

Using core tasks to track pupils' progress in physical education



What are core tasks?

The core tasks in the QCA/DfES schemes of work for physical education (PE) give pupils an opportunity to use what they have learnt in an authentic context that is suitably challenging for their age and ability.

The PE core tasks provide a complete piece of work for pupils to achieve (similar to the final piece of work that would be put into a pupil's portfolio or displayed on the wall in another subject). They:

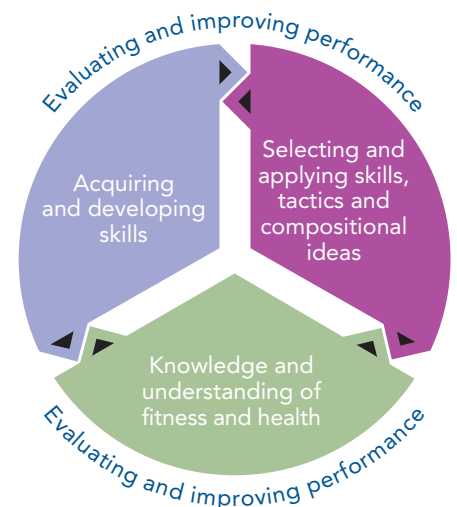
- have been designed to match the physical, mental and emotional maturity of most pupils in an age group
- enable pupils to make progress by improving the quality of their performance in a particular task
- grow in complexity and difficulty as pupils make progress through a series of tasks

- have been written so that pupils can visualise a task – they know what it looks like and what to aim for
- enable teachers to recognise and validate pupils' progress.

Each core task covers the four aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding required by the PE national curriculum, as shown in the diagram on the right. The components are linked and all need to be developed in order to perform a core task well.

The PE core tasks also provide an excellent framework for assessment for learning, as they involve an ongoing discussion between teacher and pupil about how to improve the quality of performance and make progress.

How do core tasks relate to the national curriculum?



About this chart

This chart has been produced to help you track pupils' progress in PE as they work through a specific core task or a series of core tasks. It presents a visual snapshot of the pitch and challenge of different tasks, enabling you to track pupils' progress as they complete tasks both within and across areas of activity (for example gymnastic activities and athletic activities).

Each core task is represented on the chart by a rectangular block. A pupil is ready to work at the pitch of a particular core task when they can access its key concepts and skills.

At this point, they are at the left-hand side of the block, just entering the core task. As they make progress through the core task they are likely to move:

- from hesitant early performance, applying a small range of solutions
- to fluent, accurate performance, drawing on a wide range of skills and ideas.

Once performance is at this higher level and the core task is no longer challenging, the pupil has reached the right-hand side of the block and is ready to move on.

As this suggests, the chart can be a useful tool for curriculum planning. Identify a core task that you think is at an appropriate pitch for your pupils and assess how well they can perform it (if they can perform it easily from the outset, then they are not being challenged enough). From this starting point, use the chart to plan a series of core tasks of gradually increasing difficulty from across the different areas of activity. This will enable your pupils to build on their learning effectively and to make good progress in PE as a whole.

Using core tasks to track pupils' progress in PE

Based on the QCA/DfES schemes of work for physical education



	Pre-level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Exceptional
Games activities		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 3			LINK UNIT CORE TASK 1 LINK UNIT CORE TASK 2 LINK UNIT CORE TASK 3				
Invasion games			UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 3 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 4 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 3	DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 3	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1	
Net games			UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 3			DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1	
Striking and fielding games			UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2			DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1	
Gymnastic activities		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 4 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 3 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 5 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 5 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 6 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 6 CORE TASK 2	DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1
Dance activities		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1	UNIT 3 CORE TASK 1	UNIT 5 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 5 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 4 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 6 CORE TASK 1	LINK UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1
Athletic activities		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 3 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 4 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 5 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 5 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 6 CORE TASK 1	DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 3	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 3	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1
Outdoor and adventurous activities		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 3 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 3 CORE TASK 3	UNIT 4 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 4 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 5 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 5 CORE TASK 2	UNIT 6 CORE TASK 1	DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1
Swimming activities and water safety		UNIT 1 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 1 CORE TASK 3		UNIT 2 CORE TASK 1 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 2 UNIT 2 CORE TASK 3				DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 1 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 2 DEVELOPMENT UNIT CORE TASK 3	INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 1 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 2 INTERMEDIATE UNIT CORE TASK 3	ADVANCED UNIT CORE TASK 1
	Pre-level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8	Exceptional

Further information

The full PE core tasks are available in the QCA/DfES scheme of work for physical education. To order a copy, call the QCA Orderline on 08700 606015, email orderline@qca.org.uk, or visit www.qca.org.uk/orderline/. The scheme of work is also available online at www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes3/.

QCA's swimming website, *Swimming safely, swimming well* (www.qca.org.uk/safeswimming/) shows how you can break down core tasks into teaching activities.

The document *Using core tasks for teaching and learning in PE*, available as a PDF at www.qca.org.uk/pe/, reports on how primary and secondary schools are benefiting from using core tasks.



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority
83 Piccadilly
London W1J 8QA

Telephone 020 7509 5555
Minicom 020 7509 6546
www.qca.org.uk

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