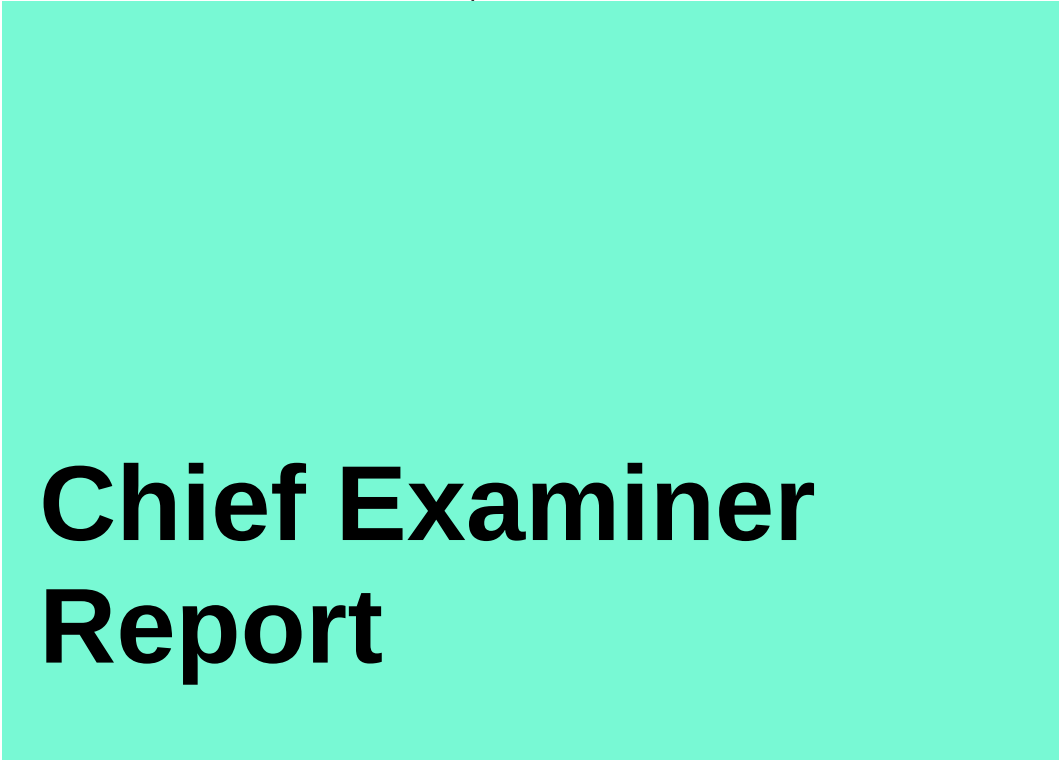




Chief Examiner Report

**T Level Technical Qualification
in Healthcare Science
QN: 603/7083/X**

**Summer 2025 – employer set project
(ESP) Optical Care Services**

Introduction

Summer 2025 – employer set project (ESP) Optical Care Services

Assessment dates: **6 May 2025 to 16 May 2025**

Paper number: **P002794**

This report contains information in relation to the externally assessed component provided by the chief examiner, with an emphasis on the standard of student work within this assessment.

The report is written for providers, with the aim of highlighting how students have performed generally, as well as any areas where further development or guidance may be required to support preparation for future opportunities.

Key points:

- grade boundaries
- standard of student work
- evidence creation
- responses to the external assessment tasks
- administering the external assessment

It is important to note that students should not sit this external assessment until they have received the relevant teaching of the qualification in relation to this component.

Grade boundaries

Raw mark grade boundaries for the series are:

	Overall
Max	96
A*	84
A	73
B	62 to 72
C	51 to 61
D	41 to 50
E	31 to 40

Grade boundaries are the lowest mark with which a grade is achieved.

For further detail on how raw marks are converted to uniform mark scale (UMS), and the aggregation of the core component, please refer to the Qualification Specification.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment is invigilated and must be conducted in line with our [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment](#) document. Students may require additional pre-release material to complete the tasks. These must be provided to students in line with our regulations.

Students 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 student work

This was the first cohort for this ESP. Although the cohort size was small, we saw a spread of marks from 35 to 64. This spread of marks is the same as we saw for the other ESP on the T-Level Healthcare Science.

This first scenario was deemed suitable and accessible; going through the same development stages as other ESPs.

Despite this being the first cohort, the average marks achieved in each task were very close to those achieved on the other (more established) ESP in Healthcare Science. This is encouraging, as sometimes with a new cohort can lead to underperformance, which was not the case here.

