

Moderation Feedback — Central

Assessment Panel:

Biology

Qualification area:

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

Biology, Human Biology, Biotechnology
Access/Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher,
Advanced Higher

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

Evidence from most of the centres was complete and in line with that requested by SQA.

In all cases the evidence submitted for Outcomes 1 and 2 was in the form of a published NAB test and in the vast majority of cases the candidate evidence supplied was for the candidates listed on the moderation request form.

Outcomes 1 and 2

All the centres moderated had used NAB Tests to assess Outcomes 1 and 2 and there was evidence that the majority of tests published were being used but heavier use of the earlier publications.

Marking was accurate and consistent in most cases. Most of the centres had used updated mark schemes.

The totaling of scripts was of a very high order with no centres being 'not accepted' due to Arithmetic Errors.

There was a noted increase in centres using internal moderation as a check which was a welcome change.

Outcome 3

This area of assessment was of a very high standard across all the levels being moderated and in the majority of cases the level of reporting was commensurate with the level of qualification being tested.

Again there was an increase in the number of centres using internal moderation and indicating on the scripts where the various PCs had been awarded.

Specific issues identified

A small number of the centres moderated had not taken account of the published updates of the NAB mark schemes and other amendments particularly in the Higher Biology units.

Centres that showed no indication of internal moderation were much more likely to cause concern with problems such as — arithmetic errors and mistakes in the application of mark scheme, particularly 'cut-off' scores.

- ◆ Outcomes 1 and 2 are 'PASS or FAIL' — many centres also appear to award a variety of grades.
- ◆ With only one piece of evidence required to achieve Outcome 3 more care should be taken in the selection of appropriate evidence as several centres used experiments that did not allow the candidates to provide appropriate evidence of **all** the PCs due to no quantitative data being generated.
- ◆ In the case of PC(f), it is recommended that more specific evaluation relating to the experiment is required rather than use of the generalised statements that regularly appear.
- ◆ Extrapolation of graph work continues to be given marks: candidates should be encouraged to plot only the data collected and not to extrapolate to zero when not appropriate.

Feedback to centres

- ◆ Centres must ensure that all the material required for moderation are submitted. In particular Outcome 3 reports.
- ◆ Only one completed report is required and this can come from any unit in a course.
- ◆ The Outcome 3 report used as evidence should allow the candidates the opportunity to provide evidence for all of the required PCs.
- ◆ Where internal moderation results in changes the final result should be obvious to the moderators.
- ◆ Any changes to the published mark schemes should be submitted with the evidence.
- ◆ The general standard was excellent with most centres producing evidence of a very high standard.