

# T Level Technical Qualification in Science

Employer-set project (ESP)

**Core skills**

All briefs

Provider guide

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## T Level Technical Qualification in Science

### Employer-set project (ESP)

# Core skills

## Provider guide

All briefs

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## Document security

Please do not distribute this document to students; it is for provider and tutor use only. All tutors must be familiar with the information in this document. This document should always be kept secure.

This document should be read along with the regulations for conduct of external assessment. Assessment conditions and resources are defined in the qualification specific instructions for delivery (QSID). These documents can be found on the NCFE website under policies and documents.

SAMPLE

## About the employer-set project

The purpose of the employer-set project (ESP) is to ensure that students are given the opportunity to apply core knowledge and skills to develop a substantial piece of work in response to an employer-set brief. The brief and tasks are contextualised around an occupational area, requiring students to plan a scientific project.

To achieve the assessment objectives and meet the brief, you must demonstrate the following core skills (CS):

CS1: Project management: to include independently producing a high-level project plan taking into account: timing of activities, resource and financial considerations, adherence to health and safety and the maintenance of quality outcomes

CS2: Researching: from independently identified sources including scientific literature and other appropriate sources, prior to the project commencement and referencing these sources appropriately

CS3: Working with others: for example, to ensure that any scientific techniques meet all safety, health and environmental requirements

CS4: Creativity and innovation: within a science context to improve practice, processes, and outcomes

CS5: Problem solving: within a science context and where appropriate making use of new technologies to solve problems

CS6: Communication: for example, providing results and recommendations in appropriate formats to clients and wider stakeholders which take into consideration 'business benefits' or show commercial awareness in a variety of formats including written reports and verbal presentations

CS7: Reflective evaluation: to be able to make improvements to own practice, for example having completed a task, reviewing and suggesting improvements and consideration of lessons learnt for own professional development

The knowledge requirements will be taken from the core knowledge relevant to the brief; the briefs will change for each assessment window.

## Administering the external assessment

The maximum overall time allowed for the external assessment is 18 hours under supervised conditions.

NCFE sets the start date and the submission date of the assessment window for the external assessment task. External assessment material should not be given to students until the first supervised assessment session.

The assessment window will consist of provider-arranged supervised sessions of the external assessment. Sessions can be undertaken in the normal classroom environment, so long as each student has access to, or the option to, use a computer system. Providers can decide how to arrange supervised sessions. Providers must submit students' completed assessment work by the published submission date.

When preparing to start a supervised session, the time taken to provide work from previous sessions (where required), print work from previous sessions (where required) and upload work (where required), is not included as part of the permitted external assessment time.

At any time, NCFE may request the timetable that providers have set for the supervised sessions.

The permitted time must not be increased, unless a reasonable adjustment has been agreed for a student in accordance with the reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy, which can be found on the NCFE website.

The permitted time must not be decreased. Students must be given the opportunity to complete the full amount of time for the external assessment task - providers must take this into account when timetabling the session.

## Marking the external assessment task

All external assessment tasks are set and marked by NCFE. This means that providers must not assess, internally quality assure or provide any feedback to the student about their performance in the external assessment tasks. The supervised external assessment tasks must be treated independently of the teaching of the outline content.

In order to achieve a grade for the core component, the student must attempt both external examinations and the employer-set project (ESP). The combined grades from these assessments will be aggregated to form the overall core component grade (A\* to E and U). If students do not attempt one of the assessments, or they fail to reach the minimum standard across all assessments, they will receive a U grade. The student will have the option to resit the relevant components.

# Instructions for tutors

## Assessment conditions

Students must complete the employer-set project (ESP) independently and under supervised conditions, following the specific guidance for each task outlined below.

Students and tutors are required to sign declarations of authenticity to confirm that the work is their/the student's own. The declaration forms can be found at [www.qualhub.co.uk](http://www.qualhub.co.uk). This is to ensure authenticity and to prevent potential malpractice and maladministration. Students must be made aware of the importance of this declaration and the impact this could have on their overall grade if the evidence was found not to be their own work.

At the end of each session, tutors must retain all materials and/or evidence produced by students within the supervised assessment.

At various times during the whole process students will be accessing a data base and laboratory information management system (LIMS) spreadsheet via a computer system, therefore, there must be sufficient monitoring and checks to ensure that students have not made materials available to themselves, or anyone else, electronically via the intranet or internet.

External assessment materials should be securely stored between supervised sessions. Students must not have access to this area between the supervised sessions, including electronic files. Where students require evidence from a previous task, this must be a duplicate to ensure no amendments are made to original work.

Work such as formative assessment, and/or work done with sample assessment materials, must not be used as part of the external assessment task submission to NCFE. Student work must be summative and produced during the arranged supervised assessment window.

