



**National Qualifications 2016  
Internal Assessment Report  
Scottish Baccalaureate in  
Languages**

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

# National Qualifications units

Scottish Baccalaureate in Languages: Interdisciplinary Project

## General comments

This year 18 centres were selected and submitted evidence for external verification.

These centres presented a total of 36 candidates in the Languages Interdisciplinary Project and external verifiers agreed with the grading decisions for 26 projects (72%). Thirteen centres made accurate grading decisions for all of their candidates demonstrating a clear and accurate understanding of the standards.

Issues were identified with assessment decisions in five centres. Assessment decisions for two candidates in two centres were deemed to have been severe and a higher grade was recommended. For two candidates in one centre the assessment decisions were deemed to have been lenient and a lower grade was recommended. A further two centres were erratic in their assessment decisions, severe in some cases and lenient in others.

## Unit specification, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

With many centres having now presented for several years there is a good knowledge of the unit specification and the assessment materials. A number of new centres must also be commended for their understanding of the assessment procedures and successful implementation of the Interdisciplinary Project.

At the quality forum event, centre representatives demonstrated their familiarity with the materials available and made valuable contributions to discussions. They appreciated the opportunity to interact with external verifiers and assessors from other centres to further develop their knowledge and experience. Both assessors and candidates in all centres had made good use of the exemplar material.

## Evidence requirements

Most centres have a good understanding of the evidence requirements for the unit with all mandatory pieces of evidence and an assessor report submitted for each candidate. External verifiers commented on the quality of evidence produced by some candidates who completed some creative and interesting projects.

From the evidence submitted it is clear that some centres need to ensure that candidates, when completing the templates, remain focused on the process and not the product. Where a candidate's evidence contains more detail about presentations and the manner in which the project was conducted, rather than

the skills developed through completing the project, it is harder for the candidate to show that they are meeting the grading criteria.

Interim reviews, progress logs and in some cases surveys and reports are still frequently submitted along with the mandatory evidence. These are not required and are not taken into consideration during central verification. Where appropriate, centres have been advised of this in their external verification report.

### **Administration of assessments**

All centres submitted evidence using the Languages template from the SQA website.

Centres have developed a wide variety of approaches to the internal verification process, with some centres providing excellent examples of inter-departmental verification. Where centres are presenting in multiple curricular areas, internal verification has expanded to include departments presenting in Science, Expressive Arts and Social Sciences. This practice helps to strengthen the assessment and internal verification process as well as enhance expertise within the centre.

Most assessor reports contained high quality comments which were very helpful to the external verification process; however, centres should ensure that the comments within the assessor report are directed at verifiers — both internal and external — and not to the candidate.

### **Areas of good practice**

Many centres are becoming more experienced in delivery of the Interdisciplinary Project and are taking on board good practice that has been discussed or recommended at the quality forum events or in the external verifier report in previous years.

External verifiers have commented on the well-developed connections which have been made out with the school environment, and on the interesting interdisciplinary connections being made by some candidates such as sustainable tourism and business. Project titles included 'Tourists of Mass Destruction: Do tourists help or hinder historical preservation?' and 'A comparison of the benefits of major music festivals in Scotland and Spain'.

Centres are supporting candidates well and providing motivating feedback. The enthusiasm for the Interdisciplinary Project shown at the quality forum event was encouraging for the future of the qualification.

### **Specific areas for improvement**

Some centres need to encourage their candidates to be more interdisciplinary and not embark on projects which are too language based. These types of projects tend to be narrow in scope and restrict access to grading criteria. There are some excellent examples of broad projects in the exemplar material which take candidates into a wide range of learning environments.

Centres should encourage candidates to use the italic prompts to help them structure their input. This has been highlighted in external verification reports where appropriate.

The provision of assessor comments in the assessor report is crucial in giving insight into the assessor's grading decisions. The lack of comments should be evident at internal verification as any verification process is reliant on them. Where a lack of comments has not been highlighted by the internal verifier and subsequently added, it questions the robustness of the internal verification process.