



National Project Manager (NPM) and National Centre (NC) Roles and Responsibilities

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1. Introduction

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a multi-year project. It is an initiative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA has taken place every 3 years since 2000 until PISA 2025 and will take place every 4 years from PISA 2029. In 2029 it is predicted that there will be around 100 participating countries and economies (referred to as countries/economies or Participants in this document) around the world in PISA 2029.

The goal of PISA is to produce internationally comparable data on student achievement. This is only possible when all PISA activities are completed by all countries/economies on time and in accordance with its Technical Standards.

This document provides Participants with a description of the roles and responsibilities of the National Project Manager (NPM) and National Centre (NC). It identifies all the resources required for PISA. This *NPM and NC Roles and Responsibilities* is the first of several vital documents that guide the implementation of PISA. Other important documents are the *PISA 2029 NPM Manual* and the *PISA 2029 Technical Standards* mentioned above.¹

This initial section outlines the key parameters for PISA 2029.

1.1 Key acronyms and terms in PISA

PISA involves many stakeholders, each of whom play a crucial key role in implementing the programme. Many of these are referred to by acronyms. For Participants (countries/economies), there are several key terms. These are defined here, with acronyms given as required.

The **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development** (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Its goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all. It draws on around 65 years of experience and insights to better prepare the world of tomorrow. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, the OECD works on establishing evidence-based international standards and finding solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges.

The **OECD Secretariat** is responsible for the overall management of PISA, and acts as the secretariat of the PISA Governing Board. It monitors implementation, prepares international analyses and reports in collaboration with participating countries/economies, and, for PISA 2029, is also responsible for developing the frameworks.

The **PISA Governing Board** (PGB) is the steering committee for PISA, and makes decisions about the survey's budget, strategy, development, overall design, and global relations.

The PGB is composed of representatives from governments from all countries/economies that speak on behalf of and consult with their respective jurisdictions to prepare the PGB discussion and decision-making. OECD Member countries² and PISA Associate countries (currently Brazil and Thailand) hold decision-making rights at the PGB.

¹ PISA 2029 NPM Manual and PISA 2029 Technical Standards, forthcoming.

² <https://www.oecd.org/about/members-and-partners/>

A **Participant** is a country or economy that has chosen to participate in PISA.

A **National Centre** (NC) is the administrative centre (or centres) for the implementation of PISA in a country/economy. The National Centre is managed by at least one NPM.

A **National Project Manager** (NPM) is the manager (or managers) of a National Centre who oversees the implementation of PISA in a country/economy throughout the entire cycle. The NPM is responsible for ensuring that tasks are carried out on schedule and in accordance with the specified international standards.

The NPM communicates with the International Contractors on all operational matters and works closely with their representative on the PGB.

The **International Contractors** are the organisations that, as a group, implement PISA on behalf of the OECD. The **Australian Council for Educational Research** (ACER) is the lead contractor for PISA 2029.

ACER will design, develop and implement PISA 2029 alongside the following organisations:

- **cApStAn** is responsible for linguistic quality assurance and linguistic quality control in PISA.
- **HallStat** performs the role of Translation Referee, who is responsible for adjudicating verifier interventions and Participants' adaptations.
- **IEA** is responsible for managing all aspects of school and student sampling.

Further information about the International Contractors is provided in the document [*Working with the International Contractors*](#).

1.2 The PISA Survey Period

PISA 2029 is implemented in a five-year cycle that involves instrument development, two data collections, the first for the Field Trial (FT) and the second for the Main Survey (MS), data analysis, and dissemination of results. The key activities for each year of the PISA 2029 survey period are:

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Framework and instrument development	Adaptation, translation and sampling	Field Trial data collection	Main Survey data collection	Analysis and reporting
NPM nomination	Field Trial preparations	Main Survey preparations		
International option selection				

1.3 PISA 2029 Core Components

In each cycle of PISA, there are core and optional components. Unless otherwise agreed, all Participants implement the core components. In PISA 2029 these are:

- Assessment of Reading (focal domain), Mathematics and Science
- Assessment of Media and Artificial Intelligence Literacy (innovative domain)
- Student Questionnaire
- School Questionnaire

A System-level questionnaire is also administered to PGB representatives by the OECD Secretariat.

1.4 PISA 2029 Optional Components

1.4.1 *Optional Modules*

In addition, there are four international options in PISA 2029:

- Financial Literacy (Assessment and Student Questionnaire module)
- Emerging Policy questionnaire for students
- Teacher questionnaire for teachers of text-based subjects
- Parent questionnaire.

Participating in international options is optional for experienced Participants and is discouraged for new Participants. It conveys an international participation fee and is likely to incur additional in-country costs for the National Centre. **Participation in the international optional modules is negotiated with the OECD.**

1.4.2 *National Options*

In addition to the optional modules available to all Participants, some Participants may choose to implement national options, which are extensions or adaptations of the implementation of PISA to better suit each jurisdiction's policy goals. This is often done to address specific policy or research issues of particular interest to that Participant. These could include:

- Over-sampling particular cohorts of students
- Adding items to questionnaires

Participating in national options may convey an additional fee depending on the nature of the option, as well as the likelihood of incurring additional costs for the NC. **Participation in national options is negotiated with the International Contractors.**

1.5 PISA 2029 Partnership Components

PISA 2029 offers two partnership options for countries/economies that participate in PISA: Capacity Building and Implementation Support (CBIS) and PISA Analysis and Reporting (A&R).

