



# Guide to Democratic Empowerment

## Module 6: Check Your Democratic Progress



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<b>Document author:</b>	Georgia Dimitrakopoulou and Anastasia Pyrini
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# Module 6: Check Your Democratic Progress

## Introduction: Check Your Democratic Progress

Every journey has a moment where we pause, take a breath, and look back at how far we've come. This is that moment for your school.

Throughout the coACTION programme, your school has worked to build a more inclusive, participatory, and democratic learning environment. You've involved pupils in decision-making, strengthened communication across your community, and explored new ways to live out shared values. Now, it's time to stop and ask: What impact has all of this had?

Module 6 invites you into a process of thoughtful reflection, structured evaluation, and meaningful celebration. It's your chance to measure progress, recognise growth, and celebrate the people and practices that made it all possible. Whether the changes have been big or small, visible or subtle, this is a moment to honour the work and energy invested across your school.

Most importantly, this module isn't just about looking back—it's also about looking ahead. What do you want to keep developing? What has surprised or inspired you? How will you take the next steps toward a democratic school culture that lasts?

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*Use this moment to thoughtfully recognise your journey so far  
and consider where it might lead next.*

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## Purpose of the Module

Welcome to Module 6 of the coACTION school programme. This final step in your journey is a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the democratic development your school has undertaken over the past months. It marks the moment where you pause to assess, share, and celebrate the progress you've made in building a more inclusive, participatory school culture.

Throughout this module, you will return to the coACTION Sensor—the tool you first used in Module 2—to reapply it with your community. This will allow you to compare your new results with those from the beginning of the school year and evaluate how far your school has come. You will also reflect on your goals, communicate the findings with your wider school community, and celebrate your shared achievements.

Importantly, you'll be encouraged to take a final step: to reflect as a project group with the support of a coach, and to close this development cycle together. Your school will also be awarded the coACTION participation sticker as a visible sign of your engagement and commitment.

## What You Will Do

By completing this module, your school will:

- Reapply the coACTION Sensor (as you did in Module 2);
- Compare your new results with those collected earlier in the year;
- Evaluate the progress made toward your school's democratic goals;

- Involve your full school community in reviewing the outcomes;
- Celebrate achievements and milestones in a meaningful way;
- Receive coaching support to reflect, consolidate, and plan ahead; and
- Be awarded the coACTION participation sticker — a symbol of your democratic engagement.

**Figure 1**

*Check Your Democratic Progress*



## When Should This Happen?

Your school is free to choose the moment that fits best within your calendar. Many schools opt to carry out this module once a year, often in September, to align with the start of the new school year. If your school uses the Sensor continuously, you might decide to designate an annual reflection period that suits your rhythm of development. The key is to create a moment of collective pause, to check in on your democratic journey so far.

## What You'll Need

Before you begin, we recommend preparing the following:

- Your school's previous Sensor results from Module 2;
- A valid access code for the Sensor platform (contact your programme coordinator if needed);
- Your project group, ready to reflect, evaluate and facilitate the process; and

- Initial plans or ideas for communicating results and celebrating progress

## Important Questions

Do we need a new access code?

*Yes — most schools receive a new annual access code for each application of the Sensor. This helps the system keep results well-organised and makes comparisons easier. If you are unsure about your school's code, please contact your coACTION coordinator.*

Can we compare this year's results with the last?

*Absolutely. The Sensor system includes a deviation analysis feature, which allows you to view and compare results from different points in time. This lets you track your school's democratic development, identify areas of growth, and see where consistent efforts are still needed.*

## Reflective Prompt (Optional)

If you would like to begin this module with a conversation or journal activity, here is a reflective prompt you can use with your project group, class, or staff team:

- What do you hope to discover by repeating the Sensor this year?
- What signs of change have you already noticed in your school community?

You can write down your thoughts, share them in pairs or small groups, or use them as discussion starters in your next project team meeting.

## Session 2: Evaluating the Results

With your updated Sensor results in hand, this session invites you to pause and explore what the data really tells you. Numbers and colour codes are just the beginning — behind them lie stories, shifts in mindset, small victories, and areas that still need care.

Evaluation is not only about assessing progress — it's about making sense of change together. This is a chance for your project group to bring different perspectives into the room, listen actively, and interpret results in a way that honours both data and experience.

By looking closely at your school's evolution, you begin to answer important questions:

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*What's working?*

*What's growing?*

*And where do we still want to go?*

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## Taking Time to Reflect as a Team

Now that your school has re-applied the coACTION Sensor and gathered new data, it's time to reflect on what the results are telling you. This session is all about looking at progress—not just numbers, but the meaningful shifts in culture, values, and participation that the Sensor helps highlight.

The results are most powerful when they are reviewed together—as a school project group, leadership team, or even in student-led groups. The process encourages dialogue, ownership, and shared responsibility for democratic growth.

