



BALERNO HIGH SCHOOL MODERATION POLICY

School Vision:

“A community built on strong relationships and a commitment to success”.

School Values:

The learning environment should promote our values:

Respect
Inclusion
Excellence
Resilience
Honesty



UNRC 29. Aims of education

Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.

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MODERATION EXPLAINED

What is Moderation?

In its widest sense, moderation is a building of a shared understanding of standards and expectations for any course and providing accurate professional judgements on pupil progress based on these. During the process of moderation, these judgements are shared, discussed and aligned with the national standards for the appropriate level/course to reach the most appropriate outcome.

Professional judgements are based on demonstrated application of the skills, knowledge and understanding of any course. These judgements must be moderated to ensure that they are realistic.

Moderation is a collaborative activity, done within a department and across departments.

In the BGE:

- the ***Moderation Cycle*** summarises the approach to understanding standards.
- teachers are familiar with the ***Moderation Cycle***
- Moderation is ongoing before, during and after the planning of learning, teaching and assessment.

In the Senior Phase:

- the principles of moderation continue to be an embedded process in the planning of Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- there is a different reference point of comparing evidence with the assessment criteria stated in the relevant ***Course Specifications*** and exemplified by ***SQA Understanding Standards materials***.
- These documents support staff to meet expectations of professional judgement in line with national standards.
- The moderation activities within the Senior Phase are explained in the BHS Internal Verification Policy.
- Moderation within departments will ensure fairness for all young people and ensure that robust standards are maintained.

Professional Judgement

Professional judgement, valued expertise and knowledge of young people are all vital in ensuring that the assessment judgements are a fair, robust, consistent and realistic assessment of a young person's demonstrated attainment.

All professional judgements for courses/levels must be:

- valid
- reliable
- practicable
- equitable
- fair

Every outcome carries weight and significance personally, socially, educationally and economically. In other words, achievement of a level, a grade or an award has a meaning for the young person but also a meaning and a value in the wider world. For this reason, it is crucial that all young people are treated fairly and equitably. Teacher Professionalism is key.

Equity, Equality, Inclusion and Fairness for all young people

There may be a range of factors that impact on young people's access to learning. When making judgements on outcomes, it is important to bear this in mind, especially in the following cases:

AAA	Young people who have AAA or who would have reasonable adjustments in place for any assessment or exam (for example a reader or scribe).
Illness	Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance, centres should also review a young person's performance in alternative assessments of similar demand when making their judgements.
Barriers to learning	Young people who experience barriers to learning including those who have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• caring responsibilities• care-experienced• interrupted learning due to illness/disability

Any discussion of fairness must take account of the possibility of bias. When coming to a decision about a young person's estimate, decisions must be based on a candidate's evidence rather than their personal circumstances, so that decisions are as objective and consistent as possible.

Special mention must be made of what might be called 'implicit bias'. Implicit bias originates from assumptions or stereotypes based on characteristics such as background, gender, disability, race and ethnicity. Research strongly suggests that implicit bias may be a contributing factor to assessment judgements, and it is for this reason that SQ!'s e-marking procedures include the suppression of young people's personal data. You need to think about potential bias in the estimates you provide.

Candidate evidence should be valued for its own worth and merit as an indicator of course attainment, and a conscious effort should be made to consider and avoid the negative impact of potential implicit bias. You should do this as you finalise your estimates by considering the accuracy of the decisions you make alongside candidate data on background, gender, disability, race and ethnicity, at both class and cohort presentation level.

Use of standardisation procedures can decrease the potential for bias in grading decisions. Moderation across departments will ensure fairness for all young people and that robust standards are maintained.

Standardisation procedures

The internal verifier/moderator should arrange standardisation processes to support all assessors in their judgement of candidate evidence. These activities allow any subjectivity and/or discrepancies between assessors' judgements to be identified and allow adjustments to remedy these.

Departmental resources/good practice will be shared in each faculty/department TEAM.

There are different ways of carrying out standardisation. The internal verifier should make sure that the standardisation exercise used is appropriate for the type of evidence generated by the chosen assessment method — for example by observation, product evaluation, written/oral questions or a combination of these methods.

