



## National Qualifications: Unit Assessments Procedures and Internal Appeals Policy

### Context

To gain a course award, a candidate must have successfully achieved all the component units and have gained at least a pass in external assessment (see Course Choice booklets for examples courses comprising component units and external examinations e.g. National 5 Physics or Higher Business Management).

Component units are assessed internally using exemplars supplied by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) or produced internally and verified by the SQA. The results of all internal assessments will be conveyed to candidates as soon as possible. If a candidate fails a unit assessment he or she will be offered an opportunity for reassessment. The timing of such a reassessment will be a matter for the professional judgement of the teacher.

Two unsuccessful attempts i.e. the original attempt and one reassessment, would indicate that the candidate is attempting a level which is too challenging. Parents will be informed when this happens and departments will make recommendations about the candidate's next steps.

### Appeals

A candidate may appeal against the result of an internal assessment. Such appeals will be dealt with within the school's overall dispute resolution framework

- They should be dealt with quickly, fairly and within agreed time limits.
- Every effort should be made to resolve the matter using informal mechanisms – e.g. through discussion with a member of staff.
- Decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level and should, where possible, involve the use of informal mechanisms to secure a resolution.

#### Stage 1

The pupil should speak to their class teacher to gain an understanding of why they have failed and what they need to do to remedy the position. This would normally occur as part of the normal 'learning conversations' which take place in class.

#### Stage 2

If the issue is not resolved at stage 1, then the pupil should speak to the Principal Teacher responsible for the course who will consider all relevant facts and make a determination.

### Appeals Criteria

- Appeals will only be considered for unit assessments that contribute to certification. They will not be considered for other assessments such as class tests, homework etc.
- Appeals must relate to the procedures followed in applying the unit assessment. Appropriate grounds would include
  - No advance notification of the assessment
  - Inappropriate test conditions
  - Incorrect application of the marking scheme or threshold scores
- The following do not constitute grounds for appeal
  - Pupil absence, for whatever reason
  - Health problems
  - Other personal difficulties
- Departments will, however, take relevant factors into account when determining an appropriate date for assessment/reassessment provided that external deadlines set by SQA make this possible.

### **Stage 3**

If the issue is not resolved at stage 2, then the pupil can appeal to the Rector. Any such appeal must be made in writing and be received by the Rector within two weeks of the result of the assessment being announced.

The Rector may consider the appeal in person or delegate consideration to another member of the senior management team.

**In all cases, this decision is final.**

SQA will not consider appeals against the judgement of the school. You may, however, complain to SQA about the school's operating procedures if you feel that they do not meet the standards set down by SQA.

## **Internal Assessment Procedures for Units**

The following guidelines apply within Jordanhill School

1. Principal Teachers (or Heads of Department) should ensure that an appropriate form of internal verification is in place and documented to achieve consistency of procedures and outcomes within the department and that all members of staff have access to all the relevant SQA documentation including marking guidelines.
2. All internal assessments will be carried out under the conditions stipulated by SQA. For example, such 'controlled conditions' might be normal examination rules with regard to supervision and timing.
3. At least one week's advance notice should normally be given of any formal unit assessments. This stipulation does not apply in circumstances where the 'assessment' is small-scale and a by-product of ongoing coursework.
4. Where reassessment is required, approaches will vary from subject to subject, but as a general principle a different assessment instrument should be used. This instrument should be subject to prior verification whenever possible.
5. Assessment or reassessment should not take place at a time when 'exceptional circumstances' are in play<sup>1</sup>. Candidates will be required to provide appropriate documentation (e.g. a medical certificate) if requested.
6. A candidate should be offered an opportunity for reassessment in respect of any outcome(s)<sup>2</sup> he or she has failed to obtain. Shortly after the original unsuccessful assessment, the teacher should discuss the reasons for non-attainment with the candidate and advise on further work to be undertaken before reassessment.
7. The timing of reassessments is a matter for professional judgement. They may be deferred until later in the course when a candidate has further developed their capacity to integrate skills, knowledge and understanding and to meet the standards for challenge and application within the Unit.
8. Where a candidate has failed a reassessment, then his or her parents/guardians must be advised as soon as possible.
9. A candidate may wish to appeal against the result of an internal assessment. In the first instance these should be considered by the class teacher (stage 1) and thereafter by the Principal Teacher (stage 2). If the matter remains unresolved, then any further appeal (stage 3) must be made in writing to the Rector and be received within two weeks of the result of the assessment. In all cases the Rector's decision will be final.

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<sup>1</sup> Exceptional circumstances are those defined by SQA in their guidance for centres within their Results Services.

<sup>2</sup> In some courses candidates must be reassessed on the complete Unit. In others candidates may be reassessed only on those outcomes in which they failed to attain the required cut-off score.