

Principal Assessor Report 2003

Assessment Panel:

Hospitality

Qualification area:

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

Higher: Food and Drink

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2002	3
Pre appeal	

Number of entries in 2003	8
Pre appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

Two centres entered candidates for this course. Although the numbers have increased from last year it is still disappointing more centres are not entering candidates.

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

Grade	Mark
Lower A	105
B	90
C	75

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 are the same as last year, and in-line with standardised 'a priori' boundaries.

C:	75 marks out of 150 marks	—	50% of available marks
B:	90 marks out of 150 marks	—	60% of available marks
A:	105 marks out of 150 marks	—	70% of available marks

Upper A (Band): 127 marks out of 150 marks

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

None of the questions on the written paper were answered particularly well and the candidates did not show any in depth knowledge of food service or beverages.

Grammar and spelling were in most cases very poor.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Staff manual — in all questions candidates had a reasonable knowledge but failed to go into any depth. Some of the manuals were well presented with evidence of time and effort having been put into them.

Written paper –

Question 1 – (a) and (b) were answered well

Question 3 – part (a) was answered fairly well by most candidates

Question 4 – most candidates managed to achieve marks in this question

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Written paper –

Question 1 – (c) and (d) parts — candidates did not give enough information to warrant 3 marks and 2 marks respectively

Question 2 – All students found this question difficult and some did not even attempt it.

Question 3 – part (b) was answered very briefly even although it was worth 6 marks

Question 5 – part (a) was answered briefly and candidates failed to get many marks for this question

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Staff manual:

The presentation of manuals was, on the whole, good with some candidates having spent a great deal of time and effort on them. However some of the questions were not answered at a higher level. Candidates did not read questions properly and gave inappropriate answers.

Written paper:

Candidates need to show a level of answer that is appropriate to a higher level paper. They did not seem to be guided by the marks allocated and often gave brief answers when extended answers were expected.

The alcoholic beverage question was poorly answered showing little knowledge of the subject. Other questions that required thought and analysis were also poorly answered.

Guidance is needed in exam technique.