



External Assessment Report 2009

Subject	Hospitality – Professional Cookery
Level	Intermediate 2 and 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

As a starting point the lecturers involved with the delivery of both levels should be commended for their efforts. For 2009 it is evident that the students being put forward for the external assessment are slightly on the decrease, although from an employer prospective the culmination of feedback emphasises the importance of 'final exams.'

Both practical and written assignments demonstrate high levels of the skills required by the industry with relevant knowledge and understanding; and these were demonstrated from the majority of the candidates, which consequently culminated in very good marks. Good practice was evident within the majority of the centres and assessment conditions were fair and robust for all candidates.

As a key indicator for 2010, it is recommended for all centres to allocate time throughout the year for the dissemination of examination techniques. The integral approach will develop the students confidence and abilities to be prepared for the final theory external assessments. The option is available to contact SQA to plan a development session for the delivery team.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Hospitality Professional Cookery Intermediate 2

The responses for the calculation, culinary terms and health & safety questions were very good.

Hospitality Professional Cookery Higher

The candidates' responses relating to storage and quality points of commodities and menu planning considerations were answered thoroughly.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Hospitality Professional Cookery Intermediate 2

Cohorts of students found the food hygiene and cookery processes questions challenging in terms of misinterpreting the questions. It was also evident that the level of responses from a small cohort of students gained very low marks for the entire paper.

Hospitality Professional Cookery Higher

Very similar feedback to 2008 with regard to the written assessment. Many candidates found it challenging to be descriptive in their responses therefore omitting essential detail/information which is mandatory at this level. HACCP knowledge continues to be poor. For the practical assessment, some candidates found it challenging to be creative and in many instances just met the basic criteria whilst others produced food to a very high standard.

Other issues in general for both courses include misinterpretation of questions and inadequate information/detail, again emphasising the importance of ensuring the students are ready for the final external assessment.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates includes:

Hospitality Professional Cookery Intermediate 2

- To reflect on the learning throughout the academic year by setting recap questions e.g issuing worksheets throughout the academic year in conjunction with practical situations to contextualise the theory aspects of food hygiene, food costing and health and safety.
- To spend time practicing examination techniques
- To continue to support the candidates on a one to one basis as well as a group
- Emphasising the importance of core skills for improving their final marks, progression and/or employment
- Integrating examination techniques at an earlier stage within the programme and explaining the importance of these sessions to the candidate
- The option to contact SQA and request a development session
- Emphasise should be placed on the importance of networking with SQA, colleagues and other colleges
- Emphasise should also be placed on the importance of lecturers to continually update their skills and knowledge through academic/scholarship activity/industrial experience as being essential to the successful delivery of the programme.

Hospitality Professional Cookery Higher

- To reflect on the learning throughout the academic year by setting recap questions and issuing worksheets throughout the academic year in conjunction with practical situations to contextualise the theory aspects of food hygiene, food costing and health and safety
- To spend time practicing examination techniques
- To continue supporting the candidates, both individually and collectively
- To continue to use the SQA guidelines to culminate positive benefits to the candidates written assignments
- Emphasising the importance of core skills for improving their final marks, progression and/or employment
- Integrating examination techniques at an earlier stage within the programme and explaining the importance of these sessions to the candidate in terms of quantity and quality of written responses. These sessions will be essential to ensure the candidates are more prepared for the examinations.
- To give additional support re research methodology, as this would be beneficial in terms of developing the students perception of menu creativity
- HACCP was very poorly answered as many of the students did not have a clear understanding of the principles. It may be advisable to encourage centres to look into how this is delivered. It would be beneficial to the student to link the delivery of the practical kitchen activities to the food hygiene unit
- Emphasis should be placed on the importance of networking with SQA, colleagues and other colleges
- Emphasis should also be placed on the importance of lecturers to continually update their skills and knowledge through academic/scholarship activity/industrial experience as being essential to the successful delivery of the programme.

Hospitality Intermediate 2 Professional Cookery

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	141
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	65
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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	16.9%	16.9%	11	77
B	29.2%	46.2%	19	66
C	20.0%	66.2%	13	55
D	12.3%	78.5%	8	49
No award	21.5%	100.0%	14	-

Hospitality Higher Professional Cookery

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	54
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	71
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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	25.4%	25.4%	18	70
B	21.1%	46.5%	15	60
C	14.1%	60.6%	10	50
D	8.5%	69.0%	6	45
No award	31.0%	100.0%	22	-

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.