



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Graphic Communication
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

The standard of draughtsmanship demonstrated continues to require improvement. Candidates are still poorly prepared in basic drawing-board techniques. In particular there continues to be no differentiation between outlines and construction lines in candidates' work.

There were a significant number of candidates who did not complete all the questions, and in some case did not attempt any part of a question. This was not isolated to any question in particular, and may be evidence that a number of candidates are still being presented at an inappropriate level.

Candidates continue to be well prepared for most of the knowledge aspects of the Course, and there is some evidence that centres are continuing to act on advice given in previous years' External Assessment reports. However, the majority of candidates continue to have difficulty in producing clear, accurate solutions to the drawing questions under external examination conditions.

A small number of questions were found to be unintentionally less challenging, and to address this, there was a change in the Grade Boundaries at all grades.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Question 1: Most candidates knew the appropriate colours and the type of safety displayed.

Question 2: Most candidates were able to state the symbol correctly.

Question 3a) and b): The majority of candidates were able to identify and draw the different line types.

Question 4: Most candidates correctly labelled the DTP document with the correct terms.

Question 5: The majority of candidates performed to a very high level in this question. Many candidates produced a high quality and accurate solution to the question, both in line type and quality.

Question 6: Most candidates correctly constructed the main body of the stopwatch including the button and recess.

Question 7a): Most candidates correctly completed the plan view accurately.

Question 8a): Most candidates completed the elevation of the assembled bicycle pedal accurately.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Question 3c): A large number of candidates clearly demonstrated that they did not know the correct name for the British Standard symbol shown.

Question 6: The majority of candidates found drawing the rectangular window and cord slot accurately due to it being on a sloping surface challenging.

Question 7: A large number of candidates demonstrated that they did not have the knowledge and understanding to plot and draw the curve of the Lens Protection Sticker on the end elevation. Most candidates found it challenging under exam conditions to produce an accurate solution to drawing a Development of the Lens Protector Sticker. Many candidates started to draw the development for a cone instead of a cylinder.

Question 8: Most candidates demonstrated that they found this question the most challenging. Candidates appeared not to have a clear understanding of the concept of a sectional plan view, or of the British Standards when adding section lines to the drawing.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

There is continued evidence that centres are taking on board much of the advice given in previous years. However, it would be helpful to centres to note the following:

- ◆ Centres are advised to examine the latest examination paper and marking instructions to ensure that they are aware of the standard required for preparing candidates for the examination and the creation of a prelim paper.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that they should also encourage candidates to use the appropriate terminology when answering the knowledge and interpretation questions.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that a BSI symbol information sheet is available from the Graphic Communication page of SQA's website, and are encouraged to make this available for candidates.
- ◆ Responses to BS conventions still require improvement. BS conventions will continue to be examined, and centres are advised to prepare candidates for this topic.
- ◆ Centres are encouraged to remind candidates to read each question very carefully and ensure that their response accurately answers the actual question asked.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that half marks no longer feature in the assessment of this Course. This should be reflected in prelims for the purpose of determining estimates and for absentee consideration. As advised in past Subject Update Letters: prelim papers produced with half marks will not be valid.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that candidates must provide only one response to any question. Where they have made more than one attempt at an answer, any work which they wish a Marker to ignore must be scored through.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 2

Number of resulted entries in 2012	2926
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	3129
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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 100				
A	42.6%	42.6%	1334	73
B	27.4%	70.0%	856	63
C	16.3%	86.3%	510	54
D	5.7%	92.0%	178	49
No award	8.0%	100.0%	251	-

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.