



User guide to moderation

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Understanding moderation

In line with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition moderation takes place before results are released and helps us to ensure assessment judgements made by centres are in line with NCFE's guidelines and are reliable across centres.

Throughout your learners' programme of study, you will assess learner work and make assessment decisions. To help you to make reliable assessment decisions, it's important you attend our standardisation sessions. Our standardisation sessions provide valuable information to help you to understand our mark schemes. Standardisation dates are published on our website at the start of each session. Your attendance at standardisation is mandatory and will be checked as part of your annual monitoring review (AMR).

We understand that a precise agreement on a mark is not possible, therefore during moderation we allow a small tolerance. If the differences between a moderator's marking and a centre's marking are within this tolerance, the centre's marks can be accepted. If the differences are outside the tolerance, we'll make an adjustment to the mark awarded by the centre to align the centre's standard of marking with our agreed standard. You'll receive details of the moderation outcome and the final marks awarded to each learner on results release day.

Our approach to moderation

To assist with your moderation planning, read our 'How to prepare for quality assurance reviews' and 'How to prepare for moderation reviews' pages on our website. These pages provide all the information you need to ensure you're fully prepared. This guide is designed to help you to understand our moderation approach and the support available.

On completion of the qualification, centres are required to submit marks for moderation. It's important that all marks are submitted before the end of the assessment window, as outlined in the Key Date Schedule.

During moderation, Moderators will look at a sub sample of learner work (either remotely or through a visit), unaware of the marks awarded by the centre's Assessors and will make professional judgements based on their knowledge and experience.

The sample size will be selected using JCQ sampling guidelines (Table 1) and include assessments from across a range of centre marks which include a learner with the highest centre mark and a learner with the lowest non-zero centre-mark. Where an assessment has been carried out by more than one Assessor, all Assessors will be included in the sample, where possible.

Table 1

No. of learners at provider	Stage 1* sample (sub-sample)	Stage 2* Sample	Stage 3* sample
Up to 5	All	All	All
6-10	5	All	All
11-15	6	10	All
16-100	6	10	15
101-200	6	15	20
Over 200	6	20	25

If the differences between the Moderator marks and the marks awarded by the centre are within tolerance, no change will be made to the centre's marks.

If the marks for one or more learners in the sample are outside the tolerance, the Moderator will expand their sample. This is stage 2 sampling.

Following this sample, if marking is considered consistent for example the centre is consistently marking too harsh or too lenient, we'll apply an adjustment to all learners in the cohort using a linear regression mechanism. Regression compares two sets of data (in this case centre marks and moderator marks) to find the relationship between them.

If learner marks can be adjusted satisfactorily using the linear regression mechanism, an adjustment will be applied to the centre marks for all learners in the cohort. Alternatively, if following this sample, Moderator marks are available for all learners in the cohort, the centre's marks will be updated to the Moderator's marks, as these marks are the most reliable with our agreed standard.

If marking is considered inconsistent the Moderator will further widen their sample. This is stage 3 sampling. Marking is considered inconsistent if the difference between the most extreme values of the Moderator mark minus centre mark, is greater than twice the accepted tolerance.

At this stage it may be necessary to apply different adjustments across the mark range, depending on the findings from stage 3 moderation, the action will be determined by the Chief Moderator, who will consider if:

- the Moderator should re-assess the work of all learners at the centre, in which case the Moderator's marks will be applied.
- the centre should re-assess the work of all its learners, in this case and a fresh sample will be re-assessed by the Moderator.
- internal standardisation within the centre has not been effective, in this case separate samples may be taken from Assessors, and adjustments applied to, individual teaching groups.
- centre assessment decisions are inconsistent across options within the occupational specialism practical activity assessment, in this case separate samples may be taken from, and adjustments applied to, individual options.

