



# **T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) QN: 610/5748/4**

Occupational specialism assessment (OSA)

**Early Years Educator**

Assignment 1 Part 2: (Structured Observations) –  
Assessor Guidance

# Contents

<b>Guidance for assessors</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Purpose .....	3
Guidelines for using extended-response marking grids .....	3
Moderation .....	4
Planning for the structured observations .....	5
Provider-appointed assessors .....	6
Conditions .....	6
Planning and recording forms .....	6
Observation Schedule Form.....	6
Observation Planning Form.....	7
Observation of Skills Recording Form .....	7
Professional Discussion Form.....	7
Final Mark Form.....	7
Assessor instructions .....	8
Observation Schedule Form.....	9
Observation Planning Form.....	10
Observation of Skills Recording Form .....	11
Professional Discussion Form.....	17
Final Mark Form.....	18
<b>Structured observation descriptions</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Structured observation 1: supporting children’s learning and development .....	19
Activity description.....	19
Structured observation 1: marking criteria .....	20
Structured observation 2: contributing to an enabling environment .....	26
Activity description.....	26
Structured observation 2: marking criteria .....	27
Structured observation 3: meeting the individual needs of children .....	33
Activity description.....	33
Mapping to skills.....	33
Structured observation 3: marking criteria .....	34
<b>Professional discussion</b> .....	<b>42</b>
Performance outcome (PO) mapping.....	43
<b>Change history record</b> .....	<b>44</b>
<b>Document information</b> .....	<b>45</b>

## Guidance for assessors

Assignment 1 part 2 is a series of three separate structured observations designed to target discrete skills. If any of the skills are not observed during the observation, you must then hold a professional discussion with the student. This discussion must be notated and scored using the Professional Discussion Form. The discussion must be about skills associated to the observation that has just been conducted only and not evidenced / observed. You should ask prompt questions that are relevant to the skill / skills that was / were not observed. Each discussion should take 15 to 20 minutes. The professional discussion is to be conducted after a short break but within an hour of completing the observation, on site in the industry placement in a quiet, private space at the industry placement location.

These observations are designed to test to what extent a student can meet the key skills and underpinning knowledge required to successfully work as an early years educator.

The guidance below explains the nature and purpose of the observations.

The structured observation assignment consists of **three** separate observations, each targeting different discrete skills. Across the observations there are also skills that are shared between observations 2 and 3 and a group of skills that could possibly be seen across all three observations.

All **three** observations and any professional discussions that are required **must** be completed.

### Purpose

The observations assess important aspects of a student's achievement in a live industry placement. Each observation and discussion has been designed to fully engage the student while being closely linked to a real-world professional development observation that is commonplace within the industry.

Assignment 1 part 2 assesses the student's level of attainment against the skills in the performance outcomes (POs) of the technical qualification (TQ), and contributes, along with all the other assignments, to the student's overall grade. These are separate from the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework criteria and are assessed in a different way.

### Guidelines for using extended-response marking grids

Each of the structured observations is potentially comprised of two stages: a live observation and a professional discussion.

Prior to, and in preparation for, the observation, you will have received the student's Observation Planning Form, which you should review alongside the assessment marking criteria in this document for each skill.

You must use each level of response marking grid (Observation of Skills Recording Form) as the student progresses through each stage, making assessment judgements in real time. You must make notes referring to the marking criteria throughout the observation to support your judgements. Your notes should be made directly onto the Observation of Skills Recording Form. It is expected that after the observation and possible professional discussion, you review your assessment decisions and complete a summary of the observation (and professional discussion). The summary does not have to be overly extensive but must offer enough holistic support for your marking decisions.

Level of response marking grids have been designed to award a student's demonstration of specific skills across all five POs. The grids are broken down into levels: each level is associated to a descriptor indicating the performance at that level. Each level has been constructed to reflect a student's level of competency. However, a student's overall achieved grade will be determined by a combination of their observable practice and, where necessary, a professional discussion.

As provider-appointed assessors, you must use the following guidance when considering placement within a band / assigning a grade, using the marking criteria as a guide for the types of actions that a student may demonstrate for each discrete skill.

The levels for each assessed skill should be broadly viewed as follows:

- Level 3 (excellent): the student is fully competent in the assessed skill and demonstrates additional, relevant ability that exceeds minimum competency standards.
- Level 2 (reasonable): the student is fully at threshold competency in the main skill being assessed.
- Level 1 (emerging): the student is working towards threshold competency in the assessed skill, though may demonstrate some errors and / or inconsistencies.
- Level 0 (limited): the student is incompetent in the main area of the assessed skill.

