



Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Economics

Qualification area

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

ECONOMICS INT 1 & 2

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	INT 1	INT 2
Pre appeal	3	143
Post appeal	3	146

Number of entries in 2002		
Pre appeal	8	139
Post appeal		

General comments re entry numbers

No significant changes.

General comments

INT 1 - numbers too small to make meaningful comments.
INT 2 - the overall ability of the candidature was much higher than last year and there was also evidence that the pupils had been better prepared for the exam.

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

	INT 1	INT 2
C	19	28
B	23	34
A	27	40
	Maximum Mark = 40	Maximum Mark = 60

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

On the whole, the grade boundaries were very similar to last year. However the Int 2 boundaries for both B and C were 2 marks higher this year - reflecting the fact that this year's exam was slightly more straightforward.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The majority of Int 1 candidates were presented at the correct level but, as in previous years, some Int 2 candidates could have comfortably passed the Higher exam.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

The Int 1 candidates displayed a sound understanding of inflation. The majority of Int 2 candidates showed an excellent understanding of the pros and cons of the UK joining the Eurozone, the concept of opportunity cost, demand and demand curves and import controls.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Most Int 1 candidates did not understand the meaning of fixed and variable costs. Some Int 2 candidates did not know how to define marginal cost and average revenue; most did not know the meaning of technical efficiency, and only a few displayed an adequate understanding of social security.

Areas of common misunderstanding

Some Int 2 candidates found it difficult to interpret correctly the diagram in Item A.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

In both exams, candidates lost marks by failing to develop fully their main points. Pupils should be instructed to look at the marks for each question and ask themselves 'Is my answer worth full marks or should I expand it further?' Int 2 candidates should also be encouraged to take time over deciding which essay to attempt - to ensure that they answer the best one for them.