Points to note around mark adjustment:

- No learner will be treated differently by virtue of having been included in the moderation sample. Mark adjustments, when made (following re-assessment of the stage 2 or stage 3 sample), are determined based on the pattern of differences between the centre and Moderator marks, with a view to bringing centre marks into line (such as to reduce the mean of those differences to zero) and applied to all learners.
- Mark adjustments should always maintain the centre's rank order of merit unless moderation moves on to stage 4. Where teaching groups are treated separately at stage 4, each group is moderated as though it is a distinct centre (and the failure to internally standardise will be followed up with the centre).
- For small centres, all learners will have been selected before stage 4 of the sampling process is reached (for example, if there are 7 learners at a centre, the stage 2 sample includes all of them), in these circumstances adjustments (if needed) will be applied in the same way as for a larger centre, retaining the centre's rank order. The final marks will be the Moderator marks only where the sampling would have moved to stage 4 if the centre had been larger.
- It is important that centre's marking is internally standardised. For further information on internal standardisation, you should refer to JCQ booklets Instructions for conducting coursework, Instructions for conducting controlled assessments and Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments on the JCQ website.

Centre support following moderation

On results release day, the below information will be available on the Portal for centres to download.

- **Student results slip for the T Level Occupational Specialist Component**
This provides an overview of the results for all assignments completed as part of the occupational specialism, the student's overall mark and overall grade.
- **Results confirmation report for the T Level Occupational Specialist Component**
This provides an overview of the raw marks awarded to each learner for all assignments completed as part of the occupational specialism, the student's overall mark and overall grade.
- **Your results explained document**
This provides information around how the final grade was awarded. In some instances, centre marks submitted for moderation may change during the moderation review. This document explains why marks may change and how alternative marks are applied.
- **Provider action plan**
Where marks have changed following moderation, centres will receive an action plan to support their assessment decisions in the following session. This will be completed by the Moderator at their next visit.
- **Chief Moderator Report**
The CM report will provide an overview of the moderated assignment including examples of good practice and where further development may be needed.

The Moderation Report

Sections of the report

- Section 1: Provider and NCFE Contact Details
- Section 2: Previous Action Plan
- Section 3: Assessment
- Section 4: Moderation
- Section 5: Provider Action Plan
- Section 6: Action required by Moderator / Head Office
- Section 7: Additional Information Sheet

Over the following pages we'll look at each section of the report. You'll find statements included in the report followed by an explanation. The explanations will detail what the Moderator is looking for and examples of evidence which could be presented to meet the criteria. Please note that these explanations are not intended to be exhaustive. There is more than one way to achieve a successful outcome for each criterion.

Section 1 – Centre Details and our Contact Details

This section of the report will include your contact details, the product covered as part of the review and the date of the review.

Section 2 – Previous Action Plan

Section 2 of the report will show any previous actions. The Moderator will confirm if they have been addressed and indicate any actions outstanding.

The outcome of final moderation from the previous session will also be captured in the first report of the next session and will inform the agreed actions to be captured in section 5

Section 3: Assessment

This section of the report is about your assessment decisions. The Moderators will use the following prompts to determine if a 'Yes' or 'No' should be applied for each criterion. If the Moderator selects 'No' an action will be added to the action plan in section 5 of this report.

3.1	Students' development needs are matched against the requirements of the assessment and an agreed Individual Assessment Plan established.
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that Assessors, complete Individual Assessment Plans for each learner. Tutor Guides are available on the qualification pages on our website and should be used to plan for assessments.

Evidence to meet this criterion could include:

- Observation Planning Form
- Future Planning Form (Early Years Educator only)

3.2	Assessors have full, up-to-date documentation.
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Explanation

This criterion confirms Assessors have full and up to date documentation. All documentation required to deliver and assess our qualifications are available on the qualification pages our website.

We highly recommend all staff involved in the delivery, assessment, and internal quality assurance of any TQ or VCert model 5 qualification attend NCFE subject specific administration training. It's the Programme Contact's responsibility to ensure all relevant staff attend this training annually as failure to complete all administration tasks sufficiently may mean that learner assessments cannot be reliably moderated.

Details of these events can be accessed via the NCFE website. All training is delivered by the subject Chief Moderator/LEQA and will usually take place via a webinar.

TQ in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4)

During moderation, the Moderator will view completed assessment paperwork for learners not included in their sample. This is to ensure assessment records are completed sufficiently so they can be used during final moderation. Should assessment records be insufficient, the Moderator would be unable to reliably moderate these during final moderation and the Assessor will need to assess the learner again.

Evidence to meet this criterion could include:

- Observation Planning Form
- Student Guide
- Observation of Skills Recording Form
- Professional Discussion Form
- Criteria Assessor judgement guidance and assessment justification
- Final Mark Form

3.3	Assessment including any assessment decisions have been applied in accordance with national standards as outlined in the qualification specification
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that Assessors are making accurate assessment decisions in accordance with national standards as outlined in the Qualification Specification. Internal standardisation meetings will highlight discrepancies in assessment decisions and should be a regular part of course management.

