



Assessing the Cross-Curricular Skills



Rewarding Learning

Supplementary Guidance

on the Assessment Arrangements

In relation to pupils in the final year of
Key Stage 3 for Communication,
Using Mathematics and Using ICT

From 2017/18

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Introduction

This guidance booklet is for principals, co-ordinators and teachers who will be involved in the end of Key Stage statutory assessment and moderation arrangements from 2017/18.



It provides information on the statutory assessment of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT and accompanies the booklet *Assessment Arrangements in Relation to Pupils in the Final Year of Key Stage 3 for Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT From 2017/18* (CCEA, 2017), which sets out the statutory requirements. This is available online at www.ccea.org.uk

Please note that we have used the following colours in this booklet to help you find what you need quickly:

Key Points

Information specific to Communication

Information specific to Using Mathematics

Information specific to Using ICT

Section 1

What's Required from 2017/18

This short section gives an overview of the main requirements for assessment at Key Stage 3. You'll find specific details relating to assessment in Section 2 and moderation in Section 3.

1.1 Teacher Assessment

Teachers assess pupils in **Years 8, 9 and 10** with reference to the Levels of Progression for Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT each year. Assessment should be based on the criteria set out in the levels for each skill.

For pupils **at the end of the Key Stage**, in Year 10, teachers must assess and **report the numerical level** that each pupil has attained in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT:

- to the Department of Education, via CCEA, by the date specified on the Key Dates poster issued separately; and
- to parents, via the Annual Report, by 30 June each year.

In Irish Medium schools and units, levels for Year 10 pupils should be reported for Communication in both Irish and English.

1.2 External Moderation

External moderation is a means of quality assurance. We have already informed schools which Cross-Curricular Skill they will be moderated in this year (Communication, Using Mathematics or Using ICT).

If you have any queries, please contact the CCEA Assessment Administration Team (see Section 5 for details).

Moderation: In February, schools will each provide us with a school submission for Communication, Using Mathematics or Using ICT based on the specific levels they intend to report for their pupils. This applies to **all** schools.

By the date specified on the Key Dates poster issued separately, schools are asked to provide us with details of the levels outcomes for their Year 10 pupils.

Moderation Follow Up: This will apply only to those schools whose understanding of the standards cannot be verified at moderation. The follow up visit will provide the opportunity to avail of CCEA moderator support, which may include further discussion of evidence.

See the ['Key Dates and Actions' Timetable](#) issued separately, for a full list of key dates for this year.

1.3 Recommendations for Principals and School Leaders

Considering the points in the checklist below can help you to ensure that your school is meeting the statutory requirements for assessment of the Cross-Curricular Skills.

For All Schools	
✓	Arrangements and processes are in place to enable teachers to implement the statutory assessment requirements.
✓	Internal standardisation arrangements are in place to enable teachers to confirm and maintain a shared understanding of the standards within the Levels of Progression.
✓	Teachers attend standardisation meetings (for example CCEA agreement trials) for Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, and relevant information from these is passed on to their colleagues.
✓	There is appropriate time allowed for teachers to take part in these meetings throughout the year.
✓	Before the end of Key Stage assessment takes place, all relevant staff implement the decisions agreed during internal standardisation meetings.

Reporting and External Moderation	
✓	The school reports the levels for each Year 10 pupil to CCEA by the date specified.
✓	Schools provide CCEA with a school submission for external moderation (gathered throughout the year as part of normal teaching practice), along with any relevant supporting documentation, in line with the key dates specified.
✓	All relevant staff are aware of the outcomes of moderation provided by CCEA and take any further action required.
✓	In exceptional cases, for instance where a teacher has been absent for a significant period of time, assessment outcomes are still agreed and reported as required.

Section 2

Assessment

2.1 Assessment Policy

All schools should have a clear and documented assessment policy, as outlined in *Guide to Assessment: Supporting Schools in Meeting Statutory Requirements for Assessment and Reporting – Foundation Stage to Key Stage 3* (CCEA, 2011). The agreed policy should:

- be understood by all staff;
- be reflected in school processes, procedures and practices and in school developmental planning;
- include clear guidance about the purposes of assessment methods, the range of evidence and the assessment information to be used;
- ensure that staff are actively engaged in applying the policy; and
- be reviewed and updated regularly.

2.2 Assessing the Cross-Curricular Skills across the Areas of Learning

At Key Stage 3, all Areas of Learning and subject strands must provide opportunities for pupils to **acquire** and **develop** the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication, Using Mathematics¹ and Using ICT where appropriate. The Learning Outcomes for each subject strand include references to these, and they should be evident in both your planning and your learning, teaching and assessment activities.

