Contents

What is Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)? 3
What are the benefits of APP? 5
How was the APP approach developed? 6
Developing independence, choice, and creativity 6

What are assessment focuses? 9
Why does APP use assessment focuses? 10
Reading assessment focuses 10
Writing assessment focuses 13
Speaking and listening assessment focuses 16
Mathematics assessment focuses 19
Science assessment focuses 20

Planning to use APP 22
Practice implications of APP 22
Refining to sublevels across an attainment target 23

Links between the Primary Framework, the National Curriculum and APP 24
Mathematics 24
Reading, writing, speaking and listening 25

Making judgements in APP 30
Mathematics 31
Speaking and listening 32
Reading: how to make a periodic level judgement 33
Writing: how to make a periodic level judgement 34
Science: how to make a periodic level judgement 35

How to secure judgements in APP 36
Roles and responsibilities 36
Planning to secure judgements 37
In-school standardisation and moderation 37

Standards files 39
Pupils' work in the standards files 39
National standards exemplified 39
Using the standards files 40
Using the training standards files 41
What is Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)?

APP is a structured approach to periodically assessing mathematics, science, reading, writing, speaking, and listening so that teachers can:

- track children's progress from Year 1 through to the end of Year 6
- use diagnostic information about children’s strengths and weaknesses.

Using APP materials, teachers can make level judgements for each of the following National Curriculum subjects:

- English
  - reading
  - writing
  - speaking and listening
- mathematics
  - using and applying mathematics
  - number
  - shape, space, and measures
  - handling data
- science.

Based on the assessment focuses (AFs) that underpin National Curriculum assessment, the APP approach improves the quality and reliability of teacher assessment. It has proved to be robust, manageable, and effective in practice.

The materials are made up of two elements:

- assessment guidelines – sheets for assessing pupils' work in relation to National Curriculum levels
- standards files – exemplars of pupils’ performance at National Curriculum levels of attainment.

APP supports teachers in providing a broad curriculum, and developing their skills and judgements for assessing pupils' progress. It involves 'stepping back' periodically to review pupils' ongoing work and relate their progress to National Curriculum levels.
What are the benefits of APP?

School leaders and teachers who have been involved in the APP pilots have identified the following key benefits.

- It does not require special assessment activities, but involves recognising significant evidence from the opportunities generated by planned teaching and learning.
- It reduces the need to use tests and specific assessment tasks to make assessment judgements by taking into account a far wider range of evidence. This gives a clearer and more accurate picture of learners’ achievements and progress.
- It provides a valuable opportunity for professional development, as it gives teachers effective tools to develop their assessment and teaching techniques.
- It provides a common framework for teachers to share and discuss the evidence they have of learners’ progress, to build assessment expertise, and to develop confidence.
- It directly informs discussions with pupils and future planning, teaching, and learning.
- It helps teachers identify gaps in their teaching. For example, when a periodic assessment showed little evidence of a particular assessment focus, teachers from the pilot found that APP influenced their planning and pedagogy.
The table below provides a summary of typical changes in assessment practice made by teachers in the pilots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice before APP</th>
<th>Practice after APP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define progress through tests</td>
<td>Assess progress in relation to key AFs for mathematics, science, reading, writing, speaking, and listening identified as relevant for a pupil or group of pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a clearer idea of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and gaps in their experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use commercial tests and optional National Curriculum tests</td>
<td>Observe pupils making choices of books in the library; listen to group discussions of texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use work in drama based on reading</td>
<td>Use spoken and written evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe pupils selecting the mathematics to solve a problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test word and sentence-level skills</td>
<td>Make assessments of vocabulary and sentence structure and accuracy in different pieces of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use spelling tests</td>
<td>Make some assessments of spelling across a range of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level individual pieces of writing twice per term using a bank of examples</td>
<td>Collect evidence from four to six pieces of writing from different subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess across the range using AFs</td>
<td>Assess through pupils' written mathematics exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather evidence in starters and plenaries and as pupils work in groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to pupils to find out more about how they tackle problems as well as whether they get the answer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe how pupils use their mathematics in design and technology and science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few Ma1 assessments made</td>
<td>Start to include more problem solving in lessons to teach skills and processes, as well as assess them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become aware that assessing Ma1 may give a different insight into pupils' understanding of the content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How was the APP approach developed?

The APP pilot projects in primary schools developed from similar projects for mathematics, reading, and writing in Key Stage 3. The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) and the National Strategies worked with LAs and schools to develop APP.

During 2006–08 a pilot of the APP model and mathematics, reading, and writing materials was carried out with teachers in Years 3 to 6 from 100 schools in 11 LAs. In 2007–08 a separate pilot was carried out to trial level 1 criteria and the APP approach at Key Stage 1 was undertaken with 50 schools in 8 LAs. In 2008–09 further pilots were undertaken for speaking and listening in Key Stages 1 to 3 and to trial level 1 and 2 criteria and the APP approach in primary science.

The projects were able to explore in some depth the APP approach to teacher assessment in mathematics, science, reading, writing, speaking, and listening as well as the related issues of reliability and consistency of judgements (go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'How to secure APP judgements'). All the materials have been extensively trialled and revised in the light of feedback from schools and the findings from an independent evaluator.

Further information on the APP approach to assessment, and summaries of the evaluation reports from the pilots, are available on the QCDA website www.qcda.gov.uk/13581.aspx.

Developing independence, choice, and creativity

The APP approach to assessment is based on a rich and varied range of evidence, which is generated by day-to-day teaching and learning. Important features of this evidence are independence, choice, and creativity.

What do independence, choice, and creativity mean in everyday terms?

Independence shows itself in different ways: it does not simply mean that a pupil works alone and unaided, as would be the case in a test. In everyday terms, it is more realistic to think of pupils learning on a continuum between supported and independent achievement. In general, the degree to which a learner can achieve something 'independently' forms the basis for assessment in APP.

However, if only completely independent achievement is recognised, significant milestones of progress would sometimes be missed, particularly in the early years of primary school. In applying the APP assessment criteria it is important to recognise pupils' progress in ways that reflect a learner's current level of understanding. When planning work and reviewing evidence, it is helpful to consider to what extent the work allows for or demonstrates independence.

Identifying independence might include thinking about:

- how closely a teacher works with a pupil
- the way that the task or activity is structured, including the mathematics apparatus or other material that is provided
- how pupils are grouped for the work
- pupils' familiarity with the task
- the degree of support given by the mode of response, for example if resources such as writing frames or worksheets are used.

Independence crucially is about giving pupils space and time to think for themselves, make decisions, and develop their own ideas in speaking, reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Independent work of this kind typically occurs at some distance from direct teaching, for example when concepts and skills taught in one context are applied in another.
Working independently usually entails having opportunities for choice in at least some aspect of what is to be done or how a task is tackled. The range of possible choices varies according to subject and stage of learning, but is an essential ingredient in effective planning for APP and for encouraging pupils' creativity.

When pupils are thinking and behaving creatively in the classroom, they are likely to:

- question and challenge
- make connections and see relationships
- envisage different, possible outcomes, asking 'What if...?' questions
- explore ideas, keeping options open
- reflect critically on ideas, actions, and outcomes.

Planning for contexts when these behaviours might be encouraged will help ensure that evidence for APP judgements is rich and varied.

**Independence, choice, and creativity in different subjects: where is the evidence?**

In English, evidence may come from contexts where pupils:

- choose books and texts that interest them, have time to read them fully, explaining their views and preferences
- select subject matter and structure, and define their own purposes for speaking and writing
- produce oral and written texts that challenge conventional approaches, such as combining words, sounds, and images
- make use of knowledge of text types in adventurous and original ways, for example writing an argumentative poem, using an element of humour in a serious topic
- decide on their own stance on a topic in both oral and written work, for example objective or partisan, expert or non-expert, supportive or critical, child or adult
- incorporate words and expressions from different languages or dialects, explore ways to echo spoken language in writing
- play with alternatives to keep options open, for example working in a role to explore ideas or when using ideas developed through role-play in writing.