We highly recommend all staff involved in the delivery, assessment, and internal quality assurance of any TQ or VCert model 5 qualifications attend NCFE subject specific standardisation training. It's the Programme Contact's responsibility to ensure all relevant staff attend this training annually and failure to attend may lead to inaccuracies in assessment decisions, which may affect the outcome of moderation and result in additional sampling from the Moderator or changes to centre marks.

Details of these events can be accessed via the NCFE website. All training is delivered by the subject Chief Moderator/LEQA and will usually take place via a webinar.

TQ in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4)¹

For TQ in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4) assessment decisions will be checked at various stages of moderation.

Early Years Educator (EYE) – Competence based criteria will be confirmed in section 4A of the moderation report and further information is provided within Section 4A of this guide.

Structured Observations – The Moderator will aim to sample learners across structured observations and industry placements and will select learners based on the rank order centres provide to ensure students are selected with the lowest and highest abilities and a range of learners in between. Moderators will select their sample using the schedule of assessment, submitted to the NCFE Portal by centres and will plan their visits as efficiently as possible to reduce the number of visits required. This may mean that centres are asked to amend some of their planned assessments, where possible, to assist with review planning.

Moderators will observe 2 structured observations per learner in the sample.

Generally, the criteria covered during moderation will be defined by the content of the structured observation and will ensure that centres and Moderators are marking the same criteria at the same time. However, given the unpredictable nature of the live assessment, some criteria may not be covered and/or additional criteria may arise that can be assessed opportunistically. Where any deviations occur, the Moderator will discuss this with the centre. No marks awarded by either party will be discussed. This discussion will solely confirm the criteria under assessment and may include the maximum marks available for these criteria.

During the visit, the Moderator will also review completed assessment paperwork, for learners not included in the sample, this to ensure sufficient detail is being captured on all assessment paperwork to reliably show how and why marks have been awarded. If assessment decisions are not reliably recorded, this may mean this cannot be moderated remotely during final moderation and the learner will need to be re-assessed and re-moderated.

Evidence to meet this criterion for could include:

- Completed assessment records, no including marks awarded by the centre
- Minutes from standardisation meeting minutes
- Discussions with the assessment team

3.4	Students receive regular feedback after assessment
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that students receive regular feedback after assessment, which is positive and constructive. During the moderation review the Moderator will view completed assessment records of learners.

During initial moderation reviews for TQ in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4) the Moderator will view student feedback for learners not included in their stage 1 sample.

¹T Level is a registered trademark of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education
 The T Level Technical Qualification is a qualification approved and managed by the Institute for Apprenticeship
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Evidence to meet this criterion for could include:

- Completed assessment records for learners

3.5	Assessment records show accurate assessment tracking, progress and achievement
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that accurate assessment records are being maintained to track learners' progress and achievement. During the moderation review the Moderator will view completed assessment records of learners not included in the sample and provide feedback to the Assessor on the completion of assessment documents. The Moderator must check this to ensure sufficient detail is being captured on all assessment paperwork to reliably show how and why marks have been awarded. If assessment decisions are not reliably recorded, this may mean this cannot be moderated remotely and the learner will need to be re-assessed and re-moderated.

During initial moderation reviews for TQ in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4) the Moderator will view student feedback for learners not included in their stage 1 sample.

Evidence to meet this criterion for could include:

- Completed assessment records

3.6	Records of placement hours are maintained and show accurate tracking
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that Assessors are maintaining accurate records of placement hours, where required, that show accurate tracking of learners' progress.

Assessment must take place at the learner's Industry Placement

Evidence to meet this criterion could include:

- Completed assessment tracking records for learners

3.7	Schedules of assessment were sent to the Moderator within the specified timescales, as requested by the Moderator
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Explanation

This criterion confirms that Assessors have efficiently and timely updated schedules of assessment on the NCFE Portal. This criterion relates to **T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4)** only.

It is important that schedules of assessment are accurate and up to date as Moderators use this to plan visits efficiently and minimise the number of visits required. Failure to maintain an accurate schedule of assessment may result in additional visits, actions within the moderation report and/or missed opportunities for the Moderator to sample the criteria required.

