Voldtofte (Denmark): The question has to catch people where they are, to meet them where there is the most energy and relevance for them, and then use that energy to go deeper. Action will flow naturally from that energy.

Felipe Herzenborn (Mexico): The question also needs to be simple and clear and penetrating. It's like a laser beam. A good question invites and challenges you to reflect at a deeper level – to find the knowledge or wisdom that's already there beneath the surface.

Verna Allee (U.S.): To me, the most energizing questions are those that involve people's values, hopes, and ideals – questions that relate to something that's larger than them, where they can connect and contribute. People don't have a lot of energy around questions that are only about removing pain.

David Isaacs (U.S.): Even though it's useful to acknowledge pain, I think it's also important to shift the question away from a problem focus or fix-it focus to a possibility focus. There's always a subtle feeling of dis-empowerment in a problem, a feeling that all the doors are shut. "We've got a problem ...oh no! Not another problem!" There's a weariness and stuckness about it. Simply asking, "What's the possibility we see in this situation?" can make a big difference.

Toke Moller (Denmark): Here's an e xample of that approach. I was working with a local school to frame a possibility-oriented question. We asked teachers, students, parents, and administrators, "What could a good school also be?" This way of posing the question helped people to see their school in a different light. It resulted in some amazing new ideas. I'm quite sure they would not have been

as innovative if the question had focused only on fixing problems.

Carlos Mota (Mexico): It's a real art to find as well as to shape the right question for your situation Once a friend told me about a time she was being inter-viewed. The interviewer said, "We're just going to ask you one question: What's the question we should be asking?" Sometimes the most important thing to do is to help the people themselves shape the questions in the most powerful way, since they know their own situation the best of anyone.

Thus, a powerful question:
- generates curiosity in the listener
- stimulates reflective conversation
- is thought-provoking
- surfaces underlying assumptions
- invites creativity and new possibilities
- generates energy and forward movement
- channels attention and focuses inquiry
- stays with participants
- touches a deep meaning
- evokes more questions

A powerful question also has the capacity to "travel well" – to spread beyond the place where it began into larger networks of conversation throughout an organization or a community. Questions that travel well are often the key to large-scale change. As we'll explore below, how such queries are crafted can make a difference in their capacity to move a system toward innovative futures.

The Architecture of Powerful Questions

As shown at the start of this volume, powerful questions can dramatically improve the quality of insight, innovation, and action in our organizations, in our communities, and in our lives. Therefore, understanding the basic architecture of formulating powerful questions is a key skill in today's knowledge economy. There are three dimensions to powerful questions: construction, scope, and assumptions. Each contributes to the quality of learning and knowledge creation that emerges as we engage with others in a generative inquiry.

Construction

Assumptions

Scope
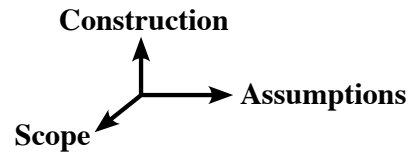
The First Dimension:

The Construction of a Question

The linguistic construction of a question can make a critical difference in either opening our minds or narrowing the possibilities we can consider. Is it a yes/no question? Is it an either/or question?

Does it begin with an interrogative, such as Who, What, or How?

**WHO – WHAT – WHEN – WHERE
WHICH – WHY – HOW?**

Just for fun, try placing these words in a pyramid of lower to higher power. Don't think too much; use your intuition.

More Powerful
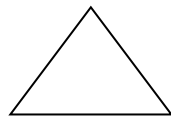
Less Powerful

When asked, most people rank these words from more powerful to less powerful as follows:

More Powerful

Why,
How,
What
Who, When,
Where, Which,
Yes / No Questions
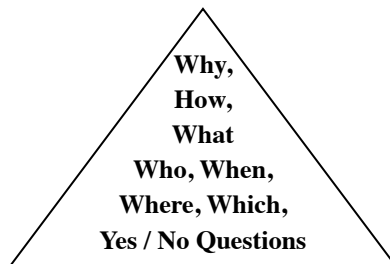
Less Powerful

By using the words toward the top of the pyramid, we can make many of our questions more robust.

For example,consider the following sequence:

- Are you satisfied with our working relationship?
- When have you been most satisfied with our working relationship?
- What is it about our working relationship that you find most satisfying?
- Why might it be that that our working relationship has had its ups and downs?

As you move from the simple "yes/no"question at the beginning toward the "why" question at the end, you'll notice that the queries tend to stimulate more reflective thinking and a deeper level of conversation. That's what we mean by a powerful question – one that provokes thoughtful exploration and evokes creative thinking.

However,a note of caution: Unless a "why" question is carefully crafted,it can easily evoke a defensive response, as people try to justify their answer rather than proceed in a spirit of inquiry.For instance, the questions, "Why can't you ever tell me exactly what you are thinking?" or "Why did you do it that way?" can cause someone to defend a given position or rationalize some past decision, rather than open new possibilities. In contrast, when a "why" question stems from genuine curiosity, such as "I wonder why that happened?" then the inquiry has the potential to create useful insights.

Just because a question is situated near the top of the pyramid does not necessarily mean that it is more important or more relevant than its counterparts at the bottom. Depending on your goals, a "yes/no"question can be extremely important (particularly if you are closing a large sale!). Likewise, a question that gets at the facts of who, when, and where can often be crucial, such as in a legal case. However, when you want to open the space for creativity and break-through thinking, questions constructed around the words at the top of the pyramid will have more strategic lever-age than those that use the words at the bottom.

THE SECOND DIMENSION:

The Scope of a Question

It's important not only to be aware of how the words we choose influence the effectiveness of our query, but also to match the scope of a question to our needs.

Take a look at the following three questions:

- How can we best manage our work group ?
- How can we best manage our company ?
- How can we best manage our supply chain?

> "A Paradigm Shift Occurs When A Question Is Asked Inside The Current Paradigm That Can Only Be Answered From Outside It."
> Marilee Goldberg,
> The Art Of The Question

In this example, the questions progressively broaden the domain of inquiry as they consider larger and larger aspects of the system; that is, they expand in scope. As you work to make your questions powerful, tailor and clarify the scope as precisely as possible to keep them within the realistic boundaries and needs of the situation you are working with. Avoid stretching the scope of your question too far.

For example, compare the following question to the ones above:

- How can we best manage the economy ?

While extremely interesting, this query is clearly outside the scope of most people's capacity to take effective action, at least in the short term. In many situations, this would be a less strategic question than one for which those involved had the capacity to make a more immediate difference.

THE THIRD DIMENSION:

The Assumptions Within Questions

Because of the nature of language, almost all of the questions we pose have assumptions built into them, either explicit or implicit. These assumptions may or may not be shared by the group involved in the exploration; for instance the question, "How should we create a bilingual educational system in California?" assumes that those involved in the exploration have agreed that being bilingual is an important capacity for the state's students. However, some powerful questions challenge everyone's existing assumptions. For example, ask yourself what assumptions the following question might challenge: "How might we eliminate the border between the U.S. and Mexico?"

To formulate powerful questions, it's important to become aware of assumptions and use them appropriately. So, contrast the question, "What did we do wrong and who is responsible?" with "What can we learn from what's happened and what possibilities do we now see?" The first question assumes error and blame; it is a safe bet that whoever is responding will feel defensive. The second question encourages reflection and is much more likely than the first query to stimulate learning and collaboration among those involved.

It's often helpful to examine a question for any unconscious beliefs it may introduce to the situation. You can do so by simply asking your team, "What assumptions or beliefs are we holding that are key to the conversation we are having here?" and "How would we come at this if we held an entirely different belief system than the one we have?" Each of these questions invites an exploration into both conscious and unconscious assumptions and opens up the space for new possibilities to reveal themselves.

By surfacing or altering assumptions, we can shift the context of a strategic inquiry and create new opportunities for innovation.

Compare the following two questions:

- How can we *compete* with the Chinese?
- How can we *collaborate* with the Chinese?

The second question changes the context by challenging our traditional business paradigm and the assumptions that underlie it. As a result, it opens up a new line of exploration and set of subsequent questions. The art of reframing questions in this way has important implications for not only shifting our assumptions, but also creating new possibilities for constructive action.

By understanding and consciously considering the three dimensions of powerful questions, we can increase the power of the questions we ask and, as a result, increase our ability to generate insights that help shape the future. As with any new skill, the best teacher is experience, and the best coach is a thoughtful listener. We encourage you to experiment with increasing the power of your questions and see what impact you have.

For example, in advance of an important meeting or conversation, spend a few minutes with a colleague and write down several questions that are relevant to the topic. Rate them in terms of their power. Referring to the three dimensions outlined above, see if you can spot why certain questions are more compelling than others. Experiment with changing the construction and scope, to get a feel for how doing so changes the direction of the inquiry. Be sure to examine the assumptions that are embedded in your questions and check to see if they will help or hinder your exploration. Just a few practice sessions will greatly enhance your ability to engage in productive conversations stimulated by dynamic questions.

Using Powerful Questions in Organizations

There are more and more examples of how the disciplined use of compelling questions is making a difference in organizational life. These changes often happen in surprising ways, opening new avenues that people never considered before.

HP "for the World." Sometimes something as simple as changing a preposition in a sentence can have a dramatic impact on how an organiza tion conceives of its mission and role. Consider how a small shift in the construction of a question led to major changes in the scope and context of strategic inquiry at Hewlett-Packard, resulting in effective innovation and targeted action. The director of HP Labs wondered why the organization was not considered the best industrial research laboratory in the world. As he thought about it, he realized that he did not know what that designation really meant. He charged Barbara Waugh, a key staff member, with coordinating the effort to respond to the question, "What does being the best industrial research lab in the world mean?" Instead of looking for answers outside the company, Barbara encouraged the director to share his core around the world.

To that end, Waugh initiated a global network of conversations around that question, using the company's technology infrastructure along with face-to-face gatherings to support the dialogues. Just by exploring the practical implications of the question in a disciplined way, the Lab began to see productivity gains. But one day, an HP Lab engineer came into Barbara's office and said, "That question is okay, but what would really energize me and get me up in the morning would be asking, 'How can we be the best industrial research lab *for* the world?'"
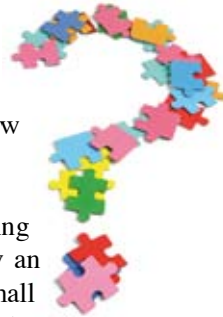
That one small shift changed the entire game by scaling up the meaning of and shifting the assumptions embedded in the original question. It profoundly altered the context of the inquiry – to become the best *for* the world as the larger context for becoming the best *in* the world. This question obviously "traveled well" – it was no longer just the Lab's question, but something that many others at HP began to ask themselves as well. Employees at HP Labs and throughout the whole company responded to this new focus with a tremendous surge of collective energy.

Once they reworded the original question, Barbara and her colleagues could change the scope of related questions depending on the situation. For example, shifting the scope downward meant focusing on "What does HP for the World mean for me? What does it mean in my life, in my own work?" HP employees could also scale up the scope by asking, "What does HP for the World mean for my work group? For my department? For HP as a company? And what might it mean for the world itself?"

HP's E-Inclusion effort, a major project to enable the world's poor to enter the new economy while providing critical medical and other information to communities in the third world, stemmed in large measure from the HP for the World exploration. The question has now traveled far beyond the company: "What does it mean for us to be 'for the world'?" was a key question explored at a State of the World Forum with a group of more than 1,000 global leaders from every continent.

Creating a Sales "Community." Another case in which a catalytic question empowered leaders in new ways occurred in the sales organization of a major U.S. corporation. Mike Pfeil, the area director of sales, wondered how a community, rather than a traditional company, might deal with the challenges it confronted. As a learning experiment, he began to host conversations with employees from all levels in his organization to explore the meaning of community at work and how they might apply community principles to enhance performance.

To depart from the group's traditional focus on problems, the sales director framed questions that shifted the context within which workers normally look at their organization. He asked people to examine their best experiences of community and to reflect on times they had participated in a community experience that really worked, using queries such as, "What allowed that positive experience to happen? What kinds of activities were taking place? How did you fit into that?"

As members shared what they knew from their own best community experiences, they began to see the analogies to business life. They posed follow-up questions, such as, "How does a community deal with adversity and adapting to change? What happens with members who don't uphold the community's standards?"

As the conversations evolved, important values that people really cared about started to come forward – values like learning, mutual respect, contribution, and sharing with others. Another simple but powerful question emerged from those early dialogues: "How can we create a community at work that enables each person to contribute our best, inspires us to keep learning, and produces valued results?" This simple shift of lens led other leaders in the company to look how it functioned within the larger communities in which it operates. The learnings from this project informed subsequent work in the area of corporate responsibility and in the creation of mission goals that include the perspectives of both internal and external stakeholders in creating the company's future.

> "The Question Never Failed Us."
> Mike Pfeil,
> Corporate Executive

The local leader who launched this effort is now a corporate vice president. In looking back on his experience with engaging powerful questions to shift the context for exploring business realities, he shared the following:

"As we learned more, the meaning of the question continued to evolve. We asked our-selves, "How can we go out and plant this seed? How do we frame it as we bring other people into the conversation?"

Improving Questions at Pfizer. In another recent case, professionals at Pfizer, the world-renowned pharmaceutical firm, are experimenting with a systematic method of improving the quality of their questions. Through a custom-designed workshop, marketing and finance professionals in Pfizer's European business unit have been learning to articulate powerful questions. These ex ecutives have discovered that meetings have more energy and creative ideas flow more quickly when they place attention on formulating catalytic questions. With this discipline in place, new ideas are more easily finding their way into key products and services.

From these examples, it's clear that improving the quality of the questions you ask and creating a framework of engagement that encourages their exploration can create business value. Because learning to engage thoughtful questions can lead to insight, innovation, and action, doing so will become an essential strategic capability for leaders of organizations who want to create sustainable results in the face of both short- and longer-term challenges and opportunities.

How Can I Frame Better Questions?

Here are some questions you might ask yourself as you begin to explore the art and architecture of powerful questions. They are based on pioneering work with questions being done by the Public Conversations Project, a group that helps create constructive dialogue on divisive public issues.

- Is this question relevant to the real life and real work of the people who will be exploring it?

- Is this a genuine question – a question to which I/we really don't know the answer?

- What "work" do I want this question to do? That is, what kind of conversation, meanings, and feelings do I imagine this question will evoke in those who will be exploring it?

- Is this question likely to invite fresh thinking/ feeling? Is it familiar enough to be recognizable and relevant – and different enough to call foward a new response?

- What assumptions or beliefs are embedded in the way this question is constructed?

- Is this question likely to generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action, and new possibilities or is it likely to increase a focus on past problems and obstacles?

- Does this question leave room for new and different questions to be raised as the initial question is explored?

Adapted from Sally Ann Roth
Public Conversations Project c.1998

Fostering Strategic Inquiry

Beyond building the capacity of individual employees to ask powerful questions, an organization can design processes that use such queries to enhance the emergence of knowledge creation and strategic thinking. As the chairman and CEO of a major multinational corporation says, "Discovering strategic questions is like panning for gold. You have to care about finding it, you have to be curious, and you have to create an anticipation of discovering gold, even though none of us may know ahead of time where we'll find it. You head toward the general territory where you think the gold may be located, with your best tools, your experience, and your instincts. And then you begin a disciplined search for the gold." We've partnered with this leader to create a set of tools for fostering strategic inquiry and working with powerful questions in the service of positive futures called the "Game Plan" process. The following steps may not apply to all situations and they may not always play out in the same sequence. However, the Game Plan suggests ways that organizations can create both formal and informal processes to support individuals as well as teams in discovering the "gold" for themselves.

> "Questioning Breaks Open The Stagnant, Hardened Shells Of The Present, Opening Up Options To Be Explored.
> fran Peavey

The Game Plan Process

The steps in the Game Plan can be used both as a process discipline by individuals looking at a particular situation, as well as by functional and cross-functional groups and leadership teams charged with the responsibility for key decisions regarding future courses of action. The Game Plan can also involve diverse stakeholders to provide important perspectives both on the current situation and on possible future actions.

THE GAME PLAN PROCESS
Assess Your Current Situation
Discover the "Big Questions "
Create Images of Possibility
Evolve Workable Strategies

Assess Your Current Situation. Get a feel for the larger context in which you are operating. Scan the internal and external business and organizational environments that may affect the future of the system or project you are working with. This situation analysis might include the assessment of critical results data, meetings with key stakeholders, and the mapping of your strengths, opportunities,

and threats. It might also involve looking for "signals" – internal and external events, developments, and trends that can affect the future of your situation.Like trackers in the mountains, look for both obvious and subtle indicators that point to storms as well as sunny skies. Allow your curiosity and imagination to take the lead as you begin to identify the many questions that the broader landscape within which you're operating reveals. It will be challenging, but important, to frame your findings as questions rather than as problems or concerns – questions that end with a question mark, not with a period or an exclamation point. To help in designing these queries, ask yourself, "How does A affect C and what questions does that suggest? If X were at play here, what question would we be asking? What's the real question underneath all this data?"

