



External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	Administration
Level	Advanced Higher

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The majority of candidates performed well in both the report and the question paper. The report has improved year on year and most candidates are getting high marks in this part of the assessment.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Part A

Question 3: most candidates answered this question well — they were very aware of the roles of the Appraiser and Appraisee.

Part B

Question 3 (b): most candidates recognised the importance of change agents and this question was answered well.

Question 4 (b): candidates answered this question very well, with a number of different strategies being suggested.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Part A

Question 2: a number of candidates spoke about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs but did not relate it to how it improves motivation.

Part B

Question 2 (b): some candidates described what videoconferencing was and did not relate it to improving the qualities of good information.

Question 4 (a): some candidates merely described Belbin's team roles but did not talk about the skills and qualities needed.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

This is the last diet for the subject so there will be no further candidates presented for this Course award.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2010	12
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Number of resulted entries in 2011	17
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 100				
A	17.6%	17.6%	3	70
B	11.8%	29.4%	2	60
C	35.3%	64.7%	6	50
D	5.9%	70.6%	1	45
No award	29.4%	100.0%	5	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Each year, therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Head of Service and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related as they do not contain identical questions.

SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as Arrangements evolve and change.