## What the Results Show

As you revisit your traffic light data—Red, Orange, and Green—you will see how each subarea and quality area is developing:

- Red = Starting level: few signs of democratic practice
- Orange = Developing level: elements are present and emerging
- Green = Established level: strong, consistent practice is in place

Comparing your old results with the new ones reveals your school's democratic trajectory. These changes often reflect the quiet, determined efforts of pupils, teachers, and school leaders working together over time.

## How to Evaluate Progress

Use the same structure you followed during your first Sensor reflection. Keep subareas matched exactly—this allows for fair and meaningful comparisons.

Place your results side by side, and observe:

- Red → Orange → Green = progress and growth
- No change = stability (still important!)
- Green → Orange or Red = potential regression (which may reflect new challenges or shifting perceptions)

## Visualising Change

Make the process of comparison more engaging and visible. Here are a few effective methods:

- Use the editable Sensor Progress Comparison Table provided in the annex;
- Colour-code results in a spreadsheet or shared chart;
- Create arrows, stickers, or progress symbols to highlight movement; and
- Involve students in interpreting and presenting the findings visually.

Visualising change not only makes it easier to understand but also helps share the findings later in your celebration or communication steps.

## Reflective Prompts for Discussion

Ask your group to consider:

- What areas have improved significantly? Why do you think this happened?
- Are there any surprises—either positive or concerning?
- What stayed the same, and is that expected?
- Where do we see strong democratic culture taking root?

What do the results tell us about participation, inclusion, and communication in our school?

## Tools for the Task













To support your evaluation, you can use:

- Your Sensor platform's built-in comparison tools, if available;
- The editable comparison table (see Annex 1) for tracking changes manually;
- Spreadsheets for colour-coding trends;
- Printed charts or posters to use in group discussions.

To guide your evaluation session, we've created an editable PDF table to map your school's Sensor progress across all subareas (Annex 1: Sensor Progress Comparison Table).

**Figure 2**

*Sensor Progress Comparison*

	Initial	Current
<b>Sensor Progress Comparison: Traffic Light Results</b>		
Pupils can express opinions freely		
Information flows both ways		
Communication is respectful and open		
School provides a safe learning environment		
School values are shared with pupils		
Democratic culture is visible in school life		

## Tip for Project Groups



Before beginning your analysis:

- Ensure all group members have both sets of Sensor results (initial and follow-up);
- Print copies of key data if helpful;
- Create a calm, inclusive space for open discussion and interpretation.

This is not just a data exercise—it's a chance to deepen your understanding of how democracy is being lived and developed in your school.

## Evaluate the Results

You've re-applied the Sensor, gathered new input, and now it's time to dig deeper. This phase of the process is where insight happens — where data turns into understanding, and understanding leads to action.

Evaluation doesn't mean ticking boxes or chasing perfect scores. Instead, it's a chance to ask honest questions about how your school is growing as a democratic space. Some areas may have moved forward significantly. Others might still feel stuck. All of it matters.

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*This session gives your team the space and tools to interpret those results thoughtfully — with openness, curiosity, and the shared goal of creating a better school culture for everyone.*

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## Overview

This lesson supports your school project group in making sense of your updated Sensor results. Together, you'll reflect on the progress made, identify areas of improvement, and explore surprises or challenges that still remain. This process is designed to be inclusive, thoughtful, and empowering, helping your school team understand the impact of your democratic development efforts.

### 1. Deviation Analysis: Compare Results

When you reapply the Sensor, you receive new results for each subarea and quality area. These are shown using the familiar traffic light colours:

- Red – Starting level: few signs of democratic practice
- Orange – Developing level: some democratic elements are present
- Green – Established level: strong and consistent democratic practice

This session invites you to conduct a deviation analysis — a comparison between your old and new results — to visualise growth and guide next steps.

### 2. How to Compare Your Results

To make a fair comparison, use the same categories and structure from the first time you used the Sensor (e.g., Area 1.2 – School values are shared with pupils).

Then, place the old and new results side by side and track the direction of change:

- Red → Orange = Progress is beginning
- Orange → Green = Strong development
- No change = Stability (still valuable!)
- Green → Orange or Red = Potential regression or emerging challenges

Each colour shift tells a story about how your school's democratic values are being practiced and perceived. Even unchanged results may reflect sustained strengths or areas needing renewed focus.

### 3. Ways to Visualise Change

To help your team and wider school community understand the results clearly, it helps to visualise the data. Here are some ideas:

- Use a simple comparison table or matrix to show old and new colours for each subarea
- Build colour-coded bar charts or progress arrows
- Add symbols (□, □) to highlight areas with improvement
- Highlight unchanged or regressing areas in red for focused attention

You can use the editable Sensor Progress Comparison Table (available as a PDF worksheet) to help structure this process.

