

Appendix 7

Revisers' Report

2009/2010

One of the biggest changes to the updated KS3 ICT accreditation scheme was the fact that schools are required to design and develop their own cross-curricular tasks. This is in keeping with the NI Curriculum which promotes the acquisition and development of skills in Using ICT across the learning and teaching of all Areas of Learning.

Schools involved in this year's scheme have reported the benefits of using assessment tasks designed specifically for their own pupils. These should be drawn from activities which exist naturally in the learning and teaching going on in their departmental Schemes of Work.

Some schools registered for the 09/10 scheme solely to submit tasks and get them approved so that they are prepared to start pupils working for the scheme in September of the 10/11 next academic year.

Who are the Revisers?

CCEA appointed a Principal Reviser and 10 Revisers for the KS3 ICT Accreditation Scheme 09/10. All of the Revisers are experienced full-time teachers. Many are Heads of ICT departments in their own schools and have prior examining and/or moderating experience with CCEA.

They have extensive experience of relevant software available to post-primary schools and some of them have specialisms, for example, CAD. All have been involved in promoting cross-curricular ICT in their own schools.

For the 10/11 Scheme, CCEA intends to appoint approximately 10 additional Revisers to give us more capacity (and contingency) for the Task Approval process. These posts will be advertised in school staffrooms.

What did the Revisers do?

Each task was submitted to two Revisers who worked collaboratively in a discussion forum to produce feedback for the school. The Principal Reviser supervised this process and a CCEA officer was responsible for the quality assurance of the process. Therefore, every task was considered by at least three people (sometimes four) and the process was totally objective.

Revisers considered:

- the curricular context of the task;
- the appropriateness of the ICT activity in relation to the curricular context of the task;
- the accuracy of the chief focus of the task;
- the software being used;
- the level of demand (pitch) of the task;
- the need for prior learning and development of ICT skills to have taken place before pupils undertook the task; and
- the need for pupils to work independently (of teacher assistance) to demonstrate competence.

Revisers provided detailed feedback for each task submitted. If a task required resubmission, it was allocated to the same pair of revisers who had dealt with it initially.

For the 10/11 scheme, CCEA plans to allocate all tasks submitted by a single school to the same group of Revisers, so that there is also some overview of how the school is trying to build a portfolio that satisfies the 5'E's in the Levels of Progression document. We also hope to provide more transparency in the revision process by inviting teachers to participate in the discussion of the tasks and therefore form part of their Continuing Professional Development.

Submission of Tasks

Schools were asked to populate an interactive Task Writing Tool (PDF) with information about what pupils would be undertaking in the task. The tasks were then submitted to CCEA for revision. Buttons at the top of the PDF allowed the document to be saved or printed off at any stage prior to submitting.

Some schools reported problems with the electronic submission of their tasks. This was due to connection/timeout issues. This was often easily rectified by sending the task through again. However, on some occasions, teachers had not saved the PDF version of their tasks and this caused further delay.

CCEA plans to put in place an automatically generated e-mail response to acknowledge receipt of tasks. In future, if a school does not receive a confirmation e-mail, then the teacher should try to submit again.

Completion of the Task Writing Tool

Tasks were accepted in the format of the Task Writing Tool.

This was necessary so that Revisers had comparable information from each school.

This PDF was available on the KS3 ICT Accreditation Scheme microsite.

The table below provides information on the completion of the Task Writing Tool.

| | Revisers' Comments | Advice for 10/11 Scheme |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Task Title | This usually gave a flavour of the subject context of the task, for example, "Tsunami presentation". Sometimes, the title was just a generic ICT activity, for example, "presentation task". | <i>Please try to incorporate the subject/topic context into the title.</i> <i>If you wish, you may also include the Year Group that will undertake the task.</i> |
| Levels | Schools submitted tasks aimed at a single level and also pitched across several levels (2,3,4 or 5 different levels). | <i>Differentiation is a key aspect of the NI Curriculum and also of this scheme as it is highly unlikely that all pupils in a cohort are working at the same level or progressing at the same rate.</i> <i>Tasks are most effective when pitched across either two or three levels.</i> <i>Where more differentiation is needed (or where different software is being used by more or less able pupils in a large cohort), it may be appropriate to have two submissions of the same task, for example, one pitched at levels 3 and 4 and a second pitched at levels 5 and 6.</i> Single-level tasks are not acceptable and none were approved. |
| The 5 'E's | In many submissions, teachers tagged all 5 'E's (even though the message had been repeated that very few tasks will be able to contribute to all of the 'E's). | <i>Please consider carefully which 'E's the task will contribute to. You should tag only the 'E's which will be demonstrated at the levels at which the task is pitched, for example, if a spreadsheet task is pitched across levels 5 and 6, there is a natural focus on the 'E's of Explore and Express.</i> <i>Remember also that even though a task will contribute to an 'E', it will rarely satisfy that 'E' fully. Part of the task might be to save the spreadsheet using an appropriate file name. However, this would only demonstrate part of Exhibit at Level 3, so do not include Exhibit. Please ensure that you obtain evidence demonstrating a higher level from another task.</i> |

| | Revisers' Comments | Advice for 10/11 Scheme |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Desirable Features | <p>Many schools submitted tasks based on one set of Desirable Features. These generally worked well, for example, a Science task for <i>Measurement and Datalogging</i> or an Art and Design task for <i>Working with Images</i>.</p> <p>Other schools submitted projects involving many sets of Desirable Features which means that the task is complex and more difficult to revise. On a few occasions, Revisers asked schools to resubmit these complex tasks in sections/separate activities in order to simplify/clarify this.</p> <p>Often schools over-complicated tasks by including sets of Desirable Features which did not exist in the task. One such example was the CCEA timetable exemplar task which several schools attempted to develop for their own purposes. This Languages task only used Working with Text but some schools included Working with Images and/or Using Modelling. These two additional sets of Desirable Features are not appropriate in the context of this task because there is no real manipulation of images (only inserting) and there is no use of a spreadsheet.</p> | <p><i>When designing your task, please use the bullet point statements in the Desirable Features to form the basis for the success criteria for your task. Include all those that are involved in your task and it is advisable to customise them relevant to the context of the task. To be representative of a chosen level in an ICT application, pupils must demonstrate the majority of the bullet point characteristics. Therefore, it is also advisable (at this early stage) to consider how each of the success criteria will be evidenced. This year's moderation has shown that Exchange and Exhibit need particular attention in terms of provision of relevant evidence in the pupil portfolio. This information should be entered into the task description field of the PDF form. Single Desirable Features tasks work well because they have a clear focus. CCEA has also received tasks which use two or three sets of Desirable Features. That also worked well but you must include success criteria for each set of Desirable Features that you use. These also work well as long as the Desirable Features provide evidence of pupil competence at comparable levels. During the course of this year's task approval process, CCEA received several projects which contained many (sometimes up to 8 sets of Desirable Features). While these types of projects have been very well-conceived and planned they are onerous to revise and are better sub-divided into smaller tasks or activities for submission. If approaching your portfolio in this way, please indicate how each sub-task links into the other parts of the project.</i></p> |
| Task Description | <p>Generally, this was the field on the PDF form which posed most problems for schools. This seemed to be because it looked as if only one line of description was required. This was the field where CCEA revisers required detail.</p> | <p><i>When completing this field, please provide a description of what pupils are involved in and are expected to produce. If you are pitching at levels 4 and above, audience and purpose is an important part of this. Always provide success criteria for the targeted levels in the chosen sets of Desirable Features (see above)</i></p> |
| Prior Learning in Subject | <p>This allows revisers to consider the context of the assessment activity, but it is not always essential.</p> | <p><i>If appropriate, state the relevant subject learning that has taken place prior to this assessment task</i></p> |
| Prior Learning in Using ICT | <p>This is essential. Pupils must have already acquired and developed the necessary ICT skills prior to undertaking an assessment task.</p> <p>If the pupils are using the software package for the first time and using instructions, the activity is not suitable for assessment.</p> | <p><i>Please ensure that pupils have already developed their skills in the application being used prior to undertaking the task.</i></p> <p><i>Please state where they have developed these skills and to what level they have covered aspects of the software being used.</i></p> |
| Curriculum Materials | <p>A comment may or may not be necessary depending on subject context.</p> | <p><i>Please state whether or not any curriculum materials/equipment is necessary.</i></p> |
| Hardware and Software | <p>This is important information for revisers, moderators and CCEA officers. We will have to be able to open uploaded work and need to have the relevant software to allow us to do that.</p> | <p><i>Please specify whether C2k or Macs being used. Please specify all software packages being used during the task.</i></p> |

| | Revisers' Comments | Advice for 10/11 Scheme |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Pupil Independence | <p>This is very important. Pupils should be working independently. If pupils are working in groups, there must be description of what they are involved in doing and each pupil should have opportunities to demonstrate the majority of the skills associated with that ICT application.</p> <p>The Levels of Progression all begin with the stem "Pupils can....." and are a description of pupil competence.</p> <p>Pupils should not be using detailed instructions/ticksheets provided by teacher. Otherwise the work constitutes lower level skills.</p> | <p><i>Please specify whether or not pupils work independently or if they receive support/assistance.</i></p> <p><i>In the case of group work, please specify what individuals will be doing.</i></p> |
| Other | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some problems arose when schools provided an incorrect DENI number or an inaccurate e-mail address. 2. Consistency is important. 3. During moderation, some pieces of pupil work did not tally with the CCEA approved version of the task. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Please check DENI number and e-mail addresses thoroughly to avoid delays in feedback reaching your school.</i> 2. <i>Please ensure that you inform CCEA if the main point of contact in the school changes during the year.</i> 3. <i>Please ensure that your school is keeping track of versions (where resubmissions of tasks have been necessary) and that your teachers and pupils are working to approved versions.</i> |

Timescales

CCEA opened the Task Approval process in October 2009 and held Task Workshops during the same month. CCEA gave assurances that schools would receive feedback for tasks within three weeks of submitting. After a couple of months, CCEA reduced this to two weeks for first-time submissions and this was achieved in all cases. Resubmissions generally took less time.

The Task Approval process ran from October 2009 till 31st March 2010.

CCEA accepted resubmissions until 30th April 2010. The majority of tasks were submitted from the end of January onwards which left schools limited time to actually carry out tasks with pupils.

In light of this, CCEA will accept tasks for approval from the end of August 2010 until 28th February 2011. Resubmissions will be accepted until 11th March 2011.

CCEA's reason for this is to ensure that schools have more time to run their tasks.

Statistics

419 tasks have been approved to date. A team of 11 revisers considered the context and appropriateness of the tasks and the level of demand. Contributing subjects were as follows:

| Area of Learning | Number of tasks submitted |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| The Arts | 77 |
| English | 51 |
| Environment and Society | 72 |
| Learning for Life and Work | 47 |
| Modern Languages | 36 |
| PE | 5 |
| RE | 18 |
| Science and Technology | 93 |
| Mathematics | 38 |

Some tasks/projects were also developed collaboratively across a number of departments.