In mathematics, evidence may come from contexts where pupils:

- decide how to set the boundaries for an investigation or how to use available information to solve a problem
- recognise how mathematics can help them pursue enquiries in other curriculum areas
- put together mathematical ideas in unexpected ways, making connections with other problems they have solved and investigations they have made
- identify the mathematics to use and the apparatus needed to support their thinking
- choose an appropriate calculation method or adapt a method for a particular case
- visualise shapes and movements
- ask questions, for example 'What might happen if...?', and make predictions
- decide how to organise and record their work
- review their work and decide whether they are on track to find a solution or draw conclusions
explain and justify their conclusions.

In science, evidence may come from contexts where pupils:
- work with scientific ideas, models, and evidence to understand science
- link scientific ideas to applications including scientific and technological developments
- decide how to use available information to answer a question or solve a problem
- present answers to questions, making use of appropriate scientific language, mathematics, and scientific conventions and terminology
- work collaboratively and recognise the advantages of the collaborative work of scientists
- identify the science to use and the apparatus needed to support their thinking
- ask questions, for example 'What might happen if...?', and make predictions
- decide how to organise and record their work
- review their work and decide whether they are on track to find a solution or draw conclusions
- explain and justify their conclusions.

Across the curriculum, evidence may come from contexts where pupils:
- decide what sources of information they need when researching a history topic, and where to look for it
- visualise shapes and movements in mathematics and use spoken or written language precisely to describe these
- use knowledge about making predictions to ask questions, for example in design and technology 'What might happen if...?'
- decide how to organise and record their work in science
- compose a set of instructions for playing a game in PE
- use knowledge of narrative structure to write a short biography of an important public figure
- draw on content and ideas learnt in other subjects, for example writing a poem on rivers after learning about irrigation in geography.
What are assessment focuses?

AFs are based on the National Curriculum programmes of study and level descriptions. They cover the areas for assessment and provide the framework for National Curriculum tests. Using AFs for classroom-based assessment enables a direct link to be made to National Curriculum standards in a subject, and the Primary Framework learning objectives.

- The AFs sit between the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions. They provide a more detailed assessment framework against which teachers can judge the outcomes of their teaching and their pupils' learning. They are tools for assessment, not learning objectives. Evidence for the AFs comes from all parts of the curriculum.

For each AF there are one to three bullet points at every level. These are level-related criteria, which identify what to look for as you observe pupils' classroom work.

- The process of making a periodic teacher assessment judgement using APP involves matching the criteria for a given AF to qualities you have noted in your pupils' work, then refining your judgement by checking the criteria above and below. The steps to follow to arrive at an overall level judgment for attainment targets are detailed in the Making judgements section (page 30).
In APP, teacher assessment judgements draw on the full context of pupils' work, whereas a test can only sample.

The information gained from the APP approach to periodic review:
- provides diagnostic information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses in relation to specific AFs
- enables forward planning based on group and individual pupil needs
- makes the most of pupils' learning experiences across the whole curriculum.

**Why does APP use assessment focuses?**

Using AFs when periodically reviewing and assessing pupils' ongoing work helps teachers to:
- have a consistent approach and language for talking about pupils' progress with pupils themselves, parents, or carers, and other teachers
- helps teachers to recognise significant evidence of learning
- develop a common understanding of the requirements of National Curriculum levels
- see how pupils' work on a small number of teaching objectives can contribute to the bigger picture of their progress and attainment
- give more precise feedback to pupils
- refine learning targets for individuals and groups within the class
- identify gaps in teaching and learning and adjust planning
- plan next steps based on the diagnostic information that emerges.

**Reading assessment focuses**

**Table of Reading assessment focuses and points to remember**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Assessment focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AF1</td>
<td>Use a range of strategies including accurate decoding of text, to read for meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF2</td>
<td>Understand, describe, select, or retrieve information, events, or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF3</td>
<td>Deduce, infer, or interpret information, events, or ideas from texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF4</td>
<td>Identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF5</td>
<td>Explain and comment on writers' uses of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF6</td>
<td>Identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints and the overall effect of the text on the reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF7</td>
<td>Relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding the assessment focuses for reading

The seven AFs for reading describe the key elements of performance in this attainment target. They are linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions, and are designed to give a detailed, analytic view of pupils' attainment across all the key stages and in all types of reading.

What the assessment focuses mean in practice:

**AF1 Use a range of strategies, including accurate decoding of text, to read for meaning**

a. AF1 has most prominence in describing the early stages of reading.

b. Evidence comes from listening to pupils read aloud and observing how they decode words to make meaning from texts.

c. Reading aloud with fluency, understanding, and expression also involves taking note of punctuation and other written language conventions.

**AF2 Understand, describe, select, or retrieve information, events, or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text**

a. AF2 applies to all levels of reading and all kinds of texts.

b. Pupils’ skills in retrieving information from texts are shown in different ways, from comments to paraphrases or retellings to summary and synthesis.

c. At the highest levels, work in AF2 demonstrates critical insights based on close reading, merging with AF3.

**AF3 Deduce, infer, or interpret information, events, or ideas from texts**

a. AF3 is vital to making progress in reading and underpins attainment across all the AFs.

b. Opportunities to develop inferential skills come from engagement with whole texts that challenge thinking and encourage different interpretations.

c. In APP, classroom discussions about books and open-ended questions from pupils, as well as teachers, provide effective evidence for this AF.

**AF4 Identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level**

a. AF4 makes most sense in relation to whole texts, so that pupils can explain what is significant about the overall shape and structure of what they are reading.

b. Work on the grammar of texts encourages pupils to explore how different elements hang together and contribute to their distinctiveness.

c. This particular reading AF is the counterpart of AFs 3 and 4 in writing.

**AF5 Explain and comment on writers’ uses of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level**

a. AF5 applies to information as well as fiction texts: deliberately crafted language can be found in many different forms of writing.

b. Pupils may learn to spot specific features in texts, but attainment in this AF depends on being able to explain why particular usages are effective and what they mean.

c. In APP, evidence for this AF sometimes comes from comparative work on a range of texts or different treatments of the same topic.

**AF6 Identify and comment on writers’ purposes and viewpoints and the overall effect of the text on the reader**
AF6 has two strands: understanding that all texts have a point of view, and that this can affect readers' responses.

b. At the most basic level, pupils detect overt purposes and express personal likes and dislikes.

c. Progression in AF6 is about developing evaluative skills supported by an analytic vocabulary.

AF7 Relate texts to their social, cultural, and historical contexts and literary traditions

a. AF7 demands engagement with a wide repertoire of reading.

b. Even young readers can talk about some of the ways that texts are the same or different from one another.

c. Working with texts from different cultures is one way of exploring the significance of context on what is written; another is comparing books from different times, and in different genres or media.

Assessment guidelines for reading

In each of the seven AF strands, level-related criteria provide the standard of expectation for judging particular aspects of reading. Progression within the strands is shown by differences in the criteria but also by the use of stems:

- Level 1: In some reading, usually with support
- Level 2: In some reading
- Level 3: In most reading
- Level 4 and above: Across a range of reading

The stems signal the expectation that as pupils' reading develops, they will work with less teacher support, and will show what they can do with a wider range of more-challenging texts. The assumption is that evidence for making judgements will demonstrate pupils' increasing abilities to make informed choices about what and how they read, with some independence.

Within each strand of the AFs, criteria are set out as bullet points, no more than three per level. The bullet points follow a pattern to explain the scope of each AF. Although the AFs are not intended to be hierarchical, in practice the judgements about early stages of reading rely most heavily on evidence for AF1 and AF2. From level 3 onwards, attainment of AF1 is assumed.

