

Benchmarks

Religious and Moral Education

March 2017

Education Scotland

Guidance on using Benchmarks for Assessment March 2017

Education Scotland's [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Statement for Practitioners](#) (Aug 2016) stated that the two key resources which support practitioners to plan learning, teaching and assessment are:

- **Experiences and Outcomes**
- **Benchmarks**

Benchmarks have been developed to provide clarity on the national standards expected within each curriculum area at each level. They set out clear lines of progression in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics, and across all other curriculum areas from Early to Fourth Levels (First to Fourth Levels in Modern Languages). Their purpose is to make clear what learners need to know and be able to do to progress through the levels, and to support consistency in teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgements.

Skills development is integrated into the Benchmarks to support greater shared understanding. An understanding of skills and how well they are developing will enable learners to make links between their current learning and their future career options and employment.

Benchmarks draw together and streamline a wide range of previous assessment guidance (including significant aspects of learning, progression frameworks and annotated exemplars) into one key resource to support teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgement of children's and young people's progress across all curriculum areas.

Benchmarks have been designed to support professional dialogue as part of the moderation process to assess where children and young people are in their learning. They will help to support holistic assessment approaches across learning. They should not be ticked off individually for assessment purposes.

Benchmarks for literacy and numeracy should be used to support teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level. In other curriculum areas, Benchmarks support teachers and other practitioners to understand standards and identify children's and young people's next steps in learning. Evidence of progress and achievement will come from a variety of sources including:

- observing day-to-day learning within the classroom, playroom or working area;
- observation and feedback from learning activities that takes place in other environments, for example, outdoors, on work placements;
- coursework, including tests;
- learning conversations; and
- planned periodic holistic assessment.

Benchmarks in curriculum areas

Benchmarks in each curriculum area are designed to be concise and accessible, with sufficient detail to communicate clearly the standards expected for each curriculum level.

Teachers and other practitioners can draw upon the Benchmarks to assess the knowledge, understanding, and skills for learning, life and work which children are developing in each curriculum area.

In secondary schools, Benchmarks can support subject specialist teachers in making robust assessments of learners' progress and the standards they achieve. They will help teachers ensure that learners make appropriate choices and are presented at an appropriate level for National Qualifications in the senior phase. This can help avoid excessive workload for teachers and unnecessary assessments for learners. For example, learners should have achieved relevant Fourth level Experiences and Outcomes before embarking on the National 5 qualifications. Schools should take careful account of this when options for S4 are being agreed. Benchmarks should be used to help with these important considerations.

Literacy and numeracy

In literacy and numeracy, Benchmarks support teachers' professional judgement of achievement of a level. Teachers' professional judgements will be collected and published at national, local and school levels. It is important that these judgements are robust and reliable. This can only be achieved through effective moderation of planning learning, teaching and assessment.

Achievement of a level is based on teacher professional judgement, well informed by a wide range of evidence. Benchmarks should be used to review the range of evidence gathered to determine if the expected standard has been achieved and the learner has:

- achieved a **breadth** of learning across the knowledge, understanding and skills as set out in the experiences and outcomes for the level;
- responded consistently well to the level of **challenge** set out in the Experiences and Outcomes for the level and has moved forward to learning at the next level in some aspects; and
- demonstrated **application** of what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situations.

It is not necessary for learners to demonstrate mastery of every individual aspect of learning within Benchmarks at a particular level and before moving on to the next level. However, it is important that there are no major gaps in children's and young people's learning when looking across the major organisers in each curriculum area.

Planning learning, teaching and assessment using the Benchmarks

In addition to the [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Statement for Practitioners](#) from HM Chief Inspector of Education, August 2016 on the purpose and use of Benchmarks, teachers and other practitioners should note the following advice.