When determining a level, you will use a bottom-up approach for the skill being assessed, together with the examples of actions typical for the observation, as detailed in the assessment justification tables and explained at the standardisation training.

You are reminded that the marking criteria tables are there as guides for both the live observation and for any professional discussion and your summary / grading justification. Be mindful of the real-world nature (for example, if something occurs during the observation that is beyond the control of the student, then you should use your professional judgement to assess how the student responded and what, if any, merit can be awarded against the marking criteria).

It is not a requirement that students must cover all of the assessment justification points to be awarded full marks.

## **Moderation**

Assignment 1 part 2 is assessed / marked by you, the provider-appointed assessor, and moderated by NCFE.

Moderators will visit industry placements and will observe the assessment taking place, accompanying you and observing the student carrying out their practical activity or structured observation. The moderator will make assessment judgements, including the allocation of marks, using the same methods and forms as the provider-appointed assessor, to ensure that the two sets of findings can be reliably compared.

The visiting NCFE moderator will attend a sample of structured observations carried out by provider-appointed assessors during the delivery window (please refer to the key dates schedule). The observations they attend will be selected by NCFE, based on the provider's structured observations plan, and in line with an appropriate sampling strategy.

Record keeping will also be a factor when ensuring sufficient quality in approved provider-appointed assessor marking. It is critically important that you summarise what you have observed in relation to the criteria and guidance provided in the observation / professional discussion forms. If there is no summary present, or if the summary lacks sufficient detail, then there will effectively be no record of evidence. The

provider would, therefore, be required to observe the student again. The training and guidance that providers receive will reflect this accordingly.

The visiting NCFE moderator will observe students alongside the provider-appointed assessor and will confirm whether they agree with the provider-appointed assessor's marking judgements.

Following moderation, the moderator will record their marks for the sample of students. There will be three potential outcomes from this activity:

- the moderator and your marks are within a tolerance; in this case, all of your marks would be accepted with no further action required
- the moderator and your marks are out of tolerance, but they are out of tolerance in a consistent way (for example they are all too lenient, or they are all too strict); in this case, a calculation would be applied to compare moderator's and your marks in order to determine the required adjustment for each student – this adjustment will then be applied to all students in the cohort
- the moderator and your marks are out of tolerance, but not in a consistent way that can be safely adjusted; in this case, additional support will be made available to you, and the remaining students' evidence will need to be reassessed and moderated.

## Planning for the structured observations

Each observation must be carried out once only and observed by you, the provider-appointed assessor, and, where required, a professional discussion is held in the student's industry placement.

The observations are one-off end assessments; therefore, these should not be carried out until the provider / tutor is confident the student will demonstrate their skills to the very best of their ability.

All three observations (and possible discussions) must be completed, for all students, during the specified window between February and May (please refer to the key dates schedule) in the final year of that cohort's delivery. Students must **not** be observed more than once in a day, unless there is evidence in writing stating that the student would prefer to be observed more than once in a day.

Observations must be planned in advance and plans, including the date of the observation, the student's name, and the industry placement, must be shared with NCFE in advance of the structured observations taking place. This is important for NCFE as moderators will need to be scheduled for the observations. This requirement is dependent on the moderation rating the provider has received from NCFE. The number of moderation visits and instances of where desk-based moderation is implemented is contingent on the initial, mandatory moderation decisions and any subsequent moderation visits that are required as follow up.

An Observation Schedule Form is supplied for providers to capture this planning, and a date will be set by NCFE by which all plans must be submitted. This date will be far enough in advance of the structured observations window to allow NCFE to plan initial moderation visits.

The observations and any professional discussion are both marked. You must carry out the observations and professional discussion and award a mark against each content point, giving a final total for that observation that is evidenced through the Observation of Skills Recording Form and, where necessary, the Professional Discussion Form. The total marks achieved by the student across all three observations and any professional discussions will be counted towards their final grade for the Early Years Educator occupational specialism (OS).

The structured observations have been written to reflect realistic and regularly occurring events or activities that will be very likely to take place live on the industry placement. As such, no specific timings

have been given, but it is expected that the observations should last no more than one hour. The professional discussion should last no more than 15 to 20 minutes per discussion.

