



External Assessment Report 2012

Subject(s)	Travel and Tourism
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

There was a marginal decrease in candidate performance, with the overall percentage of candidates gaining grades A–C slightly down from 67.1% in 2011 to 64.7% in 2012. The number of candidates achieving an upper-A grade remained the same, but there was a drop of 5% in the total number of candidates achieving a lower A grade. Aside from this, the general distribution of marks was not greatly different from 2011, and there was a broadly similar cohort of candidates to previous years.

Evidence from markers suggests that the question paper was accessible to most candidates. However, markers commented that very few candidates achieved full marks or provided developed answers for Question 4a). This was discussed and taken into account when setting the grade boundaries.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Candidates performed well in:

- Question 1 (a) Explaining the concept of travel and tourism
- Question 2 (b) Describing the main developments in travel and tourism
- Question 2 (c) Identifying the reasons for the growth of travel and tourism
- Question 2 (d) Identifying current trends in tourist activities
- Question 3 (a) Classifying tourism providers
- Question 3 (c) Understanding employment opportunities in travel and tourism
- Question 4 (b) Describing the impact of travel and tourism activities
- Question 5 (a) and (b) Understanding the effectiveness of leaflets for marketing
- Question 6 (c) Understanding the importance of advertising for businesses
- Question 8 (a) Understanding the importance of body language
- Question 8 (c) Explaining the benefits of practicing good customer service
- Question 9 (a) Describing current industry practice of ICT
- Question 9 (b) Demonstrating knowledge of the use of ICT in travel and tourism
- Questions 10, 11 and 12 Identifying a specified selection of tourist destinations
- Question 13 Explain how a tourist destination is suitable for a holiday specification
- Question 15 (a) – (d) Accurately describing Paris or Amsterdam as a tourist destination

Areas which candidates found demanding