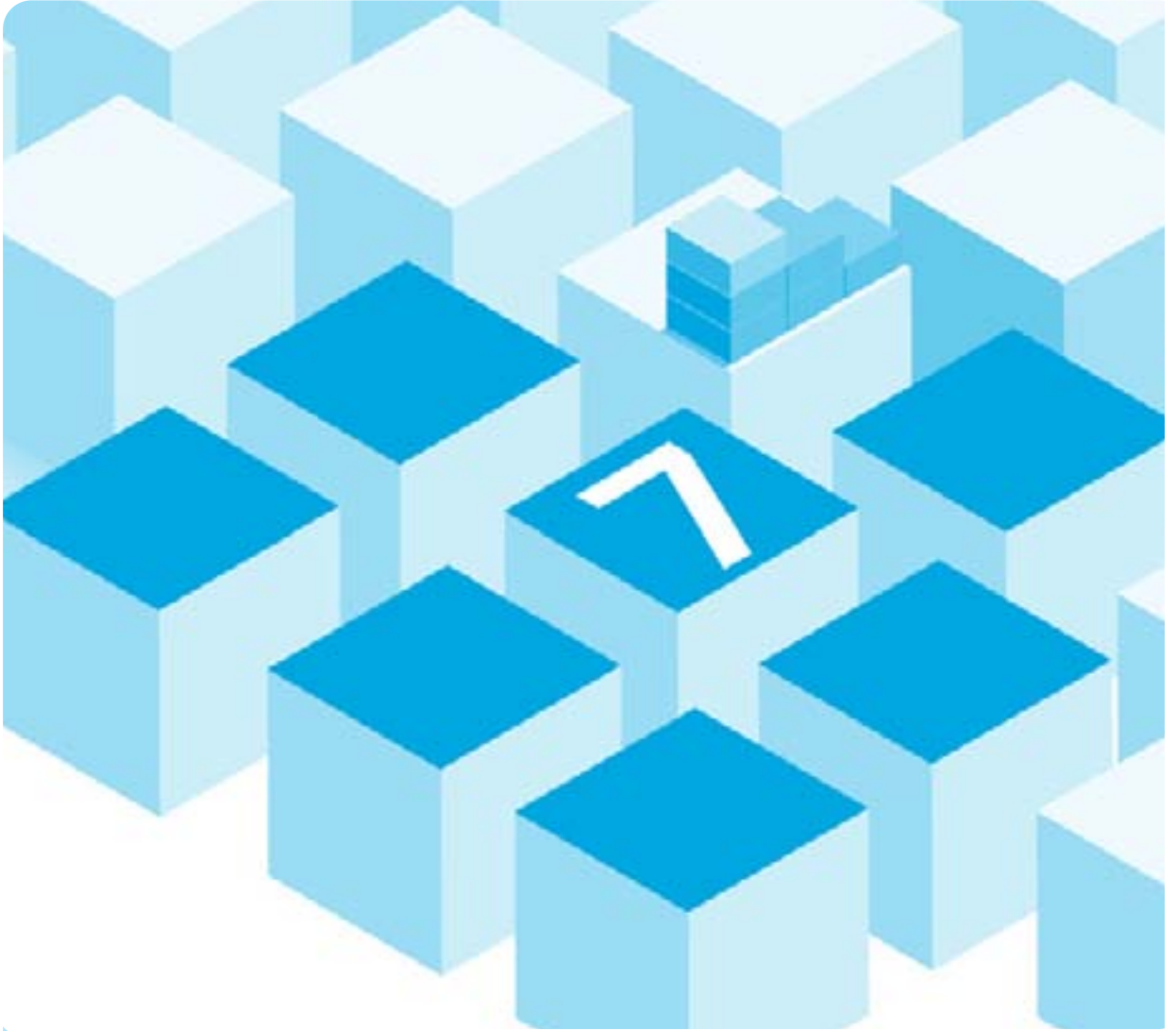


YEAR
7
PROGRESS

Level threshold tables

for year 7 progress tests in
English and mathematics



2007

National curriculum assessments

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Introduction

This booklet provides tables for converting marks on the year 7 progress tests into national curriculum levels.

