

## Principal Assessor Report 2005

**Assessment Panel:**

**Construction**

**Qualification area**

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

**Civil Engineering (Higher)**

### **Statistical information: update**

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2004</b>	20
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<b>Number of resulted entries in 2005</b>	16
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### **General comments re resulted entry numbers**

Entries from 2 centres. This has been static for a few years, with numbers similar each year.

## Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark- 100	-	-	-	-
A	18.8	18.8	3	70
B	12.5	31.3	2	60
C	6.3	37.5	1	50
D	0.0	37.5	0	45
No award	62.5	100.0	10	-

### 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 any significant changes in distribution of awards/grade boundaries

There were no required changes in grade boundaries. It was considered that the spread of candidates' marks did not require any changes to grade boundaries. Candidate success was significantly higher than 2004, and similar to 2003.

## **Comments on candidate performance**

### **General comments**

The candidates performed much better in 2005 than in 2004, and similar to those in 2003.

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

The candidates performed well in project planning and construction methods, with most obtaining good scores in this work.

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

Many candidates performed badly in the structural mechanics questions. No candidates tackled the Section B structural question.

## **Recommendations**

### **Feedback to centres**

Centres may wish to consider spending more time on structural mechanics work if this is at all possible.