### 4. What Progress Do You See?

Now it's time to interpret your results through conversation or journaling. Encourage open, respectful discussion with these reflective questions:

- Which areas showed clear improvement?
- What helped this progress happen?
- Were there any surprises or unexpected results?
- What do these results say about our school's current strengths?

This part of the lesson helps build shared understanding and pride in your progress.

#### Figure 3

*Visualizing Progress*



## 5. What Surprised You?

Sensor data can often reveal surprising patterns. Perhaps an area you expected to improve didn't, or feedback from students shifted more than anticipated. Use this step to reflect honestly:

- Did you expect higher or lower results in certain areas?
- Did any groups (students, staff, parents) offer unexpected insights?
- How might these surprises inform your school's next steps?

**Figure 4**

*Moments of Surprise*



## 6. Areas Still Needing Work

Now, turn your attention to the areas where little or no progress has been made—or where results have declined. These aren't failures, but learning opportunities.

Discuss:

- Which areas still need more development or attention?
- What might be holding back progress?
- What realistic actions could your school take next year to improve these areas?
- Use this part of the lesson to begin setting future priorities.

**Figure 5**

*Ongoing Challenges*



## 7. Reflective Summary

Thank you for your thoughtful participation in this evaluation session. Your honest reflection will help guide the rest of this module and the future of your democratic journey.

By identifying both progress and challenges, your school can celebrate meaningful change while also planning wisely for continued growth. In the next session, you will focus on communicating these results with your school community—and preparing for a celebration that recognises everyone’s contributions.

**Figure 6**

*Reflections and Insights*



## Upload Your Evaluation Summary or Table

Once you have reviewed your Sensor results and reflected on your school’s democratic progress, it’s time to bring your work together.

Your school project group is invited to **upload a summary of your evaluation** — this could take the form of:

- A completed Sensor Progress Comparison Table (see Annex 1);
- A short written summary highlighting key developments and challenges;
- A visual chart or presentation created by students or staff;
- A photo of your group’s reflection board or wall display.

This step helps **document your school’s journey** and allows you to keep a record of your achievements. It also provides helpful input for future planning, coaching conversations, and celebration activities.



You are encouraged to involve different voice —including pupils, teachers, and support staff— in writing or shaping this summary.

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***Tip:** Keep your upload concise, honest, and focused. It doesn't have to be perfect — just a true reflection of what your school has noticed and learned.*

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## Session 3: Celebrate Your Achievements

### Why Celebration Matters

Taking time to celebrate your school's democratic journey is more than just a feel-good moment — it reinforces the values you've worked so hard to strengthen. When we pause to acknowledge progress, we build pride, strengthen community spirit, and remind everyone involved that democracy is not just a goal — it's a shared experience worth recognising.

Celebration also helps sustain momentum. It says to pupils, teachers, and families alike:

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*“Your voice mattered. Your effort made a difference.”*

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### What Can Celebration Look Like?

There's no single formula for celebrating democratic progress. Each school can choose what feels authentic, joyful, and inclusive. Here are a few meaningful ways schools have chosen to celebrate:

#### **Democracy Celebration Day**

Host a special event where students share reflections, art, or performances connected to your democratic journey.

#### **Sticker or Certificate Ceremony**

Distribute participation stickers or coACTION certificates to classes or project groups.

#### **Display of Progress**

Set up a “Democracy Wall” in a visible space that shows Sensor results, student voices, and milestones achieved.

#### **Student-led Celebration**

Invite pupils to plan and lead the celebration — music, exhibits, speeches, or a pop-up gallery.

#### **Newsletter or Website Feature**

Share your achievements with families and the wider community through digital or printed media.

#### **Simple Classroom Moments**

Even small gestures — like a “democracy circle” for shared reflection — can have a lasting impact.

Whatever form your celebration takes, the most important thing is that it reflects your school’s values and makes space for genuine recognition and joy.

## The coACTION Participation Sticker

As part of this session, your school receives the coACTION participation sticker (Annex 2)— a visible symbol of your school’s engagement in building a democratic culture.

You can print and display this emblem in a public space (e.g. the school entrance, staffroom, or website), or distribute it digitally to recognise classroom or group participation.

If you haven’t received the sticker yet, please contact your coACTION coordinator for the digital or print-ready file.

## Optional Reflection

If you’d like to capture how your school celebrated, here’s a question you can use as a group discussion or journal prompt:

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*How did your school choose to celebrate your democratic achievements? What did your pupils say about the experience?*

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This reflection can be submitted by a teacher, project group, or even as a collection of student voices.

## Session 4: Coaching and Closing the Circle

As your school reaches the final session of the coACTION programme, this is a moment for thoughtful closure. You’ve explored, implemented, reflected, and celebrated — and now it’s time to take a final step together: to acknowledge what has been achieved and to consider what lies ahead.

