Moderation Practice

Version 1.1

Learner Guide

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Course Overview

This is an NQF registered course (SAQA Reg. No (**115759**)) Level (6).

This course is for any individual who is, or wishes to be involved in the Occupational Directed Education Training and Development industry, and it serves to support and advance the functioning of individuals in this industry – specifically for the following occupations:

- Moderator
- Educator
- Verifier
- Facilitator
- Further Education Training Practitioner
- Occupational Directed Education Training and Development Practitioner
- Skills Auditor

Course Outcomes

- Demonstrate understanding of moderation within the context of an outcomes-based assessment system
- Plan and prepare for moderation
- Conduct moderation
- Advise and support assessors
- Report, record and administer moderation, and Review moderation systems and processes.

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Section 1 – Introduction to Moderation

Learning Outcomes:

- Moderation is explained in terms of its contribution to quality assured assessment and recognition systems within the context of principles and regulations concerning the NQF
- A variety of moderation methods are described and compared in terms of strengths, weaknesses and applications. The descriptions show how moderation is intended to uphold the need for manageable, credible and reliable assessments.
- Key principles of assessment are described in terms of their importance and effect on the assessment and the application of the assessment results. Examples are provided to show how moderation may be effective in ensuring the principles of assessment are upheld.
- Examples are provided to show how moderation activities could verify the fairness and appropriateness of assessment methods and activities used by assessors in different assessment situations.

The Purpose of Moderation

The main purpose of moderation are:

- To verify that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable
- To identify the need to redesign assessments if required
- To provide an appeal procedure for dissatisfied learners
- To evaluate the performance of assessors
- To provide procedures for the de-registration of unsatisfactory assessors
- To provide feedback to the NSB's on unit standard and qualifications.

The moderation process can be seen as mirroring the process of assessment, in that the principles of assessment apply equal to moderation.

As a moderator you must carry out the following responsibilities to ensure that assessment is fair, valid and reliable.

Effective moderation systems allow everyone involved in outcomes-based assessment to have confidence in the assessment decisions made.

Moderation is all about ensuring, the quality of the assessment process and all the relevant assessment practices meeting the requirements advocated by the ETQA's.

Quality in the NQF is aimed at three different processes:

- **The product** or outcome: awards, achievement of standards of standards or qualifications, accreditation
- **The inputs**: learning provision, programmes, learning and learner resources, life or experiential learning
- **The process**: the quality of the learning and assessment interactions; the quality of the monitoring and auditing interactions

Moderation is seen by SAQA, as the' … process, which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in the national Qualifications Framework (NQF) standards and qualifications is fair, valid and reliable'.

The process of moderation is to ensure that all assessment practices are consistent an accurate.

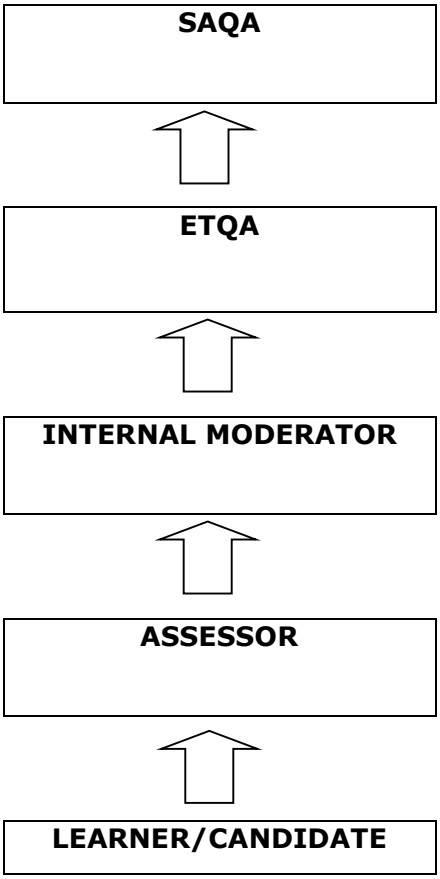
The Main Functions of Moderation are:

- To verify that assessment are fair, valid, reliable and practicable
- To identify the need to redesign assessments if required
- To provide an appeals procedure to dissatisfied learners
- To provide a procedure for the re-assessment of learners
- To evaluate the performance of assessors
- To provide procedures for the de-registration of unsatisfactory assessors
- To provide feedback to the NSB's on unit standards and qualifications

Moderators Roles and Responsibilities:

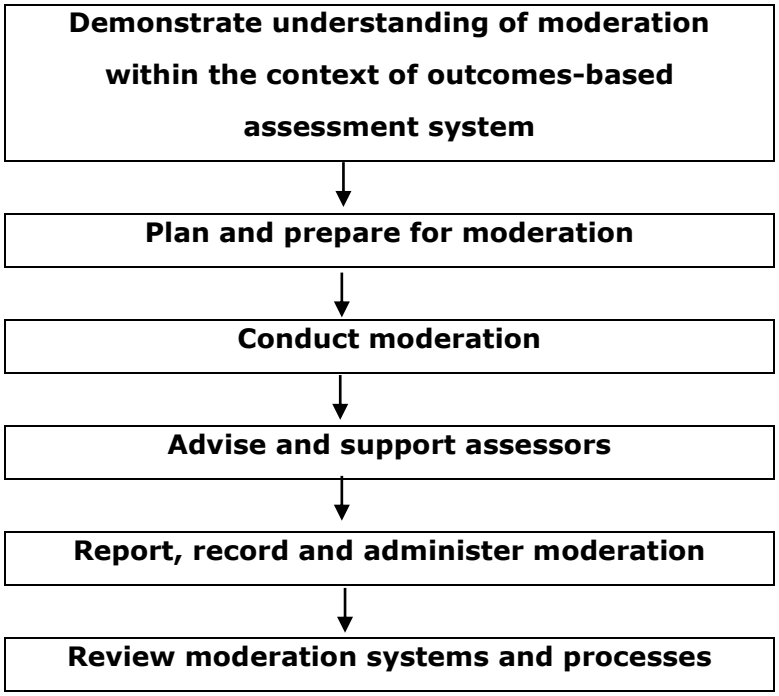
- Establish systems to standardize assessment, including the plans for internal moderation.
- Monitor consistency of assessment and confirm that assessors' judgements are fair, valid, and consistent. This is achieved through the review of assessment activities, assessment plans and assessor decisions that confirmed candidates' competency.
- Monitor assessment practices against skills development and employment equity plan.
- Put in place a process for modification to the assessment procedures and techniques when it is deemed that the assessor is not meeting the fair, valid and consistent criteria for assessment.
- Check the completion of assessment documents
- Managing the assessment team
- Provide constructive and supportive feedback to assessors in pre-assessment and post assessment moderation meetings and reports.
- Encourage and gather feedback regarding unit standards
- Ensure that industry standards are being upheld by assessors.
- Identify if and where there should have been further evidence gathered to demonstrate competency of the unit standard
- Confirm that records and recording systems fully document candidates achievements
- Liaise with external moderators
- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of assessors are defined, communicated and clearly understood by all parties.
- Ensure that clear procedures and mechanisms are in place to ensure that all assessors receive up to date information on ETQA requirements such as changes in policies and procedure.
- Manage the moderation process.
- Assist with arrangements for candidates with special needs.
- Offer assessors guidance and support, especially the new assessors.

Quality Assurance Route



The Moderation Process

The moderation process involves the following:



ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Pre-assessment Phase:

Design Phase (Involving at least 2 assessors/ moderators/designers)

Develop assessment plan

- Formative assessment tasks, tools and assessor guides.
- Summative task(s), criteria, tool and assessor guides designed.
- Portfolio guidelines established.
- **Moderation** of all new or piloted assessment plans, tasks and guides carried out by moderator/s.

Process Phase

- (Responsibility of managers & moderators)
- -Checking learning materials
- Identifying competent assessors
- -Preparation of assessors
- Assessment requirements (e.g. portfolios) explained
- Criterion-referencing explained
- Dates for submission negotiated.

Preparation for Assessment:

(Carried out by facilitator/ assessor during training)

- Assessment purposes and processes clarified with candidates
- Assessment requirements (e.g. portolios) explained
- Criterion-referencing explained
- Dates for submission negotiated.

During Training and Assessment:

(carried out by facilitator/ assessor and moderator during training)

- Evaluation form completed and submitted by candidates after contact time
- Formative tasks submitted, assessed by trainer and results recorded in pencil on task tool and cumulative record
- Tasks and tools forwarded to manager for 10% **sample moderation**
- **Moderation** on site visit for sample of assessment process
- **Moderation of sample assessment tasks during training**
- Feedback by **moderator to assessor**
- Feedback by **assessor to candidates** to rework or place in portfolio
- Evaluation form completed by candidates after assessment
- Finally, assessed portfolio and summative tasks submitted for moderation.

Post-Assessment Moderation

Manager requests and moderator conducts moderation

- Facilitator's report and cumulative record submitted
- Moderator moderates sample of portfolios and/or summative tasks and records intervention if intervention is required
- Discussion with candidate if moderator requests this
- Moderator submits a report and gives feedback to assessors
- Moderator compiles action plan to address standards drift by 1 assessor or across assessors.
- Moderator checks validity and reliability of new assessment tools
- Provider cooperates with ETDQA verification processes.

Recording and Reporting

- Results entered into database
- Hard copies of records and evaluation forms filed, & portfolios stored
- Endorsement forms completed for competent candidates
- Results forwarded to ETDQA
- Review meeting between training manager and trainer
- Report by training manager to client

Communication to clients & candidates

- Any appeals addressed

- Statement of ETDQA endorsed results and certificate sent to clients and candidates

Evaluation and Review

- Of all assessment tasks, guidelines and tools: based on assessor and moderator feedback and annual review workshop, at which trends in assessment results over time are identified.
- Professional development workshops for assessors and moderator for consistency of interpretation and to address feedback from ETDQA verifiers.
- Evaluation and review includes the macro moderation function, that is, the tracking of trends in ETDP noted through the training, and reporting on any feedback received on the applicability and relevance of the unit standards.

Administrative Responsibilities during Phases of ETD

Here is a list of responsibilities of the moderator throughout the Education Training and Development process.

A good quality management system for moderation will depend mainly on the quality manager for assessment in the provider organisation, because he or she is responsible for monitoring and ensuring that the cycle is followed in line with the organisational policies and procedures. This role could be played by the CEO or deputy CEO, the training manager, the most experienced moderator or other senior manager or a dedicated staff member, depending on the size of the organisation.

Pre-assessment phase **before training and assessment**:

- design of provider's assessment plan, including instruments and assessors' guides;
- moderation of provider's assessment plan, including instruments and assessors' guides;
- preparation of moderation plan per learning programme to match assessment plan;
- preparation and checking of materials and facilitator/assessors.

Preparation for assessment **at start of training**:

- preparation of candidates for assessment.

Tasks to be carried out **during training and assessment**:

- administrative and quality assurance tasks;
- assessment, recording and reporting;
- on-site moderation of assessment process for a sample of assessment events;
- sample of assessment tasks moderated during training to pick up problems before final portfolio assessment; and
- all assessed tasks and/or portfolio submitted for final moderation.

Post-assessment moderation carried out **after assessment:**

- moderator receives necessary documentation
- moderator conducts moderation;
- moderator makes intervention to correct standards drift if necessary;
- moderator gives written feedback to assessors;
- moderator writes and submits report; and
- results are submitted to ETDQA for verification.

Recording and reporting carried out **after moderation:**

- verification processes are completed and/or results are endorsed by ETDQA;
- results are entered into database;
- candidate information, assessment results, moderation records and evaluation forms are filed per specific course;
- candidate evidence is stored;
- one copy of each of moderator's report put in file for that moderator;
- one copy of each relevant moderator's report put in the file for the assessor being moderated;
- provider sends report to client.

Communication to clients and candidates **after endorsement of results:**

- any appeals addressed; and
- statement of ETDQA endorsed results and certificates sent to clients and candidates.

Evaluation and review: **on-going at set intervals:**

- of all tasks, tools and assessor guides (annually);
- analysis of throughput rates and identification of problems and strategies to address them (annually);
- evaluation forms read and addressed by quality manager every three months or after each course;
- feedback to ETDQA on unit standards and qualifications (annually); and
- evaluation of materials and facilitator and assessor preparation based on feedback from moderators, candidates, clients, and ETDQA verifiers, and plan to address identified weaknesses.

Responsibilities of the administrator for assessment:

- submit registration forms for candidates to the ETDQA on the required forms;
- ensure all candidates receive copies of appropriate documentation, have access to assessors for explanations where necessary, and sign off on the standard check-list that the proper procedures have been followed (unit standards, assessment plan, re-assessments arrangements, appeals system) for each learning programme;
- submit candidate results to the ETDQA on the required forms;
- prepare for verification visits, ensuring all appropriate documents are available;
- ensure internal assessment and moderation procedures are followed, forms completed and filed appropriately;
- ensure candidate records (including portfolios) are kept for two years for reference in case of appeals, complaints, verification processes, etc.

The responsibilities of moderators are spelt out in the unit standard *'Moderate assessments'*, but it may be worth re-emphasising some areas which are often areas of weakness:

Responsibilities of moderators

- respond timeously to requests for moderation;
- conduct moderations in line with organisational policy and the ETDQA code of conduct;
- complete all appropriate documentation and give to administrator for filing;
- give written feedback to assessors and participate in the internally organised professional development meetings, including 'agreement trials', where examples of assessment are compared and discussed to establish common interpretation of standards.

The responsibilities of assessors are also well covered elsewhere, so again only a few points which are sometimes neglected are listed below:

Responsibilities of assessors

- conduct assessment in line with the unit standard *'Plan and conduct assessment of learning outcomes',* giving written feedback to relevant parties;
- observe the ETDQA code of conduct;
- follow provider assessment plans and guides where they exist; otherwise draw up and follow own assessment guide;
- give feedback on unit standards and qualifications to moderators where appropriate;
- attend professional development meetings called by moderators help to standardise interpretation of standards and improve reliability of assessments

Activity 1:

1.1 Discuss the purpose of moderation

1.2 Discuss the process of moderation

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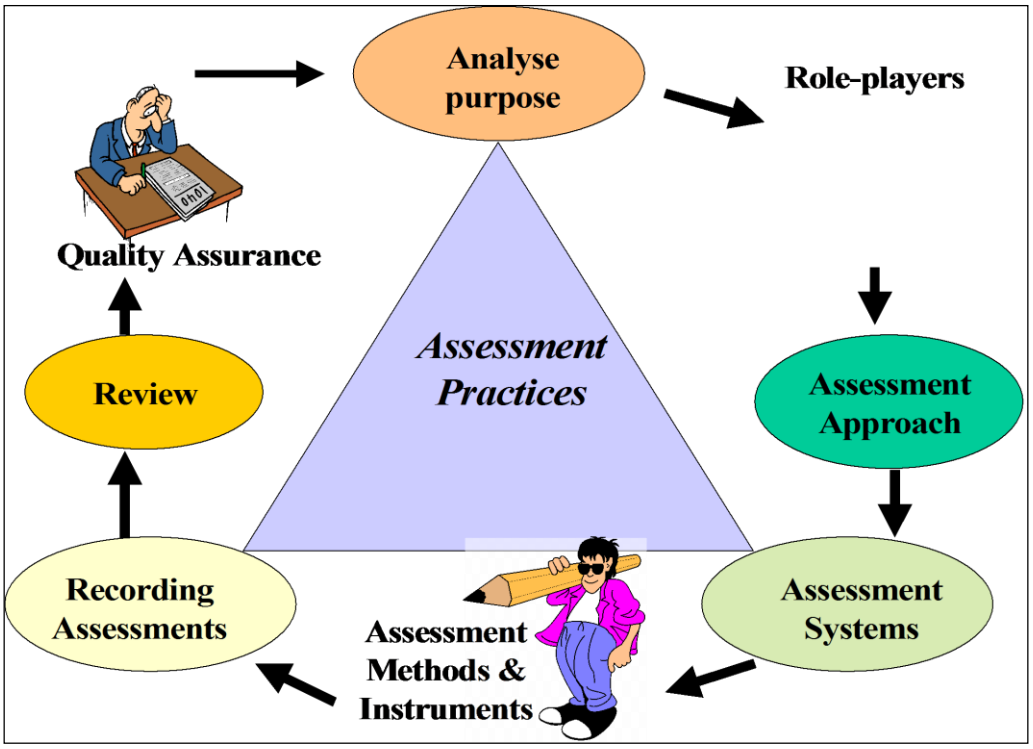
The Moderator's Role

The primary focus of the internal moderator is to 'assess' the quality of assessment practices implemented in the workplace following the moderation process.



