

## Principal Assessor Report 2002

**Assessment Panel:**

**Travel & Tourism**

**Qualification area**

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

**Retail Travel – Higher  
Selling Scheduled Air Travel - Higher**

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## Statistical information: update

<b>Number of entries in 2001</b>	Retail Travel 18 Selling scheduled Air 11
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<b>Number of entries in 2002</b>	Retail Travel 15 Selling scheduled Air 4
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\* summer certification only

### General comments re entry numbers

Entry numbers were most disappointing. One centre that entered a substantial number of candidates last year, decided not to offer the new qualifications this year. A new centre did come on stream. However, although the intended number of entries was encouraging, only three candidates in fact completed the external assessment. Two other centres who entered candidates last year, did so again, but in one case with very few candidates for each assessment, and in the other with only three candidates having completed one of the projects.

### General comments

Communication skills of the candidates in general seemed poorer than last year.

Recommendations regarding the planning stage that were suggested in the previous year's examiner's comments, were adopted by one centre, which resulted in the improvement of the quality of this section produced by candidates and an increase in the marks scored.

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

### **Retail Travel**

Grade boundaries were as follows:

Upper A – lowest mark 170

Grade A – lowest mark 140

Grade B – lowest mark 120

Grade C – lowest mark 100

### **Selling Scheduled Air Travel**

Grade boundaries were as follows:

Upper A – lowest mark 170

Grade A – lowest mark 140

Grade B – lowest mark 120

Grade C – lowest mark 100

## **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**

It was agreed that grade boundaries should remain the same as last year for both Retail Travel and Selling Scheduled Air Travel as the level of difficulty of the project briefs was unaltered.

## **Comments on candidate performance**

### **General comments**

Candidates should be encouraged to word process the project, particularly the documents that would be given to the client i.e. the letter of confirmation and the itinerary. Shortcomings in spelling and grammar could also be addressed through the word processing of the planning and evaluation stages of the project. Candidates should be advised that the presentation of the project including the documents should be to a standard that would be accepted in industry. While some candidates may not have access to word processing facilities for the majority of the project never the less the neatest presentation possible must be encouraged. Some of the projects presented to the examiner were scrappy and almost illegible.

### **Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well**

Candidates performed best in the development stage of the project where they were able to display their vocational skills. In some cases this was to a high standard and in general was to a reasonable standard. Good use of reference materials and internet facilities was evident in all centres.

### **Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty**

Both the Planning and Evaluation stages once again caused difficulty to the majority of candidates. Preparatory work requires to be done with candidates to explore the areas that they would be required to cover in each of these stages.

Candidates must be encouraged to consider all of the briefs and to justify their selection. Once this has been done, again some candidates failed to examine a good range of alternative arrangements before making their recommendations.

### **Areas of common misunderstanding**

All candidates from one centre who tackled the Selling Scheduled Air Travel lost a substantial number of marks in the development stage as they failed to 'give evidence of an effective selling skills approach being adopted to sell air travel.' Candidates recorded a telephone conversation that simply confirmed the arrangements that had already been booked. The brief states "you must describe how you would conduct the sales conversation with Mrs Wilson." A check-list was produced and distributed by SQA last year to address this problem which was highlighted to all centres during the previous year's examiner's visit.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

To be successful in the external assessment centres must allocate teaching time to this unit and course managers must try to ensure that the majority of all necessary component units of these courses are taught prior to the development stage of the external assessment.

Adequate reference resources including access to the internet is essential for candidates.

Project tutors should become familiar with the requirements of the external assessments and be prepared to give clear guidance to their students.

Both the Planning and Evaluation stages do cause difficulty to the majority of candidates. Preparatory work requires to be done with candidates to explore the areas that they would be required to cover in each of these stages.

Candidates must be encouraged to consider all of the briefs and to justify their selection. Once this has been done, again some candidates fail to examine a good range of alternative arrangements before making their recommendations.

Candidates should be encouraged to word process the project, particularly the documents that would be given to the client i.e. the letter of confirmation and the itinerary. Shortcomings in spelling and grammar could also be addressed through the word processing of the planning and evaluation stages of the project. Candidates should be advised that the presentation of the project including the documents should be to a standard that would be accepted in industry. While some candidates may not have access to word processing facilities for the majority of the project never the less the neatest presentation possible must be encouraged.