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SQA Appeals

Purpose of Appeals

“The purpose of Appeals is to provide an opportunity for centres to seek upgrades in Course awards for **exceptional cases where a candidate has** failed to perform to the standard expected. Appeals must be based on valid and reliable evidence to support the estimated level of attainment.”



SQA Appeals – the facts

- ◆ The vast majority of appeals considered in Diet 2007 **were not** exceptional cases
- ◆ Many appeals **were not** supported by appropriate evidence
- ◆ In a significant number of cases, the evidence provided **did not** support the estimate
- ◆ Appeals resulting from Diet 2007 examinations **cost over £1million** to process (not including SQA staff time)



2006 & 2007 Appeals

	2006	% of Entries	2007	% of Entries
<i>Std Grade</i>	20 314	2.3	33 622	4.0
<i>Intermediate 1</i>	1 844	4.7	2 590	5.6
<i>Intermediate 2</i>	5 845	6.7	5 596	5.7
<i>Higher</i>	15 250	9.7	16 224	10.1
<i>Adv Higher</i>	2 195	12.0	2 201	12.3
Total	45 475	3.9	60 233	5.2



Appeals success rates

	2006	2007
<i>Std Grade</i>	54.0%	51.4%
<i>Intermediate 1</i>	39.3%	41.9%
<i>Intermediate 2</i>	40.4%	41.6%
<i>Higher</i>	41.3%	37.3%
<i>Adv Higher</i>	39.2%	40.4%
Total	46.7%	45.9%



Issues

- ◆ Number of Appeals
- ◆ Success rates
- ◆ Evidence not supporting Estimates
- ◆ Missing evidence
- ◆ Late submissions
- ◆ Poor quality evidence submitted



Issues

- ◆ Centres not following advice in Subject Update Letters and Principal Assessor Reports
- ◆ Whole classes appealed for
- ◆ Appeals submitted for SG element(s) where this would not result in a change to the overall award



The Appeals Process

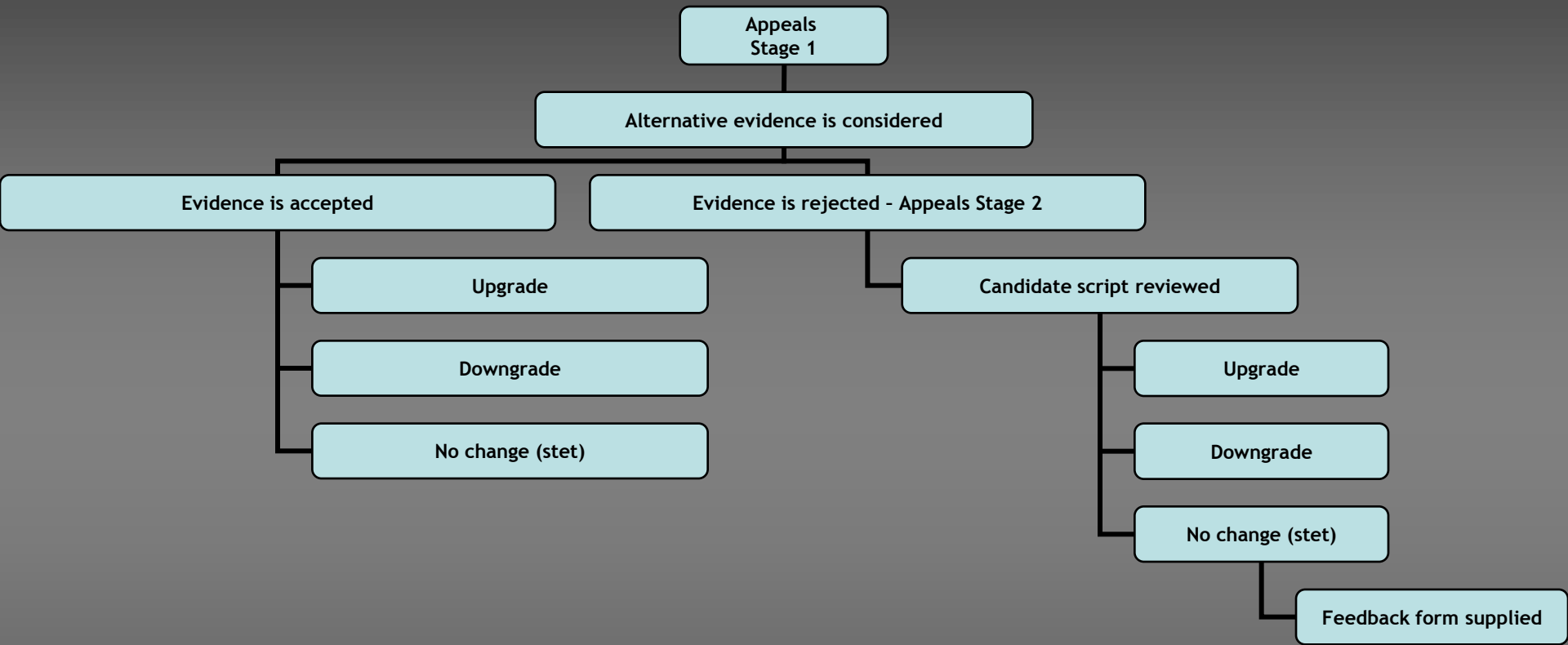
- ◆ Consider alternative evidence submitted to support the appeal
 - Validity
 - Reliability
 - Security



