

Postal / Remote Moderation - Guidance for Centres

Version 2.2

Contents

Part 1 Introduction

1 Purpose and Scope

This guide describes the centre's responsibilities and the processes to be followed when planning, preparing, and submitting electronic evidence samples for external moderation. It also provides some technical guidance to assist in managing some of the associated risks, and it identifies where to get further help.

This guide does not include information on our on-screen testing. For information on this please contact the Centre Support Team.

2 Who this guide is for

- This guide is intended for:
- Tutors
- Examination Officers
- Assessors
- Internal Verifiers
- Curriculum Managers
- ICT staff and anyone else involved in the delivery of our Qualifications.

The information in this guide is also being made available to:

- External Moderators and Verifiers
- Awarding Body staff

3 Relationship to other Procedures

This guidance supports our existing policies and procedures regarding External Moderation.

4 Risks & Benefits of eModeration

4.1 Risks

Three key security issues have been identified that need to be managed to ensure secure, robust and reliable eModeration. The use of ICT can both create and reduce risks in the areas below depending on how it is used.

- **Availability** of assessment samples: ensuring the required samples are available to the external verifier at the required time and in a format that can support the required verification tasks.
- **Confidentiality** of assessment samples: ensuring the learner identities and any original works are not inadvertently made available to 3rd parties, and that the General Data Protection Regulation is complied with.

- **Integrity** of assessment samples: ensuring the samples are not altered in any way during the process and providing assurances of this.

Other risks commonly associated with eModeration include authenticity (i.e. ensuring the work presented can be assured as the learner's own) and appropriateness of electronic evidence. These issues are already addressed by our Centre and Qualification approval processes as they apply equally to electronic and non-electronic evidence.

4.2 Benefits

There are also many documented benefits of eModeration within learning and assessment. eModeration opens up a wider range of potentially more robust and valid assessment methods, for both learners, and assessors.

Some benefits resulting from eModeration include:

- Evidence can be collected in a more naturally occurring way. For example instead of a witness testimony, required to complete a presentation as part of their assessment could provide a short video clip to accompany their presentation slides.
- Learners can submit the work that they produce electronically, in the same format. For some, this just means that there is no longer the requirement to print the documents they have written. For others, it provides the opportunity for the assessor and moderator to see the work in the way it was intended to be viewed; for example, web sites and presentations often contain elements that are lost when the material is printed.
- Many centres using eAssessment and eLearning within their course delivery have seen marked improvements in learner achievement and retention.
- Electronic creation and storage of evidence opens up the possibility of providing remote access for learners and assessors, outside of the centre opening hours, resulting in more flexible and accessible learning.
- Information Technology is a key skill. Using ICT to prepare evidence of assessment incorporates it into a course in a relevant and practical way.
- Using electronic evidence means less physical space is required to store assessment materials, and the use of consumables (paper, toner, etc) is reduced

5 Overview of eModeration

5.1 We will accept and assess electronic evidence (including ePortfolios) from centres for the assessment requirements of our qualifications.

5.2 We currently allow evidence to be provided in the following additional ways:

For centres **with** Remote Moderation Rights:

- Evidence submitted electronically, by USB drive, zip file, CD or DVD (cf. page 7);
- Evidence made available via remote access (cf. page 8).

For centres **without** Remote Moderation Rights, We currently allow evidence to be provided in the following additional way:

- Evidence made available via local computer access during a visit.

5.3 Centres must ensure that learners are not disadvantaged by the methods they select. We acknowledge that the use of ICT for assessment is not appropriate in every case.

Part 2: Guidelines

1 Planning eModeration

This section contains general issues that should be considered when choosing to use electronic evidence portfolios.

1.1 Learner and staff support

Using electronic assessment evidence may require additional skills and resources. Learners' delivery and assessment staff may need additional support. Learners should not be required to demonstrate additional skills in order to achieve our qualification.

1.2 Security

Learners' portfolios should be appropriately protected from unauthorised access and other risks while being developed and submitted.

1.3 Deciding the method of submission

Centres **with** Remote Moderation Rights may select submission:

- E.g. electronically, by USB drive, zip file, CD or DVD
- via remote access.

Centres **without** Remote Moderation Rights, may use:

- local computer access during a visit

1.4 Informing the external moderator

When you have decided on the method of submission, please notify your allocated Moderator during your early dialogue with them.

2 Preparing Assessment Evidence

2.1 Software Applications

Learners and tutors should use approaches and formats that are easily accessible to external moderators and that do not require additional commercial software. Most software packages provide export to common formats and this should be used prior to moderation.

2.2 File Types

Common file types are shown below with example viewers, freely available on the Microsoft Windows platforms at no additional cost.

