



Standards
& Testing
Agency

2013 Key Stage 1

Teacher assessment moderation
guidance

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Introduction

External moderation is statutory and gives confidence that teacher assessment (TA) judgements for Key Stage 1 reading, writing and mathematics are accurate and consistent with national standards. It also helps to ensure that TA results are fair for children and useful for schools and others who evaluate performance and progress. Key Stage 1 TA must be robust and credible as it will form part of schools' published accountability data.

Schools will receive a local authority (LA) external moderation visit at least once every four years. During the visit, LA external moderators will check teachers' understanding of standards and look at children's work and other evidence from across the year.

Schools should not create portfolios of work or prepare 'showpiece' examples for a moderation visit as the emphasis should be on professional dialogue between the Year 2 teacher and the LA external moderator. LA external moderators may also wish to observe children or talk to them about their work. There is no need for schools to keep additional records justifying their TA judgements.

This guidance should be used in conjunction with the 2013 Key Stage 1 *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA) which is available from the Department's website at: www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213220/2013-assessment-and-reporting-ks1.

Who is this guidance for?

This is statutory guidance for:

- LA moderation managers;
- LA external moderators; and
- primary phase headteachers, senior school staff and Year 2 teachers preparing for an external moderation visit.

What is moderation?

Moderation includes:

- Ongoing assessment – teachers making professional judgements on their children's attainment and progress.
- Standardisation - prior to making judgements about their children's attainment, teachers should develop a shared understanding of educational standards through discussions with colleagues. Schools may wish to collaborate so that teachers from a range of schools can share experience to develop their assessment skills.
- Internal moderation – to confirm or amend their TA judgements, teachers should review a selection of their own judgements and the supporting evidence with that of colleagues from their own or other schools. Schools may wish to collaborate so that teachers from a range of schools can share experience to develop their assessment skills.
- External moderation – visits by LA external moderators to review teachers' judgements, ensuring assessments are accurate and national standards are consistently applied. Moderators will consider the judgements and supporting evidence for a sample of children across the range of attainment including teachers' knowledge of the child to ensure assessments are accurate and consistently applied.

External moderation visits are only one part of the assessment process. It is important for teachers to have a good understanding of national standards and to discuss their assessment of children's work with colleagues, which can include those from neighbouring schools.

This guidance is only concerned with external moderation visits, designed to ensure that teacher judgements are accurate and consistent with national standards.

Purpose of moderation

An external moderation visit will confirm whether a school's Key Stage 1 TA is consistent with national standards and if not, how the school should change it. The LA external moderator will provide an independent professional verification of the school's TA. If an LA external moderator requires the school to change some or all of its TA judgements, they should explain the reasons. The LA external moderator will also provide the school with suitable feedback about the accuracy of the judgements and quality of evidence, suggesting appropriate support if necessary.

Moderation is a sampling process and is not a method for checking each child's attainment. Therefore the moderation visit should focus on sampling each level awarded to ensure that TA judgements are accurate and consistent with national standards. Where the school's TA judgements cannot be confirmed, the LA external moderator will explain clearly how the school must review and change its TA judgements before

submitting data, to ensure that the reported data will be accurate and fit for accountability purposes.

Key Stage 1 moderation in 2013

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) will oversee the moderation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), Key Stage 1, and Key Stage 2 (writing only). STA will scrutinise practice in LAs and undertake external moderation visits to a sample of LAs to ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities.

Lord Bew's independent review of testing, assessment and accountability at the end of Key Stage 2 recommended that Key Stage 1 TA moderation is better targeted so that schools where attainment and progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 are inconsistent are prioritised and moderated more frequently.

Academies and Free Schools

Academies, including Free Schools (henceforward referred to as academies), must comply with statutory requirements for Key Stage 1 assessment. Academies must confirm to STA which LA they wish to conduct moderation visits, process and submit TA results on their behalf. Academies may be charged for this service. Academies must provide the LA with proof of their most recent moderation visit and the outcome. STA will ask academies for details of their Key Stage 1 TA moderation arrangements.

Independent schools

Independent schools may submit their results to the Department for inclusion in the national summary of results, but this is not statutory. If an independent school wishes to do so it must be moderated in the first year it participates, and then at least once in every four-year cycle. The independent school must employ an LA to process and verify its TA annually within each four-yearly statutory moderation cycle.

An independent school can only claim that its results are comparable with those published nationally or locally if it has taken part in the moderation process at least once in a four-year cycle.

