

Wallace Hall Nursery, Primary and Secondary School Qualifications Scotland Policy

March 2026

Wallace Hall Academy – Qualifications Scotland Policy

Introduction

At Wallace Hall Academy all pupils will be given the opportunity to sit Qualifications Scotland qualifications during their Senior Phase from S4–S6. The overall responsibility for all Qualifications Scotland matters lies with the Head Teacher who, for Qualifications Scotland purposes, is the designated Head of Centre. Under their instruction the Qualifications Scotland Coordinator, the School Support Manager, the Senior Managers, the Principal Teacher of Additional Support for Learning and the Principal Teachers of Curriculum will support staff to meet Qualifications Scotland requirements.

The policy is split into 4 sections, all of which have relevant subsections.

1. **Presentation**
2. **Timelines**
3. **Assessment**
4. **Appeals**

1. Presentation

Appropriate progression into the Senior Phase, and the importance of well-informed, accurate and aspirational presentation decisions is vital to ensure all pupils at Wallace Hall Academy achieve success at the highest appropriate level possible for each pupil. The final decisions on presentation lie with the Head Teacher but these decisions must be based on robust, informed, evidence-based tracking and monitoring.

We need to make important judgements about the appropriate pathways for each pupil as they enter the Senior Phase. This should be done during S3 and should be informed by effective tracking and monitoring processes within the Broad General Education.

It is also essential that effective tracking and monitoring procedures are carried out in the Senior Phase. Class teachers and Principal Teachers of Curriculum will regularly track the progress of individual pupils. The progress of individual pupils will be reported to parents in November and February. Additional contact may be made with parents where there are concerns about the current presentation levels of pupils. Where a change to a presentation level is suggested both pupils and parents will be kept fully informed. The flowchart detailing this process is shown in Appendix 1 and the Level Change Request Form to be used by staff is shown in Appendix 2.

Qualifications Scotland continually adapt the assessment procedures around most courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher Level. All decisions on presentation will be made in the best interests of the pupil and in line with any updates from Qualifications Scotland which may supersede aspects of this policy. Any changes to the assessment procedures around courses can be found at the following link on Qualifications Scotland website.

How National Courses are assessed - Qualifications Scotland

Dual presentation

In a small number of instances, it may also be suitable to dual present a pupil. For example, this could mean that a pupil is entered for both National 4 and National 5 Levels in an individual subject. This may happen in instances where a pupil is keen to have a go at the upper level but that it might also be in the best interests of the pupil to have a backup level to fall back on.

It is the responsibility of the school and leaders within the school to:

- ensure appropriate tracking and monitoring procedures are in place in the Broad General Education and Senior Phase
- provide opportunities to meet with parents and pupils with regard to progress, pathways and subject choice as pupils enter the Senior Phase
- ensure a range of pathways are available for the vast majority of pupils aspiring towards National 4, National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher courses in the Senior Phase
- ensure relevant opportunities are available for pupils who wish to achieve other awards such as Skills for Work Courses or National Progression Awards in the Senior Phase
- provide regular updates and guidance to staff with regard to assessment changes implemented by Qualifications Scotland
- discuss the presentation level for individual pupils where a level change request has been made by a member of staff. The final decision will be made by the Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of teaching staff to:

- engage with and inform tracking and monitoring procedures in the Broad General Education and Senior Phase
- plan effectively to ensure pathways are available for the vast majority of pupils who are aspiring towards National 4, National 5, Higher or Advanced Higher courses in the Senior Phase
- plan effectively to ensure relevant opportunities are available for pupils who wish to achieve other awards such as Skills for Work Courses or National Progression Awards in the Senior Phase
- discuss assessment changes implemented by Qualifications Scotland within subject teams to ensure the requirements of courses are met
- provide an overview of the course content and assessment requirements for each pupil at the beginning of the course
- submit the required paperwork in good time where a change in level is requested for an individual pupil so the Head Teacher can make a timely decision on presentation

2. Timelines

Qualifications Scotland employ a detailed timeline with regard to externally marked assessments, internally assessed mark forms, visiting verifications, internal assessments, estimate grades and external exams.

