Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:	**RMPS**

Qualification area

Subject(s) and Level(s) included in this report	**RMPS – Int 2**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	
Pre appeal	
Post appeal	275

Number of entries in 2002	
Pre appeal	470
Post appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

Entries have almost doubled from previous year.

General comments

Increase in entries is generally seen as very positive. Growing number of schools presenting whole year groups of S4 pupils for course award.

Also increased number and greater geographical spread of centres presenting candidates.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

A	-	59 marks	69%
B	-	50 marks	59%
C	-	41 marks	48%

General commentary on grade boundaries

Notional percentage cut-offs for each grade

Question papers and their associated marking schemes are designed to be of the required standard and to meet the assessment specification for the subject/level concerned.
For National courses the examination paper(s) are set in order that a score of approximately 50% of the total marks for all components merits a grade C (based on the grade descriptions for that grade), and similarly a score of 70 % for a grade A. The lowest mark for a grade B is set by the computer software as half way between the C and A grade boundaries.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

No change from previous year. Same candidate group. Standard of exam unchanged.
It is felt that core RE candidates are distorting results slightly hence 48/59/69% as opposed to a priori scores.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Performance in Extended Essay is an improvement on previous years. More candidates making full use of planning pro-forma and presenting well structured essays.

This improved performance was also generally carried through to the exam.

A few candidates performed extremely well and may well have been better placed as Higher candidates.

Those candidates who achieved No Award were often those who did not answer the required number of questions or who gave very brief answers. They seemed to suffer from lack of preparation.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Extended Essay

Greater use of planning pro-forma. Candidates writing on Buddhism appear to have performed well along with those writing essays relating to Existence of God or Science and Belief.

Identification and retrieval of information was done well. Most candidates demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of their chosen issue.

Exam

Candidates performed well in Section 2 – Making Moral Decisions and in Section 3 – Nature of Belief.

Candidates who answered on Buddhism appear to have performed better than those choosing other World Religions.

Good to see some candidates answering questions on Metaphysics for the first time. Generally this section was answered well.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Extended Essay

Some candidates lost marks due to the lack of a clear aim for their essay. Also, a number of candidates may have found it difficult to introduce discussion/analysis into their essays because of the restrictive more 'topic' based title of their essay.

A large number of candidates failed to analyse different viewpoints on their chosen issue.

Limited use of source material to support arguments and personal viewpoints. This often leads to weak conclusions.

Exam

Candidates still find it difficult to include sources in their answers, particularly in questions not relating to a specific world religion.

Buddhism Q1 (b) appears to have been difficult for some candidates – very few satisfactory answers.

A small number of candidates appear to find the Question Paper difficult to negotiate. Some still answering too many or not enough questions.

Areas of common misunderstanding

Christianity Q3 (a) – lack of focus on Eucharist in candidates' answers.

Some candidates use information about the 'Origin of Life' when answering about 'Beginning of the Universe' and vice versa.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Extended Essay

Make full use of planning pro-forma. Encourage candidates to note key quotations/statistics etc and remember to use them in the essay.

Ensure that essay titles are issues which allow candidates to develop analysis and evaluation.

Ensure that candidates present an essay with clear RMPS content. Still too many general social/modern studies essays being submitted.

Encourage candidates to research topic beyond use of HSDU Support Notes and Teacher Handouts.

Exam

Remind candidates to use sources in their answers. Marks are specifically allocated to these.

Help candidates to practice negotiation of Question Paper by using past papers.

Encourage candidates to label answers clearly with unit title and question number.