SQA National Qualifications

Post-results Service (session 2018-19): Policy and Procedures

This policy reflects the guidance offered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) in the document 'Post-results Service – Guidance for Centres' (March 2014).

Post-results Service

Individual schools should determine whether:

      a) A clerical check and/or

      b) A marking review

of a candidate's script should be made on behalf of a candidate following receipt of his/her SQA results.

In considering whether to submit either, or both, of these requests, schools should reflect on evidence gathered from rigorous and robust assessment processes to ensure that they are confident in justifying such requests.

There is no consideration of 'alternative evidence' with this service. This means that schools cannot submit additional evidence of candidate performance to support the request and no such evidence will be considered by SQA in determining the outcome of the request.

Head Teachers and SQA coordinators should work closely with Principal Teachers/Faculty Heads to ensure that there is consistent practice in the application of the SQA Post-results Service.

It is important to note that the check/review can lead to a change of grade either up or down.

If the grade is changed, a new certificate will be issued by SQA to the candidate by the end of November.

    1. **Who makes the decision to submit a Post-results Service request?**

The final decision to submit a request lies with the Head Teacher.

Only requests which have been approved by the Head Teacher will be accepted by SQA. Requests will not be accepted from candidates or parents.
Requests cannot be submitted for candidates who have achieved a grade A, have received a result from the Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service or have had their award cancelled due to candidate malpractice.

Requests can be made only on the basis of assessment evidence. They cannot be made on compassionate grounds or, for example, because entry to higher education is conditional on a particular award. Neither can a request be submitted because the candidate or parent/carer has offered to pay any charges arising.

Prior to submitting the request, the Terms and Conditions of the service must be agreed to. This will include confirmation from the Head Teacher that:

- written consent from a candidate and his/her parent/carer has been received for each post-results services request submitted (this must be retained, at least, until December)

- the candidate is aware that his/her grade can go up, remain unchanged or go down

2. What needs to be considered before submitting a request?

Before a request for a clerical check and/or marking review is submitted, it should be ensured that:

- the request is being submitted within the published time-frame (late requests will not be considered)

- the Head Teacher has approved the request

- the request meets the agreed criteria

3. Clerical check

If a request for a clerical check of a candidate's exam script is submitted, SQA will check that:

- All parts of the script have been marked

- The marks given for each answer on the script have been totalled correctly

- The correct total/result was entered into the SQA's system for that script (the system evaluates all the results received in the different parts of the course, in order to calculate the final grade).

All subjects with externally-assessed components are eligible for clerical check. The majority of subjects involve one or more components where marks are recorded electronically ('e-marking'). Subjects that have been e-marked are not eligible for a clerical check, and almost all national 5 examinations are e-marked. When a subject is e-marked; the clerical check process is carried out automatically prior to the result being issued.

Where a subject has components that are both traditionally marked and e-marked, only the traditionally marked component will be eligible for a clerical check. A list of components that are **not** e-marked can be found in *SQA national Qualifications Post-results Services: System User guide for centres (Appendix – Qualifications not eligible for a request)*

(Subjects that are e-marked are, however, eligible for the marking review process)

4. Marking review

If a request for a marking review of a candidate's exam script is submitted, SQA will carry out:

- A clerical check (same as above)

- A review by a Senior Examiner of the marks that the candidate was given for each question and/or externally assessed component of the course assessment, to check whether the original marking was in line with the national standard

5. Criteria for post-result clerical check or marking review

A request can be submitted if there is clear and compelling evidence of a reasonable possibility that an error may have occurred with the marking or totalling of marks in a candidate's script.
That is, if the candidate's grade is significantly at odds with the assessment evidence gathered during the school year and is out of line with the performance of other candidates in the school with similar profiles.

It is not sufficient for a candidate's final award to be below the estimate submitted to SQA or that achieved at the prelim. The expectation is that there will be compelling evidence from ALL aspects of assessment throughout the course: class tests, unit tests, coursework and any prelim exam. (An overview of assessment evidence is provided in Appendix 1).

A clerical check and/or marking review should **not** be requested where:

- The candidate's final award is in line with the estimate previously submitted to SQA by the school

- The final award is within the same grade as that predicted by the assessment evidence held by the school.

- The candidate's performance has shown inconsistencies during the year such that the final award falls within the range of performance evidenced

- A disparity between estimates submitted by the school and actual candidate achievement for a class group indicates that the school were unrealistic in determining estimates to meet national standards determined by SQA.