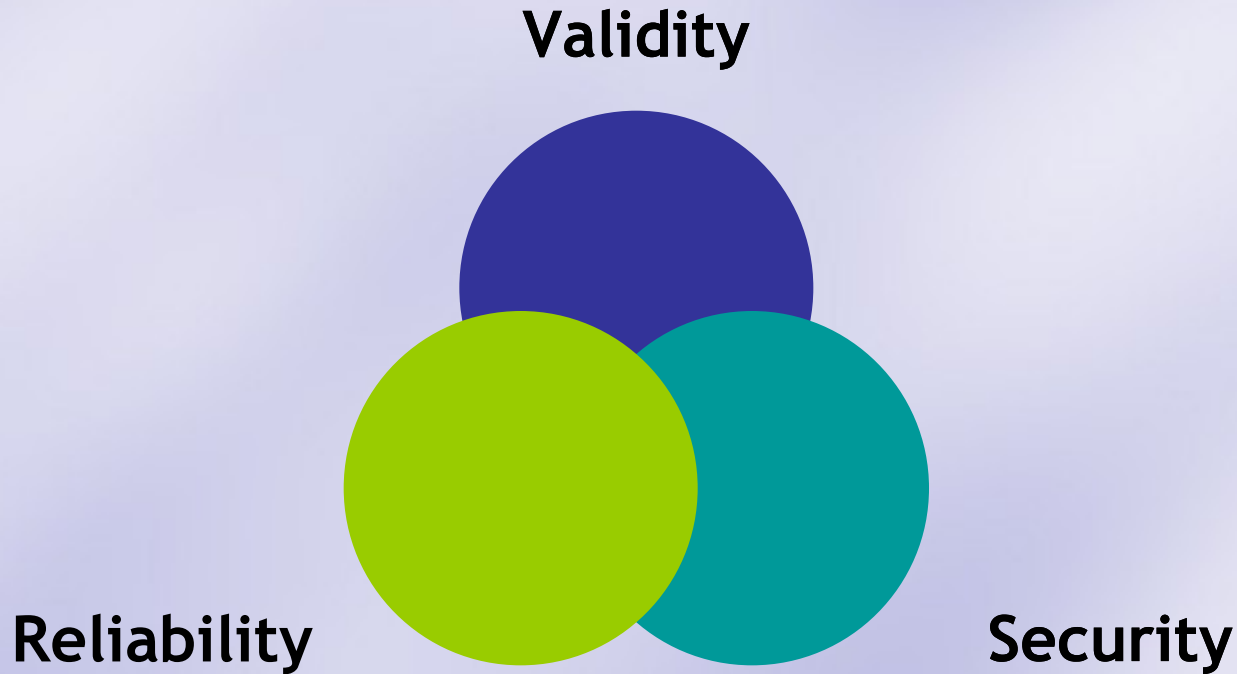
Assessment Appeals

- ◆ Consider the validity and reliability of the assessment instruments, the marking instructions and the candidate evidence submitted by the centre
- ◆ If it is merited, the award is improved
- ◆ If the Examiner is not able to improve the award, the Appeal moves to the second stage
- ◆ In the second stage there is a review of the candidate's examination script, folio etc





The Appeals Process



Validity

“To be valid, the assessment instruments have to sample the knowledge and skills of the Course adequately, be pitched at the appropriate standard, and meet the requirements of the Course Grade Descriptions.”



Reliability

“The Examiner will also consider the reliability of the assessment instruments — the structure of the questions, the accuracy of the Marking Instructions, and the allocation of marks — ensuring there are no ambiguities or other technical errors that might reduce reliability.”



Reliability

“Examiners need to be confident also about the reliability of the evidence. This relates primarily to the conditions of assessment — these should have been consistent with the conditions for the external assessment (e.g. an unseen examination)”



Security

- ◆ Examiners must be confident that the evidence presented was generated by an assessment which was held and conducted securely



Assessment Appeals

Where the assessment instrument and marking instructions are considered valid and reliable by SQA, how can an Appeal be unsuccessful?

- ◆ need to consider the candidate evidence submitted by the centre
- ◆ the candidate evidence must also be considered valid and reliable
- ◆ candidate evidence is not considered 'reliable' where the marking scheme has been incorrectly applied or inconsistently applied within the centre
- ◆ where the overall attainment in the candidate evidence submitted did not justify the grade estimated by the centre



