Verification & Moderation

Introduction

Our approach to internal verification this year is still underpinned by the SQA document *Internal Verification: A guide for centres* and you are advised to refer to this for further information. However, given the fact that we are now gathering evidence to demonstrate attainment and allocate provisional grades, it is important that we adapt our approach to meet the requirements of the Alternative Certification Model.   The documents in this booklet are aimed to help us to show the whole journey of internal verification for this session and to provide guidance and recording tools to achieve consistency across the school to prepare us for both SQA external verification and the appeals process. Faculties should be using the SQA subject specific guidance for gathering evidence to ensure requirements are met. The process of the internal verification of national qualifications will sit alongside the school and authority verification process for provisional grades.

RECORD OF INTERNAL VERIFICATION OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Guidance Notes

SUBJECT LINK / NETWORK CONTACT

As well as robust internal verification at faculty level, it is good practice to form a link with another school or local network for further reassurance that our school's understanding of standards is matched by colleagues in another centre. This can be an informal arrangement with a contact known to the FL in another school. This process can also be facilitated by NAC if required. Professional dialogue with a colleague would be particularly helpful to verify changes made to the SQA marking schemes in light of pupils' responses. NB single teacher subjects **must** collaborate with another centre for verification activity.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

All staff involved in the delivery of a course should be engaging in professional learning activities to ensure that they understand the standards of assessment and can apply these consistently. Some examples of these are:

- SQA Understanding Standards materials including opportunity to apply standard to exemplar pupil work
- Subject course reports
- Webinars
- Course specifications
- Specimen papers and making schemes
- SQA past papers and marking schemes
- Subject specific guidance on gathering key evidence
- National courses – guidance on gathering key evidence and producing estimates
- SQA Academy online course – QA of estimates for national courses
- SQA Internal Verification toolkit

PLANNED INSTRUMENTS OF ASSESSMENT (in order of weighting)

Record of planning regarding assessment instruments to be used (e.g. evidence from formal assessments carried out under exam conditions compared to class assessments/homework evidence). Agreed criteria must be applied consistently with all candidates by all teachers delivering the course. Consideration should also be given to how the assessment instrument will be used, for example in one sitting on chunked into different sections and administered across different periods.

VERIFICATION PRIOR TO ASSESSMENT PROCESS

All assessments should be moderated before candidates take the assessment to ensure that they meet the 4 principles of assessment:

- **Validity –** appropriate for purpose and does what it is intended to do in terms of measuring attainment against assessment standards
- **Reliability –** consistent from one candidate to the next, from one assessor to the next and from one occasion to the next
- **Practicability -** relatively easy to set up and conduct without undue demands placed on teachers and learners
- **Equitability and fairness –** accessible to all candidates who have the potential to succeed in them an offering equal opportunities to succeed

If you are using the SQA paper on the Secure site, you can presume that the assessment already meets the criteria. However, the answer keys will need to be amended in light of pupils' responses and any changes will need to be verified. The *Record of Assessment Moderation* should be completed for each instrument of assessment.

IDENTIFICATION AND RECORDING OF AAA PUPILS

It is important that at the planning stage for assessments, teachers identify the pupils whom they believe would benefit from additional assessment arrangements to allow them an equal chance of success. While it would be preferable to have evidence of need to refer to, if this has not been possible, centres should look at pre-existing evidence including diagnostic information. A decision to grant assessment arrangements can be made based on the candidate's normal way of working in class and the support that young person would normally receive to access the work. This information will need to be carefully recorded to ensure that we can use it as part of our quality assurance process and where required, in the case of appeals.