## **Provider-appointed assessors**

As a provider-appointed assessor you must be qualified to the level of the qualification you are assessing or above and must have been trained and standardised as per NCFE requirements. As well as this, staff assessing the qualification must hold or be working towards an assessor qualification such as Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement. Provider-appointed assessors who hold earlier qualifications (for example D32 or D33) should have continuing professional development (CPD) evidence showing compliance with the current standards.

## **Conditions**

The observation activities are written to reflect naturally or regularly occurring activities in the setting, and providers should make use of regular provision to accommodate these observations. However, it should be acknowledged that the activity should allow the student to cover all the skills being assessed as far as is reasonably possible.

After each observation you and the student may be required to have a professional discussion. The discussion should last no longer than 15 to 20 minutes. General conditions for the observations mean that:

- students should lead the activities themselves, with no input from the provider-appointed assessor
- students can interact as required with other practitioners, based on the requirements of the activity
- all planned activities will need to be carried out in line with a setting's policies and procedures at all times
- students should be aware of when they will be observed for their structured observations, and what activities they will carry out
- students should only undergo structured observations once they are ready to do so, which is once they have gained the appropriate knowledge and skills in the POs.

All mandatory forms and final marks must be kept as evidence in a secure folder for delivery to NCFE by the submission deadline in the final year of the T Level qualification.

## **Planning and recording forms**

This pack includes the mandatory forms and marking criteria that must be used by provider-appointed assessors to gather evidence for all three structured observations and to make a final marking decision.

Observations for assessment should not take place until the provider is confident that the student will be able to show an appropriate level of achievement during the observation and must be scheduled into the appropriate window as set by NCFE.

The forms are listed below, with guidance on their use.

## **Observation Schedule Form**

This form must be completed by the provider with input from the provider, student and industry placement. The document is to be shared with you the assessor and NCFE by the provider. All the relevant information must be added for both the competency and structured observations.

## **Observation Planning Form**

This form is used by the student to plan the structured observations in their industry placement. This form details the date of the observations, the intended activity to be observed and the skills expected to be covered, based on the mapping of criteria in this pack and in the Student Guide. A completed copy of this form must be shared with the provider-appointed assessor prior to the structured observations taking place.

## **Observation of Skills Recording Form**

This form is used to make a narrative record with scoring for each structured observation and professional discussion conducted by you the provider-appointed assessor. Each observation has a separate recording form.

The form is to be completed by assigning a grade / band to each skill observed by adding a notated justification for your decision. The box at the end of form is for your post observation (and professional discussion) summary that outlines holistically the observation narrative, which must be linked to the specific content points covered during the observation and discussion, which can be found in the marking criteria tables for each observation.

These tables must be used as guides to support the capture of a marking judgement for each skill, in each of the structured observations. They should be referred to by the provider-appointed assessor before and after each observation to help them highlight exactly which skill they have observed or discussed.

## **Professional Discussion Form**

A professional discussion may need to follow the observation. The Professional Discussion Form should be used to capture your grades, assessment justifications and map the skills criteria / content points covered by the discussion. It must be numbered with the same number as the Observation of Skills Recording Form

## **Final Mark Form**

This form must be completed by the provider-appointed assessor on return to the provider when the provider-appointed assessor hands over the observation forms to the provider. It is to be used to capture a final mark for each structured observation.

This form should be completed after each observation. There will be a deadline in the final year of each student's T Level qualification for these final marks to be submitted.

# T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (610/5748/4)

## Assignment 1 Part 2: recording forms

Occupational Specialism: Early Years Educator

### Assessor instructions

Please complete the details below clearly and in BLOCK CAPITALS.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Provider name \_\_\_\_\_

Student number

Provider number

Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Assessor signature

\_\_\_\_\_

## Observation Schedule Form

T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)			Student	[name and ID]
	Date	Time	Industry placement	[name and address]
Competency observation 1				
Competency observation 2				
Competency observation 3				
Competency observation 4				
Competency observation 5*				
Structured observation 1				
Structured observation 2				
Structured observation 3				

\*Rows can be added or deleted as necessary for the competency observations.