It is a requirement of the delivery of this assessment that all student performances are audio-visually recorded for the purpose of moderation. It is the provider's responsibility to check that the appropriate audio-visual (AV) equipment is set up and fully operational at each station. The AV recording must clearly identify the students, capture all relevant actions and words from the student and be clear and of sufficient quality to be adequately reviewed by the moderator. Provider staff should be equipped to be able to operate the equipment sufficiently to capture all evidence. To ensure authenticity of the performance, the student's face must be clearly visible at the start of the recording.

Appendices should not be included and will not be marked unless specifically required from the task instructions.

Plagiarism may result in the external assessment task being awarded a U grade. For further guidance, refer to the student handbook - plagiarism in external assessment and the maladministration and malpractice policy located at [www.qualhub.co.uk](http://www.qualhub.co.uk).

## Resources

Each student must have access to the appropriate resources required to complete the ESP. These include the following:

- a computer, including a printer
- individual access to the NCFE CACHE provided source database
- individual access to LIMS spreadsheet
- A2 paper and a variety of coloured markers, glue, and scissors and/or IT software/applications to create poster (or parts of) for printing, and printing facilities - for task 4 only

This list is not exhaustive, and you need to refer to the qualification specification for subject specific details.

## Accessibility and fairness

To promote accessibility and fairness for all students, and to ensure diversity and equality, we expect providers to be aware of and meet the requirements of relevant NCFE policies and government legislation. You must ensure that:

- all your processes concerned with assessment are carried out in a fair and objective manner
- you continue to adhere to current equal opportunities legislation
- you continue to operate an effective diversity and equality policy, with which students are familiar and which applies to all students using our products and services



## Assessment and task specific instructions

For each assessment window, there will be 3 versions of the employer-set project (ESP) available for booking; each version is contextualised against the occupational specialisms relevant to the pathway. These 3 briefs will be set by employers in conjunction with NCFE and will be different for each assessment window. The briefs are designed to ensure a motivating starting point for students and will be based on, for example, a real-world problem.

### Selection of brief

Students are required to discuss and agree with their tutor which of the following occupational-based briefs they would like to take forward for their ESP:

- Laboratory Sciences
- Food Sciences
- Metrology Sciences

The provider must book students onto the appropriate version of the ESP by the deadline for that specific assessment series as indicated below:

Assessment series	Student booking deadline
TBC	TBC
TBC	TBC
TBC	TBC
TBC	TBC

Bookings will be made on the NCFE portal, and guidance can be found in the portal handbook.

The selection and registration of the student to the appropriate brief must be agreed ahead of the deadline outlined in the tutor guidance document. Whilst it is recommended that a student selects the brief that is relevant to their intended occupational specialism, it is not a requirement that the student makes a decision based on this, or any other specific given criteria.

## Task 1

Task 1 requires students to access an NCFE CACHE provided database containing a variety of sources to produce a literature review, which will enable them to produce a plan during task 2.

Students are required to work independently, under supervised conditions.

Students must complete this task within 3 hours and manage how they will spend their time, using the task 1 guidance.

Students will be given an additional 30 minutes to complete their project diary which will facilitate the completion of task 6. The project diary will not be assessed.

**Note: The literature review that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 1 student guidance
- computer access
- internet access provided for literature database links only
- access to NCFE CACHE provided database
- their project diary

## Task 2

Task 2 requires students to use their literature review from task 1 to produce a plan to investigate an issue as described in the brief. Each occupational specialism will have their own specific issue. They will need to consider the types of literature available and suitability of each source to determine the most suitable method for the problem.

Students are required to work independently, under supervised conditions.

Students must complete this task within 3 hours and manage how they will spend their time, using the task 2 guidance.

They will be given an additional 30 minutes to complete their project diary which will facilitate the completion of task 6.

**Note: The plan that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 2 student guidance
- access to NCFE CACHE provided database
- their literature review from task 1
- internet access provided for literature database links only
- their project diary
- risk assessment template
- risk matrix

## Task 3

Task 3 requires students to access an NCFE provided LIMS spreadsheet providing data from organisations which have carried out similar research.

The students will need to review and analyse the data, applying any statistical techniques they feel are appropriate to produce and justify conclusions for the scientific investigation, taking into account any limitations of the data.

Students are required to work independently, under supervised conditions.

Students must complete this task within 3 hours and manage how they will spend their time using the task 3 guidance.

They will be given an additional 30 minutes to complete their project diary which will facilitate the completion of task 6.

**Note: The analysis that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 3 student guidance
- computer access
- access to NCFE CACHE provided LIMS spreadsheet
- their project diary

## Task 4(a)

Task 4(a) requires students to use their plan from task 2 and their analysis from task 3 to produce an A2 scientific poster, which they will use as the basis of a presentation to their tutor in task 4(b).

Students are required to work independently under supervised conditions.

Students are free to use ICT based methods to produce their poster, hand write/draw it, or a combination.

Students must complete this task within 3 hours and manage how they will spend their time using the task 4 guidance.