Assessment Appeals

Why are some appeals successful and some not?

- ◆ Candidate evidence is different for each appeal
- ◆ Assessment instrument may be valid only for particular grades eg C or C/B
- ◆ Different additional evidence for each appeal eg produced later in the course or third unit
- ◆ Inaccuracy/inconsistency in the application of the marking instruction within the centre
- ◆ Review of examination script



The Appeals Process

“If satisfied that the assessment instruments and the evidence submitted are valid and reliable, the Examiner is then in a position to grant an improved award if it is merited. An improved award may still be lower than your estimate.”



The Appeals Process

“If the alternative evidence is not sufficiently persuasive to enable the Examiner to improve the award, the Appeal moves to the second stage. This is a review of the candidate’s original evidence, eg *scripts, folio, etc.* It may, or may not, result in an upgrade of the original award.”



The Appeals Process

“Examiners provide written feedback for all unsuccessful Appeals (ie for those Appeals for which the grade remains unchanged from the original award). This feedback provides an explanation of the outcome, and provides constructive feedback to help centres with future assessment activities.

The outcome of the Appeals process is final.”



Appeals feedback 2007

- across all subjects

	Entries	Number of Appeals	Appeals as a % of Entries	Number of Unsuccessful Appeals	Unsuccessful as a% of Entries
Higher	160129	15850	9.9%	10052	63.4%
Advanced Higher	17751	2132	12.0%	1289	60.5%



Reasons – across all subjects

Reasons	2007 Higher	2007 Advanced Higher
Validity Only	34.7%	27.2%
Reliability Only	31.3%	18.7%
Validity and Reliability	16.8%	16.2%
Estimate Only	15.8%	15.0%
Coursework weighting	1.5%	22.7%



