



External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	Art and Design
Level	Intermediate 2

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

Practical Folio

The overall standard of work was very good, and markers commented that there were some excellent submissions at this level. Indeed, some candidates would have performed well at Higher.

As in previous years, Expressive is the stronger of the two Units.

Still Life and portraiture are very popular, but some good landscape, and fantasy and imagination Units were submitted.

In Design, fashion, jewellery and graphics continue to be popular, but there was a refreshing return to some good quality product design.

Candidates at Intermediate 2 are capable of following a design process, but can be disadvantaged by poorly-constructed Design Briefs, lack of direction and unsatisfactory evaluations.

It was noted that there was less 3D work than in previous years. Restricted department budgets have encouraged some centres to be ingenious with recycling and manipulation of materials.

Question Paper

Candidates responded well to the 2011 Question Paper, which was challenging but fair for candidates at this level.

Clear images and straightforward questions gave candidates the opportunity to display their knowledge and understanding of Art and Design terminology and the work of artists and designers.

There was a very slight increase in the average mark for this paper, from 25.1 to 25.5.

Following discussion and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data at the Grade Boundary Setting meeting, the decision was taken to slightly adjust the grade boundaries for Intermediate 2 as, in comparison with other subjects at this level, the National Rating continues to be particularly high.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Expressive

As in previous years, a number of candidates exhibited skills beyond Intermediate 2 level. High quality drawing in a range of media was supported by exciting development work leading to successful outcomes in the candidates' chosen medium.

Evidence supports the perception that the Expressive Unit is more successful than the Design Unit.

It appears from the quality of the work in this area that pupils enjoy producing their Expressive folio.

Design

It was noted that there were many excellent examples of graphic design — stronger than in previous years. High-quality graphics are being produced by an increasing number of candidates:

- ◆ who combine hand-drawn images with computer technology
- ◆ using only a range of technology in their submissions

Other areas of successful work were Product Design (lighting) and Fashion Design (headpieces) — skilfully constructed and decorated.

3D solutions in 3D Design folios added value to the candidates' submissions.

Markers commented on the return of quality 'Stained Glass' Design Units.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Expressive

Few candidates experienced difficulties in this area. It was noted, however, that some centres have excessively high expectations of their candidates. For example, 'Fantasy and Imagination', if treated in an abstract way, requires the candidate to consider quite complex concepts which may be beyond their ability.

The difficulties encountered in portraiture demand that the candidate is highly skilled in the use of media, and that they understand the subtleties of line, tone and form.

Design

Over the last few years, candidates have continued to show a greater understanding of a design process. However, the same issues still cause difficulties for candidates.

One of these is Design Briefs that are too vague or too complex. Both cause significant difficulties for candidates. These could include simple repeat pattern solutions for surfboards, ties, trainers.

More complex design briefs include interior, architecture and fashion.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

Centres are reminded that they must ensure that the candidate's choice of topic or theme is appropriate.

Design

Design Briefs must be clear and give an adequate amount of challenge, but not be over-ambitious.

'House styles' can inhibit a candidate's creativity.

In Graphic Design, ensure that the candidates' thought processes and individuality are made clear.

Candidates should not produce more than one solution to the Design Brief.

Expressive

Avoid the use of photocopies and tracings in the Expressive Unit.

Candidates should be encouraged to draw from first hand source material and consider using a variety of media.

Candidates should explore a range of experimental approaches in the Development sheet and avoid simply presenting two images, as this will result in them being unable to access all the available marks.

Question Paper

Markers commented on how well prepared candidates were for this component.

In the 'b' part of the question paper, it was noted that a number of candidates, as well as discussing the work of their two chosen artists/designers, gave lengthy biographical information on their artists/designers. These contained very little information that met the marking criteria. Centres should encourage candidates to limit this to a brief synopsis of the artists'/designers' lives, and concentrate on giving detailed information in response to the content of the question.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 2

Number of resulted entries in 2010	6,653
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Number of resulted entries in 2011	7,047
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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 200				
A	60.2%	60.2%	4,243	150
B	22.4%	82.7%	1,582	130
C	10.9%	93.6%	769	110
D	2.4%	96.0%	170	100
No award	4.0%	100.0%	283	-

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.