

Optional level 6 tests are available in:

- English reading
- English writing
- mathematics.

Schools can choose to use one or more of these tests, which can be downloaded from the 'Test orders' section of the *NCA tools* website, www.qcda.gov.uk/ncatools.

If schools intend to use the outcomes of these tests alongside the level thresholds published within the *Mark scheme* booklets, then they must be administered appropriately, under test conditions.

QCDA will not be offering an external marking service for the optional level 6 tests so schools will need to make their own marking arrangements. The *Mark scheme* booklets provide all the information needed to mark the tests and the level thresholds for each subject. They are also available on the *NCA tools* website. In order for the test outcomes to be a valid measure of pupil attainment, the questions must be marked in strict accordance with the information in the *Mark scheme* booklets.

Mark scheme amendments for modified large print and Braille are provided with the modified versions of the tests.

Test results will not be collected or published. Schools can decide how to use them and how they might provide additional evidence to inform teacher assessment levels.

Local authorities will not be required to monitor administration of the tests.

Key stage 2 national curriculum tests in English and mathematics remain compulsory for all pupils at the end of key stage 2, as does the requirement for selected schools to take part in science sampling tests.

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Administering the optional level 6 tests

The optional level 6 tests can be administered at any time, although it is anticipated that in most cases you will choose to use them towards the end of the school year so that pupils will have had the opportunity to demonstrate level 6 knowledge and skills.

There is no requirement to register pupils, apply for access arrangements or submit a *Headteacher's declaration form*. However, you should consider the range of access arrangements available to enable all pupils to access the tests and to ensure that their results accurately reflect their abilities. Further advice is available on page 8 of this guide.

If schools intend to use the outcomes of these tests, alongside the level thresholds published within the *Mark scheme* booklets, then they must be administered appropriately, under test conditions. Detailed guidance on test administration is given in the 2011 key stage 2 *Test administrators' guide*, which can be downloaded from www.qcda.gov.uk/tests.

Please note: schools should not use the introductory scripts from the key stage 2 *Test administrators' guide* to introduce any optional level 6 test. Suggested introductory scripts for the optional level 6 tests are provided on the pages overleaf.

Test duration

Each of the optional level 6 tests will take up to 60 minutes to complete:

- English *Reading paper* – 60 minutes (including 10 minutes of reading time)
- English *Writing paper* – 60 minutes (20 minutes for the shorter writing task; 40 minutes for the longer writing task)
- Mathematics – 60 minutes (30 minutes for *Paper 1*; 30 minutes for *Paper 2*).

Test materials

Test papers and *Mark schemes* can be downloaded from the *NCA tools* website at www.qcda.gov.uk/ncatools.

Adapting test materials

You may choose to enlarge papers, questions or parts of questions to meet the requirements of individual pupils. However, you should take care when making enlargements as inaccurate copies may affect the accuracy of pupils' responses. When photocopying materials you should check the measurements of diagrams to ensure accuracy.

Equipment for the tests

The table below details the equipment that should be made available for the tests.

Equipment	English reading	English writing	Mathematics	Notes
Bilingual dictionaries, bilingual word lists, electronic spellcheckers	X	X	✓	If bilingual dictionaries or word lists are used in the mathematics test, they should only give word-for-word translations and not help with understanding the subject.
Word processors and voice-activated software	✓	✓	✓	If it reflects normal classroom practice, pupils may use word processors and voice-activated software in any of the tests as long as any editorial functions (for example thesaurus, spelling and grammar functions) are turned off.
Rulers	✓	✓	✓	Rulers should show both centimetres and millimetres.
Calculators	X	X	✓ <i>Paper 2 only</i>	Pupils are allowed to use calculators for mathematics <i>Paper 2</i> only. Pupils must not have access to calculators for <i>Paper 1</i> .

Additional equipment required for the mathematics test is listed on page 6.

