

T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years

Employer-set project (ESP)
Early Years Educator

Mark scheme

v5.0: Specimen assessment materials
24 April 2025
603/5829/4

Internal reference: EAC-0003-01

Marking instructions

Levels of performance marking grids have been designed to award a student's response holistically, drawing on the evidence the student produces in the Tasks, and should follow a best-fit approach.

Marking will take place once all Tasks are complete and the marker has access to all the student's evidence for each of the Tasks.

Table 1 shows which of the Tasks (pieces of evidence) will be used as the basis of judgement for each of the assessment objectives (AOs).

Markers should review each of these pieces of evidence, using the indicative content to support an understanding of what they are expecting to make their judgement on, before placing the student in one of the bands.

The grids are broken down into bands, with each band having an associated descriptor indicating the performance at that band. You should determine the band before determining the mark.

When determining a band, you should use a best-fit approach. A judgement should be made on the overall quality of the student's evidence, and should reward students positively, rather than focussing on small omissions. If the response covers aspects at different bands, you should use a best-fit approach at this stage, and use the available marks within the band to credit the response appropriately.

When determining a mark within the band, your decision should be based on the quality of the response in relation to the descriptors. You must also consider the relative weightings of the AOs, so as not to over/under credit a response. Standardisation materials, marked by the Chief Examiner, will help you with determining a mark. You will be able to use exemplar student responses to compare to live responses, to decide if it is the same, better or worse. As a general rule of thumb, allocation of the highest mark within a 3 mark band should be evidence that may meet the criteria 'convincingly'. For 2 marks out of a total of 3, evidence may meet the criteria 'adequately' and for the lowest mark, the evidence may 'just' be meeting the criteria. This is guidance and any approach will be confirmed in standardisation.

You are reminded that the indicative content provided under the marking grid is there as a guide, not an exhaustive list. It is not a requirement that students cover all of the indicative content to be awarded higher band marks.

Table 1

Evidence	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	AO5	TOTAL
Task 1						
Task 1a (Early support plan)	4	8	4			16
Task 1b (Activity plan v1)	4	15	6			25
English, mathematics and digital skills				10		10
Task 2						
Task 2b (Activity plan v2)* *Task 2a is not marked		6			3	9
Task 3						
Task 3b (Discussion with Tutor)	1	12	2		1	16
English, mathematics and digital skills				2		2
Task 4						
Task 4 (Reflection)		7			5	12
Total marks	9	48	12	12	9	90
Percentage (%)	10	53.33	13.33	13.33	10	100

Mark bands	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	AO4 (English/ mathematics/ digital)
Task 1a 1a (Early support plan)	1–4 marks	5–8 marks	9–12 marks	13–16 marks		10 marks
Task 1b 1b (Activity plan v1)	1–5 marks	6–10 marks	11–15 marks	16–20 marks	21–25 marks	
Task 2b (Activity plan v2) *Task 2a is not marked	1–3 marks	4–6 marks	7–9 marks			
Task 3b (Discussion with Tutor)	1–4 marks	5–8 marks	9–12 marks	13–16 marks		2 marks
Task 4 (Reflection)	1–3 marks	4–6 marks	7–9 marks	10–12 marks		

Task 1a (Early support plan)

Create an early support plan that you would use to meet George's developmental needs.

The early support plan **requirements** include:

- strategies to support George's developmental needs
- identification of suitable resources and/or techniques
- appropriate communication strategies to use with George (context and stage appropriate language)
- ways to work with parents, practitioners and specialists to enhance learning opportunities and meet George's support and development needs
- methods of tracking and monitoring George's progress towards his 4 week objective
- use of educational theories, concepts or pedagogies.

