



External Assessment Report 2012

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

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

The standard of draughtsmanship demonstrated continues to require improvement. In particular, in many centres there continues to be no differentiation between outlines and construction lines in many candidates' work. Candidates are still poorly prepared in basic drawing-board techniques such as the use of projection lines and bounce lines. There were a significant number of candidates who did not complete all the questions. There is evidence that a number of candidates are being presented at an inappropriate level, and centres are recommended to consider this carefully. Candidates continue to be well prepared for most of the knowledge aspects of the Course, and there is some evidence that centres are continuing to act on advice given in previous years' external assessment reports. However, the majority of candidates continue to have difficulty in producing clear, accurate solutions to the drawing questions.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Question 1: Most candidates knew at least three out of the four projections. However, candidates should take more care with the terminology used to describe the projection.

Question 2: Most candidates identified the single command used. A smaller number of candidates than previous years answered the question with more than a single command.

Question 4: Most candidates clearly identified the DTP terms.

Question 6: Most candidates performed at a high level. A small number of candidates did not follow the instructions that all lines at 45° should be half size.

Question 7: Most candidates produced a quality solution to this question. Clear, firm outlines would have allowed some candidates to have been awarded more marks.

Question 9: Most candidates produced a quality assembly of the three parts.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Question 3: Most candidates did not take the time to produce neat and accurate dimensions according to British Standards. Candidates are advised to take the time to ensure all elements of a dimension line are to British Standards.

Question 5: A large number of candidates did not relate their answer to the uniform. Responses suggest that candidates did not fully understand the terms 'tertiary' and 'harmonising'.

Question 8: Many candidates had difficulty with the projection of the sticker onto the end elevation, and the development of the sticker.

Question 9: Most candidates continue to have difficulty hatching the sectional view to British Standards.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

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

- ◆ Centres are reminded that they should also encourage candidates to use the appropriate terminology when answering the knowledge and interpretation questions.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that there is a BSI symbol information sheet which is available from the Graphic Communication page of SQA's website, and are encouraged to make this available for candidates.
- ◆ Responses to BS conventions still require improvement. BS conventions will continue to be examined though, so centres are advised to prepare candidates for this topic.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that candidates should be encouraged to study and use British Standards for the dimensioning of drawings.
- ◆ Centres are encouraged to remind candidates to read each question very carefully and ensure that their response accurately answers the actual question asked.
- ◆ Centres are reminded that half marks no longer feature in the assessment of this Course (and this should be reflected in prelims submitted for assessment appeals purposes). As advised in past Subject Update Letters: prelim papers produced with half marks will not be valid for use in assessment appeals.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 2

Number of resulted entries in 2011	2,512
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Number of resulted entries in 2012	2,926
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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	40.6%	40.6%	1,189	72
B	24.3%	65.0%	712	61
C	18.0%	83.0%	528	50
D	6.9%	89.9%	201	44
No award	10.1%	100.0%	296	-

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.