

Moderation Feedback — Central

Assessment Panel:

Management and Enterprise

Qualification area:

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

Business Management – Intermediate 1,
Intermediate 2, Higher and Advanced Higher

Moderation Group 254

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

The central moderation event in April 2003 covered the following units:

- Business Decision Areas (H) – the unit which was moderated most frequently
- Business Decision Areas (Int 2)
- Business Investigation (AH)
- Business in Society (Int 1).

In addition, some postal moderation was carried out in February 2003. It covered Business Enterprise at Higher and Intermediate 2 and Information in Business (Int 1). Business Enterprise (H/Int 2) was moderated as part of a one Coordinated Moderation Event. A few development visits were made to centres to support moderation activity.

The standard of work produced by candidates continues to be good and there is strong evidence that centres are learning how to manage the internal assessment process effectively. In most cases, marking was careful and conscientious and demonstrated clearly that centres do take their responsibilities seriously.

The central moderation event was very well organised and, as a result, ran very smoothly. There were sufficient moderators to cope with the work that had to be done.

There was an issue with the completion date of 31 March 2003. As noted above, Business Decision Areas (H/Int 2) was the most common unit. Many centres do not complete the assessment of this unit until after 31 March, even though many had stated that this would be the completion date. Some centres were given permission to submit incomplete evidence and moderation proceeded on the basis of the evidence available. A few centres did not seek this permission and submitted work which had been hurriedly completed to meet the deadline or, in one case, was incomplete.

There seem to be two lessons from this. The first is that centres should choose a realistic completion date. The second is that, if there is a problem with submitting complete evidence, the first step should be to contact the SQA. This year's experience suggests that a solution can be found which can address any problems.

Specific issues identified

Generally, the work moderated was of a good standard and had been well marked. Most centres have developed good practice such as comments on scripts and checklists of candidate progression.

However, some points which have arisen in previous years were also apparent. They do not apply to all centres but they are.

- Clearly indicating where marks came from – there were examples where ticks on the script and the marks awarded did not match. This can make it difficult to check why marks have been given.
- Identifying the NABs used on the MS00 form – sometimes it was not easy to tell which NAB had been used and this can make it difficult to check marking. It is perfectly acceptable to use more than one NAB but it should be clear which NABs have been used.
- Providing supporting evidence for oral reassessment – oral assessment is perfectly acceptable, where candidates have just missed the cut-off score. However, good practice requires that a brief note of any question asked and the candidate responses should be given on the script.
- Inconsistency in marking – one way to address this is through the use of internal moderation and those centres which did this had much more consistent marking. They were also able to annotate marking guidelines to reflect internal moderation decisions.
- Lenient marking – a minority of centres award marks more generously than should be the case. This usually occurs in questions where the answer requires a reason and a mark is awarded when no reason is provided. There were no examples of candidates succeeding when they ought not to have done but there were instances of higher grades than were warranted by the work.

Feedback to centres

As with previous years, the main conclusion from moderation was that centres had worked hard to implement internal assessment and deserve credit for the work they have done. As noted earlier, there were many encouraging signs that centres are beginning to manage the process effectively. There were many examples of good practice, including:

- Checklists showing candidate progression – these often incorporated dates when NABs were taken and brief details of any reassessment. This makes it easy to track the progress of individual students.
- Internal moderation – good practice here includes noting which scripts have been selected (either by a summary record and/or by making a note on each script involved – using a different coloured pen clearly distinguishes moderation marking from the original); brief comments on any discrepancies; adding notes to the marking guidelines to indicate where internal moderation had identified acceptable points which were not included in the marking guidance.
- Comments on scripts – it is very good to see how many people find time to do this. Good comments gave clear and helpful advice to candidates such as the need to give supporting reasons, avoid repetition, and to answer the question asked.
- Annotating the marking guidelines – especially where additions included references to textbooks used by the centre.

It would be nice to see all centres adopting the above. However, there are some principles which all centres should adopt if possible. They are listed below.

- Where oral reassessment is used, a note should be made on the script of the question(s) asked and the response by the candidate.
- Whole marks should be awarded unless the marking scheme specifically states that half marks should be given.
- Centres may also find it helpful to encourage candidate to provide concise answers which address the question and which give reasons to support points made. Doing this may help candidates in the external exam.

It has been noted already that it is helpful if it is clear where marks have been awarded. It assists moderation of Business Investigation (AH) if the materials taken in by students at assessments are included in the materials sent for moderation.

Overall, the moderation process has once again confirmed that centres have fulfilled their obligations to carry out internal assessment carefully and diligently and to ensure that, wherever possible, it provides benefits to students.