

Principal Assessor Report 2005

Assessment Panel:

Gaelic

Qualification area

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

Gaelic (Learners)
Intermediate 1 and 2

Statistical information: update

Intermediate 1

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2004 | 11 |
|------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2005 | 15 |
|------------------------------------|----|

Intermediate 2

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2004 | 46 |
|------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2005 | 68 |
|------------------------------------|----|

General comments re resulted entry numbers

The total number of candidates for Intermediate 1 remains small, but represents an increase of five on the previous year. The candidates are largely drawn from S4.

At Intermediate 2, there is a welcoming increase in the total number of candidature. 12.3% of the cohort are from S3. The number of presentations from S3/4 is almost the same as from S5/6. In previous years, the candidature was mainly drawn from S5/6 and FE.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards including grade boundaries

Intermediate 1

| Distribution of awards | % | Cum % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|--------------------------|------|-------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark- 110 | - | - | - | - |
| A | 46.7 | 46.7 | 7 | 77 |
| B | 40.0 | 86.7 | 6 | 66 |
| C | 13.3 | 100.0 | 2 | 55 |
| D | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0 | 49 |
| No award | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0 | - |

Intermediate 2

| Distribution of awards | % | Cum % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|--------------------------|------|-------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark- 110 | - | - | - | - |
| A | 67.6 | 67.6 | 46 | 77 |
| B | 22.1 | 89.7 | 15 | 66 |
| C | 5.9 | 95.6 | 4 | 55 |
| D | 0.0 | 95.6 | 0 | 49 |
| No award | 4.4 | 100.0 | 3 | - |

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

In respect of Intermediate 1 and 2, boundaries were as in the previous year. By aggregating the scores, the demands of the examinations were of a similar demand. The allocation of A-grades is very healthy for both Intermediate 1 and 2. All candidates were successful.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

At Intermediate 1, candidates were of a good standard but were not as able as the previous year.

There was a very able, high performing top to the Intermediate 2 candidature that attained very successfully. There then appeared to be a substantial number of candidates operating at a C-pass standard, or lower in the exam room components. These candidates appear to have performed well in the non-examination room components.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Intermediate 1

The reading paper had a good balance of straightforward and more complex text to make it suitably testing. In comparison to the previous year, the reading paper was of a similar standard. Candidates were not as competent and confident in listening. The questions designed to challenge candidates proved testing but were within the parameters of Intermediate 1. In comparison to the previous year, the listening paper was of a similar standard. The standard of audio materials was very good. Writing folios were of a high standard, and had been subject to redrafting and enhancement by ICT. No evaluative comment can be made on talking.

Intermediate 2

The reading paper was well set and afforded candidates sufficient challenges. The level of demand was within the parameters of Intermediate 2 and was consistent with the previous year. The listening paper was challenging. Despite this, the able A-standard candidate performed successfully. However, the candidates operating at a C-standard were less effective and found the listening more difficult. The listening paper proved more challenging than in the previous year and this could be quantified in 2 marks. Additionally, cognisance has to be taken of the lateness of the exam and the negative impact that this has on attainment. The standard of audio materials was very good. There was a high standard of folios of writing that had been subject to redrafting and enhancement by ICT. A small percentage of candidates did not submit two different types of writing. As this does not adhere to course arrangements, credit is only received for the better of the two pieces. No evaluative comment can be made on talking.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Intermediate 1 Listening

The following language proved more challenging for some candidates:

Q5a – *Tha sinn sgìth*

Q5b – *Bha sinn anmoch a-raoir.*

Q6a – *m' athair.*

Q7 – *Tha e ag obair ann an taigh-òsta.*

Q8 – *a' sreap*

Q9 – *Chaidh sinn don taigh-dhealbh an-dè oir bha i fliuch.*

Q13b – *mòr, dubh*

Q13c – a h-uile madainn

Intermediate 1 Reading

The following language proved more challenging for some candidates:

Q1c – *ag òl* (Possibly because it was removed from normal context, eg, *ag òl tì*)

Q2a – *pàipearan-naidheachd agus irisean*

Q2b – *Is toigh leamsa*

Q3b – *'S e saor a th' annam.*

Q3e – *Is toigh leam prògraman mu dheidhinn chàraichean.*

Q4d – *Tha mo chasan goirt a-nis.*

Intermediate 2 Listening

The following language proved more challenging for some candidates:

Q1 – *oilthigh*

Q6 – *Tha mi ag iarraidh obair ann an ceann a tuath na Gàidhealtachd.*

Q9 – *Bhruidhinn mi ri daoine à iomadh dùthaich.*

Intermediate 2 Reading

The following language proved more challenging for some candidates:

Q2b – *'S e Beurla an cuspair as fheàrr leam.*

Q2d – *Tha e mu dheidhinn boireannach à Muile.*

Q3c – *Is toigh leam a bhith a' leughadh mu dheidhinn sgiobaidhean ainmeil.*

Q4d – *Tha mise a' smaoinichadh gur e an cluicheadair as comasaiche air an t-saoghal a th' ann.*

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

At Intermediate 1, candidates were of a good standard but were not as able as the previous year.

