# Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate) Principal Moderators' Report

# January 2019

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en

# Procedures
## Controlled Assessment

This series has highlighted that centres need to be reminded of the requirements for carrying out controlled assessment for the components of the Skills Challenge Certificate.
- Centres must refer to the **Code of Practice** before undertaking any assessment.
- The 3 Challenges must be taken under **controlled conditions** as set out in the **Advanced Delivery Handbook**.
- Centres are reminded there are set controls for **time, resources, supervision, collaboration and feedback** for each task of the assessment.
- Not adhering to the set controls is **malpractice** and the centre results could be in jeopardy.
- Once a task begins, **no** lessons or guidance can be provided other than that stipulated in the controls.
- It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that candidates' work is kept **secure** and candidates **cannot access** their work once each task is completed**.**
- Once the Individual Project has been submitted for assessment it **must not** be returned to the candidate to improve it.

## Submitting Work using e-submission

This was the first series with all four components being submitted through e-submission. Centres are to be congratulated on how smoothly this process was managed. The organisation of Enterprise and Employability evidence was greatly improved from previous series. However, evidence from some centres for the Global Citizenship and Community Challenges was disorganised with many different documents and there is room for improvement for future submissions.

Centres **must** ensure that:
- The e-submission guidance is referred to for the total number of documents that should be submitted and for how to upload different types of evidence.
- Candidates' work should be contained in a **zipped folder** and labelled clearly with **Candidate Number** and **Candidate Name**.
- Candidates should take responsibility for organising and saving work in their own folder. They should not include a large number of documents for a single task; they should be combined appropriately in a logical order.
- For the three Challenges the candidate folder **must** contain the completed and signed Candidate Declaration and Time sheet.
- All the required evidence is uploaded. This includes the candidate folders selected in the sample together with the completed and signed Assessment sheet for each candidate in the sample.

## Internal Moderation

It is most important that centres have a thorough internal moderation process in place. This series saw an increase in the number of centres where different adjustments were applied to different assessors within a centre. This was not just the case for centres with a large number of assessors but in centres where there were only two or three assessors. If there is a clear lack of consistency across assessors within a centre in future series the whole cohort may be requested.

# Individual Project

## Learning Outcome 1
## Identify the focus and scope of an Individual Project

This series contained an exciting range of individual and challenging topics; the vast majority were framed as a question, encouraging focus and the ability to draw specific conclusions.

The introduction, aims and objectives section was generally tackled successfully by candidates. Introductions were well-structured focusing on how the topic of the project linked to their future study at university or career. There were fewer over long introductions than in previous series. The majority of candidates adopted the structure of numbering aims and objectives therefore linking them clearly. There were few examples of aims and objectives not directly linked to the chosen topic. Candidates seemed more aware of the need to make aims and objectives realistic and achievable. With some candidates, there was a lack of clarity regarding the difference between aims and objectives, which could be developed further. Generally, there was appropriate use of action verbs.

The main area for development would be to continue to develop realistic and achievable aims and objectives; differentiating them and avoiding overly ambitious topics (such as the impact on the media which is problematic to measure).

## Learning Outcome 2
## Select and plan research methods, resources and materials

Rationales often followed an aim by aim structure that ensured good detail was included. It is worth emphasising that the key to gaining good marks for LO2 is in the justification of the choices made. Rationales should also contain a balance of detail on primary and secondary methods. Few candidates described in detail an account of primary methods by discussing the sample technique to be used, the target population or justifying their choice of primary method in context of the topic. The sample for questionnaires should be 50 to be of significance and allow appropriate analysis. When done well this resulted in some excellent rationales and structure for the overall Individual Project.

The strongest rationales included specific sources to be used and evaluation of their credibility justifying the choice. Some exceptional work included consideration of the weaknesses of credibility and weighed them against the advantages and still appropriately justified their use.

It is worth noting that credit is not given for describing and evaluating methods not selected for use.

## Learning Outcome 3
## Select, collate, reference and assess the credibility of information and numerical data

Sources were consistently of a complex and appropriate nature. Few candidates included over long and irrelevant lists of sources. The use of sources enhanced the work. Referencing for most was secure throughout the Individual Project. The majority also included a full bibliography. It is pleasing to note many candidates are using recognised referencing systems.

