



Internal Assessment Report: Biology Investigation (Advanced Higher)

Sector Panel or SSC: Biology

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

National Units

Titles/levels of National Units verified

Biology Investigation (Advanced Higher)

General comments

In a move away from retrospective verification, several centres were visited prior to Course completion in February/March 2008. The positive feedback from centres led to the verification process being extended in 2009, with an increase in the number of visiting verifiers and the number of centres being visited.

The majority of centres visited provided incomplete evidence and appreciated the feedback given to complete the internal verification process with more confidence and success.

In the centres visited, the candidates were aware of the uniquely valuable learning experience that the investigation component of their Course offered. Many candidates enjoyed a productive relationship with staff, technicians, fellow candidates and other students. Restraints on teaching time may have contributed to noticeable differences between centres in the responsibility for planning, experimentation and write-up of practical work.

In all centres visited, candidates and staff enjoyed regular verbal interaction, and candidates had all been issued with the 'Advice to Candidates' and 'Advanced Higher Biology Investigation Guidance' documents prior to starting their practical work.

All candidates interviewed were aware of the need to keep a daybook, but there was variable appreciation of the Advanced Higher requirements for internal assessment of this record of work.

In each of the centres, the need for assessment was appreciated and the candidates were aware of the Performance Criteria to be achieved.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

- ◆ Internal verification is encouraged. Where there is a single member of staff involved with the Advanced Higher presentation, some form of peer group monitoring/verification is worthwhile.
- ◆ Staff should use a Performance Criteria checklist and indicate in the daybook where each Performance Criteria is achieved.
- ◆ In the initial verbal discussions, the class teacher should initial and date the candidate record of discussion/advice given.
- ◆ Hazards and problems should be discussed and recorded.
- ◆ Clear aims, thorough planning and appropriate procedures should be documented.

- ◆ Raw data should be laid out, with all tables correctly presented with appropriate headings and Units.
- ◆ Each entry needs to be dated.
- ◆ To achieve Outcome 2, analysis of experimental information is required.
- ◆ No duplication of work is needed — photocopies of relevant data/tables can be attached.