## Observation Planning Form

<b>Student name</b>		<b>T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)</b>	
<b>Assessor name</b>		<b>Provider</b>	<b>Employer</b>
<b>Planned activity to include age of child / children</b>		<b>Skills expected to be covered</b>	
<p style="font-size: 100px; opacity: 0.2; transform: rotate(-30deg);">SAMPLE</p>		<p style="font-size: 100px; opacity: 0.2; transform: rotate(-30deg);">SAMPLE</p>	
<b>Student signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Assessor signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	

## Observation of Skills Recording Form

Student name				Date	
Observation 1: T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)					
Assessor name					
Brief description of setting and age of child / children					
<b>Band</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Mark</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Limited</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>minimal effectiveness</b> and <b>numerous errors</b>	<b>Basic</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>some effectiveness</b> and <b>some accuracy</b> (though may be inconsistent)	<b>Reasonable</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>mostly effective, mostly accurate</b>	<b>Excellent</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>highly effective, fully accurate</b>	
<b>Content points</b>	<b>Assessor judgement and notes</b>				
S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.					
S1.6 Support and promote children's speech, language and communication.					
S1.10 Implement a range of pedagogical strategies to support children's early literacy skills.					
S1.11 Identify and use unplanned opportunities to develop mathematical understanding.					
S1.12 Use observational assessments to					

identify children's mathematical skills and foster these skills through play and structured opportunities.				
S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children				
S2.10 Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.				
<b>Summary</b>				

SAMPLE

<b>Student name</b>			<b>Date</b>	
<b>Observation 2: T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)</b>				
<b>Assessor name</b>				
<b>Brief description of setting and age of child / children</b>				
<b>Band</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mark</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Limited</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>minimal effectiveness</b> and <b>numerous errors</b>	<b>Basic</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>some effectiveness</b> and <b>some accuracy</b> (though may be inconsistent)	<b>Reasonable</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>mostly effective, mostly accurate</b>	<b>Excellent</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>highly effective, fully accurate</b>
<b>Content points</b>	<b>Assessor judgement and notes</b>			
S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.				
S1.7 Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.				
S2.7 Encourage children's participation by ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.				
S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.				
S2.10 Support children to manage their own				

behaviour in relation to others.				
S3.2 Plan educational opportunities to enable children to progress.				
S3.3 Provide and lead care, educational experiences and purposeful play opportunities.				
<b>Summary</b>				

SAMPLE

<b>Student name</b>			<b>Date</b>	
<b>Observation 3: T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)</b>				
<b>Assessor name</b>				
<b>Brief description of setting and age of child / children</b>				
<b>Band</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mark</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Descriptors</b>	<b>Limited</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>minimal effectiveness</b> and <b>numerous errors</b>	<b>Basic</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that has <b>some effectiveness</b> and <b>some accuracy</b> (though may be <b>inconsistent</b> )	<b>Reasonable</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>mostly effective, mostly accurate</b>	<b>Excellent</b> demonstration of skill, as relevant to the structured observation, that is <b>highly effective, fully accurate</b>
<b>Content points</b>	<b>Assessor judgement and notes</b>			
S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.				
S2.2 Promote secure attachments with children.				
S2.3 Support children's group learning and socialisation.				
S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children				
S2.10 Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others				

S4.1 Identify and respond appropriately to health and safety, security, confidentiality, safeguarding and child welfare in line with own responsibilities.				
S4.7 Carry out a range of care routines.				
S4.8 Promote healthy lifestyles.				
S4.10 Undertake tasks, ensuring the prevention and control of infection.				
S5.4 Work collaboratively with other professionals to meet the needs of the children and enable them to progress.				
<b>Summary</b>				

## Professional Discussion Form

<b>T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)</b>		<b>Student name</b>	
<b>Date and time of discussion</b>		<b>Assessor name</b>	
<b>Observation number</b>			
<b>Record of the discussion. Please include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• which skills were discussed</li> <li>• notes of what was discussed / questions / answers</li> <li>• scores given.</li> </ul>		<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Student signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Assessor signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	

## Final Mark Form

<b>Student name</b>		<b>T Level Technical Qualification in Education and Early Years (Level 3) (610/5748/4)</b>	
<b>Assessor name</b>		<b>Provider</b>	<b>Employer</b>
	<b>Observation (and possible professional discussion) marks</b>		
<b>Structured observation 1</b>			
<b>Structured observation 2</b>			
<b>Structured observation 3</b>			
<b>Total marks achieved:</b>			
<b>Assessor signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
		<b>Date</b>	

## Structured observation descriptions

### Structured observation 1: supporting children's learning and development

#### Activity description

This activity will assess the student's ability to support children's learning and development, making use of both planned and unplanned opportunities.