We recommend that Moderators can observe up to 4 assessments per visit.

Early Years Educator (EYE) – Competence based criteria - Moderators aim to complete moderation visits between 1 September to 31 January within the learners second year. We understand that there may be times when reviews need to take place after this date, however Moderators will work with Assessors to meet these timescales as far as possible.

Structured Observations for Early Years Educator (EYE) and Assistant Teaching – Moderators aim to complete these moderation visits between 1 February and the end of the assessment window.

Evidence to meet this criterion could include:

- Fully completed schedules of assessment in line with advised timescales

Section 4: Moderation

This section of the report shows the learners and assessments sampled as part of the review.

Section 4a: T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4) only.

This section of the report lists the competence-based criteria required for practitioners to be included in the ratios specified in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework and relates to the **occupational specialism Early Years Educator only**.

Within this section the Moderator will confirm if the criteria observed has been agreed, not agreed not yet observed.

The Moderator must observe centres assessing ALL the competence-based criteria, this can be done across visits. Moderators will plan their sample efficiently to ensure they observe as much criteria as possible during each visit, to reduce the number of visits required. We recommend this is done within 2 visits. This may mean centres are asked to amend some of their planned assessments. Moderators will select their sample using the schedule of assessment submitted by centres.

During the moderation review the Moderator will assess learners alongside the centre and assessment decisions will be discussed following the assessment.

Where the Moderator and centre marks agree, the Moderator will provide feedback on what would have been required for an alternative assessment decision to have been made. For example, if the centre and Moderator award achieved for 1.2 the Moderator will discuss what a working towards would look like for 1.2 and vice versa. This is because it is not practically possible to observe each criterion as achieved and not achieved, so these discussions add rigour to the assessment.

For experienced centres who have previously undergone moderation for the Early Years Educator occupational specialism and there are no new Assessors in place, this level of feedback will be reduced.

The Moderator does not need to see all of criteria at pass level, however they do need to confirm that Assessors are making accurate assessment decisions for each criterion and therefore must observe each criterion at least once although, we expect that they will be able to see this more than once. There are no minimum or maximum learners to sample, and the sample may be across learners, Assessors, and industry placements.

Where all criteria have been observed and agreed, the report will show that the provider has been cleared to assess the competence-based criteria for EYE and no further moderation of the competence-based element will be required for this cohort.

Where Moderator does not agree with the assessment decision made an action will be set in section 5 of the moderation report and a further moderation visit will be arranged to observe this criterion.

Moderators will check during final moderation that the centre has been cleared to assess the competence-based criteria, as learners cannot be certificated until this has been confirmed.

1. Support and promote children's early education and development		Observed and agreed	Observed and not agreed	Not observed
1.1	Understand the expected patterns of children's development from birth to 5 years, and have an understanding of further development from age 5 to 7			
1.2	Understand the significance of attachment and how to promote it effectively			
1.3	Understand a range of underpinning theories and philosophical approaches to how children learn and develop, and their influence on practice			
1.4	Analyse and explain children's learning and development in relation to their stage of development and individual circumstances.			
1.5	Understand the importance of promoting diversity, equality and inclusion, fully reflecting cultural differences and family circumstances			
1.6	Understand the importance to children's holistic development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speech, language and communication • personal, social and emotional development • physical development 			
1.7	Implement a range of pedagogical strategies to support children's early literacy and mathematical skills			
1.8	Understand the potential effects of, and how to prepare and support children through, transitions and significant events in their lives.			
1.9	Understand the current early education curriculum requirements.			
1.10	Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice			

2. Plan and provide effective care, teaching and learning that enables children to progress and prepares them for school				
2.1	Plan and lead activities, purposeful play opportunities which include the learning and development areas of current early education curriculum requirements.			
2.2	Ensure plans fully reflect the stage of development, individual needs and circumstances of children			
2.3	Provide learning experiences, environments and opportunities appropriate to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children			
2.4	Encourage children's participation, ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.			
2.5	Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking, including sustained shared thinking.			
2.6	Support and promote children's speech, language and communication development			
2.7	Support children's group learning and socialisation			
2.8	Model and promote positive behaviours expected of children			
2.9	Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others			
2.10	Understand when a child is in need of additional support.			
2.11	Plan and provide activities to meet additional needs, working in partnership with parents and/or carers and other professionals, where appropriate.			
3. Make accurate and productive use of assessment				
3.1	Understand how to assess within the current early education curriculum framework using a range of assessment techniques.			
3.2	Carry out and record observational assessment accurately.			
3.3	Identify the needs, interests and stages of development of individual children.			
3.4	Make use of formative and summative assessment, tracking children's progress to plan next steps and shape learning opportunities			
3.5	Discuss children's progress and plan the next stages in their learning with the key person, colleagues, parents and/or carers			

