

Key Stage 1 Local Authority moderation of writing: script for response to questions relating to STA guidance

On 31st October 2016 the revised guidance on the 2017 external moderation of teacher assessment in writing at [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) was published. NAHT received a significant increase in the number of calls from members with concerns about moderation in 2016 and we negotiated hard on behalf of members to achieve key changes.

Schools moderated during the last week in May in 2016 had raw scores available. Schools moderated from early June had scaled scores available. This means that two sub-cohorts of moderated schools were moderated on a different basis. NAHT recommended that this inconsistency was removed in the future through changing the dates of the moderation window. The KS1 moderation window for 2017 has been moved back and is now 5th – 29th June 2017. Raw score to scaled score conversion tables for KS1 tests and test materials will be available on 5th June.

There are increased references throughout the 2017 guidance to the expectation for “professional discussion” to take place and importance placed on teachers’ “professional judgement”. It is also made clear that moderation is a collaborative process between the moderator and the school.

In addition, mandatory national Local Authority moderator training was introduced in 2017 due to the concerns from members over inconsistent approaches to moderation of writing and the interpretation of “pupil can” statements in the interim teacher assessment framework across LAs. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) also produced a [video](#) providing some clarity on the teacher assessment of key stage 2 writing and addressing some misconceptions around moderation. Although focussed on KS2, NAHT have confirmed with STA that some principles in the video also apply to KS1 and these are included below.

However, there may still be some challenging discussions with LA moderators and below you will find some suggested responses to particular issues or questions which may arise. We hope that the “script” will support you to take control of the LA moderation process.

Prior to the moderation visit:

LA contact you to inform you of a moderation visit.

“National training for all LA moderators has taken place this year. All moderators who have been approved to moderate the teacher assessment of English writing have been issued with a confirmation letter from STA. Please can you confirm that the moderator attending my school is in receipt of such a letter and will show it to me when they arrive for the moderation visit?”

LA cannot confirm your allocated moderator has the STA confirmation letter.

“All moderators who have been approved to moderate the teacher assessment of English writing have been issued with a confirmation letter from STA. As this moderator has not been approved by the STA, they should not be leading moderation in my school. Please arrange a different moderator who has successfully completed the national training.”

LA informs you that more than one LA moderator will be attending.

“The guidance is clear that there is an expectation that there will only be one LA moderator per visit. Where more than one moderator is planned to attend, the school must be made aware of this in advance. For what reason do you feel that an additional moderator is necessary?”

The guidance states that additional moderators might be expected to take part if the school has a large cohort, the LA moderator is being quality assured or another LA moderator is there for their own training purposes. The LA should be able to explicitly state the reason for the additional moderator, who they are and what their role would be.

LA contact you to inform you of a moderation visit with inadequate notice.

“The guidance document clearly states that schools will receive at least 48 hours notice of an external moderation visit. Unfortunately you are not giving this notice and I would suggest that the visit takes place on x date in order that this requirement is met.”

LA make a request for data to be provided in advance of the visit.

“The guidance document clearly states that there is no requirement for schools to provide pupil data in advance of an external moderation visit.”

LA make a request for particular evidence/documents to be available for the moderation visit.

“The guidance document is clear that evidence of our pupils’ performance should come from our normal classroom practice and this is the evidence which will be provided for your visit. It is for us to decide what our evidence looks like and how it is presented, not for LAs to dictate.”

During the moderation visit:

Where are the tick lists demonstrating that these pupils have met the "I can" statements of this standard?

“The guidance document is clear that there is no requirement to produce such tick sheets for LA moderation and we have chosen not to use this method to evidence our pupils work.”

Where is the evidence for pupil x who is working within the interim pre-key stage standards?

“The guidance states that the sample of pupils must include all standards awarded within the interim TA framework but that this does not include pupils working within the interim pre-key stage standards, therefore there is no evidence for pupil x.”

This pupil is not demonstrating this “I can” statement consistently. She/he has made errors in some of the work presented so cannot be said to have met this standard.