- The evidence used to generate estimates has not been checked through an appropriate standardisation process as part of the internal verification procedures.

In general terms, a request can be submitted when the assessment evidence is consistent and points to an award at least one grade above the final award. The candidate must also give their consent for this to be submitted.

Decisions about eligibility for the Post-results Service will be taken by the Head Teacher based on advice by the relevant Principal Teacher/Faculty Head, and in conjunction with the SQA coordinator.

6. Post-results Service helpdesk

SQA will provide a helpdesk for schools only (prs.enquiries@sqa.org.uk) which will be available from 6 August until 28 September 2019 with the exception of bank holidays.

Candidates contacting SQA about the Post-results Service will be directed back to their school. It would be helpful, therefore, for schools to advise candidates, and their parents, whom they should contact if they have any issues they wish to discuss.

SQA will not decide whether or not a request should be submitted. This is a decision for the Head Teacher.

Costs are the same as last session:

Clerical check £10
Marking review £29.75
Priority marking review £39.75

Full details regarding the SQA Post-results Service can be found on the SQA web site for candidates (www.sqa.org.uk/resultsservices) and on SQA Connect for centres (https://www.sqaconnect.org.uk)

Appeals
If a candidate is dissatisfied with the decision taken by the school then they can appeal. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the school at least seven working days prior to the end of the SQA submission window (6-27 August 2019). The appeal will be considered by the Head Teacher and the school's SQA coordinator. Appeals will be considered on the basis of the criteria set out above and will be final.

Qualification review
If a school is concerned by the marking for a significant proportion of a class for one subject/level, it may request a marking review for a sample of the candidates' exam scripts. This will be considered under the procedures set out by SQA in *'Post-result Services – Systems User Guide for centres'* (May 2016).

Submission of post-results services requests
All requests to SQA must come from the school. Parents and candidates cannot submit requests.
All requests must be submitted within the submission window publicised by SQA (7-28 August 2018).

Date	Process
6 August 2019	Candidates receive their results and certificates. Results Services system opens for Post-Results Services requests. Centres should submit Priority Marking Review requests as soon as possible after the system opens. It is also important that the request contains accurate details of the contact within the Higher Education Institution that requires the result.
16 August 2019	Closing date for submission of Priority Marking Review requests.
26 August 2019	Centres (and Higher Education Institutions/UCAS where applicable) receive Priority Marking Review results.
27 August 2019	Closing date for submission of Clerical Check or Marking Review requests.
27 September 2019	Centres receive Clerical Check and Marking Review results.
End of November 2019	New certificates issued to candidates.

<p align="center">**Appendix 1 to post-results service: policy and procedures**</p>

Assessment evidence
We gather assessment evidence throughout the sessions to inform estimate grades. Four different types of assessment evidence are used**: class tests, unit tests, coursework and prelims.**

Class tests usually contain a range of question types, which sample key aspects of the course and which replicate the demands of external assessment in terms of integration, challenge and application. They are also undertaken under 'controlled conditions'. Therefore, the collective outcomes of class tests undertaken across the session can be a very good source of evidence.

Unit Tests are generally set at minimum competence level at a level below grade C and do not of themselves offer evidence that a candidate can cope with the course assessment. However if they contain sufficient demands in terms of integration, challenge and application and the candidate performs well above the pass threshold, they then may provide useful additional evidence.

Coursework is undertaken in some subjects under exam conditions as a natural part of the programme. This too can be useful.

Prelims (internal exams)
The purpose of these exams are to:
- Provide clear evidence that the candidate can cope with the demands of the external assessment instruments
- Contribute to the determination of the estimate grade which the school will send to SQA in advance of the external examinations
- Form part of the evidence in an 'exceptional circumstances' case if this becomes necessary

Performance in prelims is not the sole source of evidence for estimates and cannot be the sole source of evidence for exceptional circumstances case or post-results services submission as parts of the course have not been covered at that point.

Appendix 2

Letter of consent

(INSERT SCHOOL NAME)

SQA National Qualifications

Post-results Service (session 2018-19): candidate consent form

I have read the post results policy and procedures and give my consent for the school to submit a request on my behalf.

I realise that as a consequence my grade may go up or down.

Candidate name (PRINT): _____

Candidate number: _____

Candidate date of birth: _____

Candidate signature: _____

Date:

Details of course result being submitted for post-results services (to be completed by school staff):

Subject and level e.g. History, N5	
Clerical check or marking review (please indicate)	

Staff name: _____

Staff signature: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____