These partnership options are designed to maximise the benefits of participating in PISA and are strongly recommended to all countries/economies taking part in PISA for the first time.

1.5.1 Capacity Building and Implementation Support

New Participants in PISA may opt and are strongly encouraged to participate in the Capacity Building and Implementation Support (CBIS) partnership. In these cases, the NPM works closely with the International Contractors in a range of activities, including:

- coordinating interviews with local stakeholders to undertake a capacity needs analysis
- working with the International Contractors to develop a capacity building plan
- asking for and receiving guidance throughout the PISA cycle
- receiving additional training.

Participation in the CBIS option conveys an international participation fee and is negotiated with the OECD.

1.5.2 Analysis and Reporting Support

New and continuing countries/economies participating in PISA may opt in to the Analysis and Reporting (A&R) support. The A&R option aims to help participating countries/economies build national capacity for the analysis, interpretation, reporting, and communication of PISA findings, in order to inform national policy and practice.

With support and guidance from the OECD, the NPM will set up a national PISA Analysis team (typically 5 to 8 people). This team will be involved in:

- training on the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of PISA 2029 findings
- developing a national PISA 2029 report with insights relevant to the national context
- developing and implementing a national PISA 2029 communication and dissemination strategy
- organising a PISA 2029 communication event prior to the release of results, as well as a PISA 2029 results launch on the same day as the international launch or shortly thereafter.

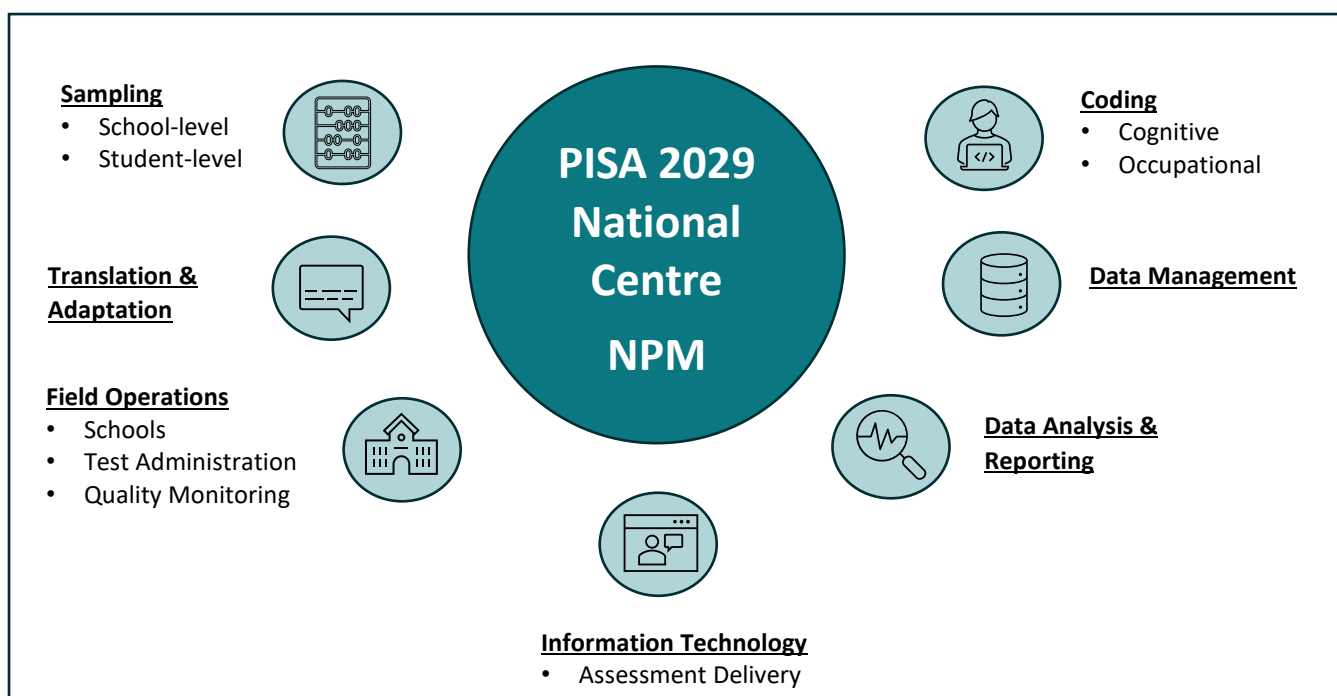
Participation in the A&R option conveys an international participation fee and is negotiated with the OECD.

2. Key Roles and Responsibilities of the National Centre

Each National Centre is led by a National Project Manager (NPM).³ The NPM has overall responsibility for the implementation of PISA in their country/economy. The NPM leads a team of people. The team size will depend on several factors, including whether staff work full-time on PISA or combine work on PISA with other professional activities, and the phase of the PISA cycle.

