

Baccalaureate Support Event Report

Introduction

A support event was held on 24 February 2011 in the Radisson Hotel in Glasgow. The event was aimed at centres delivering the Baccalaureates in Science and Languages in session 2010–11 and focused on assessment and quality assurance. Sixty-eight delegates attended the event from forty-five centres but there was also representation from local authorities, Scottish Government and the higher education sector.

Presentations

The event was introduced by Robert Quinn, Head of Humanities and Business, who welcomed the delegates and talked about the increase in candidate numbers and the excellent work being done by centres. He also referred to the quality assurance model which has been developed for the Baccalaureates and which features a collaborative approach, something which could be adopted for other qualifications. Robert described the day's events related to assessment, quality assurance and understanding standards and introduced Lorna Grant, the Baccalaureate Development Manger.

Lorna gave a presentation which described the quality assurance model for 2011 which included information on internal quality assurance, the central event, the quality forum model, and post forum procedures. She also directed delegates to the Centre Guide which is on the Baccalaureate pages of [SQA's website](#). Lorna reminded delegates that candidates' grades for the Interdisciplinary Project should be submitted by 31 March 2010. Centres will then be advised of the projects which have been selected for central verification — currently all delivering centres will be selected but a maximum of six IPs per centre. SQA will arrange to uplift the mandatory candidate evidence from centres on the 27 April 2011. All delivering centres will then be invited to attend a quality forum in May 2011. Before the quality forums, SQA's External Verifiers will attend a central event which will give them the opportunity to read the candidate evidence in detail and select projects to take to the quality forum. The quality forum is part of the collaborative approach to assessment relevant to the Baccalaureates. It is envisaged that this will be very valuable to centres as it will provide the opportunity to share information about the assessment and internal verification processes operating in centres and to contribute to central verification by taking part in a peer review of projects. The quality forum will further develop an understanding of national standards as well as enabling a sharing of good practice. After the quality forum EVs will attend a report writing event where they will take feedback from the quality forum into account, finalise their verification decisions and communicate these to centres via a Central Verification Report. **For details please select Lorna's presentation.**

Margo Lindsay, Senior Verifier for the Baccalaureates, gave an overview of the different models of internal verification which had been adopted by centres across the country. Some examples are as follows:

- ◆ In two local authorities, schools have formed networks, supported by the Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) to share ideas and carry out internal verification as a group.
- ◆ Some centres have a team of staff, from a subject area or a variety of subject areas, supporting candidates. This team will contribute to the assessment and internal quality assurance.
- ◆ In a school where only one member of staff has responsibility for the Baccalaureate, contact has been made with another school in a similar position to carry out mutual quality assurance.
- ◆ Where both the Science and Languages Baccalaureates are being delivered in a centre, there are examples of the staff in both subject areas working together to internally verify the assessment decisions.

Margo then invited representatives from four centres to describe their internal quality assurance models:

- ◆ Patrick Lawlor from Forth Valley College (working in partnership with eight schools) is working with two colleagues to deliver the Interdisciplinary Project to 20 candidates. Each lecturer has responsibility for a group of candidates but they have worked very closely as a team. In accordance with the college quality procedures, they have appointed a Lead Lecturer for the Unit; they hold regular quality meetings and record any action points on a meeting note. The three staff will also quality assure each other's assessment decisions. This process will be recorded on a standardised quality assurance sampling form.
- ◆ Paul Middleton, Languages Co-ordinator with Glasgow City Council has led a group of four Glasgow City schools in the delivery of the Languages Baccalaureate this year. The schools have worked closely together, sharing ideas, attending tutorials on aspects of project management, taking part in a EuroSCOLA project in Strasbourg, attending pupil presentations, and also sharing internal quality assurance.
- ◆ Deborah Keys from Dollar Academy is one of two tutors for the Science Baccalaureate. As well as sharing ideas and discussing issues within their own department, Deborah and her colleague have also made contact with other schools which has been mutually valuable. As the Languages Baccalaureate is also being delivered in Dollar, the Science and Languages staff have agreed to work together to quality assure the assessment decisions. Deborah pointed out that when she is looking at a Languages project it is easier to focus on the generic skills development and the process of learning which have taken place rather than getting caught up in the specifics of the subject.
- ◆ Jennifer Molloy and Sarah Masson from Jordanhill School are members of a team of interdisciplinary staff supporting Baccalaureate pupils in both Science and Languages. The team consists of staff from the Science, Languages, History, IT and English departments, who share the mentoring of pupils, assessment and

internal verification. This collective approach provides pupils with a broad base of support but is also appreciated by the staff themselves. The team has set up a user group on GLOW which enables pupils to store their project work, communicate with staff and with one another.

Workshop sessions

Delegates then moved into workshops, which consisted of representatives from both Science and Languages and an External Verifier. The workshop activities looked at project examples from the 2009–10 session, considered the elements required for an A, B or C grade. They also looked at Assessor comments and shared examples of good practice. The workshop sessions were very successful as they led to valuable discussion, an opportunity for questions, and an improved understanding of standards.

There was time throughout the day for delegates to network, share ideas and experiences. The feedback from the event was extremely positive. Of the delegates who completed evaluation forms, all were satisfied or very satisfied with the event. Many commented that the day was invaluable in clarifying issues related to assessment and providing a greater understanding of standards.