To develop as readers who can make sense of a wide range of texts, pupils need to be secure on AF3. Securing AF3 is a vital underpinning for progress through level 4 and above. The AFs which highlight evaluation and analysis (AFs 4 to 7) build on the skills in AFs 1 to 3.
Writing assessment focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Assessment focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AF1</td>
<td>Write imaginative, interesting, and thoughtful texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF2</td>
<td>Produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader, and purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF3</td>
<td>Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas, and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF4</td>
<td>Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF5</td>
<td>Vary sentences for clarity, purpose, and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF6</td>
<td>Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses, and sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF7</td>
<td>Select appropriate and effective vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF8</td>
<td>Use correct spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understanding the assessment focuses for writing

The eight AFs for writing describe the key elements of performance in this attainment target. They are linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions, and are designed give a detailed, analytic view of pupils' attainment across all the key stages and in all types of writing.

**AF1 Write imaginative, interesting, and thoughtful texts**

a. AF1 relates to the overall impact of the piece.

b. It includes the coverage and selection of content, as well as how developed the ideas are.

c. As well as thinking about what to write, pupils have to decide their stance on the topic, for example objective or partisan, expert or non-expert, child or adult, supportive or critical.

d. Imagination and creativity are needed for all kinds of texts, not just stories; for example, taking a fresh approach to a topic, taking risks, and challenging the reader by using humour in a serious topic.

**AF2 Produce texts that are appropriate to task, reader, and purpose**

a. AF2 covers purpose of writing, degree of adaptation, and style.

b. Pupils need to be set tasks that prompt them to make use of their knowledge of different text types in adventurous ways.

c. In order to develop as independent writers, pupils need opportunities to choose subject matter, forms, and purposes that interest them.

d. Pupils show understanding that they can write for specific readers when they make their own decisions about, for example, levels of formality, choice of vocabulary, and form of writing.
AF3 Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas, and events

a. AF3 is about the overall coherence of texts and includes layout, use of subheadings, diagrams, or pictures, in both paper-based and digital texts.

b. There are underlying ways to think about text organisation in non-fiction, for example logical order, chronology, moving from general to specific points.

c. There are similar choices in fictional writing – strict chronology is not always needed.

d. In stories, endings matter – both plot and theme have to be resolved. Information texts also need endings, whether these are signalled by the last in a series of numbers or by a brief conclusion.

AF4 Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs

a. AF4 is about the ways paragraphs hang together as a sequence as well as connect internally.

b. Within paragraphs, there are different ways of developing topics, from grouping related content in sections, to elaborating details around main ideas, or writing topic sentences.

c. Pupils need to experiment with different ways of making links between paragraphs, for example by time, by reason, by subject, or by importance.

AF5 Vary sentences for clarity, purpose, and effect

a. AF5 is about the purposeful variation of sentence structure, not simply about incorporating connectives into every sentence. More able writers use varied sentence structures as a way of packaging meaning into sentences with little redundancy, and varying sentence type and length in ways that support thinking across a whole text.

b. Pupils need to work on both endings and beginnings of complex sentences to achieve different effects.

c. Writing poetry affords many opportunities for constructing and selecting different types of sentences to shape meaning according to given rhyme or rhythmic scheme.

AF6 Write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses, and sentences

a. AF6 is about using accurate grammar and punctuation in sentences.

b. Effective punctuation creates clarity and meaning and can be helpfully linked to understanding grammar.

c. As pupils reach for more complex sentence construction, their punctuation often does not keep pace.

AF7 Select appropriate and effective vocabulary

a. AF7 is relevant to all kinds of writing and supports the other AFs.

b. Vivid writing, whether fiction or non-fiction, is achieved by apt choices of nouns, verbs, and adverbs, not just adjectives.

c. In non-fiction writing, the use of technical and precise vocabulary is vital to conveying content accurately, and demonstrating that the writers know what they are talking about.

AF8 Use correct spelling

a. AF8 is developed in two ways in APP so that distinctions can be made between correct or incorrect spelling of grammatical function words (a small set of items) and the larger pool of content words that carry most of the meaning.
b. In learning to spell, pupils need help with both phonemes and word structure (morphemes).

c. Spelling accuracy is an important focus, but it does not necessarily correlate with achievement at sentence and text level.

Assessment guidelines for writing

In each of the eight AF strands, level-related criteria provide the standard of expectation for judging particular aspects of writing. Progression within the strands is shown by differences in the criteria but also by the use of stems:

- Level 1: In some writing, usually with support
- Level 2: In some writing
- Level 3: In most writing
- Level 4 and above: Across a range of writing

The stems signal the expectation that as pupils develop as writers, they will work with less teacher support and show what they can do in a broader range of contexts. The assumption is that evidence reviewed to make a judgement will demonstrate pupils' increasing abilities to make informed choices about what and how they write, with some independence.

Within each strand of the AFs, criteria are set out as bullet points, no more than three per level. The bullet points follow a pattern to explain the scope of each AF. For writing, the AFs are presented in a particular order for assessment purposes: AFs 5 and 6, AFs 3 and 4, AFs 1 and 2, followed by AF7 and AF8.

Assessment of writing should begin at sentence level before moving onto whole-text structure and cohesion. In this way, impressions about imaginative appeal and overall impact will be securely based on evidence from the words of the text. Choice of vocabulary is part of all the strands, as well as being a focus in its own right. In teaching, the AFs may be dealt with in any order or combination.

Criteria for handwriting and presentation are provided for levels 1 to 3 but there is not a formal AF for this aspect. In APP, for judgements of level 2 and above, the criteria for AF7 and AF8 are considered as a way of confirming or modifying the assessments made on evidence for the majority of the other AFs.
### Speaking and listening assessment focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of speaking and listening assessment focuses and points to remember, linked to each attainment level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment focus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AF1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk in purposeful and imaginative ways to explore ideas and feelings, adapting and varying structure and vocabulary according to purpose, listeners, and content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AF2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen and respond to others, including in pairs and groups, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments, and questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AF3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking within role-play and drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and sustain different roles and scenarios, adapting techniques in a range of dramatic activities to explore texts, ideas, and issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AF4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the range and uses of spoken language, commenting on meaning and impact and draw on this when talking to others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Understanding the assessment focuses for speaking and listening

The four AFs for speaking and listening describe the key elements of performance in this attainment target. They are linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions and are designed give a detailed, analytic view of pupils' attainment across all the key stages.

**AF1 Talking to others**

Talk in purposeful and imaginative ways to explore ideas and feelings, adapting and varying structure and vocabulary according to purpose, listeners, and content

In this assessment focus, the criteria describe three distinct but interrelated strands, set out in three bullet points up to level 7. At level 8, the criteria are merged into two bullet points indicating that at the highest level skills are integrated.

**Sustain talk about ideas and feelings**

Describes pupils’ extended talk in small-group, whole-class, or larger contexts.

Sustained imaginative and purposeful talk often arises when pupils are given time to plan and prepare responses to challenging tasks and questions.

Pupils are more likely to demonstrate strength in this area when they are talking about something that matters to them.
Progression is marked by the ability to talk in extended ways about increasingly complex ideas and feelings, supported by details to make meaning precise and clear.

Organise talk to help and engage the listener
The key idea is about organising talk with awareness of the effect on the listener.
Progression is characterised in terms of pupils' developing the ability to engage and guide their listeners' response through deliberate shaping of their talk.

Adapt talk for different audiences, purposes, and contexts
The key idea is 'adaptation' of talk for a range of purposes, audiences, and contexts, both formal and informal.
Progression is marked by the flexibility with which pupils vary their choices of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and non-verbal features, depending on listener(s) and content.
The criteria encompass the use of spoken Standard English where appropriate.

AF2 Talking with others

Listen and respond to others, including in pairs and in groups, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments, and questions
The criteria are set out with two bullet points at each level, showing the distinct but interrelated strands within the assessment focus.