Evidence creation

During this session, there were no instances of missing evidence. The use of RM and reorganisations of the teams at NCFE have made it easier.

As most of the evidence was typed, there were no issues in reading the submitted work. For some of the Task 3 proformas, they were handwritten, which limited the amount some students wrote, with some more challenging to read than others.

Task 4 (b) was the presentation and this was submitted as MP4s, which is the preferred format, as it is good to see the students presenting. Care must be taken to ensure that the student is near the microphone, so that they are not drowned out by the sound of the tutor shuffling papers or typing.

There are further task-specific comments in the next section.

Responses to the external assessment tasks

Task 1: research / literature review

This task carried 20 marks, as well as four marks for the use of English.

All students were given the same case study and web links to use.

We saw a wide range of submissions, from some as little as two pages, to others managing to submit many more pages.

The students who scored higher for this task demonstrated good use of the resources available and were able to demonstrate that they could link the online resources to the specific case that is, not just comment on what they had read but think about how it related to the case. They were also aware that some online sources were of higher quality than others.

We saw some students structuring their literature review, with a defined introduction and conclusion, as well as grouping ideas. However, some students spent time creating tables of data, but usually this was simply replicating what had already been given to them in the task brief. This was not good use of their time, especially when many did not go on to comment what the table told them.

Students who scored lower marks often had poor structure to their report, did not draw conclusions specific to the case, made limited use of the links provided or typed a lot of background information that did not score them marks, for example, repeating sections from the case study documentation that wasted their time.

The number of students who were not able to reference properly was also noticeable. This includes not producing a correct reference list at the end of the sources they had used. This is an area providers can work on.

Task 2: quality improvement report

This task carried 20 marks, as well as four marks for the use of English, two marks for mathematics and three marks for digital skills.

We saw most students use the proforma. However, some students struggled to provide enough information on the proforma, for example, just writing one sentence for some of the bullet points. When students expanded on the suggested points and contextualised them to the given case study, they scored higher marks, particularly around the AO3 skills. An example of this would be 'staff training' where some students added detail about what would be covered, why, how it will be delivered, how to ensure compliance and understanding, as well as a timeframe for production and delivery.

The sections later in the proforma were generally answered very briefly and only with generic answers, rather than referring to the case.

We did see some students achieve band 4 responses, which is encouraging. These responses usually had more detail around what the required improvements to the SOP needed to be and explained the importance of each change.

For the additional marks, all students gained some of the English marks. Also, we did not see many students achieving the marks for mathematics and digital skills, despite them showing these skills in Task 1. This is a shame as there are up to nine marks available, so it can make the difference in a student's final grade.

I will remind providers of the signature boxes at the end of Task 2. We saw some providers submitting evidence with many of these boxes blank, despite the reminder on the proforma. 'The tutor **must** sign this piece of work for the purpose of validation'.

Task 3: quality improvement report V2

Many students gave very little detail to their responses for suggested changes, with no reflection and only simple justifications for changes (or not). Therefore, we did not see any students reaching band 3, as there was little evidence of effectively evaluating the feedback; most just accepted the peer feedback. This top band also requires critical reflection. Those who handwrote their Task 3 tended to give shorter answers than those who typed them.

Task 4 (b): presentation

This task carried 16 marks, as well as two marks for digital skills.

Listening to the students talking about their work was great, and it was good to see some overcoming their nerves, becoming more confident as they started talking.

Those who scored higher bands for this task put more thought into structuring their presentations, demonstrating their excellent knowledge and understanding of the project and referring to the literature

to back up their suggestions for improvement. Some students gained more marks due to the detail they gave, for example, training: what should staff be trained on, method(s), how often, by whom, how to check understanding.

Task 4 (b) also had two marks available for digital skills. These marks were straightforward to award when evidence was provided (for example, presentation slides) and most students were able to achieve both marks. These can be submitted as a PowerPoint, but also as a PDF, if providers would find that easier.

Task 5: reflection

This task carried 16 marks (no additional marks for English, mathematics or digital skills).

Many students struggled to score high marks for this task, which is a higher skill and may be more difficult for some younger students. Gibbs would be a good introduction to this.

For many students, the proforma was the only evidence submitted for Task 5, with no written reflective statement. The provider guide states the form is optional 'to help them structure their reflections'.

Very few students made reference to a reflective cycle, although the Gibbs reflective cycle was the one used by some students, but not always followed in full.

We still saw many students being very descriptive and writing what they did task-by-task, rather than following a reflective cycle.

Where the written reflection was structured to follow a reflective cycle, students achieved higher marks.

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