

# Archiving and benchmarking

## 1. Purpose of benchmarks

Qualification benchmarks have two key purposes:

- a) To ensure that there is a consistent standard being applied by assessors and moderators remains consistent year on year and across a range of centres and candidates
- b) To provide a basis for standardisation and monitoring activities related to supporting the standard

## 2. Benchmarking descriptions

Benchmarking will vary from qualification to qualification depending on the grading mechanism and mark scheme but the principle of obtaining a benchmark for a qualification is to ensure that there are benchmarks for each grade awarded within that qualification at a “bare” and “good” standard within each grade.

“Bare” standard can be described as the candidate who scrapes into the grading band with the minimum (or near minimum) amount of marks or criteria met to achieve that grade.

“Good” standard can be described as the candidate who achieves above the minimum mark or fully achieves the criteria with no question.

## 3. The process of obtaining benchmarks

Benchmarks should be obtained from actual candidate work so that they reflect the standard of work being undertaken by those candidates. It is the job of examiners (where qualifications are externally assessed) and moderators (where qualifications are assessed in a centre) to collect the benchmark evidence.

Benchmarks collected by examiners can be done during an examination session with the permission of the candidate (or their parent/guardian if they are under 18). The examiner will record examinations (usually using a Go-Pro camera) and then review these to ascertain which of the sessions best reflects the “bare” and “good” standard required for that qualification.

They will then notify the Head of Operations at RSL and send in the recordings along with their completed report forms so that the Head of Operations can log and file these as benchmarks. Benchmarks collected during the moderation process will be collated by the Chief Moderator and sent to the Head of Operations so that they can be logged and filed as benchmarks.

## 4. Longevity of benchmarks

Benchmarks should be reviewed on a three yearly basis to ensure that they remain reflective of the standard being achieved by candidates. They will be reviewed by a small sub-group of the Quality Committee who will decide if the benchmarks remain consistent or if new material needs to be collected.

At each of these meetings it would be decided as to which small selection of benchmarks would be retained in perpetuity, all the rest then being deleted from all RSL systems and external channels.

## 5. Use of benchmarks

Benchmarks can be used for training and standardisation of examiners and moderators and as a review tool for the Quality Committee to ensure that marking and assessment remains accurate and consistent across centres, examiners, qualifications and over time. At no time will benchmarks be used in a public forum or for any promotional activities conducted by RSL.

## 6. Storage of benchmarks

Benchmarks will all be stored on the benchmark hard drive facility, which acts as an independent storage for benchmarks only. This storage is secured under standard RSL protocols with high level security software, limited server access and password protected servers.

Each benchmark video will be kept and filed with the relevant exam report form ready for assessment by the Committee as to the validity of it being kept permanently for benchmarking.