1.1 Training and checking marking standards

All markers undergo training before they are allowed to start marking pupils' scripts. The training is designed to enable markers to apply the *Mark scheme* to a key stage / subject-specific national standard. The *Mark scheme* used by markers is the same as the one that was sent to your school in the mark scheme pack in April.

All markers are allocated to a team and have a supervisor who checks samples of their marking at least twice to ensure they are applying the *Mark scheme* to the national standard. If the marking is not satisfactory, the marker is stopped from marking and the scripts allocated to another marker for re-marking.

At the end of the marking period, markers are issued with the level thresholds. Markers are required to revisit their marking for pupils whose total marks fall within specified mark ranges below the final level subject thresholds; this is known as borderlining. Where this borderline check has taken place, it will be indicated on the front cover of one of the pupil's scripts.

1.2 What to do when the results are received

Return of results

Schools will be notified of their pupils' test results through the return of completed marksheets by 10 July 2007. If they have not arrived by the end of the day on 10 July 2007, please contact the NAA test operations agency on 0870 2413540.

Checking results

The marking of pupils' tests will have been checked carefully before the papers are returned to schools. However, schools may wish to undertake their own checks, particularly for any pupil(s) who in the school's opinion have been awarded an incorrect national curriculum level. The review process should only be used when, in the opinion of the staff in a school, the pupil(s) concerned have received a national curriculum level above or below that to which their work is entitled in relation to the published *Mark scheme*.

Guidance on requesting reviews is given in the key stage 3 and year 7 progress tests *Information for schools* booklet, which was sent to schools at the end of June 2007. It is essential that requests for reviews follow the procedures set out in this booklet. This includes clearly identifying where the *Mark scheme* has not been applied accurately in a question or questions.

Requests for reviews must reach the NAA test operations agency by 20 July 2007 at the latest. No reviews can be discussed over the telephone and none will be accepted after this date.

Reporting results for the year 7 progress tests

There is no statutory requirement for schools to report year 7 progress test results. However, QCA would advise that it is good practice to give feedback to parents on pupils' performance in the tests and relate it to their overall performance during year 7 in English and mathematics. If the outcome of a review is pending, schools should report test results to parents as provisional. Schools may, if they wish, return the marked scripts to pupils.



How the levels are set

The national curriculum tests are written against the programmes of study and are designed to award levels that equate demand to the level descriptions.

QCA has in place a range of procedures, as laid out in the *Code of practice*, both statistical and judgmental, to ensure the standards of performance required for the award of each level are maintained consistently from year to year. These procedures include extensive pretesting of all test papers and obtaining the advice of a panel of senior markers including the marking programme leader once the marking is well under way each year. These procedures have enabled QCA to set threshold scores each year that have maintained standards since 1996.

2.1 Setting draft thresholds

The NAA sets draft level thresholds with the test development agencies for each subject in January–March preceding the tests in May. The difficulty of the current test is considered by looking at pretest data, which includes a number of measures designed to identify any variation in the underlying difficulty of the test papers from year to year. If a test is deemed to be more difficult than the previous year's test, the level thresholds will be lower. If a test paper is deemed to be less difficult, the level thresholds will rise. The draft level thresholds are used to inform the next stage of the process.

2.2 Setting level thresholds

Once the test has been taken and marking is under way, samples of marked scripts from year 7 pupils are collected from external markers. The scripts that fall close to the draft level thresholds are scrutinised in detail by senior markers to determine where they believe the level thresholds are located.

A final level setting meeting is then convened in June to set the final level thresholds using all the evidence available.

The marks obtained by a sample of pupils in the live tests are collected so that the NAA can be aware of the impact of the decisions made in setting the thresholds.

All these measures are taken to ensure standards are maintained and that a child who would have achieved a certain level in last year's tests will achieve the same level in this year's tests.