Discover the "Big Questions." Once you think you've posed most of the relevant questions (and there may be many of them), look for patterns and themes. This is not a mechanical process, even though it should be disciplined and systematic. You are on a treasure hunt, seeking the core questions – usually three to five–that, if answered, would make the most difference to the future of the project or situation you are exploring. Cluster related questions, and consider the relationships among them. Begin to clarify the "big questions" that the initial clusters reveal. Frame these as clear and concise queries, not as problems. Something fundamental changes when people begin to ask questions together – they go beyond the normal stale debate about problems that passes for strategy in many organizations.

> "Strategic Questions Create A Resonant Field Into Which Your Own Thinking Is Magnified, Clarified, And New Motion Can Be Created."
> Fran Peavey,
> Strategic Questioning

Create Images of Possibility. Ask yourself, "What would our situation look like or be like if the 'big questions'were answered?" Creating vivid images of possibility differs from pie-in-the-sky visioning, especially if people with a variety of perspectives have participated in the earlier stages of your analysis. This part of the conversation can also provide clues for refining or reframing your big questions as well as inventing creative strategies.Developing scenarios – stories of the future based on different ways your big questions might be answered – can also be useful. These often reveal new territory and opportunities for action that are grounded in real life.

Evolve Workable Strategies. Workable strategies begin to emerge in response

to compelling questions and to the images of possibility that these questions evoke. In a sense, such strategies are the "big answers" – the key initiatives you invent to address your "big questions."Once you clarify key initiatives, you can formulate and implement specific action plans.

Of course, the cycle is never complete. You need continuous "sensing" based on relevant business and organizational data, ongoing conversations with internal and external stakeholders, informal conversations among employees, and feedback from the organizational environment. This input enables you to continually reassess the landscape you're operating in – revealing new questions for exploration.

The innovative leader with whom we developed the Game Plan process has shared this tool with the entire organization. People from throughout the company have found that it provides a way to discover questions that matter to the future of individual units and to the firm as a whole. The company has also used the Game Plan as part of refining the corporation's mission and values in the midst of a volatile and chang ing external climate. By moving from a problem orientation toward a more rigorous and disciplined focus on essential questions, the organization is slowly shifting from a "fix-it" mode to an inquiry model for business and organizational strategy evolution. This company has found that maintaining a rigorous focus on "questions that matter" and hosting strategic conversations on the organization's "big questions" is a core competence for leaders at all levels.

How Can Leaders Engage Powerful Questions?

For all organizations,in today's turbulent times, engaging people's best thinking about complex issues without easy answers will be the key to creating the futures we want rather than being forced to live with the futures we get. Leaders will need to develop capacity in the design of "inquiring systems" in order to learn, adapt, and create new knowledge to meet emerging opportunities and challenges in the more fluid organizational structures of the future.For example, the leadership challenges of the next 20 years are likely to revolve around the art of engaging and energizing networks rather than solely managing hierarchies as in the past. Successful leaders will be those who see organizations as living networks of conversation and collective meaning-making through which members create new knowledge and bring forth the future. They will under stand how to operate in networks that are both internal and external to their organization.

In particular,we believe the following core capabilities, rarely taught in today's MBA or corporate leadership programs, will help define leadership excellence in a networked world where knowledge and learning are keys to success:

Engaging Strategic Questions. How many leaders today know how to frame strategic questions that open the space for thinking about possibilities rather than solving problems? How many leaders are comfortable with not knowing and can constructively help others bring forth their collective knowledge? How many leaders can engage their workers in discovering the "big questions"that lie at the heart of their organization's future?

In a volatile and uncertain environment, one of the strongest steps leaders can take is to assist their organizations in discovering the right questions at the right time. One of their key responsibilities is creating infrastructures for dialogue and engagement that encourage others at all levels to develop insightful questions and to search for innovative paths forward. Leaders also need to consider reward systems that provide incentives for members to work across organizational boundaries to discover those challenging lines of inquiry that create common focus and new knowledge.

Convening and Hosting Learning Conversations. A core aspect of the leader's new work involves creating multiple opportunities for learning conversations around challenging questions. However, authentic conversation is less likely to occur in a climate of fear,mistrust, and hierarchical control. When the human mind and heart are fully engaged in authentic conversation and listening for core questions, new knowledge often begins to surface. Thus, the ability to facilitate working conversations that enhance trust and reduce fear is an important leadership capability.
To succeed in this pursuit, it's essential for leaders to strengthen their skills in the use of dialogue and other engagement approaches that deepen mutual inquiry and foster collective intelligence.

These capabilities include:
- Creating a climate of discovery
- Suspending premature judgment
- Exploring underlying assumptions and beliefs
- Listening for connections between ideas
- Encouraging diverse perspectives
- Honoring everyone's contributions

- Articulating shared understanding
- Harvesting and sharing collective discoveries

These skills are especially important in situations in which there are no simple answers and finding creative paths forward can make a positive difference.

Including Diverse Perspectives. Leaders must become connectors – of both people and ideas. Diverse voices and new perspectives that aren't limited by traditional boundaries of function, hierarchy, discipline, technology, tenure, and geographic region play an increasingly important role in a company's strategizing. As Gary Hamel of the London School of Economics points out, "Strategizing depends on creating a rich and complex web of conversations that cuts across previously isolated pockets of knowledge and creates new and unexpected combinations of insight."

The connections among these diverse voices and perspectives allow employees to fruitfully explore critical strategic questions. Building and encouraging personal relationships through networks of collaborative conversations across traditional boundaries helps critical strategic questions travel well. In this way, workers enhance their collective intelligence and their capacity to nurture creative futures together.

Supporting Appreciative Inquiry. Opening spaces of possibility in our organizations requires a shift in leadership orientation from focusing primarily on what is not working and how to fix it, to also discovering and appreciating what is working and how to leverage it. Appreciative Inquiry (AI), developed by David Cooperrider and his colleagues at Case Western University,is a process for leveraging emerging possibilities rather than just fixing past mistakes. When used in a disciplined way,this kind of inquiry stimulates lively conversations that use the best of what is as the foundation for what might be.

Leaders who ask, "What's possible here and who cares?" have a much easier time gaining the cooperation and best thinking of their constituents than those who ask, "What's wrong here and who is to blame?" In assessing the results of more than a decade of research and practice in the area of Appreciative Inquiry, Cooperrider has stated unequivocally that "the most important insight we have learned with AI to date is that human systems grow toward what they persistently ask questions about." By asking positive questions, organizations have the opportunity to grow in new directions and tap innovative sources of knowledge, vitality, and energy.

Fostering Shared Meaning. We make meaning of our experiences through stories, images, and metaphors. To tap into this pool of shared meaning, which is the ground from which both powerful questions and innovative solutions emerge, network leaders need to put time and attention into framing common language and developing shared images and metaphors. They can do so by constructing compelling scenarios – stories of the future – that provide a context for working on today's "big questions," as in the case of the Game Plan process described earlier. In addition, leaders must incorporate time for systemwide reflection in order to enable members to share insights and emerging questions.Collective reflection provides opportunities for the shared meaning-making that is essential in times of turbulence and change.

QUESTIONING
• Stimulates creativity
• Motivates fresh thinking
• Surfaces underlying assumptions
• Focuses intention, attention, and energy
• Opens the door to change
• Leads us into the future

Is Your Organization An Inquiring System? Assessing Your Organization's Capabilities

- To what degree do leaders in your organization foster an environment in which discovering the "big questions" is encouraged as much as coming up with workable solutions?

- Does your organization have rewards or incentives for members to work across functional boundaries to find challenging questions that create common focus and forward movement for knowledge creation?

- Do your leadership development programs contain as much of a focus on the art and architecture of framing powerful questions as they do on techniques for solving problems?

- Do your organization's strategic planning processes include structured ways to discover the "big questions" that, if answered, would have real strategic leverage?
- What enabling tools or technologies does your organization employ to "seed" itself with strategic questions that "travel well" and catalyze learning conversations both within and across functions?

- Does your organization use collaborative technology tools to enable people on the frontlines to ask each other questions related to their daily work (i.e. customer service, equipment maintenance) and receive help with these questions from colleagues in other locations?

- Do senior leaders in your organization see the process of strategy evolution as one that engages multiple voices and perspectives in networks of conversation?

QUESTIONS FOR ALL SEASONS

Here is a series of generative questions that we and other colleagues have found useful to stimulate new knowledge and creative thinking in a wide variety of situations around the world. Look at these questions to stimulate your own thinking about questions related to your own specific situation. Play. Use your imagination.

Questions for Focusing Collective Attention on Your Situation.

- What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of (your specific situation)?
- What's important to you about (your specific situation) and why do you care?
- What draws you/us to this inquiry?
- What's our intention here? What's the deeper purpose (the big "why") that is really worthy of our best effort?
- What opportunities can you see in (your specific situation)?
- What do we know so far/still need to learn about (your specific situation)?
- What are the dilemmas/opportunities in (your specific situation)?
- What assumptions do we need to test or challenge here in thinking about (your specific situation)?
- What would someone who had a very different set of beliefs than we do say about (your specific situation)?

Questions for Connecting Ideas and Finding Deeper Insight

- What's taking shape? What are you hearing underneath the variety of opinions being expressed? What's in the center of the table?
- What's emerging here for you? What new connections are you making?
- What had real meaning for you from what you've heard? What surprised you? What challenged you?
- What's missing from this picture so far? What is it we're not seeing? What

do we need more clarity about?

- What's been your/our major learning, insight, or discover so far?
- What's the next level of thinking we need to do?
- If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/ clarity, what would that be?

Questions That Create Forward Movement

- What would it take to create change on this issue?
- What could happen that would enable you/us to feel fully engaged and energized about (your specific situation)?
- What's possible here and who cares? (rather than "What's wrong here and who's responsible?")
- What needs our immediate attention going forward?
- If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we choose?
- How can we support each other in taking the next steps? What unique contribution can we each make?
- What challenges might come our way and how might we meet them?
- What conversation, if begun today, could ripple out in a way that created new possibilities for the future of (your situation)?
- What seed might we plant together today that could make the most difference to the future of (your situation)?

Nurturing Communities of Practice. Many of the most provocative questions that are vital to an organization's future are first discovered on the front lines, in the middle of the action of everyday life. But these key strategic questions are often lost because few of today's leaders have been trained to notice, honor, and utilize the social fabric of learning that occurs through informal "communities of practice" that exist throughout the organization. A community of practice is made of up people who share a common interest and who work together to expand their individual and collective capacity to solve problems over time.

Nurturing these learning networks and honoring the questions they care about is another core aspect of the leader's new work. It is important to understand how these communities deal with the questions and learning needs that arise in the course of the daily life of the organization. These understandings can provide clues about how the knowledge that resides in such communities might be engaged in the service of critical strategic questions. Leaders who take communities of practice into account as important strategic assets help assure that new work processes or organizational structures do not destroy the fabric of collective knowledge that is woven into these informal groups.

Using Collaborative Technologies. Intranet and groupware technologies are now making it possible for widely dispersed work groups to participate in learning conversations and team projects across time and space. As these tools become even more widely available, the notion of "network leadership" will expand to include supporting widespread online conversations where members throughout the organization can contribute their own questions and best thinking to critical strategic issues. The HP case shows how important enabling technology infrastructures are for strategic innovation. Several forward-looking companies, including Hallmark, Kodak, Discover Card, and General Motors, are now using an innovative online conversational technology, Communispace (www.communispace.com), to listen to their cus tomers' concerns and questions at a deep level and generate insights about new products at a faster rate than was previously possible.

Such collaborative tools will be a critical factor in how well strategic questions can travel both within the organization and among customers and other stakeholders who are key to success. These technologies of engagement create possibilities

for individuals and groups to connect with each other and to the larger whole in ways that were previously unimaginable. Leaders who are not skilled in their use or who do not recognize their strategic importance and support their use throughout their organizations will be at a significant disadvantage.

Co-Evolving the Future

It is quite easy to learn the basics of crafting powerful questions. However, once you understand the importance of inquiry, it's hard to turn back. As your questions become broader and deeper than before, so does your experience of life. There is no telling where a powerful question might lead you. Transformative conversations can result from posing a simple question such as, "What questions are we not asking our-selves about the situation in the Middle East?" Tantalizing possibilities emerge from the simple act of changing an article from "in" to "for," as in the HP example. Profound systemic change can emerge from creating a process discipline such as the Game Plan for discovering and acting on the "big questions" within a business setting.

> "A Question Not Asked Is A Door Not Opened."
> Marilee Goldberg,
> The Art Of The Question

For organizations that need collaborative learning and breakthrough thinking in order to create a sustainable future, asking "questions that matter" and engaging diverse constituencies in learning conversations are a core process for value creation. Because questions are inherently related to action, they are at the heart of an organization's capacity to mobilize the resources required to create a positive future. Seeing the organization as a dynamic network of conversations through which the enterprise develops encourages members at every level to search for questions related to real work that can catalyze collective energy and momentum. For all of us, thoughtful participation in discovering and exploring powerful questions can make a difference – to our team, to our organization, and to the larger com-munities of which we are a part.

Living systems evolve by developing a coherent identity, creating connections in complex webs of relationships, and distributing information widely throughout the organization. At the same time, human systems naturally evolve toward the questions that they ask. Seeing the ways in which the art and architecture of powerful questions can help an organization create its path into the future, and

utilizing process principles, tools, and technologies that support this evolution, is everyone's job. For it is only in this way that organizations are able to cultivate both the knowledge required to thrive economically today as well as the wisdom needed to ensure a sustainable future.

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Eric E.Vogt, Juanita Brown, and David Isaacs

For Further Exploration

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www.communispace.com provides software and services to support creative work conversations and large-scale corporate communities.

www.interclass.com is a hightrust community of experienced practitioners in large organizations exploring innovations in learning and human performance.

www.theworldcafe.com is a global resource for hosting conversations around questions that matter in both for-profit and nonprofit settings.

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MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Activities for Developing You and Your Business

ANN CARTWRIGHT AND AMANDA SOLLOWAY

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Daniel Goleman defines emotional intelligence as:

The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those in others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.

(Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence
-Why It Can Matter More Than IQ)

While accepting this definition, as were we considering the materials for this book we also decided to put together our own definition as follows:

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand, accept and recognize our own emotions and feelings, including their impact on ourselves and other people and to use this knowledge to improve our own behaviours as well as to manage and improve our relationship with others.

(Ann Cartwright and Amanda Solloway, 2007)

WHAT SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS ARE USED IN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Daniel Goleman uses the folloiwng four quadrants to define emotional intelligence in competencies for eladership:

Self-awareness	Social awareness
• Self-awareness • Accurate self-assessment • Self-confidence	• Empathy • Organizational awareness • Service
Self-management: • Self-control • Transparency • Adaptability • Achievement • Initiative • Optimism	Relationship management: • Inspiration • Influence • Developing others • Change catalyst • Conflict management • Teamwork and collaboration

FOUR TRIANGLES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
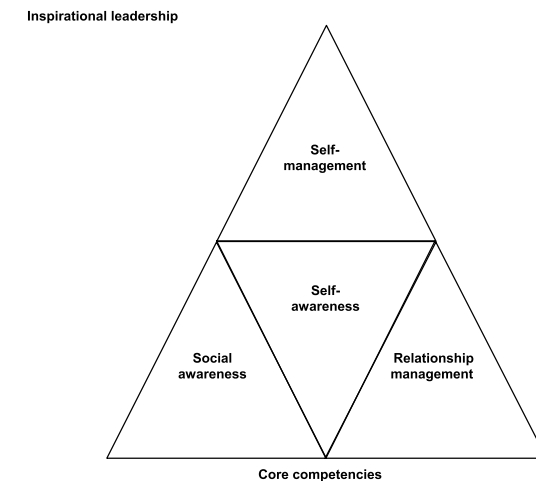
© Ann Cartwright and Amanda Solloway, February 2007. Adapted from Daniel Goleman's model of emotional intelligence (Emotional Intelligence – Why It Can Matter More Than IQ).