**Note: The A2 scientific poster that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 4 student guidance
- computer and printer access
- access to NCFE provided LIMS spreadsheet
- their analysis from task 3
- A2 paper, various coloured markers, scissors, and glue and/or IT software/applications to create poster (or parts of) for printing, and printing facilities
- their project diary

## Task 4(b)

Task 4(b) requires the student to present their poster to their tutor. The tutor may ask questions to clarify any aspect of the presentation, or to fill in any gaps in the student presentation. It is essential that the tutor reads the guidance and completes the assessment sheet for tutor questions before the presentation.

Task 4(b) must be completed under supervised conditions with the presentation recorded.

Each student has up to 1 hour to complete this task. It is likely that the presentation and any tutor questions will take a much shorter time, however, the hour provides time for the student to rehearse if they wish. If the student chooses to rehearse their presentation, this must be done independently without anyone else present.

The student must complete the presentation, respond to any tutor questioning and optional rehearsal within 1 hour, and manage their time using the task 4 guidance.

They will be given an additional 30 minutes to complete their project diary which will facilitate the completion of task 6.

**Note: The presentation that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 4 instructions
- their A2 scientific poster
- their project diary

### Tutor resources required

Assessment sheet for tutor questions.

Video recording equipment.

## Task 5

Task 5 requires students to have a discussion with their peers about an issue raised, via email, from the concerns of a consumer group regarding alternative resources. Tutors are **not** permitted to lead, prompt or contribute to the discussion.

The student is required to work with their research team to discuss the concerns the consumer group have raised and how it would be best to respond. They will need to refer to their research notes to contribute effectively to the discussion and take notes during the team discussion of the points and suggestions made. It is suggested 10 minutes are given to this at the start of the discussion.

Each group member will then take it in turns to make suggestions and to agree an approach. It is suggested that groups consist of a maximum of 3 individuals to allow sufficient time for discussion in a maximum of 30 minutes (10 minutes per individual); this will allow ample time for individuals to give their opinion and respond to others.

Following the discussion, students will need to (individually) draft an email to the consumer group to respond to the concerns raised. The email is to be hand-written on paper provided by the assessment provider, and the students name and reference number is to be included for submitting as evidence. Usual exam conditions apply during this part of the task (max 20 minutes).

There is an overall time limit of 1 hour for this task. In this time, students will:

- be asked to read the email from the consumer group in their groups
- be given 10 minutes to familiarise themselves with their literature review, their plan, their data analysis, and scientific poster
- discuss their suggestions for responding to the consumer group
- draft an email to the consumer group to respond to the concerns raised

**Note: The group discussion and email that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

## Student resources required

- their literature review (task 1)
- their plan (task 2)
- their data analysis and report (task 3)
- their A2 Scientific poster and its presentation (task 4)
- Computer access (no internet)

## Tutor resources required

Assessment sheet for tutor commentary.

Video recording equipment.

## Task 6

Task 6 requires the student to produce a written reflective evaluation of the scientific project carried out during the previous tasks.

Students are required to work independently, under supervised conditions.

Students must complete this task within 2 hours and manage how they will spend their time using the task 6 guidance.

**Note: The reflective evaluation that the student produces will be externally assessed by NCFE.**

### Student resources required

- ESP brief and task 5 student guidance
- their literature review (task 1)
- their plan (task 2)
- their data analysis and report (task 3)
- their scientific poster (task 4)
- their project diary
- access to the NCFE CACHE provided database and the NCFE CACHE provided LIMS spreadsheet
- reflective evaluation template
- internet access provided for literature database links only

### Timings

The timings below have been devised to support student and provider planning.

Task 1: 3 hours 30 minutes

Task 2: 3 hours 30 minutes

Task 3: 3 hours 30 minutes

Task 4(a): 3 hours

Task 4(b): 1 hour 30 minutes

Task 5: 1 hour

Task 6: 2 hours

Total: 18 hours (inclusive of 2 hours for project diary)



## Instructions for completing and submitting the external assessment task

The external assessment tasks must be completed and uploaded as a whole and not in separate sections. The submission of students' assessment evidence must be done by the submission date specified for the assessment window. Tutors are encouraged to ensure that students follow the filename conventions specified in the external assessment tasks for each individual document. These files, per student, should be placed within a single folder before being zipped and submitted.

Students must respond to each task individually and follow the document structure when submitting their evidence, as per the evidence requirements section within each task. They must not combine responses for separate tasks.

SAMPLE

# Appendices

## Tutor assessment sheet task 4(b)

The tutor will observe the presentation, and from their observations they will complete the e assessment sheet for tutor questions form shown below. This form is used to record any questions they ask and the student's answers.

**Note: This must be submitted along with the student's work.**

### Questions

It may be necessary for the tutor to ask the student questions at some point during the presentation. The need for questions will arise if:

- further clarification is required of any aspect of the presentation
- any aspect of the presentation is missing - for example, any aspect of the strategy or conclusions

Any question should simply aim to clarify any area which is unclear from the presentation, or to elicit from the student a missing piece of information. Questions which guide or lead the student to an answer are not permissible.

