

Circular S/IF/23/16

April 2016

To: Head of Centres within all Post Primary Schools, Further Education Colleges and Training Centres

For circulation to: All Heads of Department and Examination Officers

Important Information on the Refresh of Essential Skills

Essential Skills Application of Number and Communication curriculum standards have been refreshed by the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) to make them current and relevant to a wider cohort of learners. Teachers/tutors will continue to be able to draw upon practical, true-to-life examples and scenarios, relevant to their own group of learners, in order to build skills in application of number and communication, while they prepare their learners for progression into employment and/or further study.

Refreshed approach to assessment

The assessment methodology has changed significantly. Assessment arrangements for levels 1 and 2 in Application of Number and Communication have been revised by DELNI to introduce more rigour and to reaffirm the focus on teaching and learning.

An external end test assessment model for Application of Number and Communication (reading and writing) at levels 1 and 2 will take effect from September 2016. The speaking and listening element of communication will continue to be assessed as before. CCEA intends to offer four test series for Application of Number and Communication per year.

Other changes

From September 2016, the Guided Learning Hours for the Essential Skills Qualifications at levels 1 and 2 in Application of Number and Communication will increase to 45, with a Total Qualification Time (TQT) of 60 hours. Guided Learning is the recommended number of tutor contact hours with learners for these qualifications. TQT consists of Guided Learning, assessment and independent study time. These changes will be reflected in the NIEFQAN file from 2016-17 and will not therefore impact on the Summary of Annual Examinations Results (SAER) for 2015/16.

Please Turn Over



Training and further information

CCEA is planning to hold information sessions throughout Northern Ireland, to promote awareness of the refreshed curriculum standards and revised assessment. Information about these sessions will be published on the CCEA website shortly. Information regarding making entries, issuing and administering tests and receiving results in levels 1 and 2 in Application of Number and Communication will be published on the CCEA website shortly.

The refreshed curriculum will be published shortly and will be available on the CCEA website in due course.

**Please note that the assessment arrangements for Entry Levels 1 to 3 remain unchanged.
The assessment arrangements for Essential Skills ICT also remain unchanged.**

If you have any queries regarding the content of this circular please contact:

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