



Education, Culture & Sport Service

Highland Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers

LNCT Agreement no.29 -

**Sharing Standards and Moderation of
Assessment**

The Highland Council

Sharing Standards and Moderation of Assessment

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Procedures for assuring the quality of assessment practice are a national requirement of local authorities and an essential component of Curriculum for Excellence.

1.2 We share and moderate standards in order to:

- reflect about learning, teaching and assessment
- build confidence and recognise success
- learn from each other and try out new things to improve the experiences of our pupils
- share ideas about how we challenge our pupils and help them to progress
- familiarise ourselves with standards in courses and programmes.

1.3 Over time, standards are shared at all levels in all curricular areas. However, at this time we give priority to the core areas of health/wellbeing, literacy and numeracy.

2. Approach

2.1 Our approach is based on four elements: informal sharing; group review and discussion of evidence; learning visits - observing and talking about practice; QIO review.

2.1.1 *Informal sharing*

Much of our sharing takes place on an informal basis – teachers asking colleagues for a ‘second opinion’ by observing a particular assessment approach or reviewing the standard of a collection of work or feedback offered to the pupil. School managers actively encourage and participate in this informal process.

2.1.2 *Group Review*

We also set aside up to twelve hours each Session (including one closure day) for groups of teachers to share assessment evidence drawn from the National Assessment Resource and/or their own practice. These review activities are organised proportionately on a school or department/faculty or ASG basis. The ASG meeting(s) focus on one, or more than one, of the core areas of HWB, Literacy or Numeracy.

2.1.3 *Learning Visits*

In addition, we afford up to 4 hours each session so that each teacher observes a learning activity and is also observed. The teacher may choose by mutual agreement whom to observe and by whom to be observed. After observation, dialogue and discussion ensue about the assessment practice adopted and appropriate next steps agreed for both participants. Participants may record what needs to be recorded for their own use.

2.1.4 *Quality Improvement Officer Review*

QIOs sample our activities to ensure that they are fit for purpose. These sampling activities include review with school managers about the evidence for the effectiveness of school procedures, participation in group sharing standards sessions, discussion with individual teachers about further developments in assessment practice.

For further details refer to the following Notes for School Staff: *Sharing Standards - Learning Visits* and *Group Review*.

Notes for School Staff

Sharing Standards - Learning Visits

Our vision is working together to inspire learning and achievement in Highland. In this respect, *The Highland Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy* is a key document. *How Good is our School* Quality Indicators 5.2 – 5.5 also provide detailed descriptions of very good practice.

Establishing Our Routine

Within a context of mutual trust and support, we aim to embed learning visits (observing others and being observed) followed by open, purposeful dialogue as a regular professional activity for all teaching staff.

Informal sharing

Many Learning Visits will be short and informal – teachers inviting colleagues into class and engaging in dialogue about improvement. Managers should actively encourage and participate in this ongoing informal process.

Learning Visits

We enhance this informal process by identifying up to 4 hours per session for extended sharing of assessment practice – as an observer and being observed. Such sharing is supportive and carried out with a colleague in whom we have confidence – another teacher in our school or ASG, a school manager.

Discussion based on the Highland Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy takes place beforehand – to agree focus, purpose and who does what. Dialogue takes place as soon as possible after the lesson. It is supportive and begins with the teacher's own view of the lesson. It recognises what went well and helps to clarify a manageable number of next steps – for the observer and the person observed.

Such a collegiate approach benefits both the observer and the person observed. It involves teachers, auxiliary and support staff, school managers and pupils - not only from within our own school but also from others in our Associated Schools Group and beyond. Through sharing experiences, we learn from each other, recognising and celebrating what we do well and clarifying areas for improvement.

The Role of School Managers

Managers are key personnel in establishing and maintaining the school's routine. They:

- establish and maintain an ethos of open, non-threatening observation and dialogue
- offer themselves for observation as teachers and regularly observe
- identify staff within and outwith the school who might participate in the sharing process
- use resources (including the staff development budget) to release staff to participate.

The Role of Quality Improvement Officers

QIOs sample school and ASG processes to ensure that they are fit for purpose and offer support to ensure continuous improvement.

Notes for School Staff

Sharing Standards – Group Review

The Purposes of Group Review

In our school and ASG, Group Review - sharing and discussing assessment evidence - engages us in dialogue in order to:

- recognise and celebrate individual and collective achievement
- share ideas and agree about the amounts and types of work required to provide appropriate individual and collective challenge and progression
- share ideas and agree about how we provide formative assessment feedback to learners - especially the identification of effective next steps
- quality assure our standards of what constitutes appropriate progress in learning.

Establishing a Routine

We share assessment evidence informally and formally. Over time, standards are shared at all levels in all curricular areas. However, currently we give priority to literacy, numeracy and HWB.

Informal group review

Much of our sharing is ongoing and informal – teachers asking colleagues for a ‘second opinion’ about the standard of a piece of work or collection of work, or about the appropriacy of feedback offered to a pupil. Managers actively encourage and participate in this informal process.

Group Review

We also set aside up to twelve hours each Session (including one closure day) for groups of teachers to share assessment evidence drawn from the National Assessment Resource and/or their own practice. These review activities are organised proportionately on a school or department/faculty or ASG basis. The ASG meeting(s) focus on one, or more than one, of the core areas of HWB, Literacy or Numeracy.

The Role of School Managers

Managers are key personnel in establishing and maintaining the school and ASG systems. They:

- where possible, offer evidence from their own pupils for review
- in discussion exploit their assessment experience and skill to the benefit of staff
- help to identify for review particular assessment evidence from the NAR or other IT sources and/or from across the school/ department/ASG
- organise and/or support regular ASG activities, using resources to release staff to select, organise and prepare evidence and lead discussions.

The Role of Quality Improvement Officers

QIOs sample school and ASG processes to ensure that they are fit for purpose and offer support to ensure continuous improvement.

Planning and Organising a Sharing Assessment Evidence Activity

The amount of assessment evidence must be realistic given the time available - at least 60 minutes is required, for example, to review and productively discuss a single portfolio of evidence. For each activity, we:

- provide each participant with a pack for the activity including a description of planning, process and intended outcomes together with appropriate assessment evidence
- disseminate the materials well in advance or build in reading time during the activity itself
- provide feedback in writing to staff (and pupils where appropriate).

Signed on behalf of the Council

Signed on behalf of the Teachers' Side

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Date 17 June 2011

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