Key Skills
SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Good practice guide

Developing and managing portfolios

department for
education and skills

learning and skills development agency

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For the full range of Key Skills Support Programme publications and online resources, please visit the website at www.keyskillssupport.net.

Introduction

This publication is one of a series of Good practice guides produced by the Key Skills Support Programme. For a complete list of titles, please see facing page.

What is the purpose of the guides?

All the guides are designed to provide practical advice and guidance to teachers delivering and assessing key skills in schools and colleges. Each guide can be used as an introduction, as the basis of training sessions, as a source of ideas, for reference, as a handbook, or just for reassurance. They are based on the experience of centres that have been delivering key skills in the last few years, and particularly since September 2000.

Who are the guides for?

The guides are written primarily for staff who are relatively new to key skills, though more experienced practitioners will also find them helpful. All the guides will be useful for key skills coordinators and managers. This guide will be particularly useful to teachers who are responsible for helping students build and manage their portfolios (eg personal tutors or form tutors), and to subject teachers who have integrated key skills opportunities into their teaching and learning programmes.

What is this guide about?

This guide offers advice and guidance on developing and managing the portfolios of evidence that students submit for assessment of Part B of the key skills standards. It has been updated to take account of the revised 2004 standards.

What is not included in this guide?

This guide does not include:

- advice and guidance on interpreting the key skills standards and assessing students' work. Assessment is the responsibility of the awarding bodies, who provide specialised training (see Appendix 7 for contact details).

- advice on how to write assignments that develop and/or provide evidence for key skills. This is provided in another guide in this series: *Writing assignments*, available from the Key Skills Support Programme.

- advice or guidance on the external tests. This is provided in another title in this series: *Preparing for the tests*, available from the Key Skills Support Programme.

This guide should be read in association with *The key skills qualifications standards and guidance: communication, application of number, and information and communication technology; Levels 1–4 2004* (referred to in this guide as 'Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT') and *The wider key skills qualifications standards and guidance: working with others, improving own learning and performance, and problem solving; Levels 1–4 2004* (referred to as 'Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS').

Both are published by QCA (refs QCA/04/1272 and QCA/04/1294) and are available from QCA Publications (01787 884444) or from the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/keyskills.

These publications are essential reading for tutors who have any responsibility for the delivery of key skills.

What is a key skills portfolio?

All six key skills qualifications require the candidate to complete a portfolio of evidence. The evidence must show that the candidate has met the assessment criteria in Part B of the standards. It is usually a file of written work completed by the student, but it can include tapes, printouts, photos, models, or simply references to where the evidence can be found.

Where work is produced electronically, authentication by a supervisor or assessor is required.

Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 20

It may be helpful for a student to have two folders of key skills work. One is work-in-progress; the other is the portfolio proper, containing work that has been assessed as a pass. The second folder should be kept somewhere secure, ideally on school or college premises. Storage is easier if all the folders are a standard size and shape.

Where all the key skills evidence is integrated into the evidence or coursework for another qualification (eg a Vocational A-level (VCE)) it may not be necessary to have a separate key skills portfolio. However, there must be a separate index that shows exactly where the key skills evidence can be found in the main qualification portfolio.

What should be in the portfolio?

The portfolio should contain evidence that the student has achieved the required standard in Part B of the key skills unit or units that they are aiming for.

The QCA version of the key skills units, at every level, is presented in a four-page A4 leaflet. The front page gives a brief explanation of the unit.

Part A on page 2 describes what students need to know how to do in order to apply their skills. This is sometimes called the 'underpinning techniques' of the key skills.

How much evidence is needed in the portfolio?

The short answer to this question is: 'the minimum needed to meet the evidence requirements of Part B of the unit'.

Part B is presented in two columns. The left-hand column describes the type and the amount of evidence needed in the portfolio. If it says 'Write two different types of document…', then one example of each of the two is all that is needed. If it says 'Use at least one image…', then one image is enough. The right-hand column sets out the assessment criteria that assessors must use. The assessment criteria also show the process the student will go through to produce the evidence for a component.

Volume is not a measure of quality.

Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 18

Part B on page 3 sets out what students must do and what they have to produce as evidence. This is what has to be included in the key skills portfolio.

The back page gives further guidance and examples of the techniques and knowledge in Part A.

The QCA guidance, especially for Application of Number, Information and Communication Technology, and the wider key skills often specifies that the evidence must show a process of learning, planning and development, including checking. For example:

- *N1.2 … must include records of how the candidate has checked that the results make sense*

- *N2.3 … must describe both the methods used and what the results of the calculations mean…*

- *N3.1 … evidence of planning must include a clear description of the activity…*

- *ICT1.2 … annotated drafts of work…*

- *ICT2.3 … evidence of how the candidate has developed the presentation…*

- *ICT3.2 … evidence that the candidate has checked the work…*

This is evidence of process and development and must be included in the portfolio. The portfolio should not contain work that was submitted for summative assessment but failed to reach the required standard and was passed back for further work.

Example portfolios for Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology are available on the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/keyskills. They relate to the 2000 specifications but are valuable nevertheless.

How should the portfolio be presented?

The portfolio should contain:

- an index, showing where the evidence can be found in the portfolio or in another location (Many awarding bodies provide standard front-sheets and indexes for portfolios; see Appendix 1 for an example.)

- the assignment briefs or tasks

- the candidate's work, including evidence of support, feedback and development where appropriate

- assessment sheets and records

- records of internal verification.

  You should check these requirements with your awarding body.

Who has an interest in the portfolio?

- **The student** – should take some responsibility for managing their portfolio.

- **The teacher** – is responsible for supporting or mentoring the student through their key skills programme.

- **The assessor** – assesses the work for its key skill content.

- **The internal verifier** – checks that standards of assessment are consistent across the centre (see page 15).

- **The standards moderator** – checks, on behalf of the awarding body, that the centre's standards are in line with national standards (see page 16).

- **The key skills coordinator** – is ultimately responsible for completed portfolios being in the right place at the right time for assessment, internal verification and standards moderation.

What is evidence?

Where can evidence come from?

Key skills evidence can come from anywhere in the student's life and experience.