Listen and respond
The key idea is 'respond'. Pupils' proactive responses to what they have heard provide evidence for listening.
Evidence for listening covers both engagement with and critique of content and style.
Progression in response is characterised in terms of pupils' increasing depth of comprehension and the quality of their interaction with speakers and other audio sources.

Group discussion and interaction
These describe pupils' facilitative roles in different kinds of pair and group work.
Evidence relates to how flexibly pupils select and adapt roles in working together to achieve shared goals.
Progression is characterised by pupils' increasing independence and autonomy.

AF3 Talking within role-play and drama

Create and sustain different roles and scenarios, adapting techniques in a range of dramatic activities to explore texts, ideas, and issues.
The criterion at each level describes pupils' ability to explore ideas and issues by adopting different roles and creating imagined scenarios.
At all levels pupils' understanding of characters and ideas is enhanced through experimentation in role, building from imaginative play to establishing complex roles.
Pupils need opportunities to adapt their use of language, voice, gesture, and movement to develop empathy and insight into texts and issues, using a range of strategies, such as hotseating, conscience alley, and freeze-frame.
The process of working with others to create dramatic scenarios and sustain roles is an important aspect of this assessment focus: assessment should not focus solely on performance, but also on the ability to adapt and experiment in different situations.
Progression is marked by the increasing flexibility in pupils' adaptation of speech and gesture to explore ideas and issues.
**AF4 Talking about talk**

**Understand the range and uses of spoken language, commenting on meaning and impact, and draw on this when talking to others**

A single criterion for each level describes pupils’ abilities to reflect on how they and others use language.

Progression is characterised in terms of how effectively pupils apply this knowledge in developing their repertoire of talk, and identifying the impact and meaning of specific choices.

Pupils need to learn ways of talking about talk analytically, so that they can explain and comment on the language they hear and use, just as they are used to having a metalanguage to talk about reading and writing.

Work in this assessment focus provides scope for valuing pupils’ creativity in language use and their willingness to take inventive or unusual approaches to making meaning.

Work in AF4 also strengthens pupils’ cultural understanding about how English varies locally and globally, and what such variations reveal about identity and cultural diversity.

**Assessment guidelines for speaking and listening**

In each assessment focus, progression from one level to another is shown in the stems:

- Level 1 and Level 2 – In some contexts
- Level 3 – In most contexts
- Level 4 and above – Across a range of contexts

The stems suggest the range and consistency typical of attainment at a particular level and will help you in making overall level judgements.

Teachers familiar with the assessment guideline sheets for reading and writing will notice that the assessment guideline sheets for APP Speaking and Listening cover three rather than two levels. This has been done for the following reasons:

- in speaking and listening, pupils’ achievement is more likely to spread over three rather than two levels
- APP Speaking and Listening has fewer assessment focuses and less dense criteria than do reading and writing and this is exploited in the guideline sheets

Materials developed by The National Strategies to support the teaching and learning of speaking and listening offer further guidance about opportunities for assessing speaking and listening, and for planning for progression.
Mathematics assessment focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attainment target</th>
<th>Assessment focuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ma1 Using and applying mathematics | • Problem solving  
  • Communicating  
  • Reasoning |
| Ma2 Number – levels 1 to 4 | • Numbers and the number system  
  • Fractions, decimals, percentages and ratio  
  • Fractions (level 1 and above), decimals (level 3 and above), percentages, ratio (level 4 and above) and proportion (level 5 and above)  
  • Operations and relationships between them  
  • Mental methods  
  • Solving numerical problems  
  • Written methods |
| Ma2 Number – level 5 and above | • Numbers and the number system  
  • Fractions, decimals, percentages, ratio, and proportion  
  • Operations and relationships between them  
  • Mental, written, and calculator methods  
  • Solving numerical problems  
  • Algebra |
| Ma3 Shape, space and measures | • Properties of shape  
  • Properties of position and movement  
  • Measures |
| Ma4 Handling data – levels 1 to 4 | • Processing and representing data  
  • Interpreting data |
| Ma4 Handling data – level 5 and above | • Specifying the problem, planning and collecting data  
  • Processing and representing data  
  • Interpreting and discussing results |

Understanding the assessment focuses for mathematics

Some AFs become broader through the levels. For example, 'Fractions' at level 1 is broadened into 'Fractions and decimals' at level 3 and becomes 'Fractions, decimals, percentages, ratio and proportion' by level 5. Other focuses are merged at higher levels. For example, 'Mental methods' and 'Written and calculator methods' merge at level 5 when 'Algebra' appears as a separate AF. These changes reflect progression in the subject and the relative importance of different aspects of performance at different levels.
Progress through levels is most apparent in the assessment criteria for each AF. For example, Using and applying mathematics has three AFs: Problem solving, Communicating and Reasoning and the examples below demonstrate progression in assessment criteria. As a further demonstration of increasing demand through levels, assessment criteria for Ma1 at levels 1 and 2 are prefaced by the phrase 'with support' whereas criteria at higher levels are not.

**AF1 Problem solving**

In this AF, evidence is sought to demonstrate how the pupil sets about problem solving, ranging from 'using mathematics as an integral part of classroom activities' at level 1 to 'carrying through substantial tasks' and 'solving quite complex problems by independently breaking them down into smaller, more manageable tasks' at level 6.

**AF2 Communicating**

In this AF, evidence is sought to demonstrate how the pupil communicates mathematical ideas and work. This will range from 'represent their work with objects or pictures' and 'discuss their work' at level 1, and 'interpret, discuss, and synthesise information presented in a variety of mathematical forms', and 'pupils' writing explains and informs their use of diagrams' at level 6.

**AF3 Reasoning**

In this AF, evidence is sought to demonstrate how the pupil reasons about mathematics. This will range from 'draw simple conclusions from their work' and 'recognise and use a simple pattern or relationship' at level 1 to 'begin to give mathematical justification' at level 6.

### Science assessment focuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attainment level</th>
<th>Assessment focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AF1</td>
<td>Thinking scientifically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF2</td>
<td>Understanding the applications and implications of science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF3</td>
<td>Communicating and collaborating in science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF4</td>
<td>Using investigative approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF5</td>
<td>Working critically with evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Understanding the assessment focuses for science**

The AFs for science describe the key elements of performance. They are linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study and the level descriptions, and are designed give a detailed, analytic view of pupils' attainment across all the key stages and in all areas of science.

**Science assessment focuses explained**

**AF1 Thinking scientifically**

AF1 contains the main criteria related to how pupils work with scientific ideas, models, and evidence to understand and handle knowledge of the subject. It includes criteria which recognise how scientific ideas and models develop through further evidence, recognising the tentative nature of science as a discipline. Pupils work with scientific ideas, models, and evidence
themselves to further their understanding, and recognise how scientific understanding as a whole develops in such a way.

**AF2 Understanding the applications and implications of science**

The focus of AF2 is linking specific scientific ideas to particular applications and scientific and technological developments, and exploring how these developments can affect individuals, society, and the world. It includes criteria related to the understanding of various issues surrounding such developments, such as ethical or moral arguments, and also criteria related to the understanding of the factors that can influence the development of science and technology. In addition, there are criteria which relate to the application of science in roles or jobs.

**AF3 Communicating and collaborating in science**

AF3 contains the main criteria related to how pupils construct and present evidence-based responses and arguments for particular audiences, drawing on appropriate scientific language, mathematics, and scientific conventions and terminology. It also contains the main criteria related to how pupils use and develop collaborative approaches to their own work, and understand and recognise the advantages of the collaborative work of scientists.

**AF4 Using investigative approaches**

The focus of AF4 is how pupils ask questions, hypothesise, and develop appropriate and safe strategies and methodologies to collect scientific evidence, through experimental or other means.

