





# Essential Skills qualifications (NI) (4800)

Winter 2017-18



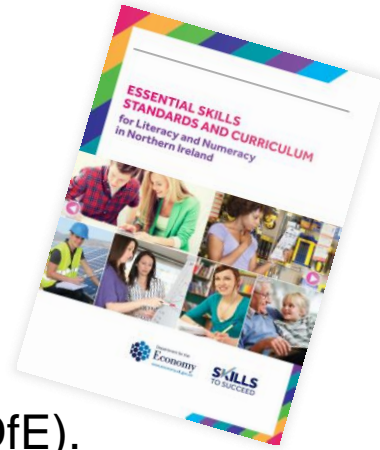
# Where to find things...

Our principal web resources	Description
   SmartScreen	<b>SmartScreen</b> is our teaching and learning platform. Search for <a href="https://smartscreen.co.uk">smartscreen.co.uk</a> or link through any webpage.
	<b>Walled Garden</b> is our secure administration portal – for registrations, entries, results, purchases, etc.
 <small>A City &amp; Guilds Group Business</small>	<b>cityandguilds.com</b> is our public website – qualification specifications, handbooks, assessment materials and other guidance.
	Sign up at <a href="https://cityandguilds.com/updates">cityandguilds.com/updates</a> to receive regular email alerts and updates. Be sure to select <b>Maths and English</b> and/or <b>Essential Skills NI</b> when asked for your preferences.

# Key documents

## Essential Skills Standards and Curriculum

- Published by NI Department for the Economy (DfE).
- Sets out technical range of skills, knowledge and understanding expected at each level, with examples of contexts where these could be taught.
- Should underpin teaching of Essential Skills subject content.

