



External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	Creative Cake Production
Level	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

This has been a positive year. The number of presenting centres was 51, with a total of 671 candidates achieving Creative Cake Production at Intermediate 2.

Feedback suggested that the coursework had been delivered to a high standard. Project proformas were neatly presented, completed to a very good standard and complied with the award criteria for assessment. Practical assignment projects evidenced a wide range of innovative designs and techniques. Provision was made available for additional support when required.

Skill development was clearly displayed through the final presentation of the cakes. Standards were high. Marks allocated to the practical element of the coursework were appropriate.

Areas in which candidates performed well

The practical assignment proforma evidenced: **Planning, Development and Evaluation.**

Planning: In general, projects were well researched and plans matched the chosen design brief. The use of ICT facilities and additional support materials proved helpful, learners gleaned specific information from internet sites and presented neatly typed practical assignment documents which eased marking and enhanced presentation.

Development: Most candidates knew how to bake and store their chosen cake and this part of the assignment attracted high marks in most instances. Applying marzipan and coating the finished cakes required additional skill which had been well taught and candidates had few difficulties with this part. Techniques executed and applied to the finishing of the cakes were very creative and in many cases exceeded the requirements of the level of study. Provision was made where learners required support and/or additional practice time. Learners were encouraged to practise techniques representing the level of the award which helped attract higher marks in the practical assignment.

Evaluation; Evaluations were generally of a good standard with photographic evidence of candidates' cakes at the three stages of evaluation being made available as stated in award criteria.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Design drawings: The task of drawing designs to match the chosen brief seemed a laborious task for some learners, resulting in poor quality with little attention to detail. This task is an essential part of the planning and should be completed before the practical assignment; changes should be reflected in the evaluation part of the proforma.

Evaluation: It should be noted that photographic evidence is part of the assessment marking criteria and photos should be available for the process stages required. Centres are advised to have a back-up copy of the cake photos where possible. Candidates should be encouraged to use evaluative statements. Examples of this activity can be found in the practical assignment exemplar and in the guidance-on-marking document.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

General

Centre staff members deliver and present this Course to a high standard and they continue to inspire learners with creative ideas.

Marks achieved in the practical assignment reflected the extent of commitment shown by the learners. Course delivery staff should be commended on providing additional opportunities, support and encouragement during the coursework.

Centre staff members commented on the popularity of the Creative Cake Production Course and most centres visited had large waiting lists of candidates wishing to embark on this exciting and challenging learning experience.

Visiting Assessors commented on the warm welcome they received from all centres and we look forward to supporting centres during the next session.

For future consideration:

Health and safety in cake finishing: Wires, cocktail sticks, fabric ribbon and other inedible products should not be inserted directly into cakes. Examples of good practice would be to use commercial aids such as a flower pick for wires, or an edible model/box if placing inedible object/s on or into the cake coating. Fabric ribbon should not be used directly on finished cakes; colour dyes and small fibres in their make-up are not often noticed and may contaminate the cake coating. Visiting Assessors are more than willing to provide advice, guidance and suggestions to centre staff where the use of commercially acceptable aids/materials used to enhance finished cakes is unclear.

Design drawing: Marks were not accessed in the design drawings mainly due to rough sketches with little detailed information, eg size of cake board, colours, etc. Learners should be encouraged to detail the design drawing in accordance with the given guidelines. The use of colour in the drawing could be applied to help the learners visualise the end result.

Evaluation: Changes to the finished cake should be explained in the evaluation section of the proforma. Photographic evidence is part of the final evaluation and assessment and should be made available for visiting assessment.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 2

Number of resulted entries in 2010	650
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Number of resulted entries in 2011	675
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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	79.0%	79.0%	533	140
B	14.4%	93.3%	97	120
C	5.6%	99.0%	38	100
D	0.4%	99.4%	3	90
No award	0.6%	100.0%	4	-

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.