Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

From mountain to sea

SQA guidance on assessment arrangements for candidates with additional support needs

Practice Guidelines

December 2017

Contents

Date	Version	Status	Reason
December 2017	2.0	Guidelines	Update and transfer to new format

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1 Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared to assist schools in implementing the SQA guidance on assessment arrangements (AA) for candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs (ASN).
This guidance has since been subject to regular revision by SQA and is now available as an online resource at http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html

This practice guidance, procedures and arrangements will enable the SQA guidance to be effectively implemented. The present set of practice guidelines seeks to facilitate this by providing further information, support, and clarification in the following areas:

- **Identification, Assessment and Provision**

  Which sets out the key process involved in identifying and meeting additional support needs and assessing the extent to which they imply a need for an alternative assessment arrangement.

- **Statement of the Key Roles and Responsibilities**

  Which sets out who is responsible for doing what and when throughout the process

- **A set of Working Documents**

  Which supports various element of the process

- **Other key documentation**

  Which include the essential SQA website link

- **The legal context**

  Which outlines some legal aspects relating to the policy and its implementation.

2 Identification, Assessment & Provision

KEY STAGES: TRANSITIONS, EXAMINATIONS & VERIFICATIONS

What are the key stages/events in the pupil's career which will impact on the assessment of the need for assessment arrangements?

- PRIMARY SCHOOL:
  - Input from Class Teacher, ASL Team, EPS, other educational support agencies
- P7 → S1 TRANSFER
  - PPR
  - ASL information

BGE → Sen Phase (S4/5/6)

  - Provision of relevant support
- FORMAL SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS
  - Year Exams
  - NABS
  - Prelims

Special Circumstances

  - Ad hoc circumstances which initiate the need to deal with late identification and assessment
  - Temporary Disability

VERIFICATION MEETING

UPLOAD REQUIREMENTS TO SQA

KEY ELEMENTS: EVIDENCE & PROCESS

What are the key elements of the process that will generate evidence relevant to the assessment arrangements?

- ASL FILES
  - All relevant documents/ material from above
  - Continuous update incl. information as below
- REGULAR MONITORING & update of pupil progress/ needs
  - Test reports/ further reading/ writing assessments (ASL) + "control" assessments

  - Review meetings
  - Sharing/ exchange of information (ASL TEAM, PT/FAC Head, Class Teacher, EPS

  Guidance teachers, SW, Health etc.)

- INVOLVEMENT OF SPECIALIST SERVICES
  - E.g., visual/ hearing impairment, SLT, EAL, Health, SW etc.
- REVIEWING individual subject requirements/ needs
- RECORDING adjustments to support/ provision (In House systems and SEEMIS)
- EVIDENCE of SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS
  - Reviewed
  - Adapted
- DIALOGUE & AGREEMENT with PUPIL
- COMMUNICATION & AGREEMENT with PARENT/ CARER
- Regular reporting and other forms of communication
- Consultation – by letter and/or meeting, as appropriate
  - Cooperation & agreement
- QUALITY ASSURANCE
  - Subject department
  - ASL
  - SQA coordinator/ SMT

VERIFICATION MEETING

UPLOAD REQUIREMENTS TO SQA

SQA EXAMINATIONS

- PPR/ ASL   RECORDS/ INFO at Transfer

3 Key Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that pupils with additional support needs have appropriate assessment arrangements.

- Throughout this process the ASL Team is seen as the coordinating body within the school, with the Principal Teacher/Faculty Head of the department taking the lead coordinating role within this.

- The table below identifies (in the "Who" column) the person/persons with prime responsibility for each identified stage set out within the "What" column. Where more than one person or body is identified, schools should nominate one person to take the lead role in ensuring that all groups referred to are involved in the activity. Where a department is mentioned, the departmental Head is assumed to have this role.

- In the "In consultation with" column, consultation with Pupil and Parents/Carers should be viewed as mandatory. Other consultations are "as appropriate/necessary".

4 Key Roles and Responsibilities (Contd.)

What	When	Who	In Consultation with
Liaison/ Communication with Pupils and Parents/Carers	Prior to and at decision point regarding assessment arrangements	ASL Team	SQA coordinator/ SMT Link
Identification of need and Collection of evidence (emerging as a result of existing evidence and experience in teaching, learning and assessment in the classroom)	P7 transfer	Primary Staff, Guidance Teacher and ASL Team	Pupil, Parents/Carers, Ed Psych
	S1 to S6	Class Teachers, Subject Departments, Guidance teacher, ASL Team	Pupil, Parents/Carers, Ed Psych
Collation of Assessment Arrangements file with evidence for each identified pupil (as a result of the Identification (above), open an Alternative Arrangements file and start collection/collation of relevant evidence)	S1 to S6	ASL Team	Class Teachers, Subject Departments, Guidance teacher
Decision on Provision required for need	S1 to S6	Class Teachers, Subject Departments, Guidance teacher, ASL Team	Pupil, Parents/Carers, Ed Psych
Check provision is adequate/appropriate/required	At appropriate assessment points through S1 to S6	Class Teachers, Subject Departments, Guidance teacher, ASL Team	Pupil, Parents/Carers, SQA Coordinator, SQA