The structured observation can consist of one of the following activities:

- a literacy session that requires the student to lead a story time session
- a numeracy session that requires the student to support mathematical development
- engaging with children during play, for example, role play / outdoor play.

The activity should allow the student to cover all of the relevant criteria listed below.

#### Mapping to skills

S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.

S1.6 Support and promote children's speech, language and communication.

S1.10 Implement a range of pedagogical strategies to support children's early literacy skills.

S1.11 Identify and use unplanned opportunities to develop mathematical understanding.

S1.12 Use observational assessments to identify children's mathematical skills and foster these skills through play and structured opportunities.

S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.

S2.10 Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

## Structured observation 1: marking criteria

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.4
<b>Criteria</b>	Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitating opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>These criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or by professional discussion.</p> <p>Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitate opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.6
<b>Criteria</b>	Support and promote children's speech, language and communication.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using visual aids and signs in the environment</li> <li>• using bilingual resources</li> <li>• modelling language</li> <li>• using appropriate questioning techniques for age and stage</li> <li>• instigating high-quality, adult-child verbal interactions</li> <li>• using songs, rhymes and storytelling</li> <li>• following children's leads and giving children time to respond</li> <li>• using an interpreter</li> <li>• 1:1 support.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Understand a range of strategies to support and promote children's speech language and communication development.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using visual aids and signs in the environment</li> <li>• using bilingual resources</li> <li>• modelling language</li> <li>• using appropriate questioning techniques for age and stage</li> <li>• instigating high-quality, adult-child verbal interactions</li> <li>• using songs, rhymes and storytelling</li> <li>• following children's leads and giving children time to respond</li> <li>• using an interpreter</li> <li>• 1:1 support.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.10
<b>Criteria</b>	Implement a range of pedagogical strategies to support children's early literacy skills.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• storytelling</li> <li>• guided reading</li> <li>• role play</li> <li>• systemic synthetic phonics</li> <li>• songs and nursery rhymes.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Understand a range of strategies to support and promote children's speech language and communication development.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• storytelling</li> <li>• guided reading</li> <li>• role play</li> <li>• systemic synthetic phonics</li> <li>• songs and nursery rhymes.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.11
<b>Criteria</b>	Identify and use unplanned opportunities to develop mathematical understanding.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spontaneous opportunities to support mathematical understanding</li> <li>• building on children’s mathematical knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• providing opportunities to support children’s mathematical progression.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion</p> <p>Demonstrate flexibility during planned activities to incorporate unplanned opportunities when supporting children’s mathematical understanding.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spontaneous opportunities to support mathematical understanding</li> <li>• building on children’s mathematical knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• providing opportunities to support children’s mathematical progression.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.12
<b>Criteria</b>	Use observational assessments to identify children’s mathematical skills and foster these skills through play and structured opportunities.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using observational assessments to identify children’s current mathematical understanding</li> <li>• supporting children’s mathematical understanding during play and structured opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

**Assessment justification**

These criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or by professional discussion.

Use observational assessments to identify children’s mathematical skills and foster these skills through play and structured opportunities.

The student:

- uses observational assessments to identify children’s current mathematical understanding
- supports children’s mathematical understanding during play and structured opportunities.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.9
<b>Criteria</b>	Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role-modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)</li> <li>• appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

**Assessment justification**

These criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or by professional discussion.

Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.

The student demonstrates:

- role modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)
- appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.10
<b>Criteria</b>	Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• actively listening and asking questions to help children verbalise feelings</li><li>• helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour</li><li>• supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.</li></ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

#### **Assessment justification**

These criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or by professional discussion.

Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

The student demonstrates:

- actively listening and asking questions to help children verbalise feelings
- helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour
- supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.

## Structured observation 2: contributing to an enabling environment

### Activity description

This activity will assess the student's ability to contribute to an enabling environment for children, making use of both planned and unplanned opportunities.

The structured observation can consist of one of the following activities:

- creating and supporting children's engagement with an interactive display, for example, a wall display or a table display
- developing an area of provision, for example, a role-play area, a book corner or a creative area.

The activity should allow the student to cover all of the relevant criteria listed below.

### Mapping to skills

S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.

S1.7 Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

S3.2 Plan educational opportunities to enable children to progress.

