

Moderation Feedback — Central

Assessment Panel:

Physics

Qualification area:

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

Physics: Advanced Higher, Higher, Intermediate 2,
Intermediate 1, Access 3

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

The number of centres moderated was similar to that of 2001/02. The sampling included more centres offering Intermediate 1 this session. In general candidates performed well in the theoretical outcomes (Outcome 1 and Outcome 2) however the Outcome 3 assessment continued to show weaknesses in graphical work; the use of uncertainties particularly at Advanced Higher; in developing conclusions from the data and in evaluating the experimental work.

Specific issues identified

The central moderation event ran very smoothly with all the required NABs being available for reference and excellent support from the moderation administration.

Four centres (6%) of centres sent incomplete material which led to 'Not Accepted' outcome. This was however an improvement on last year (15%).

The SQA communication 'Moderation-Instructions to centres on central moderation' was not always used by centres. The percentage obtained in the Outcomes 1 and 2 was given rather than using the specified P, F, or W for the unit achievement by some centres and a few centres had failed to complete the results columns completely. The information box regarding the NAB pack used for assessment of each candidate was often not completed thus giving the moderator a time consuming detection task.

Overall the application of the mark schemes for the NAB packs was good, however some centres are awarding half marks where the scheme states (1) or (0) thus tending to produce lenient marking.

Some evidence for Outcome 3 was unmarked and gave no indication of how teachers/lecturers had deemed candidates to be successful. It was also unclear if rework on the report had taken place.

The performance of candidates for the PCs of Outcome 3 covering conclusions from data/graphical work and evaluations is weak particularly at Higher and Advanced Higher level. This led to the 20% of centres with a 'Not Accepted' outcome for moderation.

Feedback to centres

Generally, centres had conducted the assessments fairly and consistently.

There was evidence of cross marking/internal moderation in a number of centres. Candidates performed well in the assessments relating to Outcomes 1 and 2 although some centres were lenient in their interpretation of the mark scheme awarding a half mark where the scheme had allowed either (1) or (0).

For Outcome 3, many candidates produced a well-structured report giving procedural details, diagrams and valid conclusions for an experiment at the appropriate level. However the quality of the graphical work was variable and the evaluation of experimental work at Higher and Advanced Higher level was often weak.

Centres should:

- ◆ ensure that the instructions for submission of material are followed. The omission of Outcome 3 evidence automatically results in a not-accepted outcome.
- ◆ ensure that their marking of Outcome 3 is clear and that, for each candidate, there is a clear indication of the internal assessment decision of the centre staff.
- ◆ refer to the publication, Physics — General Marking Instructions 1999, if queries occur when interpreting the mark schemes for the NABs. This will aid consistency in standards.
- ◆ include a statement of the centre agreed amendments to the NAB mark scheme, eg alternative answers, that have been applied during assessment. This will aid the moderators' decision making.
- ◆ when candidates are graphing, the best fit line should not be forced through the origin (particularly noted in Advanced Higher). If the line fails to provide evidence of direct proportionality, an appropriate conclusion should be given. Discussion on the possible reasons for the result could be dealt with in the evaluation of the experiment.