

# Appendix 9

## Principal Moderator's Report

### 2009/2010

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#### Background to the Scheme

In September 2009, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment introduced a new voluntary scheme to enable schools to apply for accreditation to assess pupils' skills in Using Information Communications Technology at the end of Key Stage 3 and to present schools with a Certificate of ICT Accreditation and pupils with a Certificate of Competence in Using ICT. These updates to the scheme will run until statutory assessment of Using ICT at KS3 begins, which will not be before 2012 – 2013.

The scheme supports the objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and supports the implementation of the cross curricular skill of Using ICT (UICT).

UICT, together with Using Mathematics and Communication, is one of three cross-curricular skills introduced as part of the revised NI Curriculum. It will be assessed and reported on using Levels of Progression. UICT replaces the former cross-curricular theme of IT.

The scheme was voluntary in 2009/10 and provided schools with an opportunity to prepare for the statutory assessment of UICT.

The scheme supports the principle of ICT skills being embedded in learning and teaching across the KS3 curriculum. It is designed to provide pupils with opportunities to acquire and develop knowledge, skills and understanding of Using ICT and apply these across all Areas of Learning. The focus is on **using** the skills.

Assessment is teacher-based using level descriptions for each of the 5'E's. These are:

- Explore
- Express
- Exchange
- Evaluate
- Exhibit

Evidence of pupils' ICT competence is confirmed by the completion of assessment activities which are set in subject or connected learning contexts. To achieve breadth of pupil experience and ensure that schools begin to address some emerging technologies, a pupil needs to demonstrate competence across all 5'E's and in at least five of the Desirable Features. Page 10 of the Handbook advises schools on what must be contained in a pupil's e-portfolio.

To maintain quality assurance, schools were required to submit electronic pupil portfolios (e-portfolio) for moderation. The e-portfolios were selected at random to cover the range of levels from the school. If the samples were approved as representing appropriate work for the levels concerned, the school was accredited to assess its pupils and certificates were awarded to the pupils on this basis. The pupil work should be representative of work from Year 10 but may also be drawn from work completed in Years 8 and 9 if appropriate.

CCEA provided a range of resources to support schools. These include:

- Levels of Progression to help schools come to a holistic judgement of pupils levels of ICT competence;
- Expansion of Levels that offers examples of how each progression statement might look in practice;
- Desirable Features that set out characteristics showing progression in a wide range of ICT activities;
- Exemplification Database with samples of pupils work in various subject contexts;
- Task Writing Tool to assist teachers in writing their own tasks and submitting them to CCEA for approval;
- Task Approval process which provides feedback to schools; and
- E-Moderation which allows all work to be viewed electronically by moderators.

## Schools Involved

In total, 120 post-primary schools registered for this year's scheme. E-portfolios of pupil work were submitted by schools across the five Education and Library Board areas, and represented schools across a broad spectrum. They included selective, non-selective, all-ability and special, single and mixed gender, large and small, urban and rural schools.

Many more schools have taken the opportunity to develop activities using the Task Writing Tool. In total 83 schools submitted tasks for approval and a total of 419 tasks have been approved by CCEA. This suggests that many more schools are actively involved in developing a strategy for assessing UICT and it is expected that many more of these schools will participate in the scheme in 2010/11.

This was the first time that moderators were able to view 'live' work rather than printed copies of work and despite some minor technical problems this was a very successful part of the moderation process. Moderators had access to the approved tasks from each school and used these when viewing the pupil work. It is important to note that only pupil work coming from approved tasks may be used as evidence to assess competence. A small number of centres submitted work at levels outside those within their approved tasks, unfortunately these samples could not be moderated.

The moderators wrote a report on every pupil portfolio submitted. A Moderator's report and a comment from the Chief Moderator have also been returned to each school. We would encourage schools to ensure that these reports are returned to the subject teachers who submitted the tasks. The Moderating Team would like to commend the ICT co-ordinators for their hard work in collating the samples and ask them to pass on congratulations to the various departments in the schools for taking the scheme on board and for implementing it so well.

## Issues raised

Many centres supplied excellent samples of pupil work. There were many examples of traditional ICT work such as presentations, spreadsheets, wordprocessing, CAD, sensor measurement and DeskTop Publishing. It was pleasing to see some examples of digital movies, podcasts and evidence of pupils collaborating online.

The most common issue faced by centres was a lack of evidence needed to cover one or more of the 5'E's. Many centres struggled to provide evidence from all 5 'E's, with the Exchange requirement most often missing from pupil e-portfolios. Many samples also failed to provide evidence from at least five 'Desirable Features'. Centres should carefully check the advice given on Page 10 of the ICT Accreditation Scheme handbook in order to build a holistic pupil portfolio.

### KS3 ICT Accreditation scheme 2009/2010

Schools approved to award level 1	0
Schools approved to award level 2	2
Schools approved to award level 3	6
Schools approved to award level 4	10
Schools approved to award level 5	6
Schools approved to award level 6	0
Schools approved to award level 7	0
Schools not approved due to incomplete portfolios	14
Schools who submitted levels but did not upload work	5

## The Explore Requirements

There are two bullet points used to describe the Explore requirement at Levels 1 to 7. Pupils have to show evidence of research and use of digital assets. They must also show evidence of investigating and solving problems in a range of digital environments.

The first bullet point in the Explore requirements deals with how pupils research and select digital information. Many pupils were obviously using a range of digital sources but in some cases the pupil portfolio did not include evidence of the evaluation of the resources selected and used.

At Levels 3 and 4, it is sufficient for the teacher to provide this evidence either by commentary or using a simple witness statement. This will confirm that the pupil has explored a range of sources and, at level 4, has discussed the appropriateness of the sources used.

At Levels 5 and above, pupils need to provide evidence of research and evaluating resources. Many pupil portfolios failed to provide such evidence. Best practice from some e-portfolios used a table to name sources and briefly evaluate their appropriateness – *"this was a good image for the presentation because..."*

At Level 6 and Level 7, more detailed justification and cross checking of resources is required. The Expansion of Levels on Page 14 and 15 of the ICT Accreditation Scheme handbook gives additional guidance. The second bullet point for the Explore requirement requires evidence that the pupil has used ICT to solve problems. This may involve the use of spreadsheets, music sequencing, CAD, sensors, podcasting, logo or other suitable software. Some centres provided limited evidence that this part of the Explore requirement had been covered. Other pupil portfolios contained good evidence of the use of ICT to solve problems but missed out on the first bullet point in the Explore requirement.

The Expansion of Levels on Pages 16 and 17 of the ICT Accreditation Scheme handbook gives additional guidance on the Explore requirement.

### The Express Requirements

As expected most centres found Express the easiest requirements to provide evidence for. There were many excellent examples of leaflets, presentations, newsletters, image work, podcasts and so on. The moderating team were disappointed to see relatively few samples of digital movies.

At Level 3, there were many good examples of simple newsletters, presentations and use of graphics.

At Level 4, pupils must show an **awareness** of the audience in the design of their product. This may be evidenced by a teacher comment or a simple witness statement.

At Level 5, pupils must demonstrate a **clear understanding** of audience and purpose. They can evidence this in the planning stage or by a report or annotation of the final product. It is important that there is some evidence of self-produced assets alongside found assets. This may be a simple editing or appropriate resizing of graphics.

Critically, at Level 5 in Express, pupils must evidence in their e-portfolio, that they have used **still and moving images**. Many pupil portfolios had no evidence of moving images. As a result they did not satisfy Level 5 in the Express requirements of their overall portfolio.

Many pupils included sound in their presentations, though a few omitted to upload the sound file in the e-portfolio.

Where pupils used control software, it would have been very beneficial if a print screen/screen shot had been used to show the flowcharts or control file created.

At Level 6 in Express, we expect to see more documentation in the planning stages for the leaflet, presentation, image work or whatever form the final product will take. The product will be designed for a specific audience and the pupil must evidence how their product suits this specific audience.

At Level 7 in Express, a specific end user must be identified. The design and creation of the product should be an iterative process involving this end user. No pupil portfolios were awarded Level 7.

### The Exchange Requirements

Exchange seemed to provide the most difficulty for centres, with many pupil portfolios failing to provide any evidence of Exchange whatsoever and others using only e-mail.

At Level 3, pupils may use email or another form of digital messaging. This may be evidenced by a teacher comment or a simple witness statement.

At Level 4, pupils begin to share ideas electronically. This may be evidenced by a screen print from an online discussion in a VLE where the pupil has posted comments. If pupils are sharing documents online, this may be verified by an appropriate comment from the class teacher.

At Level 5, the pupil portfolio must contain evidence of different types of online collaboration. This could be shown using a print screen/screen shot showing a wiki or perhaps by a student uploading their work and asking others for constructive comments about how this work might be improved. Google Docs and other online tools offer many possibilities for online real time collaboration, and evidence of each pupil's contribution to the shared document is easily produced.

At Level 6, pupils should show evidence of more thoughtful responses in an online discussion and of planning for online work. In most of the pupil portfolios that submitted evidence of the Exchange requirements, pupil responses rarely went beyond a single line of text which is not sufficient for this level. At this level, quality

communication using a range of electronic methods is necessary. Pupils will share, collaborative, provide feedback to each and have more constructive communications online. Moderators did not see any examples of Level 7 in 'this' year's submission. Exchange in this year's submission. It is hoped that at this level students can show evidence of online working and discussions with collaboration beyond the school. Obviously this would have to be carefully monitored by the supervising teacher.

The Expansion of Levels on Pages 20 and 21 of the ICT Accreditation Scheme Handbook gives additional guidance on the Exchange requirements.

### The Evaluate Requirements

In the Evaluate requirements, pupils must review their ICT work, commenting on their successes and showing evidence of amendments made. In a few portfolios this was done well, in many others it received a very light touch.

Best practice from some centres used a 'Plan, Do, Review' table with associated dates showing when different activities were carried out. This is a sound way to plan projects and it allowed pupils to evaluate their work at regular intervals. Some centres included simple versioning of their products and this allowed the moderating team to see how the work had developed over time.

At Level 3 and 4, it is sufficient for the pupil to discuss his or her work with the class teacher. This may be evidenced by a teacher comment or a simple witness statement. Best practice from some centres was to include earlier version(s) of work.

At Level 5, it is important that pupils evidence how they have improved their work and report on the success of the process and product. The emphasis should be on the use of the ICT.

One centre used screen recorder software to document how students developed a CAD product. Numerous video files were created and uploaded onto a secure, password protected, area of YouTube. This was a time consuming, but innovative, way to record the process of developing a product.

Some centres used very extensive print screens/screen shots to report on the product development. While we applaud the diligence of these centres, multiple page reports documenting every step of the process are not necessary.

Another innovative approach might be to use podcasting to record the student's evaluation of their final product.

At Level 6, the pupil portfolio should additionally provide evidence of evaluating the software used. Some e-portfolios contained evidence of Science experiments that used sensors and data logging software. Few had provided any evaluation of the sensors or software and how this may have helped the Science investigation.

There were no pupil portfolios with work representative the Evaluate requirement at level 7. At this level, e-portfolios should evidence the views of external users and take these into account when amending and enhancing the product.

### The Exhibit Requirements

It was expected that evidence for the Exhibit requirement should be the easiest to provide. Some pupil portfolios provided zip files with sub folders that clearly demonstrated how students had organised their work.

Several pupil portfolios provided screen dumps of their folder structure and naming conventions. This provided good evidence for the Exhibit requirements. Some pupils showed evidence of naming earlier versions of their work.

There was no evidence of any student maintaining a back up system.

There was no evidence of pupils showing consideration of file formats or file compression. This is a requirement at Level 6 and beyond for the Exhibit requirements.

## Important points for centres to note

1. Pupil portfolios must show evidence from all 5'E's before a student can be awarded a level and a Certificate of ICT Competence.
2. Schools will receive a Certificate of ICT Accreditation that will confirm the levels that they may award to pupils.
3. The 'best fit' model is used to calculate levels, for example, a student achieving;

Task A	Level 5
Task B	Level 5
Task C	Level 5
Task D	Level 4

would contain a majority of level 5 work and so Level 5 would be "best fit".
4. Pupil portfolios must contain work drawn from at least five different Desirable Features. Three Desirable Features are selected from: Animation, CAD, Data Handling, DTP, Exploring Programming, Measurement and Datalogging, Music Technology, Online Collaboration, Presentation, Researching, Modelling, Working with Images, Working with Moving Images, Working with Sound and Working with Text. Two Desirable Features must be selected from: Animation, CAD, Exploring, Programming, Music Technology, Online Collaboration, Web Design, Working with Images, Working with Moving Images and Working with Sound.
5. While teacher commentary or witness statements are sometimes sufficient at levels 3 and 4, beyond this pupils must provide evidence showing how they have satisfied each of the 5'E's. Please remember that there are two aspects to the Explore requirements.

6. E-portfolios can only include evidence of pupil work for tasks that have been approved by CCEA. These tasks identify the coverage of the 5'E's and the Desirable Feature(s). Each task will have a bulleted list that indicated what characteristics a pupil may demonstrate in the completion of this task. This should always be shared with pupils as this is good practice in assessment for learning.

7. It is also worth noting that schools, upon approval of tasks are advised to check that completed pupil work matches with the 'success criteria' specified in the approved version of the task.
8. Once all tasks have gained CCEA approval, schools are advised to cross-check the coverage of the requirements of the 5'E's.

## Future Developments

The current scheme is voluntary and we encourage more schools to participate next year.

In the near future, it is expected that that UICT (together with the other cross curricular skills) will be statutorily assessed and reported on using Levels of Progression.

Submitting e-portfolios was, despite a few problems, a more satisfactory way of assessing ICT competence. As the numbers of centres increase and larger files are more commonly used, handling e-portfolios online becomes more difficult. CCEA will be investigating alternative ways of gathering e-portfolios from schools.

INSET and other support is planned for 2010/2011

Further support is available from CCEA. Please use the KS3 ICT accreditation scheme microsite for contacts and other information.