S3.3 Provide and lead care, educational experiences and purposeful play opportunities.

S2.7 Encourage children's participation by ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.

S2.10 Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

## Structured observation 2: marking criteria

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.4
<b>Criteria</b>	Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitating opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be met through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitating opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.7
<b>Criteria</b>	Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring individual needs and interests are considered in planning and provision of resources</li> <li>• celebrating diversity of culture and family backgrounds within the setting</li> <li>• modelling appropriate behaviour and, where appropriate, is confident to challenge discrimination.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved in full via direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring individual needs and interests are considered in planning and provision of resources</li> <li>• celebrating diversity of culture and family backgrounds within the setting</li> <li>• modelling appropriate behaviour and, where appropriate, is confident to challenge discrimination.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S3.2
<b>Criteria</b>	Plan educational opportunities to enable children to progress.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting the seven areas of learning and development within the current early education curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ communication and language (for example, extending vocabulary, language structure and dialogue)</li> <li>○ physical development</li> <li>○ personal, social and emotional development (PSED)</li> <li>○ literacy</li> <li>○ mathematics</li> <li>○ understanding the world</li> <li>○ expressive arts and design</li> </ul> </li> <li>• preparing children for the next stage of development</li> <li>• fully reflecting the stage of development, individual needs and circumstances of children, including those with additional needs.</li> </ul>

<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Plan educational opportunities to enable children to progress.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting the seven areas of learning and development within the current early education curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ communication and language (for example, extending vocabulary, language structure and dialogue)</li> <li>○ physical development</li> <li>○ personal, social and emotional development (PSED)</li> <li>○ literacy</li> <li>○ mathematics</li> <li>○ understanding the world</li> <li>○ expressive arts and design</li> </ul> </li> <li>• preparing children for the next stage of development</li> <li>• fully reflecting the stage of development, individual needs and circumstances of children, including those with additional needs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Specification reference</b>	S3.3
<b>Criteria</b>	Provide and lead care, educational experiences and purposeful play opportunities.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding appropriacy to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children</li> <li>• meeting additional needs, working in partnership with parents and / or carers and other professionals, where appropriate</li> <li>• incorporating flexibility to make best use of spontaneous learning opportunities</li> <li>• including children's ideas and interests</li> <li>• enhancing learning through meaningful questioning or modelling</li> <li>• including enough time for children to complete tasks</li> <li>• creating an inclusive environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Provide and lead care, educational experiences and purposeful play opportunities.

The student demonstrates:

- understanding appropriacy to the age, stage and needs of individual and groups of children
- meeting additional needs, working in partnership with parents and / or carers and other professionals, where appropriate
- incorporating flexibility to make best use of spontaneous learning opportunities
- including children's ideas and interests
- enhancing learning through meaningful questioning or modelling
- including enough time for children to complete tasks
- creating an inclusive environment.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.7
<b>Criteria</b>	Encourage children's participation by ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporating both adult-led and child-initiated play and educational activities into the daily and weekly plans</li> <li>• providing children with easy access to resources and equipment to accommodate child-initiated play</li> <li>• offering the appropriate level of support for children to apply their knowledge and skills to different situations and knowing when to step back.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

#### **Assessment justification**

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Encourage children's participation by ensuring a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The student demonstrates:

- incorporating both adult-led and child-initiated play and educational activities into the daily and weekly plans
- providing children with easy access to resources and equipment to accommodate child-initiated play
- offering the appropriate level of support for children to apply their knowledge and skills to different situations and knowing when to step back.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.9
<b>Criteria</b>	Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role-modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)</li> <li>• appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• role-modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)</li> <li>• appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.10
<b>Criteria</b>	Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• active listening and asking questions to help the children verbalise feelings</li> <li>• helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour</li> <li>• supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

The student demonstrates:

- actively listening and asking questions to help the children verbalise feelings
- helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour
- supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.

## Structured observation 3: meeting the individual needs of children

### Activity description

This activity will assess the student's ability to meet the individual needs of children through contributing to their care and wellbeing.

The structured observation can consist of one of the following activities:

- contributing to care routines, for example, snack or mealtimes, rest and sleep, personal care needs
- supporting children through planned transitions, for example, within settings (such as, moving from one age group to another), or to / from settings

The activity should allow the student to cover all of the relevant criteria listed below.

### Mapping to skills

S1.4 Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.

