



External Assessment Report 2009

Subject	Hospitality – Professional Patisserie (PBNC)
Level	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

There was only one Centre who presented candidates for this Course this year. The Visiting Assessor reported that candidates were of mixed ability and that they had chosen to work with two of the three available briefs. The dishes selected by the candidates matched the criteria for the chosen brief.

Areas in which candidates performed well

The Visiting Assessor reported that the candidates had completed the Planning Stage of the project in a well structured manner and that the marks awarded by the Assessor accurately reflected that.

Areas which candidates found demanding

The candidates were of mixed ability and the Visiting Assessor reported that the marks awarded at for the Developing Stage accurately reflected the individual performance.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

No further advice was provided by the assessor.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2008	48
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Number of resulted entries in 2009	10
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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
A	30.0%	30.0%	3	
B	40.0%	70.0%	4	
C	10.0%	80.0%	1	
D	0.0%	80.0%	0	
No award	20.0%	100.0%	2	

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.