The English tests

The English tests consist of two papers:

- the *Reading paper*
- the *Writing paper*, which is made up of a shorter task and a longer task. Spelling is assessed as part of the longer writing task.

Schools can administer either or both tests. To obtain an overall level for English, scores for both papers should be added together and compared against the overall thresholds which are in the English mark schemes.

English reading paper

Pupils should be given 60 minutes to complete the test (including 10 minutes of reading time).

You should only read aloud the 'Remember' section on the front cover of the *Reading answer booklet* to pupils. Pupils should read the test questions themselves. An example of what you could say at the beginning of the test is given below.

At the start of the test

What to say

This is the level 6 English *Reading paper*.

Make sure you have a *Reading booklet* and *Reading answer booklet* in front of you.

Make sure your name is on your *Reading answer booklet*.

I will read the instructions on the front of the *Reading answer booklet* with you now.

You have 10 minutes to read the *Reading booklet*. You can make notes on the *Reading booklet*, but you should not open the *Reading answer booklet* during this first 10 minutes.

After the 10 minutes are up, I will tell you that you can open your *Reading answer booklet* and start to answer the questions. You will then have

50 minutes to write your answers in the *Reading answer booklet*. Remember that you can look back at your *Reading booklet*.

You should skim through the *Reading answer booklet* to check the questions and marks allocated to each one so that you can manage your time effectively.

You should try to answer all the questions. If you cannot answer a question, move on and return to it later.

Remember to check your work carefully.

If needed, you may ask for more paper. Make sure your name is on any extra lined paper you use.

It is important that you express your ideas clearly to show you have understood the text and the question. Your spelling will not be marked.

If you have any questions during the test, you should put your hand up and wait for someone to come to you. Remember, I cannot help you to answer any questions or read any of the words to you. You must not talk to each other.

Are there any questions you want to ask now?

You may now start to read the *Reading booklet*.

After ten minutes

What to say

You should open the *Reading answer booklet* and start to answer the questions.

You have 50 minutes left to complete the test. I will tell you when you are halfway through the test and also tell you when you are entering the last five minutes. I will tell you when the test is over and to stop writing.

Total marks for the English Reading paper: 32

English writing paper

Pupils should complete both the shorter task and the longer task in the *Writing answer booklet* provided.

It is recommended that pupils are given 20 minutes for the shorter writing task, and 40 minutes for the longer writing task (including up to five minutes of recommended planning time).

Pupils may use the planning sheet provided for the longer task. A planning sheet is not provided for the shorter writing task, but pupils may use blank paper if they wish to plan.

You should only read aloud the 'Remember' section on the front cover of the English *Writing paper* to pupils. An example of what you could say at the beginning of the test is given below.

At the start of the test

What to say

This is the level 6 English *Writing paper*. It includes a longer task writing prompt, including a planning page, and a shorter writing task. There are answer pages for both the longer and shorter tasks.

The shorter writing task is a test of your ability to write concisely. It is 20 minutes long.

The longer writing task is a test of extended writing. It is 40 minutes long. Your spelling will be assessed.

Make sure you have the *Longer writing prompt* and the *Shorter writing prompt*, including the *Writing answer booklet* in front of you.

You have one *Writing answer booklet* to use for both tasks. You can ask for more lined paper if you need it.

You should write your name on your *Writing answer booklet* and on any extra lined paper you use.

There is a planning page for the longer writing task for you to make notes and organise your writing. You may also use blank paper.

There is no planning page for the shorter writing task.

You may use blank paper or the back of your *Writing answer booklet* to plan your answer.

I will read the instructions on the front cover with you now.

You should complete the shorter writing task before the longer writing task.

You should pay attention to grammar, including paragraphing and punctuation.

I will tell you when you are halfway through your shorter writing task and when you should be moving on to your longer writing task. I will tell you when there are five minutes left to complete the test. I will tell you when the test is over and to stop writing.

Remember to check your work carefully.

