

Principal Assessor Report 2002

Assessment Panel:

Environment

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

**Managing Environmental Resources
Intermediate 2**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2001	
Pre appeal	40
Post appeal	40

Number of entries in 2002	
Pre appeal	48
Post appeal	48

General comments re entry numbers

Healthy increase (20% increase)
Centres: 5 schools, 2 colleges

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

A	70
B	60
C	50

General commentary on grade boundaries

Notional percentage cut-offs for each grade

Question papers and their associated marking schemes are designed to be of the required standard and to meet the assessment specification for the subject/level concerned.

For National courses the examination paper(s) are set in order that a score of approximately 50% of the total marks for all components merits a grade C (based on the grade descriptions for that grade), and similarly a score of 70 % for a grade A. The lowest mark for a grade B is set by the computer software as half way between the C and A grade boundaries.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

The upper A boundary was 83 (85). At the third presentation of this new subject it was felt that this lower boundary truly reflected the performance of candidates at the higher level.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Candidates performed well on the whole. There seemed to be a wide range of ability. No part of the paper was inaccessible to all candidates.

Q1: 7 marks: Scores ranged from 7 – 3.

Candidates would seem to have found this a more difficult question than the first one in previous years.

Q2: 10 marks: Scores 10 – 2

Discriminating question

Q3: 14 marks: Scores 5 – 13 (part b)

With scientific analysis and extended writing was where candidates scored less.

Q4: 5 marks: Scores 1 – 5

Discriminating question

Q5: 5 marks: Scores 1 – 5

Pie charts well answered

Q6: 8 marks: Scores 0 – 6

Photosynthesis was misunderstood by some candidates.

Q7: 9 marks: Scores 3 – 9

Graph interpreted well, table completed well, extended writing part (c) found most testing for poorer candidates.

Q8: 11 marks: Scores 1 – 10

Discriminating question

Q9: 21 marks: Scores 5 – 18

Map reading skills were of a high standard. Graph completed well.

Q10: Essay: All options answered well. A range of marks for each option also. No bias.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Section 2 (essays) produced some high quality responses where candidates had actively engaged in recycling projects, local environmental studies, field studies in e.g. Cairngorms, weather stations etc.

Problem solving skills: graph interpretation, average calculation, pie chart and bar graph completion, table completion, interpretation of data presented in a table were all performed well.

Map extract question was well attempted by most candidates, with map reading answers of a high standard.

Candidates were knowledgeable about current pollution and other environmental problems.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Q3b(iii):	Candidates had difficulty gaining 2 marks.
Q3b(iv):	Description not given in full.
Q2b(ii):	Question too open-ended, responses lacked detail.
Q6:	Discriminatory questions. Weaker candidates found this very difficult.
Q7(c):	Weaker candidates scored less in extended writing.
Q8(b):	Only one candidate correctly answered the ratio.
Q9(d):	Geology part was poorly answered.
Q9(f i) & (g ii):	Only correctly answered by a few of the more able candidates.
Q10: Essay:	The four candidates who gained no award scored 0, 0, 2 and 3 in this question. Not all candidates who gained an A pass (over 70) scored 7 or over in this question.

Areas of common misunderstanding

The meaning of the word “niche” Ratio calculations Percentage increase calculations

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Centres have to be congratulated for the quality of work that was evident in the examination scripts. Candidates scored well and interest and enthusiasm came over in their responses .