



## External Assessment Report 2012

Subject(s)	Physical Education
Level(s)	Intermediate 1 and 2

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the examination.

# Comments on candidate performance

## General comments

### Intermediate 1

Once again, there was a slight increase in the number of candidates sitting Intermediate 1.

Feedback from the question paper suggested that the questions in the question paper were straightforward and easy to interpret, which allowed candidates to access marks from a range of different key concepts and features.

Candidates, on the whole, seemed to be writing more detailed responses to some of the questions, especially when asked to 'describe'.

Performance Appreciation was completed by a minority of pupils, though it was evident that there was an increase in the number of centres who are delivering this area as part of their course.

### Intermediate 2

Entries at this level increased to 5,108, with some new and returning centres noted.

Candidates' responses were detailed, especially in questions that asked for a description.

The external exam was deemed to be straightforward, which allowed candidates to access a full range of marks. Markers reported an increase in candidates achieving marks in the upper scale.

Performance Appreciation was completed by a minority of pupils, though it was evident that there was an increase in the number of centres who are delivering this area as part of their course.

Candidates appeared to be writing much more when answering questions. Concern was expressed by some Markers over the standard of writing in many scripts. This led to a number of scripts being referred for further scrutiny to ensure that candidates were not being disadvantaged.

A range of activities were apparent from the answers written by candidates.

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Intermediate 1

Candidates performed well in the Performance component, with the average mark increasing to 47.3.

Question 4(b): most candidates' description of a structure, strategy or composition was described in full, with clear knowledge and understanding.

Question 2(b): most candidates were able to identify an appropriate fitness test for the specific aspect of fitness. This was then backed up with a full description.

### **Intermediate 2**

As with Intermediate 1, candidates performed well in the Performance component, with the average mark increasing to 47.1. The average mark for the question paper remained stable at 24.7.

Question 5: most candidates performed well, with some good understanding of the key concepts and features addressed across this question.

Question 8(a): most candidates were able to access upper marks for their description of a Structure, Strategy or Composition.

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

### **Intermediate 1**

Question 2(g): most candidates found this question demanding. Candidates failed to provide possible responses to what they might see in their performance after finishing their programme of work.

Question 3(a) and 3(b): some candidates found it demanding to explain what effect a skill that was a strength, and a skill that was a weakness, may have on their whole performance. Some candidates referred to preparation, action, and recovery, which did not allow them to access all the marks available.

Some candidates were unable to name one of the three types of fitness.

Question 4(d): some candidates found this demanding and did not refer to how they identified any weaknesses.

### **Intermediate 2**

Questions 3 and 4: some candidates found these demanding as they did not read the questions fully. This resulted in candidates identifying an aspect of fitness or a type of fitness that did not allow them to fully access marks for the rest of the question.

Question 5(b) and 5(c): some candidates found these questions demanding, as they were unable to describe fully the effect the skill had on whole performance. Principles of effective practice had some limited responses.

# Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

## Intermediate 1

Centres must make sure that all key concepts are covered in their course and studied at the appropriate depth and level of demand.

Centres must make sure that they cover and reinforce the three types of fitness.

Centres should develop candidates' understanding of the effect of skills on whole performance.

When considering improvements to a performance candidates should:

- ◆ know how they can gather data and record knowledge of results to see what improvements have been made
- ◆ be able to describe what effect any improvements have on whole performance

## Intermediate 2

Candidates should be advised to read the question fully before starting to respond.

Candidates should always try to back up their responses with examples from their performance.

Centres should develop candidates' understanding of the effect of skills on whole performance.

Markers highlighted many instances where candidates attempted to apply pre-planned answers to examination questions. This restricts the depth of response given. Often, candidates then do not answer the question being asked, resulting in them achieving very low marks. This has the effect of disadvantaging such candidates and preventing them achieving the best possible mark for the whole question.

Candidates should be advised of the importance of reading questions carefully and fully answering the actual question being asked.

**Statistical information: update on Courses**

**Intermediate 1**

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2011</b>	1752
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<b>Number of resulted entries in 2012</b>	1639
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**Statistical information: Performance of candidates**

**Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries**

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 100				
A	53.6%	53.6%	878	70
B	28.2%	81.8%	463	59
C	11.5%	93.3%	189	49
D	2.0%	95.3%	32	44
No award	4.7%	100.0%	77	-

**Statistical information: update on Courses**

**Intermediate 2**

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2011</b>	4783
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<b>Number of resulted entries in 2012</b>	5108
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**Statistical information: Performance of candidates**

**Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries**

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 100				
A	48.8%	48.8%	2493	72
B	33.8%	82.6%	1727	61
C	13.2%	95.8%	673	50
D	1.3%	97.1%	66	44
No award	2.9%	100.0%	149	-

## General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). 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 management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ 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, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry this 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.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.