

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Health and Fitness (601/4534/1)

Assessment date: Spring 2018

This report contains general information from the Chief Examiner. The aim is to point out the positives and negatives of the evidence marked in the assessment window to guide you to areas where learners are performing well and not so well.

Key points:

- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit to ensure they are well prepared for the external assessment.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Any stimulus materials used by the Centre during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all of the tasks independently.

The completion of the external assessment must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the NCFE Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment.

Standard of learner work

The quality and standard of the work varied enormously between learners, and a range of outcomes were seen across the Distinction, Merit, Pass and Not Yet Achieved grading criteria. There were some strong responses, which demonstrated that learners had a solid understanding of the unit content and were able to contextualise it appropriately to answer the tasks in relation to the scenario provided.

However there have also been some weaker responses highlighting that some learners may be working at the wrong level. Centres are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners, and they need to make sure that learners can fulfill the requirements of the assessment criteria of this qualification. Most learners are attempting every question, and higher performing learners are using the grading criteria to access the grade descriptors for higher levels.

Any unanswered assessment criteria will result in a Not Yet Achieved for that assessment criteria and an overall Not Yet Achieved awarded for the unit.

Some learners in this assessment window answered the questions generically. In this situation, learners provided a token answer, which had no relevance to either the task or the case study associated with the exam. At Level 2, learners must be able to demonstrate skills such as describe, explain, evaluate and compare as per the assessment criteria.

It was evident that some learners were under prepared for the external assessment as the quality of their answers did not reflect a secure understanding of the range, which is published in the qualification specification. Where learners could apply their knowledge and understanding to the assessment criteria, and write coherently with depth and detail, they were rewarded with success.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

The assessment criteria are clearly visible for each task and learners must be encouraged to refer to the grading criteria throughout the assessment to ensure that their answer fully meets this. This is especially important for learners hoping to achieve Merit and Distinction grades.

Evidence creation

Learners should use the answer booklet, using the space provided, to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, the learners name, Centre name and number, and relevant task number must be clearly visible. Any additional paper used must be securely attached to the answer booklet.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1

A.C 1.1 Describe the purpose of a PAR-Q (Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire)

The majority of learners achieved at this AC, and this was generally answered well. Learners were able to articulate the outline purpose of a PAR-Q giving a range of examples of the relevance of a PAR-Q and its importance. Learners who accessed the higher grades provided a more rounded response, which provided a clear description and understanding of the purpose of a PAR-Q as well as a number of the aspects involved in a PAR-Q. Where responses were weaker, learners did not demonstrate a detailed understanding of the purpose of a PAR-Q. In the few cases where learners did not achieve a Pass, they often misunderstood the question, gave an incorrect response, or did not answer it in relation to a PAR-Q.

A.C 1.3 Describe the preparation needed for a specific purpose

Responses to this task have continually improved across assessment windows. Learners who performed well on this AC offered a wide range of options that the individual in the case study could do in order to prepare properly for their exercise programme. Learners who accessed the higher grades provided more detailed responses, providing more detail about the preparation, outlining clearer, specific examples and the reasons for this preparation and how it would benefit the client.

Learners who achieved the Distinction outcome also explored a range of both physical and mental factors that Asha could begin to prepare in advance of her exercise programme.

Task 2

A.C 1.2 Assess the suitability of an individual to participate in fitness activities

Most learners answered this question reasonably well, with more learners beginning to access the higher outcomes. For the Pass grade, learners reviewed the information from the fitness tests in their own words and provided an accurate assessment for Asha to take part in fitness activities. Where learners achieve Merit grades, they linked reasons for the different fitness tests to key information provided within the scenario. Learners also made reference to the importance of starting the exercise programme slowly, taking into consideration fitness test results.

Learners that accessed the Distinction grade demonstrated critical judgement, breaking down a number of fitness test results, linking it back to the scenario, and suggesting suitable training methods for Asha to focus on within her training.

Learners that were awarded NYA either did not provide an overall assessment of Asha's suitability to exercise, or provided an inaccurate assessment.