It is the responsibility of the school and leaders within the school to:

- adapt the Qualifications Scotland calendar to meet the needs of pupils and staff within the school to ensure Qualifications Scotland deadlines are met in a timely manner
- share the Qualifications Scotland calendar with staff in a timely manner so that they may plan appropriate learning programmes

It is the responsibility of teaching staff to:

- work alongside Principal Teachers to ensure pupils meet deadlines
- engage in appropriate moderation activities with regard to internally assessed work

3. Assessment

An important part of the Senior Phase will be exposing pupils to appropriate and timely assessment. In January of each year, the vast majority of pupils will be given the opportunity to sit a prelim examination in all courses they are sitting from National 5 to Advanced Higher Level. The majority of courses also contain an internally or externally assessed component which could include a folio, an assignment or a practical performance, amongst other things. Pupils should speak to their class teachers for more information about this or the information can be found at the link shown below.

How National Courses are assessed - Qualifications Scotland

Assessment - Exams

In April, May and June pupils will also sit final examinations in most subjects from National 5 to Advanced Higher Level. Pupils will be well informed of the requirements on their individual exams by their class teachers and will have a presentation from Qualifications Scotland co-ordinator with regard to the procedures and conduct around Qualifications Scotland exams. A timetable of when their individual exams are will also be shared in good time with all pupils.

Where a pupil is not able to sit their final exam the school may be able to apply for exceptional circumstances. This rarely happens but could include things such as a medical emergency or a recent bereavement of a close family member. Should this happen the pupil or their parent should contact the school as soon as possible. For exceptional circumstances relating to a medical emergency a note from a medical professional would be required. A representative from the school will then liaise with the pupil or parent and may submit an exceptional circumstances request on their behalf. This usually involves sending a range of evidence gathered throughout the year to Qualifications Scotland where they will review the evidence and determine an appropriate Qualifications Scotland grade based on the evidence. Where use is made of the exceptional circumstances system there will be no access to the appeals system in August and Qualifications Scotland will not provide information on how the final grade was determined, except to say it will have been determined holistically by viewing all of the evidence by a senior subject specialist from Qualifications Scotland. More detail about the exceptional circumstances service can be found using the link below.

Exceptional circumstances - Qualifications Scotland

Assessment - coursework

When completing coursework pupils will do so under a variety of assessment conditions as stipulated by Qualifications Scotland. Individual subject teachers will inform pupils of the assessment conditions around each coursework task. These conditions will vary in terms of the amount of support that teachers are able to offer and the supervision under which the coursework should be completed. More detail on the variety of assessment conditions which could be used are given in Qualifications Scotland guidance at the link shown below.

Conditions of assessment in coursework

Internally Assessed Course Components (IACCs) are assessed and moderated by staff in school with the marks being sent to Qualifications Scotland. Sometimes this also involves visiting assessors from Qualifications Scotland. These IACCs will be shared with pupils. Pupils have the right to appeal these IACCs and should do so with their class teacher or the Principal Teacher of the subject. The Principal Teacher will then ensure that assessment and moderation procedures have been followed and will report the result back to the pupil. If appropriate to do so, then the Qualifications Scotland Co-ordinator will be involved and the final decision with regard to appeals around IACCs rests with the Head of Centre. **All internal appeals around IACCs must be lodged by the end of April of the current presentation year.** Externally assessed components are completed in school but then sent to Qualifications Scotland for marking.

In order to support pupils with navigating the requirements of their coursework, Qualifications Scotland share a "Your Coursework" guide with pupils each year. This document is shared with pupils each year in November or December and can be found at the link below.

Your coursework - Qualifications Scotland

Assessment - Assessment Arrangements (AA)

There is a separate policy governing the use of AA at Wallace Hall Academy in more detail but the information provides an overview.

Some pupils may have a physical health, mental health, behavioural or learning need which could impact on their ability to reach their potential in Qualifications Scotland qualifications. To avoid this Qualifications Scotland and the school employ a system of Assessment Arrangements (AA) where pupils can be supported to complete Qualifications Scotland qualifications without the additional barriers some may face. However, it is important to note that the system must be fair to all pupils. This means that pupils cannot be granted AA unless we have evidence of a physical health, mental health, behavioural or learning need. It is the case that where pupils are granted AA it should also be fair to them. For example, if an AA involved giving a pupil additional time, would it be fair to make them complete an assessment over 4 or 5 hours?

Qualifications Scotland provide clear guidelines to all schools in relation to the process of applying for AA and quality assuring the AA process and this can be found at the link show below.

Assessment arrangements explained: information for centres

Assessment – English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Where a pupil has EAL they may be eligible for an additional 10 mins per hour and the use of a dictionary during assessments. However, this would only be granted if this was the pupil's normal way of working and there was a need for it. Some pupils who have EAL but can understand English may present as needing ET due to slow processing as they are slower at reading English. A link to the full Qualifications Scotland policy is shown below.

Use of bilingual dictionary for candidtes who have english as an additional language

Assessment – Malpractice

While it is hoped and expected that pupils would adhere to Qualifications Scotland and school policies at all times there may be a small number of incidents involving malpractice. All Senior Phase pupils, and their parents/carers will be given a letter, shown in Appendix 3, to indicate that they have read and understood the implications of engaging in malpractice. While incidents of malpractice are rare, as a Qualifications Scotland accredited centre we are duty bound to investigate all alleged incidents of malpractice. Where an incident is alleged, it can be a difficult and stressful situation for anyone involved so we will always conduct investigations to ensure they are done consistently, fairly and impartially. The Qualifications Scotland guide on malpractice can be found at the link below.

Reporting malpractice concerns - Qualifications Scotland

Assessment - Moderation

An important aspect of both Qualifications Scotland and the school's process of awarding qualification is moderation. Moderation ensures that assessment decisions are made fairly, consistently and without bias. There are three stages to the moderation process (plan, do and review). In the "plan" stage teachers will plan what assessment they are going to carry out and ensure they have all of Qualifications Scotland requirements for that assessment to hand. In the "do" stage the assessment will be conducted, and pupil responses will be marked and a sample will be moderated. This moderation could be done in a variety of ways but will usually involve more than

one teacher assessing a pupil's work. In the third and final "review" stage teachers will reflect on the "plan" and "do" stage and make any necessary adjustments. More detail about the moderation process can be found in Appendix 4 where the guide and toolkit that Wallace Hall Academy and Sanquhar Academy use jointly can be found.

Assessment - Estimate Grades

We have to submit Estimate Grades to Qualifications Scotland for all pupils sitting National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications. These Estimate Grades will be based on demonstrated attainment. This evidence will be retained by the school which could be used in exceptional circumstances. The Estimate Grades submitted to Qualifications Scotland will be shared with pupils and parents after the Easter holidays. Details on how this evidence will be gathered and Estimate Grades will be generated can be found at the following link.

Estimates guidance and support - Qualifications Scotland

It is the responsibility of the school and leaders within the school to:

- provide a clear policy for the internal moderation of assessments
- coordinate the completion of IACCs to ensure, wherever possible, an even spread of assessments across the Senior Phase
- support and lead any appeals process around IACCs
- support teachers to make sure they have access to the conditions of assessment around coursework tasks for pupils
- speak to all pupils about malpractice and the possible ramifications of engaging in malpractice
- investigate any incidents of alleged malpractice by pupils and report to parents and pupils the outcomes of any investigation
- provide guidance for staff with regard to procedures around Assessment Arrangements
- coordinate a prelim timetable taking into account the needs of pupils, staff workload and Qualifications Scotland deadlines
- provide instructions, a clear timetable and support in relation to the final exams in April, May and June