**AF5 Working critically with evidence**

AF5 involves criteria based on how pupils interpret and analyse data, and other scientific evidence, to identify outcomes and draw conclusions using scientific knowledge and understanding. It also considers their ability to evaluate evidence, recognise limitations, and develop methodologies or other strategies to improve data or provide further evidence.
Planning to use APP

Step 1. Your training and preparation
For you to be fully prepared to make APP assessment judgements you need to be:
- trained on how to introduce and support APP
- familiar with the AFs and standards files
- clear about what counts as evidence
- prepared to adjust your planning and teaching as necessary to obtain evidence
- clear about ways to fill in the assessment guidelines sheets.

Step 2. Deciding the timing of APP judgements
Your school policy will determine when you should make APP judgements. APP is a process of periodic review of work already done, not a new assessment event. As a basic principle the work reviewed should cover more than one unit and at least one term's progress. This suggests that you will most likely formalise your judgements two or three times a year.

Step 3. Practice in making judgements
To make robust judgements in mathematics, science, reading, and writing you should follow the appropriate flow chart:
- Mathematics: making a level judgement flow chart (page 31)
- Reading: making a level judgement flow chart (page 32)
- Writing: making a level judgement flow chart (page 33)
- Speaking and listening: making a judgement flow chart (page 34)
- Science: making a level judgement flow chart (page 35)

Practice implications of APP
The high-quality information generated from APP assessment judgements can be used in a number of ways to inform:
- feedback to pupils and parents or carers
- future planning based on the Primary Framework learning objectives
- setting targets for improvement.

The diagram on the next page shows how APP can provide information for future planning.
Refining to sublevels across an attainment target (AT)

The day-to-day work produced by pupils following a school's scheme of work and teaching plans will provide evidence of attainment that is broadly based. The AFs in mathematics, science, reading, and writing provide teachers with a framework to help them be selective in looking at both what pupils have learned and how well they have learned it.

Judgements for each AT are refined into Low, Secure, or High within the level and are deemed to be equal. This is done in a holistic way by taking into account how independently, how consistently, and in what range of contexts pupils demonstrate their attainment.

Some schools choose to record ‘high’, ‘secure’ and ‘low’, broadly as a, b or c for the purpose of recording and tracking data. Rather than being based on a mathematical formula for sub-dividing a level, ‘high’, ‘secure’, and ‘low’ reflect the professional nature of the judgements that are made through APP, based on a teacher’s consideration of a range of evidence over time.

This constitutes an intelligent differentiation within the level.

APP periodic assessments are based on level judgements for all the AFs. This detail provides:

- a profile of the attainment of individuals and the next steps in learning they might take
- information to track the progress of individuals, and groups within and between levels
- aspects for development in the curriculum provided.
Links between the Primary Framework, the National Curriculum, and APP

The links between the Primary Framework, the National Curriculum, and APP AFs are identified here for mathematics and reading and writing.

Mathematics

In APP National Curriculum level judgements are made for each attainment target in mathematics. The assessment guidelines for each attainment target are organised into a number of AFs based on the National Curriculum programme of study for each mathematics attainment target. The Primary Framework for mathematics organises learning objectives into strands that also map onto the National Curriculum. Teaching should be planned in relation to learning objectives, not the APP AFs. Combinations of learning objectives work together to provide evidence for certain AFs.

National Curriculum – mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2006 Primary Framework strands of objectives</th>
<th>National Curriculum attainment target</th>
<th>APP assessment focuses* for mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using and applying mathematics</td>
<td>Ma1 Using and applying mathematics</td>
<td>Problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Communicating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting and understanding number</td>
<td>Ma2 Number</td>
<td>Numbers and the number system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fractions, decimals, percentages, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ratios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing and using number facts</td>
<td></td>
<td>Operations and the relationships between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mental methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculating</td>
<td></td>
<td>Solving numerical problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Written and calculator methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding shape</td>
<td>Ma2 Shape, space, and measures</td>
<td>Shape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring</td>
<td></td>
<td>Position and movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling data</td>
<td>Ma4 Handling data</td>
<td>Processing and representing data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Interpreting data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

00077-2010PDF-EN © Crown copyright 2010
*Some AFs expand through levels. Others merge and new focuses such as algebra are introduced at higher levels. These examples are for levels 3 and 4. Go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for ‘APP assessment guidelines’. The mathematics assessment focuses are on pages 19 and 20 of this booklet.

**Reading, writing, speaking, and listening**

The APP reading, writing, speaking, and listening AFs are based on the National Curriculum attainment targets for reading, writing, speaking, and listening and relate to the Primary Framework.

Go to:
- www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for ‘Primary Framework’
- curriculum.qcda.gov.uk and follow the links to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 English.

In the Primary Framework you will find that learning objectives are grouped under the three main headings that correspond to the organisation of the National Curriculum:

- speak and listen for a wide range of purposes in different contexts
- read a wide range of texts in print and on-screen
- write a wide range of texts on paper and on-screen.

Teaching should be planned in relation to learning objectives, not the AFs. Combinations of learning objectives work together to provide evidence for certain AFs.

Under each heading, the learning objectives are customised for each year group and indicate how, using a range of texts and different opportunities for writing, curriculum content can be taught. There are 12 strands: three for reading, five for writing, and four for speaking and listening. The different strands and associated learning objectives may be given particular emphases depending on your planning and the links you make between them. The Primary Framework emphasises the importance of creativity, independence, and enjoyment. Reading strand 8, Engaging and responding to texts, and Writing strand 9, Creating and shaping texts, are particularly important in this respect. Planning for a broad curriculum, with units of work developed over several weeks, will make effective use of pupils' abilities in a range of work, and enable teachers to structure and pace the learning experience to make it more enjoyable and challenging. Good planning and teaching, based on the Primary Framework learning objectives, will yield a wide range of evidence on which broad periodic judgements, using the assessment focuses and criteria, can be based.

The day-to-day work produced by pupils following teaching to your school's scheme of work will provide evidence of attainment that is broadly based. This is the basis for using the AFs to make periodic judgements of your pupils' attainments. The AFs give you a framework for looking selectively at what pupils have learned and how well they have learned it.
### Connections between learning objectives for literacy and the assessment focuses for reading and writing

#### Strand 1:
**Most children learn to:**
- Speak competently and creatively for different purposes and audiences, reflecting on impact and response
- Explore, develop, and sustain ideas through talk

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF1 (speaking and listening)

#### Strand 2:
**Most children learn to:**
- Understand, recall, and respond to speakers’ implicit and explicit meanings
- Explain and comment on speakers’ use of language, including vocabulary, grammar and non-verbal features

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF2 (speaking and listening)
- AF4 (speaking and listening)

#### Strand 3:
**Most children learn to:**
- Take different roles in groups to develop thinking and complete tasks
- Participate in conversations, making appropriate contributions building on others’ suggestions and responses

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF2 (speaking and listening)

#### Strand 4:
**Most children learn to:**
- Use dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts
- Create, share, and evaluate ideas and understanding through drama

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF3 (speaking and listening)
Strand 5: Word recognition: decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling)

Most children learn to:
- read fluently and automatically by using phonic knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences and the skills of blending as their prime approach for decoding unfamiliar words, and thereby:
  - build up a store of words that are instantly recognised and understood on sight
  - segment words into their constituent phonemes and understand that spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading.

Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:
- AF1 (reading)
- AF8 (writing)

Writing

Strand 6: Word structure and spelling

Most children learn:
- that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading
- to spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme–phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach, and also morphological knowledge and etymological information
- a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:
- AF8 (writing)

Reading

Strand 7: Understanding and interpreting texts

Most children learn to:
- retrieve, select and describe information, events or ideas
- deduce, infer and interpret information, events or ideas
- use syntax, context, word structures and origins to develop their understanding of word meanings
- identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts
- explain and comment on writers' use of language, including vocabulary, grammatical and literary features.

Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:
- AF2, AF3, AF1, AF4, AF5
### Strand 8: Engaging and responding to texts

**Most children learn to:**
- read independently for purpose, pleasure, and learning
- respond imaginatively, using different strategies to engage with texts
- evaluate writers' purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect of the text on the reader.

