



**Qualifications
and Curriculum**
Development
Agency

Early years foundation stage profile

Local authority moderation requirements booklet for 2009–10

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Introduction

This guidance sets out the procedures and requirements for local authority moderation and key elements of effective practice. It is based on section 6 of the *Early years foundation stage profile handbook* (QCA/08/3657), section 3 of the *2010 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements* (QCDA/09/4395) and additional guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). QCDA is remitted by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to monitor the effectiveness of local authorities' moderation processes for the early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile.

Local authority moderation requirements for 2009–10

Each local authority has to submit its EYFS profile moderation plan to QCDA as part of the QCDA evaluation and planning form. This will be sent to local authorities in April 2010 and needs to be completed and returned to QCDA by 30 July 2010. The completed form should include details of training and moderation events provided by the local authority during 2009–10 and, where possible, details of settings that will be externally moderated.¹

QCDA has a statutory function of keeping under review all aspects of the EYFS assessment arrangements. As part of the exercise of this function, QCDA monitor the effectiveness of local authorities' moderation processes. To fulfil this remit QCDA visits a number of local authorities during the summer term to undertake external moderation of their approaches and procedures. A representative sample of local authorities will be visited. EYFS profile moderation managers of local authorities that make up the sample were informed in December 2009.

The role of the QCDA external moderator is to visit the local authorities that make up the annual national sample and examine approaches to implementation and moderation of the EYFS profile by:

- meeting with the EYFS profile moderation manager and other appropriate personnel to discuss the approaches to moderation, training and support
- attending a moderation visit undertaken by the local authority
- reporting to the QCDA EYFS profile programme leader on the quality of the local authorities' approaches and the robustness of the model employed.

¹ Information regarding this may be supplied separately.

QCDA will make a decision regarding the effectiveness of a local authority's moderation model and the potential reliability and accuracy of its EYFS profile data. QCDA uses information from the evaluation and planning form, along with data analysis, reports from external moderation and support and development officer visit reports to assign each local authority a support category, dependent on the risk to the security of their EYFS profile data. These support categories will be clarified in the QCDA evaluation and planning form.

Local authorities will have the opportunity to access EYFS profile support provided by QCDA. Where the local authority systems for implementation and moderation require development and/or their data is insecure or potentially insecure a support and development officer will be assigned to support the development of an action plan to improve the standard of moderation.

Support and development officers will work alongside appropriate personnel in the local authority, focusing on identifying obstacles to the accuracy of, and confidence in, EYFS profile data. They will then report back to the EYFS profile programme leader on the local authority's progress in relation to the issues identified.

All local authorities will receive a letter informing them of the QCDA decision as to the potential reliability and accuracy of their EYFS profile data and consequent support category. The responses and outcomes in the letter should be used to inform future moderation planning.

Copies of the categorisation letter will be sent to the EYFS profile moderation manager and the person with strategic responsibility for the EYFS profile. The support category assigned to each local authority will be shared with the DCSF.

Informing schools/settings that will receive a moderation visit

Local authorities should inform those schools and settings that are to receive an EYFS profile moderation visit by 31 March 2010. Individual settings can be added to the local authority sample after this date if particular issues arise.

Moderation requirements

The requirements for EYFS profile moderation processes are set out in section 6, 'Moderating EYFS profile judgements' (pages 18-23) of the *Early years foundation stage profile handbook* and in section 3 'Early years foundation stage profile' (pages 11-19) of the *2010 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements*. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in a local authority being categorised as being potentially at risk of inaccurate data due to non-compliance with the requirements for moderation.

Statutory responsibility for moderation

Under the *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage* (May 2008) local authorities have a statutory duty to 'monitor and moderate the EYFS profile judgements to ensure that providers are making assessments that are consistent across settings' (section 2.25, page 17.)

QCDA

QCDA is remitted to oversee the implementation and moderation of the EYFS profile. Under this remit, QCDA produces this booklet for local authorities and ensures that moderation processes are consistent across the country and result in accurate, reliable data.

Local authorities

The statutory responsibility for moderating EYFS profile judgements is held by the local authority.

All practitioners implementing the EYFS profile are entitled to access moderation events. Moderation takes place in the form of

- a visit carried out by a suitably experienced and trained external moderator
- a meeting of a cluster of settings (two or more) at a session organised by a local authority.

Specific guidance and requirements in relation to moderation can be found in the *2010 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements*, section 3.11, page 18.

Local authorities have a responsibility to moderate all 13 scales over a three-year cycle. The suggested schedule for the focus and balance of moderation is set out below.

