

**NCFE**

**CACHE**

# Chief Examiner Report

**NCFE CACHE Level 3 Applied General Award for  
Early Years, Childcare and Education  
QN: 603/2987/7**

**Assessment code: AGAEYCE**

**Paper number: P002650**

**Assessment date: 5 June 2025**

## 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.

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

Key points:

- grade boundary and achievement information
- administering the external assessment
- evidence creation
- standard of learner work
- responses of the tasks within the sections of the external assessment paper
- regulations for the conduct of external assessment.

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 boundary and achievement information

Each learner's external assessment paper is marked by an examiner and awarded a raw mark. During the awarding process, a combination of statistical analysis and professional judgement is used to establish the raw marks that represent the minimum required standard to achieve each grade. These raw marks are outlined in the table below.

Grade	NYA	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Raw mark grade boundaries	0-34	35	47	60

Below you will find the percentage of learners that achieved each grade.

Grade	NYA	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Learners	125
% of learners	6.40%	16.80%	34.40%	42.40%	Pass rate	93.60%

## 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. Learners may require additional pre-release material in order 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.

## Evidence creation

Learners should use the space provided to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, the learner's name, centre number, centre name and task number must be clearly visible. The additional paper must then be securely attached to the workbook.

## Standard of learner work

Learners demonstrated strong preparation for the assessment. The majority attempted all questions and successfully achieved higher-level marks. They performed particularly well on questions that required them to describe 'what' or 'how' tasks should be completed. In previous assessments, learners often struggled with questions requiring detailed assessment or discussion for higher-level responses, but there was a notable improvement in this area in the current paper.

Learners were able to apply command verbs effectively and develop their responses with greater depth overall. Supporting learners in tackling the demands of extended-response questions has a positive impact on their overall performance.

It is important that learners read the case study thoroughly before answering and continue to refer to it throughout their responses, ensuring their answers remain focused and relevant.

## Responses of the tasks within the sections of the external assessment paper

### Question 1

Most learners accurately identified two examples of voluntary childcare provision. Clubs, after-school care, and sports activities were not accepted as valid examples, as these generally incur a cost. Furthermore, the question specifically related to voluntary childcare provision that Ava's nanny could take her to when she is not at nursery. It is important to note that Ava is only 2 years and 6 months old.

### Question 2 (a)

Many learners gave the example of a day nursery, which was already identified in the question stem and therefore could only be awarded one mark. Others identified private schools or youth facilities, which are not considered forms of private childcare.

**Question 2 (b)**

Many learners were able to describe that private childcare provision is usually flexible, often offering longer opening hours that suit working parents. However, some learners made generic comments that could apply to any type of childcare provision.

**Question 3**

Most learners were able to identify three ways to maintain confidentiality; however, some repeated their responses by rewording the same example.

**Question 4**

Most learners attempted to explain one reason why it is important for Tom to be aware of his boundaries and limitations within his role; however, some missed the opportunity to link their response specifically to Tom's role within the setting.

**Question 5**

There were some relevant explanations of the importance of a childcare practitioner being observant while caring for children, for example, to identify developmental milestones, recognise children's needs, and plan their next steps.

**Question 6 (a)**

Most learners could accurately identify three factors that support effective teamwork.

**Question 6 (b)**

There were some detailed and relevant discussions about how effective teamwork supports children's individual needs. However, some learners discussed teamwork with parents or carers and therefore lost marks, as the question was an extension of Question 6 (a) and specifically related to teamwork between practitioners and colleagues.

**Question 7**

Again, there were some detailed and relevant discussions, with good application of knowledge, on the reasons why maintaining professional partnerships with parents is important.

**Question 8**

Many learners were able to assess the importance of a child-centred approach in supporting children's care and learning. However, some lost focus on the child-centred approach, often describing what it means rather than applying the command verb 'assess'. Positive examples included planning around the child's needs to support holistic development, enabling practitioners to understand the child's interests and plan activities that promote engagement and motivation.

**Question 9**

There were strong discussions on the reasons why Tom should engage in continuing professional development (CPD), demonstrating excellent knowledge and understanding. Higher marks were awarded when clear examples were provided and expanded upon – for example, CPD develops Tom's professional competence and expertise, ensuring he can respond to children's needs in line with policies and procedures. Some responses, however, were vague, underdeveloped, and repetitive, which limited the marks awarded.

**Question 10**

Some learners were able to explain two benefits of using the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) strategy for CPD, providing relevant examples. However, some learners simply guessed, which limited the marks awarded, while others chose not to answer the question, resulting in an NR (no response).

**Question 11**

Some learners gave clear descriptions of how Gibbs' reflective cycle can support Tom in his practice, but many confused Gibbs with Schön, describing reflection in and on practice.

**Question 12 (a)**

Some learners were able to identify four key milestones of cognitive development. Marks were awarded for examples related to memory and recall, problem solving, symbolic thinking, critical thinking, and attention. However, some learners identified milestones related to physical or social and emotional development, while others listed activities instead.

**Question 12 (b)**

Learners struggled to describe two ways cognitive development is interconnected with other areas of development. For example, cognitive development is linked to social and emotional development, enabling children to understand their own and others' emotions. This understanding helps children manage their feelings, co-operate with others, and build relationships. Many links were often loose and disconnected.

**Question 13**

The majority of learners were able to identify three key influences on early brain development.

**Question 14**

Most learners provided relevant evaluations of ways Tom could support Ava in meeting her expected milestones for social and emotional development. For example, they made links between how Tom could plan activities and experiences around Ava's interests to engage her in play with others, helping her learn to share and build positive relationships with her peers. However, some responses were brief or focused on what Ava's parents or other professionals could do to support her, which did not address the question.

**Question 15**

There were some detailed discussions about how both biological and environmental factors can impact social and emotional development. Most learners made a good attempt at this question. Higher marks were awarded to responses that demonstrated clear knowledge and understanding through well-developed discussion.

**Question 16 (a)**

Most learners correctly identified three child development theorists. However, some learners named theorists related to reflective practice rather than child development, so marks could not be awarded for these responses.

**Question 16 (b)**

Most learners could describe an approach from one theoretical perspective on child development.

**Question 17 (a)**

Learners were able to define the term 'attachment'.

**Question 17 (b)**

Many learners were further able to describe one factor affecting attachment in children.

**Question 18**

Most learners were able to provide three clear impacts of resilience on a child's holistic development. For example, resilience helps children develop problem solving skills, confidence, and self-esteem.

## Regulations for the Conduct of External assessment

### Malpractice

There were zero instances of malpractice in this assessment. 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 reported in this assessment. The chief examiner would like to highlight the importance of adhering to the Regulations for the Conduct of External assessment document in this respect.

**Chief examiner: Emma McCormick**

**Date: 8 July 2025**