If you want to change your answer, you should put a neat line through the words or response you don't want to be marked.

If you have any urgent questions during the test, you should put your hand up and wait for someone to come to you. You must not talk to each other.

Are there any questions you want to ask me now?

You should now open your *Writing paper* and begin the shorter writing task.

Remember you have five minutes of planning time if you want to use it. I will remind you in five minutes to start writing if you haven't done so already.

You may now start the test.

After five minutes of planning time

What to say

Your five minutes of planning time have passed. If you haven't started writing, you should do so now.

After 20 minutes have passed

What to say

20 minutes have passed. You should now move on to the longer writing task. You have 40 minutes to complete the longer writing task.

**Total marks for the
English Writing paper: 23**
Shorter task: 7
Longer task, including spelling: 16

The mathematics tests

There are two written mathematics tests:

- *Paper 1* (non-calculator paper)
- *Paper 2* (calculators are allowed in this paper).

Pupils should be given 30 minutes for each paper.

The tests have been developed so that pupils need to take both *Paper 1* and *Paper 2* to be awarded a level in mathematics. Pupils' marks from both tests need to be aggregated to calculate their overall mathematics level. *Paper 1* and *Paper 2* have 25 marks each, giving a total of 50 marks.

The assessment does not include a mental mathematics test.

Enlarging test materials

You may choose to enlarge papers, questions or parts of questions to meet the specific requirements of individual pupils.

You should not enlarge any diagram that requires accurate measurement as it may affect the accuracy of pupils' responses. The associated text, however, can be enlarged to help pupils read the questions.

Diagrams should not be enlarged for the following questions:

- *Paper 1*, question 10
- *Paper 2*, question 6.

Additional equipment requirements

In addition to materials listed on page 2, the following equipment should be available for pupils in the test room:

- angle measurers
- pairs of compasses
- tracing paper
- mirrors (mirrors that are transparent as well as reflective must not be used).

The following equipment must not be used for the mathematics tests:

- number apparatus
- counters
- number squares
- dotted paper.

You should only read the general instructions for the mathematics test papers to the whole cohort. The following gives an example of what you could say at the beginning of the test.

Mathematics Paper 1

What to say

This is the level 6 mathematics *Paper 1*.

Calculators must not be used for this paper.

Mathematics Paper 2

What to say

This is the level 6 mathematics *Paper 2*.

You may use a calculator for this paper.

General instructions for both papers

What to say

This test is 30 minutes long.

You will need a pen or pencil for this test.

You may also need the following equipment for this test [read out the equipment list on the front page of the test booklet].

You should review the 'Remember' section on the front cover of this test paper and the instructions on page 3.

A formula that you might need is on page 2 of the test paper.

Write your name on the test booklet cover.

The test starts with easier questions. Try to answer all the questions in the booklet.

If you want to change your answer, put a neat line through the response you don't want to be marked. For changes on diagrams use a rubber.

Remember to check your work carefully.

Write all your answers and working on the test paper. Marks may be awarded for your working even if your answer is wrong.

I will tell you when you are halfway through the test and also tell you when you have five minutes left. I will tell you to stop writing when the test is over.

If you have any questions during the test, you should put your hand up and wait for someone to come to you. You must not talk to each other.

Are there any questions you want to ask me now?

You should now open your test booklet.

You may now start the test.

Total marks for the mathematics papers: 50

Mathematical notation

If a pupil asks for clarification of the mathematical symbols or notation used in a question, you may read these to the pupil but you should not indicate the operation or process involved.

For example:

	Say	Don't say
$-4x$	minus/negative four x	four minus/negative four times x
x^2	x squared	x times x or x times itself
10^4	10 to the power (of) four	10,000 or $10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$
%	per cent	out of every hundred
$4(t-1)^2$	four, open bracket, t minus one, close bracket, squared	t minus one all squared, times four

Access arrangements

You may consider the use of access arrangements to ensure that the optional level 6 tests are accessible for all pupils working at the level of the tests.

