Presentation Assessment

# Guidance for Practitioners

CfE and Presentation Skills

Presentation is an important aspect of literacy that enables learners to communicate their ideas clearly. Whether through handwriting or digital formats, effective presentation supports more successful engagement with a range of audiences.

Handwriting is a deeply personal, unique skill. It requires the development of fine motor control, spatial awareness, and an understanding of the conventions of written English which all take time and support to master. While CfE outlines that handwriting should be 'clear and legible' it does not prescribe a specific style, allowing schools the flexibility to adopt an approach that best suits their learners.

At the same time, digital presentation skills are increasingly essential in ever-evolving learning and work environments. Digital tools offer a wide range of functions —from formatting and layout to multimedia integration—that can enhance creativity and communication. Learners must be supported to make use of these tools.

Learning, teaching and assessment of both handwriting and digital presentation should consider the process and the product, focusing on control, consistency and clarity. Professional judgement must take into account the learner's age and stage of development and should always value individual progress over uniformity. This includes practitioners recognising the personal nature of handwriting and the diverse ways learners may use digital tools to enhance their communication.
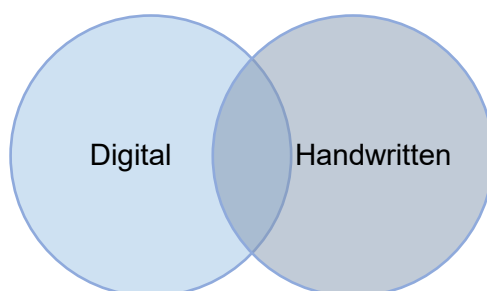
Taking all of this into account, schools should adopt an approach which:

- Recognises that handwriting develops at different rates and appropriately supports learners to develop a style that is both personal and legible.

- Provides explicit teaching and modelling of both handwriting and digital presentation skills, ensuring progression for learners across stages.

- Promotes the use of digital literacy by teaching learners how to use formatting, layout, and design tools to enhance communication and effect.

- Ensures equity and inclusion by valuing all alternative methods of presentation, where appropriate, including assistive technologies.

- Fosters a culture where individual presentation is valued, not for perfection, but for its role in helping learners express themselves clearly and confidently.

Age and Stage Appropriate Expectations

At Early Level learners will:

- Engage in mark-making using a variety of tools
  (e.g. pencils, crayons, paintbrushes).
- Participate in play-based activities that support correct pencil grip and posture.
- Begin to understand directionality by mark-making left to right and top to bottom.
- Explore shapes and letters through tactile and multisensory approaches
  (e.g. sand trays, finger painting).
- Use simple digital tools to experiment with mark-making
  (e.g. drawing apps on tablets)
- Begin to learn to form some lowercase and uppercase letters correctly.

At First Level learners will:

- Learn to form all lowercase and uppercase letters correctly and consistently.
- Develop even letter sizing and spacing between words in short sentences.
- Write from left to right and top to bottom.
- Begin to apply simple layout features (e.g. titles, headings).
- Use basic digital tools to type text (e.g. keyboard, word processors)
- Begin to explore formatting options like font size and colour.

At Second Level learners will:

- Form letters correctly and consistently in a way that is clear and legible.
- Consolidate a more consistent and fluent personal handwriting style.
- Use appropriate joins (if taught).
- Begin to use paragraphs and layout conventions (e.g. subheadings, captions).
- Use digital tools to format text effectively (e.g. adjusting font, size, alignment).
- Make decisions about how to enhance digital presentation.
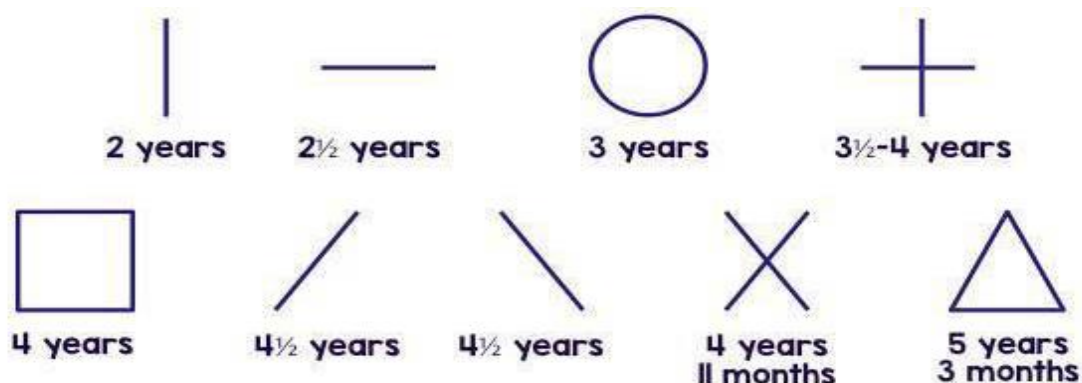
At Third Level and beyond learners will:

- Write using a fluent, legible, and efficient handwriting style.
- Make more effective independent choices about layout and presentation.
- Develop digital skills, including formatting, editing, and integrating multimedia
  (e.g. images, hyperlinks, video).

