



Scottish Baccalaureate Interdisciplinary Project

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022–23

Science

Verification group number: 458

General comments

The Interdisciplinary Project in Science continues to be the most popular of the subject areas with the highest number of candidates being presented. The level of experience in presenting candidates is evident in the high accuracy rate in grading decisions.

Course arrangements, unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

Information on all of the above is available on the SQA website, and it is recommended that all assessors revisit the material annually. Attendance at Understanding Standards events has assisted in new assessors developing knowledge of the Interdisciplinary Project requirements as well as refreshing knowledge in more experienced assessors.

When using exemplar material, centres should bear in mind that the materials are the same across all four Baccalaureate subject areas, therefore candidates and assessors should use exemplification from subjects other than their own speciality.

Evidence requirements

Most centres have a sound understanding of the evidence requirements. Issues previously arising regarding inclusion of separate timeline sheets now rarely occur, however a few centres continue to submit progress logs, interim reviews and actual projects which are not required.

When submitting evidence for external verification, centres should use the provided checklist to assist with the submission of material. This will ensure that all seven relevant pieces of evidence are included in the submission.

Administration of assessments

Almost all centres administer the assessments well and many have a strong cross-curricular group of mentors and assessors supporting candidates. This also means that generally there is a robust internal verification procedure in place, which leads to sound grading decisions.

The quality of the internal verification documents submitted varies greatly. Quite a few centres were advised that their documentation must be specific to the procedure surrounding the Interdisciplinary Project and not a more general centre or even a local authority policy. A few centres failed to submit this documentation, leading to a hold being placed on results until an internal verification document was submitted.

Areas of good practice reported in 2022–23

It is clear that centres which have presented over several years are taking on board the development points from their outcome report to improve their practice, resulting in greater accuracy of grading.

A few centres submitted very good documentation relevant to their internal verification of the Interdisciplinary Project. Inclusion of information relating to the number of candidates, the assessors and internal verifiers and timings/milestones was clear and concise.

There were some particularly interesting sounding projects this year, covering a wide range of topics. Some were more interdisciplinary in nature than others and assessors/mentors need to ensure that a candidate does not focus too tightly on what might be a specific area of interest.

Specific areas for improvement reported in 2022–23

It is evident that some internal verification could be more robust. An internal verifier should be distanced from the project and have a sound understanding of the grading criteria. This will ensure that internal verification is independent and grade awards reflect the evidence available.

Some Interdisciplinary Projects submitted are built on a project undertaken as part of an AH science course. These projects generally offer limited scope with fewer links and fewer opportunities to access different learning environments and for strong research techniques. Candidates should be advised that projects should have sufficient strands to allow them to access as many grading criteria as possible. Candidates should carry out some initial research to check on the viability of their chosen project idea prior to embarking on their project.

When a candidate becomes more interested in one aspect of their research, it can change the focus of the project. Candidates should be aware that this can sometimes limit the relevance of the project and impact on its viability.

Assessors would find it useful to annually refresh their understanding of the instruments of assessment and the assessment criteria using exemplar material. This would improve accuracy in gradings, particularly in the awarding of a grade B.