

# Prelims, Estimates & Appeals

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**The What, Why, When  
And How!**





# Learning Intentions

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- To assist in devising valid and reliable **prelims**
- To consider how best to generate effective **estimates**
- To provide an overview of the **appeals** procedures in National Qualifications (NQ)



# Estimates & Appeals – What are they?

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## Estimates

**Estimates** are an assessment by centres, based on **demonstrated evidence of performance**, of the attainment that candidates will achieve in the external assessment (47% of all estimates differ from external grades). Submitted to SQA mid-April.

## Appeals

Assessment **appeals** are made by centres on behalf of candidates whose **award in the external assessment is poorer than that estimated for them** (41.9% of Int 1 appeals, 41.6% of Int 2 appeals and 37.3% of Higher appeals are successful). Submitted to SQA Aug-Sept.

**Estimates and appeals** are based on **bands**, not **grades**

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# Bands and Grades

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<b>Band</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Standardised marks</b>
1	Upper A	85 – 100
2	Lower A	70 – 84
3	Upper B	65 – 69
4	Lower B	60 – 64
5	Upper C	55 – 59
6	Lower C	50 – 54
7	D – near miss	45 – 49
8	Fail	40 – 44
9	Fail	Less than 40

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# Evidence for Estimates and Appeals

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- **NABs** plus performance in integrated tasks/questions
- An assessment which mirrors the external assessment e.g. **prelim**





# NABs

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- Are designed to assess competence in **units**
- Don't provide evidence of **retention** of knowledge/skills over a longer period
- Don't provide evidence of ability to **integrate** knowledge across the course content
- Don't provide evidence of ability to **apply** skills and knowledge in different contexts
- Don't mirror the **added value** elements of the course – best used in a supporting role

# Therefore.....

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- It's definitely worth doing a prelim





# Using a Prelim – the benefits

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- A good prelim will give the **best indication** of candidates' likely performance in the external exam
- Cuts down on the **amount of work** to be submitted in the event of an appeal
- Is the best possible way of helping candidates to understand the **conditions**, **format** and **standards** they can expect on the day of the exam
- Candidates appreciate the experience and the **formative assessment** serves all
- **Appeals** markers like prelim evidence!

# Using a Prelim as Evidence for Estimates (and Appeals)

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To be **valid** evidence, a prelim must:

- Mirror the external assessment as closely as possible in terms of structure and marks allocation
- Be based on questions similar to those used in the external assessment
- Be clearly marked - to the standard of the external assessment
- Include **marking instructions**
- Include appropriate **cut-off scores**
- Avoid **half marks** (in most subjects)





## To be **reliable** evidence, a prelim must...

- Be secure
- Indicate the source of the questions
- Not include questions that have been taken *en bloc* from past papers
- Show that candidates' answers have been marked in line with the national standard



# Understanding Standards

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[www.understandingstandards.org.uk](http://www.understandingstandards.org.uk)

Accounting (H)  
Administration (H)  
Art and Design (H)  
Biology (Int 2, H)  
Business Management (Int 2, H)  
Care (H)  
Chemistry (H)  
Computing (H)  
Core Skills (old framework)  
Core Skills (new framework)  
Drama (H)  
English (Int 1, Int 2, H)  
Geography (H, AH)  
Graphic Communication (H)  
History (Int 2, H)  
Home Economics (H)  
Hospitality (Int 2)  
Human Biology (H)  
Information Systems (H)  
ITALL  
Maths (Int 1, Int 2, H)  
Media Studies (H)  
Modern Languages (H French, H German)  
Personal Development (Int 1, Int 2, H)  
Physical Education (Int 1, Int 2, H)  
Physics (H)  
Product Design (H)  
Psychology (H)  
Technological Studies (H)  
Travel and Tourism (Int 2, H)



# Devising a Prelim

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You can put together a paper using:

- Questions from Specimen papers
- Questions from past papers  
(from a minimum of 3 papers)

However:

**You cannot use a previous paper or specimen in its entirety**

**The Paper must not be accessible to candidates**

**You must have marking guidelines and cut-off scores**

# Writing a Prelim

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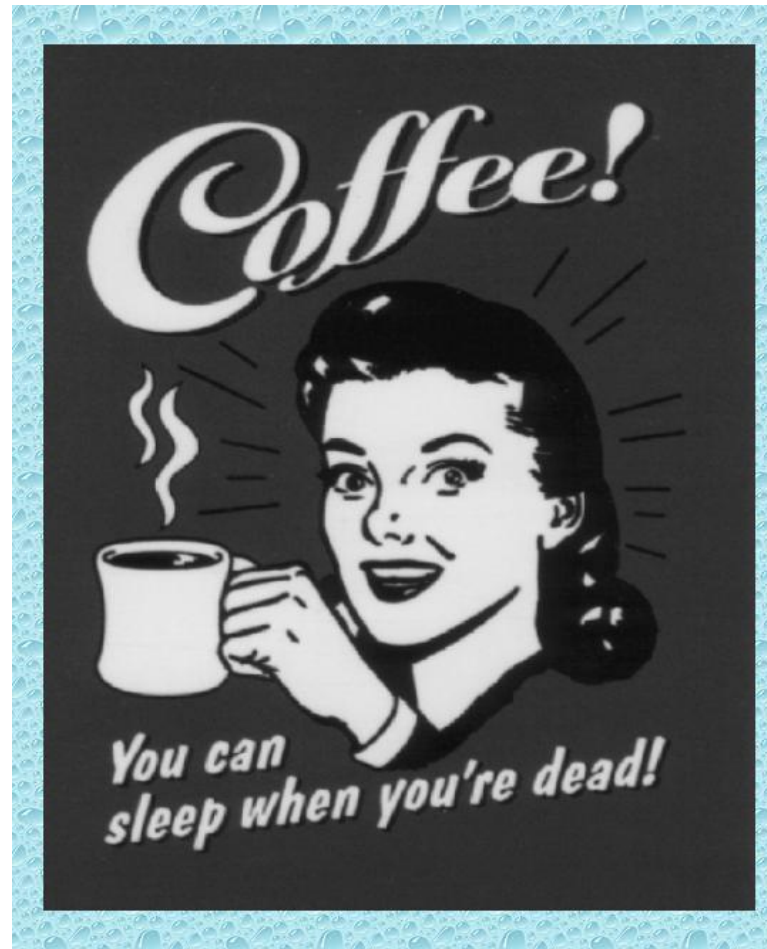
- **Course Arrangements Documentation with Course Grade description**
- **Course Assessment Specification and Specimen Question Paper**
- **Past papers**
- **Published SQA Marking Instructions**
- **External Assessment Reports**
- **Internal Assessment Reports**
- **NABs**