Assessment and Professional Judgement

To support with assessment and professional judgement, the sources below provide some further information to be considered.
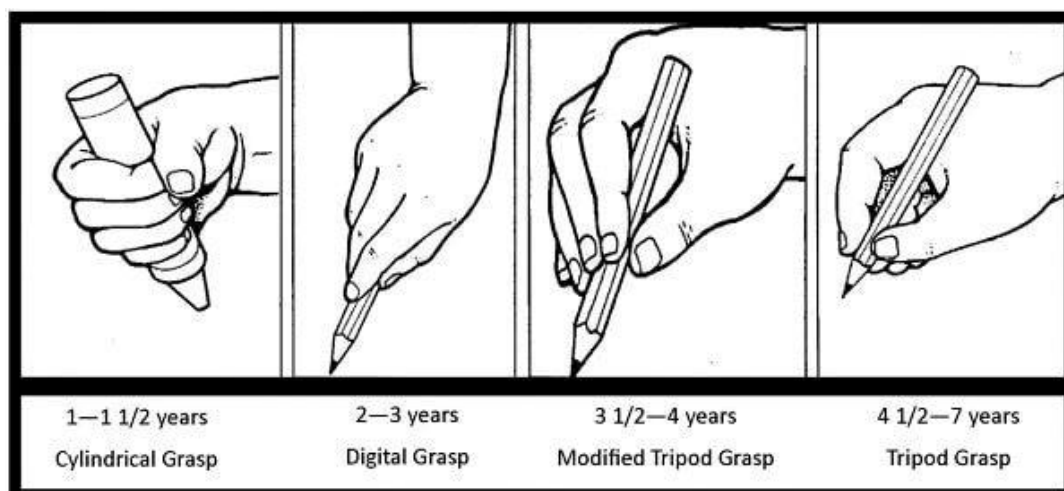
Prewriting Shapes
The progression below outlines the shapes that support handwriting development.

│	─	◯	✛
2 years	2½ years	3 years	3½-4 years

▢	╱	╲	✕	△
4 years	4½ years	4½ years	4 years 11 months	5 years 3 months

Pencil Grip
The progression below outlines the identifiable stages of pencil grip development.

1—1 1/2 years	2—3 years	3 1/2—4 years	4 1/2—7 years
Cylindrical Grasp	Digital Grasp	Modified Tripod Grasp	Tripod Grasp

Letter Formation
The chart below outlines the correct way learners should be forming letters.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff

Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Letter Families
The chart below outlines the letters learners should be forming in a consistent way.

Letter family 1 Down and off in another direction	l i t j u y
Letter family 2 Down and retrace upwards	m n r b p h k
Letter family 3 Anticlockwise round	c a d o q g e f s
Letter family 4 Zig-zag letters	v w x z
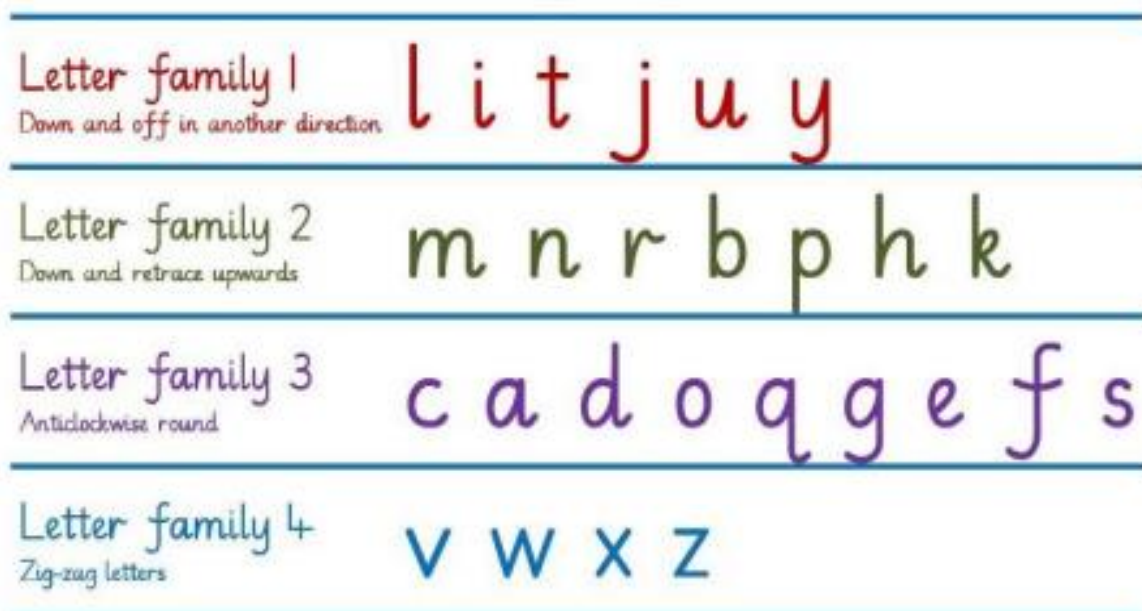
Questions to Support Moderation

When assessing your learners' presentation, it may be helpful to use the following questions to support your professional judgement and moderation:

- Does the presentation reflect the learner's age and stage of development?

- Does the learner's presentation demonstrate progress over time?

- Considering their control in handwriting (e.g. letter size, spacing) or use of digital formatting (e.g. headings, bullet points, font use) what would now be the most appropriate next steps for learning?