It is the responsibility of teaching staff to:

- engage with and follow the school policy for the internal moderation of assessments
- provide subject specific details about internally and externally assessed components to ensure, wherever possible, an even spread of assessments across the senior phase
- share IACC grades with pupils allowing time for discussion around how the decisions were made
- explain the conditions of assessment around coursework tasks to pupils
- report any incidents of alleged malpractice by pupils to their Principal Teacher of Curriculum who will in turn report the incident to the Qualifications Scotland co-ordinator and Head of Centre

- provide subject specific details to allow a prelim timetable to be created which takes into account the needs of pupils, staff workload and Qualifications Scotland deadlines
- work alongside the Principal Teacher of ASfL to ensure the needs of all pupils are met with regard to Assessment Arrangements

4. Appeals

Pupils will have the opportunity to appeal the grade awarded to them by Qualifications Scotland if they have completed all parts of the course (including the exam). The school will not be asked to send examples of pupil evidence which were used to determine their Estimate Grade. This means that if an appeal is raised with Qualifications Scotland then Qualifications Scotland will conduct a marking review.

A marking review checks that:

- all parts of the Qualifications Scotland-assessments have been marked;
- the marking is in line with national standards;
- the marks given for each answer have been totalled correctly; and
- the correct result has been entered onto the Qualifications Scotland system.

Once the marking review has taken place there are 3 possible outcomes. The pupil's grade could be **moved up**, it could **stay the same** or it could be **moved down.**

There is no financial cost to appeal.

Pupils will have the choice of whether to apply for the appeal themselves or to liaise with the school who can submit it on their behalf. We would encourage all pupils who would like to submit an appeal to speak with staff from the school first who will explain the process to them. The Qualifications Scotland Co-ordinator will put plans in place for this in August so there is no need to worry about it between results day and our return to school.

For those pupils who require a **priority appeal** to secure a place at college or university please do get in touch with the school after results day and we will work with you to ensure everything is put in place as required.

The most up to date information currently available from Qualifications Scotland about the appeals process can be found at the link below.

Appeals service - Qualifications Scotland

It is hoped that this Qualifications Scotland policy will clarify the arrangements in place at Wallace Hall Academy for all staff, pupils, parents and carers. While every effort has been made to keep all of the content as up to date as possible Qualifications Scotland make regular updates to their policies and procedures and any of these changes will supersede any aspect of this policy.

Appendix 1: Qualifications Scotland policy – Level Change Flowchart

When considering a change in presentation for a pupil please follow this flowchart.

1. **A discussion about the possibility of a change in presentation should take place between the PTC and the class teacher. The class teacher should be able to provide clear evidence for the suggested change.**

2. **A discussion about the possibility of a change in presentation should take place between the PTC and the pupil. This is just a discussion at this stage to go over the options.**

3. **A discussion about the possibility of a change in presentation should take place between the PTC and the link DHT to ascertain if it seems like a reasonable change. This may also highlight concerns where a pupil is failing a number of subjects.**

4. **A discussion about the possibility of a change in presentation should take place between the PTC and the parent. This is just a discussion at this stage to go over the options but if a parent is in agreement with your recommendation indicate that you will put it forward to SMT for approval but no guarantees can be made at this stage.**

5. **Submit a Level Change Request Form to the link DHT for approval at SMT level.**

6. **Once confirmed by SMT an email will be sent by the SSM and the PTC should confirm the change with the class teacher, the pupil and the parent.**

Appendix 2: Qualifications Scotland policy – Level Change Request Form

Qualifications Scotland Request for Changes of Level/Withdrawals/Units only
To be Completed by Principal Teacher Curriculum

Name of pupil:	Seemis class (directly under the teacher's name on the Seemis register):
Year group and house group:	Subject:
Class teacher(s):	Current level:

What change are you proposing? (please place an 'x' in only one box)

Change of level ☐ Complete course over 2 years ☐ Complete course over 2 years and do Units this year ☐

Withdrawal from entire course ☐ Withdrawal from external exam and moved to units only ☐

Dual presentation (two levels) ☐ Dual presentation (units and whole course) ☐

Please give details of this proposed change as specified below.

- For change of level state the current and proposed level.
- For dual presentation clearly state both levels or the level and the unit **names**, **codes** and **levels**.
- For withdrawal from external exam and moved to unit only include the unit **names**, **codes** and **levels**.

Please tick to confirm each of the following have been completed in advance of requesting the proposed change.

Provisional discussion with class teacher about proposed change ☐

Provisional discussion with pupil about proposed change ☐

Provisional discussion with parent about proposed change ☐

Please use this section to give reasons for the proposed change. This section will likely include information on assessment marks, prelim marks and information on interventions and contact with parents. This section will also likely include details of what the pupil will be doing with their class time as **all pupils will remain in the class** even if the proposed change is accepted.

Date and signature of PTC	Date and signature of DHT

Discussion at SMT

Agreed ☐ Agreed but with amendments ☐ Further action required ☐ Rejected ☐

Please include details of required amendments, further action required or reasons for rejection in this section.

Date and signature of HT

On spreadsheet ☐ **Emailed to PTC by SSM** ☐ **Updated on Seemis by SSM** ☐

Appendix 3: Qualifications Scotland policy – Malpractice letter

22 November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Plagiarism, collusion or other forms of malpractice during completion of SQA accredited qualifications

Your child is currently in the Senior Phase at Wallace Hall Academy, during which time they will complete a variety of SQA accredited qualifications. These qualifications will involve a range of assessments which could include (but are not limited to): folios, assignments, prelims, practical performances, class tests, final exams. The SQA expect high standards of conduct from all candidates when completing assessments as part of their SQA accredited qualifications.

Your child has been emailed a 'Your National Qualifications' booklet explaining in more detail what is meant by plagiarism, collusion or other forms of malpractice. The 'Your National Qualifications' booklet also gives helpful hints on how to avoid malpractice. If at any point your child is worried and unsure about any aspect of a task they are completing, or the expectations around it, they should approach a member of staff in school as the requirements can vary from subject to subject.

Any instance of suspected malpractice will be fully investigated by senior managers from the school and should your child be found to be engaging in malpractice we have a number of sanctions available to us including (but not limited to): removal from individual SQA exams, removal from all SQA exams, exclusion from school.

You may also be aware of the rise of 'Artificial Intelligence' or 'AI' and the use of AI by pupils completing SQA coursework is strictly prohibited. Pupils should not even be using AI as a reference source. The SQA have software they can use to detect where AI has been used and will impose robust sanctions where this is the case.

We would welcome your support in discussing the 'Your National Qualifications' booklet with your child to ensure they understand the need for honesty and integrity around SQA accredited qualifications.

Yours sincerely



Dr Ray Fulton
SQA Co-ordinator

Sanquhar Academy & Wallace Hall Academy

Verification guidelines and toolkit

Verification – Guidelines

Verification supports assessors to make assessment decisions. There are two types of verification:

1. **Informal (Internal)** – the judgements which we make that ensures that all pupils entered for the same qualification are assessed fairly and consistently to the specified national standard.
2. **Formal (External)** – the process Qualifications Scotland uses to assess the quality of internal assessment, including internal verification. The two main methods are *Event* and *Visiting*.