This model was designed to depict our belief that self-awareness lies at the centre of emotional intelligence. It is our belief that unless you have a deep and clear understanding of the self, you cannot effectively develop and manage the other three quadrants or triangles.

Underpinning the triangles are a number of core competencies, which we believe cut across each of the four headings. In addition, inspirational leadership requires a high level of skill and understanding of all four headings as well as the core competencies.

Having the power to 'see ourselves as other see us' would save us from making fools of ourselves and we can learn this skill by improving and developing our levels of self-awareness.

By increasing our levels of self-awareness we, in turn, increase our ability to manage ourselves and our behaviours that is, self-management. Likewise, by increasing our levels of self-awareness and self-management, we increase our levels of social awareness and relationship management. In short, we increase our emotional intelligence.

This series of activities is designed to assist the process of developing and increasing your levels of emotional intelligence. They can also be used to increase the emotional intelligence of your business and workforce.

Core Competency Activities

• *Communication skills:*

1. Listening for real;

2. Steps of communication;

3. Understanding, reading and using body language; language and voice tone;

4. Giving, receiving and using feedback;

5 Understanding, recognizing and using internal dialogues.

• *Emotional consciousness:*

1 Understanding and being aware of own emotions and what triggers them;

2 Recognizing, accepting and using intuition effectively.

Self-awareness Activities

1 Personal vision and values (how I see myself);

2 Understanding/knowing self (the Russian dolls of myself);

3. The Mercedes exercise; awareness

4. Knowing my values and beliefs;

5. Understanding and using personal motivation (trellis of experience);

6. Self-confidence;

7. Integrity;

8. Learning to be comfortable in my own skin;

9. Personal power and its impact on others;

10. What motivates me.
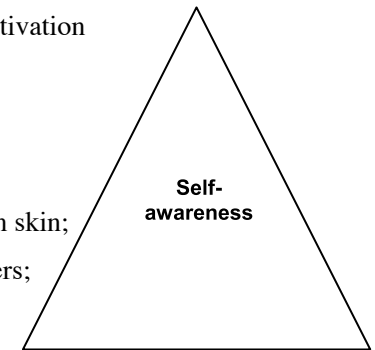
Self-awareness

Self-management Activities

1. Working with your intuition;

2. Becoming a role model;

3. Personal goals;

4. Positive thinking;

5. Managing personal change;

6. Self-coaching;

7. Self-esteem vs. self respect.

Self-management
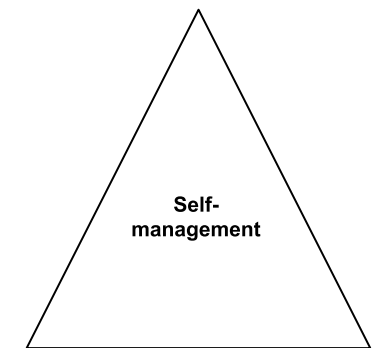
Social Awareness Activities

• Recognizing and valuing differences and similarities – people, cultures, protocols, and so on

1. Valuing differences;

2. Recognizing similarities; awareness

3. Cultural diversity and equality awareness.

• Establishing rapport with others – recognizing and acknowledging the behaviours and emotions of others:

1. Towards/away from;

2. Empathy – recognizing and acknowledging others' behaviours and emotions;

3 Understanding and entering someone else's world;

4 Pacing and leading;

5 Mirroring;

6 Initiating conversation;

7 Introvert vs. extrovert;

8 Recognizing and understanding organizational values/behaviours/ beliefs.
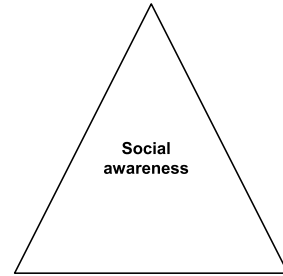
Relationship Management Activities

1. Seeking solutions/problem solving:

- Resolving conflicts

- Negotiation and mediation

- Win–Win solutions

- Agreeing to disagree

- Knowing when to fight and when to walk away

2. Assertiveness – helping others to be more assertive;

3. Establishing and building long-term relationships;
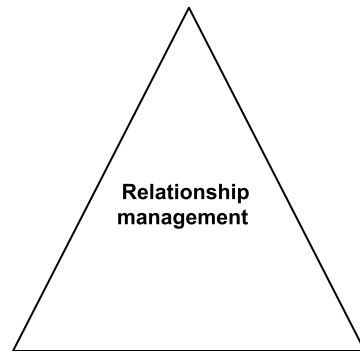
4. Recognizing what drives and motivates others;

5. Developing and maintaining openness, trust and honesty;

6. Change catalyst;

7. Team working and collaboration;

8. Goal setting and goal achievement.

Inspirational Leadership Activities

1. Inspiring a shared vision;

2. Developing leadership capacity;

3. Developing influencing skills;

4. Effective networking;

5. Making your customer relations legendary.

ASSESSING MY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Using a scale of 1–5 (1 = low, 5 = high), rank each statement.

PART 1: CORE SKILLS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Communication Skills

- I recognize and use active listening skills in every situation   [   ]

- I can understand, read and use body language, language and voice tone effectively   [   ]

- I can give, receive and use feedback effectively   [   ]

- I can understand, recognize and use my internal dialogues effectively   [   ]

Emotional Consciousness

- I understand and am aware of my own emotions, what triggers them and how to use them to manage my emotions.   [   ]

- I can recognize, accept and using my intuition effectively.   [   ]

Total - 30   [   ]

PART 2: SELF-AWARENESS

- I understand and know myself   [   ]
- I know my values and beliefs   [   ]
- I have self-confidence in all situations   [   ]
- I understand and use integrity at all times   [   ]
- I understand my own personal power and its impact on others   [   ]
- I am comfortable in my own skin   [   ]
- I know what motivates me   [   ]

total - 40   [   ]

PART 3: SELF-MANAGEMENT

- I understand and use self-coaching techniques   [   ]

- I understand and use the differences between self-esteem and self-respect   [   ]

- I am able to become an effective role model   [   ]

- I can manage personal change effectively   [   ]

- I set personal goals and take actions towards them   [   ]

- I practise positive thinking   [   ]

- I can work effectively with my intuition   [   ]

Total – 35   [   ]

PART 4 – SOCIAL AWARENESS

- I recognize and value differences and similarities between:

  – People   [   ]

  – Cultures   [   ]

  – Perspectives   [   ]

- I recognize and use empathy effectively   [   ]

- I can understand and enter someone else's world   [   ]

- I can establish rapport with others including:

  – Pacing and leading rapport   [   ]

  – mirroring their behaviour   [   ]

  – initiating conversations   [   ]

  – recognizing and using the differences between introvert and extrovert behaviours effectively   [   ]

- I recognize and understand organizational values, behaviours and beliefs   [   ]

Total - 50   [   ]

PART 5 – RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

- I actively seek solutions and solve problems by:

– Resolving conflicts	[ ]
– negotiation and mediation	[ ]
– Seeking win–win solutions	[ ]
– agreeing to disagree	[ ]
– Knowing when to fight and when to walk away	[ ]
• I actively help others to be more assertive	[ ]
• I can establish and build long-term relationships	[ ]
• I recognize what drives and motivates others	[ ]
• I can develop and maintain openness, trust and honesty	[ ]
• I can act as a change catalyst	[ ]
• I can collaborate and work in a team	[ ]
• I can set and achieve goals	[ ]
Total - 60	[ ]

PART 6 – INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP

• I can inspire a shared vision	[ ]
• I have developed leadership capacity	[ ]
• I have developed influencing skills	[ ]
• I have developed effective networking skills	[ ]
• I can make our customer relations legendary	[ ]
Total - 25	[ ]

Scores

Chapter	Total score available	My score for this section	What this tells me
1:- Core Skills	30		
2:- Self Awareness	40		
3:- Self Management	35		
4:- Social Awareness	50		
5:- Relationship Management	60		
6:- Inspirational Leadership	25		

Development Plan

Use the following table to record your reflections and plan your development.

Areas for development	Actions to be taken	Timescale	Help and support required How I will know and from whom

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Towards a Learning Madrasah:
Transforming the Madrasah into a Learning Community

Minhas Tejani

Introduction:

The institution of Madrasah has a key role in imparting Islamic Religious Education in order develop true Ithna Asheri Shias and it also has a long and evolving history. Every community has the vision of prosperity through development in various areas. Religious education has been given its due importance by every community whether it is developed or developing nation for its salvation and prosperity. Even the different religions of the world give due importance to acquiring religious education.

As a follow up of the madrasah retreat in 2011 a strategy document was prepared and approved at The World Federation conference in May 2011. A key recommendation was the formation of a formal madrasah structure to ensure that the madrasah agenda is always at the forefront of our leaders and our global organization. The Madrasah Centre of Excellence was established which is a vehicle that delivers and maintains the strategies for the madrasah program. Its focus is to attain harmony amongst the madaris and realize the vision which is "nurturing piety" and its mission is "to enable a learning environment that instills the values of Quran and the Ahlulbayt (AS)".

This concept paper will briefly explore the current status of Madrasah education and would particularly like to draw attention to some aspects of teaching and learning and suggest ways of transforming the Madrasah into a Learning Community. The focus of the concept paper is not to go into the depth of modalities but to suggest a framework for the change/transformation to initiate and sustain itself. The framework will somehow take into consideration the impact of transformation on the four work streams i.e. curriculum development, teacher training, learning resources, Assessment and Evaluation.

The Philosophical Perspective:

The two major sets of philosophical perspectives on education are the Greek and Hebrew. The understanding of these conflicting educational systems is important in determining the perspective of education. The Greek model of education shapes the modern educational theories. Greek education focused on content. Hebrew education focused on relationship. Greek teachers tried to shape students> minds. Hebrew teachers tried to shape students> hearts. Greek students were to learn what their teacher knew. Hebrew students were to become what their teacher was. The notion that one can merely teach the mind and body of a child without involving the heart and soul is the method of the Greeks.

The Greeks focused on the CONTENT of knowledge. The Hebrews focused on the CONTEXT. The Greeks saw minds as empty jars to be filled. They followed impersonal curriculum. The Hebrews saw minds as clay to be molded. They personalized the educational process by teachers spending time simply talking with, working with, playing with, living with, and their students.

The Islamic Perspective:

It is evident from the teachings of Islam that the greatest emphasis is based on the concept of "Taqwa" and one of the tools for acquiring Taqwa (Piety) is through "Ilm" (Knowledge). However it is significant to note that the concept of Taqwa is not absolute and it is more of a formative nature. It is not acquired through the performance of rituals only but through introspection, soul searching, pondering, learning and reflecting.

The Holy Quran at numerous instances mentioned about the significance of "Ilm". Some of the references are as follows:

1. Soora e Talaq Ayat 12: Where the creation of world is discussed and the glory of Allah's Qudrat through His knowledge.

2. Soora e Alaq Ayat 1-9: The whole soora is on the significance of Knowledge and teaching humans though Pen and letting humans learn that they did not know.

3. Soora e Fatir Ayat 29: Only the Ulema are the ones who are fearful of Allah.

4. Soora e Baqarah Ayat 269: Those who have wisdom are the ones with ample virtuousness.

Note: The above are not the actual translations of the Ayaat but the contextual meanings

Holy Prophet (PBUH) and Masomeen (AS) through their words and actions have also emphasized the importance of piety and acquiring knowledge and wisdom. The famous hadith of Holy Prophet "Acquire Knowledge from cradle to grave"

is a strong evidence of the importance of the formative nature of knowledge seeking. To conclude Madrasah should not confine its focus on acquisition of knowledge (memorization of facts) only but should broaden it horizon on molding the personalities so that they can move towards the taqwa. Thus the madrasah should not confine itself to "Taleem" but should focus on "Tarbiyah". This will also help in achieving the vision of MCE which is "Nurturing Piety"

The Concept of a Learning Community:

Staratt (1999) cited in Retalick and Farah (2005) defines a number of characteristics of a learning community, which can be easily related to the context of Madrasah and are as follows:

- Learning must be situated in a critical community of inquirers who support knowledge through sharing of meanings, interpretations, and learning amongst all members of the community.

- The learning agenda of the school (Madrasah) must be continually related to something intrinsically human- to the exploration of questions important to human individuals and social life.

- The school learnings are connected to a significant discourse about the making of history.

- School meanings (i.e. what students learn at school), must be continuously related to students' experience of everyday life.

Mitchell and Sackney (2000) cited in Retalick and Farah (2005) share three interrelated dimensions of capacity building for a learning community.

These are:
- Personal Capacity
- Interpersonal Capacity
- Organizational Capacity

Mitchell and Sackney (2000) conclude:

For us, a learning community consists in a group of people who take an active, reflective, collaborative, learning oriented and growth- promoting approach towards the mysteries, problems, and perplexities of teaching and learning.

From the above discussion it is quite evident that the Madrasah's need a paradigm shift into their approach towards teaching and learning. One of the important factors for making this shift is to transform the madrasah into a learning community. However the question arises how? The following discussion will help us understand how the madrasah can be transformed into a learning community.

Transformation of a Bureaucratic Organization into a Learning Community

Retalick and Farah (2005) have discussed the idea and stages of transformation of schools from Bureaucratic organizations to learning communities which are equally applicable in the context of Madrasah. During the discussion they argue that schools are seen as 'organizations' featuring bureaucracy, hierarchy, rules and regulations, policies and procedures etc. While discussing the concept of community they use the ideas of relationship, meaning, collaboration, reflection etc.

Scribner 1999 cited in Retalick and Farah (2005) suggests that bureaucratic organization and community are the opposite ends of a continuum.

Retalick and Farah (2005) suggest a three stage shift of schools from Bureaucratic organizations to Learning Communities.

Stage 1: From Bureaucratic organization to Learning Organization
Stage 2: From Learning Organization to Community of Practice
Stage 3: Designing a Learning Community

S Model for Organisational Development

Stage 1 :- From Bureaucratic Organization to Learning Organization:

As part of the Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Program of MCE it is evident that while assessing the madrasah an insight can be taken into whether the madrasah fulfills the criteria of a learning organization. In the training program for madrasah assessment and in the assessor's handbook the concept of madrasah as learning organization is mentioned with the details of the work of Peter Senge- The fifth discipline.

Argyris (1992) suggests that 'organizational learning is a competence that all organizations should develop'. In the book Schools that Learn Peter Senge (2000) and team discuss about the concept of single loop and double loop learning and its implications on the organizations. Argyris (1992) argues that single loop learning occurs when an error is detected and corrected without questioning or altering the underlying values of the system. Double loop learning occurs when errors are corrected by first examining and changing the governing variables of the organization and then the actions. A diagrammatic representation of the two types of learning is given below:

Single Loop Learning

PLAN → DO → CHECK → ADJUST

Double Loop Learning

ASSUME → PLAN → DO → CHECK → ADJUST → THINK AGAIN
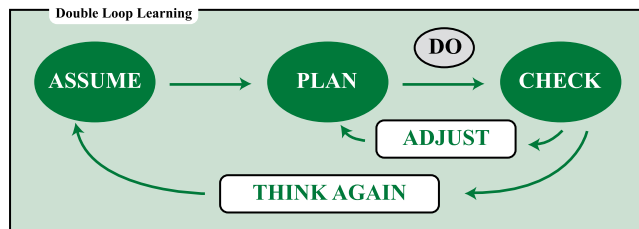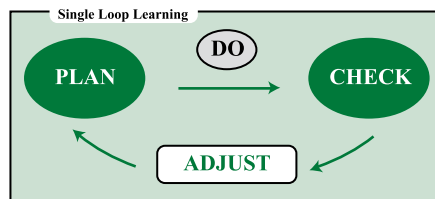
The core difference between the two is that in double loop learning you deliberately question and challenge your own norms, attitudes and assumptions. This helps to change the practices in a better and effective way. One of the effective means of carrying out double loop learning is to spend quality time on reflections that will help in changing the underlying assumptions of the organization.

Another significant work on learning organizations is done by Peter Senge (1990). He puts forward five interconnected disciplines for building learning organization.

These five disciplines are:
- Systems Thinking
- Personal Mastery
- Mental Models
- Shared Vision
- Team Learning

Stage 2 - **From Learning Organization to Community of Practice:**

Wenger (1998) cited in Retalick and Farah suggests "a community of practice is both social and individualistic; through social processes each individual develops and shapes their identity i.e. who they are, what they can and cannot do, how they relate with others and so on. Wenger has suggested three characteristics of a practice that generate the coherence required to constitute a community:

- Mutual engagement
- A joint enterprise
- A shared repertoire

The idea of mutual engagement refers to people discussing and negotiating meanings with each other. In a Madrasah setting it is very important for the teachers to have a mutual engagement to discuss and share their views on various aspects related to teaching and learning.