### Examples of permissible questions

- when you were presenting your strategy, can you clarify what you meant by X, as I did not find this clear?
- you have presented a conclusion, but you have not explained what you based your conclusion on - can you explain the basis for your conclusion?

### Examples of questions which are not permissible

- when you were presenting your strategy and you said X, did you mean Y?
- can you give me an example of a trend or pattern which you based your conclusion on?

#### Assessment sheet for tutor questions

Mark X if the tutor does not need to ask questions.	For example: X
Record tutor questions when needing to clarify parts of the presentation, or to elicit information from the student that has not been provided.	For example, can you clarify what you meant by X?
Record the outcome of any tutor questions, this can be a summary of the student's response, and whether they answered the question effectively.	For example, Student (name) gave details of Y which clarified their point. OR Student (name) was unable to provide a logical clarification of their point.

# Templates

## Template for task 1: research a strategy

State selected referencing technique

Technique:	
------------	--

Sources selected to inform planning

Title of source	Justification

Sources not selected to inform planning

Title of source	Justification

Additional information you may wish to include

## Template for task 2: risk matrix

Risk matrix- evaluation of risks							Action level
Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25	20-25 STOP
Highly likely	4	4	8	12	16	20	
Likely	3	3	6	9	12	15	12-16 URGENT
Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10	8-10 ACTION
Extremely Improbable	1	1	2	3	4	5	4-6 MONITOR
	X	1	2	3	4	5	1-3 NO ACTION
		Minimal	Minor injury	7 day + injury	Serious or major injury	Severe	
			Consequence				

## Template for task 2: risk assessment form

<b>Person carrying out risk assessment:</b>					
<b>Person(s) responsible on site:</b>					
<b>Venue:</b>					
<b>Work activity:</b>					
<b>Date of assessment:</b>					

Those at risk	Key
<b>Own staff</b>	OWN
<b>Venue staff</b>	VEN
<b>Organisers</b>	ORG
<b>Visitors</b>	VIS
<b>Public</b>	PUB
<b>Contractors</b>	CON
<b>All persons onsite</b>	AOS

Please read the guidelines prior to completing your risk assessment

Section 1

Hazard	Who might be harmed? (see those at risk, above)	Likelihood	Severity	Total risk level	Control measures (add any other control measures you will use)	Likelihood	Severity	Res. risk level

Hazard	Who might be harmed? (see those at risk, above)	Likelihood	Severity	Total risk level	Control measures (add any other control measures you will use)	Likelihood	Severity	Res. risk level

By signing the declaration below you have agreed that you will put the appropriate control measures in place to ensure that hazards are reduced and that the risks applicable to your stand are controlled.

<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Print name</b>	
<b>Review date</b>	

## Template for task 5: group discussion

### Tutor commentary for group discussion

Attribute		Participant					
No.	Outline	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Demonstrated engagement throughout						
2	Demonstrated a comprehensive breadth and depth of knowledge relevant to the discussion, when asking questions						
3	Demonstrated a comprehensive breadth and depth of knowledge relevant to the discussion, in answering questions of others,						
4	raised well-informed points and arguments						
5	Articulated using clear language						
6	Checked on others understanding						
7	Listened to other ideas and opinions respectfully						
8	reflected or built on others ideas in their own responses						
9	Collaborated with others to reach an appropriate and relevant solution.						
	Total						



## Template for task 6: reflective evaluation

### Task 1

Brief summary of approach to task 1	Description of adaptations to task 1 with justification

### Task 2

Brief summary of approach to task 2	Description of adaptations to task 2 with justification

### Task 3

Brief summary of approach to task 3	Description of adaptations to task 3 with justification

## Task 4

Brief summary of approach to task 4	Description of adaptations to task 4 with justification

# Mark scheme

## Task 1: research a strategy

### AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor The student has:
4	10–12	<p>Produced a literature review that includes a balanced and well-justified rationale for the selection, prioritisation, and rejection of a wide range of sources with detailed reference to all the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to the required investigation</li> <li>• reliability, such as from recognised and trusted scientific publications</li> <li>• availability of quantitative data</li> <li>• the strategies used in the literature in relation to what could be used in the setting</li> </ul>
3	7–9	<p>Produced a literature review that includes a credible explanation for the selection and rejection of a range of sources with reference to all the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to the required investigation</li> <li>• reliability, such as from recognised and trusted scientific publications</li> <li>• availability of quantitative data</li> <li>• the strategies used in the literature in relation to what could be used in the setting</li> </ul>
2	4–6	<p>Produced a literature review that describes some of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to the required investigation</li> <li>• reliability, such as from recognised and trusted scientific publications</li> <li>• the strategies used in the literature in relation to what could be used in the setting</li> </ul>
1	1–3	<p>Produced a literature review that identifies some of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevance to the required investigation</li> <li>• reliability, such as from recognised and trusted scientific publications</li> <li>• references to the availability of quantitative data or the strategies used in the literature in relation to what could be used in the setting will be limited or absent</li> </ul>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	Correctly referenced all quotes and articles in their literature review using a recognised academic referencing technique, for example, Harvard referencing, and stating the referencing technique used. A wide range of sources are referenced.
2	3–4	Referenced most quotes and articles in their literature review using a recognised academic referencing technique, for example, Harvard referencing, and stating the system used. A range of sources are referenced.
1	1–2	Referenced some quotes and articles in their literature review without using a clearly recognised academic referencing technique.
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO4: Use English, mathematics and digital skills as appropriate