13–16 marks	<p>The early support plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clearly presented and coherently written, and includes relevant technical terminology • is highly detailed, including reference to all strategies, resources and techniques to be used, and takes full account of all available information, referencing relevant educational theories, concepts or pedagogies • comprehensively covers all requirements of an early support plan • fully addresses all George's development/support needs.
9–12 marks	<p>The early support plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is clearly presented and includes some technical terminology • is detailed, including reference to some strategies, resources and techniques to be used, and takes account of most of the information available, referencing some educational theories, concepts or pedagogies • covers the majority of the requirements of an early support plan • addresses most of George's development/support needs.
5–8 marks	<p>The early support plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has some clarity within presentation and includes limited technical terminology • is limited in detail with limited reference to strategies, resources and techniques to be used and takes account of most of the information available with limited reference to educational theories, concepts or pedagogies • covers some of the requirements of an early support plan • addresses some of George's development/support needs.
1–4 marks	<p>The early support plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks clarity within presentation and includes little/no technical terminology • includes very little detail, little/no reference to strategies, resources and techniques to be used and takes little/no account of available information with little/no reference to educational theories, concepts or pedagogies • covers few of the requirements of an early support plan • does not appropriately address George's development/support needs.
0 marks	No creditable evidence.

Task 1b (Activity plan v1)

Create an activity plan that you could use to support George.

The activity plan should include:

- how the activity links to and supports the wider curriculum and George's development
- teaching and learning strategies and/or theory, concepts and pedagogy that underpin the activity
- the instructions to be given to George to ensure understanding and engagement in the activity (ensuring communication is age/stage appropriate)
- ways to work with parents, practitioners and specialists to prepare for the activity
- how observation will be used to track George's progress through the activity
- opportunities for formative and summative assessment to assess George's needs
- identification of hazards, risks and control measures to ensure own and others' safety throughout the activity.

21–25 marks	<p>The activity plan demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well-considered, coherent activity planning, linking to the wider curriculum • highly justified rationale for activity selection (taking account of information contained within the early support plan and the brief) that links to teaching and learning strategies that underpin the activity • high level of relevant detail shown, including instructions to be given to George and explanation of how observation will be used • justified selection of resources and/or techniques • well-considered assessment strategies including explanation of formative and summative assessments • detailed risk analysis with reference to all hazards, risks and control measures.
16–20 marks	<p>The activity plan demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coherent activity planning, linking to the wider curriculum • well-considered rationale for activity choice (taking account of information contained within the early support plan and the brief) with reference to relevant teaching and learning strategies that could underpin the activity • good level of detail shown, including some reference to instructions to be given to George and some reference to observation • reasoned selection of resources and/or techniques • considered assessment strategies with reference to formative and/or summative assessments • detailed risk assessment with reference to some hazards and risks and some control measures.
11–15 marks	<p>The activity plan demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate activity planning with some links to the wider curriculum • some consideration given to activity choice (taking account of information contained within the early support plan and the brief) with reference to teaching and learning strategies which may not be linked to the activity • appropriate level of relevant detail shown, with some consideration of instructions which may be given to George and some consideration of observation • justified selection of resources and/or techniques • appropriate assessment strategies including the need to assess George • appropriate risk assessment including relevant hazards, risks and control measures.

6–10 marks	<p>The activity plan demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited activity planning with few links to the wider curriculum • limited consideration of activity choice (taking account of information contained within the early support plan and the brief) with little reference to teaching and learning strategies • minimal level of relevant detail shown with little reference to instructions which may be given to George or observation which may be used • limited justification for selection of resources and/or techniques • inadequate assessment strategies with little or no reference to how to assess George • minimal risk assessment with some relevant hazards, risks and controls included.
1–5 marks	<p>The activity plan demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • weak activity planning with no links to the wider curriculum • no valid consideration of activity choice (taking account of information contained within the early support plan and the brief) with no reference to teaching and learning strategies • very little relevant detail shown with no reference to instructions which may be given to George or observation which may be used • inadequate/no justification for selection of resources and/or techniques • no relevant assessment strategies • no/little evidence of risk assessment.
0 marks	No creditable evidence.