Local authorities and agencies may advise STA that a particular independent school should be moderated more frequently (for example, NQTs in Year 2). STA will inform these schools by the end of March in any year that they must receive moderation visits if they wish to submit their results for inclusion in the national data.

Information for LA moderation managers

LAs are responsible for moderating Key Stage 1 TA judgements in maintained schools. Under these arrangements, LAs are required to:

- ensure that all schools receive an LA external moderation visit at least once in a four-year cycle, and that schools where assessment is felt to be at particular risk of inaccuracy, or where there are other relevant circumstances (for example a teacher new to Year 2), are moderated more frequently;
- appoint LA external moderators with recent experience of the National Curriculum in primary schools and appropriate authority to moderate TA so that judgements are consistent in relation to national standards;
- moderate a sample of the TA judgements, in reading, writing and mathematics of children in each Year 2 class in schools that are being moderated; and
- notify the headteacher of each school whether the standards applied in making TA judgements are appropriate and consistent with national standards.

In addition, LAs should:

- during the autumn term, provide STA with an outline of their plans for the moderation process (including their appeals process); and
- once all visits are concluded, provide STA with an evaluation of the moderation process, including details of how many changes to levels have been made as a result of moderation visits. Details for this will be included within the evaluation form issued in 2013.

The role of the moderation manager

LAs have a duty to ensure that assessment and reporting arrangements are administered appropriately by their schools. LA moderation managers are responsible for moderating Key Stage 1 TA judgements ensuring that Year 2 teachers are making judgements which are consistent with national standards. They are responsible for recruiting, training, quality assuring and overseeing a team of external moderators.

Each LA must provide training for external moderators to ensure that they understand the process for moderation visits set out in this guidance. The moderation manager must give ongoing support to external moderators as necessary. Any disagreements between a school and an external moderator should be referred to the LA moderation manager for resolution, in line with the LA's appeals procedure, which must be shared with schools.

Each LA must submit their moderation plans for the upcoming moderation cycle (including associated appeals processes) to STA for review.

LAs must have an appropriate system to collect, analyse and process the Key Stage 1 TA data and submit it to the Department in the required format. LA moderation managers

must check the dataset and ensure that any data concerns are resolved with schools.

Selecting schools to be moderated

LAs must ensure appropriate coverage of schools for each moderation cycle. They should select at least 25 per cent of schools to receive a moderation visit in 2013. LAs should consider the following factors when selecting schools:

- last moderation visit (schools must receive a moderation visit at least once in every four years);
- changes within the school (leadership, Year 2 teaching staff, NQTs);
- concerns where attainment and progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 are inconsistent;
- concerns regarding a school's assessment procedures;
- schools requesting an additional moderation visit; and
- other concerns raised to the LA.

Schools therefore, may receive more than one visit in every four years due to these factors.

Recruitment of LA external moderators

All LA external moderators must be qualified teachers. If not currently serving teachers, they must have a current enhanced CRB check.

LA external moderators should have;

- a strong understanding of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum levels; and
- recent experience of end of Key Stage 1 assessment (within two years), for example as a teacher or moderator.

It is important that LA external moderators provide independent scrutiny of TA judgements. LA moderation managers should ensure that external moderators are not asked to visit schools with which they have a potential or perceived conflict of interest. For example, external moderators who are serving teachers should not visit schools in their immediate vicinity. Similarly, external moderators should not visit schools where they have recently provided support or intervention activities, such as those designed to raise child attainment.

LA external moderation visits

LA external moderation visits should take place during the summer term. All visits are to be completed ahead of the deadline for schools to submit their TA judgements to LAs (Thursday 4 July 2013). LAs should not give formal notice that a school will receive an external moderation visit before the start of the summer term.

After each visit, the LA external moderator will provide a written visit summary for the school and the LA moderation manager. This summary should cover:

- overall feedback on the school's Key Stage 1 TA processes and points for future consideration;
- strengths and areas for development;
- if necessary, the LA external moderator's recommendations for how the school's TA is to be changed and their reasons; and
- the details of children included in the moderation sample, including their TA levels before and after moderation.

Where schools have an effective whole school approach to assessment, this should be recognised and reflected in feedback to the school.

At the end of the academic year, LAs should provide STA with:

- a short summary of how well the moderation process worked and any points to note;
- the number of children included in the moderation sample (anonymised), including TA levels before and after moderation; and
- the number of schools (anonymised) that challenged LA external moderators' judgements, and how these cases were resolved.