Annotated bibliographies are used by some centres. Whilst this is acceptable, it is expected that at Advanced level candidates incorporate the assessment of credibility of sources within the main discussion, as part of their analysis.

Candidates should be encouraged to consider a range of aspects in relation to credibility such a currency, validity, comprehensiveness etc. Many candidates restricted their focus to bias and/or reliability, this was especially true with the use of an annotated bibliography which is a more suitable method for Key Stage 4 candidates.

## Learning Outcome 4
## Analyse the numerical data and display using digital techniques

This learning outcome continues to be the weakest for most candidates and one that would benefit from development in most centres. It was pleasing to see a number of centres encouraging candidates to use secondary data to create original graphs for analysis and so display higher level skills. Primary data is rarely complex enough to allow such calculations. There were fewer instances of calculations without context in terms of the research. Where primary data is displayed graphically, incorporating more than one variable for comparison would encourage more complex analysis.

Able candidates are still falling down on this learning outcome in comparison to their achievement in other learning outcomes. A significant number are making basic errors or omissions in presentation of data e.g. labelling of axis, title of graphs and therefore are only achieving band 1 attainment at best.

Assessment in Centres was more appropriate this series with less generosity.

## Learning Outcome 5
## Synthesise, analyse and use information and viewpoints

The quality of synthesis and discussion continues to improve across the range of ability. This learning outcome tends to be the strongest element for the majority of candidates. Most candidates successfully include a range of viewpoints. Some titles are more restrictive than others in supporting this requirement and candidates should be mindful of the topic and the availability of material to cover a range of varying viewpoints for analysis. There were some outstanding examples of use of information and depth of understanding of complex topics shown by a number of candidates.

## Learning Outcome 6
## Produce and present an outcome

Occasionally some Centres were rewarding this learning outcome with some generosity. To achieve top band marks presentation needs to be of outstanding quality i.e. fit for publication. Whilst overall presentation was generally very good, those with simple errors throughout cannot be given band 3 marks (spelling errors, informal tone, less than complex techniques and skills utilised).

## Learning Outcome 7
## Make judgements and draw conclusions

The most successful conclusions were offered aim by aim, with an overall conclusion addressing the initial question/hypothesis directly and judgements present throughout. Such a structure gives focus and ensures detailed, relevant conclusions focused on the scope of the Individual Project. Where evidence was appropriately referred to support conclusions, band 3 marks were deserved.

## Learning Outcome 8
## Evaluate own performance in managing an Individual Project

There has been a general improvement in the quality of self-evaluations. The majority of candidates took the appropriate approach of addressing the skill areas in relation to the production of the Individual Project. A few candidates had the wrong focus – either not gaining credit by discussing the development of skills in other Challenges or by adopting a legacy structure and so not focusing on the relevant skills. Few were purely descriptive; although many could be further strengthened by clear justification for the comments made, such as using examples of development/areas of weakness. Many gained band 3 marks.

# Enterprise and Employability Challenge

### Learning Outcome 1
### Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

In this series, there were some excellent examples of candidate work that demonstrated innovative and creative responses. Some candidates were able to come up with some highly original ideas in response to a Challenge Brief and to fully demonstrate the process they went through in selecting a particular idea to focus on. However, there are still some examples of unimaginative or simplistic responses as well as omission in terms of a justification concerning which idea was to be selected or analysis of potential ideas.

Page 15 of the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate Delivery Handbook details what this skill entails. Centres are reminded that creativity and innovation can be demonstrated in each of the tasks within the brief. For Task 1, creativity and innovation could be demonstrated in how the pen portrait is developed and presented. Therefore, candidates could be encouraged to use more digital literacy techniques in making their pen portraits stand out. Candidates are also encouraged to consider what information they include in their pen portraits that will be most likely to support self-promotion. In some cases, content was either irrelevant or counter to the notion of self-promotion. They could also demonstrate their use of social media by sharing their pen portrait electronically. Nevertheless, in some examples, candidates produced high quality pen portraits.

Task 2 provides candidates with the opportunity to showcase their creativity and innovation skills in generating, analysing and evaluating ideas and coming up with appropriate and effective responses. There are many ways ideas generation and selection can be undertaken with examples such as blue sky thinking, spider diagrams, decision matrices and SWOT analyses which were seen in this series; however, candidates should be encouraged to select their own methods. In addition, candidates should also be encouraged to display the findings of their innovation venture creatively, which could also support digital literacy in using electronic methods to present findings. Some candidate responses did this extremely effectively and were able to score highly for their digital literacy skills. Some innovation ventures were highly effective and could have been created and developed by professional bodies which was highly encouraging.

