

## Principal Assessor Report 2003

**Assessment Panel:**

**Physical Education**

**Qualification area**

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

**Intermediate 2 & Intermediate 1**

## Statistical information: update

	Int 2	Int 1
Number of entries in 2002	1938	493
Pre appeal	1711	400

Number of entries in 2003		
Pre appeal	1690	369

## General comments re entry numbers

Candidate uptake is slightly down from last years 40% increase. No indication therefore that centres are opting for NQs' to replace Standard Grade. Higher and standard Grade entries are on the increase this year. Entries may be about the same as last year once final numbers are known. This could also reflect that centres are more able to select appropriate courses and levels for their candidates. It may also suggest however, that candidates who embark on a course withdraw prior to completion as projected numbers in February were 500 candidaes more than 2002.

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

### INTERMEDIATE 2

Grade	Band	Minimum Mark
A	1	153
A	2	135
B	3	126
B	4	117
C	5	108
C	6	99
Compensatory	7	90
No Award	8	81
No Award	9	0

### INTERMEDIATE 1

Grade	Band	Minimum Mark
A	1	162
A	2	136
B	3	128
B	4	119
C	5	111
C	6	103
Compensatory	7	95
No Award	8	86
No Award	9	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 grade boundaries have not changed over the last 4 years. Teachers statistically have a better understanding of what is a pass overall for a course award. Estimates for A passes are still a lot lower than what is achieved by candidates. Access to these Grade boundaries should hopefully solve this problem in the future. The weighting of performance creates an imbalance with the course. Candidates can achieve a modest mark for Analysis and Investigation and still achieve a pass. This is more pronounced at Intermediate 1 where performance is 66.6% of the overall mark.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

#### INTERMEDIATE 2

Mean marks by component

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Analysis (60)	26.6	25.7
Performance(90)	76.2	76.2
Investigation (30)	16.2	17.6

Again showing a slight decline in mean score for analysis. Presentation of Investigation much improved  
Standard of written English – no change. All this suggests that centres are putting candidates in at the correct levels.

#### INTERMEDIATE 1

Mean marks by component

	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Analysis(30)	15.0	16.3
Performance (120)	115.7	116.2
Investigation (30)	17.7	20.2

Slight increase in all areas of the course. Noticeable improvement in Investigation which had slumped in previous year.

Markers were asked to refer any candidates who had scored less than 5 marks in Investigation and less than 10 in Analysis. It was disappointing to note that there were far more referrals than in previous years with some centres being referred in both areas. This has implications for the moderation of unit assessment and was passed on to relevant SQA staff.

There were still a number of candidates attempting the Performance Appreciation area who had obviously not been taught this as part of their course. Markers also felt that candidates answered the Performance Appreciation area because it was the first part of the question paper. If they had to look for the question then they would be doing this because they had some relevant knowledge of this area. There were still centres sending in Logbooks at Intermediate 2 where it clearly states a Report is required.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

At both levels candidates did particularly well in Structures/Strategies and Composition, Skills and Technique areas of the Analysis paper.

In Investigation Reports and Logbooks planning and training programmes showed a vast improvement. This showed better use of the Cycle of Analysis and clearer more relevant data.

Many Investigations followed a school format which assisted the candidates at these levels.

### Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Investigation Reports at Int 2 and Logbooks at Int 1 candidates had real problems with the following.

- Interpreting data collected.
- Looking at whole performance rather than a skill in isolation.
- Reviewing performance after training and again interpreting data gathered to link to training programme
- Many students seemed to go through the process without understanding how they had got there and why they had done it.

At Int 1 Logbook format did not help this!

At Int 2 Report fell flat during Outcome 2 and Outcome 3

Many reports / logbooks followed a cycle of analysis format – Preparation of the Body or Skills & Technique which at times looked contrived.

## ANALYSIS

Candidates at Int 2 still inclined to write in volume looking for marks.

Preparation of the Body at both levels was weaker than usual – data gathered was on the whole poor.

Candidates were confused over Principles of training and Methods of training. Similarly in Skills and Technique they confused Principles with Methods of effective practice.

In Structures/Strategies & Composition there was still confusion over YOUR performance ( person or team? ) An important note taken again for setters.

Performance Appreciation section – a lot of poor responses at both level in this section from candidates who have not covered this area in their coursework. At Intermediate 1 some have accidentally completed this because it was the first question in the paper.

When asked for a description of a Model performer candidates were inclined to give checklists.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

Centres should not send in a Logbook at Int 2. Report only. 4 centres sent in logbooks this year. This is not acceptable.

Int 1 Logbooks sent in must be a pass internally. They must be completed because they reflect what has been achieved for a unit pass and they should be signed by a member of staff. Many are sent in to be marked for a course award and have outcomes unsigned and many of the sections of the logbook incomplete.

More time required for data collection and interpretation in Investigation unit.

In some cases candidates follow a school formula for Investigation. This is acceptable if candidates can interpret hand-outs and describe and explain information effectively.

Pupils should be told not to answer Performance Appreciation if they have not covered the work in the course.

Candidates should be encouraged to take time to read, and try to understand questions in exam before answering them.