There was a very able, high performing top to the Intermediate 2 candidature that attained very successfully. There then appeared to be a substantial number of candidates operating at a C-pass standard, or lower in the exam room components. These candidates appear to have performed well in the non-examination room components.

Presenting centres should ensure that they adhere to the course arrangements for producing evidence of writing for folio items. These entail the writing being the candidates' own work which has produced in controlled conditions and subject to one redrafting. Redrafting does not entail correction by the teacher/lecturer. When you examine the work of the candidates in all the assessable elements, it is evident that some candidates are being supported and directed too much in the folio.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Intermediate 1

The reading paper had a good balance of straightforward and more complex text to make it suitably testing. In comparison to the previous year, the reading paper was of a similar standard. Candidates made good use of dictionaries. Candidates were not as competent and confident in listening. The questions designed to challenge candidates proved testing but were within the parameters of Intermediate 1. In comparison to the previous year, the listening paper was of a similar standard. The standard of audio materials was very good. Writing folios were of a high standard, and had been subject to redrafting and enhancement by ICT. No evaluative comment can be made on talking.

Presenting centres should ensure that they afford candidates sufficient opportunities to do listening activities in exam room conditions.

Intermediate 2

The reading paper was well set and afforded candidates sufficient challenges. The level of demand was within the parameters of Intermediate 2 and was consistent with the previous year. Candidates made good use of dictionaries. The listening paper was challenging. Despite this, the able A-standard candidate performed successfully. However, the candidates operating at a C-standard were less effective and found the listening more difficult. The listening paper proved more challenging than in the previous year and this could be quantified in 2 marks. Additionally, cognisance has to be taken of the lateness of the exam and the negative impact that this has on attainment. The standard of audio materials was very good. There was a high standard of folios of writing that had been subject to redrafting and enhancement by ICT. A small percentage of candidates did not submit two different types of writing. As this does not adhere to course arrangements, credit is only received for the better of the two pieces. No evaluative comment can be made on talking.

Presenting centres should ensure that they afford candidates sufficient opportunities to do listening activities in exam room conditions.

Presenting centres should ensure that candidates submit TWO different types of writing as folio items. Advice on this is contained within the course arrangements.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Intermediate 1 Listening

Presenting centres should ensure that examination preparation includes the following language areas:

Q5a – *Tha sinn sgìth*
Q5b – *Bha sinn anmoch a-raoir.*
Q6a – *m' athair.*
Q7 – *Tha e ag obair ann an taigh-òsta.*
Q8 – *a' sreap*
Q9 – *Chaidh sinn don taigh-dhealbh an-dè oir bha i fliuch.*
Q13b – *mòr, dubh*
Q13c – *a h-uile madainn*

Intermediate 1 Reading

Presenting centres should ensure that examination preparation includes the following language areas:

Q1c – *ag òl*
Q2a – *pàipearan-naidheachd agus irisean*
Q2b – *Is toigh leamsa*
Q3b – *'S e saor a th' annam.*
Q3e – *Is toigh leam prògraman mu dheidhinn chàraichean.*
Q4d – *Tha mo chasan goirt a-nis.*

Intermediate 2 Listening

Presenting centres should ensure that examination preparation includes the following language areas:

Q1 – *oilthigh*
Q6 – *Tha mi ag iarraidh obair ann an ceann a tuath na Gàidhealtachd.*
Q9 – *Bhruidhinn mi ri daoine à iomadh dùthaich.*

Intermediate 2 Reading

Presenting centres should ensure that examination preparation includes the following language areas:

Q2b – *'S e Beurla an cuspair as fheàrr leam.*
Q2d – *Tha e mu dheidhinn boireannach à Muile.*
Q3c – *Is toigh leam a bhith a' leughadh mu dheidhinn sgiobaidhean ainmeil.*
Q4d – *Tha mise a' smaoineachadh gur e an cluicheadair as comasaiche air an t-saoghal a th' ann.*