



External Assessment Report 2012

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

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. The number of candidates sitting the examination in 2012 was 207 higher than last year. The marks ranged from 1% to 93%.

Markers felt that there was evidence of an increase in the amount of reading required in the paper this year when compared to previous years, and this made additional demands on some candidates. This was taken into account when setting the grade boundaries.

Areas in which candidates performed well

The markers felt that the quality of responses throughout the paper was generally of a very high level, with few exceptions. The majority of the candidates coped well, and there were many very well answered questions.

Areas that were particularly well done were:

- ◆ Question 2b — identifying possible excursions in a holiday destination (Barcelona).
- ◆ Questions 3 and 4 — the map-work questions and destination information.
- ◆ Question 5 as a whole — but particularly Q5b, the options for holiday money; Q5d, the extra element involved in Winter Sports holidays; and Q5e, the additional preparations before going on holiday.
- ◆ Question 6 — 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 camping.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Reading demand was a possible issue, for some candidates, identified in Q1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3d and 6a.

Some candidates found the following areas difficult:

- ◆ Q1a — some candidates had difficulty interpreting the bus timetable.
- ◆ Q1b — some candidates had difficulty with journey time calculation.
- ◆ Q1e — climate information was 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 deposit.
- ◆ Q3a/b and Q4a/b — candidates either did not use the atlas or had poor atlas reading skills. Loch Fyne was missing from some atlases, but this may have been a Junior School Atlas — we were unable to verify. Some candidates were not clear about the distinction between Country and City.
- ◆ Q3d — some candidates did not complete the journey from home to venue.
- ◆ Q5c — candidates are not giving enough detailed information to receive the marks.
- ◆ Q5g — candidates were unable to give all of the details required. This is a fundamental part of problem-solving in the Holiday Issues unit.

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 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 and Destination fact files.

Some candidates 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 2011	835
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Number of resulted entries in 2012	1031
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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	43.8%	43.8%	452	68
B	27.0%	70.8%	278	56
C	15.9%	86.7%	164	45
D	5.2%	91.9%	54	39
No award	8.1%	100.0%	83	-

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.