



Internal Assessment Report 2010: BAC Languages (457)

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

National Qualifications (NQ) Units

Titles/levels of NQ Units verified

F784: Languages: Interdisciplinary Project (SCQF level 7)

General comments

In this first session of the qualification, 14 centres submitted projects for 19 candidates. The assessment decisions of 13 centres were accepted, and it was recommended to one centre that one grading decision be reviewed as it was judged to be harsh. This shows a clear and accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards, which was greatly enhanced by the support event which SQA ran in February, attended by all delivering centres. At the event, centres were given the opportunity to work in groups, facilitated by two EVs and a Quality Enhancement Manager per group, and to discuss exemplar materials with a view to establishing an understanding of the national standard and the assessment requirements.

The SQA website has dedicated pages for the Baccalaureates which contain the Unit specifications and Assessment Support Packs, including project templates and exemplar projects. Centres used these materials extensively and commented on their usefulness. In addition, all delivering centres attended a support event in February 2010 which involved an in-depth study of the assessment requirements, the Unit specifications, the project templates and the exemplars. There was adequate time for discussion and questions. Feedback from centres indicated that they had a good understanding of the Unit requirements and the national standards as a result of the activities carried out at the event.

All centres used the SQA templates for each stage of the project, which gave clear instructions on the Evidence Requirements. There were also opportunities during support events and visits to centres by the Baccalaureate Development Manager to discuss and clarify requirements.

In a small number of cases, elements such as timescales or the presentation template were omitted, although referred to in other parts of the documentation. In these cases feedback was given to centres through the EV report.

All centres used SQA templates and assessed in accordance with the evidence criteria provided by SQA for each stage of the project.

The internal verification process was found to be robust in all centres, but in some cases this had not been clearly enough documented. However, EVs were able to draw on information provided by the centre representatives during the Quality Forum event.

Many centres took a group approach to internal verification, in a number of cases working with colleagues delivering the Science Bacculaureate or with colleagues from other disciplines.

Feedback was also sought from external partners or contacts with whom the candidates had worked.

In some cases internal verifier comments were included on final assessment sheets, which was very informative during the central verification process. Centres were reminded to include both assessors' and internal verifiers' signatures along with the date on all projects.

Centres were commended on their approach to internal quality assurance, which helped to ensure that the appropriate level had been attained by the candidates and that assessment decisions were in accordance with the assessment criteria.

Areas of good practice

The high quality and range of assessors' comments matched against the criteria was useful and informative and also highlighted how the candidates' skills had developed throughout the project.

Frequent mentoring and monitoring of candidates was evident and commended. This did not detract, but rather enhanced the autonomous work carried out by candidates.

Timescales were detailed and realistic, as were the candidates' objectives. The candidates chose a range of interesting project themes. In the case of oral presentations, in many centres the audience was asked to complete an evaluation sheet to contribute to the assessment process. In one case the candidate submitted a summary of the audience feedback along with the product template, which was innovative and interesting to read.

Centres were congratulated on their management of the project, their mentoring of candidates, the detailed evidence provided and the robust nature of their internal quality assurance procedures, all in the first year of the award. Their approach greatly facilitated the central verification process.

Areas for improvement

A number of development areas were identified as follows:

- ◆ The importance of the inclusion of timescales, which is one of the minimum criteria, was stressed, as in some cases these were scant or merely referred to.
- ◆ Two project themes were considered to be more suitable as background topics or folio pieces rather than Interdisciplinary Projects, so the centres

concerned were strongly advised to be cognisant of this and to give better guidance to future candidates.

- ◆ Centres were reminded to submit evidence for all five stages of the project and to include assessors' comments on the documentation for all five stages.
- ◆ At the proposal stage of the project, candidates should also include details of how their skills are to be developed.
- ◆ The internal verification processes were found to be robust in all centres, but in some cases this had not been clearly enough documented. This was fed back to centres through the EV report.