

Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Economics/Business studies

Qualification area

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

**Economics
Advanced Higher**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	44
Pre appeal	44
Post appeal	44

Number of entries in 2002	66
Pre appeal	66
Post appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

Numbers have increased because of the demise of CSYS, but also because students are being encouraged to take AH level rather than upgrading Higher results from the previous year,

General comments

Good responses to all aspects of the paper from many candidates, but there was a significant increase in the number of less able students who found the written paper demanding. Since this is the first year in which all candidates sat AH rather than CSYS, it would unwise to jump to wide-ranging conclusions about the performance of candidates.

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

An Upper A was awarded to a candidate for the first time. The A/B interface was again set at 68% as the level of difficulty in the paper was considered very similar to that in the 2001 examination.

Upper A 83%

A 68%

C 50%

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

See above

Comments on candidate performance

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Sound appreciation of contemporary economic issues, evidence of strong teaching and initiative shown by many candidates.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Many candidates failing to follow the guidelines. Evidence of a wide, but haphazard use of the Internet. Presentation of the dissertation often below that expected and the development sometimes lacked coherence. It is intended to publish additional guidelines in the next few months in an attempt to address this problem. (see feedback to centres for more detail.)

Areas of common misunderstanding

Uncertainty over the terms market failure and monopolistic markets in question 6, surprising in view of the specific teaching required for the microeconomics NAB unit assessment.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

As indicated earlier additional guidelines on the dissertation paper will be given to presenting centres for session 2003/4. The guidelines are intended to provide centres with enough information to make a judgement about suitability of dissertation topics without reference to SQA for prior approval purposes. In addition, they will provide criteria for judging the acceptability of dissertation content in terms of breadth, level of analysis, development, presentation etc.