KEY MESSAGES – WHAT TO DO	KEY MESSAGES – WHAT TO AVOID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use literacy and numeracy Benchmarks to help monitor progress towards achievement of a level, and to support overall professional judgement of when a learner has achieved a level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid undue focus on individual Benchmarks which may result in over-assessing or recording of learners' progress.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become familiar with other curriculum area Benchmarks over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid the requirement to spend time collating excessive evidence to assess learners' achievement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Benchmarks to help assess whether learners are making suitable progress towards the national standards expected and use the evidence to plan their next, challenging steps in learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no need to provide curriculum level judgements in all curriculum areas – stick to literacy and numeracy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss Benchmarks within and across schools to achieve a shared understanding of the national standards expected across curriculum areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not create excessive or elaborate approaches to monitoring and tracking.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not assess Benchmarks individually. Plan periodic, holistic assessment of children's and young people's learning.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not tick off individual Benchmarks.

Early Level Religious and Moral Education

Curriculum Organisers	Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment	Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement
Beliefs	<p>As I explore Christian stories, images, music and poems, I am becoming familiar with some beliefs Christian people have about God and Jesus. RME 0-01a</p> <p>As I explore stories, images, music and poems, I am becoming familiar with the beliefs of the world religions I am learning about. RME 0-04a</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 0-07a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares thoughts and asks and answers questions to show and support understanding about stories, images, music and poemsⁱ from Christianity and at least one World Religion. • Identifies and discusses at least two aspectsⁱⁱ of a religion. • Relates information and ideas about at least two beliefs to personal experiences.
Values and Issues	<p>As I play and learn, I am developing my understanding of what is fair and unfair and the importance of caring for, sharing and cooperating with others. RME 0-02a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares thoughts about what is fair, unfair, caring and sharing.
Practices and Traditions	<p>I am becoming aware of the importance of celebrations, festivals and customs in Christian people's lives. RME 0-03a</p> <p>I am becoming aware of the importance of celebrations, festivals and customs in religious people's lives. RME 0-06a</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 0-07a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares thoughts and asks and answers questions to show and support understanding about at least one celebration, festival and custom in Christianity and at least one World Religion.

ⁱ The expectation is that not all of these categories would necessarily be included. This would be a matter for professional judgement.

ⁱⁱ 'Aspects' of a religion might include, for example, prayer, worship, belief in a divine being/beings, belief in a soul etc. It might also include, artefacts, places etc.

First Level Religious and Moral Education

Curriculum Organisers	Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment	Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement
Beliefs	<p>Through exploring Bible stories, I can describe some beliefs Christians have about God and Jesus. RME 1-01a</p> <p>By exploring some places and investigating artefacts, I am developing my knowledge of Christian beliefs and my awareness of the role of Christianity in Scottish society and the world. RME 1-01b</p> <p>Through exploring stories from world religions, I can describe some of their key beliefs. RME 1-04a</p> <p>By exploring some places and investigating artefacts, I am developing my knowledge of the beliefs of world religions and my awareness of their role in Scottish society and the world. RME 1-04b</p> <p>I can talk about my own beliefs, or express them in other ways. RME 1-01c</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 0-07a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes, discusses and expresses an opinion with at least one reason on at least one beliefⁱⁱⁱ from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.^{iv} • Describes and discusses at least one personal belief and at least one example of how own beliefs might affect actions.

ⁱⁱⁱ The 'belief' for consideration is likely to come from a range of sources for each religion/belief group. It may be scriptural or not and may come from a variety of genres, for example, poetry, story, music etc, and may also involve images from the religion/belief group if appropriate. This freedom to select appropriate genres and stimuli applies across all levels.

^{iv} It is likely that 'a belief group independent of religion' will be, for example, Humanism. However, it might also be an organisation such as a charity which is founded upon 'non-religious' principles. As learners progress through levels, it might also come to include philosophical perspectives such as utilitarianism.

<p>Values and Issues</p>	<p>Having explored biblical and other Christian stories, I can show my developing understanding of key values of Christianity and how they might be put into action in people's lives and communities. RME 1-02a</p> <p>I can describe the key features of the values of Christianity which are expressed in stories. RME 1-02b</p> <p>Having explored stories from world religions, I can show my developing understanding of key values of those faiths and how they might be put into action in people's lives and communities. RME 1-05a</p> <p>I can describe the key features of the values of world religions which are expressed in stories. RME 1-05b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes and discusses at least one value^v from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion, illustrating how this value could be put into practice. • Describes and discusses at least one personal value and at least one example of how own values might affect actions.
<p>Practices and Traditions</p>	<p>Through investigating the Christian communities in my local area, I am discovering how Christian communities demonstrate their beliefs through prayer, worship and special ceremonies. I am developing respect for the practices and traditions of others. RME 1-03a</p> <p>I am developing an awareness of the ways in which Christians celebrate different times of year and can relate these to my own life and community. RME 1-03b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes and discusses the significance of at least one special ceremony, celebration and way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