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Sources of key skills evidence

        AS and A-levels
    GCSEs
                 GCSEs in
  GNVQs          vocational subjects

                              NVQs
 Vocational
 A-levels (VCEs)     PORTFOLIO

                              Enrichment
 Work experience

                              Voluntary work
  Part-time job

                  Duke of Edinburgh, Young
    Leisure activities   Enterprise, ASDAN, etc.
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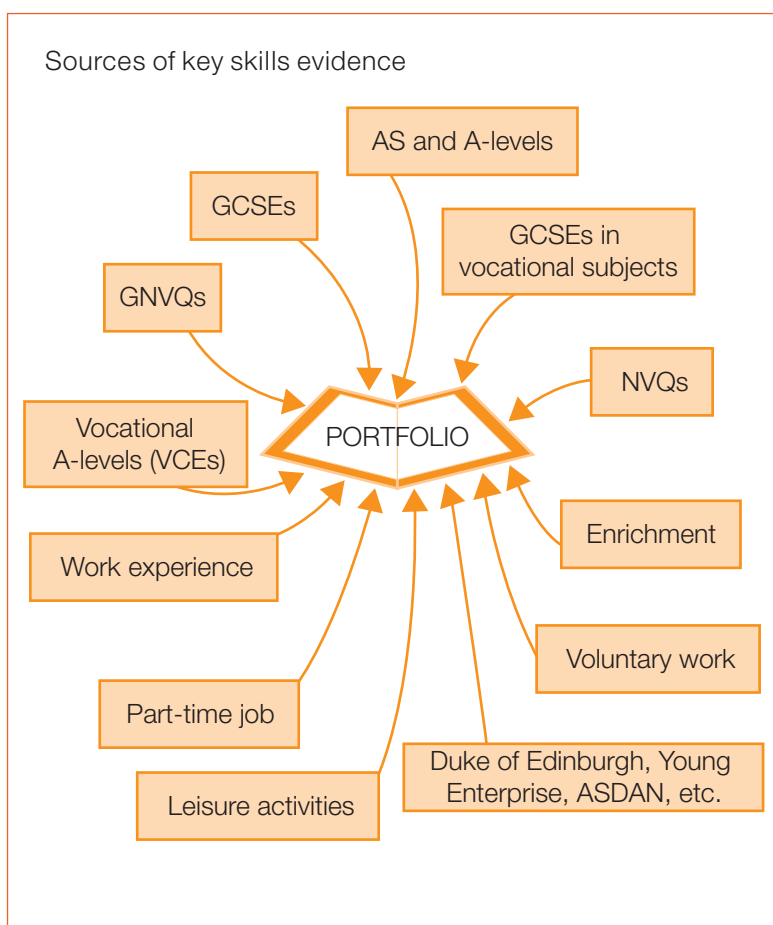
Evidence can be generated:

■ **naturally** – when the student is doing the activity either:

  □ in their everyday lives, including part-time jobs (for example, a student might write a letter or an e-mail to order some equipment for a hobby), or

  □ in the context of an assignment in their main subject programme (for example, completing a piece of coursework in Geography or Health and Social Care)

■ **in an assignment** – which is written specifically to generate evidence that the student cannot generate naturally. Such assignments must be set in a purposeful context (for example, an assignment might require the student to use Information and Communication Technology and Application of Number to research the cost of buying and running a car).

What counts as evidence?

Portfolio evidence must be:

■ **purposeful** – the evidence should be generated as part of a task that the student had to carry out in the context of another activity, and the activity must have a purpose and relevance of its own; evidence that has been generated simply for the sake of generating evidence is not purposeful

■ **authentic** – it must have been produced by the student, with no more help than the standards allow

■ **valid** – evidence must show what it claims to show

■ **sufficient** – it must include all that is required by Part B of the unit.

Witness statements

A witness statement is a statement, signed by a competent person, which confirms that the student completed the activity in question (for example, a presentation or discussion). In many cases, the witness is also the assessor and the statement can form part of the assessment record. In other cases (for example, when the witness is a supervisor in a work placement) the statement should be assessed, like any other evidence, for its authenticity, validity and sufficiency. The assessor may need to confirm with the witness that the statement is genuine and clarify points regarding the assessment criteria.

Witness statements can be useful as supporting evidence but should not be the sole form of evidence for a component. When they are used, they should include the date, name, signature and contact details of the witness and details of the context in which the observation took place.

The assessor should sign off the witness statement, which may also be internally verified.

Forms of evidence

Within the limits outlined on the previous page, evidence can take many forms. A few examples are shown below (though this is not an exhaustive list).

- *written* – report, diary, log, memo, letter, essay, story, article, minutes, notes, drafts, copies of source material, printout, case study, commentary, calculations, description, images, reading list, on paper, disc or CD

- *visual* – artwork, photographs, charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, story-board, web pages, on paper, disc, CD, tape or film

- *product* – model, artefact, picture, poster, object, design, film, video, CD, presentation, demonstration, performance (live or recorded)

- *observational* – audio or video recording, witness statement, record of discussion or Q&A session

Signposting, mapping, tracking and recording

The Key Skills Support Programme publication *Key skills resource manual* includes a training session on signposting.

What is signposting?

All specifications in the National Qualifications Framework must include 'signposts' to opportunities to develop and generate evidence for the first three key skills. GCSEs, AS levels, A-levels, Vocational A-levels (VCEs) and GNVQs must also signpost the wider key skills.

These signposts are just that: signposts. They are not requirements. Like road signs, they show you a possible way to go to a particular place, if you want to go there. You don't have to go there, you don't have to go there now, and you don't have to take that particular route. Like road signs, key skills signposts do not cover all possibilities.

In any case, key skills are about activity and application, not just knowledge, so the real opportunities lie not in the specification but in how teachers deliver the learning programme. The real signposts are those that an individual teacher identifies in their particular scheme of work.

The more active the learning style that a teacher encourages, the more key skills opportunities will be available.

The process

Teachers receive training in what is involved in integrating key skills in main subjects.

Teachers 'signpost' the key skills opportunities that they will be offering in their subject programme (see the example in Appendix 2).

The key skills opportunities are made available to students who – probably with the help of their form tutor or personal tutor – map their own route through to the complete portfolio, given the subjects they are taking (see the example in Appendix 3).

GNVQ, GCSE in vocational subjects and Vocational A-level (VCE) specifications also signpost Keys to Attainment. These show where a student who completes the vocational assignment for a unit will normally generate key skills evidence at the same time. The evidence must still be included and indexed in the key skills portfolio.

What is mapping?

Mapping is the process by which an individual student works out how, in their particular programme, they will develop their skills and collect the evidence they need for their portfolio.

How this is done will depend on how key skills are being delivered in a centre, and according to the course a student is following. Where a group of students are all following the same programme (for example, an Intermediate GNVQ), they will all have the same key skills opportunities and hence the same map.

Students should map the route to their complete key skills portfolio in advance. Trying to build a portfolio in retrospect is a recipe for failure. (See Appendix 3 for an example of mapping.)

If the centre is at an early stage of implementing key skills and offering them in a limited range of subjects (eg General Studies or enrichment programmes), then, again, mapping will be a simple process.

