**AA Policy Example 1 – Full Policy**

**Background**

This is an example of the kind of policy that many centres use.

**Good practice**

* It includes a clear timeline and refers to assessment arrangements support during BGE. This gives confidence that the centre is considering all assessment arrangements — not only when sitting external assessments.
* National 3 and 4 candidates with assessment arrangements are also sampled during verification.
* Clarity around when it is not appropriate to gather evidence 'with and without support' is included.
* There’s information about the ‘last revision’ and ‘next revision’ on the front sheet. This shows that there is a regular review of the policy as part of a programme of continuous improvement.

**How could you personalise this for your centre?**

* The document mentions a candidate ‘opt out’ form. How do you record decisions made by learners who decide not to use the assessment arrangements provided?
* The document mentions an ‘AA focus week’ in September. Would you remove that section, or would you add in a week like that into your annual assessment arrangements calendar?
* The document says the educational psychologist will take part in the verification meetings. This may not be possible in your centre and it is not an SQA requirement, so would you remove that section?
* Are there other people you work in partnership with that you would include in your policy, such as school-college partnerships?

***Please note: the use of this resource is not a mandatory SQA requirement.*** *It is provided here for your information only, as an example of the way one centre implements their AA policy or procedures. If you would like to use this resource, please feel free to adapt it in any way that suits your centre.*

Assessment Arrangements Guidelines

**Supporting the SQA Quality Assurance Process**

NEXT REVISION:

LAST REVISION:

**CONTENTS**

1. Context and Principles
2. Key Contacts
3. Identifying AA
4. Delivering AA
5. Quality Assuring AA
6. Managing AA
7. SQA Guidance

# Context and Principles

These guidelines set out our approach to identifying, delivering and quality assuring Assessment Arrangements (“AA”).

These guidelines align with the following SQA documents:

* + SQA (August 2019): Quality Assurance of Assessment Arrangements in Internal and External Assessments: Information for Schools
  + SQA (August 2019) Assessment Arrangements Explained: Information for Centres

# Context

Our AA approach and procedures are outlined in these guidelines with the intention of demonstrating how we will support candidates, parents, and carers throughout the academic yearand at different stages of secondary school in both the Broad General Education and Senior Phase.

Our AA guidelines are designed as a guide to assist all members of our school community as well as illustrating how we will support and safeguard our learners and quality assure our AA approach.

SQA and the school have a responsibility to ensure that assessment, including that leading to certification, is rigorous and fair for all candidates, enabling them to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding required for progression in learning or national qualification award. It is therefore important that AA are only provided to those candidates identified as having a physical (including medical or sensory), behavioural, mental health or additional support need that prevents them from accessing learning, an assessment and demonstrating their attainment. Our guidelines will help ensure that all learners haveequitable access to the curriculum and assessment by providing support and solutions to remove barriers to learning.

Our guidelines link to the features of highly effective practice exemplified in HGIOS 4 (Education Scotland, 2015) How good is our school? (4th edition) (education.gov.scot), specifically:

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment QI 2.4 Personalised Support

QI 2.6 Transitions

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement

Our procedures also correspond to the National Improvement Framework, specifically:

* + Improvement driver 3 - parental engagement
  + Improvement driver 4 - assessment of children’s progress
  + Improvement driver 5 - school improvement

In addition, our guidelines and procedures support all four NIF improvement priorities of raising attainment for all, closing the attainment gap, improving young people’s health and wellbeing and improving employability.

# Principles

The five key principles that underpin our AA guidelines focus on the need to remove barriers for candidates who are disabled or who have ASN, providing them with an equal opportunity to access their learning and assessments.

# Principle 1: AA are intended to enable candidates to demonstrate their attainment, not to compensate for lack of attainment.

AA must be considered in the context of the distinction between a candidate’s attainment and that of their ability to demonstrate their attainment under assessment conditions. AA are agreed before an assessment takes place and allow candidates with additional support needs to access the assessment and show the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired.

AA are not designed to compensate for a candidate not having acquired the key skills, knowledge and understanding of the qualification concerned.

