



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Care Issues
Level(s)	Higher

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

Projects were submitted from 39 candidates across three centres for Care Issues for Society: Older People. There were no submissions received for Care Issues for Society: Child Care.

Centres and candidates followed both the project brief and the guidelines closely. Projects were well presented by candidates and followed a logical order.

Overall, candidates were well prepared for the project.

Candidates used a variety of research methods and gathered information from a range of sources and were able to relate the information gained to the project.

There were no significant differences between the centre's allocation of marks and the marks allocated at central marking. This would suggest that centres are adhering to the Marking guidelines and comments made in previous external assessment reports.

There were no issues regarding candidates being able to separate social and economic factors.

Candidates' understanding of evaluative writing continues to be variable.

Areas in which candidates performed well

- ◆ Most candidates knew how to investigate and research services available to service users. Candidates had improved on ability to separate social and economic factors.
- ◆ Candidates were also able to apply the knowledge gained from research to the project.

Areas which candidates found demanding

- ◆ Where evaluative writing is problematic, candidates repeated what is contained within the plan.
- ◆ Some candidates could not differentiate between resources and sources.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

- ◆ Continue to encourage candidates to use a range of research methods and resources.
- ◆ Centres should complete and submit SQA paperwork appropriately.
- ◆ Highlight the differences between sources and resources.
- ◆ Centres should continue to follow marking guidelines to ensure consistency of marking.

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

Number of resulted entries in 2012	70
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	40
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 200				
A	55.0%	55.0%	22	140
B	35.0%	90.0%	14	120
C	10.0%	100.0%	4	100
D	0.0%	100.0%	0	90
No award	0.0%	100.0%	0	-

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.