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National Reading and Numeracy Tests – 2013 test administration handbook

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Guidance

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National Reading and Numeracy Tests – 2013 test administration handbook

- Audience** Headteachers, teachers, practitioners, governing bodies of mainstream and special schools; local authorities; church diocesan authorities; national bodies with an interest in education.
- Overview** This handbook sets out the arrangements for the administration of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to all learners in Years 2 to 9 in 2013. It should be read alongside the *National Reading and Numeracy Tests – access and disapplication arrangements guidance* and the test manuals once received.
- Action required** Headteachers, test administrators and teachers should refer to this handbook for information on the dates of tests, test duration, receipt and storage of tests, conditions for administering tests, personnel administering tests, marking tests and data input.
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- Additional copies** This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills

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Introduction

This test administration handbook forms the National Tests administration handbook (“NT administration handbook”) for the purposes of the Education (National Curriculum) (Assessment Arrangements for Reading and Numeracy) (Wales) Order 2013. The assessment timetable given below is the National Tests assessment timetable (“NT assessment timetable”) for the purposes of the above regulations. The NT administration handbook sets out the arrangements for the administration of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to all learners in Years 2 to 9 in 2013. It should be read alongside the *National Reading and Numeracy Tests – access and disapplication arrangements guidance* and the test manuals once received. Schools may also wish to refer to the sample test materials available via the Learning Wales website.

Relationship of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests to proprietary tests

The Welsh Government intends that all eligible learners in maintained schools will sit the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (“the Reading and Numeracy Tests”). The Welsh Government in implementing the tests expects that they will replace rather than supplement any proprietary reading and numeracy tests currently used for annual, summative purposes in schools in Wales.

Manner and location of test administration

The tests should normally be administered to whole classes. In 2013, learners will be required to take the National Reading Test and the procedural element of the National Numeracy Test. The National Reading Test is a single test. The tests being taken in the period 8–22 May 2013 may be administered to a whole class in the classroom or to larger groups in larger rooms, e.g. to a year group in the school hall. To avoid sharing of information about the test content, under normal circumstances schools should administer the tests so that sittings of an individual test (e.g. the Year 2/3 Reading Test, the Year 5 Numeracy Test, etc.) take place on the same day.

Schools delivering reading tests through the medium of English and of Welsh

Learners in Years 2 and 3 who are in a Welsh-medium¹ setting are only required to sit the Welsh-medium National Reading Test, with the English-medium National Reading Test available as an additional option to those in Year 3. Learners in Welsh-medium settings in Years 4 to 9 are required to sit both the Welsh-medium and English-medium National Reading Tests for their year group. Where schools are administering both the Welsh-medium and English-medium National Reading Tests, consideration should be given to ensuring a fair distribution of administration and marking duties.

Test duration

The National Reading Tests will typically take learners up to one hour to complete, plus an additional period prior to the test of 20 minutes (for the older learners – typically in Years 4 and up), and up to 25 minutes (for learners in Years 2 to 3), for issuing the test booklets, giving instructions and working through the practice questions. The National Numeracy Tests will take approximately 30 minutes per element; hence in May 2013, when the procedural element only is being sat, the total duration of the National Numeracy Test should be 30 minutes, plus an additional five minutes prior to the test for issuing instructions and test booklets.

¹ For the purposes of administering the National Reading Tests, a learner is being taught in a Welsh-medium setting if they are following the Welsh (rather than the Welsh second language) national curriculum programme of study.

Delivery of test materials to schools

During the week beginning **29 April 2013** all schools will receive packs of materials containing everything necessary for test administration. The test packs will be assembled using the information submitted by schools to the test order line by 1 February 2013.

The packs will contain National Reading and Numeracy Test booklets for your learners, and test manuals including markschemes, as follows:

- National Reading Tests (English) if ordered
- National Reading Tests (Welsh) if ordered
- National Reading Test manuals (English) if ordered
- National Reading Test manuals (Welsh) if ordered
- National Numeracy Tests (English) if ordered
- National Numeracy Tests (Welsh) if ordered
- National Numeracy Test manuals (English) if ordered
- National Numeracy Test manuals (Welsh) if ordered.

