

Introduction and purpose

This policy applies to all Moderation including End Point Assessments (EPA) provided by the S4T Limited (trading as Skills Beyond School) - hereafter referred to as Skills Beyond School.

The principle purpose of this policy is to insure that examiners, assessor, and moderators apply marking criteria consistently, and that there is a shared understanding of the academic standards students are expected to achieve.

Moderation

Role of the Moderators

Moderators have several key functions in ensuring the assessment process is reliable, fair, accurate and relevant.

These functions include:

- Advise Centres on appropriate procedures and good practice
- Advise Skills Beyond School and external clients on the running of the education process and act as an independent part of the appeal process.
- Regular sampling of assessment activities, methods and records to monitor consistency of assessment decisions as specified by qualification documentation; provide assessors with prompt, accurate and constructive feedback on their assessment decisions; undertake an active role in raising issues of good practice in assessment
- Ensure that equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices are upheld in the assessment process; liaise with other staff members and stakeholders (assessors, external verifiers, etc) to implement the requirements of the assessment system and ensure effective quality assurance; ensure that all learners' achievement records and Centre documentation are completed in accordance with the requirements of the accredited Centres, and assessment bodies.

Qualifications and training

Moderators must be suitably experienced, qualified and trained. Moderators must be suitably trained in how to apply the Skills Beyond School's examination standards in a Centre and the possible courses of action which may arise from the moderation process. Each Moderator must successfully complete a relevant verifiers training course. Moderators must attend a standardisation meeting to ensure that they have a common understanding of relevant mark schemes and that their marking is consistent and in line with the required standard.

Moderators cannot hold any other function in the examination process, or be an employee of the moderated centre.

Site visits

Moderators will visit each Centre at least twice a year, more for new Centres or Centres where significant concerns have been raised in previous visits. These visits will be at a time and date agreed between the Centre and the Moderator. The Moderator will contact the Centre at least four weeks in advance of the visit. Each Moderator may also conduct up to two 'desk' moderations, where Centres will send out materials for moderation to the Moderator. Centres must supply any reasonable materials the Moderator requests by post by the deadline set by the Moderator. The Moderator will give at least one months' notice when requesting materials for moderation.

During a visit the Moderator will:

Meet with the Centre's leader and discuss the progress of learners and the administration of the course and meet with teaching staff and assessors

Meet with learners (where this is not possible learners may be contacted by email or telephone); review the physical resources; review assessments; review learners' work and the awarded grades; complete a moderation visit report and discuss the findings of their visit with the Centre's leader.

Highlight examples of good practice and areas which give the Moderator concern

Detail the actions that are required to address any issues or concerns that are noted in the report and identify the person(s) responsible for addressing each concern and the time by which the action should be completed. Implementation of these actions will be checked at the next visit.

Sampling learners work

For each unit the Moderator will sample a % of completed work associated with the risk to that unit as

decided by the Moderator (for example change of personnel, CPD, new facilities, new learning materials, changes to business plans, student feedback). If the Moderator agrees with the grades and standard of the work they check, all of the Centre's marks will be accepted.

In cases where the sampling process reveals discrepancies in the marking of assessments, either through inconsistent application of the grading criteria or through the Moderator disagreeing with the awarded grades, the work of the Centre must be re-marked so that every learner receives the mark for their work that the Moderator believes it merits. Where a Centre and the Moderator cannot reach agreement the work will be referred to the Skills Beyond School Board or external client for adjudication. Where discrepancies in the marking are noted an action plan, which will include re-training of the assessors, will be set by the Moderator.

Advising

Moderators will meet with the Skills Beyond School at least annually to discuss their reports, and will present their reports to clients within one month of a moderation visit. At these meetings areas of good practice will be clearly identified. Any problems with the education process will be reported, discussed and recommendations for remedial actions will be made. For each recommendation, persons responsible for each action will be identified with a timescale for completion.

Moderators are also available to advise Centres. Centre leaders should have the contact details of their Moderator so they can discuss any questions they have, or problems that may arise, in a timely fashion.