However, where a centre has moved successfully towards integrating key skills in all subjects and programmes, each student may have a different key skill map. Each student will look at the opportunities offered in their particular subjects (the signposts) and plan which opportunities they will take up, and when. They will plan their own route. It is sensible to do this in stages:

- take a broad overview early in the programme
- map the first term in detail
- review at the beginning of the next term
- and so on through the course.

Students will need help from a tutor, who can advise on avoiding overload at certain times, or suggest that it may be sensible to map more than one opportunity for a particular piece of evidence. Students will also need advice on what to do if they find that their course leaves a gap in the key skills evidence they need.

What are tracking and recording?

For the student

Once students have their own maps of how they will develop their key skills and where they will get their portfolio evidence, they need to track their progress, marking off each step on their planned route. Students should take as much responsibility for this as possible, especially as they move up the levels, but they will need support and encouragement, particularly when they fall behind. Most centres have issued their students with a key skills logbook. The key skills awarding bodies have produced logbooks and tracking sheets that you can use or adapt for your centre, but you can design your own if you prefer. A good tracking sheet can become an index for the portfolio.

Signposting = drawing the map

Mapping   = planning the route

Tracking   = following the route

Recording = keeping a log of what you have done, with evidence

For the centre

The key skills coordinator needs to keep in touch with students' progress, both individually and collectively (eg GCSE students, Year 12 students, part-time students). This can be through a paper-based system, although many centres have tried using IT-based tracking systems.

The Key Skills Support Programme has produced a report called *Software for tracking key skill evidence* (updated in January 2004). It can be obtained from the Key Skills Support Programme and is on the website. Click on 'Student Guidance and Support', 'Tracking and Monitoring'.

QCA's Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT includes examples of an Assessment Checklist and an Assessment Record. Your awarding body may supply similar documents.

Assessment

This guide is about developing and managing portfolios. It includes very little about the detail of assessing portfolio evidence. The most important message about assessment is: consult your awarding body.

Formative assessment

This is part of the feedback that a teacher provides during a learning programme to help the student reflect on and review their progress. It tells the student how they are getting on. It is often called 'assessment for learning' rather than 'formative assessment'.

It is important not to underestimate the need for teaching, learning and development of key skills. Students need to confirm their understanding of the underpinning techniques and learn how to apply them in a range of contexts. Formative assessment and feedback are central to this process.

Summative assessment

This is the assessment that determines whether a candidate has achieved a qualification and, if appropriate, with what grade. It may happen in stages during a course, or all at the end. For the first three key skills, it includes both the portfolio and the external test.

How much help and advice can the teacher give?

In the context of formative assessment, the teacher can give as much advice as they think the student needs in order to learn and become independent.

In the context of summative assessment, the question is more tricky. One of the features of the key skills standards is that, as they progress up the levels, students are expected to take more responsibility for making their own decisions about how to plan, what to do, and how to present the results. At Level 3, in particular, the teacher must be careful not to give so much advice that the student cannot demonstrate their growing autonomy. Nevertheless, summative assessment should include evidence of feedback to the student.

For detailed information on assessment, you should consult QCA's Guidance documents (see page 1) and your awarding body.

Who can assess a key skills portfolio?

No formal qualifications are required to assess a key skills portfolio. However, assessors should have the appropriate specialist expertise to understand the full implications of the key skills standards. Some awarding bodies offer qualifications for key skills assessors. Assessors may also find it helpful to achieve the Employment NTO (formerly TDLB) units A1 and A2.

In some cases, the subject specialist in whose assignment the key skill is being demonstrated will have the expertise to assess the key skill at the same time as they assess the main subject content. In other cases, it will be better for a key skills specialist to assess the key skills content of a subject-based assignment.

Step-by-step assessment

When assessing a piece of portfolio evidence, it is helpful to take a systematic approach:

- check the evidence against the component in question
- check the evidence against the assessment criteria for the component
- check for detail and level against Part A and the QCA Guidance.

This process is illustrated on page 12, using Application of Number Level 2 as an example.

How can we find time to do all this assessing?

The burden of assessment has been a big issue in recent years. It is worth noting, however, that the amount of key skills evidence that has to be formally assessed is relatively small. In Communication, for example, a student aiming for Level 3 over two years has to produce evidence of:

- taking part in **one** discussion
- making **one** formal presentation lasting at least 8 minutes
- reading and synthesising information from **two** documents about the same subject
- writing **two** different types of document, **one** of which must be at least 1000 words long.

Given that most post-16 students will be studying four AS levels in the first year and three A2s in the second year, or their Vocational A-level (VCE) equivalent, and in all of these they will be discussing, presenting, reading and writing, the assessment of this evidence will be shared by a large number of teachers.

Assessing evidence for Application of Number Level 2

Consider the first component:

2.1   Is there evidence that the student has interpreted information from a suitable source?

if yes   **if no**

Consider the assessment criteria in order:

2.1.1   Is there evidence that the student has chosen how to get the information needed to meet the purpose of the activity?