Higher Appeals for Subjects with More than 1000 entries

Level/Subject	Appeals as a % of Entries	Unsuccessful Appeals as a % of Number of Appeals
Higher Accounting	16.0%	64.8%
Higher Administration	11.0%	68.3%
Higher Art & Design	10.2%	73.7%
Higher Biology	6.5%	76.9%
Higher Business Management	17.7%	67.4%
Higher Chemistry	3.3%	71.2%
Higher Computing	8.4%	76.3%
Higher Drama	14.2%	66.4%
Higher English	11.3%	68.1%
Higher French	8.2%	82.9%
Higher Geography	16.4%	51.4%



Higher -Reasons for Unsuccessful Appeals by Subject

Level / Subject	Validity	Reliability	Validity & Reliability	Estimate	Coursework
Higher Accounting	62.3%	19.9%	17.2%	0.7%	
Higher Administration	52.2%	23.0%	24.8%	0.0	
Higher Art & Design	14.2%	0.0	0.4%	85.4%	
Higher Biology	39.2%	23.1%	34.6%	3.1%	
Higher Business Management	55.8%	15.2%	28.7%	0.3%	
Higher Chemistry	42.7%	8.9%	9.3%	39.1%	
Higher Computing	49.1%	5.6%	43.8%	1.5%	
Higher Drama	6.3%	38.0%	5.7%	41.1%	8.9%
Higher English	5.9%	60.4%	13.0%	20.8%	
Higher French	9.4%	74.2%	8.4%	5.5%	0.0
Higher Geography	60.0%	7.8%	30.0%	2.1%	
Higher German	3.2%	67.5%	22.3%	7.0%	2.5%
Higher Graphic Communication	38.5%	28.1%	23.7%	0.0	9.6%



Level/Subject	% Validity	% Reliability	% Validity & Reliability	% Estimate	% Coursework
Higher Accounting	62.3%	19.9%	17.2%	0.7%	
Higher Administration	52.2%	23.0%	24.8%	0.0	
Higher Business Management	55.8%	15.2%	28.7%	0.3%	
Higher Computing	49.1%	5.6%	43.8%	1.5%	
Higher Graphic Communication	38.5%	28.1%	23.7%	0.0	9.6%
Higher Information Systems	63.3%	20.9%	11.5%	4.3%	
Higher Product Design	21.2%	44.1%	14.9%	8.0%	11.8%



Summary – prior to examinations

- ◆ Estimate grades **must** be based on demonstrated attainment
- ◆ Where the course assessment is a combination of different types of course components, attainment in these must be included in the overall estimate
- ◆ Centres need to review estimates prior to the start of the examinations



Summary – post results

- ◆ Centres need to review estimates in the light of results prior to making appeals
- ◆ Evidence submitted must meet the requirements of the grade being appealed for across the complete course
- ◆ Centres need to make use of the information issued by SQA on component marks



Estimates and Appeals

- ◆ SQA will continue to provide support where there are understanding standards issues
- ◆ Together we need to consider the costs – human, financial and opportunity



Interactive toolkit

- ◆ SQA has developed a new online toolkit to assist with estimates, absentees and assessment appeals
- ◆ www.sqa.org.uk/eaaa



Prelims

“Alternative evidence for the externally-assessed Question Paper component of Courses is mandatory for Appeals.

The most commonly used form of alternative evidence submitted to support Appeals is Prelim Question Papers. Using a judicious selection of individual questions drawn from a range of past papers (preferably adapted) to make up a Prelim paper is acceptable. In such instances, the use of at least three past papers is required.”