School year	Moderation focus	Moderation visits	Moderation meetings
2009–10	Personal, social and emotional development (3 scales) Knowledge and understanding of the world (1 scale)	25% of schools <i>(minimum)</i>	75% of schools
2010–11	Communication, language and literacy (4 scales) Creative development (1 scale)	25% of schools <i>(minimum)</i>	75% of schools
2011–12	Problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy (3 scales) Physical development (1 scale)	25% of schools <i>(minimum)</i>	75% of schools

Local authorities may refine and modify both the focus and scales moderated in order to respond to the specific needs of their settings and practitioners. However, moderation should not focus on a specific scale to the exclusion of others and all 13 scales should be moderated as part of a three-year cycle. Local authorities may increase the percentage of schools and settings visited or offer moderation meetings to 100 per cent of practitioners.

Key elements of an effective moderation process

The following table sets out the statutory requirements, key elements and examples of most effective practice required for a robust moderation model. The statutory requirements set out in italics across the top of each section, link directly with the *Statutory framework for the EYFS* (May 2008). The key elements link directly to the guidance within the *EYFS profile handbook* and the *2010 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements*. The examples of most effective practice offer guidance on what constitutes the most effective practice in this context, drawing on real examples from local authorities.

The sections in the table below can be cross-referenced with the evaluation and planning form sent by QCDA to all local authorities at the end of April (to be completed and returned to QCDA before 30 July 2010). As section A requests general contact information, the table starts from section B.

Section B – Moderation plan	
<i>The local authority should plan an annual programme to ensure that their statutory duty in relation to the moderation of EYFS profile judgements is met</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation plan is reviewed, evaluated and developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including those from the independent sector and private and voluntary settings from which EYFS profile data will be collected. • The evaluation of the previous year's moderation process is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stakeholder group includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ local authority colleagues ○ headteachers/managers ○ practitioners

<p>shared with all stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan is responsive to the review of the previous cycle of moderation. • Details of the moderation plan are shared and agreed with schools and settings before implementation. • The moderation plan includes a specific appeals procedure in relation to the moderation of EYFS profile judgements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ moderation team ○ inclusion team ○ independent school leaders ○ private and voluntary setting leaders ○ local authority data teams. • Details of the moderation process are communicated to all relevant stakeholders early in the autumn term. • Information meetings are held for settings that are to receive a moderation visit, before visits take place.
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<p>Sections C and D – Moderation team/inter-authority moderation</p>	
<p><i>In order to carry out the statutory role of moderator, the moderation team should have a thorough understanding and experience of the principles and practice of the EYFS profile</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation manager attends a QCDA inter-local authority moderation conference. • The moderation manager participates regularly in inter-local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pairing arrangements between moderators from different local authorities provide opportunities to promote consistency.

<p>authority moderation activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QCDA exemplification materials are used as part of moderator training to ensure consistency of judgements. • The local authority has an effective process for the recruitment and induction of appropriate moderation team personnel. • The induction process includes opportunities for moderators new to the role to shadow a more experienced moderator. • Moderators are trained and participate regularly in local authority moderation activities, using QCDA conference materials to ensure national consistency. • The moderation team reflects a balance of local authority personnel and serving practitioners who equally fulfil the role of moderator. • Moderators hold QCDA registered moderator status. • The moderation team includes members with appropriate experience in special educational needs and teaching English as an additional language, as appropriate to local circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority provides a mentor moderator. • Moderators participate in regular inter-local authority moderation activities, using QCDA conference materials to ensure national consistency.
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Section E – Specific EYFS profile training	
<i>EYFS profile training is carried out as part of the annual plan to ensure that EYFS profile assessments are carried out in line with the requirements set out in the EYFS statutory framework (section 2.21, page 16)</i>	
Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific EYFS profile training and support is established for the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ practitioners new to the final year of the EYFS ○ newly qualified teachers ○ teaching assistants and support staff working in the final year of the EYFS ○ EYFS leaders ○ year 1 teachers ○ headteachers/managers ○ governors ○ school improvement partners ○ additional groups specific to the local authority (for example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bespoke training is set in a context specific to the needs of the local authority. • Within the local authority, there is an expectation that all stakeholders will attend training to ensure their knowledge and understanding of EYFS profile is up to date. • Where appropriate, particular groups of colleagues might attend training together, for example school improvement partners and headteachers/managers may attend data feedback courses.

