



ABC Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies
in Art, Design and Media

ABC Level 4 Diploma in Foundation Studies
in Art, Design and Media

Processes and Procedures:
Additional Guidance for Centres

1 General

The staff at each centre must be familiar with this guidance and all other qualification documentation, in particular the qualification specification relating to the assessment and grading criteria for these diplomas. Centres must also be aware of all policy documents published and periodically updated by ABC Awards (ABC) by checking the ABC website.

The Foundation Studies Diplomas start at Level 3. Learners who are registered onto a Level 3 course and who successfully complete it will achieve a Level 3 FAD&M qualification. However, learners may demonstrate achievement at a higher level and be able to claim for a second qualification - the Level 4. Centres whose learners are verified as having achieved the Level 4 Units need to inform ABC that they will be seeking Level 4 certification. Centres should do so immediately after this is verified by the External Moderator following the First Moderation Visit.

2 Internal Assessment and Internal Moderation

It is an important feature of the assessment process that each centre safeguards the validity of its assessment decisions by ensuring it has rigorous assessment and internal moderation. Centres are required to track learner progress in order to provide an indication of learners' achievements on the programme before the start of the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08).

- 2.1 All assessment and verification decisions must be formally recorded to provide evidence during external moderation.¹
- 2.2 Records should include evidence of assessment date(s) and staff involved in the assessment and internal moderation process. (Cf. ABC's policy on Record Keeping)
- 2.3 With the introduction of level 4 units at the Pathway Stage, it is imperative that assessors not only provide learners with appropriate assignments to demonstrate achievement at that level during the Pathway Stage, but also complete records of those decisions and document them in any internal moderation and standardisation paperwork. **Centres should assess learners' achievement at the end of the Pathway Stage and provide evidence of this together with statements of intent (SOI) during the First External Moderation visit.** To be awarded at Level 4 learners must achieve all units available at Level 4 (i.e. Units 09, 10, 11 and 08)
- 2.4 Although ABC prefers that centres develop their own internal assessment and moderation / verification tracking systems to support standardisation, samples of such documentation are available on the ABC website or from your External Moderator. It is considered best practice to internally moderate at least 10% or a minimum of 6 to include all units, all tutors with a responsibility for assessment and a range of disciplines.

¹ ABC externally moderates the FAD&M twice a year, at the end of the Pathway Stage to determine level achieved and following completion of the Confirmatory Study to determine the grade.

- 2.5 Once internal assessment and moderation have been completed, centres must prepare proposed internally agreed grades for the final Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) for presentation to the External Moderator during the Second External Moderation visit. The proposed grades should be recorded by the centre on ABC's MS1 Form.
- 2.6 Criteria for a pass grade are those described in the assessment criteria for Unit 08. The overall grade for the qualification is based solely on the grade achieved for Unit 08. To achieve an overall pass, merit or distinction all criteria for a specific grade must be met in full. Criteria for the grades of merit and distinction can be found in the qualification specification, Appendix 1
- 2.7 If, when the work for the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) is submitted, it does not meet the pass criteria, the centre will refer those learners and follow the procedure below.
- 2.7.1 The centre, making use of the statement of intent (SOI) and the work submitted for the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08), will inform the learners of those assessment criteria they have failed to meet and confirm that they have been referred. Re-submitted work must be made available to the External Moderator if requested on the ME4 Action Plan.
- 2.7.2 The centre will agree with learners a timeframe and an action plan, countersigned by the course tutor and the learners, for the submission of additional work required for assessment. The latest date for submission of the required work will be mid – September for those learners wishing to progress immediately to HE.²
- 2.7.3 The centre will grade any learner's Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) including the referral work and notify ABC of the outcome by providing an updated MS1.
- 2.7.4 If the centre's appointed External Moderator has already confirmed (ME4) that a centre has already met the required standards then no additional visit from an external moderator is necessary. However, where there are large numbers of referred learners or other reasonable concerns, ABC reserves the right to view a further sample either by arranging another visit by a moderator or postal moderation. External Moderators will indicate where this is necessary on the action plan of the ME4. Centres will be charged an additional moderation fee in addition to any registration fees previously paid.
- 2.7.5 All visits to the centre will be arranged on a mutually agreed date, with requirements of the visit outlined on a Moderation Planner (ME3). Centres which cancel a visit without reasonable notice will be charged.

² ABC does not stipulate a time limit for the re-submission of work. Any restrictions placed on a learner will be the responsibility of and at the discretion of the centre

3 The First External Moderation Visit (formerly known as the Advisory Visit)

Whilst centres delivering the ABC Foundation, Art, Design and Media qualifications will retain 2 visits per academic session, the focus of the first visit will be extended.