Task 1a and 1b

AO4: English, mathematics and digital skills

English (4 marks)	<p>4 marks: Plans include excellent use of Level 2 English throughout and convey meaning clearly, concisely and coherently, using formal and informal tone as appropriate to the context of an early years/children's institution/setting. Use of terminology is excellent with no errors.</p> <p>3 marks: Plans include a well-developed use of Level 2 English throughout most of the documents and convey meaning clearly and coherently, using formal and informal tone as appropriate to the context of the early years/children's institution/setting. There is a good use of technical terminology with minimal errors.</p> <p>2 marks: Plans include inconsistent use of Level 2 English throughout the documents, ie may lack conciseness although overall, they convey meaning coherently. Use of formal and informal tone is mostly appropriate to the context of the early years/children's institution/setting. Use of technical terminology is sound but contains some errors.</p> <p>1 mark: Plans include simplistic use of English at Level 1 or below throughout the documents. There may be some errors which do not affect meaning or coherence. Use of formal and informal tone is sometimes incongruent with the context of the early years/children's institution/setting. The use of technical terminology is minimal and includes some errors.</p>
Mathematics (2 marks)	<p>2 marks: Plans demonstrate that the student has accurately processed/analysed the assessment data presented in the brief in a highly effective way.</p> <p>1 mark: Plans demonstrate that the student has processed/analysed the assessment data presented in the brief effectively.</p>
Digital skills (4 marks)	<p>4 marks: Plans produced demonstrate effective and efficient use of digital technology and media to present information and assessment evidence clearly and concisely so it can be accessed by the intended audience in the context of the early years/children's institution/setting.</p> <p>3 marks: Plans produced demonstrate an overall effective use of digital technology and media, presenting the information and assessment evidence clearly so it can be accessed by the intended audience in the context of the early years/children's institution/setting.</p> <p>2 marks: Plans produced demonstrate a mostly effective use of digital technology and media, sometimes presenting the information and assessment evidence clearly so it can be accessed by the intended audience in the context of the early years/children's institution/setting. It is clear to the audience that the use of digital skills could be strengthened to enhance accessibility and presentation.</p> <p>1 mark: Plans produced demonstrate use of digital technology and media that is sometimes effective but causes the intended audience in the context of the early years/children's institution/setting to have some difficulty in accessing the information and assessment evidence presented. It is clear to the audience that the use of digital skills is a weakness and should be strengthened to enhance accessibility and presentation.</p>

Task 2b (Activity plan v2)*

Updates to activity plan with justifications following peer discussion.

The evidence should demonstrate:

- skills of reflection and evaluation to review the objective of the activity plan
- evidence and justification of amendments made to the activity plan following peer discussion and feedback.

***Tasks 2a (i) and 2a (ii)** (*Reflect on and evaluate the plans of other students, providing feedback through peer group discussion*) are **not** marked. Marking must be solely based on the student's updated activity plan with justifications following peer discussion.

7–9 marks	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highly evaluative approach with a clear focus on the objective of the activity plan • high level of skills of reflection shown through updated activity plan and corresponding justifications • comprehensive justification for each suggested amendment to the activity plan(s) • evidence of well-reasoned/justified amendments to plan following peer discussion.
4–6 marks	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an evaluative approach with a clear focus on the objective of the activity plan • effective skills of reflection shown through updated activity plan and corresponding justifications • relevant justification for each suggested amendment to the activity plan(s) • evidence of well-considered amendments to plan following peer discussion.
1–3 marks	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited skills of evaluation with some focus on the objective of the activity plan • some skills of reflection shown through updated activity plan and corresponding justifications • few relevant suggestions for amendments to activity plan(s) • evidence of some appropriate amendments to plan following peer discussion.
0 marks	No creditable evidence.

Task 3b (Discussion with Tutor)

Discuss early support plan and activity plan with Tutor (marked evidence to include word processed pro-forma/slides if used, Tutor notes and audio recording of discussion).