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- All AFs, especially AF6, AF3, AF7

### Writing

### Strand 9: Creating and shaping texts

**Most children learn to:**
- write independently and creatively for purpose, pleasure, and learning
- use and adapt a range of forms, suited to different purposes and readers
- make stylistic choices, including vocabulary, literary features, and viewpoints or voice
- use structural and presentational features for meaning and impact.

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- All AFs, especially AF1, AF2, AF7

### Strand 10: Text structure and organisation

**Most children learn to:**
- write independently and creatively for purpose, pleasure, and learning
- use and adapt a range of forms, suited to different purposes and readers.

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF3, AF4

### Strand 11: Sentence structure and punctuation

**Most children learn to:**
- vary and adapt sentence structure for meaning and effect
- use a range of punctuation correctly to support meaning and emphasis
- convey meaning through grammatically accurate and correctly punctuated sentences.

**Relevant AFs for this overall learning objective:**
- AF5, AF6
Strand 12: Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most children learn to:</th>
<th>Aspects of this learning objective are taken account of in the assessment of writing at levels 1 to 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• develop a clear and fluent joined handwriting style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• use keyboard skills and ICT tools confidently to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compose and present work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These guidelines sheets support teachers’ assessments from levels 1 to 5 and can be accessed at: [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) by searching for ‘APP assessment guidelines’.
Making judgements in APP

When making a periodic teacher assessment judgement using the APP approach, the same process is followed in all attainment targets and subjects.

Collect together:
- pupils’ work that demonstrates independence and choice
- any other evidence, plans, or notes
- assessment guidance materials:
  - level judgement flowchart
  - assessment guidelines to be completed

Identify level borderline for attainment target

Look through the work for each assessment focus and highlight the applicable criteria

Consider which level offers the best fit and tick the appropriate level-related box for each AF

Make an overall level judgement

While there is guidance available to support teachers in arriving at these judgements on the National Strategies website (see below), a good degree of professional judgement is needed, as there is no exact mathematical formula which has to be applied.

As in some subjects there are key requirements at particular levels; there is a separate flow chart for each of mathematics, speaking and listening, reading, writing, and science, which give step-by-step guidance on how to complete assessment guidelines.
Mathematics

Use these steps to formalise your assessments of pupils’ mathematics into attainment target level judgements.

**Step 1 Making AF judgements in Ma2 Number**

Begin with the assessment guidelines for Ma2 Number.

- Look at the criteria within each AF. Decide which level describes the pupil best.
- Record the level for each AF in the appropriate box.
- Record ‘insufficient evidence’ (IE) if you do not know enough about this aspect of the pupil’s mathematics to make a judgement. This has implications for planning.

If you feel the pupil is operating below the level, check the criteria on the assessment guidelines for the level below.

**Step 2 Making an overall level judgement for Ma2 Number**

Now make your level decision for Ma2 Number.

Your assessment focus judgements give an impression of the best-fit level for Ma2.

- Read the complete level descriptions for both levels to confirm your impression of the best-fit level for Ma2.
- Decide whether the level is Low, Secure, or High. Do this by thinking about what the pupil demonstrates.
  - How much of the level?
  - How consistently?
  - How independently?
  - In what range of contexts?
- Tick the relevant Low, Secure, or High box for the level.

**Step 3 Repeat the process for Ma3, Ma4, and then Ma1**

For the Ma1 judgement, consider how the pupil uses and applies the mathematics of Ma2, Ma3, and Ma4.

**Step 4 Making an overall level judgement for mathematics**

If you require an overall level judgement for mathematics, review your judgements for each of Ma2, Ma3, Ma4, and Ma1.

Now make an overall best-fit level judgement and refine this to Low, Secure, or High.
**Speaking and listening**

Use these steps to formalise your assessments of pupils' speaking and listening into overall level judgement, in line with the standards described in the relevant National Curriculum level descriptions.

The following guidance may be helpful in determining an overall level for speaking and listening, and then whether the level is low, secure, or high, since there are key requirements for each level.

**Step 1: Making AF judgements**

Begin with the assessment guidelines for the appropriate levels.

- Look at the criteria within each AF. Decide which level describes the pupil best.
- Record the level for each AF in the appropriate box.
- Record ‘insufficient evidence’ (IE) if you do not know enough about this aspect of the pupil's speaking and listening to make a judgement. This may have implications for planning.

If you feel the pupil is operating below the level, check the criteria on the assessment guidelines for the level below, or in the case of level 1, record ‘below level’ (BL). Any gaps noted may also have implications for planning.

If you have ticked all, or almost all of the criteria for the higher level, check whether you should be using the assessment guidelines for the level borderlines above.

**Step 2: Making an overall level judgement**

- Your assessment focus judgements give an impression of the best-fit level for each AF. Use these judgements to make an initial overall level decision for speaking and listening. The minimum requirement for awarding a level is for at least three of the relevant criteria to be met.
- Now use your professional judgement to decide whether the level is Low, Secure, or High. There is not a sum to be done in terms of adding up a set number of bullet points to determine graduations of performance within a level:
  - Take into consideration how fully, consistently, and independently the criteria for each AF have been met in different contexts by looking at the stems:
    - in some contexts for levels 1 and 2
    - in most contexts for level 3
    - across a range of contexts for levels 4 and above.
  - Tick the box for Low, Secure, or High as follows:
    - Low – meets at least three of the criteria for the level across some of the AFs
    - Secure – meets most of the criteria for the level across the full range of AFs
    - High – meets all, or almost all, of the criteria for the level across the 4 AFs with some highlighting of criteria in the level above.

**Step 3: Check your overall judgement**

Finally, check your overall judgement by comparing the evidence with the relevant Standards Files, and cross-checking with the national curriculum level description.
Reading: how to make a periodic level judgement

The following guidance may be helpful in determining an overall level for reading, and then whether the level is low, secure, or high, since there are key requirements for each level.

**Step 1: Making assessment focus judgements**

For each AF, starting with AF1 for levels 1, 2, and 3 and AF2 for all other levels:

- look at the evidence in relation to all the criteria for both the higher and lower levels at this borderline and highlight those that have been met
- make a best-fit judgement on whether the higher or the lower level has been achieved and tick the appropriate level-related box
- if there is some evidence for an AF, but not enough to make a judgement at the lower level, tick the BL (below level) box
- if there is no evidence for a particular AF, tick the IE (insufficient evidence) box.

If you have ticked BL for more than one AF, check whether you should be using the assessment guidelines for the next lower level borderline.

If you have ticked all, or almost all, the criteria for the higher level, check whether you should be using the assessment guidelines for the (next) higher-level borderline.

**Step 2: Making an overall level judgement**

Check your AF judgements against the requirements for each level.

- For **level 1**: ticks at level 1 for AF1 and AF2 and some highlighting at level 1 for AF3
- For **level 2**: ticks at level 2 for AF1 and AF2 and some highlighting at level 2 for AF3
- For **level 3**: ticks at level 3 for AF2, AF3 and one other AF out of AFs 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7
  - **AF1 is not assessed separately beyond level 3**
  - For **level 4**: ticks at level 4 for AF2 and AF3 and at least one other AF
  - For **level 5**: ticks at level 5 for any four AFs, provided there is level 4 for AF3
  - For **all other levels**: ticks for any four AFs at the target level

If you have ticked IE for more than two AFs, there may be insufficient evidence to make an overall level judgement, in which case IE should be awarded.

Now finalise the overall level judgement by deciding whether the level is Low, Secure, or High.

- **Low** – meets the minimum requirements for the level.
- **Secure** – meets the minimum requirements for the level with some additional highlighting of criteria at the level in most other AFs.
- **High** – the criteria for the level are highlighted across all, or almost all, the AFs, with some criteria in the level above likely to be highlighted as well.

Your decision should take account of how fully and consistently the criteria have been met and how far the pupil demonstrates independence and choice across a range of evidence.