Likewise, candidates can also be encouraged to utilise their creativity and innovation skills in Tasks 3 and 4. This could be in demonstrated through the way information is presented, for example.

### Learning Outcome 2
### Understanding Personal Effectiveness

Personal effectiveness involves auditing and development consideration, management of own role and responsibilities and evaluating personal effectiveness which can be demonstrated throughout the Challenge. In Task 2, attention needs to be given in ensuring that candidates are able to explicitly demonstrate that they have been successful in their time management, utilising appropriate behaviour, skills and working relationships. This should not be regarded as an implicit assumption if candidates respond to the brief. Sources of evidence seen in this series included action plans and photographs, but a variety of methods can be utilised. In some responses, candidates included a self-reflection in the form of a log in terms of how well they managed their time or worked with their peers, which was a valuable method in evidencing personal effectiveness.

As part of Task 3, candidates are expected to describe the skills, qualifications and attributes related to their selected destinations and consider their current skills set, identify gaps and consider how they may address them. These skills should be in relation to the skills required in their chosen destinations, and not simply analysis against a generic set of skills. This point was lacking in some of the evidence presented.

Task 4 involves undertaking a Personal Refection Presentation in terms of the skills utilised throughout the Challenge. It requires candidates to reflect on the skills, qualities and attributes they demonstrated through the Challenge, giving clear examples. In some cases, candidates reflected on skills they had used in their place of employment or elsewhere. Or, they reflected on the outcomes generated in response to the tasks, as opposed to the skills developed in responding to the Challenge. Group reflections were also seen in this Series, so Centres are reminded that the requirement is that of a 'personal' reflection as opposed to a 'team' reflection.

## Learning Outcome 3
## Be able to apply Numeracy

Page 15 of the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate Delivery Handbook gives examples of the types of topics candidates can engage with in order to demonstrate numeracy at Advanced level. Achieving higher band scores will be achieved by the complexity of the numerical analysis and interpretation undertaken.

Most candidates demonstrated some skills of numeracy as part of Task 2 and Task 3. However, complexity was often lacking in relation to both tasks. Some candidates are still accessing online cost calculators in relation to university costs and mortgage calculations, for example, and simply snipping screen shots into their Destination Passport. This does not allow candidates to demonstrate their skills of numeracy as the online calculator carries out the calculation for them. In addition, some candidates had listed the price of food items at various supermarkets. Again, this does not demonstrate skills of numeracy. It is also very simplistic for advanced level standards. In addition, the assessment matrix requires candidates to analyse and interpret numerical results. In many responses, an analysis and interpretation of the results following the application of numerical techniques and methods was missing. This was seen in both the innovation proposal and the personal cost analysis. For example, candidates may have produced a cash-flow forecast, profit and loss account and break-even chart as part of their innovation venture, yet there was no text to accompany these calculations in terms of what they were showing and the likely implications. This should be a focus for Centres before future moderation opportunities.

Nevertheless, there were some responses that used a variety of techniques to suit their purpose such as percentage change, standard deviation, range and averages. The use of Excel is strongly recommended as this will allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to construct formulas in carrying out calculations and also supports skills of digital literacy.

## Learning Outcome 4
## Be able to apply Digital Literacy

Responses to the Challenge Brief should be organised and presented in a comprehensive manner. Many electronic files that have generic or vague file names should be avoided. In order to achieve higher grade bandings, candidates should be aiming to produce well-structured responses to each task which also demonstrate appropriate presentation techniques including effective use of tables, graphs and diagrams. Some candidate responses lacked features such as, but not restricted to, headings, side headings, page numbers, and inconsistent use of fonts and diagrams/graphs that lacked keys.

In Task 3, candidates are required to plan out a journey which will get them to their required destination. This is termed a 'Destination Passport'. Candidates should identify 2 career pathways and the CV, letter of application, UCAS personal statement, job adverts etc. are intended to be relevant to those selected options. The Destination Passport should be a focused activity and not a number of files that contain CVs, job adverts, applications and generic skills analyses; instead, these documents should be entirely relevant to the 2 options described at the start of this task. In order to achieve higher bandings for this Learning Outcome, candidates should be encouraged to bring information together into a well organised and presented document(s).

