

Moderation Feedback - Central

Assessment Panel:

Geography

Qualification area

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

**Geography Intermediate 1, Intermediate
2, Higher and Advanced Higher**

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

The moderation event ran very smoothly and the assistance received from SQA support staff was excellent. All the moderators commented on the suitability of the venue and the way this had assisted them in their duties. The event was scheduled to last for two days but was completed in one day though additional hours had to be included. The size of the team was sufficient to complete all the necessary tasks for the event. All but one of the team was an experienced moderator.

All the moderators had received and read the Handbook for Moderators sent by SQA. This meant the pre moderation training by the Senior Moderator was facilitated. This allowed the team to begin looking at evidence at an early stage.

The request by SQA to centres to include the NAB item and marking scheme greatly assisted the team and reduced lost time trying to work out the NAB item used.

Specific issues identified

Candidate performance was satisfactory and few of those sampled had failed the units.

The moderators were able to report that in most cases centres were applying marking schemes well and were clearly indicating where marks were being awarded.

There was evidence of cross marking in some departments and this was commented where identified.

A surprising and significant number of centres failed to complete the Moderation Sample Form as per instructions with centres entering marks instead of P, F or W.

Out of a total of 53 centres moderated, five centres were not accepted. The reasons are outlined below.

Intermediate 1 and 2 evidence, unlike last year, caused concern with a number of centres confusing the marking instructions giving full marks when half marks were indicated and vice versa.

One centre combined the candidates scores from a NAB test and NAB retest to produce an 'A' pass.

At Higher level, while the majority of centres moderated are familiar with the requirements of moderation, a number are still making basic mistakes. These take the form of NABs 1 and 2 being mixed, using non-moderated items, like past paper questions, use of full marks instead of half marks and not following the guidance for markers in the NAB packs. If this level of error is reflected across the country an unacceptable number of centres may have assessed candidates incorrectly.

Specific issues identified (cont)

At Advanced Higher centres are using more processing techniques for fieldwork and for some it was not clear that actual fieldwork was taking place. Some centres had little evidence in the form of marking schemes whereas others had very concise grids which the moderators found easy to use. Again, some centres included lots of evidence for a NAB item but were in fact duplicating the same statistical technique.

Feedback to centres

General comments

Many centres submitted evidence that had been carefully marked and presented. Ticks on scripts showed exactly where marks were being awarded and this was very helpful to the moderating team. Moderators commented on the number of centres in which scripts were annotated by the markers and this provided good feedback for candidates.

Centres which had obviously adopted a policy of cross marking/internal moderation procedures are to be particularly commended. Such centres presented few, if any problems, for the moderation as they had already identified and acted upon any inconsistencies or ambiguity, if there were any, in the marking of individual members of staff.

Centres are advised that whole marks are not be included in the Sample Moderation Form but only the letters P for Pass, F for Fail or W for withdrawn.

Intermediate 1 and 2

Internal assessment at this level seems to be well understood by most centres but there was a notable and disappointing confusion about the use of full and half marks.

Higher

At Higher level only NABs published in June 2002 should have been used. While there is a choice of topics within NABs 1 and 2 for the Physical and the Human Core these NABs should not be mixed together. This repeats advice previously issued by SQA.

Advanced Higher

Centres are advised to ensure that the evidence supplied makes it clear that actual fieldwork has taken place. The inclusion of marking schemes or concise grids by centres greatly assists moderators in their evaluation of the candidates work. Centres are advised not to include lots of evidence that in fact duplicates the same statistical technique.