In general, the core National Centre team is expected to consist of staff who manage or coordinate each key area of work. Additional staff may be required to carry out tasks within each area, particularly for Translation/Adaptation and Field Operations, and to provide administrative support to the National Centre. Depending on the needs and resources of the National Centre, a single individual may be responsible for managing more than one area of work (for example, one person may act as both the sampling manager and the data manager).

The key areas of work within a National Centre are:



A summary of each area of work is provided in the following sections.

³ A Participant may select to have two NPMs, acting as co-NPMs.

2.1 National Project Manager

The NPM is responsible for implementing PISA at the national level and must have a good grasp of all the elements involved in participating in PISA. NPM responsibilities and activities suit a full-time role. Part-time roles are possible with sufficient administrative assistance.

Where possible, the NPM should be appointed for an entire PISA cycle, and across different PISA cycles, this ensures continuity of activities and knowledge across cycles.

Each NPM requires:

- Advanced proficiency in English
- Experience in leading large-scale educational projects
- Ability to manage a team of staff
- Familiarity with the technical processes including sampling, survey implementation and management.

In addition, either the NPM or a member of their team requires:

- Knowledge and awareness of the PISA design, processes, and procedures
- Experience in dealing with national and regional government agencies, school staff, parents, and students
- Knowledge of statistics, sampling, and data (management, processing, analysis and reporting)
- Ability to oversee translation, adaptation, and verification activities.

A great deal of knowledge about coordinating the discrete aspects of PISA is built up in an NPM. For this reason, it is essential to have a long transition period if the NPM changes. This allows the incoming NPM to learn from the outgoing NPM.

The NPM has a wide range of responsibilities, as outlined below. These responsibilities may arise more than once during the PISA cycle and often overlap. Effective leadership of the National Centre requires the NPM to carefully plan, implement, and quality assure all related activities, including the coordination of part-time staff. Where responsibilities overlap with those of other National Centre staff, the NPM retains responsibility for ensuring that the work is completed to a high standard and in accordance with the Technical Standards.

International communications

- maintaining ongoing communication with the International Contractors
- reading manuals and documentation provided by the International Contractors
- participating in NPM meetings and webinars
- participating in training on PISA operational procedures

National communications

- meeting with national and regional governments to discuss and promote PISA
- using promotional materials to raise awareness of PISA nationally

Staff coordination

- establishing the NC
- supervising staff to complete tasks

Security

- ensuring the security and confidentiality of all materials

Review • reviewing assessment frameworks and instruments (tests and questionnaires) and providing feedback • reviewing instruments (tests and questionnaires) in the online deployment system • reviewing key international documents (such as the NPM manual and school-level manuals) and providing feedback
Translation / Adaptation • recruiting and training translators/reconcilers/people in charge of adaptations • following international protocols to adapt and/or translate test instruments, questionnaires, school-level materials and coding guides
Sampling • determining sampling strategies, with the national sampling manager, in line with the Technical Standards • meeting with the international sampling team, along with the national sampling manager • supervising the preparation of all sampling documents • supervising the implementation of the sampling strategy
Survey operations • planning, with the Field Operations Manager, the logistical arrangements of administering the PISA assessments in schools • supervising the NC activities in preparing and supporting schools to administer the assessment
Test Administration • recruiting and training Test Administrators to administer the assessment in schools
Coding • recruiting and training coders to code the open-ended test items and occupation data in the questionnaire
Data • supporting the data manager to verify the Field Trial and Main Survey data in preparation for submission to the International Contractors.
Reporting and dissemination • developing national reports to highlight key achievements and summarise data • deploying a national dissemination strategy to communicate key findings

To support NPMs in carrying out their roles, the International Contractors prepare the *PISA 2029 NPM Manual*, which will be released in two parts. The NPM Manual is the central operational resource supporting the work of NPMs throughout the PISA cycle. It serves as the primary reference for planning and managing National Centre activities required to implement PISA in each participating country/economy. This manual will be available to access in *PISA Connect* (a secure, online communications portal that will host all PISA 2029 documentation and the *PISA 2029 Helpdesk*).

2.2 Sampling

Each National Centre should have a designated National Sampling Manager (NSM). The National Sampling Manager manages all sampling-related activities for the Field Trial and Main Survey.

The National Sampling Manager should have:

- knowledge of the school education system
- experience in stratified probability design and selection
- familiarity with weighting and design-based estimation
- basic statistical knowledge, including familiarity with statistical packages such as SPSS, R or SAS
- familiarity with standard Microsoft applications such as Word and Excel.
- a high level of oral and written communication skills in English.

The National Sampling Manager will:

For school-level sampling:

- participate in the school-sampling webinars
- work closely with the International Contractors to ensure that the school sample design meets all international and national requirements
- Identify appropriate stratification variables together with the IEA Sampling Team, ensuring they are available and accurate for all schools
- complete the Sampling Forms, which summarises all the relevant information about the national school system and the national sampling plan
- prepare the school sampling frame, which is a comprehensive file of schools that includes the entire PISA student population. Guidelines for preparing the School Sampling Frame will be provided in the [School Sampling Manual](#)
- after school sampling, check and confirm the sampling-related documentation provided by the IEA Sampling Team
- secure the participation of as many sampled schools as possible. If a sampled school does not participate, secure the participation of the respective replacement school (if available).