You are free to make adaptations to the tests that will improve accessibility for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Examples of appropriate adaptations

School-based adaptations to the tests may include:

- allowance of up to 25 per cent additional time
- use of readers, prompters, sign language interpreters and scribes
- use of transcripts and word processors (word processor tools that help with spelling, punctuation and grammar should be switched off)
- use of rest breaks
- provision of tactile shapes and number cards
- separating the tests into sections, taping, photocopying onto coloured paper, use of coloured overlays, use of apparatus
- enhancing the shading on diagrams, including charts and graphs, to increase visual clarity
- enlarging diagrams, cutting them out, embossing or mounting them on card or other material
- translation of words or phrases in the mathematics test papers for pupils for whom English is an additional language, and for pupils who use British sign language (BSL) or other sign supported communication
- rephrasing of test instructions including the use of gestures or drawings
- discussion of concepts that may be culturally unfamiliar to pupils when introducing the tests
- use of bilingual dictionaries during the mathematics tests.

You should be careful that any access arrangements used do not alter the nature of the test questions.

Modified tests

Enlarged print test papers for visually impaired pupils are available to download from *NCA tools*. Braille papers and modified large print test papers for pupils with a visual impairment are also available to order.

Additional guidance notes for teachers administering the modified optional level 6 tests are available to download from *NCA tools* and are supplied with Braille test papers.

If you have any questions about ordering modified tests, contact the QCDA modified test agency on 0844 500 6727.

For further guidance on access arrangements please refer to the 2011 key stage 2 *Access arrangements guide*, available on the QCDA website at www.qcda.gov.uk/accessarrangements.

Marking the optional level 6 tests

QCDA will not be offering an external marking service for the optional level 6 tests so schools will need to make their own marking arrangements.

The *Mark scheme* booklets provide all the information needed to mark the tests and the level thresholds for each test. They are available on the *NCA tools* website. In order for the test outcomes to be a valid measure of pupil attainment, the questions must be marked in strict accordance with the information in the *Mark scheme* booklets.

Mark scheme amendments for modified large print and Braille are provided with the modified versions of the tests.

Useful contact details

National curriculum assessments helpline

For general enquiries about national curriculum assessments.

Tel: 0300 303 3013

Fax: 0300 303 3014

Email: assessments@qcda.gov.uk

Website: www.qcda.gov.uk/tests

QCDA
53–55 Butts Road
Earlsdon Park
Coventry CV1 3BH

QCDA enquiry line

For general enquiries about the work of QCDA.

Tel: 0300 303 3011

Fax: 0300 303 3014

Email: info@qcda.gov.uk

Website: www.qcda.gov.uk

QCDA modified test agency

For enquiries about modified test materials.

Tel: 0844 500 6727

Fax: 0844 500 6451

Department for Education (DfE) national enquiry line

For enquiries about the statutory requirements for assessment, national results, Achievement and Attainment Tables and reporting to parents or persons with parental responsibility.

Tel: 0370 000 2288

Website: www.education.gov.uk/contactus

Department for Education
Castle View House
East Lane
Runcorn
Cheshire WA7 2GJ

DfE publications helpline

To order single copies of DfE materials and DfE circulars.

Tel: 0845 602 2260

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About this publication

Who is it for?

This guidance is for headteachers, test administrators, key stage 2 English and mathematics teachers and key stage 2 assessment and special educational needs coordinators involved in administering the optional level 6 English and mathematics tests.

What is it about?

This booklet provides guidance for schools that choose to use the optional level 6 English and mathematics tests.

Related materials

- 2011 key stage 2 *Assessment and reporting arrangements*
- 2011 key stage 2 *Access arrangements guide*
- 2011 key stage 2 *Test administrators' guide*
- 2011 Modified test administrators' guides

For more copies

The documents listed above can be downloaded from www.qcda.gov.uk/tests.

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