Level thresholds

The *Mark schemes*, which are provided in the mark scheme packs sent to schools with the test materials, give the acceptable answers for test questions and set out the criteria for the award of marks. They also contain guidance on the general criteria used by external markers in the application of the *Mark schemes*.

Where markers find answers that are not given explicitly in the *Mark scheme*, they use their professional judgment to decide whether or not an answer is creditworthy.

The following method is used to note the marks awarded for each question:

- **1** means that a creditworthy response has scored one mark
- **0** means that a response is not creditworthy.

Half marks are not awarded. Some questions are worth two or more marks.

Some pupils' test papers may contain two sets of marks – one in red and one in green. This occurs where markers' work is routinely and randomly checked. In all cases the green marks override the red.

Where a pupil has not attempted a question, the marker will cross through the response space with a diagonal line. On the English writing tests, markers are instructed to tick each page as they mark and to rule a line at the end of the pupil's writing. Markers are not required to place any further marks on the scripts.

The total number of marks awarded is recorded on each test paper and on the marksheet.

Pupils who narrowly fail to achieve level 3, the lowest level targeted by the tests, are awarded N. No compensatory levels are awarded in the year 7 progress tests.

To calculate an overall test level for English and mathematics, the marks awarded on all the test papers in each subject are added together and the tables on pages 7 and 8 are used to convert a pupil's total mark into a test level.

Pupils who were absent for one or more test papers in a subject will be recorded as A for absent for that subject. However, for English, if the pupils sit all reading or all writing components, they will receive a reading or writing level but be recorded as A for English overall.

3.1 The English tests

The following points explain how markers apply the *Mark scheme*.

Reading test

- The reading test is marked against the *Mark scheme*, which includes descriptive criteria.
- For the more open questions, which carry several marks, judgements are made about how well a pupil's response fits these criteria.
- The maximum mark available is 40.

Writing test

The longer writing task

- The longer writing task is assessed against the following three strands of criteria:
 - sentence structure and punctuation (SSP)
 - text structure and organisation (TSO)
 - composition and effect (C&E).
- The maximum mark available is 20.

The shorter writing task

- The shorter writing task is assessed against the following criteria:
 - sentence structure, punctuation and text organisation (SSPTO)
 - composition and effect (C&E).
- The maximum mark available is 8.

Handwriting

- Handwriting is assessed through the longer writing task. Marks are awarded according to the criteria given in the *Mark scheme*.
- Pupils who are physically unable to write are awarded two marks.
- The maximum mark available is 3.

Spelling test

- The *Mark scheme* gives the correct answers.
- The total number of correct spellings is converted to a mark using the table on the front page of the pupil's script.
- The maximum mark available is 7.

The marks for reading, writing and English overall are converted into levels using the tables below.

Reading	
Level	Mark range
N	0–12
3	13–21
4	22–40

Writing	
Level	Mark range
N	0–13
3	14–25
4	26–38

English overall	
Level	Mark range
N	0–26
3	27–47
4	48–78

3.2 The mathematics tests

Markers record the number of marks awarded in the margin of the test paper.

All questions, including those not attempted by the pupil, are marked with a 1, 0 or – (for no response).

Most of the questions carry one mark only, although some carry two. In some two-mark questions, if a pupil has not given the right answer, but there is evidence that an appropriate method or working has been used, 1 will be recorded in the appropriate mark space and 0 in the other space.

For the mental mathematics test, where pupils provided the correct answer, a score of 1 will have been recorded.

Marks awarded for paper 1 and paper 2 and the mental mathematics test are totalled to provide an overall mark.

The table below gives the mark ranges for the award of each pupil's year 7 progress test level for mathematics.

Level	Mark range
N	0–33
3	34–59
4	60–100

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About this publication

Who is it for?

Headteachers and English and mathematics teachers of year 7 pupils.

What is it for?

This booklet provides tables for converting marks on the year 7 progress tests into national curriculum levels.

Related materials

Key stage 3 *Assessment and reporting arrangements*.

For more copies

A PDF version of this booklet and the related materials listed above can be downloaded from the NAA website at www.naa.org.uk/tests.

