What are the Progression Pathways?

Why are there two versions of the Progression Pathways?

The two versions of the Progression Pathways are as follows:

1. Progression Pathways: topics

Progression Pathways: topics presents the subject of computing as a whole, to encourage you and your students to think about a broad, balanced and integrated curriculum that includes computer science, information technology and digital literacy. It is not until Key Stage 4, when students can choose between qualifications in computer science or qualifications in information technology, that they should become aware of the different strands that exist within computing. Throughout Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 the focus should be on integrating these strands and developing students’ computational thinking skills.

2. Progression Pathways: strands

Progression Pathways: strands does break the subject of computing into the three strands of computer science, information technology and digital literacy to illustrate why you do not have to throw out your current curriculum and start entirely from scratch. IT still plays an important role in the curriculum, and digital literacy has an expanded role. This version of the Progression Pathways is designed to empower you to audit your existing curriculum and fill in the gaps.
A diagram showing how the strands of computing relate to each other over the key stages.

**What are the Progression Pathways for?**

The Progression Pathways are based on the 2014 National Curriculum Computing Programmes of Study and are designed to help you assess students’ progress in computing. As students demonstrate competence in the statements in each colour-coded row, moving from the top row to the bottom row of the Pathways, you can recognise achievement and/or attainment. Arbitrary values (which could be referred to as ‘levels’) could be assigned to each colour-coded row to enable you to use your assessment findings within an existing school-wide reporting system.

It is suggested that the pink, yellow, orange, blue and some of the purple rows are the most appropriate for Key Stages 1 and 2; and some of the purple, red and black rows are the most appropriate for Key Stage 3. The white row overlaps with current Level 2 qualifications. However, students currently in Key Stage 3 or entering Key Stage 3 over the next year or so may not have the prior learning required to begin their learning at the purple row, because the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Computing is being introduced into Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 simultaneously. It is therefore important to ascertain where your students are on the Pathways before you begin teaching and assign arbitrary values accordingly.

**Rewarding achievement and attainment**

Digital badges, named after the column headings in the version of the Progression Pathways you opt to use and coloured according to the row or ‘level’ met, could be used to reward achievement and attainment. Two-tone badges could be used to reward students who are working between two colours. And designing the digital badges themselves will give students a greater ownership of the rewards system.