



National Qualifications 2022
Qualification Verification Summary Report
Scottish Baccalaureate in Science

Verification group number: 458

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

National Qualifications Units

During the 2021–22 session the following NQ Unit was verified:

Scottish Baccalaureate in Science: Interdisciplinary Project

General comments

This year 26 centres were selected for external verification out of a total of 36 presenting centres. Projects from 57 candidates were verified. Assessment decisions made by 20 centres were verified as being in line with the national standard (77%). These centres were commended for the accuracy of their judgements. The grading decisions made by six centres were not in line with national standards. The assessment decisions for five candidates from three centres were deemed to have been lenient, and lower grades were recommended. The decisions for three candidates from three centres were deemed to have been severe, and a higher grade was recommended.

Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It is evident that the unit specifications and instruments of assessment are understood well by assessors. Many centres have now presented for a number of years and there is a high level of experience in supporting candidates through their projects. Many centres presenting in Science also present in other curricular areas and there is sound evidence of assessor support within these centres. Use of exemplification materials is apparent in new presenting centres as they have shown a high level of accuracy in grading.

Evidence requirements

The evidence required for external verification is the candidate's Proposal, Plan (including evidence of timelines), Presentation of project findings, Evaluation of project and Self-evaluation along with the assessor's report and documentation on the centre's internal verification process. In centres presenting the Science Interdisciplinary Project, there is a very strong understanding of the evidence requirements for the unit within most centres. All centres submitted all of the mandatory pieces of evidence. Most assessor reports were completed with extremely useful comments regarding grading decisions. Some centres continue to submit interim reviews and progress logs along with the mandatory evidence. These are not required and are not taken into consideration during external verification.

Administration of assessments

The templates provided on the SQA website were used by all centres. In some submissions the italicised prompts had been removed. This is not an issue if they

are removed prior to submission but candidates should be made aware that they are there to assist and that they should use them when populating the templates.

Evidence of internal verification was provided by all centres. A few centres presented documentation that was specific to the Interdisciplinary Project and gave a very clear indication of internal discussions that had taken place prior to final grading decisions.

Areas of good practice

The assessor comments within the report were generally of a very high quality, giving insight into the assessor's thought process when making grading decisions.

Candidates continue to choose a very broad range of innovative and creative topics to research.

The enthusiasm for their topic shown by some candidates is commendable and it is obvious that they have a very clear idea of the direction they wish to take from the outset. The crystallisation of ideas is often brought about by candidates being encouraged to present their initial ideas prior to the Proposal stage.

Many centres have presented in Science for a number of years and now also present in other curriculum areas with a collegiate approach to assessing and verifying the Interdisciplinary Project. The integration of subject areas in this way has led to strong support systems and increased accuracy of grading.

Specific areas for improvement

Many candidates have an over-reliance on web-based research meaning they are not accessing less familiar learning environments.

Assessors should encourage candidates to ensure there is sufficient scope in a project to allow it to be truly interdisciplinary in nature. In Science Interdisciplinary Projects in particular, access to several grading criteria can be restricted when an Interdisciplinary Project does not progress beyond a subject Advanced Higher project.

The skills section of the Proposal should be completed in full by the candidate, explaining their existing skill set and how their project will help them develop their skills.