Conducting the moderation visit

Statutory responsibilities – headteachers and governing bodies

Headteachers and governing bodies are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of TA judgements in their school. They have the following specific duties:

- to permit the LA external moderator to enter the premises of the school at all reasonable times;
- to meet requests from the LA external moderator for samples of children's classwork or any other information reasonably required; and
- to make time for the LA external moderator to discuss the assessments with Year 2 teachers.

Teachers who carry out TA should have adequate opportunities to become familiar with national assessment standards using funds available within the school's overall resources.

Schools – preparing for a moderation visit

When a school is notified that it will receive a moderation visit, it should:

- prepare a list of Year 2 children by class, together with their TA judgements (the LA moderation manager may ask to see the school's provisional TA judgements in advance of the visit);
- ensure that the LA external moderator and Year 2 teachers have a quiet area and access to Year 2 children's evidence of ongoing learning and assessment, in whatever format it is routinely kept;
- ensure that LA external moderator and Year 2 teachers have a professional dialogue to discuss evidence and their TA judgements and receive feedback; and
- ensure that there is an opportunity for the LA external moderator to meet the head teacher (and any other relevant school staff) to offer formal feedback at the end of the visit.

The best way for a school to prepare for a moderation visit is to have robust assessment processes, based on teachers' strong understanding of national standards. Moderation should not require any addition to a teacher's workload.

Schools should not prepare 'showpiece' examples purely for a moderation visit. There is no need for schools to separate out individual children's work into portfolios for an LA external moderator to consider if it is not normally stored in this way. There is no expectation that teachers should produce any evidence that is over and above what is normally available from day-to-day teaching and learning.

Similarly, there is no need for schools to keep additional records justifying their TA judgements. If LA external moderators have questions concerning the evidence to support a teacher's judgement, they should discuss them with the teacher.

Structuring external moderation visits

An example of a typical visit is provided below. LA external moderators should be flexible to suit local circumstances, such as the school size or timetable. The focus of the moderation visit should be the professional dialogue between LA external moderators and Year 2 teachers.

- On arrival, the LA external moderator will meet the headteacher or a senior leader and Year 2 teachers and reaffirm the purpose and expected outcomes from the visit.
- LA external moderators will review the list of children and their current TA levels to select a sample of children for moderation, though they should discuss their choices with Year 2 teachers.
- In the quiet area provided, the LA external moderator will engage in a professional dialogue with Year 2 teachers about how they have arrived at their judgements, which should be supported by a range of evidence, including their knowledge of the child. There should be a discussion about the school's assessment processes, including standardisation and moderation. The LA external moderator must use this opportunity to provide informal feedback to individual teachers.
- If the LA external moderator has concerns about lack of evidence of about the teacher's understanding of national standards, they will ask to see more work samples and evidence from additional children and have further discussions with Year 2 teachers.
- When the LA external moderator is satisfied that they have seen sufficient evidence, they will explain their decisions to the headteacher or a senior leader. We would strongly encourage the Year 2 teachers to be present. The LA external moderator will provide general feedback about the school's TA and, if necessary, detail any required changes to TA judgements.

While it is inevitable that a moderation visit will cause some disruption to the normal routine of a school (for example since Year 2 children's work will need to be available to LA external moderators), this should be kept to a minimum.

LA external moderators will wish to speak to Year 2 teachers during the course of the visit, but discussions should not be longer than necessary to minimise disruption to teaching.

Selecting the sample of children for moderation

Schools must provide LA external moderators with a list of Year 2 TA judgements by class.

Moderation should look at evidence from a sample of children in each school. The exact number of children whose work is scrutinised will vary depending on the school's size and circumstances. The sample should include sufficient children to satisfy the moderator that:

- the school's TA judgements for children across a range of attainments is accurate and consistent with national standards; and
- TA judgements by each class teacher are accurate and consistent with national standards.

LA external moderators will select the sample of children in discussion with Year 2 teachers, to ensure that the range is representative. The final decision must rest with the LA external moderator.

Schools may ask LA external moderators to look at the work of additional children, in order to help them review the quality of their TA judgements. Providing there is time and opportunity, LA external moderators should try to accommodate this.

Evidence for LA external moderators to consider

By reviewing evidence produced during everyday teaching in Year 2, an LA external moderator will get a strong sense both of childrens' attainment and the accuracy of teachers' assessment, without creating any additional workload.

