National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate
(Welsh Baccalaureate)
Principal Moderators' Report

January 2025

Introduction

Our Principal Moderator's report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with an overall summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides invaluable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with assessment preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

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[1] *Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.*

Contents

Executive Summary

Entries and Outcomes

Being a January moderation series, there are no overall outcomes for the National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate to report. However, outcomes for each component were as follows:

Individual Project

	D2	M2	P2	P1	U
Cumulative %	16.2	51.3	92.2	100	100

Enterprise and Employability Challenge

	D2	M2	P2	P1	U
Cumulative %	23.4	57.8	90.1	99.9	100

Global Citizenship Challenge

	D2	M2	P2	P1	U
Cumulative %	21.8	55.7	87.6	99.6	100

Community Challenge

	D2	M2	P2	P1	U
Cumulative %	12.1	42.9	84.1	100	100

- This January series once again saw very low entry numbers for the Individual Project component, with only 6 Centres entering candidates and as a result there will be no report produced on this component by the Principal Moderator.
- The Enterprise and Employability component saw the largest number of candidates entered for this series, with 10,000 entries from 81 Centres, closely followed by the Global Citizenship Challenge with 9,851 candidates entered from 78 Centres. The Community Challenge entry numbers were significantly lower, with 2,434 candidates entered from 29 Centres.

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Administration

Entries with 'Absent' candidates
- This series saw the return of a significant number of 'absent' candidates entered, especially for the Individual Project component, where absent candidates were 18.2% of the entries. Centres are reminded that if the decision is made to remove the full cohort of entries before the start of the moderation series, it is advisable to amend and remove the entries through the Exams Officer, rather than entering all candidates as absent.

Controlled Assessment Documentation
- Updated controlled assessment documentation to record candidate marks, assessor and candidate signatures and the time management of the Challenges were produced in 2024. These documents contain a statement declaring the use of any Artificial Intelligence when completing work and **must be used** by all Centres for all components for future series. These can be found on WJEC Portal. Emails were sent to 30 Centres by moderators requesting the updated documentation as out of date controlled assessment documentation had been submitted.

Using IAMIS to upload candidate evidence
- The upload of candidate evidence was well managed by Centres, with no apparent issues with changing the upload platform from Surpass to IAMIS. Several Centres contacted WJEC to comment how quick and easy the process was using the IAMIS platform, with the waiting time for keycodes removed.
- The organisation of candidates' evidence within the uploaded folders remains an issue for some Centres. For future series, Centres are reminded that the E-Submission guidance remains the same for IAMIS as it was for Surpass, requesting the use of a single zipped file labelled with the candidate's name and number, containing a maximum of six documents of file types that are accepted (mp3, mp4, doc, pdf, xls, ppt and jpeg). Further guidance on uploading work and using the IAMIS system can be found by visiting WJEC's e-Submission webpage.

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Overview of the Enterprise and Employability Challenge

Centres continue to use a range of Challenge Briefs that allow candidates to respond positively, showing a range of entrepreneurial skills. Where appropriate Briefs are selected a range of creative and innovative opportunities are available to candidates and, as mentioned in the June 2024 report, tools such as CANVA, Padlets, Jamboards and Minecraft are being used to show evidence of collaboration and creativity, and this is encouraging.
In the January 2025 series there has been an increased use of out-of-date Candidate Assessment Booklets which has resulted in AI and GDPR declarations not being acknowledged. There has also been an increase in the number of missing signatures and incomplete Learning Outcomes that are a requirement on the Candidate Assessment Booklet.

In a few Centres, where the WJEC Candidate Booklets have been used by candidates, these are often poorly organised, and tasks appear disjointed. This was identified as an issue in the June 2024 report. It is important that candidates understand how tasks link together so that they have a full understanding of the Challenge. The Skills Audits and Application Form or Letter of Application (Task 1) should link to the role that the candidate then carries out in the Enterprise Challenge itself (Task 2) which is then showcased in the Pitch (Task 3) and then finally reflected upon (Task 4).

Comments on Learning Outcomes (LO)

Learning Outcome 1 – Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

Strengths

- In Centres where ideas generation had taken place both individually and in groups there were multiple ideas identified, and these ideas were assessed for their strengths and weaknesses. This was sometimes evident within the minutes of meetings. This is seen as good practice.
- The SWOT task as mentioned in previous reports remains a strong aspect of this Learning Outcome, and most candidates included justifications for the chosen idea.
- Where candidates decided as a group their top three or four ideas and considered in detail the strengths and weaknesses of their ideas there was a better opportunity for reflection of the process involved in developing a new concept. This is a vital component of this Learning Outcome.
- The use of tools such as Minecraft are now being used well by candidates.
- The development of a logo as part of Task 2 is continuing to provide further evidence of creativity and many candidates are now embracing this as part of Task 2. Some candidates are using this to brand their product or service, and many have considered packaging, colour palette, typography, websites, and social media - all with the target audience in mind. This is encouraging to see.

