SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

Moderation Feedback - Central

Assessment Panel:	**Information Systems and Computing**

Qualification area

Subject(s) and Level(s) included in this report	**Information Systems Int 2, Higher and Advanced Higher**

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

Candidate performance in both Int 2 and Higher was generally good and marking was carried out in accordance with agreed national standards. Out of the 85 centres moderated, 18 were not accepted and 3 were recommended for investigation due to malpractice. This compares with 18 out of 117 centres not accepted last year before finalisation.
The majority of centres managed to submit the candidates' marks correctly as a percentage. Most centres demonstrated clear and appropriate assessment of candidates' work. The majority of centres carried out their marking very accurately, paying very strict attention to the marking schemes.

At Advanced Higher, centres seemed to be applying the marking scheme better and in accordance with the national standard. Some centres, however, still marked their candidate's projects very leniently.

Specific issues identified

The moderation process was not quite completed in the three days allocated. Two moderators called off before the event reducing the team to 9. Some moderators could not fulfil their obligation in working the agreed number of sessions, three per day. I have to make it clear that this is no fault of SQA as all had accepted their invitations and their respective centres had granted their release. The result of this was that the depleted team had to work late on the final day, beyond the allocated 3 sessions and still had to take a packet each home to complete the moderation.

The venue this year, the Glasgow Hilton, was absolutely first class and could not be faulted in any way. The decision to move to this venue was greatly appreciated by the moderation team and the room, service and refreshments were of the highest standard possible. This decision has to be commended.

The moderation team at SQA were extremely helpful and efficient in dealing with any queries and enquiries that we had.

Feedback to centres

Standardising Issues at Int 2

1. The task asks the candidates to choose 3 different software packages to explore. The arrangements state that different types of application software should be explored. If a candidate chooses 3 different types of database package then that satisfies the coursework as 3 different types of database can be regarded as 3 different software packages but not the arrangements as they are not 3 different types of application package

2. Do not penalise if candidates show the 2 records for the search on wisdom teeth

3. The beta version of the coursework cannot be used

4. NABs cannot be used for coursework

Standardising Issues at Higher

1. Marks should be entered as percentages on the moderation sample form.

2. Only tasks 1-3 from Database NAB 002 can be used in place of the tasks within the Integrated Coursework pack.

3. Do not send disks of candidate's work

4. It is not acceptable to combine the Primary entities with the 1NF entities. They must be shown separately.

5. In Analysis and Design section some candidates are stating that member no. and property code in the bookings entity are unique identifiers when they cannot possibly be

6. Property code and member no. must be included in the bookings entity to gain full marks.

7. Relationships should be explicitly stated and not inferred from the ER diagram.

8. Extraneous relationships are incorrect and should be penalised since they do not represent the data model.

9. ER diagrams should be annotated to show the relationships.

10. The use of the 'Documenter' facility in Access cannot be used to represent the design of the database. This facility can only be utilised once the data has been inputted into Access. It is therefore implementation.

11. Do not accept the ER diagram in Access using the tables showing the relationships as part of the analysis and design. This is implementation.

12. If candidates are extending the data dictionary in Outcome 1 in order to cover the requirements for Outcome 2 then this must be explicitly stated. Candidates must differentiate clearly between their data dictionary in Outcome 1 and their design of the database structure for implementation in Outcome 2.

13. For task 2 (design a database structure), candidates should design the database structure **before** implementation in their chosen software. It is not acceptable to submit screen shots of the design view of tables created in Access as this is clearly implementation. The marking scheme requires the designed database structures to be appropriate to the intended implementation method.

14. Data types should be explicitly stated and not inferred from format details, e.g. xx99

15. Irrespective of chosen software, sizes should be explicitly stated.

16. In the functions requires (section 1e) candidates must state the time period of one month for one of the processes and the output in order to gain the marks.

17. Reports should reflect a different layout other than just a printout of a collection of fields

18. In producing reports, ensure candidates only include the required fields for the report. Extra fields should be penalised.

19. Centres should discourage candidates from copying verbatim information from the sample answer and from the booklet "Using Microsoft Access for Database Systems" for task 3e (evaluation). This does not allow candidates to demonstrate individual performance in this area.

20. Accept both tactical and operational for Task 4 as long as explanation is correct.

Standardising Issues at Advanced Higher

1. Ensure there is evidence for every requirement of the marking scheme.

2. Ensure complexity of the task, particularly relating to the processes involved in the task and the design of the user interface, is at AH level.

3. Advise candidates to include the process of normalisation and check it has been carried out correctly.

4. Check E/R diagram reflects the normalised data model.

5. The design in relation to normalisation and E/R diagrams should reflect the whole database system and not individual sub systems which have been normalised and E/R diagrams created independently of the other entities

6. Ensure there is evidence of design of tables, relationships, forms, reports, queries, macros, where appropriate to the task.

7. Ensure the user interface is designed using a different tool or application to the one used for implementation. In other words, if the chosen application to produce the database system is Access then the design of the user interface should not be done using Access but using another application or design tool.

8. Ensure the design of the user interface is carried out prior to implementation and not screen shots of the interface which has already been implemented.

9. Time allocation should be a plan of how long is to be spent on each activity, not a progress diary of how long *was* spent on each activity.

10. Advise candidates to supply as much evidence as possible of a working solution. This can be done with the use of screen shots to demonstrate the testing that has been carried out.

11. Use the marking scheme and commentary of the two AH projects supplied on the "Exemplification of Standards" CD as a benchmark on which to base your own assessment of your candidates' AH projects.