if yes   **if no**

Give feedback to the student, explaining the problem

2.1.2   Is there evidence that the student has obtained relevant information?

if yes   **if no**

2.1.3   Is there evidence that the student has chosen appropriate methods to get the results they need?

if yes   **if no**

And so on through the other components of Part B of the unit. Wherever you are unsure of the standard, check with Part A of the unit, and with the QCA Guidance.
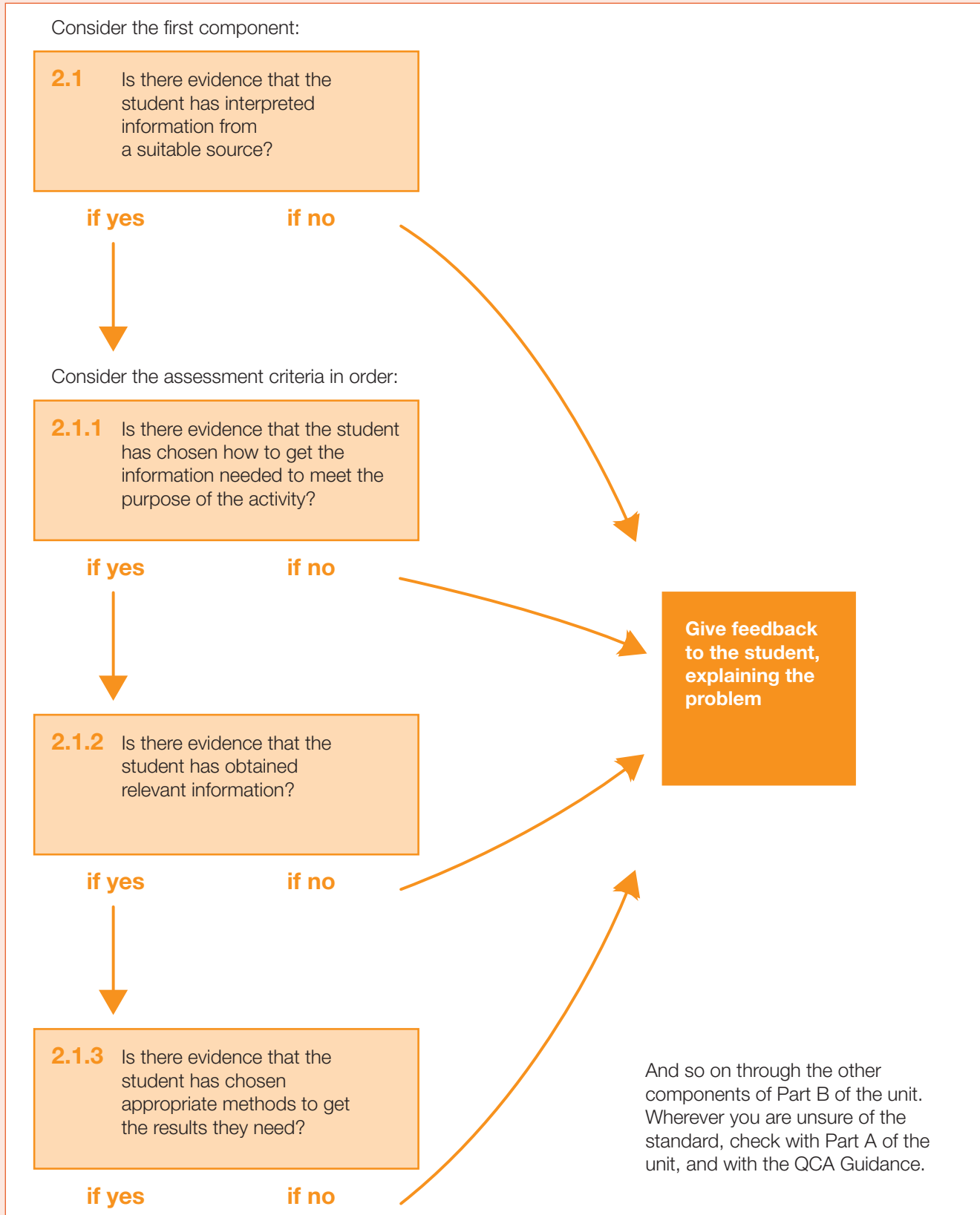
Introducing students to portfolios

There is a
separate KSSP
publication
*Good practice
guide: Planning
and delivering
induction*,
which is all about
the induction
process.

Students should understand the importance of their portfolio right from the start, although there is little point in giving them detailed information before they have some experience of what is involved. It is discouraging to be told a lot of detail that you cannot understand and before you have achieved anything.

The following outline is based on the experience of several centres. It is not fixed and you will want to modify it to suit your particular context.

As part of the overall induction programme to the new year or programme, **briefly** explain:

- what key skills are
- why they are important (improve performance, impress HE and employers)
- how they are delivered in your centre (your curriculum model)
- how they are assessed (coursework/portfolio and test)
- who will support the students as they develop their key skills (key people)
- that students will be given more detail after a few weeks of the programme.

If you have a short handout about key skills, distribute it now. You may wish to use the leaflet *Introducing key skills*, which can be downloaded from the Key Skills Support Programme website (www.keyskillssupport.net).

Try to ensure that the key skills programme is publicly given the status and importance it deserves. Ask the head or principal to introduce the session.

A leaflet called *Managing your key skills portfolio* has been written for students and can be downloaded from the Key Skills Support Programme website (www.keyskillssupport.net).

In the first few weeks of the programme:

- complete the initial assessment, which determines which key skills each student will aim for and at what level
- make sure that every student does at least one subject-based assignment that develops or generates key skills evidence for a component of a unit, but don't draw particular attention to this.

After a month or so:

- explain the portfolio process in more detail, using the evidence the students have been working on as the 'starter'
- emphasise that portfolio-building starts now
- issue mapping and tracking sheets
- emphasise that students should accept responsibility for building their portfolios but that there is help and support available
- explain the standards
- explain how far the evidence they have produced meets the evidence requirement of the standard
- issue portfolio files or folders (if this is your centre's policy)
- begin the process whereby each student maps their own particular route to completing their key skills portfolio
- if you have developed a key skills handbook, issue it now, with all the necessary paperwork, copies of the standards, etc.

After three months (or sooner if it is a one-year programme):

■ ensure that all students have mapped their route in outline, including how they will fill the gaps in the evidence they will need.

At the beginning of the second term, and regularly thereafter:

■ ensure that each student's progress is reviewed by the responsible member of staff, who will help them confirm their map for the coming term.

The key skills standards suggest that if 'producing certain types of evidence is difficult for you because of a disability or for another reason … it may be possible for you to produce evidence using alternative methods.'

In particular cases, the tutor should consult the awarding body.

The key skill Improving Own Learning and Performance has three stages:

■ **agree targets and plan how to meet them**

■ **follow the plan, using support as appropriate**

■ **review your progress and what you have achieved.**

The process of building a key skills portfolio provides a framework for developing and generating evidence for this key skill.

Internal verification and standards moderation

What is internal verification?

Internal verification is the process that ensures that everyone in a centre is assessing students' portfolio evidence at a consistent standard, which is also the national standard. The internal verifier team (which may include the key skills coordinator) help to train, lead and support the assessors, as well as re-marking a sample of assessed work. Internal verification is about quality assurance and is a process of internal dialogue and development rather than inspection.

> **In many centres, internal verifiers (IVs) check the key skills content of assignment briefs, ie that the assignment really can deliver the key skills evidence that it claims to deliver. This is sometimes called moderating or standardising assignments.**

Why is it done?

The Code of Practice requires centres to have arrangements in place to ensure that internal assessment decisions and practices are standardised.

Who does it?

Usually, another teacher in the centre will internally verify the assessment decisions made by the centre's assessors. In some cases, the internal verifier may be based at another centre in a consortium. Internal verifiers do not have to have any formal qualifications or training but awarding bodies will welcome evidence that they are qualified to at least the level they are internally verifying and, ideally, that they have – or are aiming for – Employment NTO (formerly TDLB) units V1 and V2. The awarding bodies offer training for internal verifiers.

When should it be done?

Most centres have found it helpful to have several internal verification sessions scheduled over a year. This spreads the load of the work and also ensures that, where assessed work is found to be not of the right standard, action can be taken in good time.

How many internal verifiers are needed?

This will depend on how many candidates there are, how many key skills they are aiming for, and how much time each internal verifier is given to do the work. Some larger centres have appointed a lead verifier with a small team. Internal verifiers can work with all the key skills or specialise in one or two.

How many portfolios should be internally verified?