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	4	Communicated all aspects of the literature review with excellent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly and effectively throughout, using appropriate professional tone as expected for a literature review. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is excellent with no errors.
3	3	Communicated most aspects of the literature review with a well-developed use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly and coherently throughout the review, using appropriate professional tone as expected for a literature review. There is a good use of scientific/technical terminology and language with minimal errors.
2	2	Communicated most aspects of the literature review with inconsistent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation throughout the review, conveying the required meanings overall, although may lack some clarity and conciseness. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is sound but contains some errors.
1	1	Communicated most aspects of the literature review with simplistic use of English at level 1 or below throughout the review. There may be some errors which do not affect meaning or coherence. The use of scientific/technical terminology and language is minimal and includes some errors.
0	0	No creditworthy material, SPaG or structure makes most or all the literature review difficult to understand for the reader.

## Task 2: plan a project

### AO1: Plan an approach to meeting a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	10–12	<p>Produced a plan with clear aims that are entirely relevant to the project brief and used a wide range of sources selected in the literature review (as selected in the literature review) to determine the style and nature of the investigation.</p> <p>Set out the plan in logical, sequential steps which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are complete and sufficient to investigate the most economic use of methods and process</li> <li>are achievable in the timeframe</li> <li>address resource issues and monitoring</li> <li>are entirely relevant to its stated aims</li> </ul>
3	7–9	<p>Produced a complete plan with aim(s) that are relevant to the brief and based on the sources selected in the literature review (4–6 sources).</p> <p>Set out a plan that can be followed to investigate the most economic use of methods and processes, with details of timeframes, resources, and requirements for each step.</p>
2	4–6	<p>Produced a simple plan with aims, using information from the literature review.</p> <p>Set out several steps that are appropriate for the investigation. Described timescales and resources.</p>
1	1–3	<p>Produced a basic plan with some general aims unsupported by the literature review.</p> <p>Identifies some steps that are appropriate for the investigation.</p> <p>Attempted to give a timescale and/or indication of resources.</p>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor The student has:
3	9–12	Completed an extensive risk assessment, sufficient to cover and prioritise all risks which can reasonably be anticipated and describes their effective mitigation or management. Clearly explained risks involving others and does so correctly within the risk hierarchy (prioritisation).
2	5–8	Completed a straightforward risk assessment, sufficient to cover most risks, including some detail on their mitigation or management. Described key risk involving others with some understanding of risk hierarchy (prioritisation).
1	1–4	Completed a basic risk assessment, with identification of some risks and steps taken to manage them, but the management may not be entirely effective. Overall, the process is incomplete.
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO4: Use English, mathematics and digital skills as appropriate

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	4	Communicated all aspects of the risk assessment with excellent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly and effectively throughout, in a logical structure using appropriate professional tone as expected for a risk assessment. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is excellent with no errors.
3	3	Communicated most aspects of the risk assessment effectively with a well-developed use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly throughout, with a clear attempt at using a logical structure, using appropriate professional tone as expected for a risk assessment. There is a good use of scientific/technical terminology and language with minimal errors.
2	2	Communicated most aspects of the risk assessment with inconsistent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation throughout, conveying the required meanings overall, although lacking some clarity and conciseness. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is sound but contains some errors.
1	1	Communicated most aspects of the risk assessment with simplistic use of English at level 2 throughout. There may be some errors which do not affect meaning or coherence. The use of scientific/technical terminology and language is minimal and includes some errors.
0	0	No creditworthy material.

## AO5: Realise a scientific project outcome and review against the intended project aims

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	6–8	<p>Evaluated the types of data to be collected and the mechanisms of collection. The evaluation clearly addressed how the data and its collection mechanism will meet the needs of the targeted practical investigation, the constraints of the setting, and the timeframes. Data is sufficient in breadth, quantity and relevance to realise the stated project aims.</p> <p>Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>types of data: qualitative/quantitative, numerical/verbal, primary/secondary</li> </ul>
2	3–5	<p>Described the types of data to be collected and the mechanisms of collection, which meet the needs of the targeted practical investigation. Data is adequate in breadth, quantity, -and relevance to realise the stated project aims.</p> <p>Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>types of data: qualitative/quantitative, numerical/verbal, primary/secondary</li> </ul>
1	1–2	<p>Identified some of the data to be collected and its mechanism of collection, with some but limited consideration of practicability for the setting, or realistic timeframes. Data is adequate for some elements (breadth, quantity and relevance to realise the stated project aims). There is little differentiation of types of data.</p> <p>Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>types of data: qualitative/quantitative, numerical/verbal, primary/secondary</li> </ul>
0	0	No creditworthy material.



