



## External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Graphic Communication
Level(s)	Higher

The statistics used in this report are prior to the outcome of any Post Results Services requests

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

Candidate performance in Section A remained consistent compared with previous years. Questions were generally well attempted by most candidates, who were well prepared by centres. Candidates appeared to find Section B marginally more challenging than last year.

As expressed in previous EA reports, a number of centres continue to present candidates at an inappropriate level, with these candidates not displaying the knowledge or skills required at Higher level.

Grade Boundaries at A and B were returned to the nominal grades, with C being lowered slightly.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Section A

Question 1: DTP terminology — well answered by most candidates. Candidates appeared well prepared for this type of question.

Question 2: CAD — well answered by the majority candidates

Question 4: Scale and layout — well answered.

Question 6(a)–(c): British Standards — candidates displayed a breadth of knowledge for British Standard conventions.

### Section B

Question 7(a): Extension — although this type of question has not appeared in recent years, candidates appeared confident when answering, although dimensioning to British Standards remains problematic.

Question 7(b): Measured Perspective — well attempted by the majority of candidates.

Question 11: Oblique — this question was well drawn by the majority of candidates who attempted it, although many candidates found the positioning of the handle and arcs challenging. Some candidates plotted the arcs rather than use compasses.

Question 12: although fewer candidates attempted this elective, those who did generally achieved good marks.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

### Section A

Question 1(a)(iv) — few candidates answered 'point' correctly.

Question 1(b) — some candidates appeared to misinterpret the question and described each planning stage rather than the purpose of each.

Question 2(b) — some candidates appeared to not understand that they had to give the *benefit* of using a library rather than giving a description of what a library is.

Question 3(b) — a lack of knowledge of tolerances was evident, although most knew the term.

Question 5 — some candidates appeared to misinterpret the question and described each graphic rather than the purpose of each graphic.

Question 6(b)(ii) — some candidates appeared to lack knowledge of British Standard dimensioning and thread detail.

### Section B

Question 7(b): Measured perspective — centres are again reminded that outlines should be firmed up and not left as construction lines. This continues to be the prime reason for candidates not accessing the full range of marks available.

Question 8: Auxiliary — as in previous years, a basic knowledge of how to construct an auxiliary was lacking. A number of candidates did not attempt, or appeared to struggle with this question.

Question 9: Engineering assembly — the correct application of the British Standards hatching proved problematic to a number of candidates. Many hatched through solid lines, did not hatch at 45°, and hatched areas clearly that had not been sectioned. There appears to be a lack of skill evident in using compasses. Accuracy in measuring and transposing sizes from the plan to the end elevation raised concerns from the marking team. Few candidates completed the web detail in the sectional end elevation.

Question 10: Interpenetration/ Development — the plan was well attempted by most candidates, although a number failed to establish the correct length for the development. Unusually, some candidates drew the plan projected from the elevation in first angle projection.

Question 11: Oblique — the quality of freehand sketching of curves failed to meet the standard required to gain marks. Centres are reminded that curves should be drawn as a single continuous line. Otherwise this question was well attempted by candidates.

Question 12: Isometric — few issues arose in the marking of this question.

# Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

## General

As in previous years the standard of draughtsmanship continues to be poor in some centres. The majority of candidates appeared to be well prepared by centres, particularly for the pictorial questions.

## Section A

Centres are reminded that they should refer to the Arrangements Document to ensure that candidates are prepared with the necessary breadth of knowledge to access the full range of marks in Section A.

Markers have raised concerns regarding the legibility of some of the candidates' written responses in Section A.

## Section B

Centres should ensure that all candidates have the required instruments, compasses, pencils etc, in good working order and appropriate to the task in hand. The correct rating of pencil, neither too soft nor too hard, can affect the quality of the candidate's drawing.

Centres are advised that:

- ◆ A clear difference between construction and completed outlines needs to be evident.
- ◆ Candidates must draw in an outline to be awarded the marks.
- ◆ Lines should not extend beyond their completion point; marks are not awarded if lines continue past their termination.
- ◆ The construction of centres should be clearly shown in tangency questions. Arcs must be drawn with compasses and not drawn freehand.
- ◆ Centre lines and hidden lines should be drawn clearly and to British Standard.
- ◆ Centres are advised to review their approach to teaching drawing to British Standard, in particular hatching convention and thread detail.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	4062
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	4150
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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 200				
A	25.1%	25.1%	1041	140
B	29.1%	54.2%	1209	119
C	25.0%	79.2%	1038	99
D	8.9%	88.1%	368	89
No award	11.9%	-	494	-

## 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.