For student-level sampling:

- participate in the within-school sampling webinars
- obtain lists of PISA-eligible students from each participating school and conducting quality control and plausibility checks
- select the student sample in each participating school using the IEA Online Survey Expert (OSE)
- monitor progress during the Field Trial and Main Survey data collections by tracking school- and student-level participation rates and exclusions
- if required for the Main Survey, conduct a non-response bias analysis in accordance with specifications provided by the IEA Sampling Team.

During the weighting process

- respond to queries from the IEA Sampling Team regarding weighting-related questions
- check and confirm the weighting report.

Additional staff may be needed to assist with completing the sampling tasks, such as preparing the sampling frame or completing the student-level sampling.

Expected timing for sampling tasks:

Task	Timing
School-level sampling • completing the sampling forms • preparing the school sampling frame	February 2027 – October 2027
Attend school sampling webinar	February 2027
Attend FT within-school sampling webinar	November 2027
Student-level sampling – Field Trial	From 8 weeks before the Field Trial to the start of the Field Trial period
Monitoring participation – Field Trial	During the Field Trial testing period
Attend MS within-school sampling webinar	November 2028
Student-level sampling – Main Survey	From 8 weeks before the Main Survey to the start of the Main Survey period
Monitoring participation – Main Survey	During the Main Survey testing period
Respond to weighting-related queries	Up to 10 weeks after data collection
Participate in non-response bias analysis webinar (if necessary)	October 2029
Conducting a non-response bias analysis (if necessary)	In late 2029 / early 2030

2.3 Language – translation and adaptation

National Centres will need staff to translate and/or adapt the assessment instruments (the cognitive test and corresponding coding guides, and the questionnaires), as well as the school-level manuals and documentation, into the national language(s). The national translation team will be led by the *Translation Lead*.

The International Contractors prepare all PISA test and questionnaire materials in English, and these may require translation by Participants. The International Contractors will also produce a French reference version, which may be used for reference but not for translation. Even if a translation is not required, all materials must be adapted to fit the local context. In addition, translation and/or adaptation of school-level materials and coding guides are required.

For translation from English into other languages, the *PISA 2029 Technical Standards* require a process of independently carried out, double translation, followed by reconciliation to merge the two separate translations. For PISA 2029, one of the two translations will be an Automated Translation (AT) provided by the International Contractors and one will be a Human Translation (HT), performed by a professional translator. Alternatively, Participants may opt for two Human Translations (HT), where both translations are prepared by two independent translators. This means that with the first option, at least *one independent translator* and *one reconciler* will be required. With the second option, two independent translators and one reconciler are required. Translators and reconcilers are provided by the NCs.

For adaptation (where a language is made suitable for the local context, e.g., through changing terminology and spelling), *at least one adaptor* will be required. Adaptors are provided by the National Centres. While most adaptation is from the English source version or the French reference version, some Participants that share a language, will adapt a common base version or a verified version borrowed from another Participant.

For both translation and adaptation, a *reviewer* will also be required (this may be the same person as the *reconciler* or the *adaptor*). In most National Centres, the *Translation Lead* will be the reviewer.

Each member of the translation team should have:

- relevant qualifications and experience
- advanced proficiency in English and advanced proficiency in the target language (or target version of English source or French reference, if adapting)
- an ability to use the required translation software (OmegaT).

The *Translation Lead*:

- works closely with the International Contractors to ensure that the Translation Plan (TP) meets all national requirements
- negotiates the Preferred Verification Schedule (PVS) with the International Contractors
- manages the translation team
- ensures that the translation and adaptation of instruments and supporting materials happens in accordance with international specifications for the Field Trial
- monitors the documentation of proposed changes to instruments and supporting materials for further verification for the Main Survey
- communicates with the International Contractors on translation and adaptation issues.

The *Translators*:

- translate assessment materials and other required documentation from the English source versions to the target language.

The *Reconciler*:

- merges the two independent translations (whether either are automated or human) in such a way that the resulting national version is semantically as close as possible to the source version(s).

The *Adaptor*:

- adapts the spelling and terminology of the source version, reference version, common base version or verified borrowed version to local usage.

The *Reviewer*:

- reviews and finalises the translation/adaptation following verification
- reviews proposed changes to instruments and supporting materials between the Field Trial and Main Survey.

Expected timing for language tasks:

Task	Timing
Completing and negotiating the Translation Plan	December 2026 – February 2027
Setting up the Translation Adaptation Workflow Tasks Timelines	December 2026 – June 2027
Field Trial Translation/Adaptation and Verification	From April 2027 following the agreed Preferred Verification Schedule
Main Survey Translation/Adaptation Review and Verification	From September 2028 following the agreed Preferred Verification Schedule

2.3 Information Technology

All National Centres should have an Information Technology (IT) Coordinator to manage PISA's IT-related activities to implement the computer-based assessment (CBA) within schools. IT coordination will be concentrated in the periods of instrument development, computer platform training, roll out of the School Readiness Tool, roll out of Helpdesk, CBA delivery, and data collection. During these times, the Information Technology Coordinator should work full-time on PISA.