Areas for Improvement

- The most successful Enterprise and Employability Challenges continue to provide examples of the development of an idea which are clearly selected and include sketches at different stages to evidence the process.

This continued to be an area to improve in this moderation series and was only evident in work submitted by a minority of Centres. Candidates are not being assessed on their artistic ability, but the creative process of idea development, which is required to achieve the higher bands. Collecting ideas from Google images does not show evidence of creativity.

- Whilst the task doesn't require candidates to invent a brand-new concept, combination and development of ideas as well as imagination and initiative are part of the creativity and innovation aspect. This could include personalisation or a unique selling point. Creation of a prototype can help identify design faults and help further develop an idea. This continued to be an area to improve in this series for many Centres.
- In some cases, the choice of Challenge Brief continues to limit the creativity shown by some candidates and Centres are advised to look carefully at the range of Challenge Briefs available on the WJEC website.
- The reflection on the development and creation of a new concept continues to lack depth. This is either missing or poorly developed by candidates and continues to be an area to improve in many Centres and should be an area for further focus.

Learning Outcome 2 – Understand Personal Effectiveness

Strengths

- Skills audits and their analysis continue to be a strength seen in this moderation series. The most successful candidates ensure that their strengths and areas for improvement refer to the Enterprise Challenge and how they will use their skills and develop them through the teamwork tasks.
- The letter of application again is a strength for many Centres. However, in this series there were many instances of candidates applying for roles in jobs such as teaching, engineering and hairdressing rather than a role within their team e.g. team leader, administrative assistant etc. Candidates should be guided to use their skills audits to identify skills and then apply for a role in the team that suits their skill set.
- In some Centres it is clear to see that there has been an emphasis on candidates holding meetings and recording minutes. Where these have been done well this provides effective evidence of Personal Effectiveness and can show how roles and responsibilities have been implemented. This is an activity that should be encouraged as part of the Enterprise task.

Areas for Improvement

- The analysis of skills audits and the identification of areas for development continues to be an area that would benefit from further consideration in Centres. This has been mentioned in previous Principal Moderator Reports. Screenshots and copies of skills audits are not required and computer-generated analysis cannot be awarded marks. It is the personal analysis of strengths and weaknesses that is required from candidates.
- As mentioned in the June 2024 Report, candidates should be bringing ideas and points to discuss to the meetings and individual candidates should be named in the minutes with dates and notes showing clearly what needs to be actioned by each member of the team. It is important that candidates then carry out what is actioned to them and can evidence what they have completed. Often in the minutes, comments were vague and brief, with no further evidence to show what the individual had done to undertake their role or responsibility to meet the requirements of the higher assessment bands. How minutes are recorded is an area to focus on to improve the evidence produced for this Learning Outcome.

Learning Outcome 3 – Understanding factors involved in an Enterprise and Employability Challenge

Strengths

- As mentioned in the June 2024 Principal Moderator Report, many Centres are providing a useful comment on the Confirmation Statement which can help to justify how marks have been awarded for this Learning Outcome. This is extremely helpful in the moderation process and seen as good practice.
- The concept of the 5 P's is clearly continuing to be covered effectively in many teaching and learning programmes as there is effective evidence of aims, objectives and details of the product, price, target market and promotional materials being included in the evidence provided by candidates. More candidates are now making good use of digital skills to promote products and services, and creativity is clearly demonstrated using social media accounts, short advertisements, and websites.
- Many Centres are encouraging candidates to present a Pitch in front of an audience or "Dragons" and this is encouraging to see. Many candidates are providing colourful and creative Visual Displays to support their Pitch and this provides solid supporting evidence of this Learning Outcome.

Areas for Improvement

- Again, in this moderation series there were still a number of Centres continuing to omit any evidence of a Pitch as part of Task 3. The Visual Display, supported by a script, prompt cards, photographic evidence etc. is a requirement of this Learning Outcome. Some Centres are continuing to provide a Confirmation Statement to say that a Pitch has taken place, but the candidate is not providing any evidence to support this. The Confirmation Statement on its own is not sufficient evidence. This was highlighted in the last two Principal Moderator Reports.