Modified tests, if ordered, will be delivered separately.

Receiving and opening test materials

When the test materials, including any modified materials, are received in the week commencing 29 April 2013, the headteacher or their delegate (such as an Examinations Officer or delegated administrator) must check the delivery against the delivery note to ensure that the correct number of test packs has been received, and may open the test manual and test packs in order to do so. If a delivery is incomplete, a member of staff should contact the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)/Welsh Government distribution agency helpline on 01753 637 007 to arrange for the correct number of test packs to be sent to the school. If materials have not arrived by 3 May 2013 please contact 01753 637 007.

Storage of test materials

Once the delivery has been checked against the delivery note, schools should reseal the box(es) containing the test materials, and store them and the test manuals in a secure place. Should access be required to

the test manuals for familiarisation purposes, arrangements should be made for secure access during school hours. No learner should have access to or sight of the test content in advance of the test session.

Once administered, the test papers and materials should be kept under secure conditions for at least a year and then the school should arrange for the test papers to be disposed of securely.

Test familiarisation

Test administrators should familiarise themselves with the procedures and content of the tests by reading the appropriate test manuals in advance of the test. They should also take the opportunity to inform themselves of the permissible access arrangements, as set out in the *National Reading and Numeracy Tests – access and disapplication arrangements guidance* hosted on the Learning Wales website (learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/nrnt-access-disapplication-guidance/?skip=1&lang=en). Where teachers and/or teaching assistants have access to the test manuals for familiarisation purposes, they should not use the resultant knowledge of the **content** of the tests in preparing learners for the assessments. Sample materials are available on the Learning Wales website to assist in the general test familiarisation process.

Conditions for administering tests

The tests must be administered under appropriate test conditions to ensure all schools are administering them to agreed national standards. These conditions and standards are as follows. Schools must:

- ensure learners can work undisturbed and individually
- ensure learners do not have access to materials that could, with reference to the test content, give them an unfair advantage, e.g. wall displays or similar classroom resources
- ensure learners do not take any recording media into the examination, including mobile telephones
- ensure learners are reminded that the work they produce in the tests must be their own and that they should not discuss questions or copy answers

- ensure learners are given the appropriate length of time to complete the test, with reference to the timings given in the test manuals
- ensure learners understand that they should not discuss the content of the tests or the answers outside their immediate peer group.

When administering the tests, schools must:

- ensure that there is appropriate supervision at all times proportionate to the number of learners being supervised
- ensure learners have the test materials and all necessary resources
- introduce and administer the test according to the guidance given in this handbook and with regard to the information in the test manuals
- ensure no additional support, information or help is given to learners with the content of the tests, other than in line with the provisions of the *National Reading and Numeracy Tests – access and disapplication arrangements guidance*
- make sure learners are aware of what they are required to do and the time they will be given to complete the test
- not permit learners to return to and revise their answers to the tests after the allotted time has passed.

Scope for delivering tests in parts

Within the guidelines set out above, schools have the discretion to apply arrangements which will make it easier for learners in Years 2 to 3 to perform to the best of their abilities in the tests. In particular, they may sit the tests in 'chunks': the tests have been designed so that they can be administered in two shorter chunks (in the case of the procedural element of the National Numeracy Test) or three shorter chunks (in the case of the National Reading Test) if schools feel that this would be more beneficial for learners' performance rather than as one continuous exercise. In doing this, however, schools **must** ensure that the overall time that learners spend working on the test does not exceed that allotted, and that the test is completed in a single day. Where tests are being delivered in chunks learners may not be allowed to revise their answers between test sittings. In between test sittings part-completed answer booklets/tests should be kept where they cannot be accessed by learners.

Year 4 learners should normally take the tests in one sitting but may exceptionally sit the tests in chunks if the school feels that this is necessary to allow them to do their best work. The same conditions as above apply. Learners in Years 5 to 9 should take the tests in one continuous sitting.

Absence during the test period

Planned test dates should be shared in advance with the local authority/regional consortium, parents/carers and learners.