The Information Technology Coordinator should have:

- IT skills and knowledge
- familiarity with the IT infrastructure used within schools and the challenges of using school computers for testing
- expertise in enabling participating schools to conduct the online assessment and resolve issues reported by schools (for example, results reported by the School Readiness Tool)
- familiarity with large-scale survey operations
- skills in troubleshooting hardware and networking problems
- capacity to resolve web-based and web service problems with operating systems
- proficiency in extracting and transmitting data from computers
- ability to maintain data and communications security in an internet environment
- capacity to train others on computer use
- ability to manage the data exported from the delivery platform.

The Information Technology Coordinator:

- assists schools to run the School Readiness Tool and report their results to the National Centre
- takes action to ensure that the systems are suitable to deliver assessments using the delivery platform
- attends training sessions for the delivery platform and becoming familiar with the assessment delivery process
- works collaboratively with the International Contractors to schedule assessments
- monitors the implementation of PISA 2029, receiving platform status updates and receiving interruption reports
- works with the International Contractors to implement an appropriate offline CBA solution (if necessary), including assisting them in implementing a temporary wireless network.

Expected timing for IT tasks:

Task	Timing
Preparing for the Field Trial: Assess system-wide preparedness to deliver online and determine whether offline delivery will be required, either as an option for schools (hybrid delivery) or for all schools.	From January 2027
Preparing for the Field Trial: Liaise with schools to determine access to appropriate IT devices and assess school readiness using the School Readiness Tool. Based on the results, confirm the IT infrastructure is sufficient for the CBA online mode or assess the need for the CBA offline delivery and prepare devices in line	From when the national school sample is received.

with the technical requirements for the CBA offline (if required).	
Reviewing the National Release Candidate (the national version of the Field Trial assessment platform)	From up to 2 months prior to the Field Trial (depending on when the translation/adaptation verification process ends)
Monitoring the implementation of the Field Trial	During the Field Trial
Preparing for the Main Survey: Liaise with schools to determine access to appropriate IT devices and assess school readiness using the School Readiness Tool. Based on the results, confirm the IT infrastructure is sufficient for the CBA online mode or assess the need for the CBA offline delivery and prepare devices in line with the technical requirements for the CBA offline (if required).	From after the Field Trial
Reviewing the National Release Candidate (the national version of the Main Survey assessment platform)	From up to 2 months prior to the Main Survey (depending on when the translation/adaptation verification process ends)
Monitoring the implementation of the Main Survey	During the Main Survey

2.4 Field Operations

A key area for which National Centres may wish to appoint a dedicated manager or coordinator is Field Operations. Field Operations encompasses the communication with sampled schools, the pre-test administration and coordination tasks, and the logistical arrangements of administering the PISA assessments in the schools. This includes the recruitment, training, and management of Test Administrators responsible for administering the assessment. Field Operations may also include the recruitment and training of National Quality Monitors as part of a National Quality Monitoring program.

As well as the Field Operations Manager/Coordinator, additional National Centre staff may be required in the lead up to, during and after the Field Trial and Main Survey data collections to assist with:

- gaining the cooperation of schools
- ongoing communication with schools, including providing schools with information and responding to queries
- adaptation of the school-level manuals (to fit the local context)
- organising and/or printing the school-level manuals, sampling tracking forms, parent questionnaires (for Participants administering this international option) and other associated materials
- using the School Readiness Tool to evaluate the suitability of devices to deliver the online assessment
- dispatch and receipt of materials
- monitoring the data collection in schools
- data entry of completed sampling tracking forms.

Support staff need to have:

- experience communicating with schools and teachers
- an understanding of the school system
- excellent communication skills.

Expected timing for field operations tasks:

Task	Timing
Field Trial School-level materials adaptations negotiations	From September 2027 until 12 weeks prior to the Field Trial
Communication with schools - Field Trial • Collecting student/staff information • Setting the assessment date • Running the School Readiness Test • Planning and running the assessment • Post assessment activities	From several months before the Field Trial, during and in the month after the Field Trial
Recruitment and Training of Field Trial Test Administrators	From several months before until just before the Field Trial test period
Monitoring the data collection and data entry of Field Trial tracking data	During and after the Field Trial test period.
Main Survey School-level materials adaptations negotiations	From September 2028 until 12 weeks prior to the Main Survey

Communication with schools - Main Survey • Collecting student/staff information • Setting the assessment date • Running the School Readiness Test • Planning and running the assessment Post assessment activities	From several months before the Main Survey, during and in the month after the Main Survey
Recruitment and Training of Main Survey Test Administrators	From several months before until just before the Main Survey test period
Monitoring the data collection and data entry of Main Survey tracking data	During and after the Main Survey test period.

2.3.1 Test Administrators

Each National Centre needs to appoint a large team of Test Administrators (TAs) to administer the PISA assessment in participating schools in the Field Trial and the Main Survey. Test Administrators need to have independence from the students being assessed, so that they can administer the PISA assessment impartially and uniformly in accordance with the *Technical Standards* and PISA procedures.

