

Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Computing

Qualification area

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

**Computing
Intermediate 2**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	2063
Pre appeal	
Post appeal	

Number of entries in 2002	2271
Pre appeal	
Post appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

Roughly 10% increase on last year.

General comments

The pass rate lay between the rates for 2000 and 2001. There was a small decline in overall pass rate compared with 2001. The pass rate for this subject is lower than the overall pass rate (for all subjects) at this level (68.5%).

There was a surprising number of candidates who scored extremely low marks in the exam paper. It would seem that there is an increasing number of students sitting Int 2 who do not have the ability to make a good attempt at the exam. It may be that as more candidates successfully gain Int1 Computing Studies then they are progressing onto Int2 which may be too great a leap. There would seem to be a case to look at the degree of difficulty between Int1 and Int2 and try to bridge the gap more effectively.

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

C – 49
B – 58
A – 68

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

Paper slightly more difficult than last year therefore grade boundaries brought down.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The overall standard of responses was disappointing. The gap between performance in the exam and performance in the coursework remains. Some candidates may have been entered for an inappropriate level given the number of very low marks

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Q4 - Software Development process is still vaguely explained.
Q7 – poor response to naming a procedural and declarative language.
Q8 - Not giving a device but giving a medium of storage.
Q9 – a difficult problem solving question but few candidates made a good attempt to answer the question fully.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Candidates provided poor responses to questions on software Development, resolution and procedural/declarative languages.

Candidates need to respond with more technically accurate answers, many answers were vague and inaccurate. e.g. naming storage media rather than a storage device. Questions were not always read correctly and answers not given within the context of the questions.