This cross-curricular aspect of teaching and developing skills is critical. Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT should be embedded across the curriculum experience, with opportunities for pupils to develop and use them in a variety of contexts and to connect their learning experiences. Although English (and Irish in Irish-medium schools and units), Mathematics and ICT specialists will have a lead role to play, all subject specialists should be developing the Cross-Curricular Skills and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities in a range of contexts.

In *Every School a Good School Count Read: Succeed. A Strategy to Improve Outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy* (Department of Education, 2011; paragraph 4.27), the Department advises that:

'While recognising that Communication and Using Mathematics are cross-curricular, the mathematics and English (and, in Irish-medium schools, Irish) departments should lead the assessment of numeracy and literacy and be provided with sufficient time and support from school leaders to undertake this role.

The cross-curricular nature of Communication and Using Mathematics should be reflected through the whole-school approach to planning for literacy and numeracy, with assessment supported by feedback to the English and mathematics (and, in Irish-medium schools, Irish) departments as appropriate.'

Where more than one Area of Learning (or subject strand) is involved in summative assessment judgements, all teachers involved should have opportunities to confirm and maintain a shared understanding of the standards within the Levels of Progression. (See the guidance on internal standardisation in Section 2.8 and Appendix 1.)

2.3 Making Assessment Judgements

Key Point

Teachers' assessment of pupil progress **each year** should be based on knowledge of how each pupil has performed:

- in a range of assessment activities;
- in a range of contexts; and
- over a period of time.

¹ The acquisition and development of Using Mathematics are not statutory in Music.

Assessing Pupil Work

When teachers are deciding which level a pupil is working at, they should take account of the full range of evidence available from **all** assessment activities undertaken by that pupil. The level given to a pupil response to an individual task/activity represents performance in that one piece of work at that point in time. The judgement on this individual response alongside knowledge of how each pupil has performed over time in a range of other contexts should help inform the overall level.

Assessing a Pupil Overall

You are required to make a **summative assessment judgement** for each pupil in Year 10. You should assign a level based on:

- the **standards** set out in the Levels of Progression;
- **evidence** of pupil competence:
 - across the breadth of requirements for the Cross-Curricular Skill; and
 - in **most** of the criteria relating to the level at which the pupil is judged to be working;
- knowledge of how the pupil has performed over time in **a range of contexts**, including new and/or unfamiliar contexts, as appropriate; and
- existing evidence from a variety of **school-based assessment activities** and/or **CCEA-Approved/ Exemplar Assessment Tasks**.

Carrying out internal standardisation will help to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the standards in your school. It will involve reviewing examples of pupil work that reflect the range of attainment within the school and Key Stage (see Section 2.8 and Appendix 1).

Assessing Progress in Year 10

Key Points

Teachers need to decide the **numerical levels** that each pupil has attained in Year 10.

They must assign **one overall level** to each pupil for Communication (in English and in Irish as appropriate), **one overall level** for Using Mathematics and **one overall level** for Using ICT.

Teachers must also **report** these outcomes to parents/guardians of pupils in Year 10 by 30 June each year.

For each Year 10 pupil, you will need to use your professional judgement to decide in which level the pupil has demonstrated **solid achievement**.

For example, a pupil judged to have achieved Level 5 in Year 10 has demonstrated:

- competence across the breadth of requirements for the Cross-Curricular Skill and in most of the criteria relating to the level across the range of work; and
- an ability to:
 - work consistently and independently in most aspects of the level; and
 - apply learning in new and/or unfamiliar situations, as appropriate.

Communication

The guidance on Communication applies to English and Irish, as appropriate, in Irish-medium schools.

The **overall level** that you assign for Communication should be based on the pupil's performance in all three modes:

- Reading;
- Writing; and
- Talking and Listening.

Pupils might be performing at different levels in these modes. When this happens, they need to have been assessed **at or above** the level you award in **at least two** modes, as these examples show.

	Talking and Listening	Reading	Writing	Overall Level Awarded
Pupil A	Level 5	Level 6	Level 5	Level 5
Pupil B	Level 4	Level 6	Level 7	Level 6

Using Mathematics

The **overall level** that you assign for Using Mathematics must be based on a holistic assessment of the pupil's performance. This involves considering **all evidence available** for the 'Requirements' alongside 'Knowledge and Understanding' (Number and Algebra; Shape, Space and Measures; and Handling Data).

A pupil judged to have achieved a particular level will have demonstrated the breadth and depth of the Requirements, and the Knowledge and Understanding, at that level.

Using ICT

The **overall level** that you assign for a pupil's achievement in Using ICT must be based on the pupil's performance in any three of the following 'E's:

- Explore
- Express
- Exchange
- Evaluate.

