



## External Assessment Report 2011

Subject(s)	CLASSICAL STUDIES
Level(s)	INTERMEDIATE 1

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**

There was a vast improvement in the standard this year, which was very pleasing. The mark allocation of 2, 1 and 1, instead of 4-mark questions, seemed to prove helpful to candidates.

## **Areas in which candidates performed well**

Questions on the drama 'Oedipus the King' were well done as always (Section A1 and A2 and Section B1 and B2).

Also, candidates responded well to the Classical Mythology section (Section A5 and A6 and Section B5 and B6).

There was a significant improvement in the questions on Roman Archaeology and Civilisation (Section A3 and A4).

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

Question 3 in Section B on the Roman army was not well done — candidates needed to write about the advantages of the Romans being in Britain rather than the attraction of being in the Roman army.

## **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

Clearly, candidates are being well prepared for this paper and they are coping well. Practice in reading the questions carefully and dealing with the specific issues would prove beneficial.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

### Intermediate 1

Number of resulted entries in 2011	19
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Number of resulted entries in 2012	30
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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 50				
A	13.3%	13.3%	4	35
B	16.7%	30.0%	5	30
C	23.3%	53.3%	7	25
D	13.3%	66.7%	4	22
No award	33.3%	100.0%	10	-

## 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 SQA therefore 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 Business Manager 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.