Formal Agreement to accept proposed AAs & share ASN information with SQA	Prior to Verification meeting	Pupil/ Parents/ carers dependent upon pupil age	Parents/Carer

Organisation of/ assessment arrangements in departmental assessment	At appropriate assessment points through S1 to S6	Class Teachers, Subject Departments	Guidance teacher, ASL Team
Organisation of Verification meeting	January/ February of Assessment year or appropriate to school calendar	ASL Team	
Attendance at Verification meeting		ASL Team SQA Coordinator/ SMT link Ed Psych (consultancy role) as appropriate	
Internal QA	February of external Assessment year or appropriate to school calendar	SQA coordinator	SQA
External QA	As per SQA	SQA	
Compilation of request to SQA	As per SQA calendar	ASL Team	SQA coordinator
Organisation of Assessment for Examinations (Internal and External)	As per SQA calendar	SQA coordinator/ SMT Link	ASL Team
Overall responsibility For Arrangements		Head Teacher/ Head of Centre	

5 English as an Additional Language

Candidates who have English as an additional language, and whose knowledge of English could impair their ability to communicate their attainment, are allowed the use of a bilingual translation dictionary. This is allowed in both internal and external assessments, with the exception of assessments in English, ESOL and the candidate's first language. It is the centre's responsibility to determine whether a candidate needs to use the bilingual dictionary.

All candidates who need to use a bilingual dictionary are allowed extra time of 10 minutes per hour to use the dictionary.

Staff should consult with the EAL Service and take account of SQA guidance which can be found on the SQA website. (The current link is below).

https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/controller?p_service=Front.search&pContentID=41454&q=EAL

Application for assessment arrangements should be made at the appropriate time for all subjects with the exception of English, ESOL and the home language. Support for in class assessment should also reflect this arrangement.

Where a bilingual pupil has an additional support need other than English as an Additional Language, SQA assessment arrangements may be required in line with provision for those needs.

The EAL Service can:

- provide advice to schools about SQA assessment arrangements
- assess, monitor, review and advise the English language competency levels which can be used as part of the evidence for SQA assessment arrangements

The EAL Service may be contacted via:

eal.service@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

6 Working Documentation

Evidence and information relevant to the request for an Assessment Arrangement will be generated throughout the process.

As part of the main Pupil Profile, some of the following documentation should be available to support the reasons why Assessment Arrangements might be appropriate:

- Recent (2 years) ASL assessments (formal/informal)
- Educational Psychologists consultation records and assessments
- Assessments & information from Allied Health professionals
  Speech & Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physio,

  School Medical Service

- GIRFEC/Single /Multi- agency action planning
- CSP/IEP
- Evidence of consultation with pupils, parents/carers
- Evidence of consultation with class teachers
- Classroom based evidence

Once evidence that an Assessment Arrangement may be appropriate has emerged, further Supporting Evidence which confirms the need in relation to its use in classroom and in formal assessments will be necessary. This may include:

- Updated assessments e.g., Lucid Exact, Neale or York Assessment of Reading and Comprehension, NGRT Reading Test, NFER Single Word Spelling test, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia Screeners etc.
- Year on year record of use of additional arrangements
- Evidence from subject departments of appropriate use of additional arrangements in classroom work and in formal assessments

7 Verification meeting

- Written confirmation of agreement of pupil
- Confirmation of agreement of parent/ carer
- Documentation of pupil need
- Evidence of appropriate use of arrangements and the impact that these arrangements have made (examples of work with and without additional arrangements).

Exemplars from an Aberdeenshire secondary school can be found in Appendix A. (With acknowledgments to Mintlaw Academy).

Information about the alternative assessment arrangements timeline is in Appendix B, and an exemplar of a cover slip used for attaching evidence is in Appendix C.

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8 Other Key Documentation

The following links refer to SQA; **please note that schools should ensure that the most up to date and relevant documents are used.**

Schools should also note the quality assurance documentation.

SQA also email regular updates to schools.