Pupils might be performing at different levels in the various 'E's. When this happens they need to have been assessed **at or above** the level you award in **at least three 'E's**, which must include Explore* and Express.

	Pupil A	Pupil B
Explore	Level 5	Level 4
Express	Level 6	Level 5
Exchange	Level 4	Level 4
Evaluate	Level 5	Level 4
Exhibit	We do not require evidence for 'Exhibit' in Using ICT, as coverage is obvious once the pupil's work has been saved with meaningful filenames.	
Overall Level Awarded	Level 5	Level 4

Assessing Progress in Years 8 and 9

As with Year 10, you should assess each pupil's progress in Years 8 and 9 based on knowledge of how the pupil has performed in a range of contexts and over a period of time.

In order for assessments in Year 10 to be an accurate reflection of a pupil's performance, pupils should have had experience of similar types of activities in Years 8 and 9. CCEA-approved Assessment Tasks can assist teachers in agreeing standards internally, as well as helping teachers to identify the features of a piece of work that make it a particular level.

2.4 Reporting Outcomes

Your school is expected to submit an Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) file to CCEA through C2k including:

- details of Year 10 pupils; and
- the levels that teachers have awarded to each pupil in **Communication**, in **Using Mathematics** and in **Using ICT**.

Teachers must also **report** information to parents/guardians of pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 by 30 June each year:

- For pupils in Year 10, teachers are required to report the **level** each pupil has achieved in each Cross-Curricular Skill, with reference to the Levels of Progression.
- For pupils in Years 8 and 9, teachers are required to report on each Cross-Curricular Skill, with reference to the Levels of Progression. The level is not required.

The report should also contain the information required by the Education (Pupil Reporting) Regulations (NI), 2009.

2.5 Assessment Activities

Key Point

When teachers are deciding which level a pupil is working at, they should take into account the full range of evidence from all suitable assessment activities.

School-based assessment activities will be part of ongoing classwork and may include assessment tasks (CCEA-Approved/Exemplar Assessment Tasks or other).

Whatever the nature of each assessment activity, you need to plan it well to ensure that it is valid:

- allowing you to assess the criteria it is intended to assess; and
- allowing pupils to demonstrate the criteria being assessed, at the intended levels.

You should use assessment activities to gather evidence of pupils' progress **after** teaching and learning have taken place; they provide a summative outcome to measure the progress made by each pupil at a point in time (although they can also provide you with formative information to feed into future learning and teaching).

When making assessment judgements, you should be confident that the work produced has been carried out by each individual pupil.

Pupils carrying out an assessment activity should have:

- the opportunity to demonstrate their own, individual competence in the Cross-Curricular Skill being assessed, even when they are working in groups;
- enough time to complete the activity; and
- a level of support and/or structure appropriate to the Level of Progression they are working at.

2.6 Assessment Tasks

Assessment Tasks are designed to support teachers' judgements about the level that each pupil is working at.

In assessing pupils' work, teachers use a range of assessment activities. Tasks that have been approved by CCEA have been checked to ensure that they allow pupils to perform at the selected levels. These tasks are generated from normal class work and may be used by teachers alongside other assessment activities.

Teachers can use:

- **approved** Assessment Tasks that they have designed for their pupils – tasks are verified before use through the CCEA Task Support System; and/or
- **exemplar** Assessment Tasks – we have provided a limited number of tasks in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT for use with pupils in Key Stage 3.

CCEA Assessment Task Support System

We have designed an [online system](#) to support teachers in integrating assessment into teaching and learning activities. This system allows teachers to access support from a team of revisers (practising teachers) to ensure that planned activities are suitable for the requirements and levels selected. The system is designed to support quality teaching and learning and its use is not restricted to the statutory assessment arrangements.

Please note that it is not a requirement for schools to include a CCEA Approved/Exemplar Assessment Task in school submissions for moderation (refer to Section 3).

Exemplar Assessment Tasks

The exemplar Assessment Tasks are available online at www.ccea.org.uk (go to the [Key Stage 3 'Task and Exemplification Library'](#)) and provide examples of typical tasks. You may choose to use these tasks as part of your evidence for moderation.

2.7 FAQs: Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT

The questions and answers that follow are specific to each Cross-Curricular Skill.

Communication

Can pupils redraft their response to an assessment activity or task?

In a Writing activity, pupils can redraft work when:

- it suits the nature of the activity; **and**
- you have chosen to assess the Requirement to ‘talk about, plan and edit work’ as one of your assessment criteria.