Each Test Administrator should have

- experience working with schools, teachers and students
- relevant required clearance to engage with children
- experience in administering or invigilating school-based assessments
- experience using computers for student activities.

The Test Administrator should not be the reading, mathematics, or science instructor or a close friend or relative of any student in the assessment sessions he or she will administer for PISA. Test Administrators should preferably not be school staff.

All Test Administrators must attend training and must adhere to the *Test Administration Manual*. The International Contractors develop the *Test Administration Manual* and provide it to NPMs for translation and adaptation.

The role of Test Administrator includes:

- ensuring the receipt of the assessment materials from the National Centre and maintaining their security
- contacting the School Coordinator before the assessment date to confirm plans
- administering the assessment
- updating and completing the Student Tracking Form (the list of sampled students)
- conducting a follow-up session, if required
- organising the return of the testing materials to the National Centre.

The number of Test Administrators required is dependent on several factors, including:

- the sample size
- the length of the data collection period
- the location of the schools
- the number of assessment sessions within schools
- the number of school computers and/or external laptops that are available.

It is recommended that the same Test Administrators are used in the Field Trial and Main Survey to benefit from their Field Trial experience.

2.3.2 *Key roles and responsibilities in schools*

As the PISA assessment takes place within schools, each school will need to have designated staff to assist the National Centre to organise PISA in their school. The school staff assigned to assist the National Centre will need to assist with administrative tasks and technical (IT) tasks.

At a minimum, every school selected to participate in either the PISA 2029 Field Trial or Main Survey requires a PISA School Coordinator (SC). This is a school staff member (who might be a deputy principal, teacher or administrator) who handles all communication with the National Centre to coordinate the school's participation in PISA.

The School Coordinator should have:

- access to complete school student records
- the authority to schedule assessment sessions
- the ability to communicate about PISA with other school staff
- the ability to respond to questions from students, parents and colleagues about PISA

The work of the School Coordinators is guided by the *School Coordinator's Manual*, which describes the activities and responsibilities of the School Coordinators. The *School Coordinator's Manual* is prepared by the International Contractors and is translated and adapted by the National Centre for the national context.

The role of School Coordinator includes:

- responding to communications from the NC and Test Administrator
- establishing the assessment date(s)
- preparing the student listing form (with the details of all PISA-eligible students in the school) for the National Centre to draw the student sample
- disseminating information about PISA to the school community
- encouraging and supporting the participation of sampled students
- testing the compatibility of school computers to run the computer-based assessment
- assisting the Test Administrator in organising the assessment.

Some National Centres may choose to have a PISA IT Coordinator to handle the technical aspects of PISA within the school. Where this is the case, the technical tasks that are listed above would not be the responsibility of the School Coordinator but the IT Coordinator.

The IT Coordinator should have:

- knowledge of the school's IT infrastructure
- administrative rights to the computers the students will be using for PISA
- IT technical skills.

The role of IT Coordinator includes:

- providing detailed information about the schools' computer resources
- testing the compatibility of school computers to run the PISA assessment
- ensuring required domains are permitted by the network firewall or security settings

- providing technical assistance (if required) to the Test Administrator on the day of the assessment.

In some countries/economies, the Test Administrator and School Coordinator are the same person, a *School Associate* (SA). Typically, this role is undertaken by a school staff member, who should not be the reading, mathematics, or science instructor or a close friend or relative of any sampled students in the school.

The International Contractors prepare a *School Associate's Manual* to describe in detail the activities and responsibilities of the School Associate. This manual combines the source material provided in the individual *School Coordinator Manual* and *Test Administrator Manual*.

2.3.3 Quality Monitoring

The International Contractors will organise an International PISA Quality Monitoring program to ensure that test administration procedures are implemented in a rigorous and standardised way in schools across and within participating countries/economies. The International PISA Quality Monitoring program is run during the Main Survey for all Participants, and in the Field Trial for National Centres that are new to PISA.

PISA Quality Monitors (PQMs) are responsible for observing the administration of PISA assessments and to verify that the TAs/SAs are following the approach described in the Test Administrator's Manual/School Associate's Manual and the Test Administration Script.

ACER directly employ, train and remunerates the International PQMs. Appointments will be made from nominations provided by NPMs to ensure that the PQMs have the appropriate language skills and necessary requirements to enter schools, that will allow them to carry out their observations of assessment sessions and communicate effectively with ACER. More information about the International PQM program will be provided in the NPM Manual.

Although the International PISA Quality Monitoring program is not compulsory in the Field Trial for National Centres who participated in PISA 2025, as part of quality assurance and reviewing field operations, NPMs are encouraged to run a National Quality Monitoring program where National Centre staff visit some schools and observe the assessment administration first-hand. These observations provide valuable information about aspects of national implementation and assessment procedures, and form part of quality assurance and reviewing field operations.

To prepare for this activity, NPMs need to establish protocols for visiting schools and to consider suitable staff to visit schools to observe the assessment sessions. NPMs may use their own observation form or can adapt the one used by the international PQMs. National Quality Monitors should also attend the national Test Administrator training, if possible, to ensure their familiarity with PISA procedures.

