



External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Creative Cake Production
Level(s)	Intermediate 2

The statistics used in this report are prior to the outcome of any Post Results Services requests

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

This has been a positive and successful year for Creative Cake Production. This session the number of centres presenting was 58, with a total of 844 candidates.

Centres preparation for the visiting assessment was well organised. All cakes were displayed, and associated documentation completed, to a high standard and met the requirement of the award criteria for assessment.

Candidates' interpretation of the given briefs showed clear understanding of the practical assignment requirements. Designs were constructed with flair, creativity and, when matched with the final finished cakes, attracted high marks. Many of the cakes presented exceeded the requirements for Intermediate 2.

Project proformas were completed to a high standard and attracted high marks. Evidence showed good planning, research and self-evaluation through to the finished cakes. Most centres had encouraged the use of ICT, and candidates presented neatly-typed practical assignment proformas. Centres where candidates presented handwritten work were generally of a very good standard. Candidates gained high marks in their written work as well as in the practical assignment. Both marks together often resulted in high grades.

The finishing techniques applied to the cakes demonstrated a wide range of innovation and creativity. In general, marks allocated to the practical element of the course were appropriate and met award criteria. In one or two instances centre marks for processes, techniques and overall presentation of the finished cakes were lenient. Visiting assessors provided guidance and discussed issues with delivery staff prior to results being entered in the EX6 document.

Standardisation procedures appear consistent. This is essential to ensure parity between assessors and to assist in decision-making. Staff members who presented Creative Cake production for the first time showed good understanding of the criteria for assessment and are working to the national standard. Delivery staff continue to update their skills by attending sugarcraft classes, workshops and networking groups. Many innovative approaches were used within centres to support the delivery, including: internet research; video clips; demonstration CDs; external demonstrators; a wide range of books and monthly cake magazines; and many offered lunchtime and after-school practice workshops. Education Scotland materials continue to be a valuable resource to support delivery.

SQA NAB materials are being used by all centres. A few centres have devised their own marking grids. While this was acceptable, on the day of the visit centres were advised to use the SQA-endorsed official document for assessment. The SQA teacher /lecturer guidance on marking was another useful tool to assist marking of the practical assignments. Centre staff commented on the large waiting lists of pupils wanting to take up this exciting and challenging learning experience next session

Feedback reports from visiting assessors were positive and encouraging. Centre staff members were complimented on time spent preparing candidates for assessment, and also time spent with the visiting assessors on the visit days. Candidates' cakes were beautifully displayed by all presenting centres. A wide range of approaches were highlighted in the reports, which demonstrated good practice and enhanced delivery. Candidates have clearly benefitted from having enthusiastic, motivated teachers who were receptive to ideas and suggestions and willing to share good practice. Visiting assessors also commented on the friendly welcome and kind hospitality offered during their visits.

Areas in which candidates performed well

All candidates knew how to research and plan the practical assignment. In general, projects were well researched and design plans matched the chosen brief. The use of ICT and additional support materials proved helpful at the planning stage.

Most candidates knew how to bake cakes correctly and test for readiness due to practice and experience in baking different types of cakes during the coursework. Final cakes were prepared and baked to a very good standard in most instances, and candidates attained high marks in this area.

Techniques applied to the finished cakes were in the main, well executed, creative and in many cases exceeded the requirements of Intermediate 2.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Design drawing

Design drawing is an essential part of the planning and attracts high marks. A small number of candidates found this part difficult, and some marks were lost mainly due to rough sketches with very little detail or essential information being added. Candidates should be encouraged to draw their design to scale, showing both top and side elevations as instructed in the assessment criteria. Using colour is not mandatory, but can often help candidates visualise what the end result would look like.

Some candidates found self-evaluation challenging, and in many cases marks were low in this area. Also, candidates should be encouraged to use evaluative comments in the photo evidence sections of the proforma; examples can be found in the SQA guidance/marketing document.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

Centre staff members have an enthusiastic approach to delivering and presenting the course. They are motivated to achieve high standards and in most instances provide additional opportunities, guidance, support and encouragement to the candidates during

lunch breaks and after-school hours, where practice workshops are set up to help improve skills and techniques. Staffs continue to inspire their pupils with creative ideas in cake production and cake decorating.

Health and Safety in cake finishing

- ◆ Thanks to all staff for taking on board the points made previously regarding the use of flower picks when using wires.
- ◆ Cocktail sticks should be replaced with spaghetti or candy sticks.
- ◆ Make sure, where colour dye or small fibres may contaminate cakes, and where using glitters and dusts, that you comply with Food Standards Agency guidance — see the FSA website at <http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2014/may/glitter-and-dust>.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	1138
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	844
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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	56.4%	56.4%	476	158
B	28.3%	84.7%	239	134
C	11.5%	96.2%	97	110
D	2.7%	98.9%	23	98
No award	1.1%	-	9	-

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.