^v A 'value' might include, for example principles such as selflessness, respect, equality. As learners progress across levels, progression may be facilitated through exploring values in practice rather than in principle – for example, rather than exploring the value of concern for others broadly, this might be considered by exploring specific moral issues such as human rights, gender issues etc.

I am discovering how followers of world religions demonstrate their beliefs through prayer/meditation, worship and special ceremonies. I am developing respect for the practices and traditions of others.

RME 1-06a

I am developing an awareness of the ways in which followers of world religions celebrate different times of year and can relate these to my own life and community.

RME 1-06b

I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values.

RME 1-07a

Second Level Religious and Moral Education

Curriculum Organisers	Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment	Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement
Beliefs	<p>Through investigating and reflecting upon biblical and other Christian stories, I can show my understanding of these stories. RME 2-01a</p> <p>Through investigating and reflecting upon stories of world religions, I can show my understanding of these stories. RME 2-04a</p> <p>Through exploring the lives and teachings of Jesus and other figures in Christianity, I am increasing my knowledge and understanding of key Christian beliefs. RME 2-01b</p> <p>Through exploring the lives and teachings of significant figures from world religions, I am increasing my knowledge and understanding of their key beliefs. RME 2-04b</p> <p>I can show understanding of Christian beliefs and explore the similarities and differences between these and my developing beliefs. RME 2-01c</p> <p>I can show understanding of the beliefs of world religions and explore the similarities and differences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates, describes, explains and expresses an opinion on at least one belief^{vi} from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Discusses ways in which own beliefs can affect actions.

^{vi} A 'belief' might include, for example principles such as belief in a divine being/beings, belief in life after death, the usefulness of prayer etc. As learners progress across levels, progression may be facilitated through exploring beliefs in practice rather than in principle – for example, rather than exploring an individual's belief in life after death, this might be considered by exploring specific 'issues of belief' such as the origins of the universe, evidence for/against life after death etc.

	<p>between these and my developing beliefs. RME 2-04c</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 2-07a</p> <p>I am developing an increasing awareness and understanding of my own beliefs and I put them into action in positive ways. RME 2-08a</p> <p>I am increasing my understanding of how people come to have their beliefs, and further developing my awareness that there is a diversity of belief in modern Scotland. RME 2-09a</p> <p>I am developing my understanding that people have beliefs and values based upon religious or other positions. RME 2-09b</p>	
<p>Values and Issues</p>	<p>Through investigating and reflecting upon the lives and teachings of Jesus and key Christian figures, and drawing upon moral values as expressed in Christianity, I am beginning to understand how these have influenced Christian morality. RME 2-02a</p> <p>Through investigating and reflecting upon the lives and teachings of significant figures from world religions, and drawing upon moral values as expressed in religious scriptures and other stories, I am beginning to understand how these have influenced the morality of world religions. RME 2-05a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates, describes, explains and expresses an opinion on at least one value from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Discusses ways in which own values can affect actions. • Discusses and expresses views about the importance of values such as honesty, respect and compassion.

	<p>I can share my developing views about values such as fairness and equality and love, caring, sharing and human rights. RME 2-05b, RME 2-02b</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 2-07a</p> <p>I am developing my understanding that people have beliefs and values based upon religious or other positions. RME 2-09b</p> <p>I can explain why different people think that values such as honesty, respect and compassion are important, and I show respect for others. RME 2-09c</p> <p>I am developing my understanding of how my own and other people's beliefs and values affect their actions. RME 2-09d</p>	
<p>Practices and Traditions</p>	<p>I am increasing my knowledge and understanding of different forms of Christian worship and artefacts and can explain their importance for Christians. RME 2-03a</p> <p>I am increasing my knowledge and understanding of different forms of worship and artefacts within world religions and can explain their importance for followers of world religions. RME 2-06a</p> <p>Through investigating the ways in which Christians mark major life events and times of year, I can explain key features of such festivals and celebrations. RME 2-03b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigates, describes, explains and expresses an opinion with supporting reasons on the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

Through investigating and reflecting upon the ways in which followers of world religions mark major life events and times of year, I can explain key features of such festivals and celebrations.