4. Develop effective and informed practice – Continued Professional Development				
4.1	Demonstrate a good command of the English language in spoken and written form			
4.2	Explain the importance of continued professional development to improve own skills and early years practice.			
4.3	Engage in continuing professional development and reflective practice to improve own skills, practice, and subject knowledge			
5. Safeguard and promote the health, safety and welfare of children				
5.1	Know the legal requirements and guidance on health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.			
5.2	Identify and act upon own responsibilities in relation to health and safety, security, confidentiality of information, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.			
5.3	Plan and carry out physical care routines suitable to the age, stage and needs of the child.			
5.4	Understand why health and well-being is important for babies and children and promote healthy lifestyles			
5.5	Understand how to respond to accidents and emergency situations			
5.6	Demonstrate skills and knowledge for the prevention and control of infection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hand washing • food hygiene • dealing with spillages safely • safe disposal of waste • using correct personal protective equipment • knowledge of common childhood illnesses and immunisation • exclusion periods for infectious diseases 			
5.7	Carry out risk assessment and risk management in line with policies and procedures.			
5.8	Understand safeguarding policies and procedures, including child protection, recognise when a child is in danger or at risk of abuse, and know how to act to protect them Types of abuse including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • domestic 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • neglect • physical • emotional • sexual abuse 			
5.9	Maintain accurate and coherent records and reports and share information, only when appropriate, to ensure the needs of all children are met.			
6. Work in partnership with the key person, colleagues, parents and/or carers or other professionals				
6.1	Work co-operatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of babies and children and enable them to progress.			
6.2	Work in partnership with parents and/or carers to help them recognise and value the significant contributions they make to the child's health, well-being, learning and development			
6.3	Encourage parents and/or carers to take an active role in the child's play, learning and development			

Provider cleared to Assess Early Years Educator criteria Part 1	Yes/No
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Section 5: Action Plan for Provider

Where 'No' has been indicated for any of the criteria in section 3 of the report, this will generate an action.

For **T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Childcare (603/5829/4)**, these actions will be followed up during moderation visits.

In addition, centres will receive an action plan following final moderation, where centre marks have changed following moderation.

Following the final moderation of Education and Childcare, the allocated Moderator will discuss the outcome with the provider and agree an action plan during the first visit of the next session. This will enable the continual development of assessment practice throughout the session and will include any identified areas of development for the assessment of structured observations.

All actions will be attributed to a specific owner and give a reasonable timescale. If actions in the same section have different owners/timescales, this will be made clear.

Recommendations will not be included in the action plan. Any recommendations will be included in sections 3, as appropriate, under the heading Recommendations. The Moderator will review these recommendations during their next review, however as they are recommendations, they will not be set as actions.

Section 6: Action for Moderator or Head Office

This section of the report is used to enter any action that NCFE may need to take. For example, the Moderator may be informed that the Product Contact details are incorrect or that further information is required regarding some of our products. Moderators will complete this section and any actions entered for Head Office will be passed to the relevant department.

Moderators will consider the outcome of final moderation to inform the plan for visits for the next session. Where provider marks were within tolerance and there are no changes to the assessment team, the Moderator may be able to reduce the number of face to face visits required for EYEP1 and apply the [risk rated approach](#) to moderation (only applicable for 2020 and 2021 cohort)

Where the marks were amended to either the regressed mark or the Moderator mark, visits will be planned to ensure that agreed actions are progressing and practice is developing accordingly.

Section 7: Additional Information Sheet

This section is used to provide any information that doesn't fit into the other narrative sections of the report. Where there are no further comments to make, this will be marked as N/A.

Version control:

Date approved	27.8.21
Approved by	Kay Barrass
Review date	

Only approved versions of this document should be documented in the below table:

Version	Date	Revision author(s)	Summary of changes