

External Moderation - Centre Feedback

EAL conducted external moderation during September 2016 across 14 recognised centres and sampled 190 units certificated to confirm that assessments were accurate, fair and consistent and that assessors are consistent in their interpretation and application of the national standards for EAL's Level 2 Certificate and Diploma Engineering Technology qualification

EAL have identified improvements to delivery materials that will enhance the guidance and support for centres. Units 2 and 3 for the Level 2 Technology and Technologies qualifications have been updated to reflect these changes and can now be downloaded from the Publications section in Online services.

The headline findings from the external moderation identified areas where centres need to improve internal moderation. These were in the following areas.

- Authenticity checks against Learner assessments
- Consistency of marking by Assessors
- Consistency of marking across Learners
- Accuracy of marking
- Centre moderation
- Retention of records
- Learner Feedback
- Changes to the marking criteria

All EAL recognised centres should reflect upon the feedback provided within this communication to determine the effectiveness of their internal moderation activity.

Feedback

There were indications from our sample that assessment practice could be improved in relation to the following points:

Authenticity

- Reminder to assessors that they should always complete checks regarding the authenticity of assessment presented by the learner. Ask yourself, is this the learners work? Have they copied the work? Does the evidence show the learner has true ownership of the knowledge or practical skills stated in the evidence?
- EAL's Centre Marked Assessments must always be completed in a controlled test environment to reduce the risk of plagiarism.
- It is good practice for a Centre to retain a sample copy of the assessment team's signature(s) to ensure authenticity checks can be made against their decisions. EAL provide a template document available to Centres. (See EAL's Smarter Touch document Library- "Assessment Team Signature Authentication")

Consistency of marking by Assessors / Consistency of marking across Learners

Preparing assessment teams to undertake assessment must be considered as part of the Centres Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) strategy and time must be planned in for the Moderator(s) to provide opportunities for the assessment team to compare their practice against other members of the assessment team comparing their judgements across Learners. This is a feature of the centre's standardisation and where appropriate the outcome must be communicated across all members of the assessment team.

The IQA strategy must also consider time for quality checks throughout the delivery and assessment to ensure any inconsistencies between assessors marking are corrected and marks adjusted before claims are made for certification of the Learner.

Accuracy of marking

Before any assessments are undertaken with a Learner the assessor must be familiar with the assessment requirements and the marking and grading of the qualification.

Assessors and moderators must ensure the correct version of the qualification is used to assess the Learner against their registration. EAL recommend the documents are not stock piled and checks for modification and version numbers are part of the checks carried out by assessors and moderators.

Where there is any doubt regarding the marking or grading of the learners' assessment the assessor must consult with their moderator and/or the person responsible for quality assuring the outcome of the qualification.

Should the Centre have any concerns how they accurately apply marking or grading of a qualification they should report their concerns to the Awarding Organisation.

Centre moderation

How do Centres/Organisations carry out moderation?

As part of their Internal Quality Assurance activities centres must have a moderation process in place. The moderation will include a comparison of assessor decisions; a comparison of Learners marks/grading from a representative sample of assessments to compare the consistency of marking across assessors and Learners.

The moderation process must include checks regarding the accuracy of marking and grading and where appropriate will make any necessary adjustments to the marks or grades before claims are submitted for certification.

Is there any supporting documentation for Centres?

- EAL provide a model Internal Quality Assurance process freely available to centres and a range of recording documents to record the range of IQA activities such as IQA strategy, standardisation and moderation are included. (See EAL's Smarter Touch document Library- "EAL Guidance Being a Quality Assurer")

Your External Quality Assurer is also available to provide additional advice and guidance regarding your moderation process.

Record retention

- EAL provides guidance to centres regarding a centre requirement for moderation and the retention of assessment records. (See Smarter Touch document Library- EAL Centre Requirements for Moderation of Centre Marked Assessments)
- Having a good record management process in place and ensuring that all your assessment team are familiar with the process may reduce the risks of losing records.

- All assessment records used for the purpose of centre assessment such as: VRQ assessment must not be placed in the public domain or released in learners' portfolios.
- Treat the assessment records as you would an exam paper, assessment records must be managed and maintained by the centre and stored securely and safely.

Learner feedback

Feedback should be given in a constructive and encouraging manner, which meets the Learners needs

Assessors should clearly explain their decision on the marking and/or grading of the assessments and where appropriate what areas of the Learning outcomes being assessed the Learner needs to improve or develop the necessary knowledge/ skills to successfully complete the assessment.

Assessors should identify and agree the next steps in the Learning process and what support is available to the Learner.

Check all information is complete and accurate on the assessment document and stored securely.

Changes to the marking criteria

Any changes made to the marking criteria set or agreed through EAL's validation process must be authorised by EAL.

Where a centre identifies a concern regarding the marking or grading of a qualification the centre must communicate their concern to EAL to seek confirmation and agreement before any changes are made to assessment material, the mark/grading and or the calculation of marks/grades for EAL qualification.