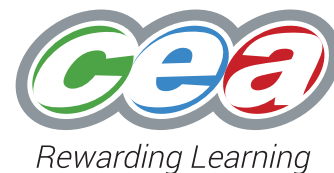


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CCEA Corporate Plan 2020–25



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Introduction

History

The Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), which was established on 1 April 1994, is a non-departmental public body reporting to the Department of Education. We remain a unique educational body in the United Kingdom in that we bring together the three areas of curriculum, assessment and examinations.

Remit, Duties and Functions

CCEA's duties and functions are detailed in the Education (NI) Order 1998 (Articles 73 to 80).

In summary, our role is to:

- a. continually review all aspects of the curriculum, examinations and assessment for grant-aided schools, colleges and training organisations;
- b. undertake statutory consultation on proposals relating to legislation involving curriculum, examinations or assessment;
- c. advise government departments on matters concerning curriculum, assessment, examinations and external qualifications;
- d. develop qualifications, conduct qualifications and assessments and moderate relevant qualifications and assessments, ensuring that educational standards are recognised as equivalent to those upheld by other similar UK bodies;
- e. accredit, regulate and provide advice on approval of qualifications; and
- f. publish and disseminate information and material relating to curriculum, assessment and examinations.

We receive core funding from the Department of Education. We can supplement our income with fees, mainly from the provision of qualifications.

We also receive ring-fenced funding from the Department for the Economy and other government departments for projects mainly involving qualifications, examinations and curriculum.

Our Structure

CCEA has a Council that consists of a chairperson and between nine and thirteen members. The Minister for Education appoints the chairperson and Council members, following public advertisement by the Department of Education. Council members typically represent all sectors of education, business and commerce. They usually serve for three years but may apply for reappointment for a further term.

CCEA is organised into four broad areas:

- a. Chief Executive's Office;
- b. Finance and Corporate Services Directorate;
- c. Education Directorate; and
- d. Regulation.

Each area has discrete business units that can be subdivided further into operational teams. We employ approximately 300 permanent staff. We also contract approximately 4500 practising teachers as examiners, moderators and markers, with approximately 1000 invigilators ensuring that examinations are conducted following a mandatory Code of Practice. At peak times, we employ up to 5000 temporary staff (including teachers) to help process examinations and assessments.



Our Stakeholders

CCEA has direct and indirect service users.

The Department of Education and other government departments are key service users. We are accountable to them for our performance against work they wish us to complete.

Learners are very important. Learners access our services through schools, further education colleges, and the teachers and lecturers who work there.

We have many other users of our services from the educational community and beyond. These include employers and higher education providers, which we must, and will, take into account and consult as we conduct our work.



Our Corporate Plan

This plan consists of a mission, vision, values and strategic themes. A range of corporate objectives underpin the strategic themes. We have identified five strategic themes that provide the focus for what we intend to achieve over the next five years. The plan describes the actions we intend to take to address and achieve each of the identified strategic goals.

Our Corporate Plan 2020–2025 uses best practice recommendations from the Department of Finance and the Northern Ireland Audit Office with regard to public body corporate planning. This model allows us to make the best use of the resources we receive to deliver value for money services to our customers.

The CCEA Corporate Plan is the highest-level strategic and planning document, with all other documents throughout the organisation complementing it as and when they are created or revised. These documents will follow the same strategic themes and outline their contribution to the key objectives of our Corporate Plan.

We have developed the Corporate Plan 2020–2025 as part of a consultative process involving participation from a wide range of staff, service users and stakeholders. This is a rolling plan that we will review to take account of any changing circumstances, in particular Executive agreement of the Programme for Government and any revised Corporate Plan for the Department of Education.

Contributing to the Programme for Government

When forming this plan, CCEA took account of and reflected the draft Programme for Government. This sets out the priorities and commitments proposed by the Northern Ireland Executive.

The Programme for Government recognises the importance of good education and the significant part it plays in helping to grow the economy, tackle disadvantage and build a shared community for the future. It also recognises the need to invest in young people to ensure that they can contribute to society. Our mission, vision and values support the priorities set out in the outcomes statements of the Programme for Government. They focus on every young person achieving their full potential through the provision of high-quality curriculum resources, educational assessment and qualifications.





