

Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Social and Vocational Skills

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

**Social and Vocational Skills
Foundation, General and Credit**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	
Pre appeal	3495
Post appeal	3505

Number of entries in 2002	
Pre appeal	3174
Post appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

The numbers have dropped to the 1999 figure. This drop is not a concern as the number of presenting centres has remained steady with a few new presenting centres.

General comments

A number of candidates are still being presented at the wrong levels. This number is smaller than previous years but is still a concern.

Candidates correctly presented at Credit level were generally well prepared and well organised. An indication of very well organised innovative courses being presented in many schools.

Letter writing, form filling and cheque completion are particularly satisfactory.

More candidates achieved Grades 1, 2 and 3 than previous years. This reinforced the perception of better prepared candidates and better organised courses allowing candidates the opportunity to prepare for the final examination.

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

Grade 1	53	Credit	77.9% of the available marks
Grade 2	41	Credit	60.3% of the available marks
Grade 3	42	General	70% of the available marks
Grade 4	27	General	45% of the available marks
Grade 5	33	Foundation	62.3% of the available marks
Grade 6	19	Foundation	35.8% of the available marks

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

The grade boundaries were set at the suggested marks for each level. The agreed grades allowed the percentages successfully achieving grades to remain steady and are consistent with previous years.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Candidates were generally well prepared for this examination. An improvement in written English was noted. The presentation of answers at credit level was an improvement on previous years.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

The publication of marking schemes and important marking rules has helped a number of candidates. It was noticeable that staff had used the pointers given when preparing candidates for the examination.

Letter writing has improved considerably and was very well attempted. Letters were well set out and showed a good use of language.

Cheque completion is well understood as shown in the General paper and the instructions given at Credit. The area often forgotten by candidates is the company the cheque is to be paid to.

Form filling continues to be well understood.

Foundation Question 4 was completed very well even though it contained a lot of reading. This was a question using information readily available to candidates and they were able to handle it extremely well.

Foundation Question 3 part (a) was very well attempted. The rota was clearly and accurately completed

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Some candidates find using a calculator difficult. This resulted in many candidates giving answers for General Question 2 which were far from the answer. It was noticed that candidates find the use of the decimal point very difficult, therefore more calculation practice during school courses would be beneficial.

Some candidates at Credit level found it difficult to know the difference between a letter and an information sheet. Again another area requiring more practice.

Map reading is an area requiring more work. Some candidates had difficulty interpreting instructions and giving right and left directions.

Credit Question 1 was either very well or very poorly attempted. A number of candidates showed excellent understanding but some candidates had great difficulty of interpreting the concept and calculating the basic figures.

Areas of common misunderstanding

A problem was noted in Question2 at Foundation level. The wording of the question was ambiguous and a significant number of candidates did not answer part (a) of the question. The cut off score for this paper was adjusted downwards to reflect this difficulty.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

At Credit level a number of candidates did not follow the instruction on the front of the answer book which states that a new page should be taken for each answer. As marks were allocated for layout as part of the marking scheme, candidates who did not take a new page for each question were penalised.

The careful use of calculators particularly placing the point requires more practice.

The difference between a letter and an information sheet requires some reinforcement. The use of an address at the top of the page and 'yours sincerely' are the pointers for a letter. An information sheet gives the information clearly and succinctly, often written with bullet points.