Assessment arrangements - SQA

9 Legal Context for implementation of the guidelines

It is conceivable that at some point in the future, a pupil or parent/carer will seek to legally challenge a school's decision to request (or not request) a particular amendment to the normal assessment arrangements. (It should be noted that once the pupil reaches age 16, he/she is considered to be legally competent, and able to take his/her own decisions. References to "pupils and Parents/Carers" throughout this document should be understood to refer primarily to the pupil (once s/he has reached age 16) for legal purposes, although it will remain the practice of Aberdeenshire to involve the parent/carer in the process where possible and appropriate.

Integral to both the SQA's and Aberdeenshire's guidance and procedures in relation to AA, is the need to involve both pupil and parent/carers of the process by informing and discussing the reasons for any decision to amend standard assessment arrangements. Indeed, it is required that part of the evidence to be confirmed at the Verification Meeting demonstrates that candidates have been involved in discussion about, and have agreed to, the arrangements being requested on their behalf.

Aberdeenshire guidance also recommends that the Parents/Carers are involved in this process. It is important that schools ensure that the views and any potential concerns that pupils or Parents/Carers have about the process, or the outcome of it, will have been considered and dealt with in the course of the process itself. By this means, the likelihood of any concerns that a pupil or his/her Parents/Carers have, actually reaching the stage where legal redress is considered the only possible course of action, should be minimized.

Nevertheless, it is possible that circumstances will arise where the views of the pupil and/or parent/carer will remain opposed to the decision of the school not to request a particular amendment to assessment arrangements and decide to challenge this decision legally

Any such legal challenge would be against the decision taken by the Education Authority, which would be represented at any appropriate hearing by the Head Teacher and/or another appropriate Officer of the authority, as well as by appropriate legal personnel.

Provided that the school has acted diligently, fairly, and reasonably in applying the authority Guidelines on Assessment Arrangements, and that evidence exists to demonstrate this, the authority will be well placed to respond to such a legal challenge. The key elements of evidence that the authority would rely on in defending the school's decision would be:

- The authority guidelines and procedures in relation to Assessment Arrangements.

- Evidence that the guidelines and procedures had been adhered to in this case and that designated roles and responsibilities have been fulfilled.

- Evidence that pupil/parent/carer had been involved in the process as per guidelines and procedures.

- The evidence that was presented at the Verification Meeting that made the decision not to make a request for an amendment.

- In circumstances where the school did not bring the case to the stage of a Verification Meeting, evidence that the pupil's additional support needs do not result in a need to amend the assessment arrangements in the way that is claimed to be necessary, by the pupil and/ or parent/carer. For example, the parent may claim that the pupil has a need for additional support (perhaps backed up by an independently commissioned report) which they claim would justify extra time as an appropriate amendment. In this case the school's evidence would need to demonstrate that the pupil was able to perform to his/her potential equally well in circumstances where the extra time was or was not granted, i.e. that the additional support need that the pupil and/or parent/carer claims the pupil has does not adversely affect his/her ability to demonstrate his/her ability to perform via the normal assessment arrangements and that it was not reasonable to grant the request.

- Recording of the evidence and key decisions which allows the decision-making process to be clearly set out.

- Where appropriate, evidence from report by the Educational Psychologist, other services, IEP, CSPs etc.

Appendix A: Exemplars from an Aberdeenshire secondary school

A. Roles, Responsibilities and Review Arrangements

- **Depute Head Teacher (SQA Coordinator)**
  - ➢ Overall responsibility for SQA AA systems and procedures.
  - ➢ Policy Review as required.
  - ➢ Attendance at Departmental / Faculty meetings when pupil AA being reviewed, and evidence discussed as part of objective sampling procedures.
  - ➢ Verification of evidence in relation to AA requests – 2 meetings per session with PT ASL (as per timeline) – random sampling of individual pupil evidence across subjects to support this process.
  - ➢ Liaison with SQA Chief Invigilator regarding AA.
  - ➢ Liaise with PT ASL regarding rooming for AA – prelim and final SQA exams.

- **Principal Teacher: Additional Support for Learning.**
  - ➢ Testing / identification regarding ASN and AA of candidates: updating and amending AA as required.
  - ➢ Work with, guide and communicate with pupils through the whole AA process.
  - ➢ Work with different agencies as required to ensure equity for all candidates.
  - ➢ Oversee information sharing as appropriate regarding ASN and AA.
  - ➢ Oversee gathering and storage of AA evidence: collation of feedback from staff regarding AA use in classwork and assessment, communication of adjustments to AA in light of this.
  - ➢ School – home communication with regard to AA.
  - ➢ Oversee systems to log SQA AA requirements with SQA.
  - ➢ AA logistics for prelim and SQA exams – rooms and staffing – liaison with Chief Invigilator / SQA Coordinator as appropriate.
  - ➢ AA Quality Assurance with departments and faculties as indicated in timeline

- **Pupil Support Assistant**
  - ➢ Specific responsibility for collation of AA.
  - ➢ Calculation of extra time allocation for assessments and exams as needed.
  - ➢ Filing of pupil evidence.
  - ➢ Development of electronic storage systems for digital evidence.