RME 2-06b

I can describe the practices and traditions of Christianity and have considered the way these have influenced Scottish society.

RME 2-03c

I can describe and reflect upon practices and traditions of world religions.

RME 2-06c

I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values.

RME 2-07a

I am developing my understanding of how my own and other people's beliefs and values affect their actions.

RME 2-09d

Third Level Religious and Moral Education

Curriculum Organisers	Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment	Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement
Beliefs	<p>Having reflected upon Christian sources, I can explain some key Christian beliefs about God, Jesus, the human condition and the natural world, and how these beliefs lead to actions for Christians. RME 3-01a</p> <p>Having reflected upon sources from world religions, I can explain some key beliefs about deity, the human condition and the natural world, and how these beliefs lead to actions for followers of those religions. RME 3-04a</p> <p>Through investigating and reflecting upon how Christians put their beliefs into action, I can reflect upon the consequences of putting my own beliefs into action. RME 3-01b</p> <p>Through investigating and reflecting upon how followers of world religions put their beliefs into action, I can reflect upon the consequences of putting my own beliefs into action. RME 3-04b</p> <p>I can explain a range of beliefs which Christians hold about 'ultimate questions' and participate in debates about these. RME 3-01c</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates and analyses at least one issue of belief^{vii}, drawing upon sources to explain responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Analyses the relationship between own beliefs and actions.

^{vii} An issue of belief is any aspect of belief over which there might be discussion and debate, for example; How did the Universe begin? Does God/do gods exist? Etc.

I can explain a range of beliefs which followers of world religions hold about 'ultimate questions' and participate in debates about these.

RME 3-04c

Through reflection and discussion, I can explain a range of beliefs which people hold and can participate in debates about 'ultimate questions'.

RME 3-09a

I can give examples of the contribution of Christian beliefs to the development of Scotland, now and in the past.

RME 3-01d

I can give examples of the contributions of the beliefs of world religions to the development of Scotland, now and in the past.

RME 3-04d

I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values.

RME 3-07a

I am developing an increasing awareness and understanding of my own beliefs and I put them into action in positive ways.

RME 3-08a

I am developing my understanding of the nature of belief and morality.

RME 3-09d

<p>Values and Issues</p>	<p>Having reflected upon Christian responses to issues of morality, I can discuss ways in which to create a more just, equal, compassionate and tolerant society. RME 3-02a</p> <p>Through investigating and reflecting upon the responses of world religions to issues of morality, I can discuss ways in which to create a more just, equal, compassionate and tolerant society. RME 3-05a</p> <p>I can demonstrate my developing understanding of moral values through participating in events and projects which make a positive difference to others. RME 3-02b</p> <p>I can demonstrate my developing understanding of moral values through participating in events and projects which make a positive difference to others. RME 3-05b</p> <p>I can describe how the values of Christianity contribute to as well as challenge Scottish and other societies. RME 3-02c</p> <p>I can describe how the values of world religions contribute to as well as challenge Scottish and other societies. RME 3-05c</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 3-07a</p> <p>I am developing my own understanding of values such as honesty, respect and compassion and am able to identify how these values might be applied in relation to moral issues. RME 3-09b</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates and analyses at least one moral issue^{viii}, drawing upon sources to explain responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Analyses how values, for example, honesty, respect and compassion might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue, illustrating a possible impact on society. • Expresses an opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.
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^{viii} A moral issue is any view/belief about morality around which there is debate and discussion – for example, euthanasia, abortion etc.