Each of these standardisation exercises encourages co-operative working and fosters professional development. They also lead to a shared understanding of national standards, thereby ensuring fair, accurate and consistent assessment judgements. There are benefits for any assessor in checking their judgement, particularly for new qualifications and awards. Teaming a new assessor with an experienced assessor is also an ideal way to provide support for a new assessor.

Agreement trial	This standardisation exercise is appropriate for product evidence. Assessors consider examples of candidate work, together with the assessment scheme. Any discrepancies or differences in judgement should be discussed to reach a shared understanding.
Blind marking	This standardisation exercise is appropriate for written evidence and aims to reduce any bias by an assessor, however unintentional. There are two ways to carry out blind marking. In one form, the evidence is anonymous as the candidate's details are removed. In the other, more commonly used form, two or more assessors mark the same evidence but are unaware of the mark awarded by the other. Any discrepancies in marks, or application of the marking scheme, are discussed to reach a shared understanding.
Cross assessment	In this standardisation exercise, assessors exchange candidate evidence to review, discuss and agree on the interpretation of the standard. The assessors may have used a different assessment or followed different procedures, but they should be judging candidate evidence against a common standard. Cross assessment can be particularly useful for centres with alternative or satellite centres, or who have a partnership arrangement for qualification delivery.
Double marking	This is similar to blind marking as it generally used with written evidence. In this exercise, assessors exchange the same candidate evidence to check each other's interpretation of the marking scheme and apply a common standard. It can be particularly useful to discuss any borderline decisions.
Dual assessment / Peer Assessment	In this standardisation exercise, also known as peer assessment, two assessors assess the same candidate. This type of standardisation is particularly appropriate for performance, practical activities and process skills. Each assessor should make an independent initial judgement, discuss any discrepancies and reach a consensus.
Evidence review	In this exercise, the internal verifier/moderator collates a range of candidate evidence and asks a group of assessors to discuss any discrepancies between their individual judgements. This allows professional development as well as ensuring a shared understanding. It can be particularly useful for any new qualifications or awards.

Sampling

It is good practice for us to develop a sampling strategy that allows the internal verifier/moderator to check that each assessor is making consistent assessment judgments, in line with the standard/benchmark, for each group of candidates over time.

This will allow the internal verifier/moderator to review assessment judgements and identify any inconsistencies at an early stage. The internal verifier/moderator can then ensure that action is taken to address these issues. This may involve expanding the sample, or sampling the work of these assessors again later in the delivery of the qualification. It is important that this should be a supportive activity that ensures confidence in the assessment process and provides professional development.

A range of assessment methods should be included in the sample, and the number of candidates sampled should be proportionate. If this is a new qualification to Balerno High School, a higher level of sampling would be expected to reduce any quality assurance risks. The internal verifier/moderator should therefore sample assessments from every candidate group assessed by every assessor. This should include any instances of remediation, where the assessor has required the candidate to supply additional evidence because of a minor shortfall or omission. Such instances must be formally noted by the assessor.

The following factors should be considered in selecting the sample:

- new assessors — either new members of staff or new to the qualification
- a new qualification in Balerno High School
- any changes to the unit or assessment since the last delivery
- any issues previously identified by internal or external quality assurance
- different methods of assessment used with different candidate groups
- different modes of delivery (full/part-time, online, partnership arrangements)
- coverage over time to ensure that all assessments within a qualification are internally verified/moderated
- candidates in alternative assessment sites such as the Bridge/ HUB/ASL services.

Like standardisation, sampling should take place at different points throughout the delivery of the qualification, and not be left until assessment has been completed. This allows the internal verifier/moderator to address any concerns before external verification and the submission of candidate results, by expanding the sample or sampling again later at a later stage. It is important that sampling is 'fit for purpose'. If the qualification is highly knowledge based, the records of that knowledge evidence and the associated assessment judgements should be sampled as part of the verification process. If the qualification involves performance or practical activities, sampling should include not only evidence such as candidate logs and assessor observation reports, but also methods to gauge how the assessment judgments were made, such as the participation of the internal verifier/moderator in dual assessment exercises.

It is good practice to document your sampling activity. Activities should be recorded using the forms in the Appendix. Such records should include the date at which sampling activity took place. SQA, and the accrediting and regulatory authorities, all have policies on record-keeping.

