



# Moderation Policy

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## POLICY STATEMENT

1. Smart Awards is committed to the internal moderation of end-point assessments so that quality and standards are maintained across its assessment tools. Our internal moderation ensures that the decisions of all assessors are consistent and fair to all apprentices.
2. Internal moderation procedures include the sampling and checking of apprentices' work, the standardisation and recording of assessors' decisions, and the mechanism for the internal moderator to feedback to assessors' in order to improve practice.

## SCOPE

3. All moderators must consider CAMERA when carrying out verification/ moderation activity.
4. Factors You need to consider
  - Apprentice ethnic origin, age, gender, special needs.
  - Assessors experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience
  - Methods of assessment questioning, observation, witness testimony, reflective accounts, assignments, professional discussion
  - Elements within the EPA problem areas, special requirements
  - Records reports from assessors, correct assessment practices, IV records, apprentice portfolios and files
  - Assessment locations
5. The moderator will undertake verification activity at set points throughout the programme as indicated on the overall sampling plan. The verification/ moderation activity will include:
  - Sampling of the assessment methods as identified on the sampling plan
  - Observing EPA practice at least once a year
  - Interviewing apprentices about their experience of assessment practice
6. Each internal quality assurance sampling plan covers apprentices who started within a given contract year.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

7. This is policy is for end point assessments offered by Smart Awards. This policy is for employers and Training providers accessing Smart Awards qualifications and related services and all those involved with the delivery and quality assurance of Smart Awards qualifications. Smart Awards has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under our control comply with it. Smart Awards has the day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation.

R	Responsibilities	The person who actually carries out the process or task. The person is responsible for action/implementation. Responsibilities can be shared
A	Accountabilities	The person who is ultimately accountable for the process or task being completed and who has the authority to make decisions, yes or no authority and veto power. Responsible person (s) are accountable to this person. Only one A can be assigned to a task
C	Consulted	The person to be consulted prior to a final decision or action (two-way communication). People who are not directly involved with carrying out the task but are consulted with.

I	Informed	Anyone whose work depends on the process or task and who has to be updated about the progress after a decision or action has been taken (one-way communication).										
TASKS	BOARD	CEO	MD	OPS DIRECTOR	QUALITY PORTFOLIO MANAGER	STANDARDS COMPLIANCE OFFICER	QUAL ADMIN OFFICER	IT CONSULT	FINANCE AUDITOR	EQA	NOPS BOARD	EMPLOYER TRAINING PROVIDER
Awarding Policies and Process												
Moderation Policy	A	R	R	R	R	R	R	I	I	R	C	R
Holiday/Sickness Cover												
The MD, CEO and Operations Director cover holiday/sickness and absenteeism for areas where the person is responsible for action/implementation of a task. The MD, CEO and Operations Director hold company wide experience to be able to carry out these tasks and hold no conflicts of interest.												

## ROLE OF THE EPA MODERATOR

8. Objective: To quality assure the practice and decisions of the EPA Assessors through the end-point assessment process.
9. Key responsibilities:
  - Observe independent assessors' performance and provide developmental feedback
  - Sample EPA assessment records, apprentice' work and assessment decisions and grading
  - Meet with apprentices and others to gather feedback
  - Lead standardisation activities
  - Following Smart Awards quality processes around moderation
  - Ensure accurate and timely reporting to Smart Awards
  - Assist in training, standard setting, and monitoring assessment decisions.

## MODERATION OF EPA ASSESSMENT

10. EPA Assessment decisions will be quality assured, recorded and monitored by Smart Awards. Moderation activity will be used to spot areas for improvement and ensure assessment decisions are robust, consistent and in line with the assessment plan for each standard. Each apprenticeship standard has a named lead moderator. Smart Awards may also use this information to report to other organisations for the purposes of monitoring quality assurance.

## PROCEDURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

11. Moderation must take place after all evidence has been assessed by the IEPA. All IEPA's will be risk banded, based on the below criteria:

High (Red) = 100% of apprentices sampled  
 New to the company  
 High change of result after moderation

Medium (Amber) = 60% of apprentices sampled  
 Newly qualified – 1st year  
 Medium change of result after moderation

Low (Green) = 50% of apprentices sampled

Experienced

Low change of result after moderation

12. These risk ratings will be reviewed every six months.
13. The Internal Quality Assurer will also need to focus on all additional areas of verification responsibility, including observations and CPD. The internal quality assurer may increase the sample beyond the above if there are concerns about assessment decisions.
14. The sampling / moderation strategy will be reviewed every 12 months at the end of each contract year. A review of moderation results/ referrals and assessors' concerns will inform the sampling strategy for the following year.
15. The Internal Quality Assurer must complete the sampling plan and record after each individual internal quality assurance activity.
16. The internal quality assurance plan and record ensures that all aspects of the assessment process have been met, evidence gathering methods, observation requirements and the various types of assessment methods are evidenced on the records. This will allow the Internal Quality Assurer and External Quality Assurer to ensure that the agreed process is being applied.
17. Where it is necessary to vary from the sampling plan, the reason should be recorded and variations added to the internal quality assurance sampling plan and record.
18. Feedback will be recorded following all sampling and moderation activity and shared with the EPA assessor to ensure the integrity of assessment decisions.
19. Direct observation of assessment practice will be carried out on a risk basis but no less than annually. Feedback and findings will be recorded on standardised documentation and shared with the EPA assessor.

## ENSURING COMPARABILITY AND CONSISTENCY OF ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

20. EPA moderators are required to lead on all standardisation activities and events, the purpose of which is to:
  - Standardise the practices and processes of the EPA assessors.
  - Ensure that evidence is sufficient to demonstrate achievement against parts of the Standard assessed by each method
  - Ensure consistency in the assessment judgements that are being made based on the available evidence
  - Ensure that the assessment does not prevent any unintended barriers to achievement for an apprentice and pay due respect to any issues of equality and diversity
  - Ensure that the assessment tasks are written in language that is appropriate to the level and is free from bias

## IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DELIVERY

21. Smart Awards seeks to continually improve the quality of its assessment tools and practice, and its EPA assessors involved in the delivery of end-point assessments. A framework that encourages feedback is in place to support the continuous improvement of practice.

## PROCESS

22. A feedback schedule is in place to gain feedback from EPA assessors, apprentices, employers and training providers. Feedback is collated and reviewed by the management team on a quarterly basis. Attendance at all EPA standardisation and update meetings is used to ensure fully compliance and improve the quality of delivery.

## GRADING

23. Grade boundaries will be applied in accordance with the bands shown in the Assessment Plan and further articulated as necessary by Smart Awards. These boundaries developed will clearly articulate the level of competence required for a pass, merit (where included) and distinction (where included).

## MODERATION OF APPRENTICES' WORK

24. Sample moderation is defined as the examination of a sample of the apprentices' work (derived from the apprenticeship standard/assessment plan as appropriate) by a second internal assessor who is appointed as the moderator. Full Moderation is defined as the examination of all the apprentices work.

25. In both cases, the role of the moderator is to check that all elements of the assessment have been duly marked and graded and that the standards of assessment are appropriate. The comments and grades of the first assessor will be available to the moderator. The moderator will be expected to make separate notes as evidence of the moderation process and on the quality of the feedback provided to apprentice.

26. Moderation of work will occur as follows: For each assessment moderated, the moderator will check that all elements of the assessment have been duly marked, with mark totals calculated correctly where applicable. For sample moderation, in consultation with the first assessor, the moderator will select and moderate a sample of the assessment which will not normally be less than 10%.

27. If the assessor and moderator agree on the mark allocation (initially or after discussion), a moderation record form will be completed making explicit which work was included in the moderation sample and recording of any discussions undertaken in reaching agreement. All reports are submitted to Smart Awards.

28. Where after discussion agreement cannot be reached by the assessor and moderator a third assessor/moderator will be appointed by Smart Awards to complete full moderation of the disputed work. The first, second and third assessors/mod should then meet to agree the grade, with the third assessor/moderator having the final say if agreement cannot be reached.

## MONITORING

29. Assessment decisions will be monitored as described in this policy, and corrective action(s) applied where necessary. Smart Awards will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, regularly considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible. Internal control systems and procedures will be subject to regular audits to provide assurance that they are effective in ensuring the quality and standards of all independent end-point assessors and their practices.

## REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

30. This policy is reviewed and revised annually in response to feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the regulators, SQA Accreditation or Ofqual.