



## External Assessment Report 2009

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Subject	Graphical Communication
Level	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 overall standard of response of the candidates was mixed, similar to last year. The examination responses indicated that only a small number of candidates had been very well prepared for the whole examination while others were not fully prepared for the topics examined this year. Many of the candidates had difficulty applying basic geometric projection principles to the cut pyramid object. In general, the written questions were very well answered compared to the drawing questions. This was very apparent in Question 1 and Question 3. Within the drawing questions it was very clear that many candidates did not take the time to apply a firm outline to the solutions to the questions.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

**Question 1** on Desktop Publishing was extremely well answered by the majority of candidates.

**Question 3 (a)** was answered well by most candidates. Some candidates however did not read the question and pick up the salient points “mood” and “state”.

**Question 5** was very well received by the candidates and was a good opening question. The majority of candidates gained a good score although many candidates did not gain full marks as they were not accurate in constructing the isometric circle.

**Question 7** was very well completed by the candidates. For maximum marks the candidates had to demonstrate that they could draw several items in the correct position and correctly apply the B.S. rules to the sectioning of components. The lack of accuracy and knowledge of B.S. prevented many candidates from achieving maximum marks.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

**Question 2** – This question was poorly attempted by the majority of candidates. Very few candidates read the question carefully enough to realise that a sketch and explanation was expected for maximum marks. A surprisingly large number of candidates did not answer 2(c) correctly; a popular answer being described was “fillet” not “chamfer”. This type of question has been asked in the past.

**Question 8** – It was clear from the candidates’ responses that they had difficulty with the single cut hexagonal pyramid. Many candidates were unable to project from the Elevation onto the Plan and End Elevation to find the solution to the problem. A good number of candidates did however manage to complete the surface development as this was independent of the Plan and End Elevation solution. In many responses the candidates did not find the true length and the appropriate lengths for the development.

## Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

### Written Questions

It is important that centres continue the good work being done in the learning and teaching of Knowledge and Understanding within the Course. Centres may wish to offer examination techniques on how to produce accurate drawings, finish off a drawing with clear firm outlines, add hidden detail when required and centre lines, as a separate topic.

Centres may wish to consider reviewing how they encourage candidates to read the questions and highlight the important words to gain maximum marks.

### **Drawing Questions**

Centres may wish to consider reviewing the learning and teaching of “Single and Double cut Pyramids” due to the poor response to drawing the single cut pyramid in Question 8.

The standard of draughtsmanship is poor throughout the paper. A large proportion of candidates do not distinguish between construction lines and outlines. This is a major concern as this may create problems for candidates progressing to Higher where the marks lost would be much greater.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	1692
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	1931
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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	30.6%	30.6%	591	70
B	22.2%	52.8%	429	60
C	21.4%	74.3%	414	50
D	7.0%	81.3%	136	45
No award	18.7%	100.0%	361	-

## 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.