



Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate) Principal Moderators' Report January 2022

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

Administration

Entries

- Due to the pandemic together with the adaptation for summer 2022 to reduce the requirement to two Challenges instead of three there was some changes to the entry pattern.
- Very few centres entered candidates for the Individual Project and the Community Challenge.
- Entries for the Global Challenge had increased not just by number of centres but also with both year 12 and year 13 being entered due to no summer 2021 series.
- Entries for the Enterprise and Employability Challenge were similar to last January.

Submitting Marks

- Centres are to be commended on the submission of marks generally meeting WJEC deadline

Submitting Work using e-submission

- It was pleasing that there were very few issues with the uploading of work.
- Centres must ensure that for candidate work that is large, such as videos, that the first step is to compress them, support to do this is available through WJEC's e-assessment information.

Internal Moderation procedures

- It was clear that centres had not undertaken internal moderation to ensure assessment across all the assessors in centre had applied the criteria consistently.
- It is appreciated that with the pandemic and the numbers of staff absences it was difficult to hold internal moderation meetings. It has however led to specific assessor scaling of marks.

Individual Project

Strengths

- Topics were clearly of interest to the candidates and responses demonstrated their personal interest and motivation.
- Most candidates were able to select a range of relevant primary and secondary sources.
- Nearly all candidates were able to present a final outcome that addressed their Project aims and objectives.
- Many candidates were able to provide detailed, relevant and well-reasoned conclusions.
- Many candidates were also able to provide highly detailed, comprehensive and effective evaluation of their own performance.

Areas for Improvement

- Some candidates had topics and titles that were too ambitious and therefore did not always allow them to demonstrate their true potential in carrying out a research project. Candidates need to ensure they have selected a manageable scope and focus.
- In some cases, aims and objectives lacked clarity. Candidates should ensure they are also logical and realistic.
- Some rationales lacked specificity. Rationales, including proposed research methods should be linked directly to the topic of study.
- Whilst nearly all candidates were able to provide a bibliography, referencing throughout work was not always consistent or accurate.
- The analysis of numerical data was generally based on the results of a questionnaire, and the use and analysis of secondary data was a missed opportunity to demonstrate the higher level numeracy skills required at Advanced level.
- Some of the comments provided by candidates on their findings were simply re-stating the information that was presented in the charts, rather than providing more meaningful interpretations on the information they had obtained.
- Some candidates based their conclusions on anecdotal evidence which should be avoided.
- Some candidates significantly exceeded the word count and marks are deducted for not meeting the brief of 3,000 – 5,000 words.

Enterprise and Employability Challenge

Learning Outcome 1 – Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

Strengths

- Generally, candidates were able to come up with creative and innovative ideas. They were able to analyse and develop their ideas, often creating a prototype using digital techniques, which demonstrated excellent practice.
- Candidates also used a variety of digital techniques to present their evidence in a creative fashion.
- Many candidates were able to utilise objective decision-making techniques in order to select an idea to carry forward.

Areas for Improvement

- Some candidates are still not generating multiple ideas, nor demonstrating the selection process in narrowing down their ideas in order to identify the best idea to proceed with.
- Some candidates are not fully exploiting the opportunities to demonstrate their creativity and innovation skills. For example, creativity and innovation can also be seen in their Pen Portrait and their Personal Reflection Presentation.
- Some ideas still lack imagination. At Advanced level, ideas should be innovative; hence ideas relating to cupcakes, five-a-side football matches and smoothies, for example, should be avoided. In addition, at Advanced level, candidates are undertaking an innovation venture. This is not the same as a business venture.

Learning Outcome 2 – Understanding Personal Effectiveness

Strengths

- Many candidates were able to understand their personal skills and analyse how they may be developed in relation to their chosen pathways.
- Many Personal Reflection Presentations were perceptive, detailed and skills focused.
- Generally, candidates were able to demonstrate their personal effectiveness through minutes, diary entries and reflections.

Areas for Improvement

- Some candidates are still repeating the content on Task 3 (their Destination Passport) in Task 4 (their Personal Reflective Presentation). The Personal Reflection Presentations should be based on self-promoting skills, qualities and attributes, and not a description of the outcomes or tasks completed.
- In Task 3, some candidates are still including copy and paste information regarding careers and degree courses as opposed to analysing the skills related to these career choices, skill gaps and how they might remedy the skills gap.

Learning Outcome 3 – Be able to apply Numeracy

Strengths

- Some candidates were able to apply meaningful techniques in both Task 2 and Task 3, which demonstrated a range of techniques that were fit for purpose and sophisticated.
- Some candidates were also able to fully interpret their numerical results which demonstrated that they understood why they were carrying out the calculations.
- There were some really detailed personal cost analyses and it could be seen that learners saw the benefits in undertaking this cost analysis as demonstrated in their comprehensive interpretation.

Areas for Improvement

- Stating numbers does not constitute numeracy. Candidates should not be awarded marks for stating the price of an item, for example. There needs to be evidence of numerical technique being used accurately.
- Candidates should be encouraged to use a range of techniques. In some examples, candidates were only able to demonstrate adding up.
- In some cases, candidates had included a diagram of a break-even point, for example, but had not included any interpretation. Where diagrams are used, they need to be explained.
- Candidates must not be provided with any writing frames or scaffolding. In some cases, candidates had undertaken exactly the same calculation and employed the same techniques. At advanced level, candidates must select and apply their own choices.