Your feedback on the first draft should be formative and appropriate to the pupil’s level; work should be redrafted with increasing independence at Levels 5, 6 and 7. If you are submitting an activity or task that includes redrafting as part of a submission for moderation, please make sure to include both drafts.

Pupils should not redraft any Reading activities or tasks.

How much structure and guidance can I give to my pupils?

This depends on the Level of Progression that each pupil is working at (see, for example, the above comment on redrafting at the higher levels). Level-appropriate support might include word banks, writing frames and sentence starters at Levels 1 and 2.

How important are spelling, punctuation and grammar when assessing a pupil?

When you assess a pupil’s skills in Writing, you must take into account the Requirement to ‘write with increasing accuracy and proficiency’. In an assessment activity or task focused on Reading, you do not need to take accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar into account.

Can pupils use a word processor such as Microsoft Word to present a response?

Yes; responses can be word processed or handwritten. You can include either or both types of work in your submission for moderation (see Section 3). As with any assessment activity, you should ensure that pupils will have an opportunity to demonstrate the criteria being assessed.

Can pupils use dictionaries and thesauri when completing assessment activities or tasks?

Yes. If they are using ICT, you do not need to disable any electronic spelling or grammar checks.

Can a reader be used to assist a pupil during a Reading Assessment Task?

In Reading tasks, a reader is not permitted.

Using Mathematics

How much structure and guidance can I give to my pupils?

This depends on the Level of Progression that each pupil is working at (as stated in the context statements for each level):

- At Levels 1, 2 and 3, pupils can be given appropriate prompts and templates, and they can be engaged in appropriate teacher-guided discussion.
- At Levels 4 and 5, pupils are expected to show more capacity to identify and recognise the mathematics required.
- At Levels 6 and 7, pupils are expected to be able to explain and give reasons for their choice of a particular approach.

Do pupils need to show their working out?

Pupils need to show evidence that they have met the Requirements for Using Mathematics, and the Levels of Progression refer to using mathematical techniques, notation and problem-solving strategies, as well as organising and reviewing work. Pupils' working out should provide evidence that they have done this. This can also be useful for external moderation.

Can pupils use software such as Microsoft Excel to produce a chart or graph?

Yes, provided they meet the assessment criteria you have set for the task. The Requirements within the Levels of Progression refer to the accurate presentation of information including the use of mathematical diagrams. Depending on the level and chart/graph, pupils are also expected to choose their own methods of presentation, including axes and labels. Any graphs must be clearly and accurately produced in line with the levels.

Can pupils use a calculator to find solutions to problems?

Calculators can be used for different purposes:

- If pupils use a calculator to **carry out** calculations, they should also be able to show methods and techniques they have used to demonstrate how they have met particular Requirements.
- If they use a calculator to **review and check** their calculations, it would be useful to add a brief comment stating this (as evidence for external moderation – see Section 3).

Can pupils use their exercise books, or other reading materials, as a reference?

Yes. Assessment activities and tasks are not formal tests. Pupils can refer to other resources, for example to check formulae. Note that at higher levels pupils should be able to identify what mathematics they need before referring to other resources.

Can a scribe and/or reader be used to assist a pupil during an Assessment Task?

Yes. You should ensure that each pupil can access the task; difficulties with reading or writing, for example, should not prevent pupils from demonstrating their competence in Using Mathematics.

Can I use old Key Stage 3 Mathematics tests to assess Using Mathematics?

No. The tests would not provide suitable opportunities to assess the Using Mathematics Requirements nor assess pupils' ability to use their knowledge and understanding in an appropriate context.

Can I use a question from a textbook to assess Using Mathematics?

Yes, this would be fine if the question:

- allows you to assess at least two of the Requirements for Using Mathematics; and
- has an appropriate context that allows pupils to demonstrate how they use their knowledge and understanding.

However, an exercise that **only** assesses pupils' knowledge and understanding would not be suitable.

Using ICT

How much structure and guidance can I give to my pupils?

This depends on the level that each pupil is working at (as stated in the Levels of Progression). For example:

- At Levels 1, 2 and 3, the teacher gives the pupils sources of information, images and sounds and helps them by prompting as they talk about, modify and save their work.
- From Level 4 upwards, pupils should demonstrate these skills independently and with increasing discernment.

How important are spelling, punctuation and grammar when assessing a pupil in Using ICT?

Spelling, punctuation and grammar will have some impact on assessing Using ICT, as accurate use of language is central to communication in any format, digital or non-digital. In ICT, the end product is assessed on how well it meets the communication needs of the audience. Therefore, spelling, punctuation and grammar are significant in achieving clarity and accuracy.

Can pupils redraft their response to an assessment activity or task?