Moderators will expect to see examples of childrens' independent work (which provides the clearest evidence of embedded learning), as well as work supported through direct modelling, use of prompts or guided group work. Moderators may therefore wish to discuss the results of statutory Key Stage 1 tests and tasks, to find out how they have been used to inform the school's teacher assessment. If the moderator considers it appropriate, they may wish to talk to children about their work.

Moderation must look at evidence from a sample of children in each school across reading, writing and mathematics.

Discussion with teachers and confirming judgements

LA external moderators will meet Year 2 teachers, individually or together, so they can hold a professional dialogue and ask questions about evidence to support TA judgements.

The professional dialogue between the Year 2 teachers and the LA external moderator is essential, so the teacher can talk through their judgements and using the necessary

evidence to support the TA. Evidence will consist of examples of children's work, any records that teachers might keep (for example from statutory tests and tasks) and their knowledge of the child. Teachers should demonstrate their judgements with the evidence they choose to present. If there is insufficient evidence to support teachers' judgements, the LA external moderator may request to see some more.

In confirming judgements, teachers and LA external moderators must refer to the national level descriptions at all times, particularly when moderating children on the borderline between levels. Teachers and LA external moderators must balance the evidence across all strands to understand where the best fit lies, and to ensure fair comparison with the work of other children.

LA external moderators will also provide informal feedback to individual Year 2 teachers, either individually or together.

For assessing reading, writing and mathematics, please note that there are no national sublevels for level 1 or level 3. If the school believes a child is working above level 4, the school should submit level 4.

National Curriculum levels:

- level 1;
- level 2C, 2B, 2A;
- level 3; and
- level 4.

Minimising bias

A range of research studies have shown that teachers' assessment of a child's work can sometimes be influenced by external factors such as behaviour, gender, ethnicity and special educational needs. For example, teachers might be influenced by the previous performance of members of the same ethnic group. Similarly, the 'halo' effect shows that attainment in one subject (or verbal ability) can affect judgements in other subjects. LA external moderators and teachers should be aware of this.

A school's internal assessment and moderation processes as well as external moderation visits should provide an element of objective scrutiny, to support or challenge teachers' judgements where necessary and ensure they are based on sound evidence.

If the LA external moderator feels that TA judgements are not supported by the evidence provided, they should challenge the teacher and seek further information through professional dialogue.

If an LA external moderator and school judgement differs

If the LA external moderator is not satisfied that the evidence provided confirms that accurate judgements have been made, they should examine evidence from an additional sample of children and discuss this with Year 2 teachers.

Where an LA external moderator has reason to believe that TA is not consistent with national standards, it will be necessary for the school to change some or all of its TA judgements.

The LA external moderator will detail which judgements need to be changed and explain the reasons.

Concluding the moderation visit

At the end of the visit, the LA external moderator will explain in broad terms to the headteacher or a senior leader where the school's assessments have been accurate and where they require TA judgements to be changed. Year 2 teachers should be present. If LA external moderators have concerns over individual teachers' judgements, these should be raised separately with the headteacher or a senior leader, since the LA external moderator's feedback should cover the school's assessment processes as a whole.

LA external moderators will provide a short written summary of their visit, outlining their judgements and reasons. The headteacher and LA moderation manager should receive copies.

It is possible that a school's Key Stage 1 TA for some children may change between a moderation visit and the deadline for Key Stage 1 TA submission, especially where moderation visits take place early in the summer term. There is no expectation that a further moderation visit is required in such cases, since moderation should look at the quality of the current school's assessment processes as a whole.

Appeals

If, after discussion, a school does not accept the LA external moderator's judgements, the external moderator will inform the LA moderation manager. The school may also contact the moderation manager to question the external moderator's decisions at a later date if they require further clarification.

The LA moderation manager should take appropriate action to resolve issues in the first instance. Each LA should have an appeals process, which may include further discussion with the school and may lead to an additional moderation visit. If further moderation visits take place, the LA should ensure that they are conducted by external moderators who meet the criteria above and were not involved in the initial visit, for example using moderators from a neighbouring LA.

Maladministration

Where an LA or other party identify potential maladministration they should contact STA's Teacher assessment and moderation team at ks1team.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Data submission

Schools must submit TA judgements as set out in the 2013 Key Stage 1 ARA, available at www.education.gov.uk/assessment. Schools must submit their TA judgements by

Thursday 4 July 2013. Local authorities can change level outcomes in a school's TA submission if they deem it necessary before submission to the Department.

Contacts and questions

For any queries regarding this document or Key Stage 1 assessment, email assessments@education.gov.uk.



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