Learning Outcome 4 – Be able to apply Digital Literacy

Strengths

- There were some highly sophisticated examples of digital literacy. Some candidates had developed websites, animation, recordings, social media and used software to produce designs and prototypes. This is regarded as excellent practice.
- Some candidate work was presented in a highly professional format, including page numbers, section breaks and a contents page.

Areas for Improvement

- Candidates need to ensure they present their work in a manageable number of files. Multiple files means that the work becomes fragmented, it is difficult to follow and loses clarity.
- When using different techniques to present information and numerical data, tables, graphs and diagrams, candidates should ensure these are fit for purpose. They should include titles, where appropriate, be straightforward to read and understand and be used to enhance content and understanding.

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

Strengths

- There were some highly effective outcomes and candidates should be commended on the quality of their work.

Areas for Improvement

- Some candidates did not complete all 4 tasks.
- Some candidates duplicated the content of Task 3, in their Personal Reflection Presentation.
- Some Innovation Proposals and Personal Reflection Presentations lacked structure and detail.

Global Citizenship Challenge

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

Strengths

- It was pleasing to see a wide range of complex issues being considered for the Challenge. Candidates were independently selecting increasingly complex and relevant secondary sources.
- In the most consistent Centres, the level of skill demonstrated in analysing and evaluating the credibility of sources was impressive. As Centres have developed this skill for the Individual Project it has had an impact on how this skill has been improved within the Global Citizenship Challenge.

Areas for Improvement

- As in previous series, the main area for improvement is the evaluation of solutions to the issue. This is most apparent in the middle bands where limited problem-solving and critical thinking was apparent in Task 2 and was frequently over rewarded.
- Similarly, when the assessment of problem solving skills was mainly focused on the evaluation of the chosen solutions, there was frequently insufficient supporting evidence. The decision making process should be clear and detailed and should include detailed justification of choices to ensure that this element can be rewarded. This is an area that still requires further development in many centres with this strand being over rewarded.

Learning Outcome 2 – Be able to apply Creativity and Innovation

Strengths

- The higher bands saw learners generate a range of innovative solutions which were supported by sufficient detail. This detail often demonstrated that they had really thought through the proposed solution and led to a more detailed and critical evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Many of the presentations demonstrated a good level of creativity.

Areas for Improvement

- This Learning Outcome is also assessed through the quality of the contribution to the Global Citizens Conference. Whatever the form the contribution takes, candidates must still demonstrate creativity and innovation. With many centres opting to direct their learners to the conference paper and a Q&A session option, many are not demonstrating this skill to higher band levels. The potential for achievement here was frequently limited by lacklustre approaches.
- In many Centres, this Learning Outcome was still the most likely to be too generously awarded when there is a limited range of underdeveloped solutions.

Learning Outcome 3 – Be able to apply Literacy

Strengths

- Overall, 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. Attainment in this Learning Outcome continues to improve and be accurately assessed by Centres.
- Centres are also more clearly evidencing attainment of this Learning Outcome in Task 2 with comprehensive speaking notes and evidence of question and answer session, although this is still an area for development for some Centres.

Areas for Improvement

- As in previous series, there were sometimes significant discrepancies in accuracy and fluency between Task 1 and Task 3. 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.
- If there was a pattern to over-rewarding, it was frequently at the top end of Band 3 where full marks were awarded but not justified by the candidate's accuracy and use of language.

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

Strengths

- As in previous series, it was quite clear that candidates had understood the Challenge and genuinely engaged with the issue, demonstrating a desire to do something about it.
- In many instances, candidates were able to handle complex sources and produce a sophisticated synthesis and analysis.

Areas for Improvement

- The quality of contributions to the Global Choices conference do not consistently demonstrate the high quality expected for Band 3 work. There should be conscious thought put into the purpose and audience and how this then affects the presentation and material used. Too often, PowerPoints went to each extreme and were either cluttered and difficult to follow or very basic. There was little evidence of conscious careful construction and a greater focus on this part of Task 2 would reap rewards across all four Learning Outcomes.

Community Challenge

Strengths

- Generally, candidates presented outcomes that demonstrated they had participated in a meaningful and beneficial community activity.
- Many candidates were able to collate a variety of evidence to demonstrate their participation in their community activity. The use of photographic evidence was particularly effective.
- Some candidates included evaluations in the form of feedback sheets and questionnaire findings to demonstrate the benefits of undertaking the community activity, and this is regarded as good practice.
- Many candidates provided detailed speaker notes to support their Personal Reflection Presentations.
- Generally, skills analysis, both before and as a result of completing the community activity was strong.

Areas for Improvement

- Candidates must have appropriate aims and objectives in order to guide the community activity and to evaluate its success. In some cases, aims and objectives lacked clarity and it was evident that candidates did not always understand the difference between an aim and an objective.
- Whilst some candidates utilised Gantt charts, they had not shown which tasks could be performed simultaneously.
- Copies of skills audits are not required in the evidence provided by candidates; only the analysis of the results and their consideration of how the identified skills need to be improved or developed to complete the community activity.
- The skills audits utilised must also be appropriate for the actual community activity the candidate will undertake, as they may need to develop specific practical skills.
- The Centre must ensure that only the most appropriate option is ticked on the Confirmation Statement to reflect the candidates' participation in carrying out the 30 hours activity. In some cases, all three statements had been ticked.