- **School Administrator (AA Data Input)**
  - ➢ Responsible for input of data into AA system in line with SQA timescales.
  - ➢ Liaise with PSA with specific responsibility for collation of AA and PT ASL.

- **<u>Principal Teachers</u>**
  - ➢ Oversee department / faculty systems to identify, review and log use of AA provision for certain pupils.
  - ➢ Ensure systems in place to submit and retain pieces of subject specific evidence in support of AA for identified pupils.
  - ➢ Liaise with PT ASL in relation to AA as required.
  - ➢ Ensure critical review of AA at Departmental / Faculty meetings.

- **<u>Classroom Teachers</u>**
  - ➢ Work with ASL staff to support pupils with AA.
  - ➢ Ensure that AA are available for pupils from S1 onwards.
  - ➢ Review and discuss the use of these AA with pupils and generate evidence to support AA needs including examples of classwork produced unaided.

Appendix B: Alternative Assessment Arrangements Timeline

Alternative Assessment Arrangements: Timeline for year of presentation for SQA Qualifications		
Date	**Action**	**Staff Involved**
September (and ongoing throughout session)	Initial meeting PT ASL and PTs Faculty / Subject (PTs F/S) to review, discuss and quality assure AA evidence using appropriate checklist. Arrangements made for PT ASL to attend departmental /faculty meetings to discuss needs and requirements with all staff.	PT ASL / PTs F/S
September	Initial verification meeting to review and authorise AA for S4-6 pupils ahead of unit assessments to be taken in coming session	PT ASL and SQA Coordinator
October	Pupils consulted regarding proposed AA. Letter sent home detailing AA for individual subjects. Pupils sign to give consent for ASN to be shared with SQA. Parents / Carers countersign.	PT ASL
November	Meeting to discuss proposed digital and adapted paper use ahead of January31st deadline	PT ASL and SQA Coordinator.
November	Prelim AA and room requirements discussed	PT ASL / SQA Coordinator
December / January	Ordering of Digital Papers	
December / January Jan/February	Prior to Prelim Examinations PT ASL visits all Departments / Faculties to discuss AA and ensure all staff fully aware. ASL staff provide feedback as prelims occur.	PT ASL / PTs Subject / Faculty ASL DEPT.
February - Post - Prelim	Evaluation with staff of AA. Invigilators annotate papers regarding use of extra time. Staff marking scripts annotate with regard to AA. Staff provide evaluation post prelim as to extent AA utilised by pupil. Evaluation also made by pupils and staff evaluation discussed with them	PT ASL / staff/pupils
February - Post - Prelim	Evaluation of AA.	PT ASL / Chief Invigilator
March	Review of prelims and AA arrangements. Discussion and sign off of finalised arrangements / rooming.	

	Second verification meeting – final review and authorisation of AA.	SQA Co-ordinator/ PT ASL
	Although the Educational Psychologist's direct input is no longer required as part of the verification process, input and advice on AA is invaluable for pupils with formal Ed Psych involvement. This can be sought at MAAPs or through 1-1 consultation.	

Late requests for AA may occur. For example, a pupil with AA may transfer to the school close to the exam diet or a change in a pupil's personal circumstances may mean that AA are required for some or all of their exams. Injury or sudden illness may mean that AA are needed.

In such instances and / or cases of temporary disability the SQA Coordinator will work with the PT ASL, and Chief Invigilator following the procedures in the 'Delivering National Qualifications: Guide for SQA Coordinators' i.e., contact the Assessment Arrangements Section at SQA to discuss the arrangements required.

Appendix C: Example of a cover slip used for attaching to different types of evidence.

To be completed by the class teacher or ASL member of staff

Evidence for SQA AA Application								
Name:								
Date :- 00/00/00			Subject :- SUBJECT HERE				Level:- LEVEL	
Evidence Type (☐)	Classwork		Class Assessment		Unit Assessment		Added Value Unit (SQA)	Prelim
Assessment arrangements given?	Assessment Arrangements used		Extra Time (Please Specify)	Reader		Scribe	Other (Please Specify)	Impact (Please Specify)
Yes/No	Yes/No		Yes/No		Yes/No	Yes/No		

(With acknowledgments to Mintlaw Academy).