It is not necessary to internally verify every piece of evidence in every portfolio. A sample is enough. The sample should include work from every assessor, each key skill, every level, and all programme areas.

How should it be organised?

The key skills coordinator or the lead verifier should be responsible for arranging internal verification, making sure that the right portfolios are available in the right place at the right time, that decisions are recorded, that the students' work is returned to the correct place, and that students are told the result.

What is standards moderation?

Standards moderation is the process that ensures that a centre is assessing and internally verifying students' portfolios at the right standard.

Why is it done?

The Code of Practice requires that awarding bodies ensure that internal assessment is valid, reliable, fair and consistent with national standards.

Who does it?

It is done by a standards moderator, who is appointed and paid by the awarding body.

When should it be done?

Standards moderation is normally done towards the end of a course, but other arrangements are possible.

How many portfolios will be moderated?

When you have formally registered your students with the awarding body, the awarding body will tell you which portfolios the standards moderator will want to see. This sample should include work for all the key skills and at all the levels concerned, from all programme areas, and from all the assessors and internal verifiers in the centre.

What decisions can a standards moderator make?

A standards moderator can:

- approve all portfolios in the sample and, therefore, in the centre
- re-mark more sample portfolios
- withhold approval from a particular cohort or group of candidates
- withhold approval from all candidates in the centre.

How should it be organised?

Each awarding body has slightly different arrangements for standards moderation. Some have fixed dates; some do not. Some visit centres; some work only by post. Some will make interim or pre-moderation visits; some will not.

For all matters relating to assessment, contact your awarding body.

Appendix 1

Portfolio front sheet

		Page
Centre name:		
Candidate name:		
Assessor name:		
Internal verifier name (if applicable):		
Awarding body:		
N1.1	Interpret information from two different sources. At least one source must include a table, chart, graph or diagram. Source 1 Source 2: table, chart, graph, diagram (circle one)	
N1.2	Carry out and check calculations to do with: (a) amounts or sizes (b) scales or proportion (c) handling statistics.	
N1.3	Interpret the results of your calculations and present your findings in two different ways using charts or diagrams. Chart Diagram	
Test	Evidence of exemption Date to be taken Date passed	

Appendix 2

Key skills opportunities in AS level Biology

	Development opportunities	Assessment opportunities	Notes
COMMUNICATION **Level 3**			
C3.1a Take part in a group discussion.	Throughout the course.	Fortnightly from January to March.	You must inform me in advance if you want to be assessed.
C3.1b Make a formal presentation of at least eight minutes, using an image or other support material.	None.	Eight members of the group can be assessed between November and April.	Please see me to discuss dates and topics.
C3.2 Read and synthesise information from at least two documents about the same subject. Each document must be a minimum of 1000 words long.	Throughout the course.	Most of your written assignments (twelve) will involve reading and synthesising from long documents eg textbooks.	You must inform me in advance if you want a piece of work to be assessed for this.
C3.3 Write two different types of documents, each one giving different information about complex subjects.	Throughout the course.	Course assignments are either lab reports or essays. Essays are usually at least 1000 words long. All work will include at least one image.	You must inform me in advance if you want a piece of work to be assessed for this.
APPLICATION OF NUMBER **Level 3**			
You must plan and carry through one or more activities that each include tasks for all three of N3.1, N3.2 and N3.3.		The assessed coursework project is designed to produce the following evidence and to meet the requirements for sources and presentation.	Your coursework project will be assessed for AoN unless you ask otherwise.
N3.1 Plan an activity and get relevant information from relevant sources.	Throughout the course, though not always with a large data set.	✓	The coursework project is based on a large data set ie over 50 items.
N3.2 Use this information to carry out multi-stage calculations to do with:	Throughout the course, though not always multi-stage.	✓	
(a) amounts or sizes			

(b) scales or proportion			
(c) handling statistics	✔		
(d) using formulae.	✔		
N3.3 Interpret the results of your calculations, present your findings and justify your methods.	✔	Throughout the course.	It is your responsibility to decide when to use graphs, etc., but there are plenty of opportunities.
			This may be possible but is not guaranteed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
Level 3

You must show that you can plan and carry through a number of different tasks, one of which must be a major task covering ICT3.1, ICT3.2 and ICT3.3.		There will be no assessment opportunities for ICT3 in this course.	We do not have enough access to PCs to be able to produce ICT evidence in this course, but there will be opportunities to practise your ICT skills.
ICT3.1 Search for information using different sources and multiple search criteria in at least one case.		Throughout the course.	
ICT3.2 Enter and develop the information, and derive new information.		From time to time during the course.	
ICT3.3 Present combined information such as text with image, text with number, image with number.		In several written assignments.	

Student's key skills mapping sheet

Student's name:	Mary Williams
Course:	AS
Tutor:	John Brown
Date:	October 2004

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY Level 2				
	Opportunity 1	**Opportunity 2**	**Opportunity 3**	**Opportunity 4**
ICT2.1 Search for and select information to meet your needs.	AS Geography January	AS Business March	AS History March	AS History May
ICT2.2 Enter and develop the information, and derive new information.	AS Psychology November	AS Business March	PSHE April	AS History May
ICT2.3 Present combined information such as text with image, text with number, image with number.	AS Psychology November	AS Business March	PSHE April	AS History May

In this example, the student is studying AS Geography, Psychology, Business and History and is also following a PSHE programme. After initial assessment, she has decided to aim for the Information and Communication Technology key skill at Level 2.

She knows that she needs evidence from two or more activities and that she must:

- include at least one ICT-based information source and one non-ICT-based source
- present evidence of purposeful use of email.

Having looked at the opportunities that have been signposted by her teachers, she is planning to use the opportunities listed under Opportunity 1 as trial runs. If she achieves the standard for one component in one activity, that will be a bonus. She will aim to use Opportunity 2 to generate evidence that she expects to reach the required standard including use of email. If she is unsuccessful in one or two of the components, or one activity, she has other opportunities to make up the evidence she needs.

The centre has advised her not to attempt the test until May. If she takes it on-screen and on-demand, she will know her result in time to re-sit before the end of the summer term.

Appendix 4

Assessor record

> **C3.3** **Write two different types of documents, each one giving different information about complex subjects. One document must be at least 1000 words long.**

Student's name:	*Mary Smith*	**Form:** *12A*
Title of activity:	*Critically consider how psychologists explain the breakdown of relationships.*	**Date:** *26/05/04*
Type:	*Essay, more than 1000 words*	

Assessment Criteria	Achieved	Comments
Select and use a format and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complexity of the subject matter.	✔	You have written an appropriate academic essay. The subject is very complex. The essay is about 1200 words long.
Organise material coherently, to suit the length, complexity and purpose of your document.	✔	The essay is well-structured, with an introduction, main body and conclusions.
Spell, punctuate and use grammar accurately.	✔	You have used the word-processor sensibly, with clear fonts and layout. Grammar and punctuation are sound and there are no spelling mistakes.
Make your meaning clear.	✔	You use psychological terms accurately and clear short sentences wherever possible. You have used images effectively.