# Principle 2: AA must not compromise the integrity of the qualification.

AA must be considered in the context of the assessment standards or competence standards for each qualification. AA must not compromise these standards or undermine theintegrity of the assessment or the credibility of the award. All relevant stakeholders, includingcandidates, must have confidence that the qualification that is awarded to a candidate provides a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills, understanding and competence of thatcandidate.

# Principle 3: AA must be tailored to meet a candidate’s individual needs.

AA must be considered in the context of the individual assessment needs of a candidate in each different subject area. As part of the overall support offered to them, candidates should have an assessment arrangement plan, considered subject by subject, with no assumption that the same kind or level of support will be required in every case. Subjects and their

methods of assessment may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. This is why we must consider the candidate’s need for AA on a subject-by-subject basis and, in collaboration with the subject specialist, make a judgement about the difficulties the candidate will experience in the specific assessment. This will require due consideration of the candidate’s achievements in the subject concerned and the extent to which the published assessment arrangements will prevent the candidate demonstrating these achievements.

# Principle 4: AA should reflect, as far as possible, the candidate’s normal way of learning and producing work.

AA must be considered in the context of the on-going support the candidate needs to access teaching and learning. There should be continuity between the candidate’s need for support in everyday learning and need for additional support in their assessment. AA that are put in place should, where possible, reflect the ongoing support given to the candidate in their class.

However, there may be situations where a candidate’s particular type of support provided in the learning environment is not acceptable in an assessment. For this reason, it is very important that candidates are aware of, and have practice in, working in a way that reflects what could be permitted as support in the assessment situation.

# Principle 5: Our AA guidelines sit within the GIRFEC principles of staged intervention.

Universal assessment relates to most candidates and is accessible within everyday planning, teaching and learning

Additional assessment is where candidates require AAs which allow them to access material anddemonstrate their true potential and ability within a curricular area

Extended, enhanced and specialised assessment for candidates with ASN often involves other support agencies in supplementing the assessment information which teachers have alreadygathered.

# Key Contacts

Supporting and delivering AA entitlements are responsibilities of all teaching staff. In addition, the following staff have specific and whole-school AA responsibilities:

* + ​
  + ​
  + ​
  + ​
  + ​

Relevant school staff are required to identify candidates who are eligible for AA, verify the needfor a particular AA and quality assure the AA process to ensure that no candidate is disadvantaged or unfairly advantaged. This will include classroom teachers, curriculum leaders, candidate support teachers and year heads at different stages.

It may also involve multi-agency input and support from partner agencies and other professionals, such as educational psychologists. Importantly, it will also involve parents/ carers and the candidate.

# SQA Contacts

If you have a question about AAA and SQA policy, please contact the SQA team as below:

Tel: 0345 213 6890

Email [aarequests@sqa.org.uk](mailto:aarequests@sqa.org.uk)

General advice can be found at: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>

# Identifying AA

The process of AA identification will begin as early as possible and will include any necessary information gathering as part of the P7 into S1 transition or enhanced transition arrangements. Candidates who require AA may be identified at any stage of their school career, but early identification and intervention is important.

The following people have a key role to play in the AA identification process:

* candidate
* parent or carer
* support for learning teacher
* support for learning leader
* class teacher
* curriculum leader
* support for candidate leader
* candidate support assistant
* senior leadership team
* link educational psychologists
* professionals from other partner agencies

An important part of the identification process will centre on the quality of individual candidate planning and record keeping which may include:

* contextual assessment used to identify ASN
* action points/outcomes of review meetings
* Co-ordinated Support Plan
* Childs Plan
* evidence and supporting documentation from partner agencies

Candidates and parents/carers should participate in the identification process.

A valuable part of gathering information on individual candidates is effective liaison between colleagues.

Candidates attending specialist provision are likely to require AA. In the case of

off-campus or shared placements, it is essential that staff in both placements discuss and agree appropriate support and AA.

Candidates in Enhanced Support Bases are likely to require AA. It is essential that staff work collaboratively with relevant partner agencies to inform and guide this process.