## Task 3: analysis of data

### AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	13–16	<p>With the scientific poster, the student has accurately presented all relevant and required data, demonstrating an excellent balance of data and information selected for presentation, including the outputs of their statistical analysis, with valid and relevant use of tables, charts and graphs.</p> <p>Chosen visualisation techniques that are appropriate and realistic for the data and the project aims, which add value to the analysis, enhancing readability and understanding.</p>
3	9–12	<p>With the scientific poster, the student has accurately presented most of the relevant and required data, selecting sufficient data and information for presentation, including the outputs of their statistical analysis, with valid use of tables, charts, and graphs.</p> <p>Chosen visualisation techniques that are realistic for the data and the project aims, some add value to the analysis, enhancing readability and/or understanding.</p>
2	5–8	<p>With the scientific poster, the student has presented most of the relevant and required data, including the outputs of their statistical analysis, with some valid use of tables, charts and/or graphs.</p> <p>Chosen visualisation techniques that support the project aims and add some value to the analysis, and that are readable.</p>
1	1–4	<p>With the scientific poster, the student has presented some of the required data with limited use of tables, charts or graphs, and where tables, charts and graphs are used, the choice of visualisation techniques only tentatively support the project aims or add limited value to the analysis.</p>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 4 to 1.

### AO3: Select relevant techniques and resources to meet the brief

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	Selected an appropriate statistical technique and used it correctly to produce valid outcomes that inform clearly expressed conclusions relevant to the project aims.
2	3–4	Selected a relevant statistical technique and used it to produce results that aided the student's conclusions.
1	1–2	Selected and used a statistical technique to produce results with a basic description of the analytical outcome that does not contribute to the student's conclusions.
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO4: Use English, mathematics and digital skills as appropriate

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	Communicated all aspects of the report clearly and effectively throughout, in a logical structure and with excellent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation which also supports the use of accurate technical and scientific language.
2	3–4	Communicated most aspects of the report effectively, with some attempt at a logical structure. Use of English grammar, spelling, punctuation and use of technical/scientific language supports understanding for the reader although is likely to have a number of minor errors (which do not impact on reader understanding).
1	1–2	Communicated some aspects of the report with little evidence of a structure. Use of level 1 English grammar, spelling, punctuation and use of technical/scientific language supports understanding of some parts of the report for the reader.
0	0	No creditworthy material, SPaG or structure makes most or all the literature review difficult to understand for the reader.

## AO5: Realise a scientific project outcome and review how well the outcome meets the brief

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	<p>Provided balanced and well-justified conclusions that explicitly link to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the trends and patterns shown in the data</li> <li>the implications of any outliers and/or potential anomalies</li> <li>the project aims</li> </ul> <p>Given a well-thought through explanation of the limitations of the data or the strategy with reference to the conclusions, addressing all elements (bulleted above) in a balanced way, such as with relevant and sufficient weight.</p>
2	3–4	Provided conclusions relevant to the trends and patterns shown in the data. Referred to the project aims with descriptions of limitations in data or strategy.
1	1–2	Provided a conclusion with some reference to the trends and patterns shown in the data, and with limited reference to the project aims.
0	0	No creditworthy material.

## Task 4: presentation of outcomes and conclusions

### AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	10–12	<p>Included on the A2 poster is a concise explanation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the investigation aims</li> <li>the investigation plan</li> <li>the results and their analysis</li> <li>the conclusions of the investigation</li> </ul> <p>All the important trends and patterns in the data are highlighted with tables, charts and graphs which are accurate, accessible, relevant, and drawn from the student's analysis.</p> <p><b>Indicative content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tables, charts, and graphs will include only a concise explanation of key trends and data and are not just be copied over from their analysis report, unless these are effective summaries for the purpose of this presentation task</li> <li>existing or new tables, graphs and charts may be printed and physically pasted onto their poster, or software may be used to create part, or all, of the poster</li> </ul>
3	7–9	<p>Included on the A2 poster is an explanation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the investigation aims</li> <li>the investigation plan</li> <li>the results and their analysis</li> <li>the conclusions of the investigation</li> </ul> <p>All the important trends and patterns in the data are highlighted with tables, charts and graphs which are accurate, accessible, relevant, and drawn from the student's analysis.</p> <p><b>Indicative content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tables, charts, and graphs on the poster will include accurate and relevant information, but may not always be in the form of a concise explanation, for example there may be some cluttered and/or long winded elements</li> <li>existing or new tables, graphs and charts may be printed and physically pasted onto their poster, or software may be used to create part or all the poster</li> </ul>

