

Moderation Feedback - Central

Assessment Panel:

Geography

Qualification area

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

**Geography: Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, Higher,
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 commended by a number of the moderators. The event was scheduled to last for two days and was successfully undertaken within that period. The brief training event at the start of the session was worthwhile and helped to set the scene. It meant that some of the pre moderation training the Senior Moderator had planned was not necessary. This allowed the team to begin looking at evidence at an early stage of the first day.

The size of the team was greatly affected by the timing of the central moderation. This was scheduled during a school holiday period. Given the diverse pattern of school holidays this was unavoidable. Five of the team of twelve were unable to attend.

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 commended where identified.

Intermediate 1 and 2 evidence was the most satisfactory. No specific issues were identified here.

At Higher level 4 centres out of 22 submitted inappropriate evidence. This took the form of old and new NABs being mixed together or new NABs 1 and 2 being mixed. If this percentage error is reflected across the country an unacceptable number of centres may have assessed candidates incorrectly. This problem appeared despite the distribution in June 2002 of new NABs which included clear instructions, and a further reminder in an update letter distributed in November 2002.

At Advanced Higher centres tended to provide more evidence than was necessary but what was provided was generally of a high standard. Not all centres were aware of the reduced requirements for evidence for the Geographical Issues Unit (Unit 3 : D 242)

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 moderators as they had already identified and acted upon any inconsistencies or ambiguity, if there were any, in the marking of individual members of staff.

Intermediate 1 and 2:

Internal assessment at this level seems to be well understood and the marking advice is being applied effectively.

Higher:

At Higher level only NABs published in June 2002 should now be used. Those published prior to that date have been withdrawn. 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:

Unit 2 : the Geographical Study:

- centres are advised to submit supporting evidence to provide samples of work undertaken. This can be part of the fieldwork and follow up analysis and does not need to contain all the work of candidates
- the choice of topic which candidates use for their Study needs to be considered carefully. Where more than one candidate wishes to work on the same topic, it is reasonable for candidates to carry out some of the fieldwork collectively, but the evidence submitted for internal assessment should be produced under controlled conditions. It should reflect the specific aims of each candidate's research and contain evidence of independent reflection on the tasks he / she has undertaken.

Unit 3 : Geographical Issues;

- the revised arrangements for internal assessment issued now require only one set of candidate / teacher checklists to be submitted. The second checklist has now been replaced by a pro forma on which the member of staff confirms that the candidate is in the process of completing a second essay
- the instructions issued to centres about the choice of topics for the Geographical Issues essays need to be carefully considered before candidates embark upon their research. While moderators and examiners are willing to take a broad interpretation of the advice that the topics chosen should relate to the applications topics from the Higher some of the work submitted for moderation had little geographical content and did not obviously reflect one of these applications.