Prelims

- ◆ the instrument of assessment
- ◆ details of the sources of questions used (eg past papers, of which a minimum of three is recommended)
- ◆ the marking instructions, with cut-off scores applied
- ◆ the candidate's evidence, marked in line with the marking instructions submitted and subject guidance



Prelims

- ◆ Centre-produced
- ◆ Local authority produced
- ◆ Commercially produced



Setting a Prelim

- ◆ Avoid lifting questions *en bloc*
- ◆ Combine questions from at least 3 past papers
- ◆ Adapt past paper questions where possible
- ◆ The Marking Instruction and its application are just as important as the question paper



Commercial Prelim Papers

- ◆ There are several providers for Business Education
- ◆ SQA **does not** prior moderate any commercial prelim papers
- ◆ Only the current year's commercial paper can be considered for Appeals purposes
- ◆ The responsibility of validity, reliability and security remain with each individual centre



Prelims – common problems

- ◆ Statistically invalid – do not have the correct number of marks
- ◆ Do not have comprehensive Course coverage
- ◆ Do not follow the correct paper structure
- ◆ Inconsistent marking
- ◆ Unmarked scripts
- ◆ Cut-off scores not indicated



Prelims – common problems

- ◆ Level of demand is insufficient
- ◆ Candidates perform exceptionally well in prelim but achieve very poor results or no award in the actual examination – variety of reasons



Higher Business Management - facts

- ◆ Entries 2007 – 5737
- ◆ Appeals 2007 – 1019 (similar to previous years)
- ◆ Successful appeals 2007 – 322 (falling each year since 2005)
- ◆ Large number of appeals based on commercial papers



What is wrong with this paper?

- ◆ Too many ID marks – possible 22 marks
- ◆ Command word not used in some questions
- ◆ Mark allocation not clear in some questions
- ◆ Heavy mark allocation to internal organisation
- ◆ Few marks allocated to finance
- ◆ Lot of HR marks in Section Two
- ◆ Problems with marking instruction – leaves too much discretion
- ◆ Suggested answers do not always match command words in question



Higher Business Management Prelims

- ◆ What makes a good prelim for Higher Business Management?
- ◆ YOU tell me.....



Appeals 2007 – Highland region

- ◆ Reasons for Higher Business Management prelims being rejected
 - Commercial paper used (not current year's)
 - Topic areas missed out
 - Commercial paper used (invalid)
 - Too straightforward/repetition
 - Too many ID marks
 - Lenient marking
 - Not holistic



Appeals 2007 – Highland region

- ◆ Reasons for Higher Business Management prelims being rejected
 - Old questions used (pre-2004 and not adapted)
 - Command words not used
 - Appeal above level of estimate
 - Incorrect use of command words
 - No prelim paper included
 - Case study lifted from my book!



Setting a good prelim for Higher Business Management

- ◆ It is acceptable to use the case study stimulus material in full from previous papers
- ◆ Section One Question 1 can be used unaltered from previous papers
- ◆ The remaining 40 marks in Section One **must** be altered
- ◆ Section Two questions must be integrated



Setting a good prelim for Higher Business Management

- ◆ Try to avoid using questions from more than 3 years ago - they tend not to be integrated
- ◆ If you do use older questions, make sure they reflect the current standard and integrate topics
- ◆ Make sure the marking instruction reflects the most current practice and that it is applied correctly and to the national standard
- ◆ Make use of the Course Assessment Specification



Setting a good prelim for Higher Business Management

- ◆ If using a commercial paper, **do not** assume that it is of the required standard
- ◆ Scrutinise both the paper and the marking instruction with reference to most recent SQA practice and standards
- ◆ Avoid the use of a split prelim wherever possible – it is unlikely to be considered of equal demand to the final examination



Any questions?



Questions

- ◆ Changes to the appeals process?
- ◆ What are the most common concerns/complaints by schools and from SQA's point of view?
- ◆ What lies ahead for Business Education subjects in terms of changes to Courses?
- ◆ What should we be doing in schools that we are not doing?



Questions

- ◆ Are there changes to Courses/procedures planned that schools do not seem to be aware of?
- ◆ Where do Numeracy/Literacy/ICT outcomes fit into the overall picture of Business Education and will they be assessed as an integral part of Business Education courses?





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