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
2	4-6	<p>Included on the A2 poster is a description of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the investigation aims</li> <li>the investigation plan</li> <li>the results and their analysis</li> <li>the conclusions of the investigation</li> </ul> <p>Most the important trends and patterns in the data are highlighted with tables, charts and graphs which are reasonably accurate, accessible, and drawn from the student's analysis.</p> <p><b>Indicative content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tables, charts, and graphs on the poster will include mostly accurate and accessible information, but may not always be relevant, for example it may have areas where it is unclear what conclusions are supported, or what points are being made</li> <li>existing or new tables, graphs, and charts may be printed and physically pasted onto their poster, or software may be used to create part, or all, of the poster</li> </ul>
1	1-3	<p>Listed on the A2 poster is some detail in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the investigation aims</li> <li>the investigation plan</li> <li>the results and their analysis</li> <li>the conclusions of the investigation</li> </ul> <p>The detail is limited with some key points missing, and where detail is provided, this may repeat or contradict already made points, descriptions, or conclusions.</p> <p><b>Indicative content:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tables and graphs, if used, may lack clarity - important material may be missing, and superfluous material may be included which does not contribute to the key points of the investigation or analysis; the student may fail to highlight key trends and patterns in the data</li> </ul>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

### AO3: Select relevant techniques and resources to meet the brief

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	Designed the A2 poster to enable all content to be easily accessible to an audience (with scientific literacy), making maximum use of the available space and arranging the content logically. All artwork and colouring aids the accessibility and understanding of the information presented (is not merely decorative) and key points (relating to the investigation aim, the results analysis, or conclusions), or the investigation conclusions, are prominent and easily recognised.
2	3–4	Designed the A2 poster to enable most of the content to be easily accessible to an audience, arranging the content in a logical way to make reasonable use of the available space.  Overall, the artwork and colouring aids improve the accessibility and understanding of the information presented (is not merely decorative), although one or 2 key points (relating to the investigation aim, the results analysis, or conclusions) may lack relevance, or only add decorative value.
1	1–2	Designed the A2 poster to display a limited amount of the content well, although organisation of content is cluttered and could make better use of the space available. Artwork and colouring are mainly decorative although may be appropriate to highlight 2 key points (relating to the investigation aim, the results analysis, or conclusions) for the audience.
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## AO4: Use English, mathematics and digital skills as appropriate

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	4	<p>Utilised IT software and/or applications <b>or</b> used mathematical processes <b>or</b> a combination of both digital and mathematical skills, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise and assign importance to all the data required</li> <li>conduct their analyses (including statistical analysis)</li> <li>produce accurate tables, charts and/or graphs which are presented clearly and are accessible to the intended audience</li> </ul>
3	3	<p>Utilised IT software and/or applications <b>or</b> used mathematical processes <b>or</b> a combination of both digital and mathematical skills, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise and assign importance to most of the required data</li> <li>conduct their analyses (including statistical analysis)</li> <li>produce relevant tables, charts and/or graphs</li> </ul>
2	2	<p>Utilised IT software and/or applications <b>or</b> used mathematical processes <b>or</b> a combination of both digital and mathematical skills, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise and assign importance to some of the required data</li> <li>conduct some analyses</li> <li>produce some relevant tables, charts and/or graphs</li> </ul> <p>It is clear to the audience that the use of digital and/or mathematical skills could be strengthened to enhance accuracy.</p>
1	1	<p>Utilised IT software and/or applications <b>or</b> used mathematical processes <b>or</b> a combination of both digital and mathematical skills, in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organise and assign importance to some of the required data</li> <li>conduct some analyses</li> <li>produce some but limited tables, charts and/or graphs</li> </ul> <p>It is clear to the audience that the use of digital and/or mathematical skills could be strengthened to enhance accuracy, accessibility, and presentation.</p>
0	0	No creditworthy material, SPaG or structure makes most or all the literature review difficult to understand for the reader.

## AO5: Realise a scientific project outcome and review against the intended project aims

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	5–6	Verbally presented the contents on the A2 poster clearly and without the need for tutor questions, using the detail as a stimulus for the presentation, expanding on each section to clearly articulate all the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the aims of the project</li> <li>the results of the analysis</li> <li>their conclusions</li> </ul>
2	3–4	Verbally presented the contents on the A2 poster, broadly using the detail as a stimulus for the presentation, expanding on some of the sections to articulate most of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the aims of the project</li> <li>the results of the analysis</li> <li>their conclusions</li> </ul>
1	1–2	Verbally presented the contents of the A2 poster, almost entirely reading from each section of the poster, rather than expanding on the detail. If the student attempts to use the poster as a stimulus, their presentation covers a minority of key points, lacking in clarity, with some significant omissions of key points, or mention of points that are not relevant to the project aims.
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.



