

The Role of the SLAR Facilitator

The SLAR Process

Teachers fulfil the role of facilitator during Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings on a rotational basis. The facilitator models effective questioning during the discussion of the samples of student work, focusing on how students' work matches the Features of Quality. During review meetings, where it is not clearly evident which descriptor should apply, the group should look for evidence in the student's work that matches all or nearly all of the Features of Quality associated with a descriptor. This 'best fit' approach allows teachers to select the descriptor that 'on-balance' best matches the work being assessed.

Teachers should not assume that the results of a group of students being assessed follows any particular distribution as the student's work is being judged only against the Features of Quality, rather than other students' performance.

Each meeting:

- is subject specific
- has a duration of approximately two hours long
- takes place at a time as near as possible to the completion of the Classroom-Based Assessment
- involves the review of student work related to a specific Classroom-Based Assessment

Before the SLAR Meeting

Before the SLAR meeting the facilitator:

- collects samples of student work from teachers
- develops a running order for the SLAR
- organises the setup of the room

During the SLAR Meeting

The facilitator leads the meeting and documents the decisions of the group using the Facilitator's Report Template. It is recommended that the meeting should generally follow this sequence.

- The facilitator explains that the purpose of the meeting is to support consistency of judgement about students' work and to develop a common understanding about the

quality of student learning. The value of the meeting in providing feedback to students on how they might improve their work should also be highlighted.

- The facilitator asks one member of staff to introduce a sample of work they have provisionally assessed as Yet to Meet Expectations.
- Following a short introduction by the teacher, the facilitator leads a general discussion on the extent to which the student's work matches the relevant Features of Quality. If the judgement is affirmed, this is noted in the meeting record by the facilitator.
- Where there is a lack of agreement, the facilitator should refer to relevant annotated examples of student work provided by the NCCA and, if appropriate, examples of student work that other teachers in the group have assessed and awarded that descriptor to.
- The facilitator should look to establish consensus during the discussion of samples, but the emphasis should be on developing teachers' professional knowledge and skills rather than on seeking unanimous agreement over every Feature of Quality in every sample.
- The emphasis in affirming judgements during the review meetings should always be on a 'best fit' approach which allows teachers to agree the descriptor that 'on-balance' is most appropriate for the work being assessed.
- While reasonable time should be allowed for discussion, the facilitator should use his/her professional judgement to decide when it would be appropriate to proceed to the next sample.
- If possible, there should be discussion of at least two samples for each descriptor and the facilitator should ensure that each teacher has at least one of their samples discussed during the meeting.
- The process is repeated, in turn, with samples assessed as In Line with Expectations, Above Expectations and Exceptional being discussed and shared in the group. At the end of the meeting, the facilitator briefly summarises the key points from the discussion.

After the SLAR Meeting

Following the SLAR meeting, the facilitator completes the SLAR Facilitator Report focusing on the outcomes of the discussion of student work at the meeting and files appropriately. The facilitator may also ask teachers, should they wish, to contribute some student work to a bank of examples:

- to support the induction of new teachers
- to support future Subject Learning and Assessment Review meetings
- to use with students and parents in demonstrating the standard of work achieved