The main responsibilities of internal moderators include the following:

MODERATE ASSESSMENTS:

- Monitoring and reviewing all assessment practices
- Ensuring that learners/candidates meet the SAQA requirements
- Taking samples of assessment decisions, how assessments are carried out and how
- evidence is judged
- Checking the completion of assessment documents
- Monitoring the assessment plans
- Monitoring the feedback process
- Moderating assessments conducted for candidates with special needs
- Moderating RPL assessments
- Managing assessment team
- Monitoring assessment practices against skills development and employment equity plan

Advising and Supporting Assessors

- Helping assessors to identify their training needs,
- Providing feedback to their performance
- Coaching and arranging training for assessors,
- Briefing assessors or organizational practices
- Giving advice and guidance on assessment guides and instruments
- Allocating candidates to assessors
- Dealing with disputes
- Keeping accurate records of assessment and internal moderation:
    - Ensuring that assessors use appropriate documents
    - Monitoring that documentation and administrative systems are fit for the purpose.
    - Authorizing certification

Moderators Competencies

It is important for moderators to have the following competences:

Competence in Internal Moderation: 115759

All moderators need to have the required moderators' qualification as well as the competencies expected of assessors, in that a clear understanding of assessment practices will be needed in order to make correct moderation decisions regarding assessment.

An awareness of the relevant occupational background:

Moderators need to have the required expertise in the areas for which they provide moderation. This is to ensure that the integrity of the qualification and assessment process is maintained.

Understanding of the international unit standards:

In order to provide the necessary support and advice to assessors, moderations need to be in a position where they are familiar with the unit standards.

Furthermore, one of the roles of the internal moderator is to be the link between the assessors and the external moderator, and in order to effectively carry out this function, internal moderators must also possess good communication skills.

An understanding of the awarding body's procedures for awarding

Internal moderators need to be in a position to provide advice to assessors on the procedures to be followed for the awarding of qualifications against unit standards for the relevant awarding bodies.

Awareness of external moderation requirements:

To ensure the practicability of the moderation process, all internal moderators need to have a good understanding of the requirements of external moderation.

This is not to say that all internal moderators need to be eternal moderation is useful in that it provides an indication to the internal moderator as to what may be required by the external moderator.

This is important in so far as it can avoid having to conduct re-moderation of assessments in order to satisfy the requirements of external moderation.

Keeping up-to-date with best practice:

With the whole assessment – moderation process being a dynamic, ever-changing system, it is important for internal moderators to keep themselves up-to-date with the latest developments in the fields of assessment, as well as latest developments from the qualification framework wherein they are operating.

In the South African context, it is useful to register on the SAQA website for all the latest information. This can be done by logging on to the SAQA website, the address of which is: www.saqa.org.za

NQF Quality Indicators

The NQF forms the umbrella under which all assessment practices need to be moderated to ensure quality provision of education and training, and assessment.

The quality assurance process is guided by the following 'quality indicators' for moderation practices as found in the NQF.

Indicators	**Quality Focus**
Integration	Qualifications and standards would be expected to Integrate theory and practice, and skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. Policies, systems and practices of learning provision (learning teaching and assessment including learning programmes, materials, activities, etc) leading towards the acquisition of qualifications and standards the same integration would be expected
Learning Outcomes	Qualifications and standards would be expected to: Clearly state the expected skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to be acquired and level and standard expected of these in order to guide learners and facilitators of learning. The learning provision needs to be designed such that these are achieved
Access Mobility and Progression	Qualifications and standards need to be designed in a way that ensures that they do not lead learners to a dead end, and that they allow for continued learning and for improved employment opportunities. Learning provision needs to ensure that learning is a process of building knowledge and skills.
Redress	Qualifications and standards would be expected to: Ensure that the potential of citizens that were previously denied education and training opportunities id brought to the fore and recognized so that they can be improved for the individual's development and the country's socio-political- economic development

Personal and National Development	Qualifications and standards would be expected to: Ensure that learners are developed so that they can be responsible for their own socio-political economic development and for the reconstruction and development of the country. Learning provision would be expected to ensure the relaxation of the same.

These indicators form the basis of the criteria for making moderation judgments against what is being provided is credible in terms of the overall framework of SAQA's objective.

Activity 2:

2.1 What are the main responsibilities of an internal moderator?

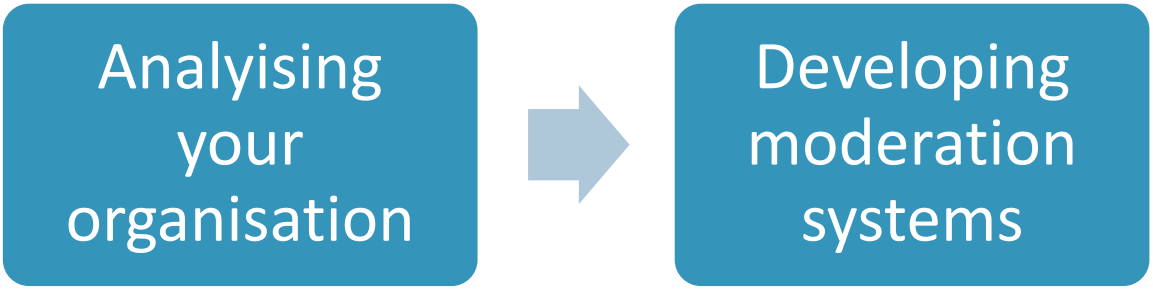
2.2 What competencies are expected from a moderator?

2.3 Discuss the NQF Quality Indicators that guides moderation practice.

Moderation Strategy and Systems

Any organization needs to scope and plan moderation practices. This will ensure the fairness and manageability of moderation.

This process involves:



The following list of questions will assist you in gathering information in order for you to develop and moderation systems relevant to your organizational needs

Questions to determine the scope of required moderation systems	Your organizational scope
How many sites are assessments being conducted?	
What is the purpose of the assessments on sites?	
How many assessors are practicing at each site of your organisation?	
What types of assessments are conducted?	
How often are these assessments conducted?	
How are the assessment records maintained?	
Who coordinates the assessment process?	
What support structures are in place to support assessors?	
How do you ensure that assessment guides are developed and validated?	
What processes are in place to obtain the full involvement of assessors and other staff in implementing assessment practices?	
What processes are used to keep assessors informed about assessment practices?	
What are the risks for your organisation if assessment practices are unfair?	
What are the employees' levels of understanding of assessment practices?	

The answers to the questions will help you to develop a strategy for the development and implementation of a moderation system.

Moderation systems

Any moderation system will be developed around the following components

P eople Assessors, Moderators, and Learners

P rocess Policy and Record systems

P roduct Training Materials
Assessment guides
Moderator's guide

ETQA Moderation Requirements

In terms of the ETQA Regulations, moderation means the process, which ensures the assessment of outcomes, described in the National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications is fair, valid and reliable

Embedded Principles in the ETDP SETA ETQA moderation process are the principles of fairness, reliability and validity

The moderation function will be carried out in a manner that ensures that the assessment of standards and qualifications are likewise fair, valid and reliable.

ETDP SETA

ETQA Agreement	In respect of moderation commissioned by SAQA, the ETDP SETA ETQA agrees to co-operate with the relevant body or bodies appointed by SAQA to moderate across ETQA's. The ETDP SETA ETQA will moderate assessments performed by constituent providers.

The Moderation Process

- The ETDP SETA ETQA will perform moderations at the accredited provider or, assessment site.
- The ETDP SETA ETQA will not require assessment documentation to be sent to or stored at the ETQA
- Moderation of assessments decisions will be verified to ensure that the assessment procedures are current and appropriate to the standard and or qualification
- Assessment decision will include the scrutiny of evidence collected during the assessment process and the examination of the assessment documentation
- Verification of the assessment decisions ensures that the assessment site's policies and procedures are adhered to and that there is compliance with national and sector requirements in terms of assessments
- Moderation may include discussions with the learner, assessor and any other relevant persons that have been involved in the assessment process
- The moderation process will be rigorous and effective but at the same time will not place a disproportionate burden on the moderator, assessments site, the assessor or the learner
- At the W&RSETA ETQA moderations will include the analysis of reports that have been sent to the ETQA on the regular basis for this purpose

Frequency of moderation	Standards and qualifications will only be awarded to a learner once a site has been for this purpose and the site has been moderated for the period in which the award was granted. Assessments will be moderated at the request of an assessments site or Provider at least once every six months.
Assessor Moderation	The ETD ETQA will moderate all registered assessors during his/her registration period**.** Assessor's work will be moderated indirectly. Moderation of Assessors will take place through moderation of assessment decision and outcomes
Moderators	Moderators may be permanent employees of the ETQA or independent individuals who have the appropriate competencies to perform the moderation function for specific qualifications and or unit standards

ETDP SETA and Moderation

Moderation Staff

- The ETDP SETA ETQA will allocate the responsibility for co-coordinating and overseeing the moderation function to the ETDP SETA Quality Assurer
- Each Quality Assurer will be allocated a number of accredited sites for moderation purposes
- The purpose of allocating a Quality Assurer to a number of sites allows for the Quality Assurer to establish a report with the site and for continuity
- The ETDP SETA Quality Assurer may only conduct moderations once he/she has been declared competent in the Moderator unit standard

Contracting Moderators

- Depending on the diversity of assessments, frequency of the assessment activity taking place within the assessment site and the Quality Assurers level of moderator expertise it may be necessary for the Quality Assurer to request additional moderators to assist during the moderation process
- The ETQA will identify the additional moderators from the pool of moderators for this purpose
- The additional moderators will be assessment competent, moderator competent and will be required to demonstrate competence in those unit standards and qualifications for which he/she would like to moderate
- A moderator, external to the ETDP SETA ETQA business unit, may only conduct moderation once registered with the ETDP SETA ETQA as a technical expert and moderator
- Independent moderators will be paid by the ETQA for services rendered

Training for Contracted staff	The independent moderator will be trained on the ETDP SETA moderation processes and procedures. It will be the responsibility of the Quality Assurer to train those contracted parties.
Conducting Moderation	The moderator will sample a minimum of 10% of all learners' achievement for that moderation period. The percentage of the sample will be dependent on the amount of international moderation that has been done by the site.
Code of Conduct	All moderators will sign a code of conduct and a code of ethics once they have been selected and trained. It is expected that the moderators conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner at all times. The site has the right to lodge a complaint if they feel that a moderator has behaved in a manner that brings the ETDP SETA ETQA in disrepute. A complaint will be lodged with the ETQA Manager if a moderator has behaved in a manner that brings the ETDP SETA ETQA in disrepute A complaint will be lodged with the ETQA Manger within 5 working days of the moderation visit
Confidentiality Agreements	It is important that the moderation process is as open and constructive as possible. Moderators will have access to materials that may be deemed confidential by the applicant therefore each moderator will sign a confidentiality agreement before conducting a site visit. The confidentiality agreement will list the documentation/product/services that is sensitive and as such the moderators will treat it with absolute confidence. The documentation listed will be included in the moderation plan.
Conflict of Interest	It is not the intent of the moderators to use the information for its own purpose, nor abuse the bases on which it is provided to the moderators. Before being assigned to an assessment site each moderator will be asked to declare any conflict of interest that he/she may have with the applicant.
Moderation reviews	After each moderation, a review will be set up between the Quality Assurer, additional moderator and the relevant people from the ETQA. The purpose of this review will to discuss the moderation process, identify areas for improvement and how the moderation policies and procedures are to be amended to ensure continues improvement. The review will allow moderators to discuss problem areas and identify possible alternatives for certain problems.

	The review will provide the opportunity for moderators and the ETQA to interact and share ideas.
Amendments of Policies and Procedures	Amendments to the moderation policies and procedures are to be made when the ETQA Board Committee gives approval to the appropriate ETQA person
Procedures	Once the amendments have been authorized it is the responsibility of the ETDP SETA Quality Assurer to ensure that all the necessary chances are to be made to the policies and procedures. All amendments will be communicated to all appropriate stakeholders. Communication of amendments will include verbal communication, updating the website and distributing any relevant documentation.
Withdrawal or suspension of accreditation	If the Quality Assurer measures the evidence against the criteria and the evidence indicates the assessment have not been performed in a fair, valid or reliable manner and the awards issued are not of the standard registered on the framework, then the Quality Assurer may recommend the withdrawal of the accreditation status. The ETQA will investigate this recommendation to be validity before the recommendation is endorse. The period of suspension will be dependent on the nature of the contravention of the principles. If the accreditation status is withdrawn then the site will be unable to re-apply for accreditation for a period of one (1) year
Appeals	An appeals process will be in place for applicants who feel that moderations had taken place unfairly. The ETQA Board Committee, on an ad hoc basis, will appoint a neutral appeals committee committee will be selected on the basis of their value added contributions or expertise in the area under dispute. The appeal committee will be responsible for hearing the evidence from the responsible Quality Assurer and the accredited site. Based on the evidence heard the appeals committee will make a final and binding decision.
Communication	The moderation process will be communicated to all accredited assessment sites, accredited providers registered assessors via the most appropriate distribution channel. The ETDP SETA ETQA will as far as possible liaise with one contact person per site throughout the entire process. The ETDP SETA will be in continuous communication with SAQA, appropriate NSB's, Business Providers, Learners and other relevant ETQA's. This will ensure that the ETQA is always operating in line with best practices and that the moderation policies and procedures are constantly updated to reflect the changing

	needs of the sector and the business environment

When reviewing your organizational moderation policy you need to ensure that it meets the necessary requirements as introduced by SAQA. Use questions to guide you through the process: such as Why? When? Who? What? How?

- Purpose
- Definitions
- Embedded Principles
- Moderation Process
- Moderation Frequency
- Moderators (Internal/External) Management
- Agreements with Moderators
- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Moderation Reviews
- Amendments
- Appeals etc.

See the example at the end of this course.

Activity 3:

3.1 Why is it important that an organization scope and plan for moderation practice?

3.2 What components are needed to develop a moderation system?

3.3 Briefly discuss the moderation process as set out by the ETDP SETA.

Moderation Methods

Moderation can be conducted in various ways. Each method may be more or less applicable in different situations and whatever methods are selected, it should be in line with moderation requirements specified by ETQA's and the centers own policies and procedures.

It will be necessary to plan for the moderation systems to evolve and develop. This will require changing the methods used over time, hence, the need for both on-site and offsite moderation

On-Site Moderation

In this method the moderator observes first hand, what the assessor does during the assessment. This assists the moderator to ascertain whether the assessor will give the correct information and guidance to the learner, especially in the preparatory process.

In this instance the following happens:

- External moderators can undertake site visits and conduct observations and documentation sampling
- Doing statistical moderation
- Discussion can be conducted with candidates, assessors and other role-players.

Strengths of onsite moderation

- Better quality and more evidence
- The opportunity of obtaining more evidence by asking questions**,**
- Authenticity can be easily proved
- Assessment practices are directly observed
- It is easy to ascertain that learners with special needs and assessment barriers are catered for.
- When an appeal has been lodged the moderator will be able to easily handle it

Weaknesses of onsite moderation

- Not very cost effective
- Time consuming
- Could entail additional travelling
- Intimidating to the assessor and learner
- Could influence the learner who now must face two observers
- Special arrangements and extra resources could be required

Off-Site Moderation

Off-site moderation can be done with or without an assessor being present. Mostly moderators go through learner's evidence that has been submitted either as a test, project or portfolio of evidence. The crux of the off-site moderation is sampling.

There are variations to this moderation method:

- Moderate one portfolio fully from batch of ten portfolios

- Moderate different Specific outcomes in different portfolios

The strengths of Off-site Moderation:

- Cost effective and consumes less time
- No need for special arrangements and resources are required
- The learner is not negatively influenced
- Only the moderator is involved in the moderation

The weaknesses are:

- The moderator cannot, from a practical point of view, confirm all the evidence presented.
- He/she must accept that the assessment process as reflected, has been followed
- Difficulty in confirming authenticity
- In the moderation of different specific outcomes in different portfolios submitted, the moderator will not have a full picture of the learner's consistent performance across competencies. (**Foundational, practical and reflexive competencies**).

Thus it is important to choose a moderation method that suits your context.

Principles of Assessment

As assessment is central to the recognition of achievement, the quality of the assessment is therefore important to provide credible certification. Credibility in assessment is assured through assessment procedures and practices being governed by certain principles.

These principles are:

- Fairness
- Validity
- Reliability
- Practicability

These principles help to allay the concerns and anxieties of users of assessment results.

The learners, parents, employers, learning institutions and the general public want the assurance that the assessment results are credible. This is because these results often affect personal, social and economic progression and mobility in society. In addition, the results provide accurate information about the individual.

The above-mentioned principles are looked at more closely below:

Fairness

An assessment should not in any way hinder or advantage a learner.

Unfairness in assessment would constitute:

- Inequality of opportunities, resources and appropriate teaching and learning approaches in terms of acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

- Bias in respect of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social class and race in so far as that the assessment approaches, methods, instruments and materials do not take into account these differences.
- Lack of clarity in terms of what is being assessed.
- Comparison of learners' work with other learners, particularly in terms of diversity of learning styles, home language, values, gender, race, life experiences, etc.