Assessed by:	*James Jones*	**Date:**	*28/05/04*
Verified by:	*Ann Robson*	**Date:**	*31/05/04*

Training activity – managing portfolios

This grid can be used in a planning session with the key skills team:

■ to check understanding of the process of developing and managing key skills portfolios

■ to identify who will do which task, when, and what resources they will need

■ to monitor progress.

KEY SKILLS PORTFOLIOS				
	When should it be done?	**By whom?**	**What resources are needed?**	**Have we a system in place?**
Mapping key skills opportunities in the curriculum.				
Standardising assignment briefs.				
Mapping each student's key skills portfolio evidence plan.				
Assessing students' work.				
Tracking students' progress.				
Recording students' progress.				
Internally verifying students' work.				
Standards moderation.				

Glossary

Note

The following abbreviations are used in this glossary.

Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT
for *The key skills qualifications standards and guidance: communication, application of number, and information and communication technology; Levels 1–4 2004*.

Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS
for *The wider key skills qualifications standards and guidance: working with others, improving own learning and performance, and problem solving; Levels 1–4 2004*.

Key skills policy and practice
for *Key skills policy and practice: your questions answered*.

Details of these publications are provided at the end of the glossary.

Accuracy

(a) *In Communication*

Accuracy in written communication 'includes the ability to punctuate, spell and apply the rules of grammar with accuracy at increasing levels of sophistication.' Part A of the standards prescribes the skills required at each level. At Level 1, 'one or two' spelling mistakes may be tolerated, 'as long as these are not repeated in the second document'. The same applies at Levels 2 and 3, but only 'providing meaning is still clear'. However, fitness for purpose is an important factor. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 29).

At all levels, learners must demonstrate the skill of proofreading, whether of hand-written or word-processed material.

(b) *In Application of Number*

The requirements for accuracy vary between the levels. For details on accuracy and checking, see Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT: Level 1, pages 55–56; Level 2, page 60; Level 3, page 66.

Evidence of checking for accuracy is required at all levels. At Levels 1–3 'where there is a series of calculations of the same type, evidence of checking at least the first few of each type should be recorded for assessment purposes. For the remainder, accurate results should confirm that effective checking has taken place'. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, pages 55–56, 60, 66).

Adult literacy and adult numeracy
QCA defines adult literacy and adult numeracy skills as 'the ability to read, write and speak in English/Welsh and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general.' (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 4). The standards for Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy at Levels 1 and 2 (which are for learners aged 16+) are aligned to the standards for Communication and Application of Number key skills, respectively, at these levels. The key skills tests at Levels 1 and 2 in Communication and Application of Number also act as the tests for Adult Literacy and Numeracy. Candidates who gain the Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy certificates by passing these tests can progress to achieving the full key skills qualifications if they wish. In order to meet the full requirements of the internal assessment component of the key skills qualifications, candidates have to develop a suitable portfolio of evidence. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 4). See also 'Basic skills'.

Advanced
Advanced level qualifications are at Level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework and include AS levels, A-levels, Vocational A-levels (VCEs), BTEC and OCR Nationals, NVQs at Level 3 and key skills at Level 3.

Assessment

(a) *Formative assessment*
This is part of the feedback that a teacher provides during a learning programme to help the learner reflect on and review their progress. It is often referred to as 'assessment **for** learning' in contrast to 'assessment **of** learning' or summative assessment. It has no direct effect on the student's final result. For more information, see www.qca.org.uk/ages3-14/66.html.

(b) *Summative assessment*
This is the assessment which determines whether a candidate has achieved a qualification and, if appropriate, with what grade.

Assessor
The person responsible for the initial judgment of a candidate's performance against defined standards expressed as assessment criteria or mark schemes.

Awarding body
There are 17 awarding bodies offering key skills qualifications, including the unitary awarding bodies in England (AQA, Edexcel, OCR) WJEC in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland. They are listed on the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/keyskills under 'Contacts'.

Basic skills
A set of literacy and numeracy skills and associated qualifications designed for use with adult learners and available at entry level and Levels 1 and 2 of the national qualifications framework. These skills are increasingly referred to as 'Skills for Life'. QCA has developed standards for an Information and Communication Technology skill for life. See also 'Adult literacy and adult numeracy'.

Chart
For the purpose of the Application of Number key skill, it is not necessary to distinguish between 'chart' and 'graph'. QCA defines these as 'a representation of the relationship between variables such as categories and frequency data, or x and y coordinates. Examples include: pie or bar chart, histogram, pictogram, frequency polygon, frequency chart or diagram, single or multiple line graph, scatter graph with or without line of best fit'. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 51). See also 'Diagram'.

Complex
For the Communication key skill at Level 3, complex subjects include those that deal with abstract or sensitive issues, and lines of enquiry dependent on clear reasoning. The subject matter, as well as having a number of strands, must also be challenging to the individual candidate in terms of the ideas it presents. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, pages 43–44). At Level 3, the candidate must write two different types of documents, each one giving different information about complex subjects.

For Application of Number at Level 3, the activity from which evidence is taken must be complex, requiring candidates to consider carefully the nature and sequence of tasks when planning how to obtain and use information to suit their purpose. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 68).

Diagnostic assessment
In the context of key skills, diagnostic assessment is the process which helps to identify the skill areas in which students are already competent and those in which they are in need of further development. See also 'Initial assessment'.

Diagram
QCA defines a diagram as any graphical method of representation other than a chart or graph where scale is or is not a factor. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 51). Examples include: scale drawing, plan or workshop drawing, circuit drawing, 3D representation, flow chart, critical path or network diagram, and organisation chart. See also 'Chart'.

Entry level
Entry level qualifications recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning in everyday situations under direct guidance and supervision. Key skills are not available at entry level.

Exemption
Key skills candidates can claim exemption from all or part of particular key skills qualifications (most commonly the external test) for up to three years from the date of the award of specific accredited proxy qualifications. See also 'Proxy qualifications'.

Expectation

The Secretary of State wishes to see key skill programmes offered to all post-16 learners. Where learners have not already achieved A*–C grades in GCSE English, Maths or Information and Communication Technology, their programmes should lead to the formal acquisition of the relevant key skills qualification/s at Level 2. Where young people are starting on advanced level programmes with the aim of pursuing a professional or higher level qualification post-19, then institutions should support them in gaining at least one relevant key skills qualification at Level 3. (Key skills policy and practice page 7).