[www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)



# Coffee

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# Why appeal?

- To support candidate who is ill on day of external exam (absentee)
- To support student who performs uncharacteristically badly on day of exam.





## Evidence for Appeals must include.....

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- **Assessment instruments** (with details of the sources of each question used if prelim)
- Associated **marking instructions** with **cut-off scores** which have been applied
- Evidence which has been generated by these instrument(s), **before** the date of the exam.
- A clear indication of the **date** on which each piece of evidence was produced



# An Appealing Prelim

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## For most subjects:

- A prelim which covers all Units and replicates the standard, format, duration and security of SQA's question paper could support an Appeal for Grades A, B and C and would be the most convincing evidence for an Appeal for Grade A.
- The level of demand is less in a prelim than in the exam if the prelim covers all Units and is split into parts and the two parts have been separated by a period of time rather than being taken on one occasion. The level of demand can be increased in a number of ways such as raising the cut-off scores or by increasing the level of challenge of the prelim. This could support an Appeal for Grades A, B and C.
- A prelim which covers a minimum of two Units of the Course and a high scoring NAB for the third Unit. This could support an Appeal for a Grade C (possibly Grade B), but not an Appeal for a Grade A.

[http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/Web\\_Estimates\\_Absentees\\_and\\_Assessment\\_Appeals\\_Sess08-09.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Web_Estimates_Absentees_and_Assessment_Appeals_Sess08-09.pdf)

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# Exemplification

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[www.sqa.org.uk/sqasecure](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqasecure)

Care Higher (exemplification of appeals)

Computing Int 2/H (exemplification of  
coursework)

# Presentation of Evidence

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- Go for the Halo effect!
- Use a covering note (typed) with information on cut-off scores, conditions of assessment or revised estimates
- Keep each student's work separate
- Ensure marking instructions are provided (unless it is a NAB)
- Make sure there is evidence for all units
- If appealing for a significant proportion of cohort written justification must be given





# The Appeals Process

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**Centre evidence (assessment instruments, MIs and candidate evidence) is reviewed:**

- ✓ If OK, then improved award **may** be granted
- ✓ Candidate may get a **partial upgrade**  
( i.e. a higher grade, but less than the estimate)
- ✓ Or a **full upgrade** (upgraded to estimate or beyond)
  
- ◆ If examiner cannot improve the award based on the centre evidence, then the candidate's script, folio, investigation etc is reviewed
- ◆ If there is **no change**, the centre is given feedback



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# Operational Requirements

**Valid from 2008**



# Late submissions

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- Must be requested in writing by Head of Centre
- All requests will be considered by a Panel
- If accepted:
  - *Cases will be considered outwith normal timescales*
  - *A charge of £55 per candidate will be levied*



# Missing materials

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**The key components of appeals evidence are:**

1. *Instrument of Assessment*
  2. *Marking Instructions*
  3. *Cut-off scores*
  4. *Individual Candidate evidence*
- Centres must ensure **all of these** are submitted
  - **New stationary** was introduced in 2008 to assist centres with this process
  - Front line **clerical check** undertaken by SQA

# Case Studies

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<http://www.sqa.org.uk/eaaa/>





# **Appeal eligibility is based on estimate**

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



# Estimates can be revised

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



## You can only be upgraded to estimate provided

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



**As you are professionals, the appeals panel will trust  
your judgement**

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



**Non-achievement of an estimated grade should automatically result in an appeal**

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care

# Context for appeals

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- The centre must persuade the appeal panel to upgrade by ***weight of evidence***. This is the crux of the matter!





# Homework and classwork can be submitted as appeals evidence

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1. True
2. False
3. Don't know
4. Don't care



# **I now feel more confident about submitting an appeal**

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1. True
2. False
3. Have always been confident
4. Not sure

# Summary

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- Estimates and appeals are designed to help candidates
- Unjustifiable appeals are costly, time consuming and never successful!
- Good preparation should shorten the odds for your candidates.



## **Contact details**

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**Tel: 01786 892009**

**Fax: 01786 892001**

**e-mail: [sfeu@scotlandscolleges.ac.uk](mailto:sfeu@scotlandscolleges.ac.uk)  
[aileen.duffy@scotlandscolleges.ac.uk](mailto:aileen.duffy@scotlandscolleges.ac.uk)**

**Website: [www.scotlandscolleges.ac.uk](http://www.scotlandscolleges.ac.uk)**



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# GOOD LUCK!

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