Fairness in assessment would constitute:

- The above-mentioned influences are taken into account and addressed.
- The assessment process is clear, transparent and available to all learners.
- Appeal mechanisms and re-assessments are accessible to all learners.

Validity

Validity in assessment refers to measuring what it says it is measuring, be it knowledge, understanding, subject content, skills, information, behaviours, etc.

Validity in assessment would constitute:

- Assessment procedures, methods, instruments and materials have to match what is being assessed.

Therefore, the assessment should stay within the parameters of what is required – not less than the unit standard or qualification, nor more than the unit standard or qualification.

In order to achieve validity in the assessment, assessors should:

- State clearly what outcome(s) is/are being assessed
- Use an appropriate type or source of evidence
- Use an appropriate method of assessment
- Select an appropriate instrument of assessment

NOTE:

When designing an assessment, the assessor must look at the specific outcome(s), the assessment criteria and the range so as to determine the kind and amount of evidence required from the learner.

The kind and amount of evidence will also determine the assessment method and instruments to be selected and used.

The assessment criteria, the range, contexts and underpinning knowledge indicated in the unit standard, will inform these decisions.

Reliability

Reliability in assessment is about consistency. Consistency refers to the same judgments being made in the same, or similar contexts each time a particular assessment for specified stated intentions is administered.

Assessment results should not be perceived to have been influenced by variables such as:

- Assessor bias in terms of the learner's gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion,
- like/dislike, appearance and such like
- Different assessors interpreting unit standards or qualifications inconsistently
- Different assessors applying different standards
- Assessor stress and fatigue
- Insufficient evidence gathered
- Assessor assumptions about the learner, based on previous (good or bad) performance
- To avoid such variance in judgment (results), assessments should ensure that each time an assessment is administered, the same or similar conditions prevail. Also, that the procedures, methods, instruments and practices are the same or similar.

In addition:

- Assessors should be trained and competent in administering assessments
- Assessors should give clear, consistent and unambiguous instructions
- Assessment criteria and guidelines for unit standards and qualifications should be adhered to
- Assessors should meet and talk to each other
- Assessors should be subject experts in their learning field(s)
- Where possible, more than one assessor should be involved in the assessment of one learner
- Assessors should use checklists, or other objective forms of assessment, in addition to other assessment instruments
- Internal and external moderation procedures for assessment should be in place
- Clear and systematic recording procedures should be in place

Practicability

Practicability refers to ensuring that assessments take into account the available financial resources, facilities, equipment and time. Assessments that require elaborate arrangements for equipment and facilities, as well as being costly, will make the assessment system fail.

NOTE:

Where the ideal assessment require specialized equipment and facilities, such assessment could be done by means of a simulation or by means of collecting evidence in the workplace.

To conclude:

FAIRNESS + VALIDITY + RELIABILITY + PRACTICABILITY = CREDIBILITY

The critical overriding principle of assessment is that of **ethics**.

Because the results of an assessment can lead to an increase in pay, improved career prospects and the like, the principles of assessment should be applied ethically and responsibly.

Layers of Moderation

Any national system of assessment must be effectively quality assured to ensure that consistent and accurate standards are being applied and maintained. There are 2 layers of moderation, internal and external moderation**.** Both external and internal moderation systems must ensure that they are credible, fair, valid, reliable and practicable.

Internal moderation

Internal moderation is designed to ensure that assessments conducted by a single provider are consistent, accurate and well designed, focusing on three key stages of assessment:

Design:

The choice and design of assessment methods and instruments are appropriate to the unit standard and qualifications being assessed.

Implementation:

The assessment is appropriately conducted and matches the specifications of unit standards and qualifications. This includes ensuring that the appropriate arrangements have been made and that there are regular discussions among assessors.

Review:

Any lesson learnt from two previous stages are considered and the necessary changes are made

The purpose of internal moderation

- Provide support, advice and guidance to assessors
- Standardise assessments
- Monitor consistency of assessment approach.

As a moderator for your organisation, this is where you fit in: Internal Moderator.

The provider can be assured that internal moderation processes are working effectively, when assessors responsible for the key stages of assessment are qualified, experienced, and able to call on the support of colleagues in an organized and systematic way.

REMEMBER

The desired output of the **internal moderation** process should be that all assessors are assessing to national standards.

External Moderation

External moderation is a means of ensuring that two or more providers delivering programmes to the same unit standards or qualifications are assessing consistently to the same standard and in a well-designed manner.

External moderation is usually conducted by ETQAs through a process called Verification. In this instance the ETQA conducts site visits to constituent providers to verify learner achievements and endorse assessment and moderation results. During this process the external moderator interacts with and questions the internal moderator for further clarifications.

The purpose of external moderation is to provide guidance and advice to providers in order to:

- Enhance teaching, learning and assessment
- Assure the credibility of assessment: Qualified staff, assessment approach, instrument and decisions.
- Ensure consistency across providers
- Improve quality of assessment and judgments, through sampling, monitoring and observation.

You can now see that a moderator plays an important role in quality assurance. These roles need to be supported by a moderation system which clearly outlines how the process is to unfold, how much sampling is to be done and what methods and techniques are to be used.

Activity 4

4.1 Discuss the methods of assessment, namely; on-site and off-site moderation.

4.2 Discuss the principles of assessment and how it should be governed by the moderator.

4.3 Discuss the two layers of moderation.

Section 2
Plan and Prepare for Moderation

Learning Outcomes:

- The planning and preparation is to take place within the context of an existing moderation system, whether internal or external, as well as an existing assessment plan.
- Planning and preparation activities are aligned with moderation system requirements.
- The scope of the moderation is confirmed with relevant parties.
- Planning of the extent of moderation and methods of moderation ensures manageability of the process. Planning makes provision for sufficient moderation evidence to enable a reliable judgment to be passed on the assessments under review.
- The contexts of the assessments under review are clarified with the assessors or assessment agency, and special needs are taken into consideration in the moderation planning.
- Moderation methods and processes are sufficient to deal with all common forms of evidence for the assessments to be moderated, including evidence gathered for recognition of prior learning.
- The documentation is prepared in line with the moderation system requirements and in such a way as to ensure moderation decisions are clearly documented.
- Required physical and human resources are ensured to be ready and available for use. Logistical arrangements are confirmed with relevant role-players prior to the moderation.

Plan for Moderation

Moderation is a planned and systematic process to ensure that all assessment practices meet the requirements of the NQF.

Additional factors driving the demand for moderating the quality of assessment are:

- the need to comply with the ETQA requirements
- the quality management of assessments in your organisation.

Improving the quality and consistency of assessments will help assessors to be more confident about their judgments. Learners/Candidates will believe that they have been treated fairly, and employers will value the qualification issued.

Moderation is part of an organization's overall approach to and management of quality processes.

What is a moderation plan?

Planning is an attempt to control moderation practices.

Planning is around issues such as the **process** and systems required, **people** required and **products** and resources required.

The plan describes:

- **what,** exactly, is to be done,
- **why** the work is being done: for whose benefit,
- **who** is to do each part of the work,
- **how** it is to be done: the approach, processes, and techniques to be used,
- **what type of evidence** is to be provided,
- **when** the work is to be started and completed, and dates of agreed 'milestones' while the project is in progress, and
- **where** it is to be done

The Context of Planning

Regulatory Requirements

- ETQA requirements
- Skills Development
- Employment Equity

Business considerations

These include the organization's quality systems, strategic planning, processes and issues relating to client satisfaction.

Resources

Consider the people, physical resources and the time available.

Moderators need to have the required moderation qualifications and have expertise in the areas, which they moderate.

Also consider the cost of establishment, operational and maintenance of the system.

Extent

Think about the type, size, location and complexity of assessment practices to determine how much and how often moderation has to happen.

The scope of the plan

A moderation plan addresses the quality assurance requirements of all assessment practices, as listed in the next table:

Assessment plan	Information for assessors
Assessment policy	Information for candidates
Assessment system and procedures	Professional judgement
Assessment tools	Professional development of assessors
Partnership assessment arrangements	Record keeping
Evidence collection	Selection and training of assessors
Special needs	Simulated assessment
Witness evidence	Team assessments
Assessment guides	RPL

The next table provides an overview of the 20 strategies. For ease of reference, they are listed alphabetically. Each strategy is mapped against the appropriate component of assessment practices.

Table1: Strategies for the quality assurance of assessment

Components that require moderation	Relevant aspect of assessment practices				
	Assessment system	**Assessment process**	**Assessors**	**Evidence**	Assessment judgement
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	E
Assessment plan		▪	▪	▪	▪
Assessment policy	▪	▪	▪		
Assessment system and Procedures	▪	▪	▪		
Assessment guides		▪	▪	▪	▪
Benchmarking	▪				
Evidence collection guides			▪	▪	
Guidelines for gathering third party evidence			▪	▪	▪
Information for assessors			▪	▪	▪
Information for candidates		▪		▪	
Internal audits		▪	▪	▪	▪
Mechanisms to support professional judgement		▪	▪	▪	▪
Partnership assessment arrangements			▪	▪	▪
Professional development for assessors			▪		
Record keeping	▪	▪	▪		
Selection and training of assessors			▪		
Simulated assessment			▪	▪	▪
Guidelines					
Team assessment		▪	▪	▪	▪
Validation strategies	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
Special needs	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪
RPL	▪	▪	▪	▪	▪

Special needs to consider for moderation

Special needs must be considered to ensure that the moderation process is fair and transparent. Failure to take account of special needs prior to commencement of the moderation may create barriers to an effective moderation process.

A wide range of barriers can occur during the assessment process that will have a negative impact on the results of the assessment.

Barriers Caused by Moderation

Physiological blocks

The block 'fear humiliation and failure' is perhaps most applicable in this sense in that moderation process may be perceived by the assessor under review as a 'threatening', resulting in an aggressive attitude on the part of the assessor.

Unsuitable moderation environment

There are two aspects of the work environment, which can have a negative impact on the results of assessment:

- The relationship between the assessor and moderator.
- The relationship between the assessor and his/her colleagues.

The relationship between the assessor and the moderator can have a crucial impact on the success of the moderation, and by implication, the assessment as well.

A question that needs to be asked is whether the assessors feel valued? If not, they may feel that the moderation is some sort of slur on their competence and capacity to do the job for which they have been trained.

Insufficient consultation

Assessors were not consulted about the purpose of moderation and/or process.

Consultation should allow for the opportunity to:

- Contribute ideas to the moderation process
- Voice fears about discrimination or bias.
- View and comment on moderation methods, documents and practices.
- Question the validity and fairness of techniques used.

Quality Systems Required for RPL

Quality management systems and processes are vital elements in the continuous development and provision of RPL services and assessments. As a moderator you need to be aware of the ETQA requirements.

Reporting and record keeping should be designed as an integral part of the QMS, to inform strategic planning requirements at national, sectorial and provider levels, and to sustain the critical integrity of the whole system.

As a moderator you will follow the guidelines provided by the ETQAs to ensure that workplaces operate management systems for RPL that are consistent, and meet the criteria and specifications for quality assurance as set out in their sector specific policies and regulations.

Remember you need to know:

- What and how?
- Who and how?
- When and where? Cost implications
- What resources?

Planning Questionnaire

Moderation component	Questions (What quality standards do you wish to set and monitor)	How will you conduct the moderation (techniques)	Moderation Instrument (Evidence of moderation practices)
Example: Assessment Plan	1. What should be in an assessment plan? 2. How is the assessment plan implemented? 3. How often are assessment plans reviewed? 4. Who are involved and how are the assessment plans developed?	1. Appoint a panel of expert assessors to validate all assessment plans	Validation Checklist
		2. Have quarterly meetings to review all assessment plans	Review checklist
		3. Branch manager to report quarterly on the implementation	Report based on review checklist
		4. Sample 20% of all assessment plans against organization assessment strategy bi-annually	Review checklist

Moderation Techniques

As a moderator you will select a technique, which is most suitable to your organization. The most effective techniques are:

- Sampling of assessment practices
- Observation of assessment practices
- QA meetings
- Reports from assessors, branch managers etc.
- Interviews
- QA Committees

Your organisation might have a QA system in place; it would be wise to integrate your moderation practices with an existing system rather than creating a separate system.

The criteria for effective moderation are the same as for assessment practices. They are;

V alidity
A uthenticity
C onsistency
C urrency
S uffiency
R elevancy
R eliability

Keeping in mind the need to be cost effective, we are going to focus on sampling techniques.

Activity 5

5.1 What is a moderation plan?

5.2 What should a moderation plan address?

5.3 What barriers could be caused due to moderation?

5.4 Discuss the criteria of effective moderation practice.

Sampling of Assessments

The method of sampling would at best provide indirect evidence of assessors' abilities to make assessment decisions that satisfy the criteria for fairness, creditability and reliability.

Awarding a qualification is based on a number of valid assessment decisions.

Moderation is about checking the quality and consistency of those assessments.

It is not normally cost-effective to check every single assessment, so you select a sample of assessments.

The size and focus of the sampling process should be agreed with the ETQA.

Choosing a sample

In choosing your sample, you need to consider the following:

- The characteristics of the sample compared with those of the assessments carried out;
- What size of sample to check;
- The experience of the assessors;
- Any specialist assessment requirements; and
- Spread of center activity.

The actual size of the sample depends on your confidence that assessment practice is consistent.

The Characteristics of a sample

It is more efficient to plan a sample which targets particular characteristics that influence assessment.

For example, the following characteristics in the table below may influence what is included in a sample.

Characteristics	Features which should be taken into account when selecting a sample
The number and type of candidates	• Age; gender; ethnic origin • With/without a disability • Candidates with special assessment needs • RPL requirements
The number of assessors and their experience	• Experienced/inexperienced • Qualified or unqualified • Assessment load • Occupational background
The standards within the NQF	• Which unit standards? (core, fundamental and elective) • Quality of unit standards • Related to learnerships • What qualification gets • Extensiveness of range statements
The range of assessment methods used	• Observation in the workplace • Questioning • Witness testimonies • RPL • Products of work • Simulations • Written tests • Projects/assignments
The type of records of assessment	• Assessor reports • Records of learning • Progress reports • Branch Managers reports • Learner/Candidates evidence files/ portfolios
The number and range of assessment locations	• In the workplace • Off-the-job • Several different sites

Some of the characteristics above can create problems for assessors, e.g. the use of evidence from simulation or RPL.

Where this is the case, you may decide to include more of them in the sample.

The main aim when selecting a sample is to make sure that all assessors are represented.

One way of doing this is to use a simple table (a 'sampling frame') to plan and record the coverage of the sample by assessor.

Sample by unit standard and assessor

ABC is an accredited training provider offering NQF qualifications. ABC has an assessment team of five assessors. The moderator decides to develop a plan to monitor the performance of all the assessors against the Unit Standard ASSMT 01.

The outcome of sampling of assessments could be recorded as shown in the table below.

	ASSESSOR				
	A	B	C	D	**E**
115753 SO 1	✓				✓
115753 SO 2		✓		✓	
115753 SO 3	✓		✓		
115753 SO 4		✓		✓	
115753 SO 5			✓	✓	

Sample by assessment method and assessor

The same internal moderator may also decide to monitor assessment methods across all assessors in the assessment team. This will give a representative view of the range of assessment methods operating at the centre.

The table below shows the plan for carrying out the sampling, based on the assessors' assessment plans. These dates could later be replaced by an indication of the outcome.

Assessment methods	**Assessor A**	**Assessor B**	**Assessor C**	**Assessor D**	**Assessor E**
Questioning		✓			
Observation of normal work			✓		
Observation of set tasks in work	✓				
Witness testimony					✓
Products of work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Sample by assessment location and assessor

An internal moderator at training provider XQZ has a dispersal team of assessors, based at five locations. They have decided to concentrate on monitoring the consistency across sites. They randomly sample candidates at each site when they visit and fill in their names and their assessors' names after the visit.

The table below shows the result of the first wave of visits to all sites.

Site	No. of candidates	Date visited	Candidate/assessor				Notes
A	12	27/09/07	BS/JW	RS/JW	AS/R	DE/MR	JW needs guidance on witness testimonies
B	15	10/10/07	DD/HC	GH/'LH	JK/LH	LP/LH	LH needs clarification on unit standard ASSMT 01, specific outcome 2
C	4	25/10/07	DL/PE	SB/PE			PE needs more networking opportunities
D	9	14/11/07	TH/AB	AW/AB	Fv/RL		This site needs to set more demanding deadlines
E	14	19/11/07	Pl/FR	SK/MW	RE/MW	SD/NG	NG has problems with finding the time, several appointments cancelled

Sampling Strategies

The following are sampling strategies, which may choose to use.

An overall strategy will probably combine a number of these at different times, according to changing priorities:

- The use of all assessment methods across a range of units;
- A selection of unit standards across a sample of evidence files/portfolios/assessments guides;
- A whole qualification across a sample of evidence files/portfolios;
- A sample of units across all assessors (individually/collectively);
- A certain percentage of evidence files/ portfolios in detail and a scan of the rest;
- Sampling by a particular source of evidence;
- A structured sample of candidates according to a particular characteristics, and
- Sampling of satellite centers and other assessment locations.