This session invites your project group to slow down, talk openly, and reflect on the journey as a whole. It’s a space for connection — with one another, with your shared purpose, and with the ongoing story of your school’s democratic development.

Whether you are supported by a coACTION coach or working independently, this is your opportunity to close the loop with care and clarity.

## Bringing the Journey Full Circle

After months of working toward a more democratic school culture, your school has reached a powerful milestone. You’ve gathered feedback, reflected on your growth, celebrated achievements — and now it’s time to bring the journey full circle.

This session offers space for your project group to pause, breathe, and reflect deeply. What did this process mean for your school? What changed — not just in the Sensor results, but in the way people speak, listen, and participate? What stayed the same? What possibilities opened up?

## Support Through Coaching

If available, your school may take part in a coaching session with your regional coACTION coordinator or coach. This is a valuable opportunity to talk through your experiences, highlight successes, and discuss the areas that still need care or energy.

Coaching isn't about judging results — it's about supporting your school's development with curiosity, insight, and care. If your school has access to a coach, you can use this moment to ask questions, validate your progress, and prepare for what comes next.

## Use the Final Reflection Guide

To help structure this conversation, your project group can use the Final Reflection Guide (available in the Annex 4 as an editable worksheet). It invites you to revisit the key dimensions of your democratic work and respond to guiding prompts such as:

- What changed in your school's culture, communication, or values?
- What moments stood out as especially meaningful or surprising?
- What did pupils notice? What did staff learn?
- Which areas still need development, and how might you approach them?
- How do you want to continue this work in the future?

## Looking Ahead

Closing the circle doesn't mean the journey ends. Instead, it marks a transition — from a time of focused development to a new phase of embedding, sustaining, and dreaming forward.

Whether you choose to repeat the Sensor next year, try new democratic strategies, or simply maintain the habits you've built, your school has already demonstrated its commitment to a better, more participatory culture.

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*You've taken meaningful steps — now take a moment to  
recognise them, together.*

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## Annexes

### Annex 1: Sensor Progress Comparison Table (Editable PDF)

An editable worksheet designed to help your school compare results from the first and second Sensor applications. Organised by quality area and subarea, the table uses the red–orange–green scale to support discussion, identify change, and guide future planning.

### Annex 2: Celebrate Your Progress Poster (Printable A4)

A high-resolution, ready-to-print poster to help you share your democratic progress with your school community. Display it in classrooms, hallways, or during your celebration event to highlight the values and voices that shaped your journey.

### Annex 3: coACTION Participation Sticker (Printable Emblem)

This official coACTION sticker serves as a visible sign of your school’s participation in the programme. You can print and display it in a prominent place—such as your school entrance, staff room, or website—to recognise the commitment and collaboration of your school community.

### Annex 4: Final Reflection Guide for Project Groups (Editable PDF)

This reflection tool offers your school project group a structured opportunity to pause, assess the journey, and think forward. Use it during your final session or coaching meeting to capture insights and priorities.

### Annex 5: Wrap-Up Checklist

This final checklist helps your school ensure all key steps in Module 6 have been completed. From reapplying the Sensor to sharing results and reflecting as a team, the checklist supports a strong and thoughtful closure to your coACTION journey.



## Sensor Progress Comparison Table

Here is the Sensor Progress Comparison Table showing initial and current traffic light results for different subareas. This can be used in Session 3 to guide reflection and identify progress or areas that need further work.

Quality Area	Subarea	Initial Result	Current Result	School's Results
1.1	Democratic culture is visible in school life	Red	Orange	
1.2	School values are shared with pupils	Orange	Green	
1.3	School provides a safe learning environment	Green	Green	
2.1	Communication is respectful and open	Orange	Green	
2.2	Information flows both ways	Red	Orange	
2.3	Pupils can express opinions freely	Green	Green	



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## Final Reflection Guide for Project Groups

### 1. Reflecting on Our Democratic Journey

- What positive changes have we observed in our school?
- How has our school culture become more democratic?
- What made this possible?

### 2. Looking at the Sensor Results

- Which areas showed clear progress?
- Were there any areas that stayed the same or declined?
- What might explain those patterns?

### 3. Surprises and Insights

- What surprised us most about this process?
- Did we learn something unexpected from pupils, teachers, or families?





#### 4. What We Want to Keep Developing

- Which areas need continued attention?
- What actions or habits can we carry forward into next year?
- How can we keep everyone involved in the next steps?

#### 5. Our Team's Closing Thoughts

Use this space to note anything else important from your closing discussion, including how the group worked together, what you're proud of, or hopes for the future:



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## Wrap-Up Checklist

Before finishing Module 6, make sure you have:

Reapplied the Sensor

Evaluated your results

Communicated progress

Celebrated achievements

Reflected as a team (with or without coaching)



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