Yes. We expect pupils to redraft their work as part of the ongoing improvements they make. However, at the higher levels they should receive only minimal direction on this from their teacher. There is no requirement to submit all drafts/versions for external moderation.

Can I use more than one CCEA Using ICT Assessment Task with my pupils?

Yes. The entire submission can be made up of CCEA Assessment Tasks, if desired.

Can pupils work in groups when carrying out Using ICT assessment activities or tasks?

This will depend on the context of the individual activity or task and/or the level the pupils are working at. Working in a group is more appropriate in Moving Image and Animation activities where pupils would not be expected to work individually to script, film and edit work. At other times, such as when a pupil is creating a spreadsheet, it would be more appropriate for pupils to work on their own. In Exchange activities, group working will be essential. Teachers should decide what is most appropriate in all cases. This can depend on the hardware and resources available at their school.

Where teachers are using an activity to assess pupil competency, and that pupil is working in a group, teachers should base their judgement on the competency demonstrated by that individual.

Can pupils do any of the Using ICT assessment outside class time?

For Exchange activities to be meaningful, the pupils' contributions should evolve over a period of time so that they can take place at times when pupils are working at some distance from each other. Therefore, pupils could contribute to an online Exchange activity over a few weeks, making posts in class, in school (but outside class time) and at home.

Can pupils use tablet technology to undertake Using ICT assessment activities?

Yes. Please contact us if you wish to check whether certain apps are appropriate, or whether they have scope for assessment purposes. If you are submitting pupil work produced on tablets for moderation, you should send us:

- the project file or a screenshot of the open project file in its native file format; and
- a version of the file saved in a format that can be opened by standard software such as media player (you can check this by adding file extensions manually, such as .jpeg suffixes, if you need to).

Please note: If pupils produce work using apps, teachers may need to export it from the tablet device by email (or equivalent) and convert it to a sharable format before sending it for moderation. In cases where a project file isn't available (such as before sharing an edited movie or saving a sound or music project as an MP3 file), the teacher can create a screenshot of work in progress to show how the work was produced. For example, the teacher can use a screenshot to show layers or edits in an image manipulation app, or the various tracks in a music app.

2.8 Internal Standardisation

Key Point

Teachers should achieve a clear understanding of the standards demonstrated in all assessment activities through internal standardisation.

Internal standardisation is essential in ensuring that teacher assessment within schools is consistent. It is also an important part of the overall moderation process.

Schools should carry out regular internal standardisation across Key Stage 3 for each of the Cross-Curricular Skills. There is great value in professional dialogue and developing a shared understanding of standards and progress within the levels framework.

As far as possible:

- **internal standardisation** ensures there is agreement that work which an individual **teacher** judges to be Level 4 (for example) would be deemed to be Level 4 by all teachers in that school; and
- **external moderation** ensures that work which an individual school judges to be Level 4 (for example) would be awarded a Level 4 by all schools in Northern Ireland.

Together, internal standardisation and moderation exist so that the assessment system is more effective and reliable. This increases the value of the Levels of Progression for assessing individual pupils' progress and the confidence teachers can place in them as pupils move between classes and schools.

Teachers should have the opportunity to take part in internal standardisation meetings before they award levels at the end of the Key Stage. The standards agreed at these meetings should reflect those established at standard setting events. Teachers should apply the same standards consistently to all their assessment judgements, and the evidence they submit for external moderation should reflect this.

As part of the requirements within moderation, for quality assurance, a **Declaration of Internal Standardisation** (form **EMA1**) should be completed and signed by the principal. This is simply to confirm that the standards demonstrated in your school submission are representative of the standards agreed within, and between, departments in your school.

Schools can decide how many internal standardisation meetings to hold each year. This may depend on, for example:

- the time available;
- how many teachers and departments will be involved;
- the range of pupil attainment within a year group or Key Stage; and
- the number of pieces of pupil work that need to be reviewed before there is agreement about standards.

See Appendix 1 for more details on internal standardisation, including guidance on establishing a process in your school and organising standardisation meetings.

Internal Standardisation and School Submissions

The evidence used to reach agreement internally within schools (i.e. for internal standardisation) may form some or all of the school submission provided for moderation. For this reason your school may find it useful to use the **School Submission Cover Sheet** (form **EMA6**) as part of internal standardisation. You may then include the same forms with your school submission.

Section 3

Moderation

3.1 The Moderation Process

Key Point

Teacher assessment of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT at Key Stage 3 will be externally moderated. Schools have already been informed of the skill in which they will be moderated.