The complexity of sampling techniques used will depend on the size of the center in terms of the number of assessors and candidates and their geographical spread, familiarity with the qualification and the experience of the assessment team.

You must record the precise sampling method used and why it was chosen, so that you can monitor the characteristics of selected samples over time. This also allows the external verifier to monitor the amount and effectiveness of sampling being carried out at the training provider.

Activity 6

Think-Big Training Solutions has 20 Assessors. Ten (10) Assessors have been conducting assessments for 3 years; five (5) for I year and (5) have started assessing the last six months. All assessors follow the organisational process and company assessment policy however all assessors design their own assessments and are kept with the assessor.

a) Nkosinathi has just been appointed as a moderator can you advise her by providing her with at least two sampling strategies.

b) Think of your own organization, describe your own scenario and identify two sampling strategies.

Developing a moderation plan

RECAP					
Process of Planning					
Strategy	**Description of moderation technique**	**Timing**	**Responsibility**	**Resources required**	**Record keeping requirements**
1. Process					
2. Product					
3. People					
Describe why and what needs to be moderated	Describe how you are going to evaluate each of the quality assurance strategies	Indicate the date(s) the review will take place.	Name the person(s) who will be responsible for moderating.	Describe what resources these activities will need, for example, people, time, physical resources. Identify the cost effectiveness	Identify what records need to be kept of the review and what form these will take, for example, recording sheets, feedback sheets, etc.

MODERATION PLAN

PURPOSE OF MODERATION	
CONTEXT OF THE MODERATION	
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS	

MODERATION STRATEGY	MODERATION TECHNIQUE	PREPARATION REQUIRED	ROLE PLAYERS	DATES	TIMES	PLACE OF MODERATION	EVIDENCE DOCUMENT NUMBER

We herewith agree to the above moderation plan

ASSESSOR/S		**DATE**	
MODERATOR		**DATE**	

WHAT?	RESOURCES REQUIRED	Completed		COMPLETED	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Has the assessor been given an opportunity to confirm what is expected of him/her in the moderation process?	Code of conduct for assessor and moderator				
Has there been agreement on the evidence that needs to be produced by the assessor for the purpose of moderation?	Moderation plan				
Has the candidate for assessment been briefed on the presence of the moderator during assessment.	Moderation procedures for candidates				
Has there been an agreement on the context of moderation?	Moderation plan				
Does the assessor know and understand the ETQA requirements for quality assurance?	ETQA moderation policy				
Has the assessor been provided with the latest, up-to-date information about the ETQA?	ETDP SETA website SAQA information				
Is there an opportunity for the moderation to form part of the assessors' overall development needs?	Assessor Induction Assessor Development Plan Review				
Has there been an agreement on the time, date and venue for the moderation process?	Moderation plan Meetings/Agenda/Minutes				

Preparing to conduct moderation (As a moderator you need to prepare yourself before you conduct any moderation.

The following checklist can be used as a guideline)

WHAT?	**RESOURCES REQUIRED**	**Completed**			**COMPLETED**	
		Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**
Do you have all the policies required for assessment practices?	Assessment and Moderation policy					
Do you have a moderation plan?	Moderation plan					
Have you met with the relevant assessor and discussed the upcoming moderation process in detail?	Moderation process mapped					
Does the assessor understand and agree to the scope and evidence requirements of the moderation?	Moderation plan Moderation process					
Are the required resources, both physical and human ready and available for moderation?	List of resources required					
Has the external verifier been notified of the moderation process?	ETQA notification					
Are the moderation documents prepared and do they relate to the moderation method to be used?	Moderation instruments - Checklist - Reports - Review questionnaires					

Preparing Moderation Documents

The purpose of the moderation documentation is to record the findings of the moderator and to link moderation to the whole quality management system.

It is the information contained within the moderation documentation which provides an indication of the extent to which the delivery of training and its assessment is meeting the required standards as identified by various ETQAs.

It is for this reason that the documentation used for the purpose of moderation needs to be clear, easy to use, and able to record all the necessary information obtained by the moderation.

It is also important to realize that not one single document will be able to record all the various aspects related to the moderation process.

The type of moderation document will depend on its purpose.

The various types of documents that can be used are:

- Moderation questionnaire
- Structured interview sheet
- Moderation observation checklist
- Moderation plan
- Moderation report
- Sample checklist
- Sample plan

Sample of an Assessor assessment schedule

WHAT?	RESOURCES REQUIRED	Completed		Completed	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Have the relevant people related to the moderation process been informed	Communication process mapped Communication prepared				

Activity 7

7.1 What needs to be considered when choosing a moderation sample?

7.2 Discuss what a sampling strategy might include.

7.3 Identify various types of documents that can be used in moderation

Section 3
Conduct Moderation

Learning Outcomes:

- The moderation is conducted in accordance with the moderation plan. Unforeseen events are handled without compromising the validity of the moderation.
- The assessment instruments and process are checked and judged in terms of the extent to which the principles of good assessment are upheld.
- Moderation confirms that special needs of candidates have been provided for but without compromising the requirements specified in the relevant outcome statements.
- The proportion of assessments selected for checking meets the quality assurance body's requirements for consistency and reliability. The use of time and resources is justified by the assessment history or record of the assessors and/or assessment agency under consideration.
- Appeals against assessment decisions are handled in accordance with organisational appeal procedures.
  The moderation decision is consistent with the quality assurance body's requirements for fairness, validity and reliability of assessments to be achieved.

Conducting the Moderation

What is involved in moderation? Moderation is about gathering evidence of fair assessment practices.

Moderation is part of assessment practices and it is not a process that only starts after all assessments have happened.

During the planning phase you would have identified what you want to moderate and how you intend moderating.

Before conducting moderation you would have had to prepare all the moderation instruments/documents that will be used.

Instruments are designed to assist you with moderating the Following:

- Moderation policy implementation
- Assessment strategies and plans
- Staff requirements
- Managing performance
- Self-assessment for assessors
- Assessment workplace
- Assessment guides
- Selection of assessment methods
- Assessments practices of RPL
- Assessment practices on and off-site
- Assessment decisions and confirming assessment results
- Process if assessment decision cannot be confirmed
- Appeals against assessment decisions
- Annual reports

Steps in Conducting Moderation

Step1:	Review Moderation Plan
Step2:	Conduct Moderation
Step3:	Feedback and Advice
Step4:	Moderation Reports

Review moderation plan

Prior to commencing with moderation, it is a good idea to review the moderation plan and check to see that the assessor understands the purpose of the moderation process and what is expected of him/her.

The review also provides the opportunity to do the following:

- Check on the availability of identified resources, both physical and human
- Check on the availability and suitability of venue
- Explanation of scope of moderation to assessor
- Explanation of moderation method to be used
- Final agreement on moderation plan
- Communication on purpose
- Final opportunity for assessor to ask questions relating to moderation
- Put assessor at ease with regards to the process of moderation

The review of the moderation also allows for the final consultation to take place between the moderator and the assessor, and can set the tone for the moderation activity itself.

Conducting a final review meeting can also serve to investigate the perception that the assessor may have towards the moderation process.

If moderation was conducted on an ad-hoc basis, the assessor may have been more concerned about just what it was that the moderator was looking for, rather than concentrating on conducting effective assessment.

Transparency of purpose for moderation is important to ensure that the focus of assessors in the right place, i.e. not on the moderator but on the assessment of the candidate learner.

As mentioned previously, the assessor may be nervous moderation and it may be a good idea to put the assessor at ease prior to the start of the assessment process.

The two main steps for conducting moderation are as follows:

Step One:

a) Cater for special needs of the candidates

b) Put assessor and his/her candidate at ease

c) Explain the purpose of moderation
d) Check for understanding
e) Ask for questions prior to proceeding
f) Explain the process of moderation to be followed

Step Two:

a) Follow moderation plan
b) Apply moderation of moderation
c) Use moderation instruments
d) Record evidence and information relating to the assessment
e) Check for rules of evidence

f) Provide assessor with feedback and advice
g) Produce moderation report

Provide advice to assessors

The advice provided to assessors should focus on the developmental needs of assessors that must be met so that the quality of assessment and the principle of 'continuous improvement' can be instilled into the practice of assessment in South Africa.

The advice that can be offered to assessors includes:

- Full, up-to-date information on SAQA documentation and guidelines for assessment
- Accurate advice on how they can meet their development and training needs
- The appropriate and efficient use of different sources and types of evidence
- Assistance provided to assessors who may be dealing with candidates who have special needs or behavioral problems
- Advice on how to ensure the consistency, creditability and reliability of assessment practices
- Advice on the national standards for assessment and how these can be used as a basis for identifying further development needs
- Sources of the training required by assessors to meet their development needs
- Advice on the different types and sources of performance and knowledge evidence and how to use them to make valid and fair judgments
- Advice on how potential difficulties with assessment may occur in collecting and judging evidence

Prepare Moderation Report

The outcome of the moderation of assessment needs to be communicated to the relevant parties, especially the external moderator and the ETQA for the purposes of quality control.

There is a strategic purpose to moderation reports, and that is to provide information to:

- Verify that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable
- Identify the need to redesign assessments if required
- Provide an appeal procedure for dissatisfied learners
- Provide a procedure for the reassessment of learners
- Evaluate the performance of assessors
- Provide procedures for the de-registration of unsatisfactory assessors
- Provide feedback to the National Standards Bodies

Moderation Policy

As a moderator you will be responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of policies related to assessment practices. (Example at the end of this book)

Assessment strategies and plans

Strategizing and planning is the most important part of assessment and moderation practices. As a moderator you will be able to identify problems ahead of time if you evaluate strategies and plans.

Staff requirements and development

As a moderator you may be responsible for identifying and selecting appropriate assessors.

You can find a competence profile for the assessor and moderator on our website.

You also have access to examples of selection procedures and instruments that you can use to select assessors.

You will need to develop and advice your assessors. It is always wise to have a summary of your assessors at hand.

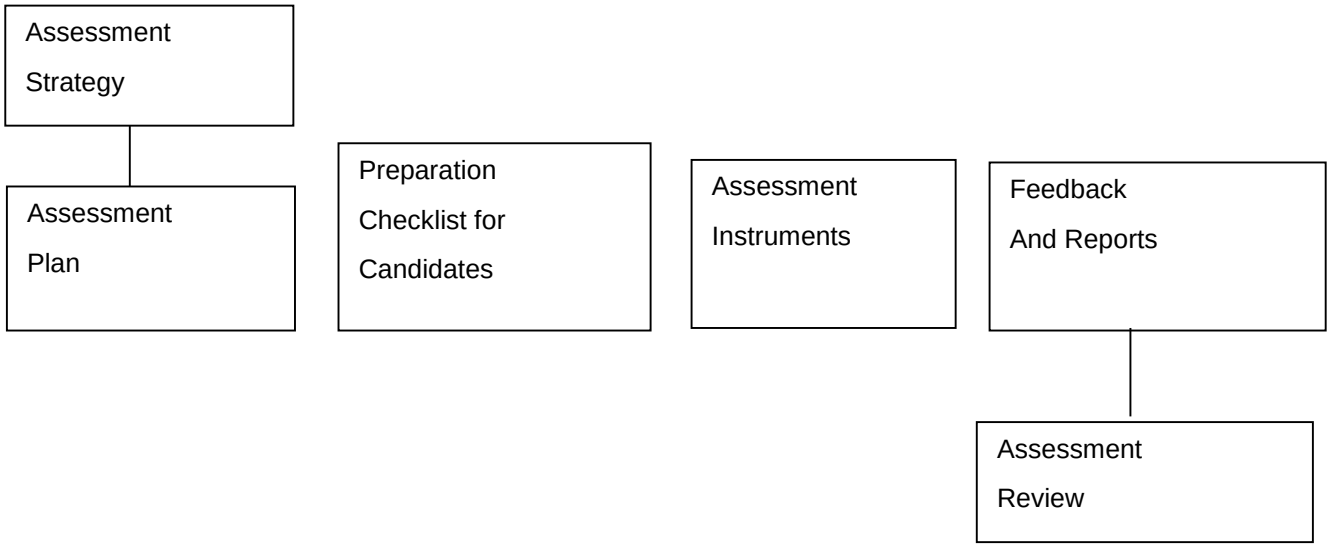
Workplace moderation

To ensure that assessment practices are fair and valid, it is important that the workplace is prepared for assessments. The moderator has to decide how often the workplace should be visited.

Assessment Guides

The purpose of assessment guides is to ensure that assessment practices are fair, valid and consistent.

An assessment guide consists of:



NOW! Look at your own organization's assessment guides.

Activity 8

8.1 What instruments are designed to assist with moderation?

8.2 Briefly discuss the steps in conducting moderation.

8.3 Why is it a good idea to review the moderation plan prior to conducting moderation?

8.4 Discuss the strategic purpose to moderation reports.

Assessment Instruments

Assessment instruments assist the assessor in collecting evidence. It is important that the moderator verifies evidence collected.

The quality of the assessment conducted by the assessor is largely dependent upon the nature of the assessment method and the assessment instruments utilized by the assessor.

It is the assessment instruments that provide the assessor with the evidence he/she is looking for, and there is a direct link between the assessments instrument used and the quality of the evidence obtained.

Given the emphasis on cost and time-effective assessment, it makes sense to ensure that the assessment instruments identified by the assessor will in fact produce the required standard of evidence as identified in the unit standard.

When planning and conducting an observation, the assessor should:

a) use observations as an opportunity to observe practical skills as well as attitudes, underpinning knowledge, key competencies and dimensions of competency
b) supplement observation with questioning or an interview, to draw out the way in which underpinning knowledge, key competencies and the dimensions of competency are being applied in practice
c) consider other forms of supporting evidence which show how the candidate has prepared or planned for the task
d) consider other people in the work environment who can give feedback on performance, such as customers and supervisors
e) consider opportunities for conducting, observations over time, for example to complete an observation of a whole process or to observe how consistently the candidate performs the same tasks
f) use a checklist to focus on the key aspects of the work activity and to record that the candidate has performed all required tasks.

Confirming Assessment Decisions

As a moderator you have to confirm assessment decisions that assessors make.

Assessment decisions need to be considered in light of the ETQA's requirements for consistency.

Consistency in assessment means that different assessors assessing the same standard of performance will arrive at the same assessment decision, i.e. a consistent decision.

This principle is one of the cornerstones of ensuring the credibility of the assessment process, and therefore attention needs to be placed on how the principle of consistency is to be achieved in the assessment process.

This is especially pertinent when you are dealing with a team of assessors who may assess different candidates/learners on the same unit standards.

The value of evidence plays an important role in making an assessment decision.

Your facilitator will give you examples of assessments that were conducted by assessors. You need to check the evidence submitted against the unit standard, moderate the assessor's judgments and feedback and decide whether you agree with the assessment decision.

Special Needs of Candidates during Assessment

The fairness of the assessment process is upheld when special factors are taken into account during assessment.

A fine balance needs to be established to ensure that assessors do not adopt a sympathetic viewpoint when dealing with candidates/learners who have special needs.

Taking account of special needs for assessment implies making use of different assessment methods and instruments than would ordinarily be the case. It is one way of ensuring free and open access to process still needs to be maintained, and it is the internal moderator's responsibility to ensure that while special factors are considered, they are not considered at the expense of credible assessment.

Special Needs	Assessment Practice	Maintenance of Creditability & Fairness
Language	Make use of an interpreter	Provides access to assessment – language not a barrier to assessment
Literacy	Identify assessment methods that focus on demonstration and verbal questioning	Candidate of low literacy level accommodation in assessment practice
Writing Skills	Select oral questioning as assessment method	Candidate provided with access to assessment by selection of alternative assessment method
Physical Handicap	Selecting assessment methods that do not present barriers for access to assessment, and the careful selection of assessment context	Ensuring openness and access to assessment, maintaining fairness.
Lacking Confidence	Putting candidate at ease, making use of first name terms (if appropriate), suitable assessment context, avoidance of onlookers	Emphasis on learner's ability to perform to the required standard without external factors influencing confidence
Cultural Factors	An awareness of the need for cultural sensitivity	Equality and transparency in assessment practice

Special needs must be taken into account during the planning stage of assessment.

However, this does not mean that creditability or integrity of the assessment practice is to be adversely affected. The reason for this is thatthe criteria for the assessment of evidence remain the same.

With special needs, a factor to be considered in the assessment process; is to ensure that no barriers (internal or external) exist that could have a negative influence on the performance of the learner or candidate.

Appeals Procedure

Part of the fairness and transparency of the assessment process is reflected in the opportunity of candidates or learners to appeal against the assessment decision made by the assessor. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the moderator to preside over such appeals in order to protect the validity of the whole assessment process.