<p>practitioners with mixed-age classes in small schools).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems are in place to monitor attendance for all training events and followed-up where appropriate. • QCDA national exemplification materials are used to support training and ensure national consistency with regard to key messages and the accuracy of judgements. 	
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<p>Section F – Moderation cycle</p>	
<p><i>In order to meet the statutory requirement that EYFS profile judgements are moderated to ensure consistency, local authorities should ensure all settings are moderated at least once every four years and that all 13 scales are moderated over a three-year cycle</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to moderating all settings on a four-year cycle, settings with identified problems or other particular circumstances are visited more regularly. Visits are triggered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ position in the four-year cycle ○ presence of newly qualified teachers and practitioners new to reception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools and settings are visited more than once every four years. • The moderation cycle includes opportunities for supportive visits throughout the year as preparation for the final moderation visit, through which the accuracy of judgements is established.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ concerns identified by the headteacher/manager or a school improvement partner/QTS support ○ data anomalies ○ non-attendance at moderation or training events. ● The moderation visit takes place in the summer term to provide evidence toward a greater range of scale points, including scale point 9. ● All practitioners not receiving a moderation visit have sufficient opportunities to participate in moderation activities. ● All practitioners responsible for completion of the EYFS profile take part in moderation activities at least once a year. ● All 13 scales are moderated over a three-year cycle: moderation does not focus on a specific scale at the expense of others. 	
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Section G – School moderation visits

In order to meet the statutory requirement for moderation, local authorities are required to visit at least 25% of schools/settings implementing the EYFS profile, ensuring that all are visited as part of a four-year cycle.

Key elements	Examples of most effective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moderation visit focuses on a professional dialogue between the moderator and practitioner, to establish the accuracy of EYFS profile judgements. • The moderator establishes the accuracy and consistency of practitioner judgements by scrutinising a range of evidence, the majority of which will come from the practitioner's knowledge of the child and observations of the child's self-initiated activities (no more than 20% of the total evidence for each scale point should be gained from adult-directed activity). • Visits take place at a designated time within the school day, with practitioners released for the duration of the visit. • At the time of the visit, the practitioner provides the moderator with a list of the children for whom EYFS profiles have been completed. This is divided into three attainment bands: those children attaining scale points 1-3, those attaining within scale points 4-8 and those attaining 9 scale points within the focus scales. The moderator selects a child's profile from each band as the basis of the moderation dialogue. • Outcomes of internal moderation are considered within the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities ensure that practitioners are familiar with additional QCDA guidance materials and moderators reference these, where relevant, during the moderation visit. • The headteacher/manager, senior leadership team, subject leaders and year 1 teachers participate in the moderation discussion during the moderation visit. • During the visit the headteacher/manager enables all practitioners to meet as a team with the moderator. • Practitioners actively seek contributions from parents or carers and the child and integrate them into the judgements made for the EYFS profile. • The local authority has an effective system to follow up on any advised actions. • Where appropriate, a joint moderation may take place. The sole purpose of this is for the moderator to gain a clearer understanding of the practitioner's observational skills and accuracy of judgement. It is inappropriate for the moderator to observe or talk to the children for the purpose of verification of

<p>moderation dialogue. Moderators establish how settings develop and use internal moderation processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the visit, the moderator informs the headteacher/manager whether the EYFS profile assessment is being carried out in accordance with statutory requirements and whether practitioner judgements are accurate. Where the moderator feels that the assessment is not in line with QCDA exemplification, they ensure that the headteacher/manager reconsiders the practitioner's judgements and arranges further professional development opportunities for the practitioner. 	<p>judgements.</p>
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Section H – Use of alternative assessments

The statutory requirement is that judgements made against the scales should be made from observations of consistent and independent behaviour, predominantly children's self-initiated activities. Additional assessments are not required in order to complete the EYFS profile.

Section I – Model for moderation meetings

As part of their statutory requirement to ensure that EYFS profile judgements are moderated to ensure consistency, local authority moderators should facilitate moderation meetings so that practitioner judgements can be verified in accordance with QCDA exemplification and outcomes recorded.