Supporting the Department of Education

CCEA's sponsoring government department is the Department of Education. Although the work of the Department of Education extends across many of the 14 Outcomes in the Programme for Government, its key area of focus lies within Outcome 14 – we give our children and young people the best start in life.

The Department of Education is leading on the development of Delivery Plans for the following four of the 42 indicators in the Programme for Government:

- a. Indicator 11: Improve Educational Outcomes
- b. Indicator 12: Reduce Educational Inequality
- c. Indicator 13: Improve the Quality of Education
- d. Indicator 15: Improve Child Development.

CCEA's Corporate Plan reflects and supports the aims of the Department of Education. We will realise our mission and vision by aligning our work with the department's strategic goals. We will also shape and support education policy by ensuring that our primary outcomes are those of the sponsoring department and therefore all resources, solutions and outputs are focused on delivering these outcomes.

Our Mission

CCEA's mission is to create a high-quality curriculum and assessment and qualifications opportunities that empower every learner to fulfil their lifelong potential.

This mission places learners at the centre of CCEA's thinking and serves as the starting point for our vision for education and the part education can and should play in the social, economic and political wellbeing of Northern Ireland.

Our Vision

CCEA's vision is to be a leading authority on curriculum, enabled by effective assessment and qualifications that reward and recognise learner achievement and lead to informed and confident citizens.

Our vision for education is one where:

- a. education supports intellectual, social, moral and spiritual development and fosters a love for learning in young people and adults alike;
- b. education provision reflects the needs of individual learners, the community and the Northern Ireland economy;
- c. learning opportunities are available to everyone, and all our young people can develop skills that enable them to compete for jobs here and elsewhere;
- d. educational providers exhibit, in a transparent way, the very highest standards of corporate governance and accountability in their stewardship of public resources;
- e. customers and stakeholders are at the centre of educational providers' thinking, and their needs and expectations are met; and
- f. end-users of qualifications, particularly employers and higher education, have confidence in the integrity of the qualifications.

Our Values



As a publicly funded arm's length body of the Department of Education, we are committed to delivering our responsibilities in line with the core values of the seven principles of public life (Nolan Principles). Working with our staff, we have adopted these and built our underpinning values.

Our values are:

Learners at the Centre

- Recognising and understanding the needs of learners, adapting to meet their changing needs;
- Taking every opportunity to listen to and understand the needs of the learner; and
- Providing opportunities that enhance educational outcomes and enable all learners to realise their full potential.



Quality

- Understanding that we all have a responsibility to uphold CCEA's reputation and recognising our personal role in achieving this;
- Recognising where efficiencies can be made across the business and doing our best to make these happen;
- Quality assuring all our work, making sure it stands up to the highest level of scrutiny and always seeking ways to improve; and
- Helping others improve by identifying strengths in their work and providing constructive feedback on how they might improve.



Honesty and Integrity

- Sharing and explaining the reasoning behind our decisions and keeping our people and stakeholders informed;
- Communicating in a timely, clear and transparent manner with our people and stakeholders;
- Always ensuring that we are open about difficult messages and where we can improve; and





- Being open with each other about errors and mistakes, so we can learn, correct and improve.

Collaborate

- Utilising the skills and abilities from across our team, our organisation and other stakeholders to achieve the best outcomes;
- Learning from each other, sharing insights, experience and knowledge;
- Seeking out collaborative partnerships that benefit all;
- Actively seeking new connections and building our networks; and
- Supporting each other individually and in teams during busy periods.



Respect

- Providing and taking the opportunity to develop and enhance skills, sharing experiences to build resilience across the team;
- Taking personal responsibility for our development, making sure our skills are ready for work we have to do; and
- Recognising and celebrating exceptional performance.



Responsibility and Ownership

- Communicating and being clear about the work we each have responsibility for;
- Proactively taking accountability for our work, decisions and action;
- Trusting others to take charge of their responsibilities; and
- Providing support to others when they need help or advice.



Innovate

- Making time to think about new solutions and innovative ways of working; and
- Sharing and respecting ideas from across the organisation.

Our Strategic Themes

We have set five strategic themes for the period 2020–2025.