S2.2 Promote secure attachments with children.

S2.3 Support children's group learning and socialisation.

S2.9 Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.

S2.10 Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.

S4.1 Identify and respond appropriately to health and safety, security, confidentiality, safeguarding and child welfare in line with own responsibilities.

S4.7 Carry out a range of care routines.

S4.8 Promote healthy lifestyles.

S4.10 Undertake tasks, ensuring the prevention and control of infection.

S5.4 Work collaboratively with other professionals to meet the needs of the children and enable them to progress.

### Structured observation 3: marking criteria

<b>Specification reference</b>	S1.4
<b>Criteria</b>	Apply strategies to develop and extend children's education and thinking.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitating opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria must be met through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Engage in effective strategies to develop and extend children's learning and thinking.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement in sustained shared thinking with children</li> <li>• scaffolding skills and knowledge</li> <li>• differentiation of support</li> <li>• using open-ended questioning</li> <li>• encouraging group discussion</li> <li>• creating opportunities for problem solving</li> <li>• facilitating opportunities for peer learning.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.2
<b>Criteria</b>	Promote secure attachments with children.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing consistent care</li> <li>• considering the attachment styles children display</li> <li>• being responsive and sensitive to the child's likes, dislikes, interests and needs</li> <li>• considering the age and stage of development related to attachment</li> <li>• meeting individual needs through care routines</li> <li>• sharing information appropriately with parents / carers.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

**Assessment justification**

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Promote secure attachments with children.

The student demonstrates:

- providing consistent care
- considering the attachment styles children display
- being responsive and sensitive to the child's likes, dislikes, interests and needs
- considering the age and stage of development related to attachment
- meeting individual needs through care routines
- sharing information appropriately with parents / carers.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.3
<b>Criteria</b>	Support children's group learning and socialisation.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision for play and learning opportunities that facilitates paired and group socialisation</li> <li>• modelling of and encouragement of positive social skills, for example, turn-taking</li> <li>• provision of support for children to interact with others at their level of development.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

**Assessment justification**

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Support children's group learning and socialisation.

Student demonstrates:

- provision for play and learning opportunities that facilitates paired and group socialisation
- modelling of and encouragement of positive social skills, for example, turn-taking
- provision of support for children to interact with others at their level of development.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.9
<b>Criteria</b>	Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• role-modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)</li><li>• appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.</li></ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

#### **Assessment justification**

The criteria must be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Model and encourage positive behaviours expected of children.

The student demonstrates:

- role-modelling positive behaviour (respect and courtesy)
- appropriate encouragement of expected behaviour through positive approaches.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S2.10
<b>Criteria</b>	Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• active listening and asking questions to help the child verbalise feelings</li> <li>• helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour</li> <li>• supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Support children to manage their own behaviour in relation to others.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actively listening and asking questions to help the child verbalise feelings</li> <li>• helping children to find strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour</li> <li>• supporting children to deal with their own behaviour in relation to others.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S4.1
<b>Criteria</b>	Identify and respond appropriately to health and safety, security, confidentiality, safeguarding and child welfare in line with own responsibilities.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• following the setting's policies and procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ child protection and safeguarding policy</li> <li>○ health and safety policy</li> <li>○ risk assessment policy</li> <li>○ administering medicine policy</li> <li>○ whistleblowing policy</li> <li>○ UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) policy</li> <li>○ acceptable use policy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• following accurate lines of reporting.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

### Assessment justification

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Identify and respond appropriately to health and safety, security, confidentiality, safeguarding and child welfare in line with own responsibilities.

The student demonstrates following:

- the setting's policies and procedures
  - child protection and safeguarding policy
  - health and safety policy
  - risk assessment policy
  - administering medicine policy
  - whistleblowing policy
  - UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) policy
  - acceptable use policy
- accurate lines of reporting.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S4.7
<b>Criteria</b>	Carry out a range of care routines.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining children's dignity and privacy (for example, during nappy changing, toileting)</li> <li>• promoting development by talking through the care routine and reasons for doing it</li> <li>• promoting choices for the child (for example, giving children a choice at mealtimes, snacks).</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

### Assessment justification

The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Plan and carry out care routines for children.

The student demonstrates:

- maintaining children’s dignity and privacy (for example, during nappy changing, toileting)
- promoting development by talking through the care routine and reasons for doing it
- promoting choices for the child (for example, giving children a choice at mealtimes, snacks).

