

## Secondary Geography Quality Mark – Frequently Asked Questions

### **How do I apply?**

Complete a registration form and return it to us. You can find the registration form and more guidance on the Secondary Geography Quality Mark homepage.

### **How much does it cost and how do I pay?**

The cost is worked out by your Number on Roll (NOR), you can find full details on the Secondary Geography Quality Mark homepage. You can pay by including a cheque for the appropriate amount when you return your registration form or request an invoice which we will send to your school office. Payment is expected at the point of registration.

### **How long does the process take?**

You can register at any point in the year but you must submit your application by the end of June for moderation in August. There are no hard and fast rules to timescales, however in many cases it takes schools two terms to put together an action plan and collate evidence. Schools have taken between six and eighteen months to submit their evidence after initial registration. The Secondary Geography Quality Mark shows the submission deadlines and the download 'Before you apply...' suggests a usual timescale for completion.

### **How do I know I'm ready to submit my application?**

If you fulfil all the relevant criteria and are comfortable about your evidence base then you are ready. Find guidance for this by looking at the Checklist document on the Secondary Geography Quality Mark homepage.

### **Can an overseas school apply for the award?**

As the application and evidence submission is paper based and is posted to us for moderation any school can achieve the award.

### **Can an independent school apply for the award?**

Yes, we welcome applications from independent schools.

### **If I decide I'm not ready to submit can I defer my application?**

Yes, you can defer to the next appropriate cohort without re-registering however, an administration fee of £50 will be charged. Please note that Quality Mark registration fees are non-refundable.

### **How many schools have achieved the award?**

Over 450 schools have achieved the Secondary Geography Quality Mark since it began in 2006. See the Secondary Geography Quality Mark homepage for a map showing the location of schools.

**How much evidence will I need to prepare?**

Examples and evidence should be carefully selected. It is permissible to use some evidence more than once if it supports more than one area of the SGQM process, but we do ask that at least three pieces of pupil work is included, together with your KS3 plan/scheme of work. See the Secondary Geography Quality Mark homepage for more information.

**What type of evidence do I need to include?**

We expect you to include examples of teaching ideas, planning, assessment and evaluation and pupils work (photographic if possible). All evidence should include a statement of context and a brief justification as to why it has been included. Annotating your evidence is one way in which this could be achieved. All evidence should be clearly marked with the appropriate reference (e.g. 2e).

**Can I submit evidence from previous academic years?**

We prefer work that you have done in this academic year however we will accept some evidence from earlier years but no more than 2 years previous.

**Can I submit my application electronically or online?**

We prefer you to submit a paper based application supported with an electronic copy. You may email your completed Application Form (if size allows) to us, any other electronic evidence can be copied onto a CD or USB stick and sent to us to support your paper application. This will allow us to use any exemplary evidence you provide on our VLE.

**Do I need to keep a copy of my application?**

It's probably worthwhile keeping a copy as you may need this for reference if you decide to apply for a higher level in the future or when renewing in three years time. Your submission is kept by the GA in order to refer to when resubmission is necessary after three years.

**Do you visit schools?**

Generally not, as the SGQM is a paper based application only. However, if our SGQM Coordinator happens to be in your area she may arrange to drop by.

**What if my application is going to be late?**

Please contact us immediately so that we can discuss the arrangements for a short extension.

**What happens after I have submitted?**

You will receive email confirmation of the receipt of your application, notification of moderation dates and when award winner's names will be announced. All winners receive a certificate and use of the SGQM logo. Centre of Excellence award winners will be invited to attend the GA Annual Conference to receive their certificates.

**What if we apply for SGQM but after moderation we do not achieve the level desired?**

Your submission will be awarded according to how you have fulfilled the required criteria. If your submission does not reach the minimum required level you will given feedback and advice on re-submitting (admin fees apply).

**How long does the award last for?**

Three years. You will be notified when you need to re-register and submit again for SGQM status.

**What advice and support is available to me?**

Professional advice is available from GA Secondary Curriculum Leader, Rebecca Kitchen and from a network of Centre of Excellence school geography teachers. For all enquiries please contact [Julie Beattie](#) (SGQM Administrator) who will, if necessary, forward your enquiries to a suitable contact.