Centres are also reminded that the use of social media should be evident within the Challenge. However, the use of social media was missing in some submissions.

In this Series, it appeared that there is a growing trend in providing electronic templates to candidates. This **must** be avoided as this is contravening the controls on resources set by WJEC and found in the Advanced Delivery Handbook.

## Learning Outcome 5 – Be able to participate in an Enterprise and Employability Challenge

It was pleasing to see that candidates clearly engaged in this Challenge and produced effective outcomes. Some candidate work was exemplary.

However, there are still some misconceptions concerning the Personal Reflection Presentation. This is not a reflection on the outcomes generated in response to the tasks, a reflection of skills developed as a result of employment or a response to Task 3. Instead, it requires candidates to reflect on the skills, qualities and attributes they demonstrated and developed throughout the Challenge and giving clear examples.

# Global Citizenship Challenge

## Learning Outcome 1
## Be able to apply Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Candidates were able to select complex and relevant secondary sources and write their Personal Standpoint with confidence.

In a significant number of centres, assessment of this Learning Outcome was overgenerous as there was insufficient evaluation of the credibility of sources to merit the marks awarded. Sources should also be correctly referenced as this is academic best practice as well as evidencing the candidate's skill at selecting appropriate sources. It should not be a separate section or annotated bibliography.

The assessment of problem-solving skills was mainly focused on the evaluation of the chosen solutions. Supporting evidence to demonstrate this decision making should include detailed justification of choices to ensure that this element can be rewarded.   Again, where candidates' evaluation of solutions was incorporated into their Personal Standpoint, the word count limited their scope.  Evaluation of solutions should take place as preparation for the Global Choices Conferences where *one* chosen solution should be presented.

## Learning Outcome 2
## Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

A clear distinction between Task 1 and Task 2 allowed Candidates to demonstrate creativity and innovation. The most successful approach was seen when learners generated a range of innovative solutions which were supported by sufficient detail and critical evaluation of the solution's strengths and weaknesses.

When candidates proposed solutions in Task 1 and considered different viewpoints in Task 2, they lacked the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to come up with solutions on their own and evaluate their potential success. This severely hampered their attainment and resulted in over generous assessment in centres where this was not recognised.

Many candidates are missing out on the opportunity to be more creative in their production of their contribution to the Global Choices conference. The presentation option does not have to be a Power Point as there are many digital tools that candidates could use to be more innovative. Instead of just inserting images in a Power Point, animations, songs and film clips could be incorporated. There were some very creative approaches taken.

## Learning Outcome 3
## Be able to apply Literacy

Once again, many candidates produced high quality work and were able to communicate fluently and accurately. Personal Standpoints demonstrated excellent analysis and synthesis and went on to present compulsive evidence to agree with the opinion expressed.

This learning outcome could be appropriately rewarded in Task 2 when candidates produced either an extended contribution to the Global Choices Conference and/ or detailed evidence of a question and answer session. Contributions of simple Power Points with images but no speaking notes were frequently too generously assessed.

Again, centres must be aware that literacy is assessed across all three tasks and candidates must therefore take care over the accuracy and clarity of their work throughout the Challenge. Similarly, in their Personal Review, candidates did not reflect in detail on their development of this skill and this is to be considered for future cohorts.

## Learning Outcome 4
## Understand issues involved in a Global Citizenship Challenge

As in previous series, it was quite clear that candidates had understood and genuinely engaged with the global issue. Their responses in both Task 1 and Task 2 demonstrating a strong desire to do something about the issue. Most Personal Standpoints incorporated a range of PESTLE factors that were appropriate to the issue.

Many Power Points used for the conference were too simplistic for Advanced level and a lack of any speech notes is not acceptable. Centres are to be reminded that the 500 word conference paper should not be just a repetition of the Personal Standpoint. Clear evidence of the Question and Answer session must be provided, there was improvement this series.

Some centres are making use of their own devised record sheet of the candidates' performance at the conference and this is an example of good practice as supporting evidence for the candidate.

# Community Challenge

## Learning Outcome 1
## Be able to apply Planning and Organising

Candidate evidence for planning and organisation continues to be the weakest of the three learning outcomes. In many centres, assessors are also over generous in their allocation of marks.

