



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Modern Studies
Level(s)	Standard Grade

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 Setting team were very pleased with the quality of response from candidates across the three papers. The number of papers where candidates had attempted very few of the questions was very low, especially at General level. This was a testament to the quality of both teaching and learning and the accessibility of the papers.

Very few candidates attempted both options in Syllabus Area 3, whilst those who did tended to do so in the Foundation paper. The number of centres teaching China remained small. The vast majority of candidates had been entered at the correct levels.

Foundation/General Level

The overall response to the Foundation paper was very pleasing. Very few candidates failed to attempt the 'written' answer questions. Cut-off scores for both elements were in line with those from previous years. The percentage of Grade 7's was again reduced.

Candidates' familiarity with question styles at General level continued to have a positive effect on their performance. This was reflected in the length and quality of responses to the paper. Cut-offs for both elements were again in line with previous years.

General/Credit Level

The General paper presented few problems to genuine G/C candidates, which suggested that the level of the exam was correctly pitched. The element of KU was well handled by candidates who used the prompts to inform their answers. The element of ES was also well handled, with many candidates achieving full or near full marks. A few candidates struggled to finish the General paper as their answers were too lengthy and they had already achieved full credit long before they had completed their answer.

Responses, overall, to KU questions in the Credit paper were a little disappointing as the quality of exemplification was not as helpful as in previous years.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Foundation level

The overall response of candidates to the Foundation paper was very good. KU questions were well done by the vast majority of candidates. The vast majority of ES questions were also well handled by candidates. Question formats in both elements appear to be working well.

General level

Question 1b) Well done. The majority of candidates provided the appropriate linkage between parts of the view and the appropriate evidence

Question 2b) Well answered.

Question 2c)	Well answered. Good use made of the prompts
Question 3A/Ba)	Well answered with push/pull factors to the fore in US answers.
Question 4b)	A question format that works really well.

Credit level

Question 2b)	Well done with a spread of answers across the four options.
Question 3 A/Bb)	A robust format for a question. Candidates had to work hard for the marks but they coped really well with the intricacies of the question.

Just as in the previous two years, Hypotheses and aims were of a better quality than was the case in the past.

There were other questions where parts of the question elicited very good responses but a number of candidates could not sustain the quality through the rest of the question. This was particularly the case in questions Question 1a), Question 2a) and Question 4a).

Areas which candidates found demanding

Foundation level

Question 4a)	A number of candidates found some difficulty with this question. The fact that the answer (member), was in the stem of the question may have put a number of candidates off choosing it even though it was the appropriate answer.
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General level

Question 2c)	Not done as well as was expected. A number of candidates merely lifted information from the graphic but failed to develop the point. Candidate knowledge appeared to be quite weak.
Question 4d)	A number of candidates found difficulty with the first sentence in the view. This then coloured the rest of their answer.

Credit level

Questions 1a)&b)	These were a very straightforward, mainstream introduction to the Credit paper. There was, however, a real lack of actual examples, especially in part b). Knowledge of what happens in the House of Commons was very sketchy.
Question 1c)	This style of question still causes problems for the majority of candidates. A number of candidates did achieve full credit but most did not.
Question 3Aa)	This question could not have been any more accessible, yet the level of

exemplification was very poor.

Question 4(e) Surprisingly, this question was very poorly done. The majority of candidates did not take into account the topic of the second investigation. Had they done so, they would have found that there was only one correct answer to the question.

Question 4(f) Again surprisingly, this question was very poorly done. Instead of focusing on the survey given to them in the question, too many candidates tended to give generalised answers about surveys.

General advice

The following general points are worth noting:

- ◆ Centres must re-emphasise to candidates to read each question carefully so that they are aware of what they are meant to do in answering a particular question style.
- ◆ The use of high-quality exemplification should again be prioritised by centres. Markers remarked on the lack of quality in the exemplification expected from candidates sitting the Credit paper.
- ◆ Candidates should be made aware that to receive full credit in certain Enquiry Skills/Evaluating style questions, an explicit linking of evidence to a specific point of view must be included.
- ◆ It is worth making the point that centres should carefully study the Marking Instructions, which are posted on the SQA website. These detail the ways in which marks are awarded for candidates' answers. This is an important tool in helping candidates frame answers. In many ways, it can be as important as the knowledge itself or the evidence required to answer a question. It is the case that with a greater emphasis on technique, answers, marks and grades can be improved.

Statistical information: update on Courses

STANDARD GRADE

Number of resulted entries in 2012	13216
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	13179
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Statistical Information: Performance of candidates**Distribution of overall awards**

Grade 1	26.6%
Grade 2	20.5%
Grade 3	21.7%
Grade 4	15.8%
Grade 5	12.9%
Grade 6	1.8%
Grade 7	0.7%
No award	0.0%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
KU	32	24	17	28	19	15	20	13	9
ES	40	26	20	36	23	17	28	17	11