SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Principal Assessor Report 2004

Assessment Panel:	**Hospitality**

Qualification area

Subject(s) and Level(s) Included in this report	**Hospitality Practical Cookery — Intermediate 2** **Hospitality Professional Cookery — Intermediate 2** **Hospitality Professional Cookery — Higher**

Statistical information: Update

Number of entries in 2003	Practical Cookery	2,676
	Professional Cookery	280
	Higher Cookery	83

Number of entries in 2004	Practical Cookery	2,836
	Professional Cookery	219
	Higher Cookery	66

General comments re entry numbers

There was an increase in the numbers for the practical cookery course this year, but the numbers dropped slightly in both the professional and higher exams. The increase in the practical cookery continues year on year and this is down to more candidates at school's preferring this type of exam instead of the traditional Home Economics courses that are on offer.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards

Practical Cookery Intermediate 2

Grade	%
A	39.2
B	33.8
C	16.6
D	3.3
No award	7.1

Professional Cookery Intermediate 2

Grade	%
A	16.0
B	11.0
C	7.3
D	3.6
No award	62.1

Professional Cookery Higher

Grade	%
A	19.7
B	7.6
C	4.5
D	3.0
No award	65.2

Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

Professional Cookery Intermediate 2 and Higher — some centres did not submit Unit results on time. This has resulted in a significant decrease in candidates achieving an overall course award.

Grade boundaries for each subject area included in the report

Practical Cookery Int 2	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	39.2	39.2	1,111	83
B	33.8	73	958	71
C	16.6	89.6	470	59
D	3.3	92.9	94	
No award	7.1	100.0	203	

Professional Cookery Int 2	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	16.0	16.0	35	77
B	11.0	27.0	24	66
C	7.3	34.3	16	55
D	3.6	37.9	8	
No award	62.1	100.0	136	

Professional Cookery Higher	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	19.7	19.7	13	70
B	7.6	27.3	5	60
C	4.5	31.8	3	50
D	3.0	34.8	2	
No award	65.2	100.0	43	

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 arrangements evolve and change.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

Practical Cookery — Intermediate 2

Grade boundaries were changed for Intermediate 2 Practical Cookery. This took direct account of the reduction in demand of the course with the removal of the theory examinations. Candidates, especially the more able, now have the opportunity to achieve higher marks than before and the boundary grades were adjusted accordingly: to maintain a year-on-year standard.

The boundaries remain the same for both Professional Cookery Intermediate 2 and Higher exams.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Practical Cookery Intermediate 2 — the candidates performed very well this year, the first with the course assessment being wholly practically based. Moderators commented on how well the candidates are being prepared and this is reflected by the marks that have been achieved.

Professional Cookery Intermediate 2 — the performance in the external assessment was similar to that of last year. The standard was the same as in previous years and the feeling is that Centres are becoming very competent at preparing their candidates.

Professional Cookery Higher — the practical performance of the candidates continues to impress but there is a continual problem when it comes to presenting their written work. Year on year the Markers have commented on the poor grammar and it is disconcerting to find that there has been no improvement.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Practical Cookery Intermediate 2 — there is now no external assessment for this qualification.

Professional Cookery Intermediate 2 — the questions on hygiene, chopping boards, basting, culinary terms and calculations were all answered well.

Professional Cookery Higher — the following questions were well answered — planning considerations, allocating the tasks for each corner, description of the dishes and storage.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Professional Cookery Intermediate 2 — the questions on meuniere, boiling and stewing were answered poorly.

Professional Cookery Higher — the following questions were answered poorly — costing, quality points, HACCP and food poisoning.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Practical Cookery — Intermediate 2

The candidates are continuing to be well prepared for this course assessment and the feedback is to maintain the good work that is being carried out.

The pass mark was adjusted upwards this year as the course assessment was less demanding than last year and it is to be noted that we will be striving to bring it back down to the '*a priori*' in the 2005 exam.

For those centres that do not have industrial links with either their local college or the industry itself, this should be a priority in order for continued development of both the practical abilities of the teaching staff and opportunities for the candidates.

Professional Cookery — Intermediate 2

Centres are now very familiar with this course and the candidates that are being presented are at the correct level. This is encouraging and hopefully there will be an increase in those entering the Higher course in future.

Professional Cookery — Higher

The message here is the same as last year – although there are good marks being achieved in the practical external assessment, the written work that is being presented is not up to the standard that is expected for this level of candidate. It is the Centres responsibility to prepare their candidates correctly and this is not being carried out.