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Overview of the Global Citizenship Challenge

Centres continue to offer a diverse and engaging range of global issues to study, including for example plastic pollution, extremism, and poverty. It is encouraging to see many candidates engaging deeply with these topics, demonstrating both understanding and analysis of the global issues. In this series it was also noted that some Centres had offered candidates the opportunity to select their own global issue from a range of options in Centre.

The application of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving remained a strong feature in this series, with most candidates effectively employing tools and strategies such as RURU analysis, highlighting, and annotation to evaluate the credibility of sources. This analytical approach enhanced the depth and quality of candidates' Personal Standpoints.

Many candidates continue to produce high-quality outcomes, showcasing both their creativity and understanding of global issues. Examples in this series included phone cases, digital posters, tote bags, merchandise, simple computer games, and videos using a variety of digital platforms. These innovative approaches not only demonstrate candidates' ability to generate impactful raising-awareness ideas but also reflect their growing awareness of global citizenship.

In relation to Centre assessment, it is noted that many Centres who have had advice in previous reports have not acted on or actioned the advice and therefore there are recurring issues within these Centres. For example, some Centres have used outdated versions of the assessment booklets that do not contain the required statement on the use of AI. Where these booklets were used, time logs were incorrect, and older challenge remits were followed, requiring candidates to find additional sources. This requirement has not been in place for several series. Centres that have used the revised assessment booklets adhered well to the updated requirements.

Some Centres continue to upload files to IAMIS without following digital upload guidelines. Centres are reminded to zip all files into one appropriately named folder (e.g., "Task 1"). Centres should not upload multiple separate documents without zipping/condensing files into a single folder. Consistent naming conventions, such as "Task 1" is considered good practice and would aid the moderation process. Additionally, digital submissions must be accessible to moderators. Several Centres had to be contacted this series to resolve accessibility issues.

Comments on Learning Outcomes (LO)

Learning Outcome 1 – Be able to apply Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Strengths

- Most candidates demonstrated that they could effectively express their own opinions on the global issues being studied. Where this was done particularly well, candidates had engaged in a classroom discussion to further their understanding, as well as to question their understanding of the global issue.
- Most candidates were able to assess the credibility of the sources. Where this was done well and effectively, reference was made to this and synthesised within the Personal Standpoint.

- The majority of candidates referred specifically to the sources and their credibility, using them as a foundation for their Personal Standpoints and supplementing their analysis with classroom discussions.

Areas for Improvement

- Centres must ensure that the source pack is included in the uploaded samples, as it provides evidence of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving strategies (e.g., RURU and PESTLE analysis, highlighting, and annotation of sources).
- Candidates should refer directly to the sources rather than discussing the global issue in solely general terms within the Personal Standpoint.
- Where candidates exceed the 800-word count, this limits their ability to present a detailed and effective Personal Standpoint. The required skill is to refine their writing to synthesise key points effectively within the word limit.
- Reflections on the Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving process continues to be weaker than reflections for Learning Outcome 2. Where candidates used tools and strategies such as RURU, it is clear that they were better able to evaluate the effectiveness of their approaches. Where these steps had not been evidenced or these approaches used, reflections were weaker.

Learning Outcome 2 – Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

Strengths

- The majority of candidates generated appropriate ideas for raising awareness.
- Most candidates demonstrated a solid understanding of SWOT analysis and applied it effectively to evaluate 3 to 4 of their preferred ideas.
- The majority of candidates implemented a realistic and feasible idea for raising awareness.
- Reflections on the creative process were strong when candidates documented several stages of idea development.

Areas for Improvement

- Some Centres and candidates skipped the initial phase of generating multiple ideas, instead jumping straight to SWOT analysis of a limited selection. This approach does not fully give candidates the opportunity to showcase their creative and innovative abilities.
- Some Centres continued to over-assess this Learning Outcome in regard to the development of candidates' ideas. Submitting a draft and a final version does not provide enough evidence of development to access marks into the higher Bands. Candidates should be encouraged to include additional developmental stages such as mood boards, style considerations, initial plans, layouts, actioned feedback, refinements etc. Likewise, producing multiple completely different outcomes e.g. 3 different posters does not constitute development unless feedback has informed each stage.

Learning Outcome 3 – Understanding factors involved in a Global Citizenship Challenge

Strengths

- The majority of candidates engaged very well with the global issues studied.
- Centres appear confident in assessing candidates' understanding of the global issues.
- Most candidates conducted PESTLE analyses, whether through annotation of the source pack or highlighting. Where this was done in an effective way, candidates were able to then synthesise this learning into their Personal Standpoints, making explicit connections to relevant factors.

