

## Principal Assessor Report 2002

**Assessment Panel:**

**Technical Education**

**Qualification area**

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

**Craft and Design – Advanced Higher**

## Statistical information: update

Number of resulted courses in 2001	20
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Number of resulted courses in 2002	71
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### General comments re entry numbers

The above stats, which are a course analysis, include candidates who:

- achieved a grade 1-9 in the external assessment and passed all internal units (course pass)
- achieved a grade 1-9 in the external assessment but did not pass all internal units (course fail)

Candidates who had a 999 in the external assessment are not included unless they completed the External Assessment elements last year and completed the units this year.

It was pleasing to see a more than threefold increase in the numbers from the last year.

### General comments

In general, a greater percentage of candidates performed better this year than last.

There were a number of good quality students who displayed a sound grasp of the subject.

A number of able candidates performed well but there was a high percentage of candidates who failed to make the transition from Higher to Advanced Higher.

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

Boundaries were as follows:

Maximum mark attainable: 250

Upper A	212
Lower A	174
B	148
C	123

### **General commentary on grade boundaries**

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**

C pass mark was lowered by two marks to 123 out of 250. This was lowered to take account of the visiting examination (a previous higher scoring component) being removed from the external assessment and the introduction of an optional essay type question to the written question paper. This was replicated at the other grade boundaries.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

Given that this was only the second year of Advanced Higher Craft and Design the overall candidates' performance was pleasing in that 31 out of 67 candidates achieved a pass.

It was notable that the majority of candidates who performed well were from centres in their second year of presentation indicating that they had benefited from their previous year experiences.

There were, unfortunately, a significant number of candidates who were insufficiently prepared. A percentage of these candidates had come from centres where there were a small number of presentations.

Almost all candidates had acted on the advice given after Diet 2001 and had not gone for trying to improve on a "design classic" for their *Extended Case Study*.

On the whole, candidates performed better this year in the *Written Paper*, thereby re-enforcing the concept that they had benefited from the experiences gained from looking at previous papers.

Centres may also have utilised the exemplar material provided by the SQA which exemplified standards of A and C passes in both the *Extended Case Study* and the *Written Paper*.

In both the *Extended Case Study* and the *Written Paper* the highest mark was better than last year.

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

The *Extended Case Study* affords candidates the opportunity to build on the foundation laid by the *Case Study Unit*.

It was strikingly obvious that, of the candidates who performed well in this element of the course, almost all had made an excellent attempt at **Section 1. Problem**. Candidates who scored well in this section did so because they had a clear understanding of the problem and of how they proposed to tackle the issues involved in solving it. Candidates who made this good start were able to stick to the parameters they had laid down and, on the whole, scored well throughout the rest of their folio. Graphical skills, formal, freehand and rendering were, in most cases significantly better than the standard displayed at Higher.

As would be expected, the questions in the *Written Paper* which were tackled well were those which centred round work which had been covered in the *Units* or *Extended Case Study*. These questions, 3 and 5, were particularly well attempted.

## Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

As stated previously, candidates who failed to identify a clear plan of how they intended to tackle their *Extended Case Study* invariably performed poorly. A number of candidates appeared to have difficulty in adhering to the *Extended Case Study Guidelines* and structuring their *Extended Case Study* round the guidance given.

A high number of candidates found it difficult to progress ideas from concepts through synthesis to a firm design proposal. Many candidates also failed to supply adequate Justification and Reasoning when making decisions. Simply stating opinions without foundation does not attract marks.

Not enough candidates made use of modelling to illustrate their solutions or component of a possible solution.

**Section 4** caused substantial problems for a number of candidates where they had difficulty in referring back to their **Problem Definition** in **Section 1**.

In the *Written Paper*, Question 7 stood out as the poorest answered question. This may have been because it demanded an essay type response, because it was a “new” type of question or merely that it was the last question in the paper.

There appeared to be no other question which was consistently poorly attempted.

## Areas of common misunderstanding

### *Extended Case Study*

The only outstanding area of common misunderstanding was the section on **Synthesis**. Synthesis is the identification of the most promising ideas which have occurred through investigation and using them to identify a firm design proposal. Too many candidates seem to think synthesis involves trying to think up new ideas or just develop one idea further with scant regard paid to ideas or concepts which emerge from their research into other solutions or part solutions.

### *Written Paper*

Candidates should endeavour to get to the nub of the question much quicker. A number of candidates like to “set the scene” before getting to the question in hand.

Candidates should also appreciate that a question worth 8 marks should normally have twice the amount of content of that of one worth 4 marks. Following this a question worth 8 marks should demand twice as much time spent on it as one worth 4 marks.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

#### *Extended Case Study*

- To ensure the best chance of success candidates should ensure that they address each point in **Section 1. Problem** as comprehensively as possible. This section is the foundation on which most successful *Extended Case Studies* are built
- Centres should encourage candidates to adhere more closely to the guidance contained within the *Extended Case Study Guidelines*. Throughout the progression of the *Extended Case Study*, candidates should constantly refer to the *Extended Case Study Guidelines*
- Candidates should appreciate the importance of **Synthesis** and how it fits into the design process
- In **Section 2(d) Justification and Reasoning**, candidates will only achieve marks if they can substantiate their decisions with sound justifications
- Candidates should endeavour to make full use of different methods of communication, including modelling
- Candidates and Centres should appreciate that there is a significant increase in the standard of performance required for Advanced Higher than that for Higher.

#### *Written Paper*

- Candidates should avoid “waffle” and get to the nub of the question quicker
- Candidates should back up their ideas and decisions with facts and the experiences and knowledge they have gained during the study of the course
- Candidates should take cognisance of the marks awarded to the questions. Questions worth 8 marks should normally have double the amount of writing as a question worth 4 marks. Likewise, a question worth 8 marks should have twice the amount of time spent on it as one worth 4 marks
- Candidates should endeavour to use sketches more to support and illustrate their answers