



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Creative Cake production
Level(s)	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

This has been another positive and successful year, 83 centres presented Creative Cake Production at Intermediate 2. Candidate numbers have increased again this year, with a number of new centres gaining approval to run the course.

Centre preparation for External Visiting Assessment was well organised. All cakes were displayed, associated documentation completed to a high standard and met the requirement for assessment.

Candidate's individual interpretation of the given briefs clearly showed a wide range of creative sugarcraft techniques, as well as novelty and traditional cake styles. Many of the cakes presented for assessment were above the standard required for Intermediate 2 level. Project proformas were completed well and provided evidence of good planning and research. Candidates gained high marks in their written work as well as the practical assignment.

Skill development was apparent throughout the practical assignment and demonstrated a wide range of innovative and creative finishing techniques.

Most centres had encouraged the use of ICT and candidates presented neatly typed practical assignment proformas and evaluations. Centres where candidates presented hand written practical assignment proforma's and evaluation were generally of a good standard. Grades achieved in the practical assignment reflected the extent of commitment shown by the candidates.

Marks allocated to the practical element of the course were appropriate and met the award criteria. Where variances occurred, marks were discussed with delivery staff members and agreed with the SQA Visiting Assessor prior to results being entered in the Ex 6 document.

Standardisation procedures appear consistent. This is essential to ensure parity between Assessors and help 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.

Staff delivering the course were keen to update their own techniques and to fill knowledge and skill gaps by; attending specialist sugarcraft courses and the recent SQA Academy skills workshops, while others continued networking with other experienced practitioners.

Many innovative approaches were used to support the delivery of the award and included: Research, internet demonstration video clips, demonstration CD's, a wide range of books, up-to-date cake decorating magazines, recipe folios and Centre -devised underpinning knowledge questions and worksheets.

SQA NAB and support materials were used by all centres. A few centres had devised their own marking grids -- while this was acceptable on the day of the SAQ visit, centres were advised to use the SQA endorsed official document provided for the purpose of this assessment. Teacher/Lecturer guidance on the breakdown of marks was another useful tool used to assist marking of the Practical Assignments.

Centre staff commented on the popularity of the Creative Cake Production course and how it was fun to teach, and how candidates had fun while they learned the skills and techniques associated with cake baking and cake decorating. Most centres visited this session have large waiting lists of candidates hoping to take up this exciting and challenging learning experience.

Feedback from visiting assessor reports was positive and encouraging. Compliments were given to staff regarding the time spent preparing the candidates for assessment and also for the time spent with the Visiting Assessors on the visit day. Candidates' cakes were beautifully displayed by all centres. A wide range of approaches were highlighted in the reports which demonstrated good practice and enhanced delivery of the award. Candidates have clearly benefitted from having enthusiastic and motivated teachers delivering the course, staff members were receptive to ideas and suggestions and willing to share good practice ideas. Visiting Assessors also commented on having received a warm friendly welcome and kind hospitality from all centres visited. We look forward to supporting existing and new centres during the next session.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Most 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 facilities and additional support materials proved helpful at the planning stage. Candidates gleaned specific information from relevant internet sites, demonstration video clips, books magazines, visits to cake shops, as well as specific advice and tutoring from their class teacher/lecturer.

Candidates performed well when baking the cakes. In most instances the cakes were baked to a very good standard. Candidates were able to take advantage of the high marks available in this section.

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: This is an essential part of the planning and attracts high marks when well executed. This must be carried out and completed in detail prior to starting the development stage of the assignment. Marks were lost in this section; mainly due to rough sketches with very little detailed information (e.g. size/shape of cake and cake board, cake type etc.) -- as part of the assessment, candidates should be encouraged to draw their designs to scale, showing top and side elevations. Also, the addition of colour can often help them visualise the end result.

In some instances, changes may have to be made to the finished cake after the original drawing/design has been planned.

Examples of changes may be due to:

- the planned design becoming too complicated and cannot be executed correctly
- planned colour theme on the original design not balancing well with cake coating/decoration
- shape/type of cake is changed — due to the original shape/type not working well with the finish design/shape
- shape/type/size of cake board is changed — due to original not being complementary to the design

Any changes made to the design of the finished cake should be explained in the appropriate evaluation stages in the practical assignment proforma.

Evaluation

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.

It should be noted that when candidates have more than one cake, the evaluation and photo evidence required should include all cakes showing the three process stages to comply with the award criteria. Photo evidence is part of the practical assignment evaluation and assessment and should be available for visiting assessment.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

Centre staff members have an enthusiastic approach to delivering and presenting Creative Cake Production, they are motivated to achieve high standards and in most instances provide additional opportunities support and encouragement to the candidates, during lunch breaks and after school hours where additional practice workshops are set up to help improve skills and techniques. Staff continue to inspire candidates with creative ideas in Cake production and Cake decoration.

Health and safety in cake finishing; Thank you to all staff for taking on board the points made previously regarding the use of flower picks for wires, cocktail sticks and ribbon insertion where dye colour and small fibres may contaminate cakes and cake coatings.

Finally, please do not hesitate to get in touch if any further explanation is required. We have a team of well experienced Visiting Assessors who are happy to help at any time.

**Statistical information: update on Courses
Intermediate 2**

Number of resulted entries in 2012	870
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	1138
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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	76.6%	76.6%	872	140
B	15.7%	92.4%	179	120
C	5.8%	98.2%	66	100
D	0.9%	99.0%	10	90
No award	1.0%	100.0%	11	-

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.