The purpose of moderation is to support schools' own standardisation and understanding of the Levels of Progression (within and between schools). It does this by verifying to schools and other education partners that the standards which schools are applying in teacher assessment are appropriate. Moderation of the Cross-Curricular Skills will involve reviewing pieces of pupils' work within agreed school submissions. This assumes internal standardisation will have already taken place (see Section 2.8).

3.2 Moderation: School Submissions

Following internal standardisation, your school should provide a school submission of evidence representing:

- the range of levels you intend to, or are likely to, report for the Cross-Curricular Skill relevant to your school; and
- the standards agreed within your individual school.

3.3 What to Include in School Submissions

We will send out a stationery pack, including labels and envelopes, to assist with the preparation of materials to be submitted.

The **School Submission Cover Sheet** (form **EMA6**) should briefly describe each assessment activity. This information could include the context, the amount of help or support given and any other relevant information to help ensure clarity during moderation.

Please note that samples of work at **Level 1** will **not** be required within school submissions for Communication, Using Mathematics or Using ICT.

Communication

You need to submit one **School Submission Cover Sheet (EMA6C)** with each level included in your submission. We will make this form available electronically at www.ccea.org.uk

Each school submission for Communication must, **at each level** you intend to report, include:

- a total of **six pieces** of work (which may include CCEA-Approved/Exemplar Assessment Tasks);
- three pieces of Reading and three pieces of Writing; and
- pupil work from a variety of contexts in Reading and Writing.

For example, the submission for a school intending to report Levels 4, 5 and 6 should include a total of 18 pieces of work: six pieces at each of the three levels to be reported.

Note on Talking and Listening

Schools do not need to submit evidence for Talking and Listening (or Listening, Understanding and Talking in Irish-medium schools and units) as part of moderation. However, you do need to assess pupil progress in Talking and Listening in order to arrive at an overall Communication level for each pupil in Year 10 (see Section 2.3), and it should be part of your school's internal standardisation process. Schools will have received details of in-school support available for teachers in developing opportunities for Talking and Listening in post primary schools this year. If you have any queries, please contact us using the details in Section 5.

Using Mathematics

You need to submit one **School Submission Cover Sheet (EMA6M)** with each level included in your submission. We will make this form available electronically at www.ccea.org.uk

Each school submission for Using Mathematics must, **at each level** you intend to report, include a total of **three pieces** of work which demonstrate breadth across the Requirements and the three aspects of Knowledge and Understanding (Number and Algebra; Shape, Space and Measures; and Handling Data). The sample may include CCEA Approved/Exemplar Tasks.

For example, the submission for a school intending to report Levels 4, 5 and 6 should include a total of nine pieces of work: three pieces at each of the three levels to be reported.

Using ICT

You need to submit one school submission based on the specific levels you intend to report. All files submitted must be available in electronic format. We do not accept hard copies for moderation. Schools should also complete the School Submission Cover Sheet (EMA6iS) and post it to us in the envelope provided.

Each school submission for Using ICT must, **at each level** you intend to report, include:

- a total of **five pieces** of work (which may include CCEA-Approved/Exemplar Assessment Tasks);
- evidence of Explore, Express, Exchange and Evaluate; and
- pieces of work that demonstrate breadth of experience of Using ICT (different types of software across different Areas of Learning).

How to Submit Using ICT Work for Moderation

There are two options available. Schools can make their submissions for moderation by:

- sending a CD or DVD of the electronic files to us in the envelope provided; or
- giving CCEA moderators access to electronic pupil work on Fronter or on the school VLE (please provide a temporary username and password to the area until the end of May).

3.4 Annotating Pupils' Work

You are reminded that completing the School Submission Cover Sheets (form **EMA6**) gives you the opportunity to describe the activities that pupils carried out; this may include context, help given and other relevant information. Using these forms should reduce the need for detailed annotation on the pupil work.

In exceptional circumstances, you may feel that you need to annotate a piece of work to clarify why you have awarded a particular level. (Please note that you do not need to justify, describe or explain every step taken.)

Where you do add comments to pupils' work, these might include details of prompts given to the pupil or any significant teacher–pupil discussion that impacted on the outcome. If your school has devised a system or code for annotation with reference to the Levels of Progression, please include details.

You can also include work in any submission that you have already marked for another purpose, such as ongoing assessment.

3.5 Checking Each Submission Is Complete

Please ensure that the submission which your school sends for external moderation meets all the requirements stated in this section. We also encourage teachers to include the relevant pupil stimulus with each sample of work submitted. This allows moderators to see what pupils were asked to do, as well as the level of structure given. If a submission is incomplete (for example a piece of pupil work is missing), it is less likely that we will be able to verify the submission and the levels that your school intends to report.

In general, if moderators are unable to verify a school's assessment judgements based on the evidence submitted, the moderation feedback process will indicate this.

