**Gathering Evidence Example 3 – Comments from subject specialists**

**Background**

One school is trialling the use of a list of standard comments that teachers could choose from when completing the ‘comments’ section of their electronic gathering evidence form. A few of the comments from this list are shown below in List A.

Other centres pull together comments written by their staff on classwork or Gathering Evidence forms and share these examples of good practice in their staff training. See List B for some examples drawn from a number of schools.

Another centre uses an electronic spreadsheet (which has replaced their Gathering Evidence form) as a shared document to which all staff have access. Staff enter their comments throughout the year, when appropriate, so it is a live, working document.

Comments gathered in these three ways - along with any annotations that the teacher/lecturer has made on classwork (if appropriate) - enable Departmental/Faculty Heads, Learning Support and the senior manager at the verification meeting to make informed decisions about whether the AA is appropriate, or whether more exploration of the need and/or its impact is required.

**Good practice**

* List A: Using a pre-populated list as part of a ‘Gathering Evidence’ form will make the process of form filling more time-efficient for staff. It can be set up to allow for multiple comments to be selected for learners with more than one AA and with an option for new comments to be added, if appropriate.
* List B: These comments, which are often more specific to the individual learners, provide personalised information that will help understand how the pupil used the AA and what the impact of the AA was. They also show that, in many instances, the teacher has spoken with the learner about their use of, and the impact of, the AA.
* Electronic AA Spreadsheet: teachers can see the comments entered by their colleagues. It encourages teachers to self-assess how their evidence gathering is going. It also means that SfL and the verifier can access the comments, in a single source, at any time.

**How could you personalise these resources for your centre?**

* What examples could you add to these lists from the comments that your staff have produced?
* If your staff complete paper-based Gathering Evidence forms, how would you share your exemplar comments: in a slide for cpd, a handout for staff to refer to, or some other way?
* If you provide a bank of exemplar comments, how can you ensure that information is also gathered, where required, about the specific situation of an individual learner?
	+ Could you include a category of ‘Other: please specify’ or space for personalised comments?
	+ In the Gathering Evidence form, could you provide a space for pupil, as well as teacher, comments about what impact the AA has had?
* Electronic Spreadsheet: These are only some of the questions that teachers in this centre are asked to complete, relating to the impact of the need on learning and teaching. What other questions do you normally ask in your paper-based form and what guidance do you give about the type of information required??

***Please note: the use of this resource is not a mandatory SQA requirement.*** *It is provided here for your information only, as an example of the way some centres implement their AA policy or procedures. If you would like to use this resource, please feel free to adapt it in any way that suits your centre.*

**List A: Excerpt of standard comments**

Sample Comments

These comments must indicate how the candidate used the support, not just whether they got better marks - why does this pupil need this assessment arrangement in your subject?

Sample comments for explaining the impact of an AA on the candidate and their attainment *(NB remember this is an excerpt only: it is not the full list):*

* Learner had time to process and understand the questions due to extra time
* Learner often takes time to settle down to the task – the extra time enabled the learner to settle and to then focus on the assessment
* Learner used extra time to check over work
* Learner focuses and concentrates better with a reader
* Use of ICT helped the learner to write their answers quicker and to complete the assessment/ timed task within the allocated time

**List B: Personalised comments from teaching staff about learner’s use of (or need for) AA**

* A used her 10% ET and then ran out of time of time due to the period ending so didn’t get to finish. She requires longer to process the questions and then check over her answers. She didn’t have a reader, but I have observed when in classes that reading text to her can help with her understanding. In the next assessment, I’m going to try 25% ET and a reader.
* B has struggled generally with the jump from N5 to Higher due to the increased amount of writing required. However, he copes best when he can access ICT for note-taking and for completion of extended writing and assessments. He also requires his additional time and makes the best use of this to complete tasks, as the attached work shows.
* C’s anxiety prevented him from sitting any exams last term. Extra time has helped to alleviate some of the pressure this term and this has helped with his engagement with the subject.
* D really benefitted from ET to allow him to process the questions and also to allow for times when his focus was interrupted. He also benefitted from separate accommodation to help processing: in a smaller space he is more able to focus and concentrate/avoid distractions.
* E produces much stronger work when typing. It helps him process, rather than think about his writing, which slows him down. No unsupported evidence available as all assessments are produced digitally. Classwork provides examples of where literacy/typing impedes E’s work.
* F said she hadn’t studied enough for the class test and so didn’t use any of the extra time provided. I’ll need to trial the use of extra time again in the next class test to check whether it is actually required or not.
* G struggles to process things quickly, but when they do have time, they can produce strong evidence. This is confirmed by question XX which was completed in ET.
* Given the extent of her difficulties and the potentially detrimental impact spelling would have on her final exams, thought should be given to H’s eligibility for transcription.
* No marks were gained in extra time due to I’s misunderstanding about what the last couple of questions were asking – maybe because he was rushing? However, he had written something in extra time, so given more practice at understanding the question prompts, I think he would still benefit from having additional time for the prelim.
* J benefitted from separate accommodation as she settled quickly and was able to focus on questions. Although she did not need her extra time in this assessment, she might still benefit from this in the final exam.
	+ *Note from initial verification meeting on the same Gathering Evidence form*: Action: Monitor Extra Time.
	+ *Separate note on Gathering Evidence form, from final verification mtg:* Conclusion – no evidence for ET to be requested. (dated and initialled)
* No support had been given in this assessment. K took longer to process answers and was clearly disturbed in a larger group. I suggest he gets an opportunity to try a small group setting.
* L should be given extra time in order to fully access and process the texts in front of her. She has difficulties with spelling which slow down her ability to read texts fluently. This naturally spills over into her written work - often her errors in spelling create distortions in meaning and confusion about what she is trying to say.
* ET allowed M to go back and complete more questions (in green) and gain additional marks.
	+ Pupil comment on same sheet: The ET lets me check my answers at the end and answer each question more fully. It’s faster to type my answers using ICT than write them.
* There was no mark improvement in N’s assessment, but in discussion with her afterward, she suggested that her anxiety was significantly reduced by having time to check her paper. The additional time meant she was able to show her knowledge to the best of her ability and this has improved her confidence.
* O was able to focus well as a result of the separate accommodation. I’d recommend he is part of a small group – this works better for him than being in a room by himself. He only used some of his extra time, but to good effect – checking through his work and answering questions as fully as he could.
* P benefits from extra time to allow him to process his questions and answers without the worry of rushing.
* Q has good subject knowledge but requires additional thinking time to consider his answer structure fully. He is able to type his answers quicker than he can write them which allows him to access more questions.

**Excerpt from electronic AA Spreadsheet**

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| **Subject Teacher Evidence – please complete all these boxes** |
| 1. How do the learner’s difficulties affect their learning in your class? Please don’t discuss exams in this section – this is about how the difficulties impact on day-to-day learning | 2. The AAs being requested reflect the learner’s normal way of learning and producing work ie how their needs are met in my classroom on a day-to-day basisChoose appropriate option from drop-down menu: Yes/No | 3. What support or adjustments does the learner use for regular classwork and assessments in your subject? Please either retain paper evidence or describe the support here. Please don’t discuss exams here – this is about the regular support which the learner needs in your class. | 4. Progress with evidence collectionChoose appropriate option from drop-down menu: Red/Amber/ Green | 5. Details of evidence collected. If your evidence is paper, just briefly reference it here. If your evidence is observational, please type it in full in this section |