An appeals procedure will be applicable in the following situations:

- Any candidate who is unhappy about his/her assessment results
- Any candidate who is unhappy about the assessment procedures
- Any disagreements regarding interpretation and judgment
- Any disagreement on the final assessment decision
- Any candidate who is unhappy with the assessor's standards and codes of conduct
- Any candidate who is unhappy with the provider's code of conduct

As we can see from the above table, the internal moderator becomes involved in the appeal during the second stage, but in reality the moderator will be involved from the start.

Given what is at stake in terms of an appeal, the role of the moderator is perhaps more that of a 'quality watchdog' than anywhere else in the moderation process. It is in cases of appeals that the quality of the whole assessment process is being questioned, and it is here that the moderator cannot afford but to uphold the principles of good assessment.

Learner Tip:
You can find Moderation Guides and Templates on the Services Seta website:http://www.serviceseta.org.za/ETQA/etqa_index.html

Activity 9

Joseph was a candidate who had been assed as not-yet- competent by his assessor. When asking the assessor to provide a reason for this assessment decision, he was told that his performance had not matched the performance displayed by the other candidates.

This answer did not satisfy Joseph and he lodged an appeal with the assessor against the assessment decision made. Joseph felt that he had displayed adequate standards of performance for the task under assessment and should be found competent. Furthermore, one of the candidates who had been assessed as competent by a different assessor had asked Joseph for help with the task prior to the day of assessment.

In response to Joseph's concerns, the assessor stated that the assessment decision was final and that if Joseph wanted to, he could apply for re-assessment.

1. How do you think Joseph feels about assessment now?

2. As a moderator, what would your approach be?

3. What could you do to prevent this from happening in the future?

Section 4
Advise and Support Assessors

Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this chapter.

- The nature and quality of advice facilitates a common understanding of the relevant outcomes and criteria, and issues related to their assessment by assessors.
- The nature and quality of advice promotes assessment in accordance with good assessment principles and enhances the development and maintenance of quality management systems in line with ETQA requirements.
- Support contributes towards the further development of assessors as needed.
- All communications are conducted in accordance with relevant confidentiality requirements.

Giving Advice and Support

The moderator's role requires him/her to support assessors and to provide advice on assessment on assessment practices.

The nature and quality of advice depends on the moderator.

The advice given to assessors is crucial to ensuring the attitude of assessors, are hence the success and quality of assessment practices.

The advice should promote assessment practices in accordance with good assessment principles and enhance the development and maintenance of quality management systems required by the ETQA.

You are familiar with the key principles identified by SAQA.

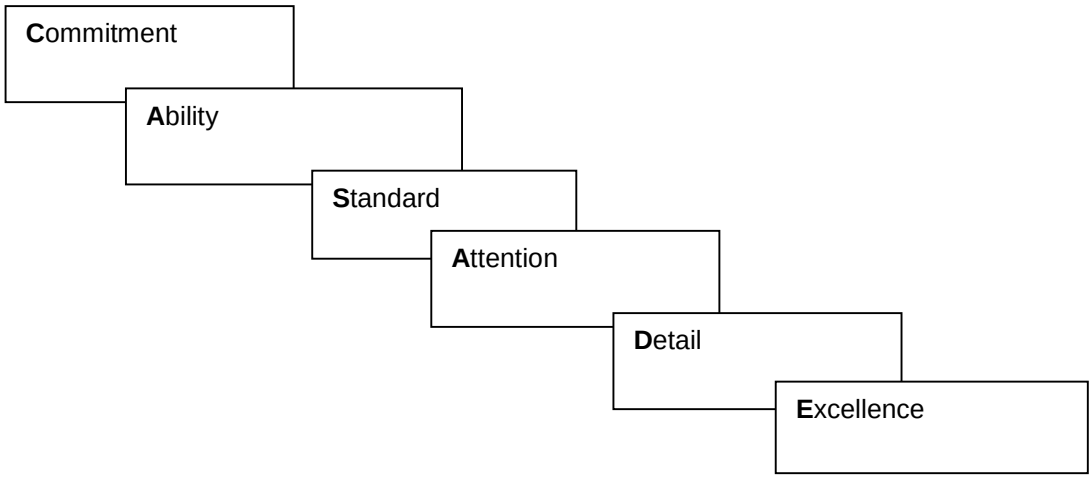
Review these principles and prepare a list of questions that will assist you with the moderation of assessment practices in your organisation. This will also help to advise the assessors.

Assessment principle	Meaning
Appropriateness	The method of assessment is suited to the performance being assessed
Fairness	The method of assessment does no t present any barriers to achievements, which are not related to advise
Manageability	The methods used make foe easily arranged, cost effective assessments which do not duly interfere with learning
Integration into work or learning	Evidence collection is integrated into the work or learning process where this is appropriate and feasible
Validity	The assessment focuses on the requirements laid down in the standard, i.e. the assessment is fit for purpose
Direct	The activities in the assessment mirror the conditions of actual performance as closely as possible
Authenticity	The assessor is satisfied that the work being assessed is attributable to the person being assessed
Sufficient	The evidence collected establishes that all criteria have been met and that performance to the required standard can be repeated consistently
Systematic	Planning and recording is sufficiently rigorous to ensure that assessment is fair
Open	Learners can contribute to the planning and accumulation of evidence. Assessment candidates understand the assessment processes and the criteria that apply
Consistent	The same assessor would make the same judgement again in similar circumference. The judgement made is similar to the judgement that would be made by other assessors

The Maintenance of Quality Management Systems

To maintain the quality of assessment practice requires skill from the moderator.

The maintenance of quality is contained in the **"CASCADE"** formula.



The key ingredient to achieving quality is **commitment**, because without communication to quality, the rest is a lost cause.

A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM may be seen as

"…the sum of the activities and information an organisation uses to enable it to better and more consistently deliver products and services that meet and exceed the needs and expectations of its customers and beneficiaries, more cost effectively and most efficiently, today and in the future."

Ultimately a QMS is about creating a "quality" culture across an organisation.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance refers to the sum of activities that assure the quality of products and services at the time of production or delivery.

Quality assurance means:

- Clarifying and describing accurately what is expected of the assessors and what they need.
- Ensuring that assessors conducting assessment have a clear, comprehensive and accurate understanding of QA systems in the organisation.
- Ensuring that assessors have resources and systems available so that they can deliver the required quality.
- Ensuring that assessors have the skills, knowledge and motivation to conduct assessment and support and coach learners/candidates.
- Ensuring that assessors have the skills to monitor quality and to review assessment practices to meet the required standard.
- Ensuring that all role-players independently audit and monitor quality and that feedback is given in order to improve practices.

Induction of Assessors

When new assessors join the team, it is useful to brief them before they commence their assessment duties.

This can take the form of an information sharing session, where you, as the moderator, can establish the experience and qualifications of the new assessors, as well as any specific areas of aptitude that they may have with regards to the assessment process.

This session can also provide you with the opportunity to inform new assessors of how the assessment practice is conducted within the specific context.

Activity 10

Anniekie Mosadi joined your organisation 3 months before as Branch Manager. Before she joined the retail sector she worked as a branch manager in a bank for 10 years. She attended an assessor course with a private provider and qualified as an assessor.

She has been conducting different types of assessments for the last five years.

You are the internal moderator for her branch and you need to induct her into the assessment practices of your organisation.

10.1 First describe how you intend to induct her, and

10.2 then describe the content of the induction programme

In general, the following information should be provided to assessors:

- The national standards against which they are to assess
- Evidence requirements of the unit standards
- Information about the assessment process and procedures to be used
- Information about the moderation process and procedures used
- Information regarding the appeals procedure
- Information relating to access to fair assessment, including equality of opportunity and special assessment needs
- Documentation used for recording assessments
- Information regarding the candidate who will be assessed, such as:
    - Existing achievements and qualifications
    - Previous assessment and other relevant background
    - Workplace location, facilities and equipment, and
    - Special assessment needs

Continuing support and Advise

As the moderator overlooking assessment practices, it is a good idea to be in regular contact with the team of assessors, for the purposes of providing support and sharing relevant information as well as assisting with the interpretation of unit standards, assessment guidelines and policies.

Assessors can be provided with support in the following ways;

- Circulating new information as soon as possible, drawing attention to any changes
- Giving advise on dealing with the acceptability of evidence, especially with concerns about the quality of evidence provided by candidate
- Providing documentation which makes the assessment process easier and more cost-effective
- Ensuring the regular review of candidate assessment plans
- Discussing individual candidate's assessments
- Discussing examples of evidence, effective combinations of evidence and what constitutes sufficient evidence
- Arranging assessment comparison and standardization exercises, and
- Providing advise on how to meet the assessment requirements of particular candidates

Although the advice and support provided to assessors may be on a one-to-none basis, time should also be regularly set aside for assessment moderation meetings.

As they also provide an opportunity to offer advice, information, as well as opportunities for team development and quality assurance concerns.

These meetings can be used as forums to discuss:

- Ways of improving assessment practices and quality assurance
- The effectiveness of the training being conducted
- The quality of assessments, specifically with regards to the assessment methods used
- Experiences gained by other assessors during the performance of their duties and sharing this information so that the idea of continuous improvement is maintained

These meetings also represent an opportunity for team development to occur.

However, team development and ideas such as continuous improvement are only going to happen in the right environment, and this is where the role of the moderator becomes crucially important, specifically with regards to the **NATURE** of the Advise provided.

Activity 11

11.1 What should the advice of a moderator promote?

11.2 List the "CASCADE" Formula used in Quality Assurance of assessment practice.

11.3 What does quality assurance mean in the context of moderation?

Confidentiality of moderation practices

All assessment and moderation practices need to be conducted in accordance with relevant confidentiality requirements.

Feedback to Assessors

Feedback is an important part of the moderation process. It is the communication line between the assessor and the moderator.

The assessor can be overly anxious when awaiting feedback from the moderator.

Questions such as 'Have I missed anything?' 'Are my documents in order?' Did I make the correct assessment decision?' 'Should I have asked for more evidence?' and many more may be going through the minds of the assessor as he/she awaits feedback.

These concerns of assessors can be set aside if the moderator has an approach that is supportive and friendly.

The idea is not to have someone who, as the moderator, regards himself/herself as a 'quality inspector' with a big stick who goes out and looks for things that are wrong with assessments.

The success of the feedback provided by moderators to assessors has a lot to do with the attitude adopted by the moderator, not only in providing Advise and support to assessors, but also in leading the assessor team.

Feedback must be constructive and should acknowledge skills and performance.

It is also a way to communicate decisions relating to the quality of the assessment processes.

Feedback should be a positive learning experience for all assessors, as it encourages assessors to continually develop their knowledge skills and understanding in the field of assessment.

Positive Feedback

This includes verbal and non-verbal encouragement, which gives the assessor a 'pat on the back'. The effect is to encourage, motivate and focus the person on achievement

Positive Constructive Feedback

These are comments which give assessors detailed Information about aspects of their assessment practice and suggest opportunities for development.

Positive constructive feedback goes further than an encouraging pat on the back. The assessors need to know which aspects of their assessment practice were effective where they did well, where not so well and how they can improve and develop further.

Negative Feedback

Negative feedback undermines the person's abilities, and may leave them feeling hopeless, angry and upset. In terms of providing assessors with negative feedback, one needs to be very careful not to de-motivate assessors to the point where they feel hopeless.

Given the fact that moderation is almost an assessment by a peer, the focus should be on what was done well, and any room for improvement related to the development plan for the particular assessor.

Constructive Negative Feedback

Constructive negative feedback may be critical of aspects of the performance but is considerate of the candidate's feelings and offers supportive strategies to improve performance.

Constructive negative feedback accentuates the positive and respects the person's dignity, while communicating the bad news and explaining the reasons. At the same time it offers some options for improvement.

Golden rules for providing Feedback

When providing feedback to assessors, it needs to be appropriate and conducted in such a manner that the assessor is motivated and looks forward to conducting further assessments.

It has to be a positive experience for all involved, and must meet the requirements for good assessment practice.

When giving feedback, it is important to ensure that the feedback you are providing is appropriate for the specific candidate. You need to *let them know* that you are paying attention and trying to understand things from their point of view.

Furthermore, providing feedback is also all about the sharing of information, involving listening and speaking. When providing feedback to an assessor, it is a good idea to ask them what themselves thought of their performance, and this is where it is important to listen.

Unfortunately, we are not all good listeners: We fail in three ways:

a) We do not concentrate hard enough when we listen.
b) We do not always check when we do not understand.
c) We find it hard to take in and remember more than a small amount of information at a time.

These points need to be remembered when you yourself are providing feedback.

Besides being bad listeners, there are barriers that assessors erect against incoming messages. These barriers, are, or example, when the assessor:

a) Does not like the message.
b) Dislikes or mistrusts the moderato.
c) Is not motivated to listen
d) Thinks that she or he already knows the message.
e) Has a better idea or something better to say.
f) Prejudges the content to be irrelevant, uninteresting or too simple or complex.

Therefore, it is crucial for the feedback session to be effective when you speak to your assessor.

Confidentiality of Feedback

Given the sensitive content of the feedback session and the information dealt with, it is important that the whole process of communication within the practice of moderation is conducted under the requirements of confidentiality.

Keeping in mind that the implications of the content of the communication can be profound for the assessor, especially when one considers the position of the assessor as a member of a large team, it is necessary that the information that concerns the moderation of a specific assessor's assessment practices be confidential.

Failure to adhere to confidentiality requirements may result in a situation where an assessor may feel 'betrayed' by the moderation process.

This ultimately can damage the creditability of the moderation process as well as the professionalism of the assessor.

Activity 12

12.1 Discuss what is meant by Positive Constructive Feedback

12.2 Discuss the golden rules in providing feedback.

Section 5

Report, Record and Administer Findings

Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this module.

- Moderation findings are reported to designated role-players within agreed time-frames and according to the quality assurance body's requirements for format and content.
- Records are maintained in accordance with organisational quality assurance and ETQA requirements.
- Confidentiality of information relating to candidates and assessors is preserved in accordance with organisational quality assurance and ETQA requirements.

Reporting of Moderation Findings

Internal moderation records support a training provider's assessment activities.

It is important that reporting and recording systems are fit for purposes. Systems should be coherent and cost-effective, not in time-consuming and bureaucratic.

Thorough planning is required for effective recording and reporting systems.

Where possible, use existing systems to record information about assessment practices. Any new systems developed should be compatible with existing internal systems, adding as little burden as possible while providing enough information to serve their purpose.

You can use documents to record assessment and moderation, which have been provided by the ETQA or have been developed by yourself.

The information required by the ETQA for moderation documents, specific to learners, includes:

- Name and unique learner number (ID Number or SAQA generated number)
- Contact details
- Demographic information (age, race, gender, geographical location, occupation – if applicable)
- Education and training background and experience (prior qualifications, prior learning skills, language skills and preference)
- Special learning needs (relevant disabilities or learning difficulties)
- Additional learning needs (relevant disabilities or learning difficulties)
- Additional learning needs (necessary experience and knowledge of relevant technology)
- Resources factors (place and time of learning, access to resources including electricity and technology, financial resources for additional learning or support materials)
- Motivation for entering a programme of learning
- Programme/s for which the learner is registered
- Performance during the programme (internal and continuous assessment)
- Achievement during and at the end of the programme (internal and external assessment, final assessment, award achieved)

Why are records of assessment and moderation important?

It is important to have good records of assessment and moderation because they:

- Provide useful information when arranging assessment provision, such as the allocation of assessors to candidates;
- Allow assessment to be reviewed and monitored;
- Track candidate's progress through the qualification;
- Form a basis for making certification requests to the accrediting body;
- Enable the training provider to monitor and review its own performance (noting good practice and areas of concern);
- Contribute to the training provider's financial control; and
- Provide information to the ETQA (through the external moderation process), so that the unit standards relating to qualifications can be monitored at a national level.

The Internal Moderator's Role

Internal moderators are responsible for co-coordinating the system of documents and records used by the training provider's assessors. This involves making sure that the information collected and collated is useful and fit for purpose and the assessors understand which records they are required to complete.

If internal moderators are working in a large accredited training provider, a co-ordination may be in charge of the administration of these documents.

Moderators are also responsible for monitoring record keeping on a regular basis, so that any problems are identified at an early stage, as well as ensuring the security and confidentiality of information.

It is not necessary to do all the administration and maintenance of the recording systems, but moderators do need to make sure that systems are in place and working well.

It is also required of moderators to brief and support any staff who take responsibility for aspects of documentation used by the training provider.

Administration records	▪ Assessment schedule planner. ▪ Learner/candidate records, including the date the candidate enrolled into the training provider's assessment programme; the date the candidate was registered with the awarding body; candidate registration forms; information on candidate progress; when candidates achieved units and completed the qualification. ▪ Assessor records, including occupational background, assessor qualifications, area/s of assessment. ▪ Details of assessment locations, including details assessors and equipment available at the workplace/satellite. ▪ Records of assessor and moderator meetings, development activities, consistency initiatives and so on.

Types of internal moderation records

The following table shows some of the records, which could be used for internal moderation.