AAA should be used to support the candidate to demonstrate their true level of ability across all the levels of CfE and in National Qualifications.

AA should reflect the day to day provision made for the candidate within teaching and learning. When identifying candidates who are eligible for AA, emphasis should be on enabling candidates to work as independently as possible.

The following indicators may prove helpful in identifying candidates who require AA:

* + a higher level of comprehension than reading accuracy
  + a greater ability in verbal responses than written work
  + an inability to write legibly
  + an inability to remain focused on and complete a task within a given time frame
  + a significantly slow rate of information processing, reading and/or writing
  + a display of significant agitation in the context of a formal assessment
  + a specific language impairment
  + a physical, medical, visual or hearing impairment which prevents the candidate fromdemonstrating their true level of attainment
  + co-ordination and motor planning difficulties
  + a specific difficulty with spelling
  + temporary additional support needs related to a recent trauma
  + requires the use of a bilingual dictionary and extra time
  + family history of additional support needs
  + difficulty recalling mathematical sequences
  + difficulty carrying out simple calculations in practical situations and on paper
  + a clear discrepancy across subject areas
  + lifelong additional support need

Teaching and candidate support staff must be satisfied that they have the curricular and assessment evidence to support the candidate’s AA entitlement. This information should be contained within relevant contextual assessment to be reviewed and updated regularly.

We must consider the motivation of the candidate along with other factors. For some candidates having access to AA may give them the motivation to continue attending school on a regular basis in the knowledge that they have the potential to achieve their personal best and levels of attainment commensurate with their ability.

The SfL Leader has a crucial role in the collation, co-ordination, and dissemination of information on candidates entitled to AA at all stages. Every member of teaching/support staff has a professional responsibility to ensure they are fully aware of the AA entitlements in place for candidates. This information is available on the school ed ICT confidential system.

# Transition Support for Candidates

Identification of candidate ASN is made in liaison with our cluster primaries as part of our well- established transition support arrangements. Staff liaise with primary schools and relevant partner agencies to ensure that P7 candidates who require additional support or AA are identified and effective arrangements put in place to support their transition to S1. The school will also liaise with college and university to share information on a candidate’s ASN/AA to ensure that appropriate support is in place at their post-school destination.

# Delivering AA

After appropriate consultation, the school will determine how the candidate's ASN will be supported and which AA are appropriate across the curriculum.

AA may include:

* + adapted assessment papers
  + digital question papers
  + ICT using appropriate software (with/without spellchecker)
  + bilingual dictionary or translator app on school iPad
  + additional use of calculator
  + extra time/rest breaks
  + separate accommodation
  + prompt to keep candidates on task
  + reader/e-reader/scribe
  + transcription/transcription with correction
  + communication devices

Candidates who are eligible for AA should have regular opportunities to access AA as part of theireveryday learning. Candidates will require training and practice to make the most effective use of their AA. Decisions on the use of AA should be taken in partnership with candidates, parents/ carers and relevant school staff.

AA should reflect the methods most suited to an individual candidate's learning style. In assessments, the candidate should have access to the support they normally receive in the classroom. It is recognised that, by their nature, some standardised assessments preclude such flexibility.

It is the responsibility of the school to provide the appropriate training and advice for staff who are involved in supporting candidates in assessments. Support and advice may also be sought from:

* + Educational Psychology service
  + Additional Support for Learning Service
  + SQA

For candidates entitled to AA, it is essential that there is an effective transfer of information as they prepare to leave school at the end of their school career. We have established procedures for transferring candidate information who are moving to post-school destinations

# BGE

To help ensure that all candidates have appropriate experiences and outcomes and achieve CfE benchmarks as expected, candidate support staff (with young people and their parents/carers) will continue to review and evidence AA for our candidates to support them to achieve their personal best in learning. A reflective dialogue will take place, both formally (at points duringthe academic year, including at the start of the session in August/September) and informally (in-class contact and one to one meetings throughout the year). Any noted changes to a candidate’s AA will be uploaded to the AA spreadsheet and conveyed to parents/carers and relevant staff.

# Senior Phase

Candidate Support staff and young people will continue to engage in reflective dialogue in the Senior Phase, including formally at the start of each academic year, before and after each Formal Assessment Block (“FAB”) and on an ongoing informal basis as required throughout the session. A review of AA after the FAB will take place with each eligible candidate. Any AA changes made will be shared with parents/carers and relevant staff and updated on the AA spreadsheet. Support for Learning staff will follow SQA arrangements for requesting adapted papers and AA via the SQA online portal in line with the SQA timeline.

# Requests for support with AA

In both the BGE and Senior Phase, AA requests are made by the class teacher to the Support for Learning Leader via AA Request Form which is retained in the Nation Minutes One Note Jotter. Candidate Support Assistants undertake the administration and organisation of arranging AA support for in-class assessments.

# Quality Assuring AA

Our quality assurance processes support the review of AA at key points in the academic year.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that effective AA internal quality assurance procedures are in place. We will:

* + regularly plan and review AA through meetings and learning conversations with the candidate, keeping parents/carers updated
  + Centrally record core information for each candidate, including an overview of their ASN andAA and arrangements for monitoring and review
  + Carry out review and verification meetings as part of our quality assurance cycle
  + Ensure a sample of candidates with AA arrangements undertaking National 3 and 4 qualifications are included in the verification process

The SQA guidance on quality assurance of AA guides our work:

Quality-Assurance-Assessment-Arrangements-schools.pdf (sqa.org.uk) Quality Assurance requirements for the delivery of assessment arrangements - SQA

# Evidencing AA entitlements

Providing evidence for candidates who may need AA is a responsibility of all teaching staff. All staff will be briefed on AA procedures at the August In-service and time will be given for staff to familiarise themselves with support entitlements throughout the session.

AA and ASN information, including these AA guidelines, are stored on the confidential ed ICT system and on School Handbook SharePoint under the Staff Information folder for the relevant academic year. All staff have access to this. Any changes to this information will be undertaken by the Support for Learning Leader and shared with relevant staff.

Support for Learning teachers, led by the Support for Learning Leader, will co-ordinate and collate evidence provided by faculties. For the most part, this will take the form of evidence of assessments undertaken with and without AA in place. With and without support is not always required where alternative forms of evidence are available such as the results of a recent test of reading speed and accuracy and/or spelling, ongoing use of reader and scribe for support in class which is noted in support records etc. Documented feedback from subject teachers should also provide supporting evidence in some cases. Support for Learning staff will liaise with all faculties regarding the most effective means of gathering this evidence. The evidence forms will also consider the teacher’s view / professional judgement as a valuable source of evidence to the SQA, as well as feedback from the candidate. It is therefore necessary that this part of the evidence sheet is completed by the member of staff presenting the evidence.

Further forms of evidence may be obtained from Support for Candidate Leaders such as the need for AAs due to stress, personal circumstances such as bereavement or a medical condition. This could include communication from a GP or specialist, CAMHS or other partner agencies.

# Evaluation of Assessment Arrangements form

The following “Evaluation of AA” form (see below) must be completed and attached to appropriate evidence and returned to the SfL Hub.

# Candidate AA Opt Out Form

The following “Candidate AA Opt Out” form (see below) must be completed and returned to the SfL Hub at least one week before the assessment is scheduled to take place.

# AA Focus Week

An AA focus week during the last week of September will enable candidate support staff and faculties to secure and quality assure evidence and to discuss any outstanding or complex cases.

The evidence collated from each subject for each candidate will be collated and stored in the candidate’s AA folder.

Once all evidence has been verified, SfL staff will meet with candidates and phone/email parents or carers regarding AA changes. This will take place before the Formal Assessment Block diet.

The Support for Learning Leader will liaise with SQA Coordinator regarding entering ASN/AA information on the SQA online portal.

# Right to Appeal

Candidates and parents/carers will be notified if their AAs have to be changed. Parents/carers have right to appeal these decision. A meeting will be arranged and evidence considered accordingly. The SQA will be consulted in cases where agreement cannot be reached.

# Partnership with parents and carers to support AAs

Parents/carers will be involved in the AA process as outlined in these guidelines. Support for Learning colleagues will also liaise with parents/carers and the Candidate Support Leaders onany situations or AA requests that happen out with our AA planned timeline.

# Partnership with Educational Psychologist & Education Manager to support AAs

Our link Educational Psychologist will take part in Internal Verification meetings. TheSupport for Learning team will continue to liaise with the Educational Psychology team for advice and, where appropriate, with our Education Manager.

# Partnership with SQA to support AA

We will continue to seek advice from SQA to inform our practice. In addition, Support for Learning staff will attend relevant SQA professional learning events as appropriate.

# Managing AA

All staff have a responsibility to:

* + promote and facilitate equality of opportunity for all candidates in assessments
  + encourage candidates to work towards independence in assessments, wherever possible
  + liaise with SfL staff about the most appropriate AA for identified candidates
  + complete the AA Evaluation Form for each candidate who requires one
  + liaise with SfL staff to discuss and develop the most appropriate AA for candidates whohave emerging, suspected or confirmed ASN
  + ensure the candidate is familiar with and has the opportunity to practise their AA inrelevant subjects
  + review AA following an assessment and note any adjustments that may be required for future assessments

SfL staff will:

* + set up and maintain an evidence file for each candidate which will contain relevant evidenceand quality assurance documents, and keep this available for verification and moderation
  + ensure that candidates’ AA information is shared with and accessible to relevant staff
  + when a candidate finishes their school career, ensure that the evidence file is stored inthe candidate’s PPR in the event of moderation or future enquiry
  + when a candidate moves school, ensure that their evidence file is included in the PPR foronward delivery to their new school

**AAA Timeline**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Activity** | **Staff responsible** |
| May - August | * Presentation to all staff re AA arrangements at INSET * Communication Strategy time given to all staff (ASN/SEBN sessions) to familiarise with AA * AA spreadsheet available to all staff * 1:1 with candidates to discuss existing AA and newsubjects | SfL Leader / SfL Staff  PSL Leaders CLs  PSAs  All staff |
| * 1:1 CLs to discuss evidence gathering process and AA |
| * S1 arrangements put onto spreadsheet and leavers arrangements removed |
| September | * Classroom teachers gather AA evidence * SfL staff meet with AA candidates in S4- S6 toreview/implement AA | Classroom teachers SfL Staff |
| AA FOCUS WEEK for S4-S6   * Whole school focus on AA | Faculties SfL Leader SfP Leaders |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | * Faculty meetings – evidence, quality assurance * Liaise with PsL re individual candidates and their targets | SfL Staff |
| October/ November | * Analysis of AA evidence gathered * Internal verification of AA (SQA Coordinator/DHT/ SfL Leader andEducational Psychologist) * Confirmation of AA for forthcoming FAB * Rooming/timetable for FAB finalised | SfL Leader DHT Candidate SupportSQA coordinator Educational Psychologist |
| December | * Parent/carer letter confirming AA for FAB/SQAexams and candidate permission to share AA with SQA * Early entry into SQA AA portal for certain candidates | SfL Leader SfL Staff |
| January | * Verification of adapted papers * Submit requests to SQA for adapted papers * BGE evidence collection * Conversations with candidates re AAs post-FAB | SfL Leader SfL Staff |
| February | * Final conversations with candidates re AA post- FAB | SfL Staff |
| March | * Analysis of BGE evidence gathered * Any final changes to AA to candidates/parents/carer s * Final liaison with office re SQA entry forASN/AA * Rooming arrangements and TTs for AA finalexams * Update SQA portal with new/revised AA | SfL Leader SQA  Coordinator Admin Team |
| May & June | * Delivery of AA during SQA exams (formalassessments as part of ACM21) * Post SQA review/evaluation to inform futureplanning and ongoing improvement * Internal verification of AA (SQA Coordinator/DHT/ SfL Leader andEducational Psychologist) | SfL Leader SfL Staff |