



Chief Examiner Report

**NCFE CACHE Level 3 Applied General
Certificate in Health and Social Care
QN: 603/2914/2**

Assessment code: AGC HSC

Paper number: P003205

**Submission window: 8th January to 26th January
2026**

Introduction

This report contains information in relation to the external assessment from the Chief Examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of learner work within this assessment window.

The aim is to highlight where learners generally performed well as well as any areas where further development may be required.

Key points:

- grade achievements
- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- assessment structure
- use of word allocation
- criteria requirements and command verbs
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- assessment criteria (AC)
- instructions for conducting examinations.

It is important to note that learners should not sit the external assessment until they have taken part in the relevant teaching of the full qualification content.

Grade achievements

Grade	NYA	P	M	D	Learners	21
% of learners	52.38	23.81	14.29	9.52	Pass rate	47.62

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with [JCQs Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#). Learners may require additional pre-release material to complete the tasks within the paper. These must be provided to learners in line with our regulations.

Learners must be given the resources to carry out the tasks, and these are highlighted within the [Qualification Specific Instructions for Delivery](#) (QSID) document.

Standard of learner work

- The standard of learner work varied, both in the breadth and depth of answers. Some learners did not use the full word allocation yet still attempted every criterion; this affected the depth of their answers and sometimes meant they did not achieve the demands of the command verb of describe, discuss, or explain.
- Some learners did not complete every element of each criterion, affecting their overall marks. For example, the P3 criteria requires learners to describe a legislation, policy, or procedure and how they safeguard individuals in relation to empowering service users. Some learners described a policy or procedure, explaining what it is, but not stating how they safeguard individuals in relation to empowerment, which meant they could not meet this criterion.
- Many learners achieved some or all the pass criteria. Where learners did not achieve some of the pass criteria it was generally because they only attempted part of the requirements, typically not following the bold text in the grade criteria explanations.

Assessment structure

- Learners are required to follow the assessment structure, addressing in turn all the pass criteria, followed by the merit and distinction. All learners took this approach.
- Learners must organise their responses to the criteria logically and identify the criteria that they are referring to.
- Where learners completed quotations in emboldened text, this supported their writing as quotations were clearly visible to them when checking and proof reading.

Use of word allocation

- Some learners submitted work which utilised less than half of the allowed word count. Although they still attempted to address all criteria, they were generally not successful, as by only utilising part of the word count available learners did not provide depth or breadth in their answers.
- In contrast, learners who achieved higher outcomes made effective use of the full 1500-word allocation, this enabled them to demonstrate more detailed discussions and explanations, ensuring they had related this back to empowering individuals or relating back to how this related to an element in the explanation.
- Some candidates made effective use of their word counts overall using the full amount. They could further improve by applying the command verbs more effectively, for example, P1 does not require description but explanation, which can be more succinct.

Criteria requirements and command verbs

- Learners should be strongly encouraged to engage thoroughly with the grading criteria and accompanying explanations. Doing so will support their understanding of what is required for each task and ensure they are able to address all necessary elements to meet the assessment expectations effectively.
- M1 is an example, learners must “discuss” two impacts of advocacy but also relate this to the title in order to achieve the criterion, some learners explained what advocacy is, discussed two impacts of advocacy, but did not relate this back to empowering service users.

- Empowerment was generally understood although not fully applied throughout in some cases. Learners should ensure they read the grade criteria explanation fully and underline key words to ensure they complete all the aspects of the criteria.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

- Centres should remind learners that blogs and Wikipedia are not suitable academic sources for quotations, and learners should not use essay writing sites.
- Centres are advised to be reminded of the [Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) in assessments](#) webpage.
- Learners who achieved all quotation and reference criteria had emboldened their quotations; this appears to be an effective way to ensure these criteria are present in each grade boundary and have been met when learners proofread their work.
- Sources should be underneath quotations, so they are identifiable.
- Quotations should be in the body of the work, not separate as an isolated P5, M4 or D2.

Assessment criteria (AC)

P Criteria

P1

- Many learners successfully explained the expected development or wellbeing of a chosen individual in a specific life stage and related this to the title of empowering service users.
- Where learners did not achieve the criterion, they tended to focus on isolated aspects of development without clearly linking their points back to the overarching theme of empowering service users. Learners should be reminded to refer to the criteria linking this back to the theme.

P2

- Some learners did not name a health and social care practitioner; they described a generic role combining several practitioners' responsibilities.
- Some learners did not describe any kind of monitoring of care needs which prevented them from gaining the mark.
- To achieve this criterion learners must name a health care professional and describe their monitoring of the care needs in relation to the title.
- Learners who successfully achieved this grade, named a health care practitioner, described how the practitioner would monitor the care needs, what they would do, and related back to the title and the care needs.

P3

- Many learners named 2 policies, procedures or pieces of legislation and described these in relation to safeguarding which secured the criteria.
- When learners did not achieve the criterion, it was usually because they described policies or procedures but failed to link their response to safeguarding.

- In some cases, P3 was not achieved because candidates either failed to include two examples, did not fully explain how legislation and policy safeguard individuals, or did not link this to empowering service users.

P4

- This criterion was answered well in many cases with candidates able to link how campaigns can empower people with knowledge and motivation.
- Some students successfully explained the role of health education campaigns, some students failed to link their chosen campaign back to the theme of empowerment.

P5

- Quotations should be embedded in the learner's work, this enables them to support the development of their writing, they should not appear as isolated quotations at the end of the submitted work.

M Criteria**M1**

- Learners are required to discuss the impact of advocacy and provide two examples to support their explanation. Some learners did not address the impact, which meant they were unable to achieve the criterion.

M2

- Successful learners clarified what informed planning is in relation to empowerment, often providing examples to demonstrate how planning supported empowerment.

M3

- To achieve this criterion learners must discuss how the application of reflection supports effective practice. Explaining what reflective practice is does not meet the requirement.
- Reflective practice tended in some cases to be general rather than specifically linked to the theme of empowerment.

M4

- Quotations should be embedded in the learner's work, this enables them to support the development of the learners writing, they should not appear as isolated quotations at the end of the submitted work.

D Criteria**D1**

- Successful learners clearly stated their chosen life stage at the beginning of their response before analysing the role of health education in promoting healthy lifestyle choices.
- Some learners did not identify a life stage at all, which limited their ability to meet the requirements of the criterion.

- Some learners tended to repeat P4 in approach rather than looking at health education, which is different to health promotion campaigns.

D2

- Quotations should be seamlessly embedded within the learner's work to strengthen and support their written analysis. They should not be presented as standalone or isolated quotations at the end of the submission.

Instructions for conducting examinations.

Malpractice

There were zero instances of malpractice in this assessment window. The chief examiner would like to take this opportunity to advise learners that instances of malpractice (for example, copying of work from another learner) will affect the outcome on the assessment.

Maladministration

There were zero instances of maladministration in this assessment window. The chief examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the JCQ [Instructions for Conducting Examinations \(ICE\)](#) in this respect.

Chief examiner: Clare Scott

Date: 07 April 2026