

Principal Assessor Report 2004

Assessment Panel:

Latin and Classical Greek

Qualification area

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

Classical Greek – Intermediate 2, Higher

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2003	Intermediate 2 - 17
	Higher - 5

Number of entries in 2004	Intermediate 2 - 9
	Higher - 13

General comments re entry numbers

Overall numbers remain similar; difference in numbers at different levels reflects needs of centres.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards

With *a priori* boundaries, candidates were awarded grade A. The grade reflects excellence in candidates' work.

Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

The distribution was 100% A grades – an excellent cohort of candidates.

Grade boundaries for each subject area included in the report

Intermediate 2

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	100.0	100.0	9	42
B	-	-	-	36
C	-	-	-	30
D	-	-	-	27
No award	-	-	-	0

Higher

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	100.0	100.0	13	105
B	-	-	-	90
C	-	-	-	75
D	-	-	-	67
No award	-	-	-	0

General commentary on passmarks and grade boundaries

- While SQA aims to set examinations and create mark schemes which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum 50% of the available marks (notional passmark) and a very well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70%, it is almost impossible to get the standard absolutely on target every year, in every subject and level
- Each year we therefore hold a passmark meeting for each subject at each level where we bring together all the information available (statistical and judgmental). 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 senior management team at SQA
- We adjust the passmark downwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly more demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- We adjust the passmark upwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly less demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- Where the standard appears to be very similar to previous years, we maintain similar grade boundaries
- 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 are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. And just because SQA has altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry 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
- Our main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain standards across the years, even as syllabuses evolve and change

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

The *a priori* boundaries were used for all levels.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

At both levels there were some excellent answers. Candidates had clearly engaged with the Interpretation texts and there were some examples of very good quality translation work.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

At Intermediate 2, there was a very high standard of translation work, with some candidates producing near perfect versions. In Interpretation, some responses were thoughtful and analytical, showing excellent knowledge of the material.

At Higher, there were several very high quality translations, though some candidates experienced one or two difficulties with phrases. In Interpretation, there was a very high standard overall, with some very good examples of short responses and essay writing.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

There were no significant areas of difficulty, though some candidates, at Intermediate 2 level, tended to list details in the extended response rather than analyse and comment. There was less obvious difficulty in the use of the word-list, and the work done by centres in improving candidates' performance in this area is commended.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

- Encourage candidates to comment, analyse, and evaluate rather than simply list details.
- Encourage work on word-list use, eg recognising augmented forms of verbs beginning with a vowel.
- Encourage candidates to strive to produce a more accurate rendering of translation work, rather than attempting a paraphrase: a paraphrase is less likely to be awarded full marks for the block.
- Encourage candidates to ensure that there is no overlap in answers – repetition will not be rewarded, except with additional point(s) of interpretation.
- Encourage candidates to write essays which have some attempt at structure with opening/middle development/conclusion with analysis and comment at each point.