Assessment records	▪ Details about assessments, which have been carried out, including the name of the candidate; the name of the assessor; the date(s), location and outcome of the assessment and location of the evidence, evidence files.

Verification records	▪ Details about internal moderation activities, such as the sampling strategy, sampling plan and records of assessment samples. ▪ Copies of internal moderation reports to assessors, following reviews of candidate evidence and decisions made. ▪ Copies of requests for certification.

Quality assurance records	▪ Equal opportunities information, such as candidate's achievements in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. ▪ Information about appeals and disputes. ▪ Reports of external moderation visits and other quality assurance reviews.

Using Records to Evaluate Performance

Moderation records may be used to evaluate the success of the training provider in a number of ways. The administration records can help to streamline the assessment and moderation practices carried out by the training provider.

For example, using the administration records, you can establish the average time it takes for candidates to complete their learning programmes. This information can be used to compare individual assessor or assessment centre performance.

This analysis helps you to highlight whether assessors are rushing candidates through, whether over-assessment is taking place, and whether a similar level or equipment is provided to all candidates. Achievement rates can also be used in conjunction with records of candidates' ages, gender and ethnicity to determine whether there is any bias within the assessment process; this will also allow you to chart the success of your equal opportunities policy.

By conducting your own evaluations, you may find that you can reduce the level of external verification conducted by the training provider.

Ensuring the Quality of Records

Moderators must make sure that assessment and moderation records and candidate evidence records are complete, legible, accurate and auditable – an auditor or external moderator should be able to see who assessed and internally moderated the candidate's evidence and dates on which assessment and internal moderation occurred.

Records should be kept of this information for a period of time determined by the relevant ETQA.

Records must be retained particularly if certificates are claimed for candidates between external moderators' visits.

Learners/candidates evidence, files/portfolios should be available for inspection by the external moderator during a visit.

Reviewing Documentation

Moderators are responsible for making sure that all records and documents used serve as a useful purpose in the overall system. This involves reviewing documentation at regular intervals to make sure that:

- It serves a clear function and does not duplicate other documents;
- It is fit for purpose; and
- It is efficient in terms of time and effort – for example, wherever possible it serves more than one purpose.

Unless a form meets these requirements, it needs to be revised.

It may be helpful to draw up a flow chart showing where record keeping and documentation fit into one ongoing process of assessment and quality assurance.

This can be a good starting point for reviewing the effectiveness and fitness for purpose of existing record-keeping systems with an eye to reducing the number of different records held.

Look at the flow chart you developed. If you haven't listed the required documents for each step in the process do it now.

Ask a fellow moderator to evaluate the system. Evaluate the system in terms of the manageability and value of the information and ETQA requirements.

Confidentiality of moderation records

Moderation records should be **stored securely**, so that only those who have a right to see information may do so, and **stored so they can be updated easily**.

Moderators are responsible for ensuring that records are kept securely and confidentiality. This is particularly important because:

- A learner's assessment may be spread over months or years and it is vital that none of the evidence records go missing;
- Learners/candidates need to know that their assessments are treated in confidence; and
- Security is essential in any assessment system – the system must not be open to abuse.

Special considerations of commercial confidentiality arise when an assessor or moderator has access to a workplace other than their own. You need to ensure that all assessors are aware of the need for professional conduct.

Some centres require their assessors to sign a 'code of conduct'.

Activity 13

13.1 What information is required by the ETQA regarding moderation report?

13.2 Why are records of assessment and moderation important?

13.3 Discuss the types of moderator records that needs to be kept by a provider?

13.4 Why is it important to keep moderation documents confidential?

Section 6

Review Moderation Systems and Processes

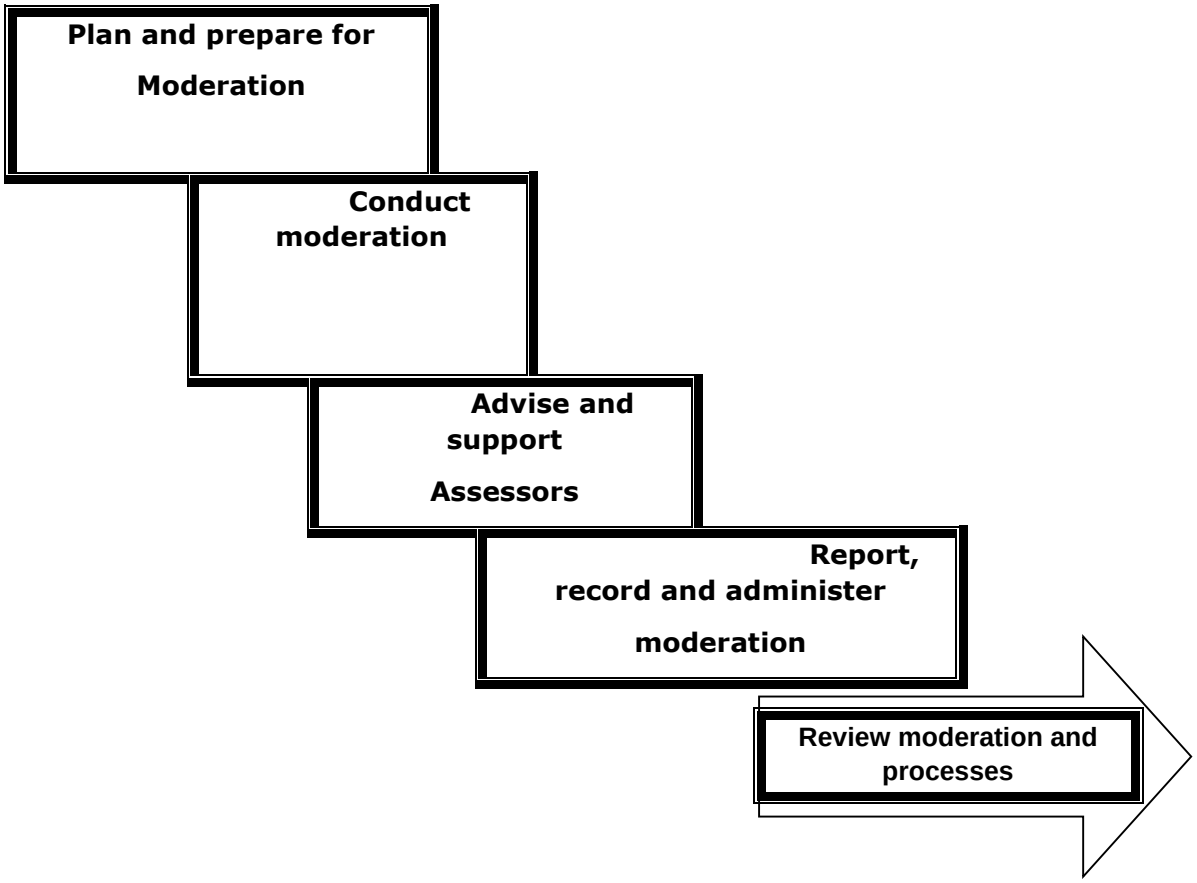
Learning Outcomes:

The following learning outcomes are covered in this chapter.

- Strengths and weaknesses of moderation systems and processes are identified in terms of their manageability and effectiveness in facilitating judgements on the quality and validity of assessment decisions.
- Recommendations contribute towards the improvement of moderation systems and processes in line with ETQA requirements and overall manageability.
- The review enhances the credibility and integrity of the recognition system.

Moderation Process

Let's review the total moderation process:



Strengths and Weaknesses of Moderation Systems

The moderation process does not take place in isolation from the delivery and assessment of ETD practices. The efficiency and effectiveness of moderation is to a certain extent dependent upon the strength and weaknesses of the systems and procedures in place within ETD providers.

The strengths and weaknesses of the moderation system have much to do with the quality of the system inherent in the specific ETD content wherein moderation is taking place.

With this thought in mind, an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of moderation has to start at the basis of the system within which it operates.

The documents 'SAQA: Quality Management Systems for Education and Training Providers;' identifies eight criteria that providers of ETD practices should meet in terms of the quality management system implemented.

These eight core criteria are:

Criterion	Elaboration
1. Policy statement	**The organization's aims, objectives and purposes need to be spelt out**
2. Quality management systems	**Identify processes and outline procedures that implement quality management in the organisation**
3. Review mechanisms	**Outline the ways in which the implementation would be monitored**
4. Programme delivery	**Outline how learning programmes would be developed, delivered and evaluated**
5. Staff policies	**Outline policies and procedures for staff selection, appraisal and development.**
6. Learner policies	**Policies and procedures for the selection of learners are outlined, and learners are given guidance and support.**
7. Assessment policies	**Outline policies and procedures for forms of assessments that are used and how they are managed.**
8. Management systems and policies	**Indicate the financial, administrative and physical structures and resources of the organisation, as well as procedures of accountability within the organisation.**

Policy Statement

The purpose of an organisation having a policy is to indicate the ways in which the organisation views itself, what it sets out to achieve, to whom it directs itself and, fundamentally, why it believes there is a need for it to exist.

However, given the need for a Total Quality Management (TQM) approach and the existence of the NQF, organization's policy statements need to also clearly locate themselves within the values and principles articulated in the NQF. In terms of these, policy statements need to:

- Show how the organization is located within the NQF;
- Show how democratic practices inform the structure, management and operations of the organization;
- Clearly indicate the approach adopted with regard to teaching and learning activities; and
- Indicate how ongoing development of activities will be ensured through assessment, auditing, monitoring, research and review practices.

A policy statement is not necessarily a detailed explanation of everything an organization does, but an expression of the principles upon which an organization bases itself as well as the ways in which it intends to operate, with whom, and for what purpose.

The following questions may help providers to define their policy statements:

1. What are the organization's values and principles?
2. How do these values and principles link with those of the NQF?
3. What are the structures, systems and activities of the organization that attempt to apply such values and principles?
4. What is the aim of the organization?
5. What does it offer?
6. To whom is the organization directed?

Quality Management Systems

As was noted earlier, 'quality' in the TQM, SAQA and NQF senses of the term, is intended to mean a holistic, integrated, democratic, process-oriented and flexible approach to quality.

In order for providers to meet the specification of a quality management system, providers would need to clearly describe the nature of operations within their organization.

How exactly is quality assured in the organization, on all levels?

A clear description of the workings of the organization and how quality is assured, needs to be provided.

The following questions may help the organisation to clarify its quality management processes:

1. How does the organisation, in practice, create and sustain a quality culture within the organisation?
2. How does one ensure the relevance, comprehensiveness and clarity of standards used in the organisation?
3. How is information about the working of the organisation collected, how often and by whom?
4. How are learner's needs actually met?
5. How often are programmes delivered by the organisation reviewed?
6. How does the organisation ensure that its facilitators of learning actually possess the competence to both facilitate learning effectively and to assess learners in ways that are consistent with the NQF?
7. How does the organisation ensure that learning and assessment activities are monitored and reviewed?
8. How does the organisation ensure that what is gathered from reviews, audits and/or monitoring in fact leads to improvements in the organization's activities?
9. What mechanisms does the organisation use to report back to people within the organisation?
10. How does the organisation ensure that resources available to it are utilized effectively and efficiently, and are used to good effect?
11. How does the organisation report to and generally relate to the ETQA under which it falls?
12. How does the organisation relate to other providers in the area that it works within, if this applies?

As can be seen from the questions above, these criteria require a fairly comprehensive description of the workings of the organisation in terms of hw the development and sustainability of quality is ensured within the organisation.

Review Mechanisms

In responding to these criteria, provider's need to provide a detailed account of how, by whom, how often and for what purposes the activities of the organisation will be researched, monitored, audited and/or reviewed.

It has been emphasized that one of the important features of quality within the TQM approach is a developmental emphasis. This criterion is important because organizations can only develop if they monitor and their own activities.

Various options exist in this regard, including external evaluations, the use of moderators, internal review and monitoring systems, assessments, appraisals, research, and auditing.

Providers need to provide a clear description of what system they have in place, how it operates in practice and what its concrete achievements are.

Also included here should be a clear indication of how such review findings get fed back into the organisation so that improvements are operationalised.

In order to generate such a description, providers may find the following questions helpful:

1. What are the review, monitoring, research and/or auditing mechanisms the organisation has in place?
2. How do these mechanisms work?
3. How often are they carried out?
4. By whom?
5. How are review findings reported back within the organisation?
6. How do the review findings inform improvements in the organisation?

Programme Delivery

At the heart of provider's activities are the programmes that they deliver. It is critical that providers give a clear and coherent description of the ways in which their programmes are delivered in practice.

The following questions may be helpful to identify ways in which they can fulfill the requirements related to programme delivery:

1. What is the nature of the programmes the organisation delivers?
2. What is the NQF status of the programme (e.g. NQF level5)?

3. What are the components (for example, programme modules) that make up the programmes?
4. How often are the programmes delivered, and what is the duration in notional learning hours?
5. What are the modes used in the delivery of the programmes? (For example, the use of group work, opportunities to learn in the workplace, or the role of distance learning would be described at this point.)
6. Top what extent is the delivery of the programmes flexible?
7. How is learner-centeredness ensured in the delivery of the programmes?
8. How does programme delivery ensure that the programmes are relevant to learners?
9. How are learners assessed during the programme delivery? How often? By whom?
10. How are learners given feedback on their performance during the delivery of programmes and what forms does this take?
11. How are resources planned for the delivery of programmes?

Staff Policies

The emphasis with regards to staff policies is on the organization's relations with its own staff. Providers will need to indicate whether their staff members are competent to carry out their roles as facilitators, and how they know whether this is the case. They would also need to relate this assessment of competence to NQF principles.

With regard to employment procedures, providers may find the following questions helpful:

1. What criteria are used in the staff selection process?
2. Who selects staff in the organisation?
3. What selection procedures are followed?
4. To what extent are the stipulations of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 respected in the selection process?

The purpose of staff policies is to ensure that policy on staff selection and appraisal should be informed by principles of increased access and respect of employment equity policy, as well as ensuring the transformation of education and training practices and adherence to NQF principles.

Learner Policies

The focus here is on learners. Issues of selection of learners the extent to which their needs are met and what support and guidance they are given need to be explicitly described.

Here providers to be mindful of the following key NQF principles with regard to learners:

- Learner-centeredness
- Learner participation
- Relevance of the programmes to learners
- Lifelong learning

In order to show how these NQF principles are being applied, providers may find the following questions helpful:

1. How are learners selected for the programme?
2. To what extent do such selection procedures recognize their prior learning learners have?
3. What is the demographic composition of the leaner population? (Gender and race are clearly crucial, but attention should also be given to how learners from outlying areas are attended to, and to poverty indices.)
4. Is the organisation planning to diversify the demographic composition of the learner population, taking into account historical disadvantages and discrimination?
5. How does the provider ensure that the programme is relevant to the needs and aspirations of the learners?
6. How does the delivery of the programme encourage learner participation?
7. How does the organisation identify the nature of the support leaner require?
8. What support is given to learner?
9. What guidance is offered to learners? Why?
10. How are opportunities for further learning provided for by the organisation?
11. How, by whom and how often are learners given feedback on their performance?

Assessment Policies

Assessment policies are more than assessment practices. Assessment policies describe the approaches that are used by an organisation in its assessment practices.

For example, are assessment approaches mainly examination-based? Do assessment policies recognize principles of lifer long learning, recognition of prior learning and integration of theory and practice?

Are assessment policies informed by an understanding of the notions of failure and deficits or do they work in

developmental, supportive and continuous ways? As such, assessment policies need to indicate what approach the organisation adopts with regard to assessment and whether this approach is in line with NQF principles.

Assessment polices also outline how the processes of assessment will be managed: - by whom, how and how often. They include internal assessment, external assessment, moderation, provision of feedback to learners and maintaining records of assessment.

They also include ways in which support that learners may require are identified and ways in which support is provided. Thus, assessment policies should not be conflated with assessment practices, although they include them.

In order to meet the requirement of assessment policies, providers may find the following questions helpful:

1. What is the organization's approach to assessment?
2. Is the organization's approach consistent with NQF principles?
3. How does the organization's assessment policy incorporate principles of lifelong learning, recognition of prior learning and integration of theory and practice?
4. How are assessments conducted, by whom and how often?

5. What mechanisms does the organisation put into place to assure the quality of assessments conducted? Are moderators used for assessments?
6. Are policies and procedures for possible appeals in place?
7. How are learners given feedback on the ways in which they have been assessed? How does this occur? Who does it, and how often?
8. How does the organisation ensure that assessments are used to identify and provide for the support and guidance learners need?
9. How is the assessment results fed back into programme development?

Management Systems and Policies

This refers to the managerial capacity of the provider to carry out its functions. The provider would need to indicate its capacity to deliver the programmes/s effectively and efficiently and in an accountable manner.

However, given the enormous differences in size, type and focus of providers, this criterion must carefully contextualized, taking into account, for example, the management of partnerships in the delivery of programmes.

In the SAQA "criterion and Guidelines for Providers" document, different types of providers are identified, i.e. 'delivery on site; assessment only site', etc. In addition, there is also an awareness of SMME providers, which may include an individual as provider.