Please note that under no circumstances may an internal verifier be involved in the verification of their own assessment judgements or any assessments which they have developed.

Moderation is a process that supports staff in Understanding Standards in the following areas:

- Achievement of a level in the BGE
- Meeting Assessment Standards for National 3, National 4 courses
- Meeting Assessment Standards for SQA units at all levels
- Grading an internally-assessed course component of a National 5, Higher, or Advanced Higher course
- Grading a full course at National 5, Higher, Advanced Higher levels to provide a provisional result

SQA Verification

External verification is a process whereby SQA will check staff understanding of applying the appropriate assessment judgements to ascertain an outcome based on the national standard. Verification can be visiting, as is the case with many of the practical subjects, or course materials can be uplifted and checked by a verification team at the SQA.

SQA Verification activities take place every session and this is outlined in the SQA Key Dates that are issued on an annual basis. (Round 1/Round 2/Visiting Verification)

The Internal Verification process is a check to ensure staff are applying assessment judgements for SQA-generated assessments as per the SQA guidance.

The term Verification is used when:

- Secure SQA-generated assessments are used for final assessments, and internally-assessed course components or for units
- The conditions of assessment replicate those set out in the Course Specification
- SQA-generated Marking Instructions are used and applied to make relevant assessment decisions

Verification is a specific part of
the Moderation Cycle.

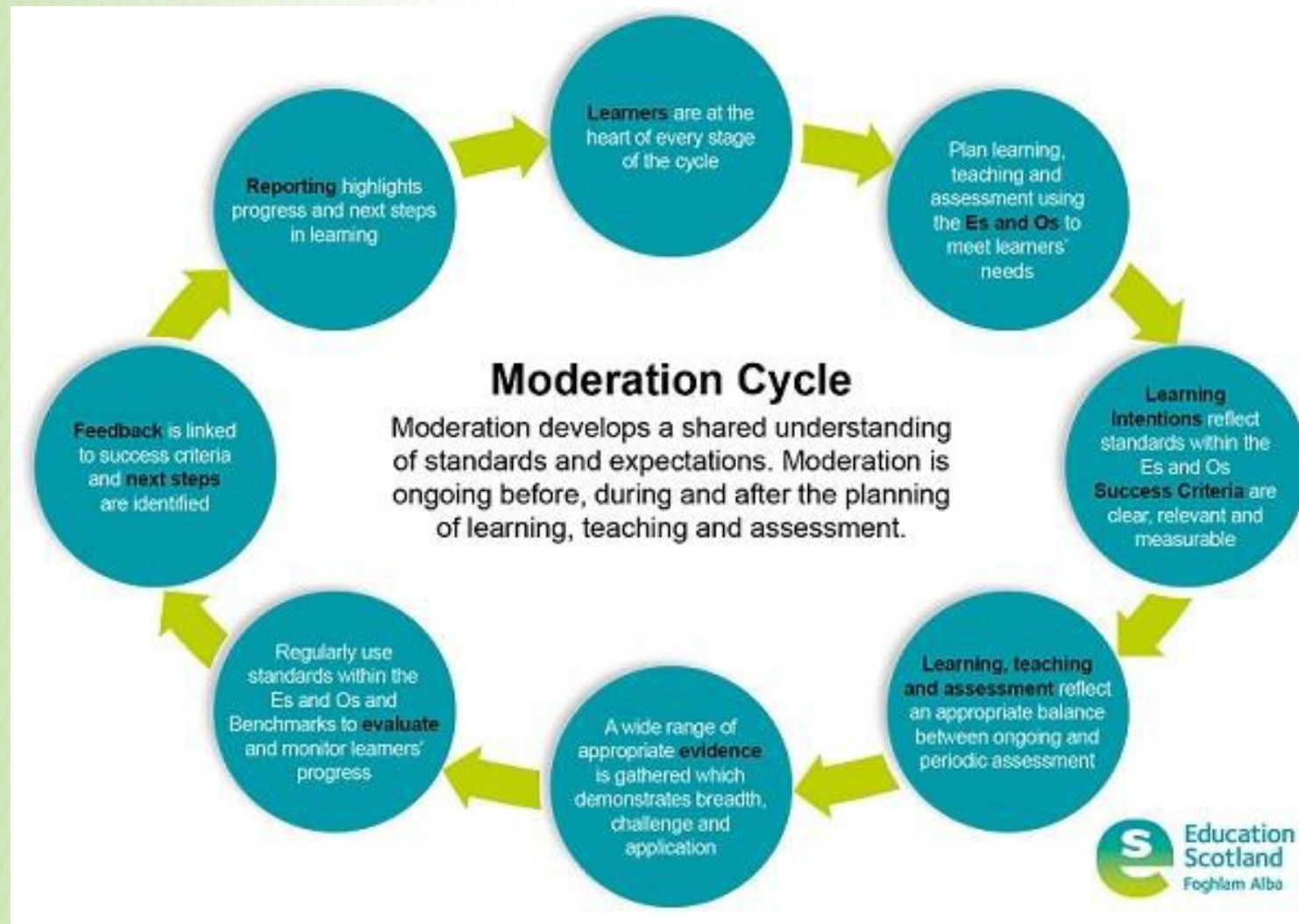
In the Senior Phase this is specifically an
SQA-driven process to check national
standards have been applied to the
delivery of SQA Assessments,
Conditions of Assessment, Assessment
Standards and Marking Instructions

