



## External Assessment Report 2010

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>Hospitality: Professional Cookery</b> |
| Level   | <b>Intermediate 2, Higher</b>            |

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

Overall the external assessment from the candidates was of a consistently high standard. The practical and written sections demonstrated excellent technological skills and abilities — this was also evident in the candidates' knowledge and understanding. Improved candidate responses also showed that centres are becoming more comfortable with the demands of the question paper at both Intermediate 2 and Higher levels.

Specifically relating to the practical performance at both levels, which continues to be a great strength of the Courses, many candidates performed at levels above the Course entry. Visiting Verifiers commented on the very high standard of lecturers' understanding of National Standards, and commended them for the professional way in which they hosted the events.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Hospitality Professional Cookery (Intermediate 2)

The candidates' responses to health and safety, food costing, and the culinary terms were answered thoroughly.

### Hospitality Professional Cookery (Higher)

The candidates' responses to menu planning, food costing, and the storage and quality of commodities were answered thoroughly. There was a major improvement in hazard analysis and critical controls points (HACCP) responses.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

### Hospitality Professional Cookery (Intermediate 2)

Cohorts of candidates misinterpreted questions and others found the structuring of their responses demanding, to an extent whereby 'text' language was evident. In some cases the responses to the food storage temperatures were poorly answered. The kitchen equipment question was also poorly answered and a small percentage of candidates did not attempt to respond.

### Hospitality Professional Cookery (Higher)

Some candidates did not include the expected level of description in their responses and omitted important details relating to the preparation and cooking of the dishes on their menus. Candidates misinterpreted questions again this year and lost marks unnecessarily as a result.

## **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

For Intermediate 2 and Higher, it is essential to continue to invest time with the candidates throughout the academic year to develop and practise examination techniques. This may be carried out by issuing worksheets in conjunction with practical activities to contextualise the knowledge relating to health and safety, food calculations, food hygiene (with specific attention to temperature control), and HACCP.

Specifically for Higher, continue to involve the candidates with research methodology, as this will assist the learning process in terms of menu creativity. Continue to impress on candidates the importance of applying core/soft skills to gain additional marks in the exam, and highlight these skills in terms of their progression within the hospitality industry.

It is also recommended that centres continue to support the candidates individually and collectively. Lecturers should network with colleagues and other colleges to continually update their skills and knowledge (via academic/scholarship activity/industrial placements) to give all candidates the best possible learning experience.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

### Intermediate 2

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2009 | 65 |
| Number of resulted entries in 2010 | 77 |

## 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                             | 28.6% | 28.6%  | 22                   | 77          |
| B                             | 32.5% | 61.0%  | 25                   | 66          |
| C                             | 23.4% | 84.4%  | 18                   | 55          |
| D                             | 2.6%  | 87.0%  | 2                    | 49          |
| No award                      | 13.0% | 100.0% | 10                   | —           |

## Statistical information: update on Courses

### Higher

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2009 | 71 |
| Number of resulted entries in 2010 | 72 |

## 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                             | 16.7% | 16.7%  | 12                   | 70          |
| B                             | 36.1% | 52.8%  | 26                   | 60          |
| C                             | 27.8% | 80.6%  | 20                   | 50          |
| D                             | 2.8%  | 83.3%  | 2                    | 45          |
| No award                      | 16.7% | 100.0% | 12                   | —           |

### 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, therefore, SQA 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 Head of Service 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.