Preparation to include:

- summary of key points within early support plan and activity plan, including detail of review undertaken
- how the plans are informed by educational theories, concepts or pedagogies
- communication techniques required to support George's progress
- strategies to support the relevant areas of George's development
- consideration of suitability of resources.

13–16 marks	Evidence presented demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level of preparation evident in relation to the Task • highly confident contribution to the discussion • comprehensive summary of the key points within the early support plan and activity plan, including thorough detail of review undertaken; summary includes detailed explanation of all educational theories, concepts or pedagogies and strategies to support the relevant areas of George's development • clearly articulated justification of selected resources and techniques within early support plan and activity plan • well-considered and well-reasoned responses to Tutor's questions.
9–12 marks	Evidence presented demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient level of preparation evident in relation to the Task • confident contribution to the discussion • appropriate summary of the key points within the early support and activity plan, including sufficient detail of review undertaken; summary includes reference to educational theories, concepts or pedagogies and strategies to support the relevant areas of George's development • some justification of selected resources and techniques within early support plan and activity plan • considered and reasoned responses to Tutor's questions.
5–8 marks	Evidence presented demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some preparation evident in relation to the Task • adequate contribution to the discussion • limited summary of the key points within the early support plan and activity plan, with some detail of review undertaken; summary includes limited reference to educational theories, concepts or pedagogies and strategies to support the relevant areas of George's development • some understanding shown for choice of resources and techniques within early support plan and activity plan • considered responses to some of the Tutor's questions.
1–4 marks	Evidence presented demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very little preparation evident in relation to the Task • limited contribution to the discussion • vague/no summary of the key points within the early support plan and activity plan, with very little detail of review undertaken; no reference to educational theories, concepts or

	<p>pedagogies and strategies to support the relevant areas of George's development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited understanding of choice of resources and techniques within early support plan and activity plan • limited responses to Tutor's questions.
0 marks	No creditable evidence.

SAMPLE

Task 3

AO4: English, mathematics and digital skills

<p>Digital skills (2 marks)</p>	<p>2 marks: Summary and key points of plans produced in Task 3a demonstrate overall an effective and efficient use of digital technology and media to present information clearly and concisely so it can be accessed for the discussion in Task 3b.</p> <p>1 mark: Summary and key points of plans produced in Task 3a demonstrate a mostly effective use of digital technology and media to present information clearly so it can be accessed for the discussion in Task 3b.</p> <p>0 marks: Summary and key points of plans produced in Task 3a did not demonstrate the effective use of digital technology and media, either by being hand-written, or resulting in significant difficulties in accessing the information required for the discussion.</p>
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Task 4 (Reflection)

Complete a reflective account to include:

- effectiveness of own communication skills and quality of own contribution within peer discussion and Tutor discussion
- quality of planned activity/early support plan to support intended outcomes
- extent to which feedback informed changes to own planned activity
- identified improvements to own knowledge, planning skills and collaborative working for future practice.

10–12 marks	Reflective account demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference to all 4 points above includes clear, well-reasoned reflection with comprehensive analysis, evaluation and justified actions.
7–9 marks	Reflective account demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference to all 4 points above includes reasoned reflection with appropriate analysis, evaluation and some justified actions.
4–6 marks	Reflective account demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference to relevant points above includes appropriate reflection with limited analysis, evaluation and limited justified actions.
1–3 marks	Reflective account demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reference to some points above includes limited relevant reflection and no analysis evidence of evaluation or justified actions.
0 marks	No creditable evidence.

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Change History Record

Version	Description of change	Approval	Date of Issue
v1.0	Published draft version		April 2020
v2.0	Published final version		01 September 2020
v3.0	T Level branding updated		December 2020
v3.1	Version, branding and formatting final updates		March 2021
v3.2	NCFE rebrand.		September 2021
v4.0	Annual review 2023: Name changed to Education and Early Years	June 2023	19 June 2023
v4.1	Sample added as a watermark	November 2023	15 November 2023
v5.0	Wording amended throughout Branding and document information updated	November 2024	24 April 2025