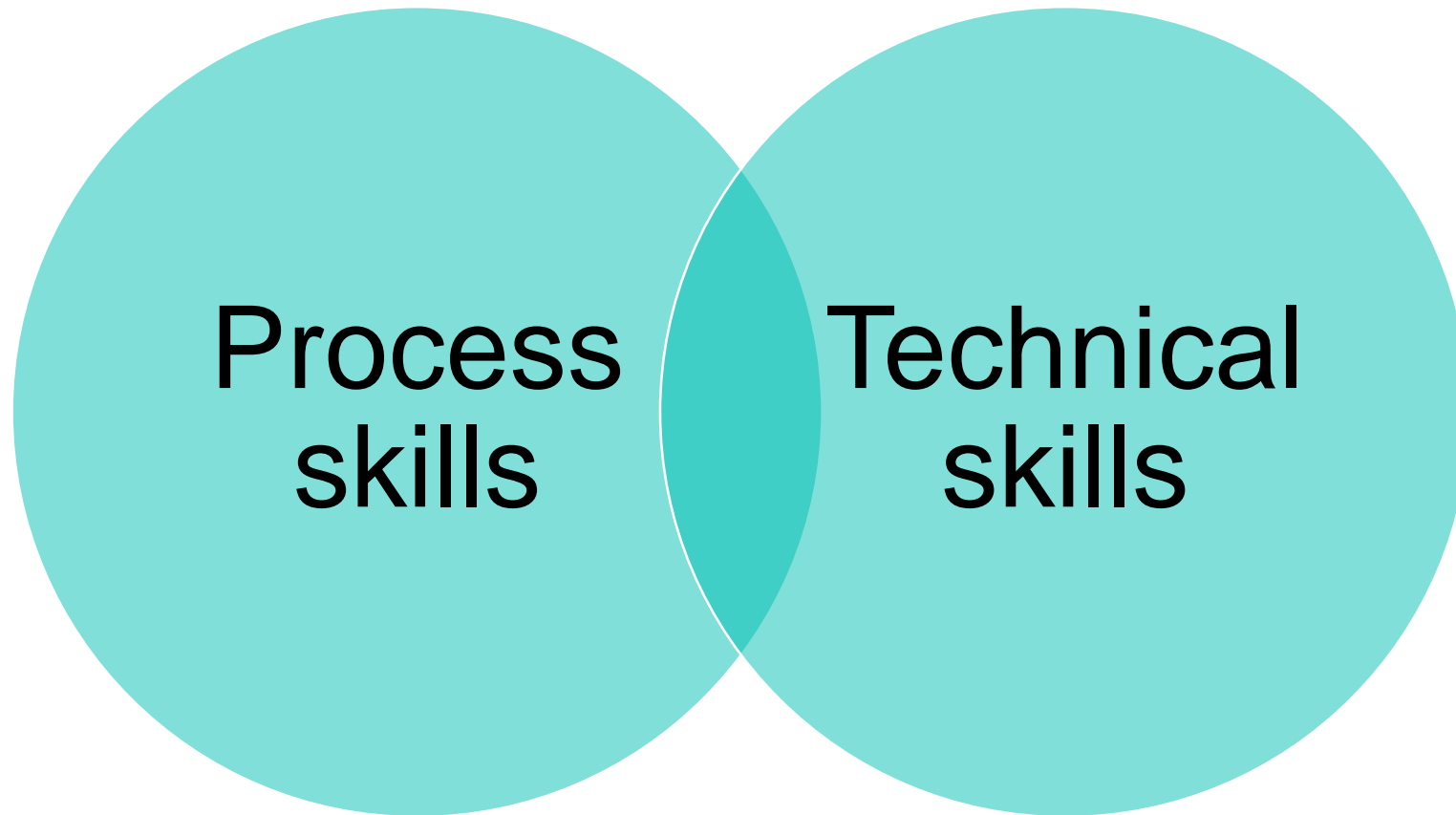


## Essential Skills Qualification Specifications

- Qualification/Subject Criteria devised by CCEA Regulation
  - Common to all awarding organisations.
- Sets out **skill standards**, **coverage** and **range** Essential Skills qualifications must assess (as well as prescribing assessment model).
- Incorporated into our Essential Skills qualifications handbook.

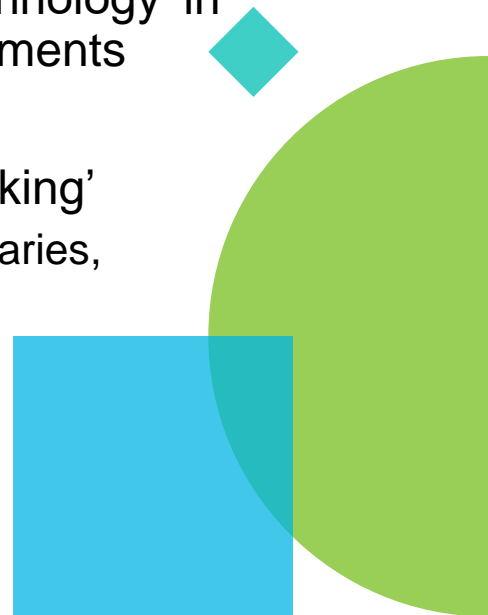


**Remember – Essential skills is about the bit in the middle!**



# ES qualifications - overview

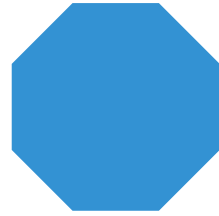
- Concerned with practical ability to **apply** communication, number and digital skills within purposeful contexts.
- Less subject content than GCSE, but more emphasis on applying knowledge/understanding.
- Scenario-based assessments – working through a ‘problem’.
- External assessments for Comm and AoN within current model has replaced **both** the action-based activity and desktop task from pre-2016 qualifications.
- Assessments subject to ‘ICE principles’ but with some additional flexibilities.
- **Doesn’t** have to be in traditional exam hall.
- Candidates may use ‘relevant technology’ in course of completing their assessments
  - but no internet access!
- Emphasis on ‘normal ways of working’
  - Spell/grammar checkers, dictionaries, calculators all fine.
  - Need to ensure candidates know what they need to bring (or have made available).



# Performance feedback

- External assessment results initially released to Walled Garden
- **Hard copy** confirmation sent a few days later, along with
  - Notification of Candidate Results (NCR)
  - Certificate (where due)
- As well as confirming grade, NCR also displays performance codes, indicating relative performance against skill standards.
- A glossary of these codes can be found in the Essential Skills qualifications handbook (see pages 32-36).