Extended period

For the first three key skills at Level 4, an extended period of time is about three months.

External assessment

In England and Northern Ireland, the external assessment for the first three key skills takes the form of a test which samples from the whole standard at the appropriate level. The tests are externally set, taken under supervised conditions and externally marked. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 14). See also 'Tests'.

For the wider key skills from September 2004, candidates will be required to give satisfactory answers to questions asked by an assessor (eg tutor, trainer, supervisor). The assessor will select these questions (the 'Part A questions') from a list supplied by the awarding body, in order to confirm candidates' knowledge and understanding of areas of Part A where the assessor cannot infer this from the portfolio of evidence. Candidates' answers should be recorded in note form, or in an audio or video format. These notes or records should be available to standards moderators/verifiers if required. Candidates will also have to include in their portfolio a completed pro forma that will help structure and order the portfolio. The blank pro forma (or similar) will be supplied by the awarding body.

Fitness for purpose

Key skills portfolio evidence should be appropriate for the wider context and purpose for which it was produced. See also 'Purposeful'.

Foundation

Foundation level qualifications are at Level 1 of the National Qualifications Framework and include GCSEs at grade D to G, Foundation GNVQs, NVQs at Level 1 and key skills at Level 1.

Funding

Brief guidance on the funding of key skills and basic skills provision in schools, colleges and work-based training can be found in *Key skills policy and practice*.

Grading

There are no grades for key skills.

Graph

See 'Chart'.

Image

Information and Communication Technology and Communication both require the use of images. Examples include models, plans, sketches, diagrams, pictures, graphs and charts. Whatever form the image takes, it must be fit for purpose and must aid understanding of the written or spoken text.

At Levels 1 and 2 of Communication, candidates must use at least one image **either** to obtain information **or** to convey information in a discussion **or** a talk **or** a document they write. At Level 3, candidates must use an image or other support material in their presentation and at least once more – either to obtain information **or** to convey information in a document they write.

At Levels 1, 2 and 3 of Information and Communication Technology, candidates must use at least one example of an image (as well as examples of text and of number).

A table of text or numbers does not count as an image for Information and Communication Technology or for Communication. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 27).

Independent assessment

All qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework must include a form of independent assessment or an alternative approved by the regulatory authorities (QCA, ACCAC, CCEA). For key skills, this requirement is met by external assessment (qv).

Information

Where the standard for the key skill Information and Communication Technology, at every level, refers to 'information', this can take the form of text and/or images and/or numbers.

Initial assessment

In the context of key skills, initial assessment is the process of identifying the appropriate level at which a student should start their key skills learning programme. This may vary from one skill to another. See also 'Diagnostic assessment'.

Inspection
Brief guidance on Ofsted and ALI inspection of key skills provision in schools, colleges and work-based training can be found in *Key skills policy and practice*.

Intermediate
Intermediate level qualifications are at Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework and include GCSE at grade A*–C, Intermediate GNVQs, NVQs at Level 2 and key skills at Level 2.

Internal assessment
Internal assessment of key skills is organised by the centre. It focuses on the requirements of Part B of the standards, is based on a portfolio of evidence, is internally assessed and externally moderated. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 14).

Internal verification
This is the process through which an identified person in a centre ensures that the standards of assessment in the centre are consistent both across the centre and with national standards. Key skills internal verifiers do not require particular qualifications but should be competent at the level of key skill that they are verifying. The awarding bodies offer training for internal verifiers. An internal verifier is often referred to as an 'IV'.

Interpersonal skills
Candidates for the wider key skills are encouraged to develop and apply their interpersonal skills eg skills in responding appropriately to others, offering support and encouragement, communicating their ideas and needs, accepting constructive feedback, helping to resolve conflict. (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, pages 20, 40).
See also 'Process skills'.

Moderation
The process through which internal assessment is monitored by an awarding body to ensure that it is valid, reliable, fair and consistent with the required national standards. Each centre will be allocated a standards moderator for key skills. This role is sometimes referred to as external verifier.

National Qualifications Framework
The National Qualifications Framework was created by the 1997 Education Act and includes all external qualifications that are accredited by QCA (ACCAC in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland), plus degrees and other higher-level qualifications which are regulated by the universities and QAA. A revised version of the NQF comes into effect on 1 September 2004.

Objectives
The purposes for working together that are shared by the people involved in an activity for Working with Others. They may be set by a tutor, supervisor or project leader, or by members of the group or team, depending on the level. (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, pages 22, 28, 34).

Portfolio
Key skills candidates have to organise and present evidence of how they have met the requirements of the standards, usually in a portfolio. This is usually a file of hard copy but may be an electronically based storage-and-retrieval system. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 14).

Problem
There is a problem when there is a need to bridge a gap between a current situation and a desired situation. (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, pages 60–61, 65, 71).

Process skills
All the wider key skills standards include process skills eg skills in planning, target-setting, organising and carrying out activities and reviewing progress. These skills are the main focus of assessment. (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, pages 20, 40). See also 'Interpersonal skills'.

Proxy qualifications
Proxy qualifications are qualifications that have been agreed to assess the same knowledge and skills as aspects of the key skills qualifications. Because of this overlap, key skills candidates can claim exemption from all or part of particular key skills qualifications (most commonly the external test) for up to three years from the date of the award of the specific proxy qualification. For a current list of proxy qualifications, see the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/keyskills. See also 'Relaxation'.

Purposeful
Key skills evidence must be generated in the context of a task or activity that satisfies some purpose in the student's work or leisure. Evidence that is collected simply to satisfy the requirements of the key skills portfolio is not purposeful and does not meet the assessment requirement.
See also 'Fitness for purpose'.

Qualification
All six key skills are qualifications and are included in the National Qualifications Framework (qv).

Relaxation
The relaxation ruling allows Foundation and Advanced Modern Apprentices who started on or after 1 September 2001, and who have achieved a grade A*–C GCSE in English and/or Maths within five years of the date of registration for the MA framework, to complete their frameworks without being required to take the Level 2 Communication and/or Application of Number key skills qualifications. This is distinct from the use of proxy qualifications (qv).

Specification
The complete description – including mandatory and optional aspects – of the content, the assessment arrangements and the performance requirements for a qualification. In the past, this has often been referred to as a 'syllabus'.
See also 'Standards'.

Standards
From September 2004, the key skills units (specifications) will be referred to as the 'key skills standards'.

Straightforward

(a) *Straightforward subjects* and materials are those that candidates commonly meet in the context in which they are working or studying. The content is put across in a direct way so that candidates can easily identify the information they need for their task. In Communication, sentence structures are simple and candidates will be familiar with the vocabulary.