**Step 3: Checking the overall level judgement**

Finally, check the overall judgement by comparing the evidence with the relevant standards files.
Writing: how to make a periodic level judgement

The following guidance may be helpful in determining an overall level for writing, and then whether the level is low, secure, or high, since there are key requirements for each level.

**Step 1: Making assessment focus judgements**

For each AF, starting with AF5:

- Look at the evidence in relation to all the criteria for both the higher and lower levels at this borderline and highlight those that have been met.
- Make a best-fit judgement whether the higher or the lower level has been achieved and tick the appropriate level-related box.
- If there is some evidence for an AF, but not enough to make a judgement at the lower level, tick the BL (Below Level) box.
- If there is no evidence for a particular AF, tick the IE (Insufficient Evidence) box.

If you have ticked BL for more than one AF out of AFs 1 to 6, check whether you should be using the assessment guidelines for the next lowest level borderline.

If you have ticked all, or almost all, the criteria for the higher level, check whether you should be using the assessment guidelines for the next, highest-level borderline.

**Step 2: Making an overall level judgement**

Check your AF judgements against the requirements for each level.

- **For level 1**: ticks at level 1 for three out of AF5, AF6, AF1, and AF2 and (either) AF7 or AF8, plus some highlighting of level 1 criteria for handwriting.
- **For level 2**: ticks at level 2 for three out of AF5, AF6, AF1, and AF2 and either AF7 or AF8.
- **For all other levels**: ticks at the target level for any four AFs out of AFs 1 to 6.

If you have ticked IE for more than two AFs, there may be insufficient evidence to make an overall level judgement, in which case IE should be awarded.

Now finalise the overall level judgement by deciding whether the level is Low, Secure, or High.

- **Low** – meets the minimum requirements for the level.
- **Secure** – meets the minimum requirements for the level with some additional highlighting of criteria at the level in most other AFs.
- **High** – the criteria for the level are highlighted across all, or almost all, the AFs, with some criteria in the level above likely to be highlighted as well.

Your decision should take account of how fully and consistently the criteria have been met and how far the pupil demonstrates independence and choice across a range of evidence. Where evidence for AF7 and AF8 is significantly better or worse than the evidence for other AFs, it is likely to influence your judgement of Low, Secure, or High.

**Step 3: Checking the overall level judgement**

Finally, check the overall judgement by comparing the evidence with the relevant standards files.
**Science: how to make a periodic level judgement**

**Stage 1: Making AF judgements**

Begin with the assessment guidelines for the appropriate levels.

- Look at the criteria within each AF. Decide which level describes the pupil best.
- Record the level for each AF in the appropriate box.
- Record 'insufficient evidence' (IE) if you do not know enough about this aspect of the pupil's science to make a judgement. This has implications for planning.

If you feel the pupil is operating below the level, check the criteria on the assessment guidelines for the level below, or in the case of level 1, record 'below level' (BL).

**Stage 2: Making an overall level judgement**

- Make your overall level decision for science. Your assessment focus judgements give an impression of the best-fit level for each AF.
- Now use your professional judgement to decide whether the level is Low, Secure, or High.
- Take into consideration how fully, consistently, and independently the criteria have been met in different contexts.
- Confirm you initial judgement and tick the box for Low, Secure, or High as follows:
  - Low – meets some of the criteria for the level across some of the AFs
  - Secure – meets most of the criteria for the level across the full range of AFs
  - High – meets all, or almost all, of the criteria for the level across the AFs with some highlighting of criteria in the level above.

**Step 3: Checking the overall level judgement**

Finally, check the overall judgement by comparing the evidence with the relevant standards files.
How to secure judgements in APP

The information from APP judgements is only valuable if the judgements are secure and in line with national standards. Everyone involved needs the reassurance that APP judgements are consistent within and between schools.

Teachers' judgements should be consistent between colleagues in the years above and below, within school, and in transition between schools. The Roles and responsibilities chart below outlines who should be responsible for the APP activities in the school to ensure that teacher assessment judgements are consistent, reliable, and matched to national standards.

Roles and responsibilities

The following diagram outlines the suggested minimum involvement and the activities of school staff to be involved both in introducing APP and at each assessment round, usually termly:

- a school senior leader
- the APP lead teacher for each subject – mathematics, science and (or) reading and writing
- classroom teachers, a minimum of two from the same or adjacent year groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APP school leader</th>
<th>APP lead subject teacher</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial review and work on whole-school assessment policy, and practice and APP focus for the school, including how often assessments are made (see Planning to secure judgements).</td>
<td>Attend external APP training</td>
<td>Attend external APP training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The model of assessment</td>
<td>The model of assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The assessment focuses</td>
<td>The assessment focuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making a judgement using APP</td>
<td>Making a judgement using APP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning for APP</td>
<td>Planning for APP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject leader standardisation</td>
<td>Subject leader standardisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver teacher training 1</td>
<td>Deliver teacher training 2: 1st school standardisation</td>
<td>Teaching and learning, ongoing assessment information gathered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APP model and approach disseminated to subject teachers</td>
<td>APP subject teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver ongoing teacher standardisation to strengthen teachers' judgements (as required) (see In-school standardisation)</td>
<td>Make judgements for pupils and record these on assessment guidelines</td>
<td>Make judgements for pupils and record these on assessment guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of school curriculum provision and assessment policy, practice, and planning in the light of APP assessment outcomes</td>
<td>In-school moderation</td>
<td>Assemble a range of work or information for one or two pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments of at least one pupil per teacher to be reviewed and agreed with at least one other teacher</td>
<td>Review outcomes and plan accordingly (see In-school moderation)</td>
<td>Review outcomes and plan accordingly (see In-school moderation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External moderation</td>
<td>Review weekly teaching plans and teaching sequences and adjust as necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

00077-2010PDF-EN © Crown copyright 2010
Planning to secure judgements

Planning to introduce and support the APP approach in your school will be central to its success. Here we outline the initial considerations for you and your school’s senior leadership team (SLT), the planning decisions required to identify the staff to be involved, their continuing professional development (CPD) and training needs, and the activities to secure your teachers’ assessment judgements through planned in-school standardisation and moderation activity.

Initial considerations for the school leadership team (SLT)

The SLT should consider the school context and how its assessment policies and practices fit the APP approach. This will help the SLT decide with which subjects, year groups, and teachers your school is going to start using APP.

### School assessment policy review
- When and how assessments are undertaken
- The balance between teacher assessment and summative testing
- Progress reviews
- Effective in-school standardisation and moderation activity to ensure:
  - the consistency of teacher judgements within school (between teaching and year groups)
  - the robustness and reliability of judgements against national standards
- Involvement of teaching assistants (TAs) and other adults
- Enhancing what is passed on to the next teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School assessment policy review</th>
<th>School assessment practice review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When and how assessments are undertaken</td>
<td>Current teacher assessment practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The balance between teacher assessment and summative testing</td>
<td>Medium and short-term planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress reviews</td>
<td>Reviewing progress with pupils, parents or carers, colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective in-school standardisation and moderation activity to ensure:</td>
<td>Grouping pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— the consistency of teacher judgements within school (between teaching and year groups)</td>
<td>Use of planning, preparation, and assessment (PPA) time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— the robustness and reliability of judgements against national standards</td>
<td>How you gather, record, and use evidence and information from assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement of teaching assistants (TAs) and other adults</td>
<td>Use of end of unit, term, and year tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing what is passed on to the next teacher</td>
<td>A cross-curricular approach to assessing literacy, mathematics, and science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### In-school standardisation and moderation

Standardisation and moderation are central activities of the APP approach to ensure consistency of judgements within school. They have different functions and occur at different stages in the assessment process.

- **Standardisation** is designed to ensure that national standards are understood and can be applied consistently. It occurs:
  - **before** teachers assess their pupils initially
  - from time to time, to review and strengthen teachers' judgements within AFs or attainment targets as appropriate.