## Task 5: group discussion

**AO2: Apply core skills and knowledge to the development of a scientific project**

**AO3: Select relevant techniques and resources to meet the brief**

**AO5: Realise a scientific project outcome and review against the intended project aims**

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
3	7–9	<p>Demonstrated engagement throughout, and a comprehensive breadth and depth of knowledge relevant to the discussion, both when asking questions and in answering those of others; raising well-informed points and arguments, articulating these in clear language for all students to understand, and may even check that others have understood accurately.</p> <p>Listened to other ideas and opinions respectfully, reflecting or building on these in their own responses, demonstrating collaboration with others to reach an appropriate and relevant solution.</p> <p>Written an email that responds clearly and fully to the initial concerns raised by the consumer group with valid solutions.</p>
2	4–6	<p>Demonstrated consistent engagement throughout, and a reasonable breadth of knowledge relevant to the discussion, both when asking questions and in answering those of others, raising some valid points and expressing these in clear language.</p> <p>Listened to other ideas and opinions without interruption, demonstrating an understanding of other opinions and consideration of these to reach an appropriate and relevant solution.</p> <p>Written an email that responds clearly to the initial concerns raised by the consumer group, including valid solutions, but may only partially address the concerns.</p>

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
1	1–3	<p>Demonstrated some engagement with the discussion, and basic knowledge relevant to the discussion, both when asking questions and in answering those of others; raising points and arguments that are tentative and largely unsupported by suitable evidence, articulating these in language that is sometimes understandable to the other students but is not always clear.</p> <p>Listened to other ideas and opinion but was not always respectful of the opinions of others or may be dismissive of their contribution. Did not consider other opinions to reach a solution, or they reached a solution that was not appropriate or suitable.</p> <p>Written an email that responds only tentatively to the initial concerns raised by the consumer group.</p>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 3 to 1.

## Task 6: Reflective evaluation

**AO2: Apply core knowledge and skills to the development of a scientific project**

**AO3: Select relevant techniques and resources to meet the brief**

**AO5: Realise a scientific project outcome and review against the intended project aims**

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	11–14	<p>Provided an evaluation of all the following tasks, including a comprehensive and balanced explanation of what worked well and what worked less well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their literature review</li> <li>• their project plan</li> <li>• their analysis of given data, including their choice of statistical analysis technique</li> <li>• their A2 poster and its presentation</li> </ul> <p>Provided balanced and well-justified reasons for all the changes (or not) they would make if repeating each task, with direct reference to the aims of the project and resource constraints or general constraints of the setting, and demonstrating a clear understanding of how changes in different tasks interact and impact on the quality of the other tasks.</p>
3	7–10	<p>Provided an evaluation of all the following tasks, including credible explanations of what worked well and what worked less well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their literature review</li> <li>• their project plan</li> <li>• their analysis of given data, including their choice of statistical analysis technique</li> <li>• their A2 poster and its presentation</li> </ul> <p>Provided well-justified reasons for all the changes (or not) they would make if repeating each task, with direct reference to the aims of the project and resource constraints/physical constraints of the setting.</p>

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
2	4–6	<p>Provided an account of most of the following tasks, including some explanation of what worked well and what worked less well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their literature review</li> <li>• their project plan</li> <li>• their analysis of given data, including their choice of statistical analysis technique</li> <li>• their A2 poster and its presentation</li> </ul> <p>Outlined some reasons for the changes they would make if repeating each task, with some reference to the aims of their project or any resource constraints/physical constraints of the setting.</p>
1	1–3	<p>Listed examples of what worked well, and what worked less well for some of the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their literature review</li> <li>• their project plan</li> <li>• their analysis of given data, including their choice of statistical analysis technique</li> <li>• their A2 poster and its presentation</li> </ul> <p>Outlined basic changes they would make if repeating the tasks, making little or no reference to the reasons why or how it relates to the aims of their project.</p>
0	0	No creditworthy material as described in bands 4 to 1.

## AO4: Use English, mathematics, and digital skills as appropriate to the development of a scientific project

Band	Mark	Descriptor
		The student has:
4	4	Communicated all aspects of the reflective evaluation with excellent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly and effectively throughout, in a logical structure. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is excellent with no errors.
3	3	Communicated most aspects of the reflective evaluation effectively with a well-developed use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation, conveying meaning clearly throughout, with a clear attempt at using a logical structure. There is a good use of scientific/technical terminology and language with minimal errors.
2	2	Communicated most aspects of the reflective evaluation with inconsistent use of level 2 English grammar, spelling, and punctuation throughout, conveying the required meanings overall, although lacking some clarity and conciseness. Use of scientific/technical terminology and language is sound but contains some errors.
1	1	Communicated most aspects of the reflective evaluation with simplistic use of English at level 2 throughout. There may be some errors which do not affect meaning or coherence. The use of scientific/technical terminology and language is minimal and includes some errors.
0	0	No creditworthy material, SPaG or structure makes most, or all, of the reflective evaluation difficult for the reader to access or understand.

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## Change History Record

Version	Description of change	Approval	Date of Issue
v1.0	Post approval, updated for publication.		January 2021
v1.1	NCFE rebrand.		September 2021
v1.2	Sample added as a watermark	November 2023	20 November 2023
v1.3	NCFE internal review – updated wording to pages 7, 10, 11, 16 and 18.	November 2024	25 April 2025