In this regard providers may find the following questions helpful:

1. What is the management and administrative structure of the organisation?
2. How are decisions taken in the organisation, by whom and in relation to what?
3. What is the financial resource base of the organisation? What are the sources of funding? Does the organisation have a plan to become self sustaining, if it is not already?
4. Does the organisation have adequate human and material resources to carry out its intended functions?
5. What are the systems used by the organisation to mange and be accountable for its finances?
6. More generally, to what extent is the organisation run in ways that are transparent and accountable?

Recommendations to be incorporated into moderation systems

Recommendations to be incorporated into moderation systems serve to improve the quality of the moderation practices, thereby ensuring that the monitoring of assessments is of a high quality.

If we look at the moderation process, it is possible that the recommendations relating to moderation could cover the whole scope of moderation:

- Planning
- Resources

- Experience of moderators
- Quality of evidence obtained through moderation
- Moderation methods, i.e. statistical sampling
- Moderation advise

Summary of moderation practices

The purpose in conducting a review of moderation practices is to ensure that the system being applied continuous to meet, and improve, the level of quality management of the assessment process.

Like a continual feedback-loop, the success of a moderation system lies in its ability to look upon itself and make adjustments where necessary to ensure quality.

The fact that qualifications can now effectively be awarded by assessors and not only large educational institutions means that there can be a justifiable concern regarding the issuing of qualifications to candidates/learners who may not necessarily deserve them.

In order to create the perception that qualifications are granted on the basis of set standards and required evidence of competence, it is necessary for moderation systems to ensure that the process of granting these qualifications, meets the requirements of quality so that assessment judgments made are creditable, reliable and fair.

Moderation Policy Example

Purpose
The purpose of the moderation policy is to ensure that assessment practices within the organisation are conducted in accordance with NQF principles.

Scope
The policy will deal with issues around fairness, validness and reliability with regard to assessment practices within an organisation.
References

- SAQA criteria and guidelines for assessment of NQF registered unit standards and qualifications.
- SETA/ETQA Moderation Pack

Policy – Moderation
Moderation of assessment will occur at both the level of FUTURE PERFORMANCE TRAINING (internal moderation) and external moderation. Both internal and external moderation systems will ensure that assessors produce assessments that are credible, fair, valid, reliable and practicable.

The following will be the process for internal moderation:

Step 1: Design
Future Performance Training will ensure that the choice and design of assessment method and tools are appropriate to the unit standards and qualifications being assessed.

Step 2: Implementation
Future Performance Training will ensure that the assessment is appropriately conducted and matches the specifications of unit standards and qualifications. Regular discussions among assessors will take place.

Step 3: Review
Future Performance Training will ensure that lessons are learnt from the design and implementation of moderation and the necessary changes will be made whenever deemed appropriate.
The moderation system will include the following components:

- Appropriate timing (schedule)
- Scope of the moderation
- Moderation materials
- Registered moderators (personnel)

Moderation will be carried as follows:

- Revising exemplars of assessments and benchmarking materials against established criteria.
- Doing statistical moderation
    - (10 % sample of assessments ETDP SETA)
    - (10% sample of assessments HW SETA)
    - (25% sample of assessments SSETA)
- Conducting external assessments
- Site visit by external moderators

- Panel meetings by external moderators
- Establishment of a moderation committee

ETQA Moderators

Moderators who wish to carry out the moderation function for standards and qualifications must be a registered constituent moderator with THE RELEVANT ETQA/SETA.

The moderators will have achieved the unit standards 'moderate assessment' and 'design and develop assessments' or conduct outcome based moderation. Moderators must be subject matter experts in the field or sub-field in which they carry out their moderation activities.

Moderators should be able, if required, to moderate the assessment instrument including the instructions to the assessor, instructions to the candidate, recording format, scoring guide etc. These detailed instructions are an essential part of an assessment task or instrument. They are often made into a handbook to guide the assessors and standardize their approach to conducting an assessment task or a series of tasks. This set of instructions is usually known as an assessment guide.

Moderators will have the following characteristics:

- The ability to identify and solve problems
- The ability to work as a team member
- Organizes and manage oneself and activities when planning, preparing, conducting and recording the moderation.
- The ability to collect, organize and critically evaluate information.
- Effective communication skills
- Understanding of the impact of moderating assessments on individuals, organisations and the credibility of recognition through the NQF system.
- The ability to plan, conduct and give feedback in a culturally sensitive manner.
- The ability to guide conversation to keep it flowing smoothly, keep the discussion focused and have confidence.
- The ability to encourage expression of viewpoints without showing preference or sharing personal views and must be non-judgemental.
- Be an expert in the field and understand, be well informed and familiar with the subject.
- Have the ability to be comfortable with all types of people and be able to apply different communication styles.

Moderators will have an understanding of:

- Principles of assessment
- Principles and practices of RPL
- Methods of assessment
- Principles and mechanisms of the NQF
- Assessment policies and ETQA requirements
- Moderation Techniques, systems and specific moderation requirements
- The role and function of a moderator
- Knowledge of quality assurance and policy and procedure
- Understanding of organisational or institutional contexts

Moderators will have the following functions:

- Verify that assessments are valid, fair, reliable and practical
- Evaluate assessment design, assessment process, assessment outcomes and documentation of proof of individual learners' competence status
- Evaluate registered Assessors performance.
- Identify and provide evidence for the de-registration of Registered Constituent Assessors
- Identify areas within the assessment system that may require improvements

- If required, identify any needs to redesign assessments and assessment tools/instruments if required
- If required, identify any need to redesign moderation and/or moderation systems tools
- Provide an appeals procedure for any learners that may feel dissatisfied
- Provide feedback to SETQAA on Unit Standards and Qualifications
- Provide support and guidance to Assessors

Internal moderation
Internal moderation will be conducted after every assessment process and reports will be submitted with the upload of learner achievements to SETQAA and it will be conducted by registered constituent moderators. Reports will be submitted to SETQAA at the intervals as specified and required.
The intervals for the submission of internal moderation reports:

- Month 3 of the qualification/learnership.

The internal moderator will concentrate on the assessment plans that have been put in place, such as:
- Accreditation status
- Structured curriculum
- Implementation procedures of the Quality Management System
    - Required workplace exposure as per the qualification/learnership
- Learning material and relevance to the qualification/learnership
- Assessment tools to be used for summative and formative assessments
- Constituent status of assessors
- Assessment plans
- Design of assessment activities and process to be followed
- Assessment guides
- Moderation sampling requirements
- Formative and summative assessments will both have been conducted at this stage
- Assessment will also include procedures such as:

- Rating scales
- Work samples
- Simulations
- Role plays
- Observing learner performance
- Critiquing learner products
- Conducting interviews
- Reviewing learner's background or previous performance using portfolios

The internal moderator will moderate the assessment tools keeping in mind:
- The content of the standard to be assessed
- Professional judgement of the Assessor in terms of:
    - Level of candidate
    - Resources available
    - Learner's experience
    - Purpose of assessment
    - Credits to be awarded
- Month 6 of the qualification/learnership.

The moderator will identify gaps from the tools and processes followed and provide recommendations to the Assessor. The internal moderator will concentrate on the following areas:
- Assessment guides indicating:
    - Design of assessment activities and processes to be followed
    - Assessment plan
    - Assessment is fit for purpose

        - Consistency, reliability, validity, appropriateness and practicability of assessment
            - Assessment tools
    - Portfolio of evidence indicating:
        - Authenticity
        - Evidence assessed reflects current level of learner's competence
        - Sufficiency, currency, reliability and validity of evidence
        - Applied competence assessment/ workplace experiential learning/ workplace evidence
        - Progress, Assessor and Moderation reports
    - Learner records of Future Performance Training database and upload of achievements
    - Moderation guide indicating:
        - Moderation report indicating:
            - Assessment process is fair, unbiased and does not present any barriers for the learner
            - Assessment was conducted in line with policies that are in line with SETQAA policies
            - Ability and competency of Assessor
            - Learner's readiness in respect of the assessment and progress in respect of the learning experience
            - Assessments conducted by various Assessors to check reliability and consistency of assessment practices (combination of Competent and Not Yet Competent results)
            - Feedback provided to the Assessor
        - Moderation review
- Month 9 of the qualification/learnership

    - The moderator shall:
        - Remedy any shortfalls identified and test the provided recommendations
        - Guiding and informing the assessment processes that are meant to prepare the learners for Summative/Integrated Assessments.
        - Internal moderation conducted at this stage will be similar to moderation conducted at Month 6.

At the beginning of month 10 a request for Final External Moderation and Summative Assessment will be sent where applicable.
A random sample of 25% of the learners' Portfolios of Evidence or assessments conducted will always be used by the Moderator.

- Month 11 of the qualification/learnership

The internal moderator will provide the final report, which will consist of moderation activities conducted during and after assessments. Moderation will cover all areas including but not limited to:

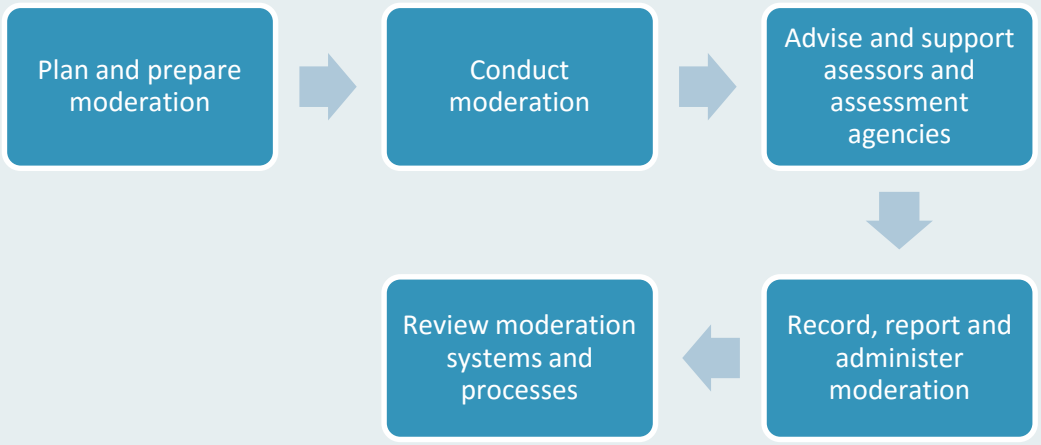
- Accreditation status
- Structured curriculum
- Implementation mechanisms of the Quality management System
    - Required workplace exposure as per the qualification/learnership
- Learning material and relevance to qualification/learnership
- Constituent status of assessor and moderators
- Assessment guides indicating:
    - Design of assessment activities and processes to be followed
    - Assessment plan
    - Assessment is fit for purpose

- Consistency, reliability, validity, appropriateness and practicability of assessment
- Assessment tools

- Portfolio of evidence indicating:
  - Authenticity
  - Evidence assessed reflects current level of learner's competence
  - Sufficiency, currency, reliability and validity of evidence
  - Applied competence assessment/ workplace experiential learning/ workplace evidence
    - Progress, Assessor and Moderation reports
  - Learner records of Future Performance Training database and upload of achievements
  - Moderation guide indicating:
    - Design of moderation activities and processes to be followed
    - Moderation plan
    - Sampling requirements
    - Moderation report indicating:
      - Assessment process is fair, unbiased and does not present any barriers for the learner
      - Assessment was conducted in line with policies that are in line with SETQAA policies
      - Ability and competency of Assessor
      - Learner's readiness in respect of the assessment and progress in respect of the learning experience
      - Assessments conducted by various Assessors to check reliability and consistency of assessment practices (combination of Competent and Not Yet Competent results)
      - Feedback provided to the Assessor
    - Moderation review

We will have registered Constituent Moderators available to fill the moderation requirement and moderators will follow the moderation process as set out below:

Moderation process



External moderation

Future Performance Training will provide a random sample of 25% for the purposes of external moderation. The following will be made available for the purposes of external moderation:

- Structured curriculum
- Implementation mechanisms of the Quality Management System
- Learning material and its relevance to the qualification / learnership / skills programme
- Constituent status of assessors and moderators
- Assessment guides indicating:
    - Design of assessment activities and the process that will be followed
        - Assessment tools used for formative assessments
        - Assessment tools used for summative assessments
    - Portfolio of evidence indicating:
        - Authenticity
        - Summative assessments
        - Progress and Assessor reports
    - Learner records of Future Performance Training database and upload of enrolment / achievements
    - Moderation guide indicating:
        - Design of moderation activities and processes followed
        - Moderation plan
        - Sampling requirements
        - Moderation report
    - Internal moderation report

Evidence using a variety of assessment techniques, including work samples, simulations, role plays, written, oral, portfolios and projects will be gathered.

During external moderation the External Moderator will have access to:

- Accreditation report
- Quality Management Systems
- Assessment strategies, guides and instruments
- Portfolio of Evidence
- Project report
- Detailed Future Performance Training database of learners, assessors and moderators
- Internal moderation reports and systems

The principles of good assessment

The universal assessment principles of fairness, validity, reliability and practicability form the foundation of the ETDQA and Future Performance Training assessment policy.

Fairness relates mainly to the assessment process. Validity relates mainly to the assessment design. Reliability relates mainly to the conduct of the assessment. And practicability relates mainly to the financial and time implications of assessment.
A fair assessment should not in any way hinder or advantage a candidate. Fairness is the overarching principle for good assessment practices, but the other principles help to clarify exactly what we mean by a fair assessment. Examples of unfairness might include:

- Unequal opportunities or resources;
- Biased assessment (e.g. In relation to ethnicity, gender, age, disability, social class, language);
- Unethical behaviour by the assessor, candidate or other person involved (threats, bribes, copying, leaking of confidential information, etc.);
- Any irregularities in the conduct of the assessment;
- A lack of transparency about the assessment process; or
    - Ambiguous or unclear assessment instructions.

    Language must not be barrier to assessment. Learners have a right to assessed in a language of their choice whenever possible. Learners should generally be assessed in a language they are most proficient in; which may be any one of the eleven official languages of South Africa. Learners have a right to an interpreter for an assessment, unless the assumption for the unit standard is competency within the language of assessment, and where the language of assessment is different to that of the candidate.
    A valid assessment really assesses what it claims to assess. In order to achieve validity in the assessment, assessors should:
    - Check that the selected assessment instrument really targets the selected outcomes/unit standards;
    - Check that the assessment method that is 'fit for purpose';
    - Ensure that the evidence is authentic (it was generated by the candidate in an appropriate context);
    - Ensure that the evidence is current (up-to-date), if this is a requirement; and
    - Ensure that the evidence is sufficient to show competence and covers the range given in the range statement, where this exists.

    A reliable assessment is one that is in line with other assessments made by the same and other assessors in relation to the same unit standard or qualification. Reliability in assessment is about consistency. Consistency means that comparable judgments are made in the same (or similar) contexts each time a particular assessment is conducted. Assessment judgments should also be comparable between different assessors. Assessment results should not be perceived to have been influenced by variables such as:
    - Assessor bias;
    - Different assessors interpreting the standards or qualifications differently;
    - Assessor stress and fatigue; or
    - Assessor assumptions about the candidate, based on previous performance.

    The principles of fairness, validity and reliability imply that some form of moderation practices (both internal and external) need to be applied to assessments. In other words, moderation is a key element of a reliable assessment system.
    A practicable assessment is effective without placing unreasonable demands on the relevant role-players. Assessment should be designed to be as effective as possible in the context of what is feasible and efficient in a particular learning programme or RPL process. It should try to avoid unreasonable demands in relation to:
- The time commitments required for the generation, collection, presentation and assessment of evidence involving:
    - The candidate;

- The assessor;
- Third party witnesses (mentors, line-managers, coaches…); and
- Evidence facilitators, RPL advisors and others involved in advice and support.

References

- SAQA criteria and guidelines for assessment of NQF registered unit standards and qualifications.
- THE RELEVANT ETQA/SETA guidelines for assessment
- THE RELEVANT ETQA/SETA guidelines for moderation.

Definition
Moderation means the process which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in national qualifications framework standards or qualifications, is fair, valid and reliable.

Policy - moderation

Moderation of assessment will occur at both the level of FUTURE PERFORMANCE TRAINING(internal moderation) and at the level of the THE RELEVANT ETQA/SETA ETQA (external moderation). Both internal and external moderation systems will ensure that assessors produce assessments that are credible, fair, valid, reliable and practicable. The following will be the process for internal moderation at FUTURE PERFORMANCE TRAINING

Step 1: design
Future Performance Training will ensure that the choice and design of assessment plan, assessment method and tools are appropriate to the unit standards and qualifications being assessed.
Moderators are expected to follow the process set out in the unit standard 'moderate assessment'. These are summarized in the specific outcomes, entitled:

- Plan and prepare for moderation
- Conduct moderation
- Advise and support assessors and assessment agencies
- Report, record and administer moderation
- Review moderation systems and processes.
- Evidence must be gathered for moderation of assessments of candidates with special needs, and RPL cases.
- Moderation must cover a range of assessment practices including assessment instruments, assessment design and methodology, assessment records; reporting and feedback mechanisms.
- Evidence must be gathered for moderation of assessments involving a variety of assessment techniques, including work samples, simulations, role-plays, written, oral, portfolios and projects.
- Moderation interactions could include pre-moderation interaction; standards discussion; recording and record keeping; reporting and feedback mechanisms; post-moderation; interaction and support and recommendations.