“The guidance explicitly states that “consistently” does not mean that the pupil must demonstrate an “I can” statement 100% of the time and that pupils will improve over the course of the year. They may make mistakes in something their teacher knows they are secure in. The teacher has exercised their professional judgement in making this decision and will be happy to discuss this.”

Where is the evidence from across the curriculum?

"The guidance states that evidence of pupils' work should be in the form of day-to-day work from across the curriculum, however English and literacy work alone can produce the depth of evidence required. We believe that the necessary evidence is shown through this English and literacy work so there is no expectation to produce evidence from other curriculum areas."

This work does not demonstrate the "pupil can" statement for spelling independently as it has been edited as a result of teacher feedback.

"The STA clarified in a video following national training for moderators that if "sp" has been put in the margin to indicate there is a misspelt word in that line, which has then prompted the child to correct the spelling of that word, this would not be considered evidence that the child could independently meet the "pupil can" statement. However, the video goes on to state that more generic comments to "check your spelling" at the end of a paragraph or block of text or at the end of a piece of work, are acceptable. This is the approach taken by the teacher and so this can be accepted as independent spelling."

This is not independent writing as it has been supported by learning objectives and/or success criteria.

"The STA clarified in a video following national training for moderators that success criteria have a key part to play in teaching and learning. In order for a piece of work to be considered independent, it would be informed by clear learning objectives and success criteria. These should encourage pupils to focus on the criteria against which the work will be assessed, but should not be over-detailed and not over-aid pupils in that they directly shape the writing, for example, telling children what to include or where to include it. The learning objectives and/or success criteria used here are not over-detailed, nor do they over-aid pupils, therefore this writing is independent."

Have you used the exemplification materials to inform the standard of teacher assessment?

"As a school we are confident in our judgements and the guidance document is clear that there is no need to use the exemplification materials if this is the case - the exemplification materials are there to help teachers make their judgements where they need additional guidance. As a school we are confident in our judgements using our existing processes for teacher assessment and internal moderation."

If we compare this work to the exemplification materials...

"The guidance is clear that there is no need to use the exemplification materials - the exemplification materials are there to help teachers make their judgements where they need additional guidance. As a school we are confident in our judgements using our existing processes for teacher assessment and internal moderation."

Where is the evidence that this pupil has met the "I can" statements of the preceding standard(s)?

"The guidance document is clear that there is no requirement to produce specific evidence for this. The teacher must be confident the pupil meets the statements in the preceding standards and the pupil's work for the standard they have been awarded also evidences these."

Where is the evidence that this pupil has met the "I can" statement for handwriting?

"The guidance has made it clear that to be awarded 'working towards' or 'working at expected' standards, pupils do not need to evidence the statements related to handwriting. It is only to be awarded "working at greater depth" that these statements must be evidenced."

This evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate this pupil has met the standard you suggest. (When the school TA judgements have been fully accepted by the LA external moderator)

"We believe that this pupil will be able to consistently demonstrate the relevant knowledge or skills after this visit, but before the deadline for TA submission of Thursday 29 June 2017. We would ask that the LA agree to accept additional evidence for this pupil in order to validate the proposed standard. As the school TA judgements have been accepted in full by the LA external moderator, this evidence can be internally moderated by the school without the need for a LA review. The LA record of visit needs to include these agreed next steps."

This evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate this pupil has met the standard you suggest. (When the school TA judgements have not been fully accepted by the LA external moderator)

"We believe that this pupil will be able to consistently demonstrate the relevant knowledge or skills after this visit, but before the deadline for TA submission of Thursday 29 June 2017. We would ask that the LA agree to accept additional evidence for this pupil in order to validate the proposed standard. As the school TA judgements have not been fully accepted by the LA external moderator, this evidence must be reviewed by the LA before final submission of the TA data, so can we therefore make arrangements for this to happen. The LA record of visit needs to include these agreed next steps."