



## External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Care
Level(s)	Intermediate 2

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the examination.

# Comments on candidate performance

## General comments

Candidate numbers increased slightly this year, from 711 in 2012 to 733 in 2013. However, the number of centres presenting candidates at Intermediate 2 was down from 31 to 25.

Overall, the standard of candidate response was good, with an increase of 10.7% of candidates achieving A grade, as well as a 6.1% increase in candidates achieving A–C grades. Candidates seemed to be entered at the correct level and were well prepared.

The exam paper performed as expected, with no note of concern from any centres.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

There was a broad spread of marks, with more able candidates gaining higher marks overall.

### Section A

- Q3 a & b Overall many good responses allowing candidates to achieve high marks.  
Q4b Candidates generally applied their knowledge well to the case study.

### Section B

- Q3 This question was answered well by candidates, with some very good descriptions given.

### Section C

- Q 2 & 3 Candidates gave some excellent responses for these questions and demonstrated good knowledge and understanding.  
Q7 Candidates gave quite in-depth descriptions of how a care worker could demonstrate the principles identified which is encouraging.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

### Section A

- Q1b A number of candidates could not identify appropriate cognitive features of the two named stages of development.  
Q2 The majority of candidates did not apply their answer to care workers in a homeless unit.  
Q4a Most candidates gave a fairly good description of nature/nurture, but did not mention/give any understanding of the debate.  
Q4c Generally poorly answered — a number of candidates did not know why a care worker needed an understanding of attachment theory in relation to the situation in the case study.  
Q5a Many candidates could not give a description of a key feature of the Humanist approach.

Q5b Candidates did not relate their responses to young people with mental health issues.

### **Section B**

Q3 The majority of candidates did not relate their response to poverty.

Q6a Responses were in general not specific to looked-after children. Also many candidates described discrimination rather than possible effects of discrimination.

### **Section C**

Q1 As in previous years needs were not identified well, many candidates identified the problems instead of Ben's needs.

Q4b A number of candidates described how a care worker could demonstrate promoting client choice but did not seem to understand the concept of informed consent.

Q5 & 6 Some candidates did not know the difference between the purpose and the stages of the care planning process, and as a result could not be credited with full marks.

## **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

- ◆ Centres should continue to ensure candidates are entered at the appropriate level.
- ◆ Candidates would benefit from the use of formative and peer assessment, as well as prelim papers that reflect the current format of the external exam.
- ◆ It would also be advantageous to encourage practice in application of knowledge to case studies and to encourage candidates to apply their responses to the specific areas given in the questions.
- ◆ Teachers/lecturers should prepare candidates for the difference between Knowledge and Understanding (KU) and Analysis and Evaluation (AE)/Application (App) type questions.
- ◆ It would also be beneficial for candidates to have a clear understanding of how to match the detail in their answers to the mark allocation given to questions.
- ◆ As mentioned in previous reports, candidates would benefit from a sound understanding of key command words.
- ◆ Clear and honest feedback from NABs and formative assessment will guide the candidates to focus on specific areas for development in preparation for the external exam.

**Statistical information: update on Courses  
Intermediate 2**

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2012</b>	711
---	-----

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2013</b>	733
---	-----

**Statistical information: Performance of candidates**

**Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries**

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 80				
A	37.4%	37.4%	274	56
B	26.3%	63.7%	193	48
C	19.9%	83.6%	146	40
D	3.3%	86.9%	24	36
No award	13.1%	100.0%	96	-

## General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.