	<p>I can explain how the different beliefs that people have, including beliefs which are independent of religion, relate to their moral viewpoints and how this leads them to respond to moral issues.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-09c</p> <p>I am developing my understanding of the nature of belief and morality.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-09d</p>	
<p>Practices and Traditions</p>	<p>Through investigation of and reflection on Christian traditions, practices and customs, I can explain the significance of these for Christians across a range of Scottish Christian Traditions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-03a</p> <p>I have researched and reflected upon the major ceremonies and customs of world religions and can explain the significance of these to the followers of these religions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-06a</p> <p>I am developing my understanding of Scotland's religious diversity as well as the place of religion in society.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-06b</p> <p>I am developing my understanding of Scotland's religious diversity within Christianity and of the place of religion in society.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-03b</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 3-07a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates, explains and analyses the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

Fourth Level Religious and Moral Education

Curriculum Organisers	Experiences and Outcomes for planning learning, teaching and assessment	Benchmarks to support practitioners' professional judgement
Beliefs	<p>Having considered key Christian beliefs, I can express reasoned views on these and discuss how putting them into practice might affect individuals and society. I can confidently support my own responses to these issues of belief.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 4-01a</p> <p>Having considered the key beliefs of world religions, I can express reasoned views on these and discuss how putting them into practice might affect individuals and society. I can confidently support my own responses to these issues of belief.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 4-04a</p> <p>I can explain the contribution of Christian beliefs to the development of Scotland, now and in the past.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 4-01b</p> <p>I can explain the contributions of the beliefs of world religions to the development of Scotland, now and in the past.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 4-04b</p> <p>Having reflected upon and considered a range of beliefs, belief systems and moral viewpoints, I can express reasoned views on how putting these beliefs and values into action might lead to changes in society.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RME 4-09a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates and evaluates at least one issue of belief, drawing upon a range of sources to explain and compare responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Evaluates the relationship between own beliefs and actions.

	<p>I can explain my own responses to the benefits and challenges presented by the increasing diversity of belief to modern Scotland and the wider world. RME 4-09c</p> <p>I am able to offer a basic analysis of the origins and development of beliefs and morality. RME 4-09d</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 4-07a</p> <p>I can apply philosophical enquiry to explore questions or ethical issues. RME 4-09e</p>	
<p>Values and Issues</p>	<p>Through exploring a range of issues of morality, I can consider Christian responses to these issues and relate these to my own developing values. RME 4-02a</p> <p>Through exploring a range of issues of morality, I can consider the responses of world religions to these issues and relate these to my own developing values. RME 4-05a</p> <p>I can apply my developing understanding of morality to consider a range of moral dilemmas in order to find ways which could promote a more just and compassionate society. RME 4-02b RME 4-05b</p> <p>I can explain how the values of Christianity contribute to as well as challenge Scottish and other societies. RME 4-02c</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigates and evaluates at least one moral issue drawing upon a range of sources to explain and compare responses from Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion. • Evaluates how at least one moral viewpoint might be applied in relation to at least one moral issue. • Expresses a developed opinion with supporting reasons on the relationship between own values and actions.

	<p>I can explain how the values of world religions contribute to as well as challenge Scottish and other societies. RME 4-05c</p> <p>I am developing respect for others and my understanding of their beliefs and values. RME 4-07a</p> <p>Having reflected upon and considered a range of beliefs, belief systems and moral viewpoints, I can express reasoned views on how putting these beliefs and values into action might lead to changes in society. RME 4-09a</p> <p>I am able to apply my understanding of a range of moral viewpoints, including those which are independent of religion, to specific moral issues and am aware of the diversity of moral viewpoints held in modern Scotland and the wider world. RME 4-09b</p> <p>I am able to offer a basic analysis of the origins and development of beliefs and morality. RME 4-09d</p> <p>I can apply philosophical enquiry to explore questions or ethical issues. RME 4-09e</p>	
<p>Practices and Traditions</p>	<p>Through researching a range of Christian traditions, practices and customs, I can explain their significance across a range of Christian Traditions. I can consider the place of these in the contemporary religious life of Scotland. RME 4-03a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigates, compares and evaluates the importance of at least two from a tradition, a practice, a ceremony, a custom, a way of marking a major life event in Christianity, at least one World Religion, and at least one belief group independent of religion.

Through researching a range of traditions, practices and customs of world religions, I can consider the place of these in contemporary life.

RME 4-06a

I am able to reflect upon my own responses to the challenges and opportunities presented by Scotland's religious and cultural diversity and extend this reflection to the global context.

RME 4-03b 4-06b