The aim of both of moderation and Internal verification processes is to reach a shared understanding of standards.

MODERATION

IN THE BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION
PHASE

The Moderation Cycle



The Moderation Cycle Explained

Learners are at the heart of every stage of the cycle	Learners should be actively involved at each stage of the cycle, from planning through to evaluating evidence
Plan learning, teaching and assessment using the Experiences/Outcomes to meet learners' needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning, teaching and assessment should be planned together from the outset • Learning, teaching and assessment should be planned from the Experiences/Outcomes • Experiences/Outcomes should be bundled to link concepts appropriately
Learning Intentions reflect standards within the Experiences/Outcomes. Success Criteria are clear, relevant and measurable	<p>Learning intentions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly outline what the learner should know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson/series of lessons/block of learning. <p>Success Criteria should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline what the learner must do to do successful in achieving the learning intention. • Be clear, relevant and measurable. • Be co-constructed with learners
Learning, teaching and assessment reflect an appropriate balance between ongoing and periodic assessment	Learning teaching and assessment should be planned together using the Experiences/Outcomes. Planned to allow opportunities for breadth, challenge and application. There should be an appropriate balance between ongoing and periodic assessment.
A wide range of appropriate evidence is gathered which demonstrates breadth, challenge and application	A wide range of evidence should be considered when making judgements around progress towards achievement of a level. The range of evidence will exist in different places (jotters, displays, learning conversations, periodic assessments). Evidence should demonstrate breadth, challenge and application. Evidence can be from what a young person has written, said, made or done.
Regularly use standards within the Experiences/Outcomes and Benchmarks to evaluate and monitor learners' progress	Standards within the Experiences/Outcomes and Benchmarks should be used to evaluate and monitor learners' progress. Evaluation should be ongoing to inform short-term planning. Practitioners should have opportunities to evaluate a range of evidence together when considering progress towards or achievement of a level to ensure consistency in teacher professional judgement.
Reporting highlights progress and next steps in learning	Reporting should highlight the learners most recent progress and next steps in learning. Further advice can be found in the document <u>"Reporting Parents and Carers Guidance for schools and ELC settings"</u>
Feedback is linked to success criteria	Feedback should be clearly linked to success criteria. Next steps in learning should

and next steps are identified

be identified using the Success Criteria

Feedback discussions should be ongoing throughout lessons. Learners should have the opportunities to take part in feedback discussions when reviewing learning over a period of time to set longer term goals.

MODERATION IN THE BGE

Moderation – Collegiate Planning

When planning takes place collegiately, moderation discussions become part of everyday practice. Collegiate practice ensures practitioners are discussing and agreeing the standards from the outset. This allows practitioners to discuss and plan opportunities for learners to demonstrate breadth, challenge and application in learning experiences and in planned assessments.

