



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Architectural Technology
Level(s)	Higher

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

Candidates performed well in both the Project and the question paper components.

Some Projects lacked drawings and sketches, which lost candidates many marks. Centres are reminded that guidance for the Project is available in the Course Assessment Pack, available from SQA's website.

Centres are advised that some guidance to candidates about the Project marking Instructions would possibly focus on the value of each section.

The question paper was well answered in general with the usual spread of marks from centres.

Areas in which candidates performed well

All questions in the question paper, and the Project, were accessible, with most candidates answering to the best of their abilities.

Centres are advised to ensure candidates consider the mark allocation for each question to assist in understanding the response required.

Areas which candidates found demanding

All questions in the question paper were attempted, and candidates appeared to select the appropriate optional question for them.

Centres are reminded to refer to the marking guide for the Project, to ensure adequate work is being produced for the sketching and drawings section. This may assist candidates to access the maximum marks available for this area. Further information is contained in the Course Assessment Pack available from SQA's website.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Preparation for this year's cohort appeared to be good.

Centres appear to be using Past Papers and Marking Instructions in their preparations, and this is highly commended.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2012	12
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	12
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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	41.7%	41.7%	5	140
B	8.3%	50.0%	1	120
C	16.7%	66.7%	2	100
D	8.3%	75.0%	1	90
No award	25.0%	100.0%	3	-

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.