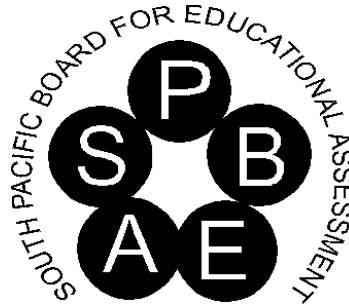


**SOUTH PACIFIC BOARD
FOR
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT**



**Quality Assurance
Standard**

**Accreditation of Schools
for
PSSC and SPFSC**

January 2005

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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document sets out the quality assurance requirements for accreditation of schools to allow students to enter for the Board's qualifications. In particular it specifies the requirements to be met for initial accreditation, confirmation of continuing accreditation or extending the scope of accreditation for schools.

1.2 What is accreditation?

Accreditation involves an evaluation of the capacity of a school to enter students for the Board's qualifications. Accreditation is not an evaluation of actual performance.

The actual performance of a school is evaluated through the moderation process and when a review of accreditation takes place.

The accreditation process is an opportunity for schools to improve their management and learning/teaching/assessment processes and SPBEA will work closely with schools in achieving this aim. The accreditation process is not only regarded as a review of processes but as a way the school and SPBEA can work together to achieve efficient outcomes.

Schools wishing to present candidates for the Board's qualification must satisfy their national education authority and SPBEA that they have the resources necessary to successfully provide the courses to be offered within the school.

Schools will be required to maintain quality assurance systems to continue to carry out the Board's qualifications. These systems will be checked on by SPBEA from time to time as well as an annual verification of the individual subjects internal assessment processes and assessor judgements.

1.3 Scope of accreditation

A school may wish to seek accreditation for:

- full Pacific Secondary Senior Certificate (PSSC)
- full South Pacific Form Seven Certificate (SPFSC)
- partial accreditation covering specific subjects for either or both Certificates.

1.4 Initial accreditation of schools

Initial accreditation of schools involves an evaluation of the potential of the school to enter students for the qualifications. In applying for initial accreditation, a school is required to develop a Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) that sets out the schools Quality Assurance policies and procedures for administering and running the Board's qualifications. This manual is to be kept current each year and is to be made available to SPBEA for review when requested including at time of IA verification visit.

Accreditation may be provisionally or conditionally granted with schools needing to fulfill certain requirements before full accreditation is confirmed. Provisional or conditional accreditation will allow the school to enter students for the qualifications for a specified period of time.

1.5 Confirmation of accreditation

After initial accreditation, a process of confirmation of accreditation will occur on approximately a 3-4 year cycle or where it is deemed necessary by the Board.

Confirmation of accreditation requires evidence that the requirements of the quality assurance standards continue to be met.

1.6 Extending the scope of accreditation

The process for extending the scope of accreditation applies to schools that have already gained partial accreditation for PSSC and/or SPSFC.

In evaluating an application to extend accreditation, the Board does not conduct a detailed evaluation of the quality assurance processes, as this will have already been evaluated in the initial accreditation application. The Board does however, seek evidence that the quality assurance processes are current and will be applied to delivery and assessment in the subjects covered by the extension application.

1.7 Administration information

Schools wishing to present candidates for the Board's qualification for the first time must satisfy their national education authority that they have the resources necessary to successfully provide the courses to be offered within the school. Written approval from the authority is necessary, and a copy of this should reach SPBEA by October 15th of the year preceding the year of first presenting candidates for examination

The *Rules and Procedures* allow for a school to offer up to six subjects. A school that is intending to present for the Board's qualification for

the first time may, because of resource constraints, be in a position to offer some, but not all, of the courses available for examination. A typical situation would be where school resources would allow for arts biased subjects to be offered but not those science biased subjects which have specialist equipment demands

If, at a later date, school facilities were improved to allow for an increase in the number of courses offered, then the school should request its national authority to reassess the schools capacity to offer an expanded programme.