Moderation – Observation of Learning and Teaching

Observing learning and teaching is part of the moderation process. Observing learning and teaching allows practitioners to share ideas and to moderate their judgements about learner progress together. It is important to have a clear emphasis on the purpose of observing learning and teaching, for example by focussing on:

- The progress of particular learners (e.g. if achievement of a level is borderline)
- A particular aspect of the moderation process (e.g. learning intentions and success criteria)
- Gathering evidence for assessment
- Standards within a particular curriculum area or subject

Moderation – Reviewing Evidence

Practitioners should have regular opportunities to moderate a body of evidence in order to share, understand and agree on standards. It is particularly important to moderate samples of evidence when considering progress towards or achievement of a level. Evidence should be reviewed against the standards in the Experiences/Outcomes and Benchmarks.

Moderation – Benefits of Moderating Teacher Professional Judgement

- Improved planning and collegiate accountability
- Improved consistency in quality of learning and teaching
- Improved assessments
- Improved reliability of teacher professional judgements
- Improved pupil understanding of judgements of their learning
- Improved transparency
- Improved attainment
- Improved pathways into the senior phase

Moderation – A Balerno High School Context

- Moderation within departments is part of departmental Quality Improvement Calendar, and the Forms shown in Appendix 1-Appendix 3 are used to document how professional judgements have been agreed
- Moderation of professional judgement related to achievement of a level takes place according to the Faculty/Department QA calendar.
- Cross-curricular themes will be moderated periodically, in line with the school quality improvement calendar i.e. Literacy across learning, Numeracy across learning

MODERATION IN THE BGE

Evaluating moderation in Balerno High School

When evaluating moderation within our quality improvement cycle, we should ask the following questions:

How are we doing?

- Is there a shared understanding of standards embedded within the Experiences/Outcomes?

How do we know?

- How robust and reliable is teacher professional judgement within our department/faculty?
- What evidence do we have?

What are we going to do know?

- Which aspects of the Moderation Cycle require a stronger focus on our department/faculty?