We also need to keep one fact in mind that there will be diversity of views and opinions. A joint enterprise is the result of a collective process of negotiation reflecting the full complexity of mutual engagement and it creates among participants, relations of mutual accountability that form an integral part of the practice.

In the madrasah setup it can be done for curriculum development and implementation. The shared repertoire or set of resources include routines, artifacts, tools, ways of doing things etc. In a madrasah setup sharing of the best practices amongst the colleagues and amongst other madrasahs can be done very easily.

Stage 3 - **Designing a Learning Community:**

An important principle of designing a learning community is that students have varied opportunities and places for engagement. In a madrasah setting ample opportunities should be given to a student to have varied opportunities for learning inside and outside the classroom.

Mitchell and Sackney (2000) use the term 'learning architecture' to suggest that the elements of a learning community need to be consciously built alongside the 'physical architecture'. The elements are: learning teams, a learning agent, time, feedback, incentives and rewards.

It is imperative to note that learning is not confined to the students and the madrasah should focus on the following three levels to organize the reach the level of a learning community.

These levels are:
• Students
• Teachers
• Community (Parents and overall community)

Conclusion:

In this concept paper the idea of embarking upon the journey towards becoming learning communities is proposed. The journey as discussed is challenging but it will be the basis of transforming the madrasah education particularly its outlook on teaching and learning. As argued above it has to come in phases and stages and it requires constant action and reflection.

All the stakeholders i.e. community, parents, teachers, students have to work seriously to attain this target. If we are to achieve our target it will have a significant impact on the future generations.

References:

The following books were used for developing this concept paper:

1. Retallick and Farah (2005) Transforming Schools in Pakistan – Towards the Learning Community.

2. Senge Peter (2000) Schools that Learn – A fifth discipline field book for educators, parents and everyone who cares about education.

3. Assessors Handbook- Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Program - MCE The World Federation (July 2012).

4. Muniat-ul Murid (in Urdu) by Shaheed e Saani (2007).

" *Verily, knowledge is a lock and its key is the question* "

Imam Al Sadiq

SECTION 3
SLIDES

Madrasah
Centre of
Excellence

THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES
www.world-federation.org

ISLAMIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Nurturing piety
*through enabling a
learning environment
that instils the values of
the Holy Qur'an
and the Ahlul Bayt (as)*

What is Madrasah Centre of Excellence?

Formal madrasah structure established by the World Federation to drive its madrasah initiative.

Why was it formed?

- Madrasah Retreat held in Dubai in February 2011.

- Strategy document was prepared for the Madrasah Agenda of the World Federation.

- Approved at the World Federation Conference in May 2011.

- A key recommendation was the formation of a designated madrasah department.

What is the need for it?

- To solve the existing and future challenges faced by our madaris worldwide.
- The focus of MCE would be to attain harmony amongst the madaris and realise the vision by coordinating the work streams.

How will MCE achieve its mission?

- *Head of MCE* – **Naushad Mehrali**
- *Curriculum Development* – **Safder Jaffer**
- *Teacher Development* – **Syed Ali Naqvi and Minhas Tejani**
- *Learning Resources* – **Jaffer Jaffer**
- *Assessment and Evaluation* – **Yasin Rahim**

What will each work stream do?

Curriculum Development

- Provide a curriculum framework that can be tailored to individual Madrasah needs and which would be reviewed periodically.

Teacher Development

- Facilitate the provision of training to meet the training needs of the madrasah teachers.
- Representative body providing support and a forum for teachers to interact, share valuable experiences and learn.

What will each work stream do?

Learning Resources

- Provide a comprehensive resource centre for teachers, parents and students where resources can be shared globally encouraging development of new ideas and innovation.

Assessment and Evaluation

- Create a learning environment for all where the students, teachers and institutions are assessed and evaluated with a view to continually improve.

How will the madaris be involved in the process?

- The purpose of MCE is neither to reinvent the wheel nor to be autocratic.
- Partnership with the madrasah which in turn, is a partnership between teachers, students and parents.
- Engage the madaris at various stages.

Will the global curriculum be enforced upon all madaris?

- MCE's approach will be to find solutions for the challenges we are facing.
- MCE, with the assistance of madaris, will prepare a comprehensive global curriculum framework.
- Madaris will be encouraged to adopt this framework so that we can reap the benefits of a single curriculum framework.
- No madrasah will be forced to implement it.

Will course books be produced?

- Two formats – published materials and online resources.
- If the resource material is not already available, it will be produced.

By Assessment and Evaluation do you mean inspections, rating and naming and shaming ?

- No. Assessments will be about supporting and developing the madrasah.
- Standards for assessment of madrasah.
- Developmental support for non-compliance to any of the standards.

How long will the whole MCE programme take?

- Building blocks - 3 to 5 years.
- Implementation - longer
- Maintenance - indefinite

Partnership between the MCE and regional federations

The role of regional champions:

- Participate in meetings of the full MCE Team as required.
- Liaise with Heads of work-streams to ensure that any regional variations are adequately catered for in the action plan of each work stream.
- Assist with the collection of data and any other information from the Madaris in the region as and when required.
- Assist with the marketing of the work of MCE within the regional community.
- Facilitate visits to the region by members of MCE Team.
- Interact with the Madaris in the region to evaluate their needs and to implement the Madrasah Centre of Excellence services in the most effective manner.

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Programme

Developing Assessors

> *"When we come in*
> *they should welcome us*
> *and*
> *when we leave*
> *they should know that we have left.*
> *What has happened*
> *there is created by them."*

Introduction and Context Setting

✦ **Context setting of assessment**

- Where have we come from?

- Where we are going?

✦ **Facilitator introduction**

✦ **Group work**

- How will you assess the facilitators who are running this programme over the next 2 days?

Different types of assessments

- SUMMATIVE assessment is characterized as assessment *of* the madrasah and is contrasted with FORMATIVE assessment, which is assessment *for* the madrasah.

Summative assessments

- The goal of summative assessment is to measure the level of success of the madrasah that has been obtained by comparing it against another madrasah.

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Formative assessments

- The goal of formative assessment is to gather feedback that can be used by the madrasah through self assessment so as to help it to improve what it does.

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5 Principles of MAEP

- Light touch

- Formative in its approach

- Proportionate

- Information driven

- Transparent and Authentic

How would MAEP work?

- Self assessment on 4 standards. This will be an on line questionnaire where the madrasah would assess itself to be either fully compliant or partially compliant to the standards.

- Visit by the MCE to assess the madrasah's compliance to the standards: sitting in a few classes, talking to parents, teachers and students.

- Report written and checked with the madrasah for factual accuracy.

- Where "partially compliant" support madrasah to become fully compliant through a madrasah capacity building programme tailored for the madrasah.

Standards for madrasah

- **Standard 1:** Madrasah apply principles of good corporate governance
  Outcome: Parents and learners have confidence in the learning environment provided by the Madrasah

- **Standard 2:** Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and or experienced personnel
  Outcome: Teachers feel supported to nurture their skills and constantly develope their abilities in supporting the learners

- **Standard 3:** There are systems and processes in place to asses progress in the madrasah
  Outcome: The Madrasah utilises appropriate assessment criteria to measure the learner's growth and development and supports all types of learning needs and learner's abilities

- **Standard 4:** Madrasah has a positive impact in the lives of the children, the parents the local community and the wider society
  Outcome: The learner is able to transform his learning to the positive development of his local jamaat and neighbourhood

Data from the madrasah

- Madrasah would be invited to to undertake a survey of parents and teachers on its effectiveness. Copy of draft questionnaire will be shared.

- *In future, plans for two on-line questionnaires:*

  - Spiritual Growth Questionnaire.

  - Madrasah Gross Happiness Questionnaire.

Assessment Process

- Assessors would have to undertake assessment by asking organisation on how they meet the standards.

- Process would be through questions on the standards.

- Some questions are included in the handbook on page 229-231

- Visit would be approximately 5-7 hrs.

- Between 4-6 assessors to visit the madrasah to undertake assessment.

- Assessment record sheet to be completed by assessors.

- Assessment records can be left with the madrasah.

Assessment Process

- Interview approximately 8-12 teachers depending on the size of madrasah.

- Observe 2-3 classes.

- Obtain examples of lesson plans taught on that day.

- Sharing of at least ONE good practice.

- Assessors would need to reach judgments on compliance to the four standards.

- Report to be drafted by assessors and sent to MCE.

- MCE to benchmark reports.

Assessment Process

- Report sent to madrasah for factual accuracy.

- Madrasah to decide how to share the report.

- Any action plan to be delivered with the MCE, local regional federation and the madrasah.

Reaching Judgements

- **Option 1:** The madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant to the standards.

- **Option 2:** Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is partially compliant.

- **Option 3:** Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant.

Reaching Judgements (Cont'd)

- **Option 4:** Madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is partially compliant.

- **Option 5:** Madrasah has declared itself fully compliant and the judgment reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant, but to maintain compliance, assessors have suggested improvements that need to be implemented by the madrasah.

- **Option 6:** Madrasah has declared itself partially compliant whereas the judgement reached by the assessors is that it is fully compliant, but to maintain compliance, assessors have made recommendations that the madrasah may consider for implementation.

Support for the Madrasah

- The MCE would also provide individual support to the madrasah for purpose of continuous improvements where needed. The suggestions for improvements would be co-designed by the assessors and the madrasah.

- Knowing what we know about madaris, WHAT one challenge will the assessment programme face and HOW could we overcome it?

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Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Programme

Developing Assessors

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Dua

"Oh lord expand for me my breast, make my task easy for me, loose the knot of my tongue, that they may understand my speech." Taha – 25-28

I hold on to Allah, and in Allah I have confidence and on Allah I rely.

Concepts

- Capablity and Capacity
- Content & Process
- Assessor Journey
- Knowledge Paradox
- Not Microwave Assessors

Knowledge Paradox

Things on my Exam

Things I was Taught

Things I Learned

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Content & Process

Content

- What
- Prophet Mohammad (SAW)
- India
- History of Mongols
- Hinduism
- Nuclear Energy
- Drugs
- Diseases

Process

- How
- Reading
- Lecturing
- Discussion
- Observation
- Writing
- Tutorial
- Role Play
- Mentoring

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Our Ground Rules

- Confidentiality
- Respect
- Active listening
- Non judgemental
- Support
- Punctuality
- Authentic
- Cell Phone on silent /vibrate
- WF Gender Interaction Policy
- Do you want to add or remove any ground rules?

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Respect vs Tolerance

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Understanding Self

As Assessors for Madrasah

Understanding Self As Assessors For Madrasah

- Personal Windows

- Our Lenses

- Iceberg

- Mindmaps

- Perceptions

- Emotional Intelligence

- MBTI

Arif is quick to act

Sajedah finds him abrasive
Yasmin finds him rash
Mahmood finds him pushy

Who is right?

Understand self and others

- Personal windows

- Our lenses

- Know your own windows and lenses

- Understand others by seeing through their lenses and windows

The real journey of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

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*We live under the same sky but we all
have different horizons*

Understanding Organisations

An iceberg

- the surface is based on a much deeper (and bigger) reality, yet this reality is usually unexamined.

THE ICEBERG

HOW MUCH DO YOU SEE OF AN ICEBERG?

THE ICEBERG

ONLY 10% OF <u>ANY</u> ICEBERG IS VISIBLE. THE REMAINING 90% IS BELOW SEA LEVEL.

THE ORGANISATION ICEBERG

The Organisational Iceberg

Formal Organisation

Formal
Organisational structure
Policies and protocols
Products & services
Annual accounts
Management hierarchy

Informal Organisation

Values, attitudes & beliefs
Leadership style & behaviour
Organisational culture
Power, politics & conflict
Informal groupings

REFLECTION

On your tables, discuss the madrasah ICEBERG.
What can be seen? What is unseen?

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The Madrasah Iceberg

**Formal
Organisation**

**Informal
Organisation**

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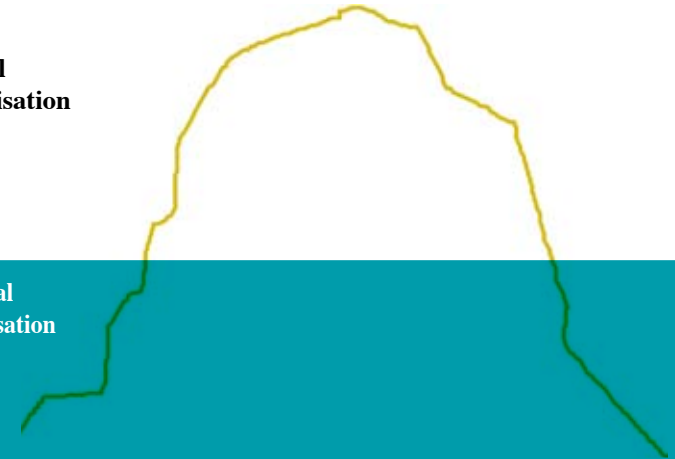
Personal Mind Maps

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The Perception of Others

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Who/what is he?

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Perception of Others

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The Perception of Others

Count the number of 'F's in box below

Finished files are the result of many years of scientific research and the experience of many varied facts

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Perception

Perceptions

What is the difference between:

6 + 2 = 8

8 = 6 + 2

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Emotional Intelligence

The capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.

Daniel Goleman

Some reflections as assessors

- You have unique window into the madrasah.
- It is subjective and filtered view.
- Don't expect others to see what you see.
- Your own personal iceberg could influence the assessment process.

Understanding Self

- How does the understanding of my own iceberg help me?

- What does it stop me seeing or doing? (perspectives / actions)

- How does it influence my behaviour?

- How will it come in or help in the process of madrasah assessment?

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Madrasah Assessment
and
Evaluation Programme

Learning Organisations

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What is Learning?

- Learning has happened when people can demonstrate that they know something they didn't know before (insights and realisations as well as facts) and/or when they can do something they couldn't do before (skills).

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Learning Experiences

- What have been your most enjoyable and best learning experiences and why?

- What have been your most painful and worst learning experiences and why?

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Learning

- **Pedagogic Learning**

- **Andragogic Learning**

Learning

	Pedagogy	Andragogy
What, How & When to learn	Teacher decides	Adult learner decides
Past experiences	Not a resource for learning	Rich past experiences as learning resource
Attitude	Passive and submissive	Driven by own development needs
Orientation	Knowledge & subject based	Problem based & contextual
Dependency	Teacher dependant, self concept is dependant	Self directed and autonomous

Learning - continued

	Pedagogy	**Andragogy**
Motivation	External – grades, parents, teachers	Internally driven & personal pay offs
Outcome	Dependency	Independence
Process	Teaching & telling	Facilitation
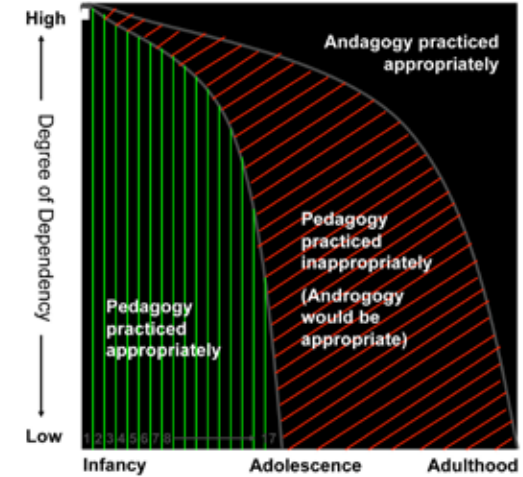
Self directed Learning

- Self directed learning has been defined as "a process in which individuals take the initiative in designing learning experiences, diagnosing need, locating resources and evaluating learning".

PRAGMATIST
Stage 4
Planning the next steps

ACTIVISTS
Stage 1
Having an experience

THEORIST
Stage 3
Concluding from the experience

REFLECTOR
Stage 2
Reviewing the experience

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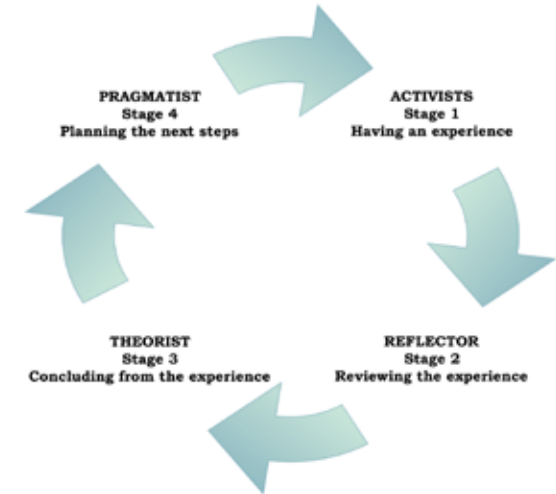
Definition of a learning organisation

It is an organization where <u>people</u> continually expand their <u>capacity</u> to <u>create</u> <u>the results</u> they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are <u>nurtured</u>, where collective aspiration is <u>set free</u>, and where people are continually learning how to <u>learn together</u>".