More centres are allowing candidates autonomy to select activities of interest to them which resulted in stronger planning and implementation than in previous series. The planning and organising evidence of candidates working in a team was not always as well documented as those who did the activity as an individual.

Before commencing the assessment, candidates should be encouraged to research thoroughly the community group they want to engage with to help provide justifications for decisions on what activity they will be planning and organising. Most candidates are producing aims and objectives which are relevant and appropriate, but they are not always realistic and achievable in the 30 hours. Candidates must be provided with a solid understanding of aims and objectives making use of the action verbs found in the Individual Project section of the Advanced Delivery Handbook.

There are still unsuitable community activities taking place which are not complex and do not allow the candidates scope to gain more than band 1 attainment for this learning outcome e.g. working in charity shops, work experience and litter picking.

In many cases there was a lack of depth in the use of project management skills. The community activity must be complex for Advanced level and enable candidates to be able to generate multiple tasks each with sub-tasks which can be allocated time, resources, individual and team responsibilities if working in a group, targets and risks in completing. Candidates should be encouraged to use Gantt charts or similar digital tools to support the project management.

There is a general lack of evidence that candidates are monitoring and adapting the original plan when they are participating in the 30 hours. When candidates collected a variety of evidence during the community activity they were able to reflect on successful planning and to discuss changes implemented during the activity.

There has been some improvement this series in candidates reflecting on their planning and organisation skill and how it had been applied during the activity. This is difficult when candidates had not been given the opportunity to plan and organise the activity themselves but were rather told what to do.

## Learning Outcome 2
## Understand Personal Effectiveness

Most of the candidates demonstrated a realistic ability to use skills audits and analyse the results. Where this was done particularly well, candidates made clear links between the proposal and an explanation of how their personal skills would make an impact in carrying out the activity.

Copies of skills audits should not be included in the Proposal as it is the analysis of the results that is needed. The audit used must relate to the activity the candidates are going to undertake. Candidates should firstly consider what skills they possess, then what skills are needed for the activity and finally to plan how they will improve the necessary skills in order to carry out the activity.

Centres are to be reminded that a team is between 3-6 members, centres allowing candidates to do activities in pairs or larger groups must address this.

Providing clear visual evidence of effective management of their role and responsibilities in carrying out the activities was not always evident.

Many successful candidates collated a variety of supporting evidence including annotated photos, log book/diary, test results for coaching and feedback questionnaires. Comments of the Confirmation Statement provide support of the candidate's personal effectiveness in time management, use of appropriate behaviours and working relationships. The standard of the evidence produced by candidates has improved once again this series with many candidates collating a variety of evidence and annotating effectively.

Although most candidates referenced their personal effectiveness in their Reflection Presentation, this was generally basic with limiting descriptive accounts and is an area for improvement.

## Learning Outcome 3
## Be able to participate in a Community Challenge

All candidates produced a credible Proposal however, many would benefit from making use of the structure provided in the Advanced Delivery Handbook. Centres **must not** provide candidates with a Proposal template to complete. Candidates were able to discuss the purpose of their activity and how it would benefit their chosen community.

Confirmation statements were missing from some candidates' work and it was evident that some candidates had not completed the 30 hours required. As noted in the Advanced Skills Challenge Delivery Handbook on page 12 'The Confirmation Statement must provide testimony and validation of the learner's 30 hours of active and purposeful participation in completing the community activity'. Centres are also to be reminded that the 30 hours must be over a minimum of 4 weeks and logged on their time sheet.

Centres are reminded that the Reflection Presentation should be of at least 10 minutes. Many candidates should take more care in producing a structured, informative and reflective presentation that is suitable in meeting the time requirement. A copy of speakers' notes must be included with the presentation, this was not always evident and had an impact on the reflection element of the other two learning outcomes. There was an improvement seen in candidates' Reflection Presentations. Many centres are including a presentation sheet for each candidate where teachers make effective comments on the delivery of the presentation.

Candidates still tend to describe the activity as opposed to providing evaluative comments on the outcome of the activity and how it is benefitting the community. This is done well when candidates refer to their success criteria stated in the Proposal. The use of a feedback questionnaire or interviewing members of the community is a useful tool to help demonstrate the success of the outcome from the 30 hours activity.