

Moderation Feedback - Central

Assessment Panel:

Financial Services and Accounting

Qualification area

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

Standard Grade Accounting and Finance Practical
Abilities

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

All but one centre had submitted materials on time and generally the moderation procedure ran very smoothly

Specific issues identified

Marking Schemes – This year, a marking scheme was issued to centres and this was welcomed by moderators. It made the arithmetic check much easier and speeded up the moderation process substantially. Only one centre submitted their own marking scheme, while 68 centres used a slightly modified SQA marking scheme.

One of the centres, which used a slightly modified marking scheme failed to submit it along with the candidate scripts. Fortunately the method of marking in the scripts was exceptionally well done and the moderator was easily able to check the work. It should be noted for future years that if centres choose to modify the scheme issued by SQA they must submit a copy along with the moderation sample.

Spreadsheets – there were two instances this year of candidates not submitting the specified spreadsheet task, resulting in one Grade 8 being awarded. Many centres are choosing to allow pupils to attempt other tasks on spreadsheet too which is quite acceptable, but it was concerning to see significant similarities between scripts within a centre. It looked as though candidates were being given more information than would be expected for such tasks, particularly at Credit level. It would be helpful, therefore, if centres could be asked to submit copies of spreadsheet templates, which the teacher had prepared for tasks other than the designated spreadsheet task. This would allow the moderating team to gauge the degree of assistance being provided by centres.

On the other extreme, some centres left the candidate to do all the formatting of cells and keying in of formulae for such tasks, and then penalised them if it was wrong. The teacher is responsible for setting up any spreadsheet to be used by candidates, formatting cells to suit and keying in all the formulae required. The amount of additional data provided will depend on the level of the project being attempted.

Candidate evidence – Only the final piece of evidence produced by the candidate should be submitted, but there was a case where a centre submitted 3 different versions of tasks from the first draft with teacher comments to the final copy. Another centre submitted evidence which had been clearly “marked” by the teacher (in pencil). These pencil marks were subsequently rubbed out and the candidate had changed their answer. Marks were then awarded for this task. Only one adjustment to grades was made in light of this obvious teacher assistance. The selection made by this centre did not meet the given criteria either. No evidence was submitted for grades 3 or 4, yet there were 2 candidates with such grades listed on the SGER00.

There was only one instance this year of centres failing to complete the necessary documentation to accompany candidate scripts.

Method of Marking – Many centres make their intentions perfectly clear when marking scripts. There are, however, a number of issues still giving cause for concern. Penalties are being applied excessively for omission of dates, nomenclature etc – a maximum deduction of –2 per question should be applied. Only penalties should be indicated by showing –1 beside an answer, (along with a reason for the penalty, dates, nomenclature, extraneous etc). Any answer which is just wrong and gets no award should have 0 written beside it, not –1 as some centres were doing.

There were also a number of instances where candidates were not being given full marks for correct answers because they had not shown any working. In a couple of cases the wrong cut-off score was applied in determining grades.

Feedback to centres

Spreadsheet templates should be prepared by the teacher and should be correctly formatted and contain all the necessary formulae to allow the candidate to complete the task. Candidates should not be expected to insert formulae at any level.

Any centre which modifies the marking scheme provided by the SQA should submit a copy along with the candidate scripts for moderation.

Marking of scripts – marks should be indicated beside the correct answer and then totalled at the end of the question. If the answer is wrong, indicate this with 0 and not –1. Only penalties applied to questions should be indicated in such a way. This will avoid confusion when checking scripts.

Candidates must be given full credit for correct answers, even if no working has been shown.

Maximum penalties within a question should be applied for things like omission of/wrong dates, nomenclature, extraneous items, etc.

Evidence submitted should be the candidate's final piece of work only. There is no need to submit draft copies of work.

Cut off scores are 75% for the upper grade and 50% for the lower grade. There are still some centres applying a 70% cut off score.