



External Assessment Report 2009

Subject	Graphic communication
Level	Intermediate 1

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 responses to this year's examination was very mixed. Candidates appeared to be well prepared in certain areas of the course, but lacked basic knowledge in others.

Candidates were poorly prepared in basic drawing techniques such as the use of projection lines and bounce lines. This lack of knowledge led to many basic errors in Questions 5, 7 and 9.

There are still many candidates not 'lining' in the outlines in drawing questions, making it hard to distinguish between projection lines and outlines.

In general, the written questions were answered better this year compared to 2008's Question Paper. The exception was Question 3 where the responses were varied.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Question 1 (colour theory) and Question 2 (computer hardware) were answered well, with the majority of candidates gaining full marks.

Question 4 (KI) was tackled well, although for part (d) many candidates gave all three dimensions for the top instead of just the length.

Question 6 (planometric) was answered well with most candidates gaining at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the available marks. The location of the ridge of the roof and the position of the porch proved to be a challenge for the less able candidates.

Question 8 (isometric) was answered well with most candidates gaining at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the available marks. Candidates lost marks by failing to add the depth to the screen and not positioning the two squares correctly.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Question 3 (DTP) - Many candidates were poorly prepared for this type of question and did not know basic DTP terms.

Question 5 (orthographic projection) - In the majority of cases, candidates did not project from the End Elevation to the Elevation to obtain the correct heights for the view. Many more did not project the Plan correctly. Only a handful of candidates used a bounce line to project the widths from the End Elevation to the Plan.

Question 7 (pyramid) – The responses to this question were very poor. Many candidates did not know how to construct a pyramid with even fewer managing to complete the development.

Question 9 (sectional view) – Many candidates did not manage to reach the last question. Those who did attempt it were let down by poor orthographic projection. Those candidates who did finish it knew the correct way to hatch the view using the 45 degree set square and showing differentiation between the two surfaces.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Presenting centres should ensure that they are familiar with the Course Arrangements document for Intermediate 1 before presenting candidates for the Course. They should also ensure that candidates are entered at an appropriate level.

It is vital that centres ensure that their candidates acquire the basics of orthographic projection and the use of bounce lines. Centres should also ensure that when teaching orthographic projection, pupils are remind that is important to 'line in' their finished work to avoid confusion between outlines and projection lines.

Areas which require specific attention are; Geometric Solids and DTP terms.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	142
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	328
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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	15.5%	15.5%	51	70
B	20.4%	36.0%	67	60
C	24.7%	60.7%	81	50
D	9.1%	69.8%	30	45
No award	30.2%	100.0%	99	-

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.