



## External Assessment Report 2011

|         |                       |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Subject | <b>Art and Design</b> |
| Level   | <b>Intermediate 1</b> |

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 overall standard of work was very good and, in the main, appropriate for this level, with the majority of candidates attaining the standard required.

Expressive work was generally of a higher standard than Design.

Team leaders commented on the breadth and variety of work in both Expressive and Design Units.

Still life, portraiture and natural environment continue to be the most popular choices in the Expressive Unit.

In Design, jewellery, fashion and graphics were the most commonly attempted projects.

Fewer candidates submitted 3D work than in previous years in both Expressive and Design.

Centre staff and pupils are to be commended for continuing to submit Units of quality while having to adapt to reduced budgets.

Following discussion and analysis of statistical data at the Grade Boundary Setting meeting, the decision was taken to adjust the grade boundaries for Intermediate 1 slightly as, in comparison with other subjects at this level, the National Rating was particularly high.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Expressive

Still life continues to dominate as the most popular area, and markers noted some outstanding work in this area. There was evidence of excellent media handling; the use of pastel, colour pencil and the control and understanding of the properties of paint was very good.

It is encouraging that most candidates are drawing from first hand source material for their 'gathering information' sheet.

The development sheet at this level continues to show an improvement. Fewer candidates are relying on a sheet that has only two compositions on it. There is a genuine attempt to be more experimental and creative on this sheet.

A number of final pieces in various themes were beyond Intermediate 1 level.

### Design

Candidates at this level perform best when there is a clear, logical design process for them to follow. A thematic approach proved to be a successful route for candidates. Well selected market research supported candidates' themes.

The most successful areas were graphics, jewellery and fashion.

The best quality graphics came from the candidates' own hand drawn images, which were then manipulated and developed using Information Technology.

In jewellery there were some lovely examples using mixed media. Recycled materials were also used in a number of pieces.

Fashion continues, in the main, to be dress design, although the making of hats/fascinators is also popular.

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

### **Expressive**

Few candidates experience difficulties in this area.

However, it was noted by some markers that some centres' expectations of candidates, at this level, are quite ambitious. The demands of portraiture or figure composition at Intermediate 1 are beyond the abilities of a number of candidates.

### **Design**

Candidates generally make a very good attempt at a brief that sets them a number of challenges.

However, it is evident that the design issues presented to candidates at this level are not always fully addressed. This could be due to the candidates' lack of maturity/experience or, in some cases, to poorly-constructed or over-ambitious Design Briefs.

The evaluation, which is worth 8 marks, is all too often an afterthought with little substance to it.

The markers identified that those candidates who designed three or four quickly-finished ideas did so with little substance. It is recommended that candidates are encouraged to develop the required minimum of two ideas in greater depth.

# Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

## General

### Expressive

Centres should continue to encourage candidates to draw from first hand sources.

Candidates should be allowed to explore a variety of media.

The most successful Expressive Units are produced when the candidate has a personal interest in the theme.

Centres should avoid the use of photocopies in candidate submissions. Copying over photographs or tracings is not encouraged.

Candidates at this level require appropriate themes/outcomes/approaches that suit their skill and ability level.

### Design

Clear, concise, and structured Design Briefs, set at the appropriate level, will help candidates to achieve a focused and relevant design process.

More sketches and/or drawings in the Design Unit would complement computer-generated images.

A good evaluation is worth 8 marks. Centres should highlight the importance of this and reinforce this skill with candidates.

Candidates should be encouraged to limit their design ideas, on the development sheet, to allow for realistic experimentation and a proper design process to be followed, rather than producing a number of insubstantial pieces.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

### Intermediate 1

|                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of resulted entries in 2010 | 3,875 |
|------------------------------------|-------|

|                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of resulted entries in 2011 | 3,683 |
|------------------------------------|-------|

## Statistical information: performance of candidates

### Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

| Distribution of Course awards | %     | Cum. % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark 160              |       |        |                      |             |
| A                             | 58.0% | 58.0%  | 2,136                | 117         |
| B                             | 22.9% | 80.9%  | 842                  | 101         |
| C                             | 12.6% | 93.4%  | 463                  | 85          |
| D                             | 3.1%  | 96.6%  | 116                  | 77          |
| No award                      | 3.4%  | 100.0% | 126                  | -           |

## **General commentary on grade boundaries**

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions that 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, though, 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.