Key elements

Examples of most effective practice

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings focus on the agreement trialling of evidence provided by practitioners to underpin judgements made in relation to specific scale points. • Practitioners have the opportunity to moderate their own evidence in small groups facilitated by a moderator. They are able to establish the accuracy of their judgements through the discussion. • QCDA exemplification clips are used with practitioners to provide further agreement trialling opportunities and promote the principles of the EYFS profile. • The local authority has a system in place to follow up any concerns raised by those attending moderation meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional meetings take place during the year to provide practitioners with the opportunity to meet the moderators and further their understanding of the focus assessment scales. • Development meetings are provided and include the opportunity for practitioners to raise questions and concerns relating to EYFS profile judgements. • Informal opportunities (for example drop-in sessions) are provided for practitioners and moderators to explore particular issues in more detail. • Headteachers/managers, leadership teams, subject coordinators, assessment leaders and year 1 teachers attend moderation cluster events.
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<p>Section J – Data collection and analysis</p>	
<p><i>Local authorities are required to collect EYFS profile data by 30 June 2010. This collection (and subsequent return to DCSF where required) should be carried out in line with section 3.4 of the 2010 EYFS and KS1 Assessment and reporting arrangements.</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EYFS providers have an appropriate electronic system to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities provide a helpdesk or other means of support for the electronic data collection system, and training is provided

<p>record and submit EYFS profile data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local authority promotes and develops the understanding and use of EYFS profile data to support school development and planning in year 1. As a result of ongoing training and support, all stakeholders, particularly year 1 teachers, school leadership teams, assessment coordinators and subject leaders, should use EYFS profile data effectively and appropriately. The local authority provides EYFS profile data analysis at local and school level. This includes summary data for the school or setting compared with local and national outcomes and indications of trends and areas for development. 	<p>for practitioners new to the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local authority moderation manager has an effective working relationship with both the local authority schools' IT teams and the data analysis teams. Systems for the collection, submission and analysis of EYFS profile data are evaluated and developed each year. Schools and settings receive a data pack that reflects local and national priorities, enables effective evaluation of outcomes and provides appropriate information to support school improvement conversations. Training is provided annually on the use and interpretation of this data.
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<p>Section K – The quality assurance of EYFS profile data</p>	
<p><i>To ensure that the data submitted for each child is an accurate reflection of their attainment the school and local authority should have quality assurance processes in place.</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headteachers/managers take responsibility for the reliability of the EYFS profile outcomes and ensure that the data accurately reflects the attainment of their cohort of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exploration of anomalies reflects an understanding of local circumstances and priorities. Any sampling of data for scrutiny takes place with regard to local intelligence.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority has an effective process for the quality assurance of EYFS profile data before submission to the DCSF. EYFS profile data from schools and settings is scrutinised by the moderation manager and the local authority data team. Apparent anomalies and inconsistencies are identified and highlighted to schools and settings for review and amendment (where necessary). • The local authority scrutinises data at a level of detail that enables anomalies to be identified and investigated. • Amendments to EYFS profile outcomes are made before submission to DCSF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local authority moderation manager has an effective working relationship with both the local authority school's IT team and data analysis team. Systems for the quality assurance of EYFS profile data are evaluated and developed each year. • Training of all stakeholders (including school improvement partners and local authority personnel) on understanding the EYFS profile and the resulting data ensures that the need for accuracy is embedded at all levels.
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<p>Section L – Use of data to support planning in year 1</p>	
<p><i>The primary purpose of the EYFS profile is to inform the year 1 teacher of the attainment of child to ensure that the teacher can 'plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet children's needs'. (EYFS profile handbook page 5.)</i></p>	
<p>Key elements</p>	<p>Examples of most effective practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is provided for year 1 teachers, focused on the understanding and interpretation of EYFS profile outcomes and how these may be used to support transition, provision and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 teachers attend training alongside EYFS practitioners. • Year 1 teachers participate in local authority moderation events.

<p>planning in year 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 teachers participate in internal EYFS profile moderation within the school.• Year 1 teachers understand and use EYFS profile data effectively to ensure they plan a curriculum that meets the needs of all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding is made available to support joint attendance at training for year 1 teachers and EYFS practitioners.• Transition processes are developed and evaluated each year in response to EYFS profile outcomes, to reflect the needs of the current cohort.
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Moderation timetable 2009–10

End of October 2009	QCDA notifies the local authorities that are to receive an external moderation visit
February 2010	Moderation requirements booklet 2009–10 is distributed to local authorities
By 30 March 2010	Local authorities notify the settings that are being moderated in 2010
End of April 2010	QCDA distributes EYFS profile evaluation and planning form to local authority moderation managers
May/June 2010	QCDA moderation visits to the sample of local authorities
30 July 2010	Deadline for local authorities to submit their completed evaluation and planning forms to QCDA
October 2010	QCDA assigns each local authority a support category
October 2010	QCDA provides written feedback on strengths and areas for development, based on each local authority's moderation evaluation
October 2010	EYFS profile support and development officers are allocated to identified local authorities
November 2010	Publication of the QCDA annual monitoring report for EYFS profile (2009–10)