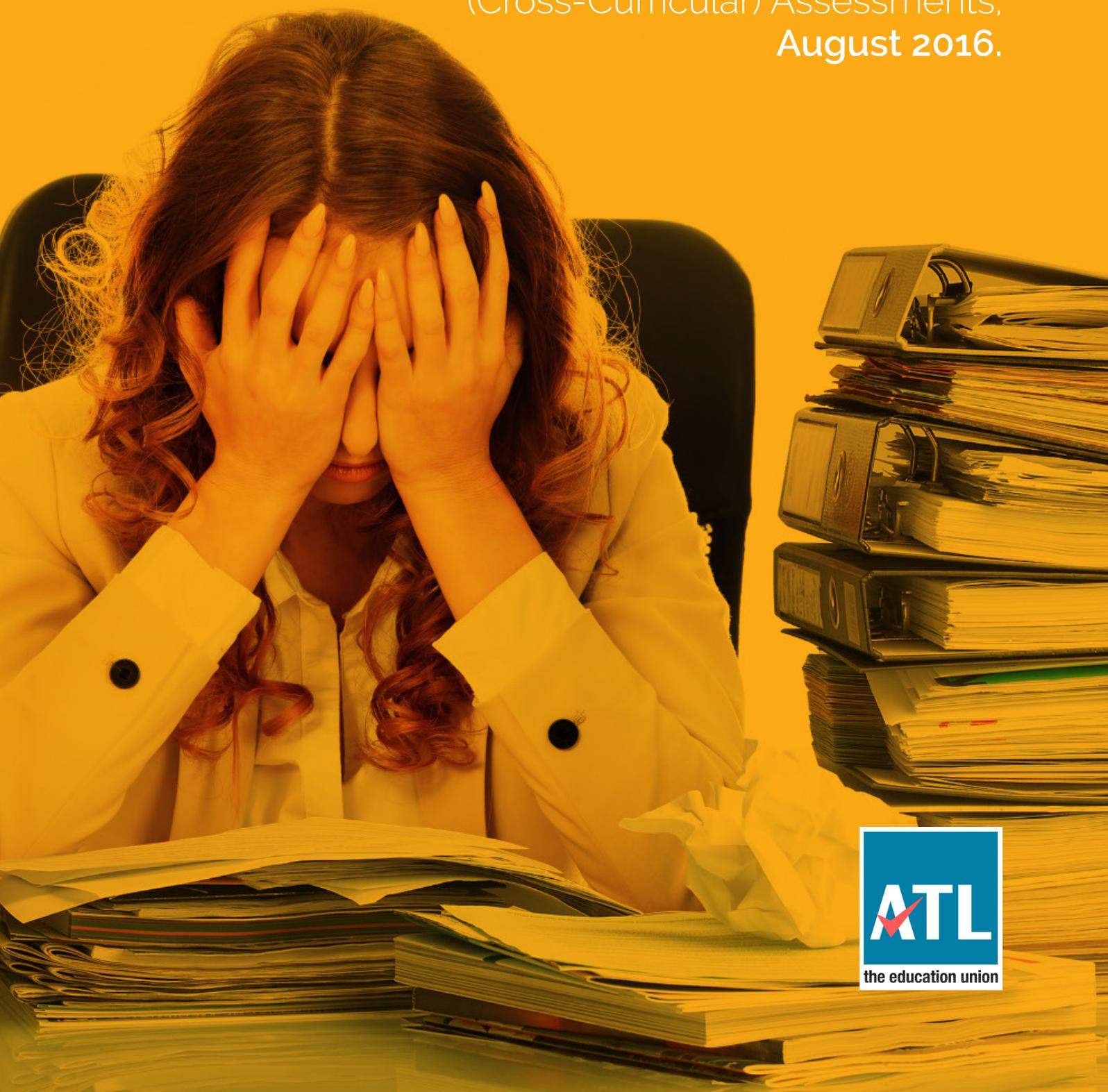


# ATL Guidance on Industrial Action:

Non Co-operation with  
DE/CCEA End of Key Stage  
(Cross-Curricular) Assessments,  
**August 2016.**



## ATL Guidance on Industrial Action:

ATL members in schools balloted for industrial action in 2013, with the majority of schools voting by over **95% in favour of action** – that being **Non Co-operation with DE/CCEA End of Key Stage 3 (Cross-Curricular) Assessments**. This action was initiated as a result of the conviction that the current arrangements are of limited benefit to pupils, parents and teachers, and may even distort other priorities in learning.

ATL considers that the DE/CCEA designed Assessment process places an unreasonable workload on teachers. The balance of workload, notably at Key Stage 3 on English, Maths and ICT Departments, is acute and gives a lie to the notion that the process is genuinely "cross-curricular".

You will be aware that the moderation of Using ICT becomes statutory from September 2016.

The arrangements encroach significantly into the teaching and learning time of pupils and teachers. The process lacks the confidence of teachers and, we believe, of parents. Our concern is that standards in education will be negatively affected.

The process is unreasonable, unworkable, and clearly not fit for purpose.

In response to the letter of David Hughes of the Department of Education, to School Governors, on 24th August 2016, **we are further reinforcing our advice to ALL ATL members not to co-operate with the End of Key Stage Assessment arrangements**.

For avoidance of doubt, **Non Co-operation means Non Co-operation** with each and every aspect of the Department of Education (DE) and Council for Curriculum, Examinations and assessment (CCEA) process, including:

- **use of levels**
- **input or submission of levels**
- **preparation of tasks**
- **submission of tasks**
- **preparation of lessons in relation to DE/CCEA tasks**
- **internal and external moderation**
- **attendance at training events**
- **dialogue with DE or CCEA staff in relation to any part of the process**
- **any other duty associated with the DE/CCEA arrangements**

Bearing this in mind, ATL advises that assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning, and it remains an important and contractual element in the professional responsibilities of teachers. The 'Jordanstown Agreement' states:

*"included in the professional duties which a teacher may be required to perform" are "... assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils;"<sup>1</sup>*

Therefore, ATL members **should continue to professionally assess pupils in all other ways**, in accordance with your school's Assessment Policy, with the exception of the DE/CCEA Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 (Cross-Curricular) Assessments. This includes Assessments at Year 8, 9, and at the End of Key Stage at Year 10.

ATL deeply regret that the Department remain wedded to a system which clearly does not enjoy the confidence of teachers. We acknowledge that negotiations with the former Minister and Departmental officials have mitigated – to an extent – the flawed system-design, notably in that:

- the Department of Education no longer hold school level assessment data;
- individual pupil portfolios are no longer a feature of moderation.

However, the jury remains out on how ETI (or other arms-length bodies) will use key stage assessment data appropriately.

We re-iterate our willingness to re-engage in negotiations, but on a more fundamental basis as set out in the Northern Ireland Teachers Council policy position paper "**Rising to the Challenge**".

It is particularly galling that the former Minister, and the Department, should require compliance with the flawed system of Key Stage assessment as a condition of receiving Shared Education funding – a manoeuvre which ATL can only treat as a hostile act and one which is punitive to applicant schools.

Schools seeking Shared Education funding should contact ATL direct, for further guidance, at [mlanghammer@atl.org.uk](mailto:mlanghammer@atl.org.uk)

- ✓ **The industrial action has been very popular with ATL members.**
- ✓ **We detect no desire to end our action.**
- ✓ **The action will continue pending a workable, workload-proofed alternative.**

<sup>1</sup> Statutory Rules of Northern Ireland 1987 No. 267 Education: Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 Schedule 3, Regulation 5 3. (1) (c)