

Moderation Feedback – Central

Assessment Panel:

History

Qualification area

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

History: Higher, Int.2,

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

The vast majority of centres moderated had applied national standards in a clear and consistent way. They had indicated on the candidate scripts where the candidates had achieved Outcomes and there were helpful comments which were aimed at improving the candidates' performance. These centres presented the moderating team with no problems.

Many of the centres had used NABs as a "Prelim". This is acceptable because candidates need only to achieve a "Pass" for Internal Assessment purposes and the standard for a pass is the same for both Internal and External Assessments.

A number of centres have started to use "cross-marking" for borderline scripts. This certainly does reduce the number of scripts where the moderating team disagree with the centre's assessment. A few centres made cross-markings obvious by using different colours of ink, but, in most cases cross-marking was noticed only when the moderators scrutinized the scripts. It would be helpful if centres indicate clearly where cross-marking has been used.

A number of centres use a marking code to indicate where and why they have given candidates credit. Usually, these centres use the same marking code as Exam Markers. This is helpful to both the candidates and to the moderators. Some centres give very detailed written feedback to candidates (sometimes using specific essay review/essay profile sheets) and this too is very helpful.

There were a number of cases where centres had given clear and detailed feedback which they had followed up with revisiting to help candidates achieve a pass.

Specific issues identified

The most obvious issue was the use of "old NABs".

New NABs have been issued for Advanced Higher, Higher Special Topics and Intermediate 2 to harmonise the types of questions and the marking schemes used for Internal and External Assessments. **In future, "old NABs" will not be acceptable** for Internal Assessments at these levels.

Revised NABs for Intermediate 1 will be issued during Session 2004-5. We will only accept "old Int 1 NABs" for this Session to accommodate centres which have a two year Intermediate Course. From August 2005 **only revised NABs will be acceptable** for Internal Assessments.

Some centres, especially those who had combined their Internal Assessment with their Prelim, had not used NABs and had not submitted their Internal Assessment for Prior Moderation. Centres must be very careful when they do this. They will not be accepted if their Internal Assessment is inadequate.

There were a number of centres where candidates was awarded a "narrow pass" at Higher. Where centres had given candidates detailed feedback and/or used a clear marking code and/or used cross-marking, then it was clear to the candidate and the moderating team why the pass was described as "narrow" and it was usually "accepted". Problems occurred where there was limited feedback or none at all. A few centres came close to being "not accepted" because they had too many "narrow passes" which were open to question.

One centre submitted evidence for the wrong Unit. It had to re-assess its candidates.

Intermediate 2 raised three specific issues.

Firstly, a number of centres failed to realize that three marks are specifically reserved for the Introduction and Conclusion of the 8 mark essay.

Secondly, many Source Comparison answers still fail to carry out a comparison. Candidates who summarise each source and then simply state some degree of agreement/disagreement are not carrying out a comparison and they will not be credited with achieving that Outcome. Candidates must select one piece of evidence from one source and a comparable piece of evidence from the other source and then proceed to explain some degree of comparison. Candidates must understand that it is the explanation of the comparison which achieves credit.

Thirdly, many source evaluation answers fail to evaluate the source. Candidates are not to be credited for copying out information from the introduction to the source but they should use this information to start the process of considering the Origin of the Source and identifying whether it is Primary or Secondary. Again, candidates must explain their answer e.g. "It is Primary because it was written at the time of... (whatever the question is asking)." A bald statement that the question is "Primary" will not be credited. Candidates should also be encouraged to consider the possible purpose of the source and its possible weaknesses through content omission or bias. Candidates who only write about the content of the source will not achieve a pass mark for that question.

There was evidence of "re-visiting" being used and candidates benefiting from the opportunity to re-visit an assessment. However, centres should remember that re-visiting is part of a process which should help candidates to improve their answering skills. Candidates who use this opportunity simply to add "two extra facts" to their answer are not really benefiting from the opportunity.

Revisiting should be used only when a candidate is weak in one Outcome. It should not be used when the candidate is weak across more than one Outcome.

Since there are a limited number of NABs and time for assessment is limited, candidates should be given adequate opportunity to learn and understand a topic before they attempt an Internal Assessment.

Feedback to centres

The vast majority of centers are very well aware of the national standards and they apply these in their assessments. Consequently, the moderators' comments are simply to endorse the centres' assessments.

Centres which use "cross-marking" for "borderline" cases are generally more consistent and reliable than those which do not. Similarly, centres which use a form of marking code (usually the one used for External Assessment) and/or an essay review or essay profile sheet cause fewer problems at moderation.

More centres are merging Internal Assessment with their Prelims. This is acceptable but centres should remember that there are still differences in the allocation of time which could affect the validity of evidence used for Appeals. Centres doing this should also remember that they must use valid assessments for Internal Assessment purposes.

Many centres are making good use of re-visiting to help their candidates. There are, however, limits to the use of re-visiting especially where more than one Outcome is concerned or where the candidate does not know or understand the topic being assessed.

Centres must use "Revised NABs". The original NABs should be discarded. Centres which submit evidence gathered by using "old NABs" will not be accepted.

Intermediate 2 raised three specific problems. Firstly, for the 8 mark essay, centres were not reserving three of these marks for the Introduction and Conclusion. Secondly, candidates were not actually comparing evidence in their Source Comparison answer but simply reporting source content and expecting the assessor to make the comparison for them. Thirdly, Source Evaluation was still focusing on Author and Content and not considering Primary/Secondary, purpose or weakness caused by bias or omission of information.