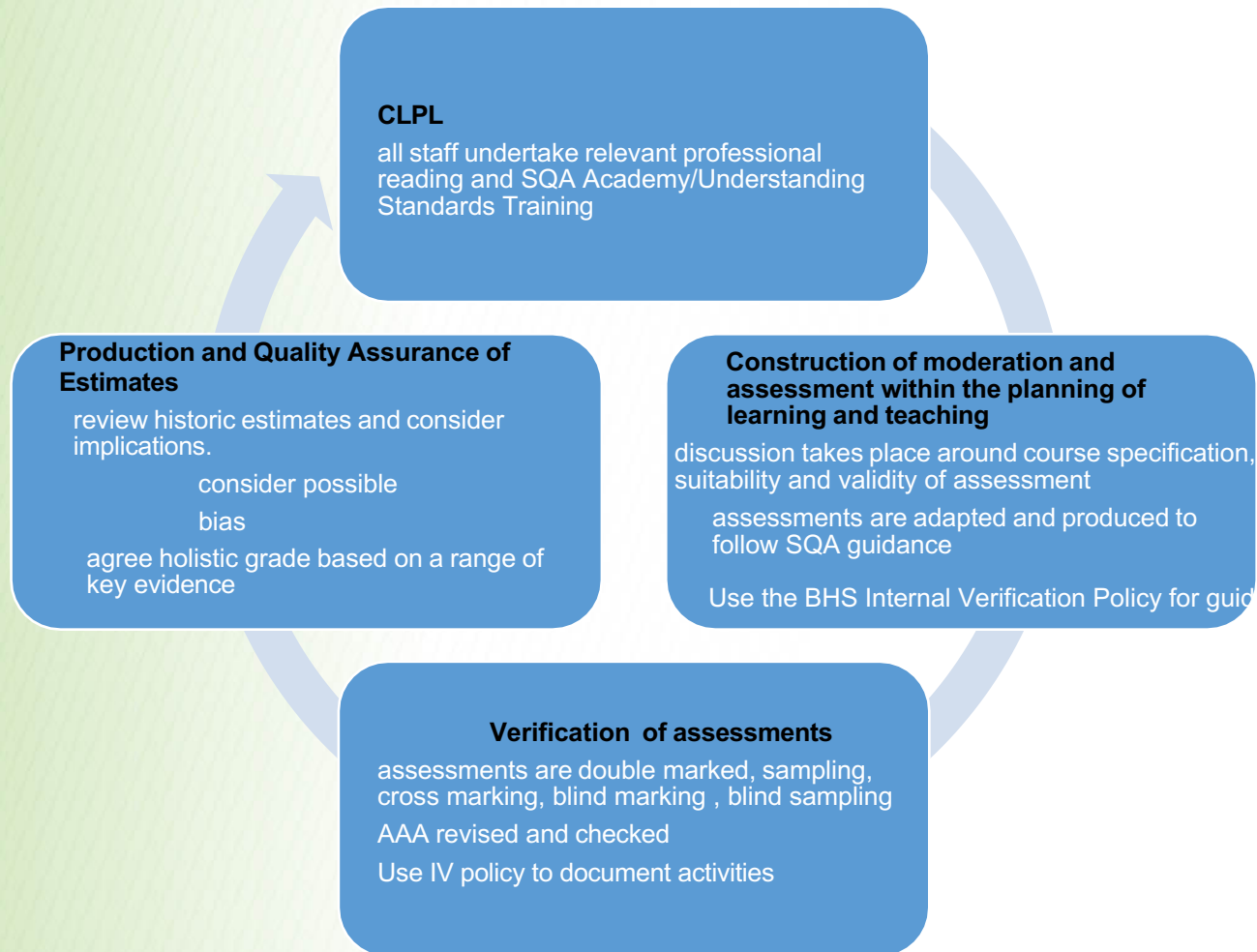
MODERATION

IN THE SENIOR PHASE

MODERATION IN THE SENIOR PHASE PROVIDING ESTIMATES

Moderation in the Senior Phase

The principles as set out in the Moderation Cycle continue to be relevant in the Senior Phase, however the point of reference for decision making shifts from Experience/Outcomes and Benchmarks to being the SQA Course Specifications, Assessment Standards and Understanding Standards. Please refer to the BHS Internal Verification Policy for more information.



CLPL

MODERATION IN THE SENIOR PHASE PROVIDING ESTIMATES

All staff are required to ensure their professional knowledge and understanding takes account the key areas outlined:

- read the updated guidance from SQA [National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates](#)
- staff should engage with subject-specific [SQA Understanding Standards](#) materials to ensure they are clear on the standards and can apply these in all assessment decisions.
- In addition, dialogue should take place departmentally, in order to ensure a common application of SQA standards.
- Subject-specific SQA Course reports should be read by all staff to generate dialogue.

Where appropriate, relevant CLPL should be undertaken to ensure standards are understood, and all departmental staff are upskilled to take account of the important professional judgements required for this process.

When planning for assessment, staff have knowledge of national assessment requirements and requirements of awarding and accrediting bodies. Staff apply professional judgement to evidence gathered, which is then subject to moderation.

Moderation 'partners,' where teachers work in pairs or groups to confirm each other's assessment decisions and to moderate evidence over a period of time, can be an effective way to reinforce assessment standards. It is good practice to extend moderation activity beyond the centre to a local or regional level, where possible.

MODERATION IN THE SENIOR PHASE PROVIDING ESTIMATES

Roles and Responsibilities

All Colleagues in Balerno High School have an important role to play in the production of estimate grades:

- Classroom teachers
- Curriculum Leaders/Pupil Support
- SLT

Classroom Teachers

- Engage in Department/faculty moderation Activities throughout the year.
- Engage in National Understanding Standards webinars (where possible)
- Collate and review evidence for each candidate in their class(es) and determines estimated grades in close liaison with their department/faculty
- Share estimated grades with their Curriculum Leader
- Contribute to department discussion with respect to the determination of estimated grades for each candidate
- Contribute to quality assuring the accuracy of estimated grades in line with SQA guidance

Curriculum Leaders

- Review Departmental Tracking information throughout the academic year
- Lead Departmental/faculty moderation activities throughout the year
- Lead the process of collating evidence and determining estimated grades in their faculty
- Engage with Local Authority moderation activities
- Engage with national moderation/verification events
- Engage in National Understanding Standards webinars
- Responsibility for quality assuring the accuracy of estimated grades in line with the SQA guidance
- Leads department/faculty discussion with respect to the determination of estimated grades for each candidate
- Inputs estimated bands on Seemis and have these checked by one other member of the leadership team (Quality Assured).