2.5 Coding

National Centres will need staff to code student responses to the open-constructed-response items for the assessment domains, as well as the occupations collected in the student questionnaire.

2.5.1 Coding of cognitive items

Once students have completed the assessment in the Field Trial or Main Survey, their responses to the cognitive open constructed response items need to be coded. Coders are trained to apply specific guidelines to determine how well students have answered an open constructed response item. The number of required coders will be determined by the coding design.

Cognitive coders should have:

- more than a secondary qualification (i.e., high school degree); university graduates are preferable
- good knowledge of the domain(s) in which they are coding
- a good understanding of secondary education in the domain(s) they are coding
- fluency in the language(s) of the assessment
- two coders for each domain must be bilingual in English and the language(s) of the assessment.

Cognitive coders will:

- code the open constructed response items according to the *PISA 2029 Coding Procedures* and following the training they received.
- completing reliability responses as directed.

For each of the domains in PISA – reading, mathematics, science, Media and Artificial Intelligence and financial literacy (if participating in this international option) – a *Lead Coder* is appointed. Lead Coders receive training from the International Contractors and are responsible for managing and quality assuring coding. They do so in accordance with the training that they have received and the domain-specific *Coding Guide*, which the International Contractors develop.

In addition to the list of qualities of a cognitive coder (above), Lead Coders should be fluent in English.

The responsibilities of the Lead Coder role include:

- conducting training (or retraining where necessary) on each item to be coded
- assigning items and allocating student responses to the coding team
- ensuring the Reliability coding is completed
- ensuring Anchor coding is completed
- viewing the Reliability report
- addressing coder questions when required.

It is recommended that the same coders are used in both the Field Trial and Main Survey to benefit from their Field Trial experience. Cognitive coding operations can start as soon as a country/economy has enough data to ensure work for their coding team, so it may overlap with the assessment period.

2.5.2 Coding of occupations (from the questionnaires)

The reliable coding of occupational data from the questionnaires is important because this information is used to form key indicators of student socio-economic status. Occupational coding can only begin once ALL relevant data is available, including the responses from the Parent Questionnaire (if participating in this international option).

The International Contractors will provide training for occupational coding. At least one member of the NC occupational coding team must attend the training, and they must train all other members of the coding team.

Occupation Coders should have:

- more than a secondary qualification (i.e., high school degree); university graduates are preferable
- fluency in the language(s) of the assessment
- fluency in English is preferable (any coder attending the international training **MUST** be fluent in English).

Occupation Coders will:

- code the written description of parental occupations to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) coding scheme, following the [PISA 2029 occupation coding procedures](#) and following the training they received.

Expected timing for coding tasks:

Task	Timing
Participating in the international Field Trial coder training (lead coders) • Reading (in-person) • Science, Maths, MAIL & Financial Literacy (virtual) • Occupation coding (virtual)	January 2028
Conducting the Field Trial coding	From the Field Trial assessment period to 5 weeks from the end of the Field Trial.
Participating in the Main Survey coder training webinars (lead coders)	January 2029
Conducting the Main Survey coding	From the Main Survey assessment period to up to 5 weeks from the end of the Main Survey.

2.6 Data management

Each National Centre should have a designated National Data Manager (NDM). The National Data Manager will manage all the data-related activities for the Field Trial and Main Survey. The National Data Manager must abide by all security and data privacy regulations to assure the confidentiality of all Participants.

The National Data Manager should have:

- knowledge and experience in planning and managing data capture in large-scale surveys
- statistical knowledge, including familiarity with statistical packages such as SPSS, R or SAS
- familiarity with standard Microsoft applications such as Word and Excel
- a high level of oral and written communication skills in English.

The National Data Manager:

- communicates with the International Contractors on all data management activities
- participates in all data management training including participating in the Field Trial and Main Survey Data Manager training meetings, attending technical seminars, and reading the technical documentation provided by the international contractors
- communicates with staff on schedules
- ensures the required information is sent to the International Contractors by the agreed deadlines, or seeks additional support in advance where necessary
- oversees national compliance with PISA Technical Standards and data delivery outcomes
- ensures all post-assessment processes are completed
- ensures consistency across sampling participation rates, tracking forms, platform statuses, submitted datasets
- trains staff on data entry procedures
- supervises support staff during data collection and data entry
- conducts validation checks of data from survey instruments according to PISA guidelines
- oversees data reconciliation activities and national responses to validation and follow-up queries
- follows the established procedures to transmit data to protect the privacy of the survey participants
- ensures national capacity to remain available during validation and cleaning phases to respond to data queries, manage late-stage issues affecting national data.

Additional staff may be needed for data entry and other data management activities, especially for countries/economies participating in the Parent Questionnaire, and have opted to administer it as a paper-based questionnaire (countries/economies participating in the Parent Questionnaire can choose to administer the Parent Questionnaire in either the paper-based format or online, but not both).