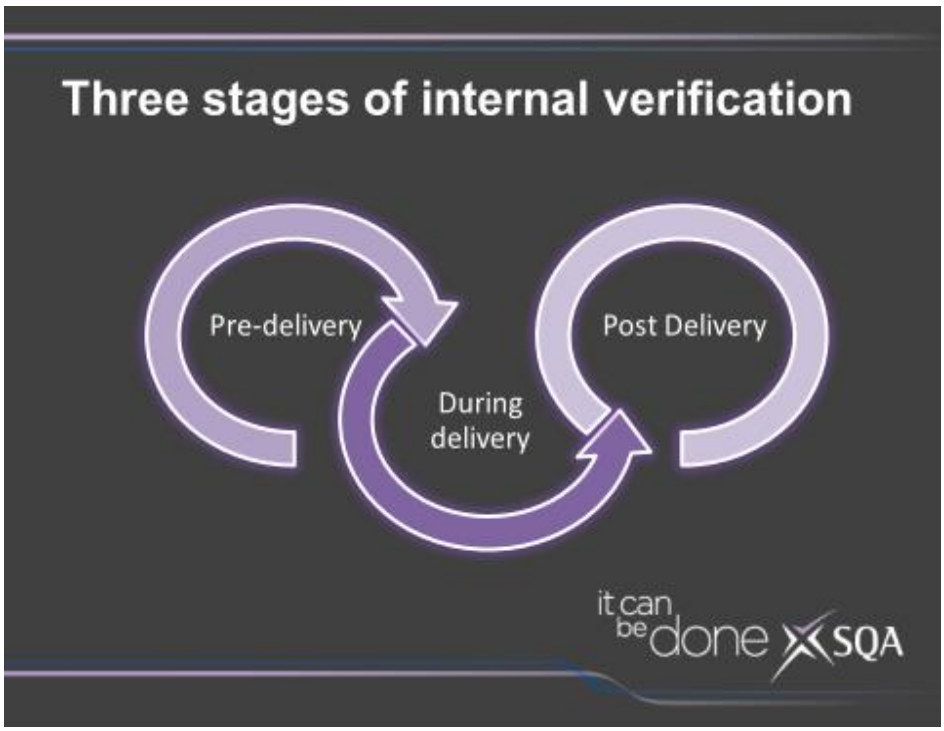
There are **3 models of internal verification**:

1. **Lead Internal Verifier**: An internal verifier who will sample assessments marked by other assessors
2. **Peer Review**: All staff in a department will take part in understanding standards activities and carry out cross marking of each other's assessments *
3. **Single Assessor Departments**: A networking approach allowing professional dialogue and cross marking between assessors in different centres*

*Most likely to be used, partnership arrangements allow for greater opportunities for both centres to collaborate and share opportunities and experience.

An internal verifier cannot verify assessments which they have developed or verify assessments which their own assessment judgements.

There are **3 stages of internal verification**:



Pre-delivery (Plan)

- Prior verification service if required (this is if you want to use an assessment in place of an assessment provided by Qualifications Scotland)
- Planning internal assessment activities which meet the requirements
- Plan internal verification activities to ensure that assessors are familiar with the qualification standard
- Ensure a shared understanding of standards
  *The internal verifier needs to have sufficient subject knowledge to understand the content of assessments and national standards for the award and be able to confirm reliable assessment judgements have been made.
- Agree assessment approaches
- Prepare pupils
  *Ensure that expectations are clear. Remember to apply AAs if required.

A checklist from Qualifications Scotland is shown below which may be of use when planning assessments.

Internal verification: A guide for centres p8

Is the assessment appropriate for its purpose?*	☐
Does it allow candidates to produce sufficient evidence that they have the knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the national standards?	☐
Is there an appropriate assessment scheme/marking instructions/recording mechanism to check that the candidate's evidence meets the requirements of the national standard?	☐
Can the assessment be carried out effectively and efficiently within the resources of your centre or assessment site?	☐
Is the assessment accessible to all candidates?	☐
Does the assessment meet any specific requirements of the unit/award? For example, does the unit/assessment strategy stipulate a time frame or permitted resources?	☐

During delivery (Do)

