



External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Graphic Communication
Level(s)	Intermediate 2

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

Centres are very experienced in the delivery of Intermediate 2 Graphic Communication, and this is reflected in the strong performance produced by the candidates this year. Candidates are well prepared for the knowledge aspects of the course and there is evidence that centres are acting on advice given in previous year's reports.

A new approach was taken to marking the Planometric question by marking items individually followed by additional marks for the correct position within the overall drawing.

Questions were appropriately accessible for the majority of candidates and as a result a significant number of candidates completed all of the questions.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Question 1: This was intended to be a 'settle-in' question and was answered well by the majority of candidates. A very small number of candidates are still responding with 'purple' instead of 'violet'.

Question 3: Most candidates displayed knowledge of input, storage and output devices correctly. A very small number listed devices not in the 'office floor plan'. The majority of candidates identified the building symbols correctly.

Question 4: Generally, candidates responded well to this question. There were some minor misunderstandings with the reasoning for using sectional views and the term 'exploded'.

Question 5: This question received a very positive response from candidates who had a clear understanding of orthographic drawing.

Question 7(a): This part of the question received a positive response from candidates who had a clear understanding of orthographic drawing.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Question 2: Some candidates continue to respond with terms that are not in the arrangements document, eg 'flip' instead of 'mirror'. A number of candidates did not correctly identify 'gradient fill'. Some candidates seemed reluctant to give an extended answer to the advantages of CAG, resulting in lower marks being awarded.

Question 6: The Planometric question received a mixed response from candidates. The majority of candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the correct technique required to complete the drawing. However, not as many candidates gained full marks for this question due to a lack of accuracy in positioning the components.

Question 7(b) & (c): Some candidates responded poorly in the production of the surface development and the true shape indicated in the drawing.

Question 8: This is, traditionally, a challenging topic for many candidates and received an average response. Some candidates demonstrated a lack of knowledge of how to apply section lines to an assembly drawing in this question. The lack of accuracy in the candidates' solutions prevented more of them gaining a higher mark.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

There is evidence that centres have taken on board much of the advice given in previous years. However, it would be helpful to note the following:

- ◆ Centres should make full use of the Arrangements Document, which clearly outlines the Course content. This document is referred to when constructing question papers.
- ◆ A BSI symbol information sheet is available from SQA's website, and centres are encouraged to make this available to candidates.
- ◆ Candidates should be made aware of the terminology used by SQA. In particular, centres should explain to candidates how to handle different types of questions to achieve maximum marks. Past question papers and marking instructions are available on SQA's website.
- ◆ Candidates must provide only one response to any question. Where they have made more than one attempt at an answer, any work which they wish a Marker to ignore must be scored through.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Centre lines and hidden lines should be drawn clearly and to British Standard.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	3129
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	1416
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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	35.9%	35.9%	509	72
B	22.0%	58.0%	312	62
C	19.4%	77.3%	274	52
D	8.1%	85.4%	114	47
No award	14.6%	-	207	-

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.