



# **National Qualifications Framework Levels 1–4, 2007**

## **Computing**

### **National Moderator's Report**

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## **NATIONAL MODERATOR REPORT FOR COMPUTING**

### **General Guidance for Assessors of Achievement and Unit Standards**

The purpose of external moderation is to provide reassurance that assessor judgments are at the national standard and are made on the basis of assessment materials that are fair and valid. All assessment materials are expected to:

- give the learner the opportunity to meet the requirements of the standard
- have an assessment schedule that gives evidence of appropriate learner responses and clear judgments at all levels.

The Ministry of Education contracted subject experts to write assessment resources for achievement standards. These are not pre-moderated. The intention is that they are modified to suit teaching programmes and learner needs. They do not provide “rules” but suggest different ways of assessing to the nationally registered standard.

### **General overall comment**

The standards for databases, spreadsheets and websites appear to be well understood by assessors.

The more creative desktop publishing units 2788 and 2789, and the presentation units 5940 and 5946 present some issues in terms of assessing.

The level 2 presentation unit 5946 requires at least two software applications to be used, whereas the level 3 presentation unit 5940 does not. Many presentations do not make for effective communication because of the use of too many effects. The use of many effects does not necessarily enhance the information. In many cases they seem to be used only for the sake of using technological effects rather than for more effectively communicating the required message. With the advent of more data projectors in classrooms learners should be encouraged to use more imaginative ways of giving presentations. The presentations should be supplied on disc, and teachers should test that they work correctly with all the required links before sending them for moderation. It is inappropriate to send printouts of screens without the electronic file of the presentation itself.

With the website units, it is expected that the electronic files be supplied so that the moderator can view the website and its functionality on screen. Assessors need to ensure that the website will actually work when supplied on disk and that all the required links are present and correctly named. Alternatively, assessors can post the websites live and just supply a web address which is accessible by the moderator if this is easier.

Concept designs and design development are often mixed up. Different concept designs occur when the style/genre is entirely different, eg minimalist, funky, cartoon, historical, modern etc. Design development is more about seeing the same elements and their placement being refined to better meet the brief’s required outcomes. Although the concept design is expected to clearly represent the final product, it can be just a sketch on paper.

Assessors need to be clear as to what is required at level 2 and what is required at level 3. With the level 2 standards, in many cases, the brief may be given, but at level 3 the brief must be written by the learner.

At level 2 and level 3 it is expected the students need to be able to think for themselves and therefore step by step instructions are not accepted at these levels and the design process must be demonstrated. This is for both the creative standards as well as the database and spreadsheet standards.

Readability is still an issue of concern. Readability is a requirement in many standards and seems to be evidence which is glossed over and often no judgments are given. Whether it is a web site, a printed document, a database or spreadsheet, similar criteria are present. It is not uncommon to see something like dark blue text on a black background being accepted or text on a dominant background etc. when clearly the text is hard to read.

There are many reasons for poor readability such as:

- black text on a dark background
- white text on a light background
- text which is in all capitals
- large chunks of white text on a dark background
- line length which is too long
- leading too small
- poor colour choices so that there is little contrast between text colour and background
- text on a dominant graphic background
- text on a background with high contrast
- large blocks of text with no paragraph spacing or no contrast with headings etc.

Any text in any situation which is to be deemed as having good readability has to be readable easily at a glance. Larger type is not necessarily easier to read, smaller type with larger line spacing can often be easier to read than the larger type with small line spacing.

All assessment material needs to be internally moderated before being given to learners to ensure it meets the required standard.

Many unit standards allow for evidence to be oral rather than written and assessors need to choose the best method for their learners. There are a large number of learners who might achieve more if the method of assessment was of an oral nature rather than written.