Type of file	Formats / Uses	Can be accessed by
Images (including photographs and scanned documents saved as images)	.gif, (small file sizes for large areas of simple colour - best for diagrams and text annotations and simple images with limited depth/resolution requirements) .jpg, .jpeg (generally larger file sizes, better for photos and artwork images with shading and textures) png (Larger files, best for vector graphics, scalable images without degradation of quality when zooming in)	Internet Explorer, Firefox, Paint + most common Image viewers
Microsoft office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)	.doc, .docx, .xls, .ppt Common Office documents	Microsoft Office Viewers

Type of file	Formats / Uses	Can be accessed by
PDF documents	.pdf Read Only format which embeds and preserves fonts that may not be available on other machines	Adobe Acrobat Reader
Video files	wmv, avi, mpeg	Windows Media player, Apple Quick time
Sound Files	wma, mp3, wav	Windows Media player, Apple Quick time
Web pages	Htm, html	Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox

2.3 **Protect the integrity of learners work**

Where possible files should be converted to a read only format. If this is not possible because of the type of file, then care must be taken to ensure it is not altered in any way.

2.3.1 Clearly name and organise collections of files and folders

It must be possible to uniquely identify each piece of evidence, and to associate it with:

- The correct internal assessment records;
- The learner;
- The units / learning outcomes / assessment criteria which the evidence meets.

This can be done through folders and file naming conventions as appropriate for the samples being provided. When renaming files, make sure you do not change the extension (for example removing the .doc or .jpg) (Cf. Appendix A for example of naming files.)

Note: You must not re-organise, or rename files that are linked together in any way, such as the files comprising a web site or objects linked to PowerPoint, as this will cause the links to break. Instead, put all of the files in a folder which has been named following your convention.

2.3.2 Sending electronic evidence to the External Moderator

- Ensure all submissions clearly state the MV reference number (include in email subject headers etc.)
- Ensure you have included the sample requested and, if that has not been possible, the appropriate substitutes have been made with an explanatory note.
- Identify the file types and how the samples are organised (see Appendix A)
- Ensure you have included an attached list of files
- Indicate whether sound and/or video has been included in the sample.

2.4 Making evidence available via remote Access

2.4.1 Provide Moderator Familiarisation

- Provide familiarisation opportunity and instructions on using the system well in advance of moderation.

2.4.2 Provide logon details to the Moderator

- Provide in advance with appropriate level of read only access.

2.5 Making evidence available via a local computer during a visit

- Provide logon details with appropriate access.
- Provide a suitable environment and adequate computer resources, including network connectivity.
- Supply any additional peripherals needed for sampling e.g. headphones, speakers.
- Provide familiarisation of the system and/or required training.
- Ensure technical support is available for the moderator if needed.
- Provide an appropriate environment that is quiet, adequately ventilated and free from direct lights/glare where the moderator will not be interrupted.
- Records of internal assessment decisions explained if electronic.

3 After Submission / eModeration

Retention of Evidence

Centres must ensure that they not only retain the evidence itself for the required period for appeals (as currently happens with paper based evidence) but also that they retain

the applications required to view it or alternatively, that they convert it into a format that remains accessible.

Loss of, or damage to, electronic evidence is treated in the same way as loss of, or damage to, paper based evidence. The likelihood of this occurring can be minimised by ensuring copies are stored separately for safe-keeping.

Part 3 Further Support offered by us

3 General Advice and Guidance for Centres

For advice on e-moderation for qualifications awarded by us, centres should contact:

- Your own ICT support staff for technical issues
- Our Centre Support Officer for procedural issues.

Appendix A

1 Naming of files and folders

We recommend centres use a convention similar to the one shown below, which can be applied either to individual files or to a folder containing a group of related elements:

[Centre]_[Course and assessment/course learner ID]_[Learner registration ID]

Centres may need to adapt the guidance given to learners to include details of this naming convention. This naming convention may be applied to individual files or to a folder containing pieces of connected evidence, depending on the course. This does not replace any existing instructions to learners to include their names or identifiers on pieces of work, but supplements it.

You must not rename files that are linked together in any way, such as the files comprising a web site, as this will cause the links to break. Instead, put all of the files in a folder, named following your convention.

When renaming files, make sure you do not change the extension (the letters after the dot – for example, .doc or .jpg) by accident. These letters are used to identify the type of file, and the software applications that can view it.

2 Working with Collections of Files

This may happen if, for example, the centre is submitting written work (as a word-processed document), photographs and an associated audio file.

Put all of the files in a folder, clearly named following the naming convention of [Centre]_[Course and assessment]_[Learner registration ID].

This may already have been done by the learner when completing the assessment.

If the evidence is going to be sent to an external moderator by email, a compressed file may need to be created.

If the resulting file is too big to send, centres should consider using zip files or sharing software such as cloud based solutions, (e.g. Dropbox). You must ensure that these solutions meet security requirements.