A copy of any approval given after reassessment should reach SPBEA in the year preceding the year of presenting candidates for examination in the expanded part of the programme.

Section 2 – Quality Assurance Standards required for Accreditation

A school is expected to meet the following standards in order to qualify for, and to maintain its accreditation status. Details of how a school achieves these standards is to be included in the school's Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) and kept up to date each year.

2.1 Assessment policy

The school has a clear assessment policy including measurable goals and objectives. The policy should reflect the distinctive character and nature of the school.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. Having an assessment policy including measurable goals and objectives
- ii. Ensuring the assessment policy is implemented and operates consistently across all departments of the school.

2.2 Governance and management

The school has adequate and appropriate governance and management systems to administer the Board's qualifications.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. appointing a PSSC/SPSFC Co-ordinator to administer the qualifications and maintain clear communication channels with SPBEA and the teachers
- ii. preparing assessment, moderation and administration timetables to ensure that SPBEA key dates are met including student entries and internal assessment results
- iii. ensuring strategies are in place for entries and results sent to SPBEA are accurate and timely
- iv. allocating funds to reflect and maintain the school's stated assessment policies.

2.3 Personnel

The school recruits, manages and develops its staff to ensure that teaching and assessment programmes are carried out in accordance with prescription and moderation requirements.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. using recruitment and selection practices to make sure it has appropriate personnel with teaching and subject knowledge at the appropriate levels
- ii. providing ongoing staff development and ensuring that they have a clear understanding of assessment and moderation procedures.

2.4 Physical and learning resources

The school has adequate and appropriate physical teaching and learning resources.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. ensuring their premises, facilities and other physical resources are adequate to cater for their number of students and the range of subjects offered eg laboratories, technology workshops
- ii. ensuring the teaching and learning resources are adequate to support delivery of subjects offered and the requirements of assessment processes.

This includes:

- teaching and learning resources for individual subjects eg texts (teacher reference and class sets), laboratory and workshop equipment and consumables), computers (hardware and software)
 - independent learning opportunities eg library books, internet
 - other appropriate resources eg photocopier, email, fax
- iii ensuring that there is provision in the budget to maintain adequate resources eg up-dating resources, maintenance of photocopier and other equipment, replacement of consumables.

2.5 Learner information and support

The school provides adequate and appropriate assessment information and support services to students.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. providing assessment information to students and parents of courses available, assessment requirements, qualification fees, key dates including examination timetable, appeal procedures and other appropriate information
- ii. providing subject specific assessment information including course outlines and assessment requirements and programmes
- iii. providing appropriate and timely feedback to students on the results of their achievement against the prescribed outcomes for school based and internal assessment (for qualifications) activities. This is to allow for improvement of student's results and further learning to take place.

2.6 Development, delivery and review of programmes

The school adequately and appropriately designs, develops, delivers and reviews its teaching, learning and assessment programmes.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. designing and developing teaching, learning and assessment programmes for specific subjects based on the outcomes required by the current subject prescriptions
- ii. timetabling and delivering courses to meet the needs of learners
- iii. ensuring that the SPBEA Internal Assessment requirements are met in an appropriate and timely manner
- iv. systematically monitoring and evaluating all courses and using the results to improve learning outcomes and achievements.

2.7 Assessment and moderation

The school has adequate and appropriate systems of assessment and moderation, to meet the expected outcomes of learning programmes.

The school demonstrates this by:

- i. providing assessment:
 - processes and decisions that are transparent, systematic and consistent
 - methods that are appropriate, fair, manageable, and integrated with learning

- that is fair, valid and consistent, and students are treated equitably
- evidence is valid authentic and sufficient.
- ii. having processes for internally moderating assessment materials and teacher judgements to ensure they comply with 2.7.i
- iii. having processes to ensure accurate and timely records are kept and transferred to SPBEA
- iv. ensuring student results are transferred to SPBEA in the prescribed manner and on the appropriate form
- v. complying with the external moderation requirements of SPBEA
- vi. having procedures for managing compassionate considerations
- vii. having procedures for managing late work
- viii. ensuring samples of student achievement are stored to meet external moderation requirements and to respond to student appeals
- ix. having the necessary SPBEA accreditation.