Learners who are absent on the scheduled test date should be allowed to take the test within the remaining portion of the specified test window.

If a learner is absent for part of the test and is unable to complete the rest of the test at a later point in the test window, the school should still mark the test script. The school will be able to use the learner's results to inform the narrative report to parents/carers.

Learners missing the entire test period should be reported as absent when entering/uploading the test results via the relevant system, i.e. school Management Information System (MIS) for the National Reading Tests and, for May 2013 only, the NFER School Portal for the National Numeracy Tests.

Headteacher's declaration

Once the last test for the testing cycle has been administered, the headteacher must sign and submit to the relevant local authority a declaration confirming that the test packs were received and stored securely, that the tests were administered correctly according to the requirements set out in the NT administration handbook (this handbook), and that the tests were marked in accordance with the markscheme. A downloadable declaration will be available from the Learning Wales website.

Persons administering and marking the tests

Many schools are likely to have well-established protocols in place for annual testing of learners and should consider whether these arrangements are appropriate for application, with or without

modifications, to the National Reading and Numeracy Tests. When making or modifying such arrangements schools should be mindful of the provisions of the Department for Education's *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2012* ('STPCD 2012').

Schools have discretion as to which of their staff **administer** the tests but should be mindful of the provisions of STPCD 2012 in making any decisions in this regard. Where the tests are administered in class bases, broadly in the context of normal timetabled teaching time, it may be reasonable to ask teachers to administer them, by analogy with paragraph 93 of Section 4 of STPCD 2012.

Conversely, where the tests are sat in conditions which replicate those for external examinations, out of normal teaching time and in discrete examination conditions, such as on a year group basis in an examination hall, schools should be aware that they are likely to fall under paragraph 63.11 of Section 2:

Participating in arrangements for preparing pupils for external examinations does not require a teacher routinely to participate in any arrangements that do not call for the exercise of a teacher's professional skills and judgement, such as invigilation².

Where tests are administered on this basis, paragraphs 94 and 95 of Section 4 are relevant:

In this context, it is a reasonable expectation that, subject to the agreement of the head of centre (usually the headteacher), a teacher should be present at the beginning of an external examination in their subject area to check the paper and to ensure that there are no problems with it. Those invigilating the examination should be made aware of the procedure for dealing with emergencies and for contacting a teacher in the subject area under examination should any candidate raise a concern or problem with the paper which requires their professional judgement. It may also be appropriate for a teacher to be present at the end of an external examination to ensure its efficient conclusion³.

When carrying out such tasks, teachers should not be expected to stay in the examination hall/room for any longer than is necessary to perform them⁴.

² Department for Education *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2012 and Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* (STPCD), Section 2, page 113, paragraph 63.11.

³ STPCD 2012, Section 4, page 188, paragraph 94.

⁴ STPCD 2012, Section 4, page 188, paragraph 95.

Schools may employ external invigilators if they so wish.

Schools have discretion as to which of their staff **mark** the National Reading Test and the procedural element of the National Numeracy Test. Mark schemes have been designed to be quickly and easily applied and to eliminate the need for professional judgement. While there will remain the need for some judgement to be applied in a limited range of circumstances, the tests should be markable by a reasonably literate or numerate non-teacher. Schools should be mindful of this, and of the aforementioned provisions of paragraph 63.11 of Section 2 of STPCD 2012, in making any decisions as to who should mark the tests.

Time needed for marking

It is at schools' discretion whether they choose to give markers dedicated time for the task of marking. Excluding initial time for familiarisation with the mark scheme, it should take markers approximately 90–120 minutes to mark 30 National Reading Test papers and 30–45 minutes to mark 30 procedural National Numeracy Test papers.

All test papers **must** be marked by the time specified by your local authority for the National Data Collection (NDC) in order to allow for timely uploading of scores.

Mark scheme

Mark schemes will be found in the test manuals supplied with the test packs. Marks are recorded directly onto the test papers. Schools should retain papers once marked and may wish to refer to them for diagnostic purposes.