3.1 This visit will take place at the end of the Pathway Stage and will inform ABC Awards on:

- assessment decisions at the end of the Pathway Stage to determine potential additional awards at Level 4. Samples³ of learners' work will be chosen by the External Moderator and should be as originally presented to the internal assessor;
- sample of statements of intent. The External Moderator will provide the centre with general feedback on the SOIs sampled;
- internal verification;
- learner satisfaction (achieved through interviewing a selection of students).

Where appropriate a time-scaled action plan is agreed between the External Moderator and the centre. At the end of this visit the centre and the External Moderator will complete a report (ME4) and send to ABC for forwarding to centres.

3.2 These visits also include guidance and information to centres on new developments in the administration of the qualification and may also identify examples of good or weak practice in delivery.

3.3 This visit will take place later than the previous advisory visit and will be conducted at the **end** of the Pathway Stage when the internal assessment and internal moderation of that Stage has been completed.

4 The Second External Moderation Visit

The second External Moderation Visit will sample the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) at the end of the Personal Confirmatory Stage.

4.1 As the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) represents the summation and maturation of the learners' experience and development, this unit is not taught and may only be supported through the centre's normal tutorial process. The selection, organisation, preparation and display of the Personal Confirmatory Study work for assessment must be completed by the learners themselves.

4.2 Learners are required to produce a written Statement of Intent (SOI), within the parameters defined in Unit 08, Assessment criteria 1.1, 1.2 before starting the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08)

³ Centres should make all student work available, but where large volumes of work make this impractical, centres may select a 15% sample. This sample must, however, include all assessors and all disciplines and levels.

- 4.2.1 Each SOI must be prefaced with the ABC SOI Cover Sheet and should be authenticated by the course leader or personal tutor
- as the work of the named learner,
 - as meeting the relevant assessment criteria, and
 - as having been completed before the start of the Personal Confirmatory Study.
- 4.2.2 Each SOI must be reviewed by the tutor and an action plan for further work discussed with the learner if it does not meet the criteria.
- 4.3 All learners must display or appropriately present their Personal Confirmatory Study, final Statement of Intent (SOI) and written evaluation and provide access to all contributing and supporting work.
- 4.3.1 Where learners are displaying, for reasons other than assessment, work in addition to their Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08), then that additional work must be clearly labelled to avoid confusion.
- 4.3.2 All learners must complete, and provide a copy of, the ABC's Declaration of Authenticity.
- 4.4 External moderators may not enter into any form of discussion with the learners. It is, however, appropriate for the course leader or any other appointed member of staff to show the External Moderator the location and extent of the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) work but not to enter into a discussion on the team's grading decisions.
- 4.5 The centre will provide the External Moderator with a copy of the proposed grades on form MS1. This MS1 must be retained by the centres until after the Second Moderation Visit.
- 4.6 The External Moderator will look at all displayed work and have access to all assessment documentation as required.
- 4.7 The sample for moderation will constitute 10% (or minimum 6 whichever is the greater) of the total number of learners claiming these qualifications plus a further 5% as necessary to clarify grading decisions.
- 4.8 The External Moderator will ensure that the sample contains as far as is possible:
- an appropriate spread of grades across the grade range;
 - coverage of boundaries of grades;
 - coverage of level if appropriate at the centre;
 - an appropriate range of disciplines, reflecting the range, breadth and depth of the Foundation experience covered at the centre;
 - coverage of all assessors and/or assessment teams.

- 4.9 The External Moderator will confirm the appropriateness of assessment decisions and internal moderation procedures to ensure that the assessment and grading criteria are being met.

In completing external moderation the External Moderator will have:

- viewed the Personal Confirmatory Study and SOI;
- focused on the independently identified sample;
- confirmed the grades with the centre;
- recommended and agreed any action to be taken where assessment decisions have not been agreed;
- provided evaluation and feedback to the centre on assessment decisions;
- highlighted any areas of concern in respect of confirmation of the centre's assessment decisions.

The findings of the Second External Moderation visit will be recorded on an ME4 moderation report form.

- 4.10 If the External Moderator agrees that the proposed grades meet the assessment and grading criteria then the result sheets (MS1) can be completed by the addition of the confirmed final grade and the signatures of the External Moderator and the course leader. As this procedure represents the culmination of the entire assessment process, due care and attention should be taken to ensure that the correct agreed grades are entered. The completed MS1 forms will be forwarded to ABC by the centre to claim certification.
- 4.11 Upon receipt of the confirmed grades, certification will be authorised by ABC. Only when ABC has confirmed the results to the centre may the centre publish the results to learners. Any prior notification of results by the centre to learners must be qualified with the statement that results can not be confirmed until ratified by ABC.
- 4.12 Centres will receive a copy of the reports (ME4) made by the External Moderator following processing by the ABC office.