APPENDIX 1

Approval Procedures for Accreditation of Schools (PSSC/SPFSC)

Approval procedures for new schools

- **May** SPBEA sends a reminder to the National Education authorities in each country of the procedures for those schools who wish to offer PSSC or SPFSC courses for the first time in the following year.
- National Education authorities shall indicate its endorsement or otherwise of any school through submitting a written report to SPBEA, covering the following areas:
 - *Staff*: names, qualifications, experience and teaching subjects
 - *Text and reference books* available to support each subject including the library
 - *Laboratories*: a list of available equipment and consumables available to support the sciences
 - *Reprographic facilities*: photocopiers and duplicators available and their capacity to support learning and teaching
 - *Infrastructure*: the sufficiency of classrooms and related facilities
 - *Guidance*: the facilities for student support and counseling
 - *Communications*: postal address and availability of telephone, facsimile and email facilities
 - *Budget*: the ability for the school to maintain the level of equipment and resources on an on-going basis.
- **By July**: National Educational authorities inform SPBEA of new schools they recommend for approval to offer PSSC/SPFSC the following year with the appropriate documentation
- **August/September**: SPBEA officers visit the school to review facilities and appropriate documentation
- **October**: Applications are submitted to the Board's Annual General Meeting for approval
- **November**: National Educational authorities advised of the Board's decision
- **November**: Schools receive prescriptions and other relevant documentation for preparation of courses for following year

- **January:** Schools are added to the SPBEA mailing list and are invited to attend the IA training sessions.

Approval procedures for schools wishing to introduce new PSSC/SPFSC subjects

- **March** SPBEA sends a reminder to the National Education authorities in each country of the procedures for those schools who wish to introduce new subjects for PSSC or SPFSC courses for the first time in the following year.
- National Education authorities shall indicate its endorsement or otherwise of any school through submitting a written report to SPBEA, covering the above areas related to the specific subjects that approval is being sought.
- **By July:** National Educational authorities inform SPBEA of new schools they recommend for approval to offer new subjects for PSSC/SPFSC the following year with the appropriate documentation
- **August/September:** SPBEA officers visit the school to review facilities and appropriate documentation
- **October:** Applications are submitted to the Board's Annual General Meeting for approval
- **November:** National Educational authorities advised of the Board's decision
- **November:** Schools receive prescriptions and other relevant documentation for preparation of courses for following year.

APPENDIX 2

Focus questions for accreditation and development of the school's Quality Assurance Manual (QAM)

School Assessment Policy and Procedures

- What are the schools assessment policies including the measurable goals and objectives?
- Does the policy, goals and objectives reflect the distinctive character and nature of the school?
- How is the school community informed of these policies?
- What strategies are in place to ensure the policies are implemented consistently across the school?

Governance and management

- Has the school appointed a PSSC/SPSFC Co-ordinator who has a clear understanding of the requirements for the qualifications?
- Have timetables been prepared to ensure that SPBEA key dates are met?
- What strategies has the school in place to ensure that the student entries and results are accurate and sent to SPBEA in a timely manner?
- Are processes in place to ensure that the results are secure within the school?
- Does the budget include items to ensure the maintenance of the school's stated assessment policies?

Personnel

- Does the school have staff recruitment practices in place to employ appropriate personnel?
- Is a professional development programme in place to ensure a continuing understanding of assessment policy and procedures?

Physical and learning resources

- Does the school have strategies in place to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to maintain the teaching, learning and assessment programmes, including budgetary provision?

Learner information and support

- How does the school provide information to parents and students of the assessment policies?
- Are students provided with subject information including course and assessment outlines?
- Do students receive appropriate and timely feedback on the results of their school based and internal assessments to help them improve?