What does it mean…..

A "Learning Organization" is one in which <u>people</u> at all levels, individually and collectively, are continually increasing their capacity to produce results they really care about.

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What makes a Learning Organisation?

Learning Organisations

- Are internally motivated and self directed

- Bring collective life experiences and knowledge to learning

- Goal oriented

- Practical

- Like to be respected

5 Disciplines to create a Learning Organisation

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Architecture of a Learning Organisation

✦ **Shared Vision**

- Building a sense of commitment in a group, by developing shared images of the future we seek to create, and the principles and guiding practices by which we hope to get there.

✦ **Personal Mastery**

- Personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience and of seeing reality objectively. Personal mastery is when an individual has a clear vision of a goal, combined with an accurate perception of reality.

Architecture of a Learning Organisation

✦ **Mental Models**

- We have to understand who we are in order to see where we would like to go and to develop. We have to identify the values of the organisation and the perception of what the business is all about.

✦ **Team Learning**

- Team learning is the discipline by which personal mastery and shared vision are brought together. The discipline of team learning starts with a dialogue.

Architecture of a Learning Organisation

✦ **Systems Thinking**

- An action on one part of the organisation will have an impact or consequence (intended or unintended) on another part of the organisation. We have to understand the correlation between actions and consequences, and that they can occur in different time spans.

S Model for Organisational Development

Learning Community

Communities of Practice

Learning Organisation

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Reflection Question

- How can madaris be learning organisations?

- What is OUR role as assessors in managing the assessment process and supporting the madrasah to become a learning organisation?

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Madrasah Assessor Programme

Skills for Assessors

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Exercise on tables

What skills are essential for assessors?

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Essential Skills for Assessors

- Active listening

- Questioning skills

- Empathy

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*"Seek first to understand
then to be understood"*

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ

*And they shall say: Had we but listened or pondered, we
should not have been among the inmates of the burning fire.*
(Qur'an 67:10)

Active Listening

This is listening with your

- Eyes
- Heart
- Ears

Becoming an Active Listener

- Pay Attention
- Show that you are listening
- Provide feedback through body language and where appropriate words (paraphrasing)
- Defer judgement
- Treat the other person as they would like to be treated

Listening Mnemonic

- **L**ook and feel interested

- **I**ncisive question at the right time

- **S**ilence is golden

- **T**est your understanding through paraphrasing

- **E**ncourage through non verbal communication

- **N**eutralise your feelings

Questioning Skills

*You can tell a
clever and a wise person
by the questions they ask*

What Do Questions Do?

- Essential tool for andragogy
- Stimulate reflection and fresh thinking
- Assist in understanding the iceberg under the water
- Focus intention, attention and energy
- Open the door to change
- Generate greater insight

Questioning Skills

MORE POWERFUL

HOW
WHAT
WHO, WHEN
WHERE
YES/NO QUESTIONS

LESS POWERFUL
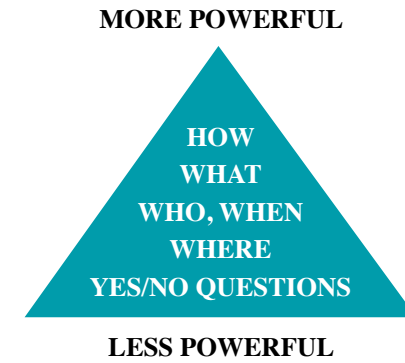
Questions to Avoid

Steer away from WHY questions because they are judgemental…..

- Why did you do this?

- Why do you believe in God

- Why do you want to be an assessor….

Types of Questions

- Open Ended Questions

- Close Ended Questions

- Exploratory Questions

- Inquiry Questions

From LESS Powerful to MORE Powerful Questions

- Are you satisfied with our relationship?

- When have you been most satisfied with our relationship?

- What is it about our working relationship that you find most satisfying?

- What might be the reasons for which our relationship has had its ups and downs?

What makes a POWERFUL question

- Thought provoking

- Surfaces organisational iceberg

- Invites creativity and forward movement

- Touches a deeper understanding of the organisation

- Generates greater insight

Some examples of good questions for assessors

Exercise: In your groups look at the 4 standards and identify questions you could ask as part of your assessment.

Empathy Skills

Definition: Mentally entering the feeling of a person, appreciating their perception and their understanding or "walking in someone else's shoes".

How to Develop Empathy

- Listen in a way to ignite the human mind

- Attention to the listener

- Show appreciation

- Create ease

- Encourage

Exercise

In your groups, discuss THREE ways in which you could "create" empathy in your role as assessors

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Albert Einstein

"We can not solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them"

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Notes:

Notes:

SECTION 4
APPENDICES

SECTION 4 – APPENDICES

A MAEP
1. MAEP Action Plan (2012 – 2014)
2. FAQs
3. MCE Regional Representatices

B THE ASSESSOR
1. Job description
2. Person specification
3. Code of conduct
4. Confidentiality agreement
5. Personal Development Plan (PDP)

C THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS
1. Madrasah self-assessment form
2. Teachers' questionnaire
3. Parents' questionnaire
4. Tentative assessment day time table
5. Crib sheets for gathering evidence on the four standards
6. MAEP Assessment record
7. Template for classroom observation
8. MAEP report template
9. Sample report – Luton Madrasah
10. Madrasah Development Plan (MDP)

D ESSENTIAL TOOLS
1. Assessment scenarios for interviews with teachers
2. Agenda for interviews with teachers
3. Evaluation form for interviewees
4. Assessors' self-evaluation form
5. Observer feedback form

Action Plan – Assessment and Evaluation until December 2014

Objectives				
	What	*How*	*When*	*Who*
1. Co-create process for assessment and evaluation of madaris.	a) Pilot a process for assessment and evaluation based on standards.	i) Jointly with madrasah develop a process for assessment and evaluation. This will be done in madaris: Hyderi, Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi, Leicester and 3 madaris in North America. ii) Each assessment undertaken will have a report published. iii) Each assessment would build on previous assessment using the model of PDSA (Plan, Do, Study Act).	May 2012 In Hyderi. September 2012 in Dar and Nairobi. February 2013 in Leicester. 3 Madaris in NA. 2 additional madaris in the UK.	Team of assessors
	b) Train 80 assessors to undertake assessment and evaluation.	i) Develop training material for assessors ii) Train assessors in UK, Africa and North America.	April 2012. April 2012 in UK. July 2012 in Dar. March 2013 in NA. April 2013 in UK.	Akber Mohamed ali and Yasin Rahim.
2. Assessment and evaluation of madaris.	a) Complete a methodology for assessment and evaluation of a madrasah and training programme of assessors.	i) From the five pilots, design a methodology for assessment and evaluation of madrasah. ii) Develop a training manual for assessors.	March 2013.	
	b) Train assessors in each region to undertake assessment of that region.	i) Assessment training to be held in Dar-es-Salaam, London, Toronto.	April 2013 in London, March 2013 in Toronto.	

Objectives				
	What	**How**	**When**	**Who**
3. Assessment and evaluation of madaris.	a) Undertake at least 3 assessment for madrasah in each region.	i) Ensure at least 3 assessment for madrasah undertaken in each region: Africa, Europe and North America by the local assessors in 2013.	2013	Team of assessors developed locally
	b) Assessors meeting regionally to assess learning from the assessment and evaluation process.	i) Assessors seminar regionally. Three regions. The model of evaluation for learning from the assessment undertaken would be PDSA.	August 2013 in Dar for assessors in Africa. November 2013 in Toronto for assessors in NA. December 2013 in UK for assessors in UK.	
4. Revisit the methodology for assessment and evaluation based on feedback from the meeting with assessors regionally.	a) Redevelop the methodology for assessment and evaluation of a madrasah and training programme of assessors.	i) Examine the feedback from assessors and redesign methodology for assessment and evaluation. ii) Redevelop a new training manual for assessors.	January 2014 February 2014	
	a) Undertake 4 assessment for madrasah in each region.	i) Ensure 4 assessment for madrasah undertaken in each region: Africa, Europe and North America by the local assessors in 2014.	2014	

Frequently Asked Questions on the Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Process

What is MAEP

MAEP is about raising standards in our madaris globally through a process that is designed, detailed and implemented by those working in the madrasah.

What MAEP is NOT about?

MAEP is not a madrasah inspectorate system. Research has shown that the best way to improve performance of any system is through self assessment and evaluation of that assessment. Interventions through an inspectorate system are de-motivating and are not sustainable.

Why are we doing this work?

We are doing it to help and support madaris to raise standards. The program was agreed at the WF Triennial Conference in May 2011 after the Dubai Madrasah Retreat of February 2011.

Why do we need to train assessors for this role?

This is a new area of our work and we have developed methodology that needs to be delivered face to face. The role of the assessor is critical in this process and having a training session where we all meet will enable us to deliver the program effectively.

What am I committing to as an assessor after attending the two day program?

We are looking for assessors to give between 6-8 days per year for this work. They will need to visit madaris in their local region and undertake the assessment. The assessment will last between 4-6 hours depending on the size of the madrasah.

Can you expand on the 6-8 days per year? How many visits will I have to undertake in a year?

We are asking for a commitment of 6-8 days per year. The visits will generally take place during madrasah hours so that you can observe the madrasah at work. Since most madaris conduct lessons on weekends, it is anticipated that a large part of your work will be carried out over a weekend. This includes travelling to

the city where the madrasah is located on Friday night/Saturday morning, a pre-assessment briefing by the head of MAEP and Lead Assessor, a meeting with the madrasah committee to explain to them the process, and undertaking the actual assessment. You will then be given one week to write and submit a report of your findings. This should generally take about 4 hours in total.

Who will coordinate the visit to the madrasah?

The Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE) will undertake all administration work to plan for the visit. There should be minimal administration work by the assessors (less than an hour) to organise their travel. All other arrangements will be made by the MCE, including boarding and lodging.

Will I be conducting the assessments on my own?

No. You will carry out the assessment as part of a team of 6-8 people from your region, depending on the size of the madrasah being assessed. MCE is therefore training individuals from all regions to enable locally trained assessors to carry out the assessments. During the pilot assessments, two people from the MCE will be with you to support the team.

How many assessors have been trained so far?

We have trained 44 assessors so far. The first training session took place in April 2012 in Birmingham where we trained individuals from Africa, North America and Europe.

The 2nd training session took place in September 2012 in Dar-es-Salaam where we trained individuals from Nairobi, Mombasa, Arusha, Dar-es-Salaam and Bukoba.

The 3rd training session for assessors is scheduled to take place in Toronto on the 29-31st March 2013, and the 4th training session is scheduled for 26 – 28 April 2013 for assessors in the UK.

Which regions are coming to this meeting in Birmingham?

We have invited over 25 people noting that some may not be able to make it due to their previous commitment. We are hoping to have at least 18 people, 6 from each of the regions: Africa, North America and Europe.

Would I have to be actively involved in the madrasah after I have finished the assessment?

No, unless you choose to do so. The model of assessment is such that it is there to help and support the madrasah to deliver what they think they need to meet the standards. The people who best know how to achieve what they need to achieve are the madrasah themselves.

The role of the assessor is to assess how the madrasah is meeting the standards and help engage with it to meet the standards in full if it is partially meeting them.

Will I be delegated any work by the madrasah?

No. Neither the madrasah you assess nor the MCE will ask you to do anything besides completing the assessment report.

So what exactly is the assessment process about?

The assessment is based on self-certification by the madrasah to the standards identified by the Madrasah Centre of Excellence and a visit by the assessors to have conversations with the madrasah on how they are meeting the standards.

What is the role of the assessors?

This will be fully explained at the MAEP training session.

The objectives of the training session are:

1. To understand the models of assessment and evaluation, and co-create an appropriate model for the madrasah.

2. To develop a common understanding of the institution of the madrasah.

3. To enhance communication skills required to assessments.

4. To share the draft process of assessment so as to have a common understanding.

5. To understand the impact of the assessors on the process of assessment

If I decide to attend, what can I expect to achieve at the end of it?

At the end of the training session, participants will have:

1. A common understanding of the work of the Madrasah Centre of Excellence.

2. An appreciation of adult learning models and its application in assessment and evaluation.

3. An overview of the madrasah assessment process and its application.

4. An increased understanding of self and its impact on the assessment and evaluation process.

5. An understanding of the concept of "iceberg" and its application to the institution of madrasah.

6. An opportunity to enhance and practice communication skills required in the assessment process.

7. An opportunity to compile a draft report for a madrasah.

Will the assessors have the freedom to move around during the assessment? Being able to ask questions to teachers / students of their choice and not chosen by the madaris?

Yes, during the assessment process you will have the freedom to move around but it is essential that you work with the madrasah as they will have identified for you teachers to talk to and classes to sit in.talking with students will be more flexible. Remember that we are approaching this from a supportive and facilitative approach.

What happens after the assessment?

After the assessment, a report will be prepared for the madrasah. The report will not be in the public domain and the report will contain information of what was found during the visit and an agreed action plan.

Support for the implementation of the action plan could, if the madrasah so chooses, come from MCE. However, it would be up to the madrasah to decide what to implement to become compliant to the standard and how to implement.

What outputs are provided to the madrasah after the assessment?

The madrasah gets a detailed report about the visit. This report will be written by the assessors and quality assured by the MCE. Training on how to write a report will be provided to assessors at the training session.

Is this a paper exercise?

No. It is the beginning of a long-term programme. It is an exercise to support but that can only be received as the MCE develops a relationship with the madrasah. Through the standards and the self-evaluation and self-assessment, MCE will build relationships with madaris and facilitate change locally.

Who will cover the cost of travel for the assessment?

The World Federation would cover travel cost and all associated expenses such as accommodation. The individual who accepts to be in the role of an assessor will not be out of pocket.

Why have I been selected to become an assessor? Why did you not advertise for the role so anyone could apply?

We have taken various approaches to select assessors. In some regions, we have asked local people to identify for us individuals in their region suitable for this work. In others, we have relied on our personal networks to select people who we know have worked in the madrasah or familiar with concepts that are covered in this program.

How often will a madrasah be assessed?

We plan to assess madrasah every 3-4 years. This will depend on how many assessors we recruit and the programme of assessment.

So what are the next steps?

We hope you can attend the training session. If you need accommodation, please confirm the same by writing to Naushad Mehrali at mce@world-federation.org. Participants are requested to have completed an assessment of their MBTI before attending the session. They should have a best fit of their MBTI with them when they come to the programme.

This will enable and enhance their participation in the programme. Please bring your MBTI Introduction to Type Book to this training session. We shall be referring to it in the training.

Is doing the MBTI essential?

Yes. It is essential. The training session builds on that.

I have not done an MBTI but would like to take part in the program. What do I do?

If you chose to be an assessor, we will arrange for you to have your MBTI done. This involves completing a questionnaire, followed by a feedback session. The entire process will take about 3 hours. This will have to be done before you attend the training program.

*Is attending the Leadership Development Programme (LDP) essential?*

If you chose to be an assessor, we would expect you to have either attended or plan to attend an LDP coordinated by the World Federation. We find this helps in the role of the assessor. If you have not attended the LDP programme previously, the cost of it will be borne by the MCE and will be part of your personal development plan.

What is a Personal Development Plan (PDP)?

A PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken by all assessors to reflect upon their own learning, performance and achievement. As assessors, you will be required to submit a PDP after the training program. As adult learners, it is essential to ensure you identify areas of your development and ways you can achieve this.

So are we starting the assessment of a madrasah straight away?