<b>Specification reference</b>	S4.8
<b>Criteria</b>	Promote healthy lifestyles.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	The student demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• providing healthy snacks and drinks</li><li>• role-modelling healthy behaviour</li><li>• providing information and advice to parents</li><li>• encouraging healthy lifestyle activities (for example, physical activities, cooking, growing food, role play)</li><li>• using books to help educate children and parents / carers.</li></ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes

#### **Assessment justification**

The criteria can be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.

Plan and carry out care routines for children.

The student demonstrates:

- providing healthy snacks and drinks
- role-modelling healthy behaviour
- providing information and advice to parents
- encouraging healthy lifestyle activities (for example, physical activities, cooking, growing food, role play)
- using books to help educate children and parents / carers.

<b>Specification reference</b>	S4.10
<b>Criteria</b>	Undertake tasks, ensuring the prevention and control of infection.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates understanding of setting policies and procedures related to prevention and control of infection, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• handwashing</li> <li>• personal hygiene</li> <li>• food hygiene</li> <li>• clearing up waste / spillages and disposing of them safely</li> <li>• use of correct equipment</li> <li>• isolation and exclusion</li> <li>• using correct personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> <li>• knowledge of common childhood illnesses and immunisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be achieved through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Undertake tasks, ensuring the prevention and control of infection.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• handwashing</li> <li>• personal hygiene</li> <li>• food hygiene</li> <li>• clearing up waste / spillages and disposing of them safely</li> <li>• use of correct equipment</li> <li>• isolation and exclusion</li> <li>• using correct personal protective equipment (PPE)</li> <li>• knowledge of common childhood illnesses and immunisation.</li> </ul>	

<b>Specification reference</b>	S5.4
<b>Criteria</b>	Work collaboratively with other professionals to meet the needs of the children and enable them to progress.
<b>Assessed skills</b>	<p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining effective and ongoing communication to discuss child's progress</li> <li>• sharing knowledge, expertise and experience</li> <li>• fulfilling own professional responsibilities</li> <li>• maintaining and updating any relevant records or documentation.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional discussion allowed?</b>	Yes
<b>Assessment justification</b>	
<p>The criteria can only be met through direct observation or professional discussion.</p> <p>Work collaboratively with other professionals to meet the needs of the children and enable them to progress.</p> <p>The student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintaining effective and ongoing communication to discuss child's progress</li> <li>• sharing knowledge, expertise and experience</li> <li>• fulfilling own professional responsibilities</li> <li>• maintaining and updating any relevant records or documentation.</li> </ul>	

## Professional discussion

The purpose of the professional discussion is to ensure that any skills that were not evidenced during the observation can be assessed and will only be conducted when skills that were expected to be seen within the structured observation have not been observed at all. It will act as evidence that the student is aware and is able to reflect on a planned activity that did not entirely go to plan, as well as allow them the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of how they could have performed a skill that they missed the opportunity to perform or evidence during the observation. As such, it is not a mandatory part of the observation. The professional discussion for each observation should only be used where there was no evidence for a particular skill, not to bolster a poor performance of a skill.

When asking questions during the professional discussion, it is important that the questions are accurately phrased and on the topic. They must be formulated in a manner that will allow you to make a judgement as to whether the student has enough knowledge to explain the process, reason and outcome of applying the criteria / skill in a real-life situation.

SAMPLE

## Performance outcome (PO) mapping

Observation	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO4	PO5	Marks
1	15	6				21 marks
2	6	9	6			21 marks
3	3	12		12	3	30 marks
<b>Total:</b>	<b>24 marks</b>	<b>27 marks</b>	<b>6 marks</b>	<b>12 marks</b>	<b>3 marks</b>	<b>72 marks</b>

SAMPLE

## Change history record

Version	Description of change	Approval	Date of issue
v1.0	First published version	09 May 2025	16 June 2025
v2.0	Inclusive change development: branding, headers and footers and copyright updated / moved. Skills rearranged to run in numerical order.	26 March 2026	30 April 2026

SAMPLE

## Document information

Copyright in this document belongs to, and is used licence from, the Department for Education, © 2026.

'T-LEVELS' and 'T Level' are registered trade marks of the Department for Education.

NCFE is authorised by the Department for Education to develop and deliver this T Level Technical Qualification.

'CACHE' is a registered trade mark of NCFE.

SAMPLE