1. CCEA will monitor and advise on the curriculum, so that children and young people have the best start in life, are committed to lifelong learning and can be effective within a global economy.
2. CCEA will provide high-quality assessment mechanisms that inform and recognise progression and reward achievement within our curriculum and qualifications.
3. CCEA will offer a range of high-quality qualifications that recognise knowledge, understanding and skills in a valid and reliable way and that support progression and lifelong learning.
4. CCEA will maintain public confidence in the standards of all regulated qualifications used in Northern Ireland.
5. CCEA will fulfil its strategic priorities by developing its people and resources, with a particular focus on skills to use technology.

All our work during the period 2020–2025 will align with one or more of these themes.

Delivering Our Strategic Themes

1

Strategic Theme 1

CCEA will **monitor and advise on the curriculum**, so that children and young people have the best start in life, are committed to lifelong learning and can be effective within a global economy.

- To achieve this aim CCEA will:
 - a. Complete annual monitoring of the curriculum. This will involve asking stakeholders for their views about the curriculum, or parts of the curriculum, consolidating and reporting those views and proposing actions to address issues that arise.
 - b. Advise the Department of Education, other government departments and arm's length bodies on how they can best use the Northern Ireland Curriculum to meet their strategic or corporate objectives.
 - c. Inform the public about the Northern Ireland Curriculum, ensuring that parts of the curriculum are highlighted or supported with appropriate learning content, and ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the skills required for social and economic success.
 - d. Engage with communities to develop our curriculum so that it contributes towards an inclusive and tolerant society.
 - e. Review international best practice and research to ensure that our curriculum remains consistent with that best practice.

2

Strategic Theme 2

CCEA will **provide high-quality assessment mechanisms** that inform and recognise progression and reward achievement within our curriculum and qualifications.

- To achieve this aim CCEA will:
 - a. Build an assessment mechanism that informs

stakeholders about learners' progress towards levels of achievement, eventually across all key stages.

- b. Ensure our assessment mechanism is fully aligned with the Northern Ireland Curriculum and can adapt to any changes that arise as a result of monitoring of the curriculum.
- c. Develop assessment technology that supports the assessment mechanism while reducing the burden on stakeholders involved in the assessment.
- d. Test, evaluate and implement our assessment mechanism, engaging with stakeholders throughout to ensure the system is adopted across the education providers.
- e. Review and, if required, revise the assessment mechanism used in our qualifications, and regulated qualifications, to ensure that they are efficient and effective but also reduce the burden placed on learners.
- f. Benchmark our assessment mechanisms against other international practice and research, to ensure that the public can have confidence in the data and information that they provide.

3

Strategic Theme 3

CCEA will **offer a range of high-quality qualifications** that recognise knowledge, understanding and skills in a valid and reliable way and that support progression and lifelong learning.

- To achieve this aim CCEA will:
 - a. Review its entire existing qualification portfolio, ensuring that qualifications are valid, reliable and cost-effective. Where the government's priorities or needs are not met by regulated qualifications, CCEA will develop and implement new qualifications. Where qualifications, including regulated qualifications, do not provide valid, reliable or value for money services, CCEA will either reform or withdraw these qualifications.
 - b. Provide qualifications that meet the regulatory standards as defined by the Northern Ireland regulator of qualifications.

- c. Provide support, assistance and content on the teaching of CCEA's qualifications, where this support, assistance or content does not already exist within the private market or where it is reasonable to do so.
- d. Review GCSE and GCE qualifications so that they address the recommendations of the Ministerial Expert Group Report on the Future of Qualifications in Northern Ireland.

4

Strategic Theme 4

CCEA will **maintain public confidence in the standards of all regulated qualifications** used in Northern Ireland.

- To achieve this aim CCEA will:
 - a. Secure the comparability and portability of qualifications standards.
 - b. Promote public confidence in regulated qualifications used in Northern Ireland.
 - c. Promote awareness of the range and benefits of regulated qualifications.
 - d. Ensure that accredited qualifications are compliant with regulatory conditions of recognition in development and delivery.

5

Strategic Theme 5

CCEA will fulfil its strategic priorities by **developing its people and resources**, with a particular focus on skills to use technology.

- To achieve this aim CCEA will:
 - a. Become a leading public sector example for the use of technology, data and information to better our services. This includes introducing Artificial Intelligence or Machine Learning in the interests of making better, ethical and reliable systems.
 - b. Retain ISO 9001, 18000 and 27000 accreditation.
 - c. Be recognised as being a leader in equal opportunities.

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