A.C 1.4 Assess an individual's base level of fitness

This assessment criterion focuses on the learner's ability to interpret fitness test results and break these down into strengths and weaknesses. Learners who achieved the higher grades demonstrated a greater understanding and clearly assessed a number of these results in detail, looking at reasons why these results were how they were in relation to the information provided in the case study. A number of learners simply repeated the results table, not actually providing any assessment of Asha's base level of fitness. This led to the award of NYA as there was no evidence of the learner understanding or interpreting the results. Some learners also provided only a very brief response which had no specific detail within it, again limiting their outcomes.

Again, the quality of responses provided by learners appears to have improved, and learners are demonstrating a greater understanding of the vocational relevance of the task.

Task 3

A.C 2.2 Produce a nutrition plan for the period of the personal exercise programme

The nutrition plans developed as part of this assessment criteria have continued to improve in comparison to previous windows. Generally, learners provided a suitable outline plan, which included suitable food choices for breakfast, midday meal, evening meal, snacks and drinks.

Where learners have produced good quality nutrition plans, specific detail within nutrition plans was provided, with learners outlining more balanced meal choices, including a wide range of healthy foods. For a Merit to be awarded, learners included specific detail within their meal e.g. what their salad included, what vegetables were with their meal. In addition to this, learners provided a wide variety of meals over the 2 nutrition plan. Where learners achieved higher grades, they also made reference to cooking methods and portion sizes.

Much like previous windows, a number of learners were awarded NYA for this AC. The key reasons for the award of NYA were predominantly learners not completing the nutrition plan in full, too many inappropriate food choices e.g. too many sugary foods, and insufficient detail for meal choices e.g. simply stating 'meat'.

A.C 3.3 Describe how to improve the nutrition plan

Learners were asked to improve the nutrition plan in order to keep Asha interested over a long period of time. Learners generally demonstrated a good understanding of how to improve the nutrition plan taking into account the feedback from Asha. Learners who were awarded this criteria provided specific improvements to the nutrition plan. Where learners were awarded the higher grades, they provided detailed reasoning for these improvements and in some cases, looked at the positives and negatives of these improvements.

Where this was not answered so well, learners suggested unsuitable improvements, including unhealthy food choices and cheat days. In some cases, learners did not actually provide an improvement, simply repeating elements that were already within the original diet plan.

Task 4

A.C 2.1 Produce an individual exercise programme for a specific purpose

Much like previous windows, this task appeared to provide the most challenge for learners. Too many learners provided an exercise programme that was lacking the specific structure, detail and accuracy for a Pass to be awarded. Where NYA was awarded, this was largely due to learners providing unsuitable activities, exercise plans which were too vague, or providing exercise plans where elements were missing.

The number of higher grades awarded for AC 2.1 has continued to rise in comparison to previous windows. This is largely due to learners providing better quality exercise programmes in which the components of FITT have been embedded. Learners have provided exercise programmes which are more varied and which are more appropriate to the information provided about Asha in the case study. These programmes have been tailored to the necessary components outlined in the task.

A.C 3.2 Describe how to improve the exercise programme

Much like the previous window, a significant proportion of learners did not achieve a Pass for this criteria. Where this was not answered well, learners did not review their programme and failed to answer the task which informed them that Asha was 'getting bored doing similar exercises'. Learners either were not aware of how to improve the exercise programme, or did not read the task correctly. In some cases, learners provided improvements which were too vague and/or generic, or improvements which were already included within their original programme.

However, a lot of learners performed well within this task, with a good proportion of learners achieving a Merit or above. These learners provided a clear improvement to the exercise programme and clearly outlined reasons why these improvements would benefit Asha, taking into consideration in the rest of the exam and the case study.

A.C 3.1 Assess the effectiveness of the exercise programme

Many learners were able to review the results of the exercise programme and assess the effectiveness appropriately. Where learners achieved a Pass they reviewed the results accurately, identified the specific improvement and most learners began to draw conclusions as to the reasons why the improvements had occurred. In order to achieve the higher grades, learners are required to look further at the improvements and explore the reasons for the improvement in fitness test results.

In some cases, learners were awarded NYA for this task. Reasons for this include the fact that some learners did not attempt or complete this task, as well as the fact that some learners discussed the wrong components of fitness.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded to give due attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It is not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment early in their programme. It is far more appropriate to enter learners once they have taken part in the relevant teaching to ensure they are well prepared. Centres would be in a better position to prepare their learners for the external assessment following the support of an external moderation visit for the internally assessed units.

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