

Moderation Feedback — Visiting

Assessment Panel:

English and Communication

Qualification area:

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
Included in this report**

Standard Grade
NQ English: incomplete evidence only

Visiting Moderation

General comments on visiting moderation activity

In Standard Grade, moderators found, once again, a high degree of consistency with national standards. Moderators commented on the willingness of centres to accept SQA gradings, and discussion was, therefore, constructive. Procedures for Moderation of Standard Grade Talk are now familiar to centres; allied to the moderators' emphasis on the training dimension of the exercise, this has helped to make moderation, for most, positive and enjoyable.

There was no visiting moderation of NQ courses. (All moderation was central.)

Five centres were visited as part of an initial investigation into the moderation of incomplete evidence. Results of the 'pilot' indicate that the exercise was successful; it should be noted, however, that the emphasis in English will continue to be on the moderation of the product or end-of-unit assessment.

Specific issues identified

The videotape of performance (with commentary) for Personal Study (spoken response) is a welcome addition to the National Assessment Bank, a need identified in last year's report.

Moderators occasionally found difficulty in persuading centres, in advance of the Standard Grade moderation, that all staff to be moderated must be available for the duration of the procedure. This will be emphasised in the feedback to centres.

Feedback to centres

In this year's moderation of Standard Grade Talking, most centres selected displayed a high degree of consistency with national standards. Moderators commented on the positive nature of discussions and the willingness of staff to accept SQA gradings and commentaries. It is worth repeating a point made in last year's report: items on the training tape (particularly on recent tapes) are selected to highlight different aspects of assessment, and the emphasis is on performances not easily assigned to one grade or another. It is felt that the training dimension of moderation is best served by that emphasis.

The moderation will require the best part of two hours. All staff to be moderated must be available for the duration of the moderation. The moderator should be notified of any difficulties in advance of the meeting.

Several training tapes have been released since *Young People Talking* was issued to all centres in 1988. Suspicion that the GRC have been in some way diluted over the years is misplaced: this may have arisen as a result of a slight shift in selection policy for the tapes, towards items likely to be more generally helpful. The inclusion, for example, of individual talk far beyond the 'baseline' requirement for Grade 1 was helpful, no doubt, in illustrating what can be achieved, but not perhaps of great assistance in training colleagues in the day-to-day application of the GRC.

Tapes are *not* available from the Moderation section at SQA — those released were issued to local authorities for forwarding to centres.

Once again, departments with procedures in place for internal moderation of standards were often more secure in their assessments than those without.