

Moderation Feedback— Central

Assessment Panel:

Information Systems and Computing

Qualification area:

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

Information systems Intermediate 2, Higher and
Advanced Higher

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

Candidate performance in both Intermediate 2 and Higher was generally good and marking was carried out in accordance with agreed national standards. Out of the 117 centres moderated, 15 were not accepted and three were recommended for investigation due to malpractice. This compares with 32 out of 107 centres not accepted last year before finalisation.

The majority of centres managed to submit the candidates' marks correctly as a percentage. Most centres demonstrated clear and appropriate assessment of candidates' work. The majority of centres carried out their marking very accurately, paying very strict attention to the marking schemes.

Specific issues identified

The moderation process did not run as smoothly as in previous years due entirely to the fact that four moderators called off. I have to make it clear that this is not fault of SQA as all four had accepted their invitations and their respective centres had granted their release. Also two of the moderators could not attend for one full day and when they did return they had to use up the majority of two full sessions dealing with a Higher National issue totally unrelated to the moderation of Information systems. Consequently the team had to return for an unprecedented fourth day to complete the moderation. It was only due to the centres' agreement to release these moderators that the moderation was able to be completed.

The room itself was a bit on the small side and if we had been up to full strength, ie 13 moderators, then it would definitely have been too small to accommodate us.

The moderation team at SQA were extremely helpful and efficient in dealing with any queries and enquiries that we had.

Feedback to centres

Standardising issues at Intermediate 2

1. The task asks the candidates to choose three different software packages to explore. If a candidate chooses three different types of database package then that satisfies coursework requirements but not the Unit assessment requirements as they are not three different types of application package.
2. Do not penalise if candidates show the two records for the search on wisdom teeth.
3. Do not use the beta version of the coursework.
4. NABs cannot be used for coursework.

Standardising issues at Higher

1. Marks should be entered as percentages on the moderation sample form.
2. Only tasks 1–3 from Database NAB002 can be used in place of the tasks within the Integrated Coursework pack.
3. Do not send disks of candidate's work.
4. It is not acceptable to combine the Primary entities with the 1NF entities. They must be shown separately.
5. In the Analysis and Design section some candidates are stating that member no. and property code in the bookings entity are unique identifiers when they cannot possibly be.
6. Property code and member no. must be included in the bookings entity to gain full marks.
7. Relationships should be explicitly stated and not inferred from the ER diagram.
8. Extraneous relationships are incorrect and should be penalised since they do not represent the data model.
9. ER diagrams should be annotated to show the relationships.
10. Do not accept the ER diagram in Access using the tables showing the relationships as part of the analysis and design. This is implementation.
11. If candidates are extending the data dictionary in Outcome 1 in order to cover the requirements for Outcome 2 then this must be explicitly stated. Candidates must differentiate clearly between their data dictionary in Outcome 1 and their design of the database structure for implementation in Outcome 2.
12. For task 2 (design a database structure), candidates should design the database structure **before** implementation in their chosen software. It is not acceptable to submit screen shots of the design view of tables created in Access as this is clearly implementation. The marking scheme requires the designed database structures to be appropriate to the intended implementation methods.
13. Data types should be explicitly stated and not inferred from format details, eg xx99.
14. Irrespective of chosen software, sizes should be explicitly stated.

15. In the functions requires (section 1e) candidates must state the time period of one month for one of the processes and the output in order to gain the marks.
16. Reports should reflect a different layout other than just a printout of a collection of fields.
17. In producing reports, ensure candidates only include the required fields for the report. Extra fields should be penalised.
18. Centres should discourage candidates from copying verbatim information from the sample answer and from the booklet “Using Microsoft Access for Database Systems” for task 3e (evaluation). This does not allow candidates to demonstrate individual performance in this area.
19. Accept both tactical and operational for task 4 as long a explanation is correct.

Standardising issues at Advanced Higher

1. Ensure there is evidence for every requirement of the marking scheme.
2. Ensure complexity of the task, particularly with the number of entities and attributes involved, is at AH level.
3. Advise candidates to include the process of normalisation and check it has carried out correctly.
4. Check E/R diagram reflects the normalised data model.
5. The design in relation to normalisation and E/R diagrams should reflect the whole database system and not individual sub systems which have been normalised and E/R diagrams created independently of the other entities.
6. Ensure there is evidence of design of tables, relationships, forms, reports, queries, macros, etc.
7. Ensure the design of the user interface is carried out prior to implementation and not screen shots of the interface which has already been implemented.
8. Time allocation should be a plan of how long is to be spent on each activity, not a progress diary of how long *was* spent on each activity.
9. Advise candidates to supply as much evidence as possible of a working solution. This can be done with the use of screen shots to demonstrate the testing that has been carried out.
10. Use the marking scheme and commentary of the two AH projects supplied on the “Exemplification of Standards” CD as a benchmark on which to base your own assessment of your candidates’ AH projects.