



Brechin High School Senior Phase Assessment Guidelines

Our Vision	Proud to be Brechin
Our Aims	At Brechin High School, we are a friendly, inclusive community. We value learning, wellbeing, and resilience; empowering every student to grow and succeed.
Our Values	Respectful, Ambitious, Responsible

[UNCRC Article 28](#) (Right to Education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Rationale

At Brechin High School we aim to achieve the highest standard of learning, teaching and assessment in order for our learners to be successful. Our assessment guidelines are underpinned by our vision where we are Proud to be Brechin and our values of Responsible, Ambitious and Respectful.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a whole school approach for assessment in senior school. These guidelines should also complement the ones set out in our Brechin Framework for Learning guidelines.

Underpinning Principles

- A range of assessment strategies should be used by staff to allow learners to know how to achieve success in their learning
- Assessment should be continuous, linked to learning goals and feedback based on assessment judgements provided to learners in order for them to improve
- Assessment arrangements should ensure that the full range of achievements of all learners can be recognised
- **Key pieces of assessment** should be robust, meet Qualification Scotland standards and staff should collect and retain evidence. Evidence should be stored for at least 3 weeks beyond the qualification completion date unless contacted by an external verifier (https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/qualifications-scotland-evidence-retention-requirements.pdf). Evidence should be stored securely meeting GDPR requirements.
- A process of **moderation & internal verification** should be built into each faculty to ensure the highest standards of assessment are used and all staff have an understanding of the standards (see BHS moderation & verification policy)
- Each faculty should have an **assessment plan** for senior school which states when key pieces of assessment will be carried out by learners

Exemplification of key principles of these guidelines

Key pieces of assessment

A key piece of assessment is one which meets the following criteria:

- meets Qualification Scotland standards. This could be an assessment which has been produced by a faculty and then verified by Qualifications Scotland or Qualifications Scotland past paper questions which link to the assessment standard being assessed. The same marking instructions should be applied consistently by staff and retained as part of candidate evidence
- key assessment has been moderated. A faculty discussion has taken place to ensure that the key piece of assessment meets the assessment criteria and assesses the standard being assessed
- the key assessment has previously been unseen to the learner (i.e. this is the first time they have attempted it)
- conditions of assessment are recorded. Faculty should record and retain the condition of the assessment and ensure they meet Qualification Scotland standards. This includes conditions such as the date, length of time given for assessment, calculator or non calculator, ASN requirements etc
- moderation of learner responses to key pieces of assessment must take place, see below

Moderation & Internal Verification

Building the Curriculum 5 states that “**Moderation** is the term used to describe approaches for arriving at a shared understanding of standards and expectations”. It also states that “Moderation helps to ensure that there is an appropriate focus on outcomes for learners, that learning is at the appropriate level and that learners develop the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, including higher order thinking skills, which will allow them to be successful in the future. Teachers involved in developing their assessment approaches through participation in moderation activities is a highly effective form of professional development”

“**Verification** is one of a range of quality assurance measures used by SQA to confirm that assessment tasks and activities provide learners with fair and valid opportunities to meet the standards. It is the term used to describe the approaches to ensuring that centres' assessment decisions are valid and reliable and are in line

with national standards" *Building the Curriculum 5; a framework for assessment Quality Assurance and Moderation* (2010)

Each faculty should have a process for **internal verification** which is built into the quality assurance calendar, has the valid checks in place and allows for all staff to be consistent in their assessment decisions in the same SQA qualification. See appendix 1 for a practical example.

See the [National Verification Toolkit](#) and the BHS moderation & verification policy if you need more guidance with internal verification.

Assessment Plan

An assessment plan outlines the frequency and time at which key pieces of assessment are carried out by learners.

The following outlines the expectation in Brechin High School regarding the number of key pieces of assessment:

- Term 1: 1 key piece of assessment
- Term 2: 2 key pieces of assessment
- Term 3: 2 key pieces of assessment
- Term 4: if time allows then at least one more key piece of assessment

Each PT should record when the key pieces of assessment are being carried out on the PTC QA calendar (this may also be carried out by a member of SLT). In order for there to be a whole school overview and try to manage learner workload.

Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team to have an overview of the assessment plans and manage these to support learners. SLT will also be responsible for ensuring moderation and internal verification processes are taking place in faculties and that the systems are robust

Principal Teachers of Curriculum (PTC)

It is the responsibility of PTC to put in place the moderation and internal verification processes and that the key pieces of assessment meet the criteria. The PTC must ensure that their faculty quality assurance calendars include these processes.

Teachers

It is the responsibility of teachers to engage with the moderation and internal verification processes. Teachers are also responsible for ensuring that appropriate assessment support is put in place for learners with additional support needs. Please see the school's assessment arrangements policy for more details on how to support learners who require alternative assessment arrangements.

References to National Resources

Education Scotland

Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment (2011)

Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment. Quality Assurance & Moderation (2010)

National Qualifications Internal Verification Toolkit

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/74670.html>

SQA Evidence Retention Requirements

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/qualifications-scotland-evidence-retention-requirements.pdf

Appendix 1

An example of practice from our Maths Faculty

- Draft key pieces of assessment are created, followed by a moderation process which includes the following:
 - discuss reasons for assessment and come to a shared understanding
 - Agree that assessment techniques are valid and fit for purpose
 - Agree the assessment standards being assessed
 - Agree that the assessment is robust and assesses the standards
 - Agree on the spread of grade related questions e.g. 65% C grade and 35% A/B grade questions
- Key pieces of assessment are redrafted and finalised in light of the moderation process
- Pupils complete the assessment, teachers mark using shared and agreed marking instructions. Consideration should be given to how the marking is shared e.g. marking shared across faculty with one member of staff marking questions 1 to 5, and another marking 6 to 10 or building in blind marking

activities where staff all mark the same learners work and then marking is compared

- Verification process will now take place, samples of work selected for example two very good examples, two average examples and two lower examples. These are remarked within faculty, discussions are then held regarding any inconsistencies between the marking scheme and staff's interpretation
- Feedback given to pupils
- Data entered into Faculty Spreadsheet and papers stored in file - GDPR secure (SQA cupboard has been discussed for this use before so appeal info can be found instantly by SQA DHT)