3.6 Feedback on Moderation

Key Point

Each school will receive written feedback following moderation.

The feedback provided after moderation will indicate either:

- the standards within your school submission have been verified; or
- the standards within your school submission have not been verified.

3.7 Moderation Follow Up

If your feedback indicates that **the standards within your school submission have not been verified**, your school will be offered additional support from the moderation team.

Where necessary, we will arrange a visit from a moderator to discuss feedback and provide further support.

Section 4

Assessing Pupils with Special Educational Needs

The access statement below provides useful guidance on planning and managing assessment activities and tasks for pupils with special educational needs.

Providing Equality of Opportunity and Access for All

Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and should aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

In planning curriculum and assessment activities, teachers should be aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (*SEND O*) and should have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including travellers and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

For pupils with special educational needs, teaching should take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the pupil:

- For pupils whose attainments fall significantly below the levels expected at a particular Key Stage, degrees of differentiation of tasks and materials appropriate to the age and requirements of the pupil will be necessary.
- For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected levels of attainment during a particular Key Stage, you will need to plan suitably challenging work by extending the breadth and depth of study across Areas of Learning.

In planning to meet the needs of all pupils, you may need to:

- use teaching approaches appropriate to different learning styles;
- use a range of organisational approaches, such as setting, grouping or individual work, to ensure that individual needs are properly addressed;
- vary content and presentation so that it matches the learning needs of particular pupils;
- use a range of activities and contexts for work and allow a variety of interpretations and outcomes;
- allocate sufficient time for children to complete tasks/activities;
- use accessible texts and materials that suit children's age and level of learning;
- plan work which builds on interests and cultural diversity;
- plan the pace of work so that all children will have the opportunity to achieve success;
- plan challenging work for those whose ability and understanding are in advance of their peer group;
- provide support by using ICT, video or audio materials, dictionaries and other suitable aids; and
- enable the fullest possible participation of pupils with disabilities, including those with medical needs.

The questions and answers below give additional guidance for teachers of pupils with special educational needs. You will also find relevant information in Sections 2 and 3, for example, details about using computer software to present a response to an assessment task.

How much support can I provide for a pupil with special educational needs?

This depends on the Level of Progression that the pupil is working at; see Section 2 for more details. You should clearly indicate on any samples of work that you submit for moderation where the pupil received support (see Section 3.4).

What is the relationship between the Prerequisite Skills (Q Skills) and the Levels of Progression for the Cross-Curricular Skills?

The Q Skills are a non-statutory assessment resource for pupils working below Level 1 of the Levels of Progression. They refer to the same requirements for Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT as the mainstream levels. For more details please see *Prerequisite Skills (Q Skills): Building towards Level 1 of the Cross-Curricular Skills, Non-Statutory Guidance* (CCEA, 2012) available at www.ccea.org.uk

Is there a statutory requirement to assess a pupil who has a statement of ‘moderate/severe learning difficulties’?

Pupils with statements which include any reference to a ‘severe learning difficulty’ are exempt from statutory assessment. Please note that you should record the end of Key Stage outcome for all pupils who are exempt as, for example, ‘E2’ or ‘E4’. See the Department of Education Circular (1990/45) (available at www.deni.gov.uk) for more information.

Also refer to *Information for Principals on Exemptions from Statutory Curriculum and Assessment* in the Key Stage 3 Assessment section at www.ccea.org.uk

What is the role of a centre for alternative education provision in statutory assessment?

If a pupil is attending a centre for alternative education provision, this centre should assess the pupil in the Cross-Curricular Skills. There must be a procedure in place to ensure that there is effective communication about the pupil’s assessment between the school where the pupil is registered and the centre for alternative provision. The registered school should then report the necessary information to the Department of Education, via CCEA, by the required date.

Section 5

Useful Contacts

For queries about:	Please contact:	
Assessment Administration	Moderation and Assessment	Gary Black (028) 9026 1224 gblack@ccea.org.uk
Assessment and Moderation and Assessment Tasks	Key Stage 3 Curriculum and Assessment Team	<p>Communication Roisin Radcliffe (028) 9026 1200 ext. 2195 rradcliffe@ccea.org.uk</p> <p>Using Mathematics Gavin Graham (028) 9026 1200 ext. 2658 ggraham@ccea.org.uk</p> <p>Using ICT Roisin Radcliffe (028) 9026 1200 ext. 2195 rradcliffe@ccea.org.uk</p>
Assessment for pupils with special educational needs	Key Stage 3 Curriculum and Assessment Team (SEN)	Treasa Hawksford (028) 9026 1200 ext. 2619 thawksford@ccea.org.uk

For queries about *Assessment Manager* and SIMS.net, please contact C2k at 0870 6011 666.