Areas for Improvement

- Some Centres tended to over-assess the quality of final outcomes. To achieve Band 4 marks, outcomes must be of high quality and effective. Issues such as poor spelling, blurry images, and unclear presentation limit access to higher Bands.
- Digital submissions must be accessible. If candidates create digital work, links must be functional, and PowerPoints should be uploaded in their original format rather than as screenshots to allow moderators to assess features such as transitions etc.
- Centres should also submit work in colour where appropriate, as black-and-white copies may reduce the clarity and effectiveness of the final outcomes.

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Overview of the Community Challenge

Centre planning remains key to ensure the Community Challenge is a success and consideration is needed on how chosen Challenge Briefs can be implemented within the individual school's setting. The community participation, or 'doing' aspect of the Challenge must be sufficient in time and complexity to allow candidates to present sufficient evidence across all Learning Outcomes. Short activities such as hosting a fundraising stall or activities which involve a high number of candidates such as beach cleans can hinder candidates' ability to demonstrate the independence and responsibility needed as part of their planning and organisation.

Centres are encouraged to revisit the assessment grid to ensure that candidates present evidence relevant to the Community Challenge as there were instances where the evidence appeared to be an amalgamation of the Enterprise and Employability Challenge and/or the Global Citizenship Challenge.

Centres are reminded that although the activity itself is carried out as a team, the majority of evidence will be completed individually. With the exception of some components of task 2 (e.g. opportunities and risks, resources, lesson plans, group action plans) there must be individuality in the evidence presented as candidates "must provide an individual response as part of any task outcome".

Comments on Learning Outcomes (LO)

Due to smaller entry numbers, there will be general comments made on the Learning Outcomes for the Community Challenge

Learning Outcome 1 – Be able to apply Planning and Organisation

- The most successful evidence began with a clear and focused Brief allowing the candidates to present appropriate aims and objectives that were relevant the "doing" aspect of their Challenge. Centres are reminded that the planning and organisation must focus on how candidates intend to deliver their chosen activity.
- There were some strong examples of planning when implementing a Coaching brief and candidates were able to show clear monitoring and development as they documented how they carried out each session.
- The most successful candidates showed consideration for the various examples of content listed in the specification (page 28) such as targets, required resources, risks, team and individual action plans.
- The strongest evidence of monitoring and development was seen through detailed Participation Records where candidates would refer to strengths and any improvements made when implementing their plans.
- The reflection on skills linked with Planning and Organisation remains an area to focus improvements for Centres.

Learning Outcome 2 – Understand Personal Effectiveness

- Most candidates had undertaken a skills audit in one of several form. The strongest analysis and plans for improvement were clearly related to the candidate's chosen activity.
- Those with a detailed Participation Record in which they clearly documented the implementation of their plan were able to demonstrate effective performance of their own role and responsibilities during the activity.
- Where candidates were able to carry out a purposeful and valuable activity, they were able to include specific examples of how they've applied various skills during the Challenge within their reflection.
- This Learning Outcomes was the one assessed most accurately by Centres.

Learning Outcome 3 – Be able to participate in a Community Challenge

- When a well-defined Brief was provided, candidates were able to show consideration of the purpose and benefit of the activity, usually in the form of an introduction to the Personal Digital Record.
- In some cases, this was too generic by candidates as they described or defined 'a neighbourhood' or 'a community', and it was unclear what the candidates wanted to achieve and with which community they were involved. Centres are reminded that this task should be completed individually with a clear focus on their chosen activity.
- Centres are reminded that the Challenge required sufficient hours carrying out the 'doing' aspect of the Challenge through work with or in their chosen community. There remains engagement with Social Welfare Briefs where candidates are focused more on raising awareness and/or fundraising which doesn't fulfil the Community Brief requirements. Centres are encouraged to revisit the briefs when planning how to implement the Community Challenge in a way that addresses the criteria and is appropriate for their school setting.
- Overall Centres made successful use of Candidate Booklets however there were examples where the Centre had added additional structure which hindered the candidates' ability to show demonstrate their digital literacy as they develop their Personal Digital Record in a creative manner.
- The Participation Record is a key element of the Personal Digital Record and is a source of evidence for each of the Learning Outcomes. This was strongest when candidates clearly documented the implementation of their plan and provided a record of what they personally did during the 'doing' aspect of the Challenge using individually arranged and annotated photographs, digital diaries, personalised videos, blogs etc.
- There remains a small number of candidates who do not present a Personal 'Digital' Record and submit handwritten evidence. Centres are reminded that the digital aspect is a vital part of the assessment requirements.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: 01443 845612
Email: nfscc@wjec.co.uk
Qualification webpage: Welsh Baccalaureate National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | WJEC

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

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WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk