



National Qualifications

Qualification Verification Summary Report 2022–23

Scots Language Award

Verification group number: 627

National Qualifications Awards

Scots Language (SCQF levels 3, 4, 5 and 6)

General comments

Overall, centres have an accurate understanding of the requirements of the national standards. The verification round showed that teachers are clear about the standards and that there is significant collaborative dialogue around them. In most cases several teachers in each centre are confident to internally verify assessment decisions, and where numbers are limited teachers are aware of collaborative networks providing support from other centres. Most centres use either SQA unit assessments or adapted versions of these, although some centres confidently apply assessment standards to centre-devised instruments of assessment. This verification round, centres are more confidently offering the History and Development unit of the award in addition to the Understanding and Communicating unit, which allows candidates to achieve the full award.

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

Assessors are familiar with the course arrangements and unit specifications. There is increasing variety of method of delivery of Scots Language units. Some centres offered the Scots Language units as a stand-alone course, posited in a range of faculties from English to Humanities. Some centres integrated the units expertly into delivery of the Scottish Studies award. Some centres offered Scots as a language choice and some centres offered Scots Language units in an ASL setting.

Instruments of assessment

Most centres utilised SQA instruments of assessment, modified versions of these, or their own assessment in close alignment with UASPs. For the History and Development unit some centres had developed write-on booklets, in line with the outcomes, or had developed scaffolded materials supporting candidates in writing an essay. For the Understanding and Communication unit centres had confidently devised their own instruments of assessment, for example: poetry in Scots as a response to debates and discussions with visitors to the school, theatre reviews in Scots following a visit to the panto, and constructing a website in Scots to promote a local business.

Evidence requirements

There is clear understanding of the evidence required for the course and its units. All centres were familiar with the expectations of verification, were well prepared and provided the candidate evidence in an organised, accessible way in a range of

formats, including booklet answers, essays, posters, sound and video recordings. Some centres provided a portfolio of evidence for each candidate beyond the requirements of the verification, which provided welcome context about the wide range of activities and opportunities for the candidates.

Administration of assessments

Assessments were administered effectively. In all cases it was evident that assessment evidence was the product of an extended course of learning and investigation, often involving partners, visitors and engaging activities. Assessment tasks were well matched to the abilities and interests of the candidates and to the outcomes being assessed. There was evidence that centres were giving effective and supportive feedback to candidates. Internal verification procedures were well developed in all centres, and in some were highly developed, the centre providing the centre's verification policy for Scots Language. Where other teachers with sufficient expertise with Scots were not available in centres, staff had used collaborative networks to identify staff from other centres who supported them with internal verification.

Learning and teaching

Centres demonstrated a flexible approach to the award and evidenced a broad range of learning and teaching styles, methods and resources, including ICT based approaches. Interdisciplinary learning was central to the approaches taken by centres. A wide range of resources was used:

- visits from poets, campaigners, writers
- websites such as ScotsHoose, Scots Language Centre
- work with partners such as Historic Environment Scotland, Doric Film Festival, Doric Books
- Scots translations of books by ItchyCoo publishing
- TikTok
- University of West of Scotland resources

In this verification round, many centres were using ICT approaches which they had developed during home learning with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some centres' assessments involved candidates making a website to promote local businesses in the medium of Scots. Many centres had work displayed on walls and in cabinets related to their Scots Language learning. Some centres delivered the Scots Language units using a project-based learning approach.

Areas of good practice reported in 2022–23

- More centres are confidently offering the History and Development unit in this verification round, which is providing candidates the opportunity of achieving the whole Scots Language Award when combined with the Understanding and Communication unit.
- Consistent constructive, supportive and effective feedback is given to candidates.
- Centres are making good use of SQA provided instruments of assessment, in addition to including naturally occurring evidence, emerging from debate, discussion, research and other activities.
- In some centres whole departments are involved in the delivery of the award.
- Some centres have developed strong links with partners – academics, activists, poets, writers, educators, community members – which has enriched the experience for candidates and made their learning relevant to the real world.
- Some centres provided an internal verification policy for Scots Language, included notes from internal verifiers and had also noted outcome codes on scripts where they had been achieved. More teachers are confident to internally verify Scots Language work this verification round, and those who had difficulty finding colleagues available to do this knew how to access collaborative networks to receive support.
- Centres provided ample opportunities for personalisation and choice, providing an engaging and enjoyable experience for candidates.

Specific areas for improvement reported in 2022–23

- For the History and Development unit, centres should strengthen the instruments of assessment to enable candidates to show their understanding for outcomes 1.3 (reaching reasoned conclusions about the impact of each factor on contemporary Scots) and 2.3 (explaining relationships between Scots and other languages), particularly at levels 4 to 6. Candidates should explicitly demonstrate the impact of historical and cultural factors on the Scots language.
- For the History and Development unit, some exemplification materials supplied during this verification round also omitted linguistic features of Scots, which is a requirement at levels 5 and 6. Centres should adapt instruments of assessment to give candidate opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of Scots grammar and other linguistic features.
- Centres should record and store audio and video evidence from candidates.
- Centres should regularly review newly available teaching resources and assessment materials, which are becoming increasingly available from SQA, Scots Language Centre, Scots Hoose, Dictionaries of the Scots Language and others.

- Centre-devised instruments of assessment should include marking schemes and/or judging evidence tables which correspond to specific assessment standards.
- Centres should be aware of the resource for the [2023 Scots in Education Conference](#).