Expected timing for data management tasks:

Task	Timing
Participating in the Field Trial data management training webinar	January 2028
Field Trial data monitoring	During the Field Trial test period
Field Trial data management tasks • data entry • validation checks • data submission	Up to 8 weeks following the end of the Field Trial test period
Responding to data queries following the Field Trial	Following Field Trial data submission
Reviewing the Field Trial National Datafiles and National Item Analysis Report	August – December 2028
Participating in the Main Survey data management training webinar	January 2029
Main Survey data monitoring	During the Main Survey test period
Main Survey data management tasks • data entry • validation checks • data submission	Up to 8 weeks following the end of the Main Survey test period
Responding to data queries following the Main Survey	Following Main Survey data submission
Reviewing the Main Survey National Datafiles and National Item Analysis Report	August – December 2029
Reviewing the International Database and Public Use Files	February – July 2030

2.7 Data analysis and reporting

The PISA 2029 analysis and reporting phase will take place in 2030, under embargo, starting from the release of the first version of the international database (IDB1) and up to the international release of PISA 2029 in the third quarter of 2030. The PISA Governing Board (PGB) representative is responsible for overseeing the PISA 2029 analysis and reporting activities at the national level.

The PISA Governing Board representative is responsible for ensuring that the PISA 2029 confidentiality agreement with the OECD is signed, in which all individuals who will be granted access to PISA 2029 information under embargo are listed. In most countries/economies, the NPM and National Centre team members are included in the confidentiality agreement and support the PISA Governing Board representative with the following tasks:

- two rounds of review of the PISA 2029 international report drafts
- review of other PISA 2029 dissemination materials, such as Country Notes and PISA in Focus.

All participating countries/economies are encouraged to develop and publish their own national analyses of the PISA 2029 findings. The scope of analysis and the dissemination plan are at the discretion of the PGB representative. In most participating countries/economies, the NPM and National Centre team members play an active role in the analysis, interpretation and development of national PISA outputs.

For each cycle, the OECD provides general support and resources to assist countries/economies with national analysis and reporting. These include informational webinars on PISA analysis and tools, national report templates, and international data tables. In addition, the OECD provides more hands-on and tailored support to new and continuing PISA Participants for the analysis and reporting of their national PISA 2029 findings through the PISA Analysis and Reporting support option (see Section 1.5.2). New Participants are strongly encouraged to take part in the Analysis and Reporting support option.

3. National Centre Facilities

Successful coordination of PISA 2029 will rely on access to high quality communications infrastructure.

Face-to-Face meetings are scheduled at different stages throughout the PISA 2029 cycle (the schedule of meetings will be available on *PISA Connect*, as well as the *Working with the International Contractors* document). In addition, much of the interaction between the International Contractors and NPMs will be virtual:

- Regular communications between the National Centre and International Contractors staff will occur via the *PISA 2029 HelpDesk* (a virtual ticket-based system) within *PISA Connect*
- All key documents and announcements will be shared on *PISA Connect* (an online portal)
- Some meetings or training sessions will include Zoom- or Teams-based interactions.

When a National Centre is established, it is therefore important to ensure that the following facilities are available to the NPM and the National Centre staff throughout the PISA 2029 cycle:

- access to computers/laptops with (at minimum) Microsoft Office applications Word and Excel
- access to a reliable, high-bandwidth internet connection, with access to recent version of one of the common browsers (Firefox, Chrome or Edge) and email facilities.

For IT security reasons, it is recommended that National Centres use versions of the operating system and applications, including browsers, that are (at a minimum) still supported by the vendor.

It should be noted that some of the tools used by National Centre staff (for example, for translation activities – see Appendix A) may require the installation of applications or the on-demand execution of apps. Further information about these tools will be provided when their use is required. National Centres will need to allow HTTPS access to specified whitelisted URLs or domains, either through a web browser or via an approved application.

In addition to computing facilities, the National Centre will require access to the following resources:

- printers (for example, printing the *School Coordinator's Manual* and *Test Administrator's Manual*, tracking forms and promotional materials)
- suitable workspace, including desks and computers, to support National Centre staff and coding operations
- suitable space for the storage of equipment and materials
- access to postage/courier services to dispatch materials to schools, Test Administrators and coders.

When establishing a National Centre, it is essential that the **security of all PISA materials** is always maintained and remains confidential. The NPM must ensure that only approved staff have access to these materials and spaces.

Appendix A – Technical specifications for the translation and adaptation activities

The translation and adaptation activities require that National Centre staff use specific applications that have specific requirements (listed below). Please contact/share these technical requirements with your IT/system administrator at your earliest convenience, to make sure that they are allowed by your local system.

IT requirements

- Allow HTTPS access to whitelisted URLs or domains, either in the browser or from a whitelisted app.
- Allow installation and/or on-demand execution of whitelisted apps.

Whitelisted locations

- github.com/capstanlqc/* (any url with this domain)
- *.capstan.be/* (any url with this domain)
- *.teamviewer.com/* (any url with this domain)

Whitelisted applications

- OmegaT and Java runtime bundled with OmegaT
- TeamViewer QuickSupport

References

- <https://github.com/capstanlqc/omegat>
- <https://github.com/capstanlqc/omegat-user-config-dev572>