

CCE (part of RTE) explained

1. Introduction

The RTE act is at the core of CACR and it is essential that the act and its components are well explained on CACR's website both for members and others. CCE is an important element of RTE. CCE as an evaluation tool makes a radical departure from the exam system we know both personally and from how it is practiced elsewhere.

RTE has been ridiculed for its provision of automatic promotion of a child to the next standard at the end of an academic year. Indeed, Pratham reports show that post the implementation of RTE act in 2008 student literacy (language and arithmetic) is on a steady decline (after initial improvement prior to 2008). As with laws, the RTE itself may not be at fault - its implementation is. We in CACR must understand what CCE aims to achieve and then get the system (teachers, HMs, edu dept) to implement it correctly. A credible third party audit of any student for his or her expected abilities commensurate with his or her standard in school should match with what the schools CCE card for the student shows.

It took some time chasing AOs and HMs before I could get CCE documents (from HM Bazaar Gate school at Petit). These documents are in Marathi and not easy to understand for a non-Marathi person. There are actually 3 documents all meant to be teacher's guide to CCE with two numbered 2 and 3. But the preamble does not tell you if the latter ones were issued later and are meant as a revision.

The term CCE itself was not clear to me. C can stand for curriculum, consistent, continuous or comprehensive. E can stand for elementary, evaluation or education. My best guess is that CCE stands for Consistent Comprehensive Evaluation.

The Marathi language used in the document is somewhat complex. I wonder how many teachers are able to understand it (despite training they may have been given).

2. Admittedly the current examination system puts undue stress on mugging and its recall and may not test intrinsic learning of the subjects. It puts the students under undue stress at exam times which in itself can cause poor performance of some. The final score becomes a major factor in future life. The system of teaching and studying therefore becomes geared to scoring higher. CCE aims at avoiding these pitfalls.

What CCE misses in the main is the possibility of the CCE being used as a tool in poor teaching in schools. There is no provision of third party audit and the teacher can do a routine job of rating the students. A good average puts the teacher in good light and the education department can pat itself on the back for how good its teachers and schools are.

3. There is a whole chapter on how students must develop their observation ability, be curious, be creative etc. The students must be encouraged to ask questions: who, why, what, how, where, why not, if, how many etc.

4. Evaluation

A teacher is supposed to evaluate a student based on observing the student daily, on the student's oral participation (answers, loud reading, conversation, group discussion etc.), on student's projects and experiments, written examination, homework etc. Each of these is called as instruments of evaluation. For each subject the number of instruments to be used is specified. Thus, for extra-curricular subjects such as art, projects and physical education cum health a

minimum of three instruments are to be used while for remaining subjects a minimum of 5 instruments must be used.

Three different terms such as practical / experiment, activity / action and project are used as three instruments. However, due to lack of any specific examples it is not clear what kind of work or study belongs to which of these three instruments. Of these projects are easier to understand. It is expected to be given in small groups and have to be completed within a single term. The teacher is expected to serve as a project guide. Some examples of projects for different standards are given.

There must be at least one open book examination in each academic term (there are two terms to an academic year). The choice of open book or closed book is with the teacher but if closed book the complexity of questions is expected to be low.

The teacher maintains evaluation sheets for each student. There are two pages in which the teacher can make remarks once in a while about the teacher's observation on the student. If the student has any inherent or otherwise difficulty (say pronouncing words or certain sounds) then those too have to be recorded by way of such observations.

5. Combined score for a subject

Evaluation is divided into assigned score (using instruments such as observation, activity, practical, unit test etc.) given during the teaching period over the term and assessed exam score (oral, practical and written) at the term end. The assigned and assessed scores are to be mixed in a specified proportion. For lower standards the assigned score is higher and goes down for higher standards.

The school can and must determine for each standard and for each subject how the score on each instrument is to be combined to arrive at a single score for the subject. The CCE booklet itself gives some indicative percentages for various standards and subjects and it would be surprising that the schools deviate from those percentages.

Each combined score is then converted to a grade A1 (91 to 100%), A2, B1, B2 (61 to 70%), C1, C2, D, E1 and E2 (below 20%).

Each term a progress report is prepared for each student and signed off by the class teacher and HM. The same is supposed to be shown to the parent and parent's signature obtained.

6. Remedial teaching

The teachers are required to observe any difficulty or deficiency student/s may have and work towards removing them.

7. Sample questions

Several pages are devoted to questions for each standard starting with 1 and for each subject. For each standard and subject the questions are grouped into various categories. There is no uniformity across standards, subjects and categories. Thus, it is not clear if all categories have to be used in all standards, subjects or selectively. The subtle difference between categories too is not clear to a person like me.

a. Knowledge / comprehension

- (1) Std 1, Subj Marathi: Write the name of a flower.
- (2) Std 3, Subj Marathi: Use (had fun, vanished) in "soon as guard came the children ran away".

(3) Std 4, Subj maths: what number is 1 less than 10,000?

b. Usage

- (1) Std 2, Subj Marathi: Use opposite word such as happy in the sentence “the sparrow was sad because her nest was broken”
- (2) Std 4, Subj maths: take any four digits and make a 4 digit number from it

c. Creative

- (1) Std 2, Subj Marathi: What would you have done if you had wings?
- (2) Std 4, Subj maths: How will you draw a circle without a compass?

d. Oral

- (1) Std 1, Subj English: see a picture and tell if it is cat, window, book etc.
- (2) Std 4, Subj English: recite a poem

e. Written

- (1) Std 4, Subj English: rewrite the given letters or words in alphabetical order

f. Practical

- (1) Std 4, Subj English: from given letter cards, make a word

g. Open ended

- (1) Std 2, Subj Marathi: Write (or tell) words related to rains
- (2) Std 6, Subj science: write the names of 5 trees in your area and write their features

h. Thought provoking

- (1) Std 3, Subj maths: write the correct sign in the blank space 15 12 3
- (2) Std 5, Subj science: A boy has malaria. Write a notice board telling people what precautions should be taken so that it does not spread.

8. Part 2

This part elaborates on the instruments (observation, oral, practical / experiment, action / activity, project, exam, homework / self work) used for evaluation. For some instruments such as observation a list of what constitutes difficulty (drops words while reading) and what may constitute good ability (reads books other than textbook, uses alternative method to solve a maths problem) is given.

While the material given is somewhat helpful, it did not completely clear my doubts about what exactly constitute some instruments such as activity or practical.

9. Part 3

This part too is like part 2. Patchy examples for some standards for some subjects are given of various instruments.

The second half of this booklet gives the student record forms. It contains the student's personal information, the schools where the student has studied so far, his score in each term of each

academic year for each subject, the various government facilities (such as scholarships, uniform etc) availed of in each academic year and a record of behavior traits of the student for each year in personal, social, studies and inclination / likes.