



External Assessment Report 2013

Subject(s)	Travel and Tourism
Level(s)	Intermediate 1

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

The markers felt that the 2013 external assessment was a successful paper, set at the appropriate standard for Intermediate 1 candidates. The marks ranged from 0% to 100%.

867 candidates sat the examination. This is a decrease from last year, which was the highest number of candidates since the exam started. This number of candidates brings us back to the levels of 2010 and 2011.

As is the norm for this examination, the cohort of candidates contained large proportions of S5 and S6 candidates. There were more candidates from FE this year — about 2.5% — but this is about half of the number of FE candidates in 2010 and 2011. For secondary schools, there were 12 new centres and seven returning centres, which together accounted for 183 candidates.

Markers felt that, in general, candidates continue to be well prepared by teachers and tutors. Specifically, centres are preparing and instructing candidates to a high level in the necessary procedures, allowing them to be very successful in the examination.

There was general agreement from all concerned in the marking exercise that this question paper had performed its function well, and that the extending reading difficulty which appeared in last year's paper was not repeated.

Areas in which candidates performed well

The markers felt that the quality of responses throughout the paper were generally of a very high level; there were many very well answered questions. With very few exceptions, candidates were able to complete the whole paper in the time available. Excellent resources were highlighted in questions 1a and 1b.

Areas that were particularly well done were:

- ◆ Question 1a) — interpretation of the Ardnamurchan Peninsula map
- ◆ Question 1c) — interpretation of the Crete Excursions information.
- ◆ Question 2a) — the booking form was completed well by many candidates.
- ◆ Question 6 as a whole — candidates were able to respond very well about the positive and negative aspects of tourism. There was a good understanding of responsible behaviour with regard to Sustainable Tourism.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Some candidates found the following areas difficult:

- ◆ Q1d): climate information — not well interpreted by some candidates.

- ◆ Q2a) — candidates experienced arithmetical problems, despite the availability of a calculator. This was particularly evident in the calculation of the total cost and the deposit.
- ◆ Q3a)/b) and Q4a)/b) — A small minority of candidates either did not use the atlas or have poor atlas-reading skills.
- ◆ Q3c) — some candidates were poorly prepared for the UK destination Fact File.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

There is evidence that the candidates in this examination have, in general, been very well prepared throughout the session, and that teachers and tutors have spent a considerable amount of time on preparation for the examination. This is good practice and should be continued for future candidates.

However, there is evidence that a proportion of candidates find some topic areas to be unfamiliar — suggesting that some shortcuts may have been adopted in the teaching process. Areas affected by this include the full range of subject terminology; the Booking Form; practice in the use of atlases; and development of Destination Fact Files in the UK and overseas.

In line with advice given in previous years, some centres might benefit from additional work in the following areas:

- ◆ Practice with using a variety of different timetables and calculating journey times.
- ◆ Practice with calculating journey times from known distance and speed.
- ◆ Practice with completing booking forms with a variety of different layouts.
- ◆ Carefully calculating the different constituent parts of necessary holiday costs for the booking form
- ◆ Further practice in identifying places on maps and correctly plotting places on maps — using a Senior School atlas.
- ◆ Descriptions of journeys from home to destination address.
- ◆ Practice of analysis of holiday problems to ensure all necessary pieces of information are supplied to enable a solution.
- ◆ More time should be spent researching destinations at home and abroad and presenting this information in a concise format.
- ◆ Further training in the necessary subject terminology.

**Statistical information: update on Courses
Intermediate 1**

Number of resulted entries in 2012	1031
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Number of resulted entries in 2013	867
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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 100				
A	51.1%	51.1%	443	70
B	24.5%	75.5%	212	60
C	15.0%	90.5%	130	50
D	2.1%	92.6%	18	45
No award	7.4%	100.0%	64	-

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.