Pupil Support and Support for Learning

- Review Tracking information throughout the academic year
- Provide an overview of candidates with exceptional circumstances to SQA Coordinator where appropriate

Senior Leadership Team

- Review Tracking information throughout the academic year
- Overview of the process of collating evidence and determining estimating grades
- Engages with, quality assurance, in close liaison with SLT and Curriculum Leaders, the accuracy of estimated grades

MODERATION IN THE SENIOR PHASE PROVIDING ESTIMATES

Types of Evidence and key considerations for generating estimates

Estimates take account of:

- Tracking and Monitoring
- Reporting
- Robust Assessments
- Class tests
- Folio work
- Home Study Tasks
- Assignment
- Other benchmarking tests/assessments
- Evidence of sustained/increased commitment following on from a robust assessment
- Professional Judgement
- Faculty Quality Assurance Calendar





APPENDICES

Documenting moderation discussions

Please see the forms in the Appendix which are there as a guide as to how best to document moderation discussion.

Appendix 1	Appendix 1 can be used to plan a unit of work
Appendix 2	Appendix 2 can be used to record assessment decisions relating to a number of pupils and this can be extended to suit the purpose of the moderation activity. <i>This method allows for an overview of decisions across a department.</i>
Appendix 3	Appendix 3 can be used to record assessment decisions relating to a single candidate.

Justification for decision making

It is **imperative** that decision making relating to Professional Judgement is documented and the justification for decision-making part of the form includes a detailed explanation of the reasons for professional decisions being made. These decisions must be based on demonstrated evidence and should already be clearly documented in tracking and monitoring procedures, interventions and subsequent communications to parents.

Storing appendix evidence

Please store these documents in Moderation/QA channel in your faculty TEAM

Appendix 1 - Planning Sheet

Skills for Learning Life and Work				Context for Learning:				Higher Order Skills Development											
Literacy				Experiences and Outcomes: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">SUBJECT</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Literacy</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Numeracy</th> <th style="width: 25%;">H&W</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				SUBJECT	Literacy	Numeracy	H&W					<u>Knowing</u> Identifying, Labelling, Naming, Selecting, Stating. <div style="text-align: right; color: red;">← Focus On...</div>			
SUBJECT	Literacy	Numeracy	H&W																
Numeracy								<u>Understanding</u> Classifying, Explaining ideas or concepts, Giving examples. <div style="text-align: right; color: red;">← Focus On...</div>											
Health and Wellbeing				<u>Application</u> Carrying out, Changing / Modifying, Constructing, Preparing, Producing, Solving. <div style="text-align: right; color: red;">← Focus On...</div>															
Employability, Enterprise and Citizenship				<u>Learning Intentions and Success Criteria/Learning and Teaching Approaches</u>				<u>Analysis</u> Comparing, Finding, Illustrating, Organising, Selecting. <div style="text-align: right; color: red;">← Focus On...</div>											
Thinking								<u>Synthesis</u> Combining, Creating, Designing, Modifying, Planning, Revising.											
				<u>Homework/Family Learning Activity/Link to Wider Achievement</u>				<u>Evaluation</u> Checking, Defending, Describing, Justifying.											
								<u>Systems Thinking</u> Foreseeing consequences. <div style="text-align: right; color: red;">← Focus On...</div>											
				<u>Benchmarks</u>				<u>Creativity</u> Brainstorming, Imagining, Modifying, Producing.											
								<u>Assessment Evidence</u>											
				<u>Next Steps/Pupil Feedback</u>															

Appendix 2 - Record of Moderation – Planning Review of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Activities

Record of Professional Judgements

Details of what is being moderated:	Department	Course	Staff involved in Moderation Activity Including roles where appropriate

Date	Level	Details of discussion	Evidence Base	Decisions agreed including justification	Completion Date

Appendix 3 - Record of Moderation – Internal Moderation of Assessment Decisions

Record of Professional Judgements

Pupil Name	Assessment/Evidence Base	Level	Marked by:	Moderated by:

Marks allocated as such:

Marker	Moderator

Details of discussion in relation to this candidate	Decisions agreed including justification

Following professional dialogue, marks agreed by:

Marker	Moderator	Date