Development, delivery and review of programmes

- Does the school have strategies in place to ensure the development, delivery and review of learning, teaching and assessment programmes?

Assessment and moderation

a. Assessment material

- What is the source of the internal assessment activities and schedules used for the external qualifications?
- Are pre-assessment internal moderation processes in place to ensure the activities are fair and valid?
- Are the assessment activities accessible and centrally filed for future use?
- Are there strategies in place to ensure assessment material is reviewed from one year to the next and moderation decisions taken into consideration?

Examples of good practices

- use of SPBEA and other exemplars to assist with the development of material
- materials reviewed after use for improvement for next year

- materials developed with teachers working together
- materials moderated internally by others in the department or school
- materials moderated internally by colleagues from other schools or within subject associations
- materials reviewed at department meetings.

b. Verification of assessment decisions

- Are strategies in place to ensure that assessment judgements are consistent where there is more than one class being assessed?
- Are the assessments judgements being made in accordance with the assessment schedule which is in turn developed in accordance with the prescription requirements?
- Are processes in place to ensure that the assessment judgements are consistent from one year to another and at the appropriate Regional standard?

Examples of good practices

- one teacher assesses all across a subject and a sample is checked by another teacher
- each teacher does own assessment, sample checked by HOD or a colleague
- teachers assess as a panel; borderline cases discussed
- different teachers assess different questions or sections
- teachers marking a mix of student work from different classes
- clear and transparent assessment schedules
- check marking of assessed work by independent person
- benchmarks or guinea pig papers assessed at meetings and results discussed

c. Authenticity

- Are strategies, appropriate to the different subjects, in place to ensure that the student work is their own?

Examples of good practices

- requiring the student to report progress at set milestones
- changing topics or contexts from year to year and for different students to prevent copying
- control resources students may use and the teacher being familiar with the resources being used
- discussion with the student to ensure understanding is as indicated in the work done
- oral presentation where appropriate ,ensures students own work
- supervised assessments (or parts of assessments) in class
- requiring all sources to be referenced including internet sites
- having a good knowledge of the capabilities of individual students
- observing research and practical work
- drafts to be handed in with finished work
- not allowing work to go home
- no access to other students” files in Computing; controlled log-on and printing
- controlling group work by breaking the task into group and individual components or requiring group attestation of an individual’s contribution
- signature on authenticity statements on each assessment completed.

d. Documentation

- Are process in place to ensure accurate and timely records of students results?

Examples of good practices

- cover sheets on student’s work clearly showing assessment against the outcomes, allowing for student appeals, and providing feedback to students
- student signs off results as acceptance of mark
- teacher keeps clear records to be transferred to SPBEA
- backup copies of results kept in a safe place

e. Late work

- Are policies in place to deal with the handing in of late work by students that is consistent across the school?

f. Compassionate considerations

- Are policies in place to deal with the handing in of compassionate considerations for students who have missed internal and external (examinations) assessments?

Resources and Equipment *(List details and numbers of texts (reference and class sets) and other resources and equipment appropriate to the subject – use separate sheets if necessary)*

Subject	Reference Texts	Class Texts	Other resources and equipment
Accounting			
Agriculture			
Biology			
Chemistry			

Computer Studies <i>(include no. computers and software)</i>			
Development Studies			
Design Technology			
Economics			
English			

Fine Arts			
French			
Gagana Samoa			
Geography			
History			

Japanese			
Mathematics			
Physics			
Tala 'O Tonga			

Resources and Equipment *(List details and numbers of texts (reference and class sets) and other resources and equipment appropriate to the subject – use separate sheets if necessary)*

Subject	Reference Texts	Class Texts	Other resources and equipment
Accounting			
Biology			
Chemistry			
Economics			

English			
French			
Geography			
History			

Mathematics (Calculus)			
Mathematics (Statistics)			
Physics			