Step 2: implementation
Future Performance Training will ensure that the assessment is appropriately conducted and matches the specifications of unit standards and qualifications. 10% of assessed PoE's will be randomly moderated to ensure that proper assessment processes and principles are adhered to and are according to the THE RELEVANT ETQA/SETA's guidelines and criteria. In terms of a new assessor, 100% of the assessed PoE's will be moderated. Regular discussions among assessors will take place.

Step 3: review
Future Performance Training will ensure that lessons are learnt from the design and implementation of moderation and the necessary changes will be made whenever deemed appropriate.
The moderation system will include the following components:

- Appropriate timing (schedule)
- Planning of moderation (moderation plan)
- Scope of the moderation
- Moderation materials
- Registered moderators (personnel)

Moderation will be carried as follows:

- Revising exemplars of assessments and benchmarking materials against established criteria.
- Doing statistical moderation (10 % sample of assessments)
- Conducting external assessments
- Site visit by external moderators
- Panel meetings by external moderators
- Establishment of a moderation committee

Example: ASSESSOR CHECKLIST

ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES	YES	NO	Comment / Evidence
Fair			
1. All learners understand the assessment procedures and the criteria on which performance will be judged.	✓		
2. Barriers to learning or special needs are considered during assessments.	✓		
3. Assessment adjustments for barriers to learning do not provide the learner with an unfair advantage and/or influence the reliability and validity of the assessment.	✓		
4. Establishing procedures for appropriate re-assessment opportunities and appeals, if required.	✓		
5. Procedures are in place where learners provide feedback on the assessment process and can challenge the assessment if necessary, i.e. the appeals process.	✓		
6. Sample group on which the assessment is piloted is representative of learners of all races, gender, social and cultural backgrounds.	✓		
7. Assessment process is as transparent as possible. Transparency is obtained through effective communication with learners who are being assessed.	✓		
8. Avoiding the comparison of one learner's work with another learner's work (norm-referencing).	✓		
9. An assessment guide based on the unit standard / qualification assessed is well planned and used when conducting an assessment.	✓		

Valid			
10. Assessment activities accurately assess all the outcomes and assessment criteria covered in the unit standards or qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values	✓		
11. The number of assessment items / opportunities per competency reflects the relative importance of that competency to the unit standard.	✓		
12. Assessors must be able to relate the assessment activities to a specific unit standard.	✓		
13. The level of the assessment correlates with the level of the learning (Bloom's Taxonomy).	✓		
14. Assessors should be subject matter experts who are competent at using appropriate assessment activities.	✓		
15. The appropriate sources of evidence are allocated.	✓		
16. The appropriate method is selected to conduct the assessment.	✓		
Reliable			
17. Instruction in the assessment guides is clear, unambiguous, and consistent irrespective of who is reading them.	✓		
18. Assessment is based directly on the outcomes and assessment criteria of the unit standard.	✓		
19. Outcomes, assessment criteria, etc remain constant regardless who is being assessed or who the assessor is.	✓		
20. Including as many assessment instruments/tools as possible, as this leads to a higher probability that the assessment results will be reliable.	✓		
21. Assessment guides are revised regularly.	✓		
22. Assessors should meet and talk to one another.	✓		
23. Assessors should have extensive knowledge/expertise of the field in which they are assessing.	✓		
24. Assessment tools include as many checklists as possible to limit the level of subjective judgements required by the assessors.	✓		
25. Assessment process ensures that sufficient evidence is gathered.	✓		
Consistent			
26. That consistency in assessment is practiced.	✓		
27. Assessors are familiar with the assessment guides.	✓		
28. Similar assessment activities are administered in the same way, if possible.	✓		
29. That the assessor checks for consistency in the learner's performance.	✓		
Practicable and Cost effective			
30. Assessments are cost effective in terms of finance and time	✓		
31. Assessment method has minimal impact on company resources and employee productivity.	✓		
32. Naturally occurring evidence is used as far as possible	✓		

Open			
33. Learners are made aware of the assessment process, methods to be used, evidence required before the assessment process commences.	✓		
34. Learners contribute to the planning and the accumulation of evidence	✓		
35. An open feedback process ensures that the learners are kept informed of assessment outcomes	✓		
Systematically recorded			
36. Assessment planning and record keeping is sufficiently rigorous.	✓		
ASSESSMENT METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Integrative			
37. An appropriate combination of assessment methods and instruments are used (applied competence i.e. practical + foundational + reflective competence).	✓		
38. Assessment activities are tailored to the learning programme or work that the learner is currently doing.	✓		
Appropriate			
39. Appropriate methods and instruments are used	✓		
40. Assessment methods used are suitable to the performance being assessed and the learner's environment.	✓		
41. Assessment methods and instruments are suitable to learners with special needs.	✓		
Reasonably adjustable			
42. Instruments and methods used do not present artificial barriers	✓		
43. Learners are informed and consulted before any adjustments are made	✓		
M*anageable*			
44. Assessment methods and instruments are easily arranged.	✓		
45. Assessment methods and instruments do not interfere unduly with learning or work.	✓		

EVIDENCE COLLECTED	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Direct			
1. The assessment method used requires the learner to perform the EXACT skill that is being assessed.	✓		
2. Assessment situation and tasks are authentic as possible.	✓		
3. Use of projects, realistic case studies, simulations, observations, demonstrations and oral interview are used to gather evidence of competency.	✓		
4. Evidence is collected from activities that are similar to the conditions of actual performance.	✓		

Sufficient			
5. Evidence that is enough and of the right quality is collected.	✓		
6. Evidence that is collected indicates that the learner is competent	✓		
7. A variety of assessment activities and various sources of evidence are used	✓		
8. Every competence is covered by an assessment task.	✓		
9. That the learners are assessed at various stages and contexts as specified in the assessment guide.	✓		
10. An assessment scenario should cover the most important situations in which the competence can be used.	✓		
Authentic			
11. Authenticity of evidence collected is checked thoroughly.	✓		
12. Evidence provided is attributable to the learner being assessed.	✓		
13. That evidence that has not been directly assessed is verified.	✓		
14. Learners to submit a witness testimony.	✓		
15. Learners are to sign an affidavit confirming that the work is their own.	✓		
16. Obtain as many evidence samples through varied assessment methods, as possible.	✓		
17. Conduct an oral interview during or after submissions of POE.	✓		
Related to competency			
18. The collected evidence relates to the learner's current competence.	✓		

THE ROLE OF THE ASSESSOR	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Planning			
1. The assessor discussed the purpose of assessment with the learner and other stakeholders.	✓		
2. The assessor selected appropriate methods of assessment taking into account the purpose, environment and evidence to be collected.	✓		
3. The assessor selected appropriate assessment activities and instruments to ensure the evidence gathered is adequate to prove competence	✓		
Guidance to learner			
4. The assessor prepared the learner for the assessment.	✓		
5. The assessor discussed with the learner the learning requirements, prior knowledge and experience.	✓		
Assessment process			
6. The assessor ensured that the learner is at ease.	✓		
7. The assessor conducted the assessment according to established principles of good assessment.	✓		
Decision making			
8. The assessor make assessment decisions about learner's competence against the evaluation of the evidence collected using the assessment criteria.	✓		

Administration of Moderation			
9. Agreed timeframes are adhered to in reporting the assessment results in accordance with the provider's and SETA's requirements.	✓		
10. Records are kept and submitted to the relevant Administrative Division or centralized site.	✓		
11. Confidentiality of information relating to learner is preserved.	✓		
Learner feedback			
12. Feedback is given timeously, in an appropriate environment, to the learner.	✓		
13. Feedback is given in an affirming, constructive and interactive way.	✓		
Assessment evaluation			
14. The assessor evaluated the assessment process identifying strengths and weaknesses in the facilitators and his / her own performance.	✓		
15. A process is in place to integrate lessons learned in future assessments.	✓		

Learner Appeal Process	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Valid			
A process is in place that enables appeals to be lodged and handled against an appeal policy and procedures.	✓		
Open			
1. Policy and procedures is in place that ensures that the learner understands the appeal process	✓		
2. An open feedback process ensures that the learner is kept informed of the appeal outcome.	✓		
Fair			
3. Clear information about appeal process is provided to the learner.	✓		
4. Appropriate re-appeal opportunities are provided to the learner.	✓		

Moderation Of Assessment Process Checklist			
COMPONENTS OF MODERATION	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Timing			
1. A moderation plan to conduct moderation according to the provider's and SETA's requirements is in place.	X		
Extent			
2. The what and how much of the assessment of each qualification as specified in the assessment guide is communicated to moderators.	X		
Materials			
3. That proper material to conduct moderation is in place (moderation tools, assessment activities or assessment activity exemplars, assessment guides or assessment guide exemplars, case studies or assessed learners' work samples).	X		

Personnel			
4. The provider has access to qualified registered moderators or moderation agencies.	X		
Recording			
5. Moderation of assessment activities and judgments, including off-site are recorded.	X		
Reported			
6. Moderation of assessment activities and judgments, including off-site are reported	X		

MODERATION METHODS	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
1. A range of methods to conduct moderation is in place and relevant to make an informed assessment decision.	X		

THE ROLE OF THE MODERATOR	**YES**	**NO**	**Comment / Evidence**
Plan and prepare			
1. A moderation system is confirmed to be in place and planning and preparation activities are aligned with moderation system requirements.	X		
2. The scope of the moderation is confirmed with relevant parties.	X		
3. The planning of the scope and nature of the moderation activities ensure the manageability of moderation and enable a fair judgement to be passed on the assessments under review.	X		
4. The context of the assessment under review is clarified with the assessor or assessment agency, and special needs are taken into consideration in the planning.	X		
5. The moderation process used is sufficient to deal with all common forms of evidence including evidence gathered for recognition of prior learning.	X		
6. The documentation is prepared in line with the moderation system requirements and in such a way as to ensure moderation decisions are clearly documented.	X		
7. The required physical and human resources are ready and available for moderation.	X		
8. A variety of moderation techniques are described and compared in terms of strengths, weaknesses and applications before moderation is conducted.	X		
Conduct			
9. The proportion of assessments to be moderated meets the SETA's requirements.	X		
10. The moderation is conducted in accordance with the moderation plan.	X		
11. The assessment instruments and process are checked and judged in terms of their appropriateness, fairness, validity and sufficiency for assessment.	X		
12. Moderation confirms that special needs of candidates have been provided for but without compromising the required standards.	X		

13. The key principles of assessment are described in terms of their importance and effect on the assessment and the application of the assessment results.	X		
14. A variety of assessment methods are described in terms of their importance and effect on the assessment and the application of the assessment results.	X		
Advise and support assessors			
15. The nature and quality of advice to assessors facilitates clear understanding of the standards and issues related to their assessment.	X		
16. The nature and quality of advice improves assessment in line with ETQA requirements.	X		
Administration of moderation			
17. Moderation findings are reported within agreed timeframes in accordance with the SETA's and provider's requirements.	X		
18. Records are kept and submitted to the relevant Administrative Division or centralized site.	X		
19. Confidentiality of information relating to learners, assessors and assessing agencies is preserved.			
Moderation review			
20. Strengths and weaknesses of the moderation system and process are identified.	X		
21. The moderation review enhances the credibility and integrity of the assessment system and process.	X		

Certification Process	*YES*	*NO*	*Comment / Evidence*
1. Ensures that the provider certificate the learner if assessed against a skills programme and notify the SETA accordingly.	X		

Use the ETQA checklist to moderate your organizational assessment guides

Assessment Guide Checklist				
	Criteria	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments**
	1. Assessment Plan			
1.1	Unit standard Title stated			
1.2	Description of Unit standard given			
1.3	Specific outcomes stated			
1.4	Embedded knowledge stated			
1.5	Range stated			
1.6	Instruments to be used stated			
1.7	Period of Assessment stated			
1.8	Location stated			
1.9	Credits and level stated			
1.10	Results availability stated			
	2. Candidate Preparation			
2.1	Logistical requirements stated per instrument			
2.2	People to be informed stated			
	3. Guide to Learner			
3.1	Instruments to be assessed against described			
3.2	Preparation required of learner described			
3.3	Equipment/resources required stated			
3.4	Performance expectations stated			
3.5	Evidence requirements stated			
	4. Assessment Instruments			
4.1	Description of each instrument given			
4.2	Purpose of each instrument described			
4.3	Company specific information included			
4.4	Summative assessment activities described			
4.5	Critical cross-field aspects included in summative assessment activities			
	5. Guide to Learner Response/Evidence Checklist			
5.1	“Model answers” to Knowledge Tests included			
5.2	Performance Checklist to learner activities included			
5.3	Summary of competence judgement included			
5.4	Assessor evaluation of assessment against assessment principles			

	6. Recording Documents and Checklist			
6.1	Planning of Assessment			
6.2	Recording of Evidence			
6.3	Evaluation of Evidence			
6.4	Evidence feedback			
6.5	Recording of Assessment Decision			
6.6	Further actions			
6.7	Formative Assessment Evidence Checklist			
6.8	Summative Assessment Evidence Checklist			
6.9	Corresponding unit standard			
	7. Overall Presentation			
7.1	Overall presentation of Assessment guide			
7.2	User-friendly of guide			

Assessment Instrument

Candidate's name:	Anna Simpson		
Assessor's name:	Jim Walters		
Unit Standard:	Orientation to aged care work		
Workplace:	Golden Square Aged Care Services		
Date of assessment:	12 June 2007		
Procedure:	Greeting customers at their home		
During the performance of skills did the candidate:	Yes	No	N/A
i. present for work at the appropriate time?			
ii. present for work in a clean and tidy manner?			
Iii. greet the client using their preferred name?			
iv. use appropriate non-verbal communication?			
v. consult the client about the preferred routine for the day?			
The candidate's performance was:	Not satisfactory	Satisfactory	

Feedback to candidate

Demonstrated lack of confidence in communicating with clients, although all procedures were covered.

Areas of improvement suggested: building relationship with the client, checking the client's understanding, needs or possible problems; feeling more positive and relaxed around the client.

Anna admitted feeling nervous today and ahs agreed to keep practicing these skills and attitudes.

Agreed to a repeat observation in one month's time.

Candidate's signature:	**Anna Simpson**
Assessor's signature:	**Jim Walters**

Use the following checklist for a quick review

MODERATORS REVIEW CHECKLIST			
	Yes	No	Action
Internal Moderation Competence			
Have I achieved my moderation credits/qualification?			
Have I kept my occupational background and knowledge up-to-date?			
Do I fully understand the occupational standards and have I resolved any queries with the external verifier?			

Taken from Guide for Internal Verifier for NVQ.

MODERATORS REVIEW CHECKLIST			
	Yes	No	Action
Do I understand the requirements of the ETQAs with regard to moderation?			
Am I up-to-date with current best practice and documentation for the purpose of moderation?			
Monitoring Assessment Practice			
Do I make sure that all the assessors meet, and continue to meet, the requirements for competence?			
Do I decide on how I will monitor assessment practice, based on the lost suitable approach for the provider?			
When I monitor an assessors' assessment practice, do I give clear and constructive feedback afterwards?			
Moderating Assessment Decisions			
Do I check that evidence used for assessment is valid, authentic, reliable, consistent and sufficient?			
Do I consider whether assessment is happening in the most cost-effective way?			
Sampling Assessments			

Do I decide on a sampling strategies used and assessments looked at?			
Do I make information on sampling available to the external verifier before external verification visits?			
Supporting and Advising Assessors			
MODERATORS REVIEW CHECKLIST			
	Yes	No	Action
Do I fully brief assessors when they first start assessing?			
Am I in regular contact with all the assessors to check they have all the information and advise they need?			
Do I take the lead in deciding what information and advise assessors need, as well as responding to requests for information?			
Do I help assessors identify their own development needs?			
Do I provide development activities for the assessment team as a whole?			
Have I agreed to assessor allocation with those involved?			
Internal Moderation Records			
Do I make sure that internal moderation and assessment records are fit for purpose and use existing systems where possible?			
Do I make sure that records show which assessor assed whom, what and when, and how evidence is linked to the candidate?			
Do I keep records securely and confidentially?			
Do I make sure that documentation and records are reviewed regularly to check that they are still useful?			
Access and Fair Assessment			

Do I provide guidance to assessors to make sure that they do not discriminate against any candidate?			
Do I monitor assessment practice to make sure that discrimination is not happening?			
Appeals			
Do I know what to do if there is an appeal from a candidate?			
Do I keep records of appeals that are lodged?			

References:

http://www.saqa.org.za/