5 Centre Failure to apply the Assessment and Additional Grading Criteria

- 5.1 If the External Moderator finds that the proposed grades in the sample viewed do not meet the relevant criteria then a request for further samples will be made.
- 5.2 The outcome of reviewing additional samples may result in the centre being requested to re-assess and re-grade across the entire cohort or a small subset (i.e. of a particular discipline or grade band). This, where possible, may be done on the day of the visit. Where this is not possible a further visit may be arranged, the cost of which will be borne by the centre. This request will be confirmed on the ME4 report form as an action for the centre. Centres may not claim certification until the External Moderator has either signed off the MS1 or indicated that the claim for certification (MS1) can be sent directly to ABC.

- 5.3 If agreement cannot be reached the centre may appeal against the External Moderator's decision (cf. 8.2 below). Any appeal must be put in writing in line with ABC's policy on Enquiries and Appeals.

6 Extenuating Circumstances

When a learner cannot complete his/her Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) within the agreed timescale because of extenuating circumstances, the learner may defer completion.

- 6.1 The latest date for late submission of the Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) is mid – September for those learners who need to achieve a full diploma within the academic year of registration. Otherwise timescales for re-submission are not limited by ABC.
- 6.2 The centre will grade the learners' Personal Confirmatory Study (Unit 08) against the assessment and additional grading criteria and notify ABC on an MS1.
- 6.3 Awards will be made subject to the centre having previously received a satisfactory external moderation visit and report.

7 Conduct of External Moderation

Centres are required to contact ABC directly and immediately after the external moderation if they are dissatisfied with the conduct of the process. Centres may communicate their experiences of external moderation by accessing and completing the 'Customer Feedback Form' available on the ABC website www.abcawards.co.uk or contacting ABC's Quality Manager directly on 01257 244902 or emailing carolines@abcawards.co.uk

8 Enquiries and Appeals (Cf. ABC's policy on Enquiries and Appeals)

8.1 Learner Appeals

- 8.1.1 If individual learners appeal against their confirmed grade, previously agreed by the centre and the External Moderator, then the centre should use their own internal appeals procedure to confirm or deny that appeal.
- 8.1.2 If the internal appeal is successful then the centre must appeal to ABC within 28 working days of the date of the result (receipt of R1). Confirmation of the internal appeals process must be provided.

8.2 Centre Appeals

- 8.2.1 If a centre does not agree with the External Moderator's decisions, it may appeal against them. In such circumstances a further visit by the Lead Moderator will be arranged to review the evidence.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries arising from this guidance please contact:

Clair Lilley-Bray
Tel no. 0115 8541 621
Email: clairlb@abcawards.co.uk

GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject specialist queries will be referred to a member of ABC's Foundation External Moderator Team.

The Level 3 Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art, Design and Media attracts the following UCAS points for entry into HE. The Level 4 does not currently attract UCAS points.

UCAS Tariff	Grade
285	Distinction
225	Merit
165	Pass

FAQs – frequently asked questions about these qualifications are available on the ABC website.

GLOSSARY OF ABC'S REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

All the following documents can be found on the ABC web site

Qualification specification – the definitive document detailing the aims, entry requirements, learning outcomes, assessment and additional grading criteria, indicative content, teaching and learning strategies and methods of assessment.

Processes and Procedures: Additional Guidance for Centres – additional qualification specific details for the conduct of the internal and external moderation process.

Level Achievement Checklist – an aid for centres during the assessment and internal moderation of the Pathway and Confirmatory Stages.

Statement of Intent Cover Sheet and Guidelines - provide the learner with details on the context and the content required for the completion of the Statement of Intent.

Declaration of Authenticity - confirms that the work submitted for assessment is the learner's own and must be present with any work presented for assessment and external moderation.

E2 Application for Reasonable Adjustments – is a formal request, by the centre to ABC, for different assessment arrangements for a learner who has disclosed a disability.

E2A Application for Special Consideration – formal notification by the centre to ABC of a request for the consideration of an award following extenuating circumstances i.e. inability of the learner to fully complete the assessment requirements.

External Moderator's Moderation Planner (ME3) – details the requirements for the agreed moderation, forwarded to the centre and ABC by the allocated External Moderator.

External Moderator's Report Form (ME4) – details the External Moderator's conclusions at the completion of an external moderation visit. Forwarded to ABC by the External Moderator and then to the centre.

Mark sheet (MS1) – formally records confirmation of assessment decisions and individual learner unit performance with confirmed grades (where grades other than a pass are available) and should be forwarded to ABC by the centre immediately following external moderation for the purposes of claiming certification. Confirmation of achievement of any learner referrals must be sent separately

Results Sheet (R1) – final confirmation of results and usually forwarded to the centre with certificates.