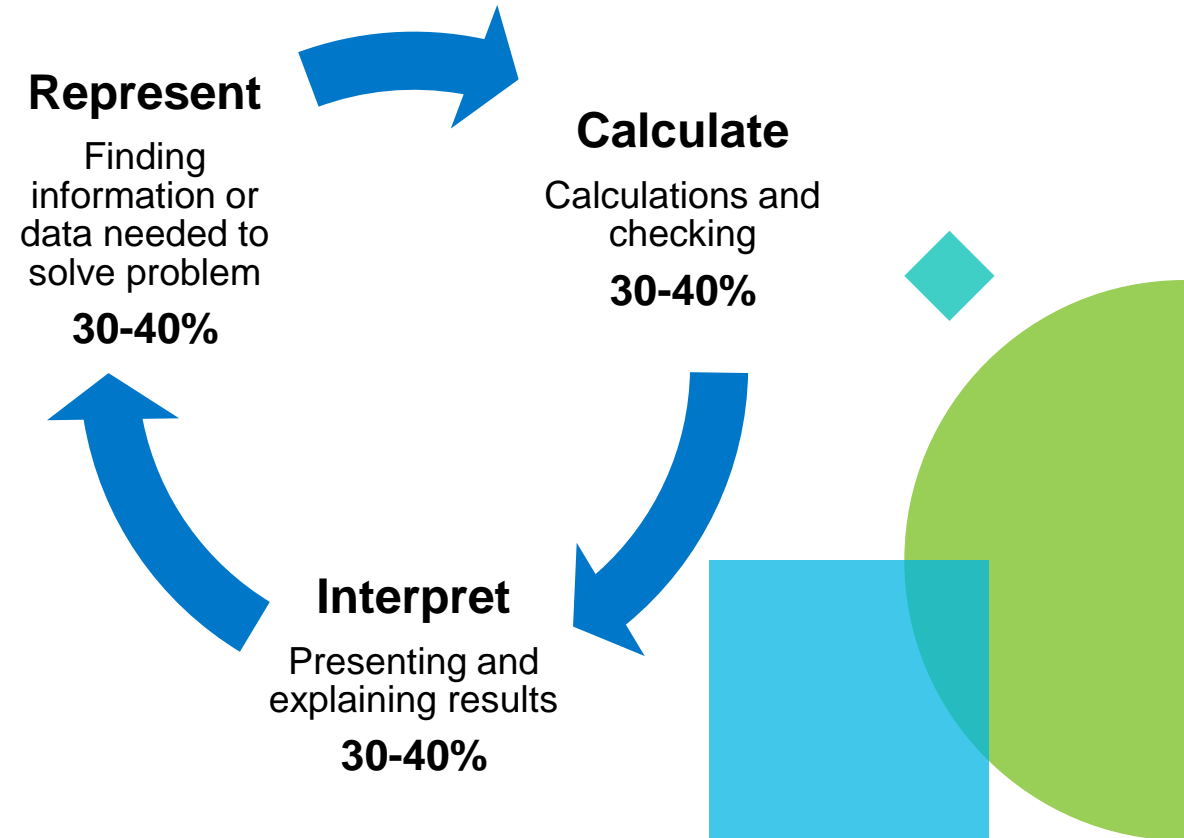




# Application of Number

# Application of Number – key points

- Single assessment paper
  - 1 hour 30 minutes.
- Each paper assesses **100%** of skill standard and at least **80%** of the coverage and range.
- Level **1** comprises **three** holistic tasks
  - each worth 15 marks (total of 45 marks available)
  - each has a Number, MSS or Data focus.
- Level **2** comprises **two** holistic tasks
  - each worth 25 marks (total of 50 marks available).
- Equal weighting of marks between Represent, Calculate and Interpret
  - only about a third of marks relate to carrying out calculations; the other two thirds relate to representing and interpreting.





# Guidance for Delivery

- Designed to help tutors and curriculum managers understand structure, content and mark allocations within City & Guilds' external assessments.
- Written by our Chief Examiner – intended to provide direct insight into what our markers expect to see.
- Must be read in conjunction with qualification specifications (as set out in Section 5 of Essential Skills qualifications handbook).
- Periodic examiner reports as well
  - shorter document, commenting on any specific patterns or trends we've noticed recently.
  - most recent one published October 2017.



# Things we're doing to help AoN tutors

## Available now

- four sets of sample assessments at each level
- two 'worked examples'
- Guidance for Delivery
- examiner reports  
(most recent update October 2017).

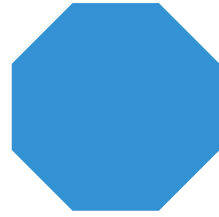
## Things we're working on

- video 'walkthrough' of Guidance for Delivery
- definitions of performance code descriptors.

## Longer term...

- improve candidate performance feedback.





Communication

# Communication (Reading and Writing) – key points

- Single assessment paper – with discrete Reading and Writing sections
  - Level 1: 1 hour 30 minutes
  - Level 2: 1 hour 45 minutes
- Marked out of 50
  - 25 marks available for Reading (8 questions)
  - 25 marks available for Writing (2 documents)
- Overall mark awarded for whole paper (no ‘internal threshold’ for each sub-skill).
- Candidates need to manage their time!



# Communication (Speaking & Listening) – key points

- Level 1 – two group discussions
  - one **formal** discussion on an **unfamiliar** topic
  - one **informal** discussion on a **familiar** topic.
- Level 2 – presentation and group discussion
  - one **formal** presentation on a **familiar** topic
  - one **informal** discussion on an **unfamiliar** topic.
- Each of these terms defined in Essential Skills handbook.
  - formal simply means a conventional subject without the use of casual and colloquial form
  - unfamiliar **doesn't** mean completely off-the-wall
    - though candidates expected to obtain/use new information.
- Assessment record sheet must be completed for each candidate/attempt.



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- Must be read in conjunction with qualification specifications (as set out in Section 5 of Essential Skills qualifications handbook).
- Periodic examiner reports as well
  - shorter document, commenting on any specific patterns or trends we've noticed recently.
  - most recent one published in October.



# Things we're doing to help Comm tutors

## Available now

- three sets of sample R&W assessments at each level
- 'worked example' S&L assessment record sheets
- Guidance for Delivery
- examiner reports  
(most recent update October 2017).

## Things we're working on

- fourth set of R&W samples
- 'worked example' R&W samples
- adjustment to SPaG mark allocations
- video 'walkthrough' of Guidance for Delivery
- definitions of performance code descriptors.

## Longer term...

- improve candidate performance feedback.



# Thank you

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You can also follow:

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