- **Moderation** is designed to check that national standards have been applied consistently, and occurs after teachers have made their assessments.

### In-school standardisation

The purpose of in-school standardisation is to check the consistency of teachers' judgements before they assess pupils in their class. The APP lead teacher for the subject should run a school-based session for all teachers involved before they make their APP assessments.
Teachers assess a small sample of pupils' work from the school and (or) use a training standards file (of no more than two pupils) and standardise their judgements using the APP materials. The APP lead teacher for the subject draws attention to any variations in standards and resolves the differences before teachers assess their own pupils.

The standards files should be used as a reference to answer queries about or resolve differences in judgements.

The materials needed for delivering a standardisation session are:

- assessment guidelines
  go to [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) and search for ‘APP assessment guidelines’

- standards files
  go to [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) and search for ‘Standards files’

- sample the work of one or two pupils from the school and (or) from the training standards files,
  go to [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies) and search for ‘Using the training standards files’.

### In-school moderation

The purpose of in-school moderation is to check the consistency of teachers' judgements after they have made their assessments, to identify and resolve any differences, and to agree on school standards.

To make the process manageable, it is helpful to have a focus for the moderation rather than try to moderate all the judgements made. You will need to select a sample of work on which you will agree judgements within your school.

The focus for the sample:

- should reflect your school interests and concerns
- can vary at each assessment round.

In mathematics, the focus for the first moderation might be Ma1 and Ma2, and for the second Ma1, Ma3, and Ma4. The pilot project demonstrated that it is important for schools to keep Ma1 a focus at each round, as it permeates across Ma2, Ma3, and Ma4.

In English and science, choose your own focus for each moderation. The focus could be a particular level or level boundary. For example, the focus might be pupils on the level 3 and 4 boundary in writing for the first moderation, and pupils at level 4 in reading for the second moderation.
Standards files

The standards files for speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science are a central part of the APP approach. Their main purpose is to exemplify national standards and act as a resource and reference point for teachers:

- on assessing pupils' work
- on diagnosing pupils' strengths and weaknesses
- for training and professional development purposes.

Each standards file includes:

- examples of pupils' ongoing classroom work which have been assessed to exemplify the APP approach and show national standards
- commentary on the evidence at AF level, which leads to a summative judgement on the pupils' work
- the assessment guidelines sheet that records both a profile of attainment across the AFs and a National Curriculum level for the attainment target.

The files exemplify attainment from Years 1 to 6 at National Curriculum levels 1 to 5. The separate collections of work for reading and writing are provided so that the annotations and commentaries are presented as clearly as possible to focus on the evidence for each mode separately, and to help sharpen teachers' judgements accordingly. In some circumstances a collection of pupils' work could well provide evidence for the assessment of both reading and writing, but teachers will need to judge the two modes separately.

Pupils' work in the standards files

Each standards file comprises a number of pieces of work from individual pupils in schools directly involved in the piloting phases of APP. Some of the evidence is written, some of it is in the form of notes made by the teacher when working with the pupils, or when observing them in class; in some files, video material of what pupils can do is included.

In the mathematics standards files, there are also summary notes made by the teacher about what the range of work demonstrates about a pupil's mathematical attainment. For mathematics and reading and writing, the level of annotation on the work presented in the standards files is far more than a classroom teacher would be expected to record. The standards files have a large amount of annotation, as they need to stand alone, and the classroom teacher is not available to discuss what the evidence amounts to and what additionally they know about a pupil's work.

Background information about the context of the work has been kept to a minimum, since each collection has been selected primarily to exemplify attainment at a particular National Curriculum level and in a relevant year group, rather than as an example of recommended curriculum practice. In some cases, the pupil's work in a file represents that pupil's entire output during the period; in others, it is a small sample. In each case, the criterion for the size of the collection is the same: how much is sufficient to support a teacher in making a level judgement against the AFs?

National standards exemplified

Each collection of work in the standards files has been assessed using an assessment guidelines sheet. Four kinds of annotation or commentary may support assessment of the pupil's work.

Completed assessment guidelines sheets

A completed assessment guidelines sheet shows how the pupil's work is assessed and provides information towards making a judgement of Low, Secure, or High within a level.
Marginal annotation
These annotations indicate where a particular criterion in the guidelines is met. The annotations refer directly to criteria for an AF at a particular level.

Commentary and teacher's notes on a piece of evidence
At the end of each piece of a pupil's work in reading, writing, or speaking and listening, a commentary summarises what has been demonstrated across the AFs. In mathematics and science after each piece of a pupil's work teacher's notes are provided along with next steps for the pupil.

Assessment summaries
These consider all the evidence and conclude with a level judgement for the AT.

Using the standards files
The standards files enable classroom teachers to have a common understanding of different levels, and the nature and demands of the AFs that underpin each one.

There are different ways of using the standards files:
- to standardise judgements, that is, to ensure that teachers' judgements are in line with national standards before making assessments
- as a reference when assessing your own pupils
- to support moderation activity
- to clarify what it means to make progress
- to exemplify the APP approach.

Standardisation materials
To ensure that judgements made by teachers in your school are in line with national standards, standardisation training in school could use the materials in the following ways.
- Each teacher assesses one pupil, and agrees the level judgement with a colleague by comparing and contrasting the pupil's work with that of a standards file pupil at that level.
- Teachers assess the work of one standards file pupil, using a training version of the standards files with the references to level judgements removed, and then compare their judgements with those in the full standards file.
- Teachers copy one or two collections of work from their own pupils, without any annotation or commentary, and ask colleagues to identify pupils in the standards files to which each is closest in performance.
- Using two standards files at the same level (for example Low 3 and Secure 3), with all the annotations but without the assessment summaries or assessment guidelines sheets, groups discuss and agree which is Low and which is Secure.
- To clarify progress, look through all standards files that cover one identified attainment target to track the evidence for a particular AF or group of AFs.

Reference
When assessing your own pupils you should use the standards files for reference:
- as a benchmark when making periodic assessment judgements
- to compare the performance of your pupils at a particular level with exemplars that have been assessed against national standards
• to check what constitutes sufficient evidence of attainment in an AF at a specific level

• to refine your judgement of what is typical of performance in adjacent levels, for example comparing two collections of work in the same attainment target, one on either side of a level borderline

• to check what progression in a particular AF looks like.

Supporting in-school moderation

Moderation activity generally involves a group of teachers reviewing a sample of class teachers' initial assessments, reconciling any disagreements and agreeing a final judgement. The standards files are essential tools in this process of bringing differing views to agreement in an evidence-based way that is in line with national standards. Disagreement can be resolved by recourse to the question: How does the pupil under discussion compare with pupil X or Y from the standards files?

Exemplifying the APP model

Subject leaders, and others running training sessions, could use selected pupil standards files to illustrate how the principles that underpin the APP model of periodic assessment operate in practice, or to illustrate particular aspects of assessment. Discussion can be focused, for example, on:

• attainment at a particular level in different year groups, or in a particular AF at different levels

• the range of potential evidence in using and applying mathematics or reading, for example how much evidence of attainment for a particular AF is required to support a judgement

• differences between evidence gathered from oral work, practical science activities and from writing

• whether it is harder to find evidence for some AFs than others

• identifying the next steps in teaching and learning for a particular pupil or groups of pupils.

The links for the standards files are as follows:

• Mathematics standards files – go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'Mathematics standards files'

• Reading standards files – go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'Reading standards files'

• Writing standards files – go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'Writing standards files'

• Speaking and listening standards files – go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'Speaking and listening standards files'

• Science standards files – go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for 'Science standards files'.

Using the training standards files

A number of the standards files have been made available without the annotations that reveal the level at which each pupil is working. These are the training standards files. They will provide a useful resource when training staff, and can be used with groups of staff to show the process of making a level judgement. For more details of this process go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search for ‘Making judgements in APP’. 