Appendix 1

Guidance on Internal Standardisation

Internal standardisation can make an assessment system significantly more effective and reliable. CCEA strongly recommends that each school establish a process for internal standardisation.

Whether you are establishing a new process or reviewing your current procedures, we hope that you find the recommendations in this guidance helpful.

What Is Internal Standardisation?

Internal standardisation is a collaborative process. In it, teachers in a school work together to review examples of their pupils' work. They use set criteria (in this case, Levels of Progression statements) to reach an agreement about standards that are typical of work at a particular level. This promotes a shared understanding of:

- the standards themselves;
- the teachers' approaches to assessment; and
- how to apply the standards when assessing pupils' work.

Benefits to Schools

Setting up an internal standardisation process:

- ensures that relevant staff can be involved in discussing standards;
- provides information that can lead to more effective curriculum planning, learning and teaching; and
- may help schools select appropriate materials to include in submissions for moderation.

Internal Standardisation and the Cross-Curricular Skills

Statutory assessment of the Cross-Curricular Skills within the Northern Ireland Curriculum is based on teacher assessment, so it is important that teachers share the same understanding of the performance and achievement of pupils working at particular levels.

Many teachers will already have participated in standard setting events that focus on developing a common understanding of pupils' attainment. Internal standardisation is about taking this a stage further, as schools establish their own process for ensuring a shared understanding of standards.

Establishing an Internal Standardisation Process

The school principal, senior management team and/or assessment co-ordinator should first decide who will arrange and take part in the internal standardisation process. The process should involve all teachers who will be assessing and reporting on the Cross-Curricular Skills with reference to the Levels of Progression.

It is best to focus on one aspect of a Cross-Curricular Skill at a time throughout the school – for example Writing – and not to attempt too much in each meeting. Internal standardisation is likely to be an ongoing process.

Consider the following:

Staff Involvement	Should you involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • year groups? • Key Stage 3 departments? • staff from special units? • cluster groups (for small schools)?
Timescales	How long should meetings last? How often should they take place? How many meetings should you plan?
Groupings	Should participants work in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pairs? • horizontal groups (for example within one year group)? • vertical groups (for example combining different year groups)?
Content	Which Cross-Curricular Skill will you focus on at each meeting? Which aspect of that skill? Which levels?

Organising an Internal Standardisation Meeting

It is important to prepare for each internal standardisation meeting.

Before Each Meeting

- Define a focus for the meeting and ensure everyone knows what it is, for example Writing for Communication or Handling Data within Using Mathematics.
- Choose which pieces of pupil work you will focus on. If you would like to use your own pupils' work, give teachers enough time to choose appropriate samples before the meeting. They may wish to annotate the samples with contextual information that will be useful to other staff.
- Collate and/or photocopy the work so that everyone can view a copy. Alternatively, you could pass the work around during the meeting, or display an electronic version.
- Ensure that copies of the Levels of Progression and other supporting materials are available to help teachers reach agreement on standards. The Expansion of the Levels of Progression for each Cross-Curricular Skill help to provide further details on the levels.
- Decide how you will collate and share the comments of each group.

During the Meeting

- Ensure that everyone involved can contribute their views; the process should acknowledge each teacher's professional contribution.
- Make sure that each teacher has access to the pupil work and knows the context in which it was completed.
- Define again the aspect of the Cross-Curricular Skills that you are focusing on.
- Set time for teachers to discuss each piece of work in relation to the Levels of Progression and assign a level to each. They may wish to annotate the work to highlight what they have discussed and agreed.
- Where teachers have been working in more than one group, bring them back together to give feedback. They should:
 - discuss the provisional levels that each group has assigned; and
 - seek to reach an overall agreement about the level for each piece of work.
- Record the decisions taken at the meeting so that staff can refer back to them later. For example, you could create an internal School Communication Folder using the pieces agreed at internal standardisation.

Identifying Progress within a Level

As well as assigning a level to each piece of work during internal standardisation, you may find it helpful to decide where that work sits within the level. For example, you might identify it as Level 2-, 2o or 2+, or Level 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3 – any method that your school finds useful. This is not a statutory requirement (and you do not need to report to CCEA or parents in this way), but it can help to make comparisons between pieces of work and identify pupils' progress over time.

At the End of the Meeting

Consider the following:

- Will you need to revisit the same area or skill at a later meeting?
- Should you address a different area or skill in the next meeting?
- What have you learned about levels of work that could inform future planning in your school?
- If only a small proportion of staff took part in the meeting, how can you share your findings with other members of staff?