STANDARDISATION ACTIVITIES DURING ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Once the instrument of assessment has been moderated, the verification process that looks at the teachers' application of the standard can begin. The role of the verifier or verifier team is to ensure that the assessor's judgements are consistent and reliable. The approach to verification will vary depending on both the subject and what is being assessed. A practical performance in PE for example, will be verified in a different way to a piece of writing in English. Standardisation activities allow any subjectivity and/or discrepancies between assessors' judgements to be identified and allow adjustments to remedy these. Standardisation may include:

Agreement trial: This standardisation exercise is appropriate for product evidence. Assessors consider examples of candidate work, together with the assessment scheme. Any discrepancies or differences in judgement should be discussed to reach a shared understanding.

Blind marking: This standardisation exercise is appropriate for written evidence and aims to reduce any bias by an assessor, however unintentional. There are two ways to carry out blind marking. In one form, the evidence is anonymous as the candidate's details are removed. In the other, more commonly used form, two or more assessors mark the same evidence but are unaware of the mark awarded by the other. Any discrepancies in marks, or application of the marking scheme, are discussed to reach a shared understanding.

Cross assessment: In this standardisation exercise, assessors exchange candidate evidence to review, discuss and agree on the interpretation of the standard. The assessors may have used a different assessment or followed different procedures, but they should be judging candidate evidence against a common standard. Cross assessment can be particularly useful for centres with alternative or satellite centres, or who have a partnership arrangement for qualification delivery.

Double marking: This is similar to blind marking as it generally used with written evidence. In this exercise, assessors exchange the same candidate evidence to check each other's interpretation of the marking scheme and apply a common standard. It can be particularly useful to discuss any borderline decisions.

Dual assessment: In this standardisation exercise, also known as peer assessment, two assessors assess the same candidate. This type of standardisation is particularly appropriate for performance, practical activities and process skills. Each assessor should make an independent initial judgement, discuss any discrepancies and reach a consensus judgement.

Evidence review: In this exercise, the internal verifier collates a range of candidate evidence and asks a group of assessors to discuss any discrepancies between their individual judgements. This allows professional development as well as ensuring a shared understanding. It can be particularly useful for any new qualifications or awards.

All verification activities should be recorded on the *Record of Internal Verification* document.

SAMPLING STRATEGY ADOPTED

The internal verifier should select a sample of candidate evidence to check that each assessor is making consistent decisions in line with national standards. The number of candidates should be proportionate to the total number of candidate entries for that qualification. You may choose a defined number or defined percentage of the total number of candidates. However, a higher level of sampling would be expected in the following circumstances:

- A new qualification to the school
- A member of staff delivering the course for the first time
- Any changes to the course specification/assessment since the last delivery
- Any issues previously identified by internal or external verification

REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

Post-delivery you should reflect on the assessment approach used and the effectiveness of your verification process. Feedback from your team as well as any feedback from external SQA verification should feed into next steps to plan for further improvement and greater consistency in future.

IRVINE ROYAL ACADEMY
INTERNAL MODERATION SENIOR PHASE (Appendix 1)

Candidate's Name		SCN	
Subject		Level	
Unit Assessed			
Evidence provided			
Source			
Marker			
Moderator			

Question/Task	Moderators Comments	Marks awarded	Within Tolerance Y/N

Were any amendments made to the original marking?		Yes	No
If yes, provide details below:			

The above marking has been agreed by both the original marker and the moderator.

Marker's Signature		Date	
Moderator's Signature		Date	
PT Signature		Date	

This completed form should be attached to the candidate's original assessment and retained as evidence.

IRVINE ROYAL ACADEMY
EXTERNAL MODERATION SENIOR PHASE (Appendix 1)

Candidate's Name		SCN	
Subject		Level	
Unit Assessed			
Evidence provided			
Source			
Marker			
Moderator			

Question/Task	Moderators Comments	Marks awarded	Within Tolerance Y/N

Were any amendments made to the original marking?		Yes	No
If yes, provide details below:			

The above marking has been agreed by both the original marker and the moderator.

Marker's Signature		Date	
Moderator's Signature		Date	
PT Signature		Date	

This completed form should be attached to the candidate's original assessment and retained as evidence.