- Standardisation activities
  *Ensure that assessors have a common understanding of the standards – e.g. Double Marking, Blind Marking, Dual Assessment
- Sampling of pupils' assessed work

  *It is important to prioritise sampling from:
  - new assessors
  - when units or assessments have changed
  - when issues have been identified in internal or external verification
  - different approaches to assessment have been used
  - different locations/resources have been used

  *Sampling strategy – e.g. cross marking, a strategy which will allow the internal verifier to check that each assessor is **making consistent assessment judgements in line with national standards, with each group of pupils over time.**
  The number of pupils included in the sample for internal verification should be proportionate to the total number of pupils. Remember to sample following any resits.
- Feedback and dialogue with assessors who marked assessments
- Supporting assessors
  *Open collaborative approach throughout the year
- Confirm results – agreeing final marks
  *Provide a second opinion in internal assessment appeals / malpractice investigations
  Pupils can appeal assessment judgements

  It is important that centres maintain accurate records. Pupils must be informed of the result of internal assessment.
  If pupils have not achieved their desired result – available options should be discussed.
  Centres should retain pupil evidence for a specific length of time.

Post-delivery (Review)

- Reflect on how things have gone, how to improve delivery of the course
- Agree and plan for any necessary changes in assessment approach
- Agree and plan for any further understanding standards activities
- Agree and plan for any changes to internal verification processes

Verification - Toolkit

Stage 1: Plan

Course Title			
Course Level	National 3 National 4 National 5 Higher Advanced Higher Other (e.g. NPA, SfW): (Please Circle / **Bold** / Highlight as appropriate)		
Element	Unit 1 Qualifications Scotland UASP Unit 2 Qualifications Scotland UASP Unit 3 Qualifications Scotland UASP Added Value Unit Prelim Assignment End of Unit Assessment (own creation) Practical Performance Other: (Please Circle / **Bold** / Highlight as appropriate)		
Name of Assessor(s)			
Name of Internal Verifier(s)			
Date of meeting(s)			
Reason(s) for internal verification	Routine New or inexperienced assessor New assessment Feedback from previous verification Other (please specify): (Please Circle / **Bold** / Highlight as appropriate)		
Assessment arrangements		Discussed (Yes, No, N/A)	Comments and action required
	Content of assessment		
	Assessment criteria		
	Date(s) of assessment		
	Method for recording pupil evidence		
	Conditions for re-assessment		
	Assessment Arrangements		
Internal Verification	Number of pupils to sample		
	Date scheduled for internal verification meeting		

Stage 2: Do

Verification Activity	Agreement Trials (shared understanding based on the assessment criteria) Dual Assessment (two assessors assess the same pupil together) Cross Assessment (assessors exchange pupil evidence to check interpretation of standards) Evidence Review (group discussion of discrepancies between individual judgements) Double Marking (same pupils evidence marked by two or more assessors) Blind Marking (evidence is marked by two assessors, but each is unaware of the others mark) Other (please specify): (Please Circle / **Bold** / Highlight as appropriate)			
Pupil Name	**Assessor Mark**	**Verifier Mark**	**Agreed Mark**	**Comment about rationale for agreed mark (if discrepancy between Assessor and Verifier)**

Please ensure that where there are discrepancies between the assessor and verifier mark that a mark is agreed upon and entered in the appropriate column. A comment should also be left indicating the reasons for the discrepancy and how a resolution was reached.

If there are significant differences or an agreement cannot be reached then it may be appropriate for a third party (additional verifier) to be involved.

Assessment evidence approved by:

Assessor: _____ Verifier: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Stage 3: Review

Task to be completed due to internal verification activity (Tasks may include adapting marking schemes, attending understanding standards events or running a sharing good practice event)	Person responsible	Date to be completed

Review of assessment and internal verification conducted by (not all 4 need to be signed):

Assessor: _____ Verifier: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Principal Teacher: _____ Qualifications Scotland Co-ordinator: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____