No. We have adopted the following model for our pilot assessments:

Double Loop Learning

ASSUME → PLAN → DO → CHECK → ADJUST → THINK AGAIN
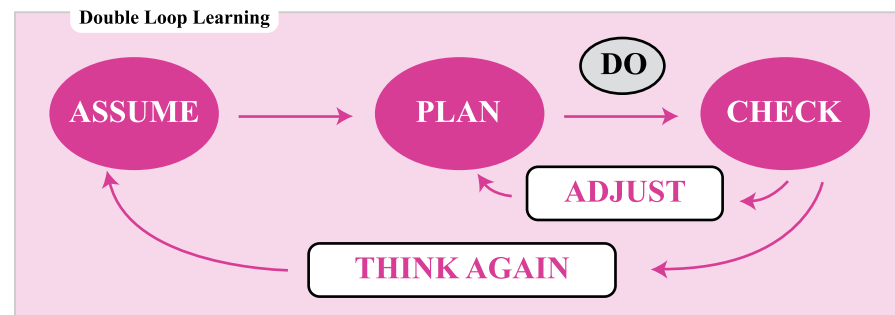
We have designed an assessment process, which we are piloting at various madaris worldwide. After the pilot assessments, we will evaluate the process to see what works and what needs changing.

Assessors from every region will meet with the madaris that participated in the pilot assessments to test our assumptions of the current process. This testing of the assumptions will enable us to adjust the process to make it more suitable.

Piloting the process

We are planning to pilot the process in a few madaris in Europe, North America and Africa. Assessors will be expected to attend one of the pilot programmes for assessment of a madrasah so as to put into practice the skills they have acquired and test the methodology in practice.

The programme of the pilots are as follows:

Europe: In May 2012, Hyderi Madrasah in South London was the first to undertake a pilot assessment. This madrasah has over 400 students served by 80 teachers. In February 2013, Sharikatul Husain Saturday Workshop in Leicester underwent a pilot assessment. This madrasah has about 120 students and 40 teachers. We are planning 2 more pilots in the UK that will be undertaken between May and October 2013.

Africa: 3 madaris have been assessed in East Africa, namely Haydari Madrasah in Nairobi, Husaini Madrasah Girls Section and Husaini Madrasah Boys Section in Dar-es-Salaam.

An additional pilot is being planned for May 2013 in East Africa.

North America: We have planned a pilot assessment of a madrasah in North America on Sunday 21st April 2013. Another two pilots are being considered in May and June 2013.

What happens after the pilot assessments?

After the pilots, all those assessors who have been involved in the assessment process and the madaris that we have assessed will reconvene over three days. The purpose of this meeting would be share the learning from the process. Based on that feedback, the process of the assessment will be changed before we roll it out to the communities in North America, Europe and Africa.

When will this meeting take place?

The date for the meetings are as follows:

Africa: 29-31 August 2013. Venue to be confirmed.
North America: 1-3rd November 2013. Venue to be confirmed
United Kingdom: 6-8 December 2013. Venue to be confirmed

Transport and accommodation costs to attend this event will be covered by the World Federation.

If you have any further questions, please send them to mce@world-federation.org.

MCE Representatives from Regional Federations

Person specification

- Familiarity with general framework and workings of a madrasah.
- Awareness of madaris network within the region.
- Good communication skills.

Role

- Participate in meetings of the full MCE Team as required.
- Liaise with Heads of work-streams to ensure that any regional variations are adequately catered for in the action plan of each work stream.
- Assist with the collection of data and any other information from the Madaris in the region as and when required.
- Assist with the marketing of the work of MCE within the regional community.
- Facilitate visits to the region by members of MCE Team.
- Interact with the Madaris in the region to evaluate their needs and to implement the Madrasah Centre of Excellence services in the most effective manner.

Job Description for MAEP Assessors

Post: Assessor

Responsible To: Head of MAEP

Fee: Travel, accommodation and reasonable expenses

Job Purpose:

The core focus of this job is to undertake assessments of the madaris within the Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Communities who have submitted their self certification form. The post holder will do this by undertaking assessments of these organisations using procedures outlined by the Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE)

Main Tasks:

• To undertake assessments of the madaris who have submitted their self certification form.

• To identify what areas the organisation assessed require support to meet the MCE standards.

• To identify any "good practices" taking place in member organisations that are assessed.

• To maintain clear, concise and timely records of assessment visits and actions in line with the MCE policies on file maintenance.

• To assist in the collection of data using the appropriate IT systems.

• To work at all times in line with the MCE Code of Conduct.

• To undertake such other duties as the MCE may reasonably require.

Pre-requisites:

Completion of the World Federation's Leadership Development Program (LDP) is essential for this role.

PERSON SPECIFICATION
Assessor

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Qualifications and Training			
1. GCSE or equivalent	✓		
Experience			
1. Experience of undertaking assessment in organisations.		✓	
2. Experience of working in mosque management committee or equivalent		✓	
3. Acknowledged excellent application of Islamic values.	✓		
4. Experience of working positively in a changing environment.		✓	
5. Attended WF's Leadership Development Program	✓		
Knowledge and Skills			
1. Good working knowledge of the MCE and its objectives.	✓		
2. Knowledge of madrasah.			
3. Excellent verbal communication skills.	✓		
4. Time management and planning skills.	✓		
5. Case recording skills.	✓		
6. Team working.	✓		
7. Good IT skills including use of e-mail and inputting data.	✓		
8. Enthusiasm for raising standards in madaris.	✓		
Personal Qualities			
1. Self starter	✓		
2. Highly motivated	✓		
3. Creative and innovative	✓		
4. Inclusive	✓		
5. Meets deadlines	✓		
6. Flexible and adaptable	✓		
Other Requirements			
1. Ability to travel throughout the region where based.	✓		

Code Of Conduct For Assessors For The MCE

Assessors engaged by the MCE to provide services in connection with assessment of the mosques and organisations, are required to confirm formally their willingness to observe and be bound by the following code. While performing the duties of an assessor the individual named shall comply at all times with the administrative, professional and ethical requirements of the MCE as outlined below.

The individual named agrees:

To treat as strictly confidential all information including documents received or obtained while performing any duties for the MCE and not to divulge such information to any other person or organization (including their local Jamaat or Madaris) now and in the future unless authorized in writing to do so by both by the MCE and the organization being assessed;

To keep confidential the supporting commentary and evidence and sample outcome measures comprised in the MCE Standards and to use them only for the purpose of the MCE's assessment.

Not to use such information for personal advantage;

To store all documentation received from the MCE or from the organization being assessed in a safe and secure manner at all times, and on request, to return such documents to the MCE;

To seek permission from the MCE before copying or reproducing any MCE publication or any document supplied by the MCE and before transferring such documents to a third-party, unless these are already in the public domain; To assess strictly in accordance with the MCE standards and to refrain from making unsolicited comments on any other matter;

To disclose to the MCE any relationships, consultancies or involvement with an organization to be assessed on behalf of the MCE. This is to be done before undertaking any form of assessment of the organization;

Not to take advantage of their relationship with the client by accepting any inducement, gift, commission, discount or any other profit from the organization being assessed on behalf of the MCE or from representatives of the organization or from any other interested person, nor knowingly allow assessors that are members of the team of assessors to do so;

Not to act in any way prejudicial to the interests of the MCE;

Not to accept invitations to speak on behalf of the MCE or represent the MCE without prior agreement with the MCE;

That in the event of any alleged breach of this code, to co-operate fully in any enquiry procedure.

That the following circumstances may lead to immediate termination of your agreement with the MCE:

If you:-

1. commit any serious breach of this code or any gross misconduct or any wilful neglect of your duties;

2. commit any act of serious misconduct or serious incompetence;

3. repeat or continue (after warning) to breach any provisions of the agreement or fail to comply with any of your obligations to the MCE;

4. are guilty of any fraud, dishonesty or conduct tending to bring yourself or MCE into disrepute;

5. are convicted of a criminal offence;

6. you become bankrupt or make arrangement or composition with your creditors.

I agree to comply with the code set out above: _____

Name (Block Capitals): _____

_____

_____
Signature:

Date:

Witnessed by: _____

Name (Block Capitals): _____

_____

_____
Signature:

Date:

Confidentiality Undertaking

I _____undertake to maintain as confidential all information which I may acquire or become acquainted with as a result of, or arising in the course of, my work with the MCE and assignments I undertake for that body.

I undertake not to divulge such information without express permission from the Madrasah Centre of Excellence (MCE). There are no matters, of which I am aware, which could in general prejudice my integrity and impartiality in undertaking work for the MCE.

If a specific matter should arise in a particular case, I undertake to declare it to the Head of the Madrasah Centre of Excellence. I declare that I am subject to no obligations which conflict with the above confidentiality undertaking.

_____
Signed

Date : _____

Witnessed by

Name : _____

_____
Signature

Date : _____

Personal Development Plan (PDP)

PDP is defined as 'a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development'.

PDP embraces a range of approaches to learning that connect planning (an individual's goals and intentions for learning or achievement), doing (aligning actions to intentions), recording (thoughts, ideas, experiences, in order to understand and evidence the process and results of learning) and reflection (reviewing and evaluating experiences and the results of learning). To help ensure success in your role as assessors, you will, as a result of the training received, identify area of development. As adult learners, it is essential to ensure you identify areas of your development and ways you can achieve this.

Below is a template for that purpose.

What is my area of development	How can I achieve this	Who can help me	By when will I have this

MADRASAH SELF ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of the madrasah: _____

Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

Phone number: _____

This form needs to be filled in and duly signed by the Principal of the Madrasah.

Declaration

I declare that the information on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Name of the person filling out the form:

_____

Address and contact number: _____

Position within the madrasah: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questionnaire for Madrasah Teachers to be distributed by the madrasah and overall results provided to the assessment team during their visit

Dear Teachers
Salamun alaikum

XXXXXXX has been invited to be part of a pilot programme of Assessment of its madrasah by the Madrasah Centre of Excellence of the World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Communities.

We would like you to provide us with anonymous feedback about the madrasah. Please fill out the questionnaire and kindly forward it to the madrasah principal at XXXXXXXX. Please note that your response will be used by the madrasah to improve the services to teachers

With salaams and duas
XXXXXXXXX, Principal of XXXXXXXXXX

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1)	I am proud to be a member of staff at this madrasah				
2)	Children are safe at this madrasah				
3)	Behaviour is good at this madrasah				
4)	The behavior of students is consistently well managed				
5)	Teachers do all they can to improve teaching				
6)	The madrasah make appropriate provision for my teaching development				
7)	The madrasah successfully meets the differing needs of individual pupils				
8)	I know what we are trying to achieve at this madrasah				
9)	All staff consistently apply the madrasah policies				
10)	The madrasah is well led and managed				
11)	The madrasah has a positive impact on the local jamaat (community)				
12)	The madrasah has a positve impact on the wider community and society				

Questionnaire for Parents to be distributed by the madrasah and overall results provided to the assessment team during their visit

Dear Parents
Salamun alaikum

XXXXXXX has been invited to be part of a pilot programme of Assessment of its madrasah by the Madrasah Centre of Excellence of the World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Communities.

We would like you to provide us with anonymous feedback about the madrasah. Please fill out the questionnaire and kindly forward it to a madrasah teacher at XXXXXXXX. Please note that your response will be used by the madrasah to improve the services to the students.

With salaams and duas
XXXXXXXXX, Principal of XXXXXXXXXX

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1)	My child enjoys madrasah				
2)	The madrasah keeps my child safe				
3)	My madrasah informs me about my child's progress				
4)	My child is making enough progress at this madrasah				
5)	The teaching is good at this madrasah				
6)	The madrasah helps my child to have a healthy spiritual lifestyle				
7)	The madrasah meets my child's particular needs				
9)	The madrasah deals effectively with unacceptable behavior				
10)	The madrasah takes into account of my suggestions and concerns				
11)	The madrasah is led and managed effectively				
12)	The madrasah has had a positive impact on my child				
13)	The madrasah has a positive impact on the local jamaat (community)				
14)	The madrasah has a positive impact on the wider community and society				

Please tick your response and return it to a madrasah teacher at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Tentative Assessment Day Timetable

	PAIR 1	PAIR 2	PAIR 3	PAIR 4
10:00 – 10:15	Welcome and tour of the madrasah			
10:15 – 10:30	Interview with parents			
10:30 – 11:00	*Interview Teacher 1*	*Interview Teacher 1*	*Classroom Observation*	*Classroom Observation*
11:20 – 11:45	*Interview Teacher 2*	*Interview Admin team*	*Interview Teacher 1*	*Interview Teacher 1*
11:50 – 12:10	*Interview Teacher 3*	*Classroom Observation*	*Interview Teacher 2*	*Interview Teacher 2*
12:15 – 12:30	Interview students			
12:30 – 13:00	*Interview Teacher 4*	*Interview Teacher 2*	*Interview Teacher 3*	*Interview Teacher 3*
13:15 – 13:35	*Classroom Observation*	*Interview Teacher 3*	*Classroom Observation*	*Interview Teacher 4*
13:40 – 14:00	*Interview parent teachers*			
14:00 – 14:30	*Salaah*			
14:30 – 14:45	*Interview with parents*			
14:45 – 15:45	*Assessment team planning for feedback*			
15:45 – 16:15	*Meet madrasah team for Preliminary Headlines Feedback*			

Depart at 16:30

Crib sheets for gathering evidence on the four standards

STANDARD 1
GOVERNING DOCUMENTS
Madrasah apply principles of good corporate governance

WHAT GOVERNING DOCUMENT DO YOU HAVE?

CAN WE SEE THEM?

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

DO YOU HAVE A MADRASAH DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

ARE THESE POLICIES ACCESSIBLE TO STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

ARE THESE POLICIES MONITORED REGULARLY

STAFF CRB CHECKS

TEACHERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

MADRASAH FINANCES

DISCUSS PROCESS FOR CRB / POLICE CHECKS, OR OTHER LOCAL EQUIVALENT, ADHERENCE TO TEACHERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ARE ACCOUNTS AUDITED?

BEST PRACTICE

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Revised February 2013

STANDARD 2
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
Madrasah ensures that services are provided by suitably qualified and experienced personnel

DO THEY HAVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

WHAT IS THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

DO THEY HAVE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION

MADRASAH TEACHERS & VOLUNTEERS

DO THEY GET PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

DO THEY FEEL SUPPORTED AT ALL LEVELS

ANY MECHANISMS FOR THEM TO GIVE REGULAR FEEDBACK

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

STANDARD 3
ASSESSMENT PROCESS
There are systems and processes in place to assess progress in the madrasah.

HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS

MADRASAH STUDENTS

HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

WHAT LEARNING RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS

HOW DO STUDENTS DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

IS THERE A CURRICULUM

MADRASAH TEACHERS

HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF TEACHERS

DO TEACHERS FOLLOW A LESSON PLAN

WHAT RESOURCES CAN TEACHERS ACCESS TO ENHANCE THEIR TEACHING?

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

STANDARD 4
IMPACT OF MADRASAH

Madrasah has a positive impact on the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society

IMPACT OF MADRASAH ON
THE STUDENTS

IMPACT OF MADRASAH ON
THE JAMAAT

IMPACT OF MADRASAH ON
LOCAL COMMUNITY

ARE THERE PROCESSES IN PLACE TO GET FEEDBACK

PARENTS' FEEDBACK

TEACHERS' FEEDBACK

STUDENTS' FEEDBACK

MADRASAH CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

The MCE Assessment Record

Form R1

Each pair of assessors should jointly complete this assessment record. Copies of the record can be left with the madrasah, if requested. In that instance, record of discussion sheet (Page 7) must be removed.

Name of Madrasah	
Address:	
Date of visit	
Names & signatures of assessors conducting the interviews	

Summary of interviews (to have at hand evidence to help reach judgment at the end of the process).

Standard 1: Corporate Governance		*Standard 2:* Teaching by suitably qualified personnel	
Positive Evidence	*Negative Evidence*	*Positive Evidence*	*Negative Evidence*
Standard 3: Systems to assess progress		*Standard 4:* Madrasah impact	
Positive Evidence	*Negative Evidence*	*Positive Evidence*	*Negative Evidence*

Standard 1: Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance.

Desired Outcome: Parents and students have confidence in the learning environment provided by the Madrasah.

Lines of inquiry:

1. Governing documents that commit the madrasah to clear lines of accountability.

2. Written policies on health and safety and child protection. Where would we find them?

3. How are these policies made accessible to staff?

4. Is implementation of these policies monitored regularly? (e.g. date of last fire drill).

5. Vetting of staff before recruitment (e.g. CRB, police checks, references).

6. Staff code of conduct. What processes are in place to ensure code of conduct is adhered to?

6a. What records are kept by the madrasah for each teacher?

6b. Explain the process of succession planning for the madrasah management (question for management).

7. Does the Madrasah have a 2-3 year development plan? If present, how was it developed?

8. Does the madrasah keep financial records? Are these records audited?

9. Areas of good practice you have been shown with regard to this standard.

Interview notes

Standard 2: Madrasah ensures that services are provided by suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

Desired Outcome: Staff feel supported to develop their skills and constantly grow their abilities in supporting the students.

Lines of inquiry

1. Is the role of staff at all levels well documented? How is it conveyed to the staff? Prompt: Induction?

2. Madrasah's procedure for recruiting and vetting staff (Prompts: Word of mouth, advertising).

3. How is the madrasah ensuring that all staff receive appropriate supervision? (ask for 2 examples).

4. How is the madrasah ensuring that staff have access to personal development and training, including religious training? (ask for 2 examples).

5. How does the madrasah support teachers and staff? (E.g. mentoring programmes, access to teaching resources, feedback for teachers, personal development plans).

6. What mechanisms are in place to receive regular feedback from teachers? Prompts: Supervision from departmental heads, resident alim, feedback questionnaires.

7. Areas of good practice you have been shown with regard to this standard.

Interview notes

Standard 3: There are systems and processes in place to assess progress in the madrasah.

Desired outcome: The Madrasah utilises appropriate assessment criteria to measure the students' growth and development and supports all types of learning needs and learner's abilities.

Lines of inquiry:

1. What is the madrasah's approach to assessment?
2. What systems and processes are in place to assess student progress?
3. What systems and processes are in place to assess students with special needs?
4. What learning resources can students access to enhance their learning? Prompt: Library, Internet.
5. What opportunities do students have to develop their leadership skills? Do students have opportunities to undertake leadership roles at the madrasah?
6. Is there an overarching curriculum that is followed by the madrasah? How is it implemented? How often is it reviewed?
7. Do all teachers use lesson plans and schemes of work to plan and deliver lessons? Ask to see three examples of lesson plans and schemes of work used on the day.
8. What assessment processes are in place for assessing the progress of teachers? Prompt: Observations by departmental heads, resident alim.
9. What resources can teachers access to enhance their teaching?
10. Areas of good practice you have been shown with regard to this standard.

Interview notes

Standard 4: Madrasah has a positive impact on the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society.

Desired outcome: The students are able to transform their learning to the positive development of their local jamaat and neighbourhood.

Lines of inquiry

1. How is the madrasah's impact on the lives of the students measured?
2. How is feedback from students obtained? How frequently is this done? How is it implemented? Prompt: Feedback questionnaires
3. How is feedback from parents obtained? How frequently is this done?
4. Do you think parents are satisfied with the madrasah? Can you please share examples?
5. What is the madrasah's impact on the local jamaat? How is this impact measured? How can the madrasah maximise its impact on the local jamaat?
6. What is the madrasah's impact on the wider community? How is this impact measured? How can the madrasah maximise its impact on the wider community?
7. Areas of good practice you have been shown with regard to this standard.

Interview notes

Information gathered from other sources

	What standard is this information relevant to?
Notice Boards	
Photographs	
Annual Reports/Publications/Madrasah Development Plan	
Student Activities	

Log of policies/documents reviewed. Please do NOT take any document from the madrasah.

Policy / document (description)	Date of policy	Review date	Format (paper or electronic)	Requested but not available
			P E	
			P E	
			P E	
			P E	
			P E	

Record of Discussions: This sheet needs to be removed if the madrasah request a copy of the MCE Assessment Record. This is to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the process.

Position Held	Responsibilities within the mosque/madrasah	Standards that were discussed

Madrasah Centre of Excellence – Classroom Observation

Teacher:_____

Observers: _____

Class:_____ No. of students_____Date:_____

Lesson Context:_____

Standard 3		Comments
High expectations and constructive relationships in the class.		
Safe learning environment in the class.		
Promoting equality within the class.		
Managing behaviour in class.		
Teachers use a lesson plan.		
Scheme of work is evident.		
Students are engaged.		
Students encouraged to share learning.		
Monitoring progress of learners.		
Enabling students to reflect on their learning.		
Personalising work for students.		
Students given opportunities for leadership to develop social skills.		
Learning resources used: Worksheets / Videos / Pictures Discussions Any other		
Activities used in lesson involves: Individual/ Paired / Group work		
Colleagues appropriately involved supporting learning in class.		

THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES
Registered Charity in the UK No. 282303

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Report

Name of Madrasah	
Address:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Madrasah Head	
Phone:	
Email:	

Madrasah Background Information

No. of Students	Boys	Girls
Age Range		

No. of Classes		

No. of Teachers	Male	Female

Madrasah Timings		
Day(s)	Start	Finish

Subjects Taught		

Summary of our findings for the WF MAEP standards

Background of the Madrasah

What we found overall

How we carried out this assessment

Who did the assessors meet at the madrasah?

Name	Capacity

What classes / lessons did the assessors observe?

Class	Observations

How many parents and students (including age groups) we spoke to

What we found

What people told us

Examples of Good Practices

Assessing the four standards

For each standard, state madrasah's self-assessment results, what was observed, relevant results from the surveys, judgement reached and recommendations.

Standard 1: *Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance.*

Standard 2: *Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified staff.*

Standard 3: *There are systems and processes in place to assess the children's progress in the madrasah.*

Standard 4: *Madrasah has a positive impact on the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society locally.*

Next Steps

Assessment was undertaken by

	Name	Occupation + Madrasah experience
Lead Assessor		
Assessor 1		
Assessor 2		
Assessor 3		

THE WORLD FEDERATION

OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Registered Charity in the UK No. 282303

Madrasah Assessment and Evaluation Report

Name of organisation   Luton Madrasah
Address   1 Madrasah Lane, Luton
      Buckinghamshire

Date the assessment visit   18th March 2012
was undertaken

Summary of our findings for the WF MAEP standards

Background of Luton Madrasah

Luton Madrasah has 26 teachers and 148 students. It runs every Saturday from 1pm to 6pm. It teaches 4 topics: Fiqh and Aqaid, Quranic Studies, Quran Recitation, Tareekh and Akhlaaq. Each lesson is 40 minutes long, with a break half way between the day. On the day we visited, there were 130 students and 18 teachers.

What we found overall

We found that Luton Madrasah was partially compliant to standards 1, 2 and 3 and fully compliant to standard 4 of MCE MAEP.

How we carried out this assessment

We reviewed the organisation's self certification form. In it, the organisation had declared itself partially compliant to all the four standards:

Standard 1: Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance

Standard 2: Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

Standard 3: Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and or experienced personnel.

Standard 4: Madrasah has a positive impact in the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society locally.

We then visited it on 18th March 2012 to assess the compliance. We spoke to the following staff members:

Br Mohammed Jaffer, Principal
Sheikh Jaffer Haider, Resident Alim
Br Mohammed Haider, Fiqh Teacher
Sr Shamim Khaku, Akhlaaq Teacher
Sr Zainab Suleiman, Quran Teacher

We had the opportunity to speak to 6 parents and 20 children ranging from 8 to 14 years.

We sat in the following randomly selected classes:
Quran for Years 6-8
Fiqh for Years 9-10
Tareekh for Year 12
Toddlers Group

What we found

We found that all the students in the class were treated equally. We found that teachers filled out the lesson plans that were later signed by the Head of the Department. The teacher recapped the previous lesson through oral questions/ quiz to monitor the learning of the students. However, in one of the classes it was observed that the lesson was mostly lectures and not all the students seemed to be involved in the participation of discussions. For example, the students in one class told us they were *"bored in class because the teacher could not speak English well. We don't understand what he is saying."* We found that there was another adult in that class. When we asked what their role was, we were told that he was present in the class to maintain the discipline.

What people told us

Parents, teachers and students we spoke with told us that the Madrasah was well run and supported. Students told us how they felt part of the Madrasah through its activities. Students lovingly called the Principal "Bai" and told us their "Bai" was part of their life. One student could not wait and come as a teacher to the Madrasah because *"I know I will learn a lot from Bai."* We were told how, though the children attending the Madrasah went to different schools, they liked coming to the Madrasah because it was an opportunity to be with friends. Parents told us how they have

learnt more about fiqh through their children and felt that if they had any concerns about their children, they could call the Principal who would address these concerns. One parent told us how they had been personally supported by *"Bai"* in some very challenging situations.

However, some parents felt dissatisfied with the Madrasah system in that some sort of discrimination was evident wherein the bright students were availed many more opportunities than the average and below average students. This created a general feeling of being left out and a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem amongst the average and below average students.

We shared this observation during the feedback to the principal and her team whom we found most concerned about it and were given assurances that these issues will be looked into. Teachers told us how they were encouraged to try out different approaches to their teaching. There was support given to them with an expectation that they are role models as teachers.

Examples of Good Practice

During the visit, Luton Madrasah shared some examples of good practice.

These are listed below:

1. All policies are actively monitored and reviewed by the Madrasah. It has excellent teacher appraisal structures in place including an extensive grievance procedure document.

2. It has engaged the Youth of the community very well in the madrasah through youth led initiatives such as "Bring A Friend Day" when madrasah students invite their friends from school to the mosque to break fast in the month of Ramadhan. They then get an overview of the month of fasting.

3. There is a teacher training course dedicated solely for graduates of the Madrasah. Students in their final year are encouraged to become teachers at the Madrasah and are suitably trained if they are interested in doing so.

4. Distance Learning Programme (DLP). This is a programme which takes place during the holidays. Students are given projects to complete, and are able to present them to their fellow students and members of staff when the Madrasah reopens. This is optional; however, those students who excel in it are rewarded.

5. The Qur'an classes are divided according to ability, not age. This allows students to progress at a pace they are comfortable with and in an environment in which they feel at ease.

Standard 1: Madrasah applies principles of good corporate governance.
The desired outcome for this standard is: Parents and students have confidence in the learning environment provided by the Madrasah

Luton Madrasah declared itself partially compliant to this standard.

We found that the madrasah was structured in that, the Principal was the final decision maker to facilitate the smooth running of the institution. From the interviews conducted it was evident that there was a high level of respect and integrity for the Principal.

We also noted that all teachers and staff had a clear understanding of the systems to follow. Furthermore, there was no interference or misunderstanding in regards to their accountability. However, the terms of reference for the organization were not available in a written format.

There was a written teachers' code of conduct which was required to be signed by the teachers. From the interviews conducted we found that this document has mostly been availed to new and recently recruited teachers. Those who have been teaching at the Madrasah for a longer period of time have not been given this document nor are they aware of it. Every student was given a diary which includes rules and regulations to be adhered to.

The Principal took great care to ensure the right person was coming to work in the Madrasah as a volunteer and a number of informal checks were undertaken before a person was recruited. The madrasah administration prepares an annual budget for its requirements which is presented Luton Jamaat for approval and subsequent release of funds.

Whilst the Madrasah had no written policies in place for health and safety, fire and child protection, it had adequate procedures to ensure the safety of children. There was a first aid kit available and basic health supervision was administered within the campus. In case of an emergency or major health concern, the student was taken to the nearby hospital for medical care.

In both cases, the parents of the child were immediately notified. We were informed that the support staff in the campus knew how to operate the fire extinguishers that were placed in various strategic areas of the Madrasah, such as the entrances.

However, amongst the teachers who were interviewed it was evident that they were not trained to operate the extinguishers and no fire drills had been conducted. Students were considered to be safe within the premises of the Madrasah by the teachers and parents.

We found Luton Madrasah to be Partially Compliant to this standard.

The madrasah may want to consider the following recommendations that could help achieve full compliance:

- Create relevant policies for health, safety, fire and child protection.
- Put systems in place to monitor these policies.
- Members of staff should be familiar with these policies.

Standard 2: Madrasah ensures that teaching is provided by suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

The desired outcome for this standard is: Staff feel supported to develop their skills and constantly grow their abilities in supporting their students.

Luton Madrasah declared itself partially compliant to this standard.

We found that whilst the teachers of the Madrasah had job descriptions that were agreed verbally, we did not find any written statements to demonstrate the roles and responsibilities. We were informed that the job descriptions were in the process of being documented.

Recruitment of the staff was done by referral, personal invitation and word of mouth. We spoke to some teachers who told us that because of shortage of staff, they were requested to teach subjects that they were not comfortable teaching. We were informed that core subjects like Aqaid and Fiqh were taught by experienced and senior members of staff.

We found classroom supervision of the teachers took place sporadically. Teachers we spoke with told us that the Head of Department would go through their lesson plans, fill in comments and sign these. However, we found that not all lessons plans we looked at had been reviewed by the Head of Department. We concluded that this supervision was done sporadically.

We found that teachers had access to resources. For example, there was access to Bab Ul Ilm library which was located in the same building as the Madrasah. We found that there were fixed projectors in two classes and further mobile projectors were available that could aid in delivery of the content of teaching. On the day of our assessment, we found that teachers did not use these to deliver the material.

We asked the students whether the existing technologies were used to support the teaching. We were told this happened infrequently. The Resident Alims also assisted the teachers and provided the necessary guidance. We found that mentoring for the young teachers was available. The assistant teachers were trained to become the main teachers. We found that two youths were 'shadowing' the principal and were trained in administrative tasks.

We spoke to teachers who told us that there was no formal teachers' training. We spoke with students who described the teaching methodology as "ancient." Feedback from the teachers was received through the quarterly departmental meetings. The teachers were pleased that requests made by them were promptly actioned by the Madrasah Management.

The communication among the Madrasah staff through email was efficient and information was shared swiftly. We spoke with a number of students who told us that a few of the teachers were very much liked by the students because of their teaching methodology.

The Madrasah undertook the MCE survey of its teachers and shared with us the results of the survey. The survey was completed by 22 teachers (there were 26 teachers in the Madrasah).

The key results were as follows:

1. 100% of teachers said that they were proud to be members of staff at the Madrasah.

2. 73% of teachers said that behaviour was good at this Madrasah.

3. 77% of teachers said that the behaviour of students is consistently well managed.

4. 98% of teachers said that they know what the Madrasah was trying to achieve.

5. 76% of teachers said that the Madrasah successfully meets the differing needs of the individual pupils.

6. 91% of teachers said that the Madrasah was well led and managed.

We found Luton Madrasah to be partially compliant to this standard.

The madrasah may want to consider the following recommendations that could help it become fully compliant to the MAEP Standards:

- To ensure all Madrasah teachers receive appropriate supervision and support in a structured manner.
- To provide teachers with opportunities to continually develop themselves so as to be effective in their role.
- To utilise the skills of local educationalists to ensure continuous development of teachers.

Standard 3: There are systems and processes in place to assess the children progress in the Madrasah.

The desired outcome for this standard is: The Madrasah utilises appropriate assessment criteria to measure the students' growth and development and support all types of learning needs and learners abilities.

Luton Madrasah had declared itself partially compliant to this standard.

We found that the children's progress was regularly monitored and assessed to ensure that most students have the support they need to grow and develop as much as possible. For the younger students, namely those in the 3-4 age group, this assessment was carried out orally.

From the age of 5 onwards however, this was transformed into a written form of assessment. Students were given a written exam twice a year at least. In the Qur'an lessons, the Madrasah splits the classes into ability based classes, even if this means removing them from their age groups. This allowed maximum development and progress of the child and ensured that they were not hindered by varying abilities in their age group.

To ensure all teachers knew the expected standard that pupils should meet, a curriculum was available and all teachers were expected to follow it. There was a meeting at the beginning of the year between Heads of Departments and other staff in that department and during this meeting, the curriculum and schemes of work were discussed. Furthermore, all teachers were expected to make schemes of work and lesson plans based on this curriculum for every lesson they teach and these were checked by senior members of staff and Heads of Departments from time to time.

The Madrasah had a textbook that teachers based their lessons on. However, they were expected to add to this by using their own resources e.g. other books and the internet. Every student also receives a copy of the main textbook so they were able to refer to it. The Madrasah had its own library which also had video resources and other learning aids that the teachers could use.

If the teachers requested material that was not available in this library, the Madrasah financed these for them. In addition to books and videos, other materials such as worksheets and board games were available at the Madrasah. Within the library there was also an AV room which the teachers and students had access to. There were also computers with internet access available at the Madrasah, and many of the teachers made use of these to enhance their teaching. Although the Madrasah does not currently have its own website with resources, they advised teachers to use resources from other Madrasah websites.

A good practice that the assessors noted was that there were some opportunities for older students to develop their leadership roles, for example, the older students taught the younger pupils how to perform wudhu. This gave them the opportunity to practise their teaching skills informally and gave them confidence in their own knowledge and passing it onto others.

Although there were assistants for the younger classes and the older classes can request assistants if necessary, none of the members of staff were trained on dealing with SEN pupils or pupils who were struggling with their work. The Madrasah did encounter such pupils, but due to the lack of information and training, they were not given equal opportunities to develop.

We came to learn that there were some students in Class 9, aged 11-12, who required special attention from the Madrasah, but due to lack of training in this area, none of the teachers were qualified to do so. A major issue that needs to be handled sensitively is the support provided to pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Fifty-two percent of teachers (14) said that the Madrasah successfully meet the differing needs of the individual pupils.

Juxtaposing this result with the parent satisfaction survey that 74% (52) parents felt that Madrasah met their child's particular needs, the Madrasah may want to further explore any underlying concerns so as to support the growth and development of the children attending the Madrasah.

We found Luton Madrasah to be partially compliant with this standard of the MAEP.

The Madrasah may want to consider the following recommendations that could help it become fully compliant to the MAEP Standards:

- To consider approaches to support the development of Special Education Needs by providing training and development to teachers and support staff.
- To involve parents in exploring further ways that the Madrasah could meet different children needs.

Standard 4: Madrasah has a positive impact in the lives of the children, the parents, the local community and the wider society locally.

The desired outcome for this standard is: The students are able to transform their learning to the positive development of their jamaats and neighbourhoods.

The madrasah has measures in place to gauge the impact it is having on the lives of the children, the community and the wider society. Records of absenteeism are kept,

and if a child is absent, a phone call is always made to the parents. In addition to this, the Principal is always available at the madrasah and makes a point of making himself visible to both the parents and students, should anyone wish to talk to him. We found he leads from the front and inspires confidence in the teachers and students.

However, the madrasah may find it useful to note that it needs to have a succession plan for the leadership of the madrasah. Furthermore, all parents have been given the Principal's telephone number and e-mail address, and are able to contact him at any time during the week. They are also able to give their feedback by means of surveys.

The students we spoke to felt that they knew whom to contact and how, should they have any concerns, and were confident that they would be listened to. Some teachers felt, however, that there was a need to set up a Muslim girls' guide and boys' scouts group.

A Parent's Day also takes place, where parents have an opportunity to discuss their child's progress at madrasah and voice any concerns they may have. Furthermore, there are three parent governors and two teacher governors on the madrasah committee. From the parent's survey results, it is clear that the majority of parents are satisfied with the madrasah, with 99% of them answering that they were happy with their child's experience at the madrasah overall. Similarly, 87% of them felt that the madrasah takes their suggestions and concerns into account.

It is evident that the madrasah has a positive impact on the jamaat. There are several practices to suggest this, including the showing of a Haj film and a Haj exhibition, as well as a 'Mother's Day' which is marked by the wiladat of Sayyida Fatima. There is support from the jamaat to the madrasah.

The relationship between the teachers and the students left us feeling that there is a level of engagement, mutual respect and dedication by teachers for the work they do. For example, a number of children came to the assessors and insisted that we meet with one of their "Smiley Aunty" because she was the real "backbone" of the madrasah. Such dedication that the children recognise and appreciate sends a positive message for volunteering within the madrasah and the community.

The positive impact created by such dedicated teachers who are a positive role model in their communities has an impact on the "tarbiyat" of the children. Likewise, the madrasah has a positive impact on the wider community. This is demonstrated by practices such as chocolate distribution that takes place in the local neighbourhood on the day of Eid. In the infant's group, the students are encouraged to show and tell using artefacts from home and they are then urged to take these into their schools and share them with their class.

This enables them to share information with people outside their community, as well as helping them to build their confidence. Students are also required to undertake research-based coursework, which supports them to work independently and shows the impact that the madrasah is having on the young people's lives. During Ashura, the madrasah students give out leaflets and speak to members of the public about the event.

They also visit their local neighbours near the mosque to raise awareness of the event. Madrasah teachers told us that through this programme young people made a very positive impact in conveying the message of Imam Hussein AS. It is apparent that the students are able to and are succeeding in transforming their learning to the positive development of both, their local jamaat and neighbourhood.

We found Luton Madrasah to be fully compliant to this standard.

Report publication

This report is for the Madrasah only. The Madrasah Centre of Excellence will not publish it. However, the madrasah, can, if it chooses to, share this report as it sees fit. The MCE will use the information collected from the visits as part of its capacity building programme for madaris. It will, with the permission of the madaris, request that the good practices identified from the visits are placed on its website for other madaris to access and replicate these locally. It will anonymise the results of these visits and share this nationally.

Next Steps

As Luton Madrasah is fully compliant to Standard 4, the MCE may request it to be part of its capacity building programme and support other madaris to become fully compliant for this standard.

In order to maintain continuous compliance and continue the momentum achieved in meeting the standards, a number of key recommendations have been identified in the report under Standards 1, 2 and 3. The MCE MAEP recommends that the madrasah draws up an action plan on how these will be met. The madrasah is invited to share this with the MCE by 30th June 2012. The implementation of this action plan will form part of the review of Luton Madrasah assessment envisaged in October 2012.

Process post visit

1. The Madrasah is given an opportunity to comment on the report and correct any factual inaccuracies or correct any aspects of information gathered. It would be given 15 working days to send its comments to the MCE.

2. If the Madrasah is not happy with the decision reached by the MCE MAEP, it has the right of appeal. The process of this would be outlined to the organisation appealing any decision.

Assessment was undertaken by

Syed Abbas Naqvi, Madrasah Teacher at Wolverhampton Madrasah for over 10 years. He is Pharmacist by profession.

Br Sikander Walji, Madrasah Teacher at Peterborough Madrasah with over 20 years of experience. He is also a Deputy Head at a local secondary school.

Sr Arifa Vakil, Madrasah Teacher at Portsmouth with over 5 years of experience in madrasah teaching. She is an accountant by profession.

Sr Maimuna Kassam, Madrasah Teacher at Essex with 10 years of experience in madrasah teaching. She is a lawyer in real estate.

Madrasah Development Plan

A madrasah development plan (MDP) is primarily a working document for use by the madrasah. It will be based on the madrasah>s analysis of current levels of performance, its assessment of how current trends and future factors may impact on the madrasah, and set out priorities and targets for improvement for the period ahead.

What are the principles of undertaking such a plan?

The process of developing the plan should:

- Be inclusive. Students, parents, teachers and community members should all be involved in its design.

- Be developmental. It should be looking at the glass half full then half empty.

- Be short. It should not be more than 5 pages long.

- Be information driven. Data from parent and teacher satisfaction questionnaire should be used in development.

What could it include?

- Confirmation of the madrasah's ethos, culture and aims;

- An assessment of the madrasah's current position, its strengths, areas for improving the quality of learning and teaching, and the various factors which would influence the management and development of the madrasah over the next 3 years.

- Anticipated level of resources and its management.

- What the madrasah wants to achieve within a defined number of years. These could be expressed in terms of quantifiable targets for future performance.

- How it intends to bring about these achievements.

- When and how progress will be measured

Madrasah Centre of Excellence – Assessment scenarios

Scenario 1

The madrasah has reluctantly agreed to the assessment, and has therefore appointed a new or inexperienced madrasah teacher to talk to the assessors. The madrasah teacher is not aware of the existence of any governance, and has no knowledge of any of the areas being assessed. The assessors feel that the teacher just wants to get it over and done with and just gives contradicting answers to the questions. No one else is available to talk to. How would you deal with this situation and how would you decide whether the madrasah is compliant or not?

Scenario 2

The madrasah teacher is having a bad day and looks very stressed. She points out to the assessors at the outset that she is very busy and can't spend more than 20 minutes on the interview. The rapport building has not gone down well, and the teacher clearly does not want to engage or respond to discussion. Any attempt to get her motivated by discussing topics dear to her heart has failed. She is rushing the assessment and does not agree to the assessors returning when she has more time. What few questions can you ask to get the best answers to the questions which will help you decide how compliant the madrasah is.

Scenario 3

The madrasah teacher appears to be slightly paranoid that the assessment has been arranged because of politics between the Executive and madrasah, and that there is a vendetta to replace the teachers because of drummed up incompetence. The teacher is therefore very defensive and sees the assessment as a "Checking up" exercise. He is therefore hostile and will not believe or respond to the assurances of the assessors. The response to every question is '....so you think we are a bunch of amateurs? ... of course we do that....' How would you change the teacher's perception of the reasons of your visit?

Scenario 4

The assessors through no fault of their own arrive 30 minutes late. This has clearly upset the busy madrasah principal, who insists on making life difficult for the assessors for their late arrival. He blocks every question and changes the subject to something totally irrelevant. Any attempt to engage has failed. The facial expression and body language show clearly the hostility and you are certain nothing you can say will change the atmosphere. How do you proceed to complete your assessment?

Scenario 5

Having walked around the madrasah and sat through a lesson, they do not appear to be compliant on any of the areas. The teacher however believes they are compliant and shows evidence which does not seem authentic, and looks as though it was prepared for the meeting.

Even a subtle comment about one of the documents has resulted in the teacher becoming very defensive and upset that may be you are seeing through her stories. How would you continue to get a true reflection of where the madrasah is with the areas being assessed?

Scenario 6

During your visit, and before your discussion with the principal, you witness a child being abused which is clearly distressing and illegal. Do you continue with your assessment as if nothing had happened or go ahead with the discussion and bring it to the attention of the principal? Do you mention it when discussing confidentiality? Do you leave the madrasah even if you feel other children are at risk and that urgent action needs to be taken? What action would you take and who would you talk to?

Scenario 7

The madrasah is clearly in need of assistance, and the teacher is under the impression that the assessors are there to help them. She keeps insisting that if the assessors are not going to help, they are not going to waste their time with an assessment which will not benefit them directly. She even brings a pad and a pen and asks the assessor to write a to-do list for them to become a good madrasah. She asks about how they could make the lessons more interesting, but it is clear she is looking for a summative response. She asks you for the point of the assessment if you are not going to help. How do you respond?

Scenario 8

The teacher is very dedicated, but is very upset with the lack of support from parents, other teachers and the principal. She tries to do things by herself but is worried that she may not be doing it right. A quick chat with the principal at the same madrasah tells a different story. Neither have evidence, but they both seem genuine. The assessment form was completed by someone else who has now left the madrasah. Who do you believe and how can you make sure your assessment is accurate.

Scenario 9

The madrasah teacher is very enthusiastic about her work, but is in tears because of lack of support from the parents and others. She keeps moving on to examples of disrespectful, rude and ungrateful behaviour of the students towards her. She is clearly distressed about this, and seems to want to only discuss how she can change the way things are. She does not respond to other topics of discussion and keeps returning to same type of stories. She even calls in a student and asks him if he has done his homework, but the student responds by saying "Get lost". This again upsets her and she points out that she is not making it up. How would you proceed?

Scenario 10

The madrasah teacher is not a Khoja. He has very strong views on how the madrasah should be run in a more Islamic way, the way he had witnessed in his country. He acts 'holier than thou' and even comments on why one of the assessors does not have a beard. He clearly feels, and makes it clear that the assessors and the MCE should concentrate more on truly Islamic madaris rather than good governance. As a result of his strong beliefs, he blocks building rapport with the assessors. How would you handle this situation?

Scenario 11

The madrasah principal is failing to engage with the assessors. He seems to be busy with his paperwork and responds to questions half-heartedly whilst doing other things. The meeting is continually disrupted by people walking in and out. Any attempt to build a communication rapport through active listening and body language is to no avail. How would you proceed to make sure the assessment is full and complete?

Scenario 12

The principal insists on taking over the format of the visit. She wants the assessors to spend a day at the madrasah and view how things are done. She strongly believes, that would be more productive that talking. She insists that no discussions take place with the teachers, parents or students; and that the assessment is done purely through observation. Would you go along with that, and if so what would you want to observe which would help you decide how compliant the madrasah is.

Scenario 13

The madrasah is clearly taking the assessment very seriously and has therefore invited all the teachers, a number of the parents and even some students to the meeting. Who would build a rapport with and how would you start? Then having started, everyone becomes very excited and they all talk over each other. At one point even an argument breaks out between one of the teachers and a parent when the teacher suggests that the parents work with the children at home. How would you calm the situation and proceed?

Scenario 14

The madrasah principal / teacher is a very old lady who has taught at madrasah all her life. She clearly does not want a summative discussion, and even during the formative chat, continues to respond by saying 'this is how we have always done it and I don't see why we should change'. They have never had governance, lesson plans or curriculums. Volunteer teachers come on an ad hoc basis and teach the children for the pleasure of Allah. She feels strongly about not telling the other teachers how to do things, and feels only Allah can judge if we are doing a good job. How would you respond to this situation?

Interview Agenda - Assessor's Guide

1. Meet and Greet

Greet teacher in the hallway or reception area before inviting them to sit with you.

2. Introduction (Set the scene)

- Time - how long the discussion will take

- Privacy policy - feedback will be treated as confidential and help evaluate the processes of the madrasah. Teacher being interviewed must be made aware that the interview is not to assess them. Rather, it is aimed at getting an insight into the workings of the madrasah.

- Child protection policy – Any serious issues relating to the health and welfare of the madrasah children raised during the interview will be shared with the principal who will take appropriate action.

- Use of data/information - notes will be taken to draft a report which will help the principal to improve the madrasah. Should the teacher wish to have a copy of these notes, they should contact the principal.

- Outcome - a better experience for teachers, students and the wider community

Check if there are any questions that the teacher would like to ask at this stage.

3. Standards

Discuss the standards, and assure teachers again that this is an evaluation of the processes of the madrasah and not of them. Proceed to give an overview of the standards and ask for their understanding of them.

Standard 1 - principles of good corporate governance
Standard 2 - suitably qualified and/or experienced personnel
Standard 3 - systems and processes to assess progress of students and teachers
Standard 4 - positive impact of the madrasah

4. Closing

At the end of your meeting, thank the teacher for their time and ask if they have any further questions.

"How Was It For You" Feedback Form

Dear Teacher

Salamun alaikum. Thank you for taking the time to discuss with the Assessment Team from MCE the madrasah and the four standards. We greatly appreciate your time. We would be grateful if you could fill out this short evaluation form to provide us with feedback on how we did. It will help us do this role better if we knew what we needed to improve. Your feedback will be shared with the assessor so that he/she can o the job better. It will be anonymised so you don't need to put your name on it. Please send your response to the Principal of the Madrasah who will collate the responses and send it to the Madrasah Centre of Excellence.

With salaams and duas

Yasin Rahim
Head of Assessment and Evaluation

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1)	The assessors put me at ease				
2)	I felt I was able to answer the questions asked of me				
3)	When the assessors spoke with me, I felt comfortable				
4)	The assessors listened attentively				
5)	The assessors appeared interested in what I was saying				
6)	I felt like I was treated with on the wider community and society				

One thing the assessor should STOP doing

………………………………………………………………………………….

One thing the assessor should START doing

………………………………………………………………………………….

One thing the assessor did that he/she should CONTINUE doing

………………………………………………………………………………….

Please return this to the Principal who will pass this onto MCE

ASSESSORS' SELF-EVALUATION FORM

At the end of an interview, assessors must complete this form to evaluate the interview process and their performance. This will help assessors and trainers highlight areas that need reviewing.

Name of Assessor: _____

Details of person interviewed: _____

	Circle the appropriate number				
Statement	**Strongly agree**				**Strongly disagree**
I put the interviewee at ease	5	4	3	2	1
I was able to ask appropriate	5	4	3	2	1
questions which were relevant to the interviewee The interviewee felt comfortable speaking with me	5	4	3	2	1
I listened attentively to the interviewee	5	4	3	2	1
I appeared interested in what the interviewee was saying	5	4	3	2	1
I felt like I treated the interviewee with respect	5	4	3	2	1
The interview went well/as planned	5	4	3	2	1

One thing I should START doing:_____

One thing I should STOP doing: _____

One thing I should CONTINUE doing:_____

Additional comments

OBSERVATION OF ASSESSORS DURING ASSESSMENT

Madrasah: ....

Assessor's Name: ....

Observor's Name: ....

Date: ....

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO INFORMATION FROM INTERVIEW	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	MADE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION / GOOD RAPPORT BUILDING					
2	PRESENTED MCE POSITIVELY					
3	PRESENTED A CLEAR SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF VISIT					
4	WELL STRUCTURED INTERVIEW					
5	EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING TECHNIQUE					
6	EFFECTIVE USE OF BODY LANGUAGE / MIRRORING					
7	NOT JUDGEMENTAL IN THEIR INTERACTION					
8	EFFECTIVELY DEALT WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS					
9	MADE THE INTERVIEWEE FEEL AT EASE / COMFORTABLE					
10	WORKED WELL AS A TEAM					

ONE THING THE ASSESSOR SHOULD CONTINUE DOING	....
ONE THING THE ASSESSOR SHOULD STOP DOING	....
OVERALL PEFORMANCE OF THE ASSESSOR	....