Malpractice

If an instance is found where a learner's script does not represent that learner's own work (for instance where learners have copied from one another) the headteacher should be informed and a record kept of which questions and responses might have been affected for the information of the marker, the local authority and any subsequent investigation by the Welsh Government. The headteacher or an

appropriate delegate should then contact the relevant local authority to notify them and for guidance on the actions that should be taken. The final decision on results in cases where they are in doubt, or appear inaccurate or incorrect, rests with the Welsh Ministers.

Data input

For the **May 2013 testing round only**, the following procedure should be followed.

- Raw scores from the National Reading Tests, together with the details of the test taken and the date taken, should be input into the school's MIS. They should then be uploaded to the Data Exchange Wales Initiative (DEWi) as part of the NDC.
- Raw scores from the procedural element of the National Numeracy Tests should be uploaded to the NFER School Portal via a downloadable data collection form.

Further guidance on how to input data into the NFER School Portal will be supplied nearer the time.

Generation of standardised scores and reporting

Upon receipt of the raw scores, the systems described above will generate learner level reports for each test, including standardised and age-equivalent scores for both the National Reading Test and the procedural element of the National Numeracy Test, by the end of the summer term. These reports should be shared with parents/carers as part of the normal reporting process and the scores used to inform a narrative report to parents/carers on learners' literacy and numeracy achievements.

Optional reading tests for Years 4 to 9

The Welsh Government has procured additional, optional, extended response reading questions which schools may choose to administer to learners in addition to the formal tests described above. Photocopiable copies of these tests will be supplied in the test packs. These tests are entirely optional, designed to assist schools in further exploring learners' skills in reading. As such none of the constraints above apply. Schools may use the optional response tests as they wish for formative purposes and administer them in whatever manner they deem best **once the National Reading Tests to which they relate have been sat**. There are no data reporting requirements associated with the optional tests.

NT assessment timetable

Tests dispatched to schools	Week beginning 29 April 2013
Schools administer tests	8–22 May 2013
Marking (in schools)	By date set by local authority for the NDC
Data uploaded to DEWi (National Reading Tests)	As set by local authority, but by 14 June
Data uploaded to NFER School Portal (National Numeracy Tests)	14 June
Results to parents/carers	By the end of the summer term

Support

To answer any queries, schools can contact the NFER telephone helpline on 01753 637 007. In addition to the NFER telephone helpline, a telephone and visiting support service will be available in the period up to the implementation of the tests. Schools will be contacted once the service commences operation.

Annex: Test administration guidance specific to 2014 arrangements, including implementation of the reasoning element of the National Numeracy Test applicable from May 2014 onwards

Manner and location of test administration

From May 2014 onwards, the National Numeracy Test will come in two parts, one related to procedural knowledge⁵ and one to numerical reasoning.

The reasoning element of the National Numeracy Test needs to be administered in a room with facilities that enable learners to view the stimulus materials that accompany the first question which are presented via DVD immediately prior to the test. This might be in a classroom. It is important that all learners are able to see these stimulus materials which will need to be projected onto a whiteboard or similar. It is also essential that only one year group's test is administered at a time, as the stimulus materials are different for each test.

Test familiarisation

An essential part of the numeracy reasoning test will be the delivery of stimulus materials to inform the response to the first test question. Those delivering the stimulus sessions will need to familiarise themselves with these in advance of the test. A script is provided to accompany the visual input, which consists of either a PowerPoint presentation, a video or an animation. The Welsh Government estimates that delivery of the stimulus materials will take 5–10 minutes.

Persons marking the test

The reasoning element of the National Numeracy Test, while supported by a markscheme, will require more subjective decision making. As such, additional guidance on marking arrangements for this element will be produced and disseminated in advance of implementation in May 2014⁶.

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⁵ To be sat from May 2013 onwards.

⁶ There will be specialist marking for the **pre-test** of this element of the National Numeracy Test, which will take place in selected schools in May 2013.

Data input

From the May 2014 testing round onwards, coinciding with full implementation of the National Numeracy Tests (procedural and reasoning elements), all data input will be via schools' MIS systems and uploaded to DEWi.