

CORE GUIDE / 03

Indicators & Measurement

Choose measures that are clear, useful and feasible enough to support action.

START WITH A DECISION, NOT A FORM.

Ask what decision the evidence should inform before deciding what to measure.

The essential idea

An indicator is a specific, observable measure used to track a condition, change or result. A strong indicator is clear about **what is measured, for whom, when, how and why it matters**.

WHY IT MATTERS

Indicators make outcomes measurable. One outcome may need a small set of complementary measures rather than a single number.

From outcome to indicator

Indicators make outcomes measurable. One outcome may need a small set of complementary measures rather than a single number.

- Use an indicator when it answers a decision-relevant question.
- Define numerator, denominator, unit and disaggregation where relevant.
- Set a direction of change and a review frequency.

Use indicator reference sheets

A reference sheet creates consistency across people, locations and time.

- Write an exact definition.
- Specify source, method, frequency and owner.
- Note exclusions, risks and interpretation boundaries.

Worked field example

A teacher-development programme expects more teachers to use checks for understanding during lessons.

Programme question	Evidence to use	Decision it can support
How consistently are teachers using checks for understanding?	Percentage of observed lessons meeting the rubric threshold, disaggregated by grade band and coaching cycle.	Target coaching on practice gaps, not only on attendance.

Try it in your work

- Rewrite one broad measure into a measurable indicator.
- Specify the source, frequency and person responsible.
- Ask whether the result would change a decision.

<p>Common mistakes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counting outputs as evidence of outcome. • Using indicators with unclear denominators. • Setting targets before checking baseline feasibility. 	<p>A stronger habit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a one-sentence indicator definition. • Pilot the indicator with two users. • Track disaggregation only when it supports an equity or implementation question.
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REFLECT	What could your team stop collecting because it does not currently support a decision, accountability requirement or learning conversation?
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