(b) *Straightforward tasks* can be broken down into easily-managed steps and involve familiar resources and situations. (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, page 23).

Targets
Targets are the steps for helping to achieve personal, learning and/or career goal. Targets should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART). (Guidance; WWO, IOLP, PS, pages 41, 48).

Tests
In England and Northern Ireland, assessment of the first three key skills includes a written test (see 'External assessment'). Details can be found on the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/keyskills. There are no written tests for the wider key skills. Increasingly, tests at Levels 1 and 2 are available on-screen and on-demand. The tests for Communication and for Application of Number at Levels 1 and 2 also act as the tests for Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy at these levels. (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, page 26).

Transferable
Key skills are transferable. This means simply that, once a student has developed a skill for the purpose of one context, they should be able to identify when and how to apply the same skill for another purpose in another context.

Witness statement
A statement signed by a competent person which confirms that the candidate has completed the activity in question at the required standard. A witness statement should not be the sole form of evidence. Assessors are responsible for judging the validity of witness statements. They are most likely to be used in Communication (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, pages 33, 37, 43, 49), ICT (Guidance; Comm, AoN, ICT, pages 80, 84–85) and in the wider key skills.

Note

Copies of the following publications
can be ordered from:
QCA Publications
PO Box 99
Sudbury
Suffolk CO10 2SN
Tel 01787 884444
Fax 01787 312950

*The key skills qualifications standards
and guidance: communication,
application of number, and information
and communication technology*
(ref. QCA/04/1272; price: £10)

*The wider key skills qualifications
standards and guidance: working
with others, improving own learning
and performance, and problem solving*
(ref. QCA/04/1294; price: £10)

Copies of *Key skills policy and practice:
your questions answered* can be
ordered free of charge from:
Department for Education and Skills
Key Skills Policy Team
Room E3c
Moorfoot
Sheffield S1 4PQ
Tel 0114 259 3759
key.skills@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

All three publications can be
downloaded from the QCA website
www.qca.org.uk/keyskills.

Appendix 7

Useful addresses

ACCAC (Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales)
Castle Buildings
Womanby Street
Cardiff CF10 1SX
Tel 029 2037 5400
www.ccw.org.uk

ALI (Adult Learning Inspectorate)
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UD
Tel 0870 240 7744
www.ali.gov.uk

AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance)
Devas Street
Manchester M15 6EX
Tel 0161 953 1180
Publications 0161 953 1170
www.aqa.org.uk

ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network)
Wainbrook House
Hudds Vale Road
St George
Bristol BS5 7HY
Tel 0117 941 1126
Publications 0117 941 1448
www.asdan.co.uk

BSA (Basic Skills Agency)
Commonwealth House
1–19 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1NU
Tel 020 7405 4017
Publications 0870 600 2400
www.basic-skills.co.uk

CCEA (Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment)
Clarendon Dock
29 Clarendon Road
Belfast BT1 3BG
Tel 028 9026 1200
Publications 028 9026 1228
www.ccea.org.uk

City & Guilds
1 Giltspur Street
London EC1A 9DD
Tel 020 7294 2468
www.city-and-guilds.co.uk

DfES (Department for Education and Skills)
Key Skills Policy Team
Room E3c
Moorfoot
Sheffield S1 4PQ
Tel 0114 259 3759
Publications 0845 602 2260
www.dfes.gov.uk/keyskills

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme
Gulliver House
Madeira Walk
Windsor
Berkshire SL4 1EU
Tel 01753 727400
www.theaward.cix.co.uk

Edexcel
One90 High Holborn
London WC1V 7BH
Tel 0870 240 9800
Publications 01623 467467
www.edexcel.org.uk

Key Skills Support Programme
(LSDA)
Regent Arcade House
19–25 Argyll Street
London W1F 7LS
Helpline 0870 872 8081
kssp@LSDA.org.uk
www.keyskillssupport.net

Key Skills Support Programme
(Learning for Work)
The Cottage Office
Eightlands Road
Dewsbury
West Yorkshire WF13 2PF
Helpline 0845 602 3386
Publications 0117 971 9583
www.keyskillssupport.net

LSC (Learning and Skills Council)
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Tel 0845 019 4170
www.lsc.gov.uk

LSDA (Learning and Skills Development Agency)
Regent Arcade House
19–25 Argyll Street
London W1F 7LS
Tel 020 7297 9000
Information Services 020 7297 9144
enquiries@LSDA.org.uk
www.LSDA.org.uk

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Coventry Office
Westwood Way
Coventry CV4 8JQ
Tel 024 7647 0033
Publications 0870 870 6622
www.ocr.org.uk

Ofsted
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
Tel 020 7421 6800
Publications 0700 263 7833
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Outward Bound Trust
Watermillock
Penrith
Cumbria CA11 0JL
Tel 0870 5134 227
www.outwardbound-uk.org.uk

The Prince's Trust
18 Park Square East
London NW1 4LH
Tel 020 7543 1234
www.princes-trust.org.uk

QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority)
83 Piccadilly
London W1J 8QA
Tel 020 7509 5555
Publications 01787 884444
www.qca.org.uk/keyskills

UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)
Rosehill
New Barn Lane
Cheltenham GL52 3LZ
Tel 01242 222444
Publications 01242 544903
www.ucas.ac.uk

Young Enterprise
Peterley House
Peterley Road
Oxford OX4 2TZ
Tel 01865 776845
www.young-enterprise.org.uk

What is the Key Skills Support Programme?

This support programme for schools and colleges with post-16 provision is funded by the DfES and the European Social Fund. The Programme provides teachers, lecturers and managers with information, advice, materials and training.

What are the priorities of the Programme?

The priorities of the Programme are to:

- raise awareness and understanding of key skills
- produce materials on teaching and learning key skills
- provide practical advice, solutions, exemplars and models
- provide training at conferences, workshops, courses and regional sessions.

The Programme is run by a consortium led by LSDA with partners including AoC, BTL e-learning, CDELL and CfBT.

What services are available?

A dedicated Key Skills Helpline is available on 0870 872 8081 every weekday to answer questions on key skills and provide information updates. The website on www.keyskillssupport.net provides news and information on key skills developments, resources, publications, consultancy support, training and conferences, contacts and links. Newsletters are published each term and sent to all maintained schools with post-16 provision and colleges in England.

There are links with the awarding bodies and with the parallel support programme for trainers in work-based learning, managed by Learning for Work (Helpline 0845 602 3386).

How can I find out more?

- You can contact the Key Skills Helpline tel 0870 872 8081
- or e-mail kssp@LSDA.org.uk
- or visit the website www.keyskillssupport.net or the student website on www.keyskills4u.com

Key Skills
SUPPORT PROGRAMME

department for
education and skills

learning and skills development agency

EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund