



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Selling Overseas Tourist Destinations
Level(s)	Intermediate 2

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

This year once again Case Study 2 'Weddings' and case study 1 'Family Holiday' were certainly the most popular case studies chosen by the candidates.

The majority of the candidates performed well, gaining a Pass overall for the project. 'Comparisons' were this year relatively well done, but once again 'Recommendations' were not completed satisfactorily.

Lower results were achieved in the 'Evaluation' stages once again this year, with a third of the candidates failing to gain half of the actual mark in this section. Candidates should cover all the points illustrated in the specification — some parts were omitted, eg areas like knowledge & skills and strengths & weaknesses were only briefly touched on, which resulted in loss of marks.

Some candidates had printed their 'Comparison & Recommendations' and 'Evaluation' stages, but had not included their handwritten notes.

The 'Research Based Report', where the candidates have to link the written responses to the tasks set, relating it to the researched material, was once more not addressed fully by the majority of the candidates this year.

Areas in which candidates performed well

In the Development Stage, the Research Based Reports were completed very well, with more candidates showing a good level of research undertaken. This resulted in two thirds of the candidates gaining a minimum of approximately 70 per cent of the marks allocated for this section.

The Case Study Report in this section where the Role of the Sales Person & Process Involved in the Sale were completed well, along with the Holiday descriptions being answered fully with detailed knowledge once more displayed, matching the customer holiday requirements.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Planning

The planning section this year was not as well answered in the aims and objectives area.

Development

The research reports were completed and presented well, gaining the candidates good marks, along with more handwritten and annotated maps being submitted in this section, but these were found at the back of the projects in no specific order.

The area of linking the written responses to tasks set relating to the researched material, once more was only fully addressed by the more articulate candidates.

Recommendations failed to gain full marks by the candidates, where the candidates did not fully address the suitability of the chosen holiday to the customer requirements in this section which resulted in a loss of marks by approximately a third of candidates this year.

Evaluation

This section was poorly answered by the candidates — 50% of them failed to get half marks in this section. Candidates answered the questions in this area briefly, and this was clearly shown by the poor results achieved this year. ‘Knowledge & Skills’ and ‘Strengths & Weaknesses’ were the two questions that were most poorly answered by the candidates.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Planning

The planning section this year was not well answered in the aims and objectives area, nearly fifty per cent of the candidates only briefly addressed this part of the section.

Development

The research reports were completed and presented well, gaining the candidates good marks, along with more handwritten and annotated maps being submitted to a high standard in this section. Centres should ensure the candidates review the projects before submission and ensure the candidates put the project in the appropriate stage, as the maps and climate graphs this year were found in no order at the back of the completed projects after the Evaluation stage.

The area of linking the written responses to tasks set relating to the researched material, once more was only fully addressed by the more articulate candidates.

Recommendations failed to gain full marks. Candidates completed the Comparisons section, but failed to fully address the recommendations area, which resulted in a loss of more than half marks in this section by a third of the candidates this year.

Evaluation

This section was the most poorly answered — fifty per cent of the candidates failed to meet half marks in this section. Candidates briefly answered the questions in this area and this was clearly shown by the poor results achieved this year. ‘Knowledge & Skills’ ‘Strengths and Weaknesses’ were the two most poorly answered questions by the candidates in this section, resulting in the loss of nearly half of the marks in this area.

**Statistical information: update on Courses
Intermediate 2**

Number of resulted entries in 2012	38
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	15
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 200				
A	40.0%	40.0%	6	140
B	26.7%	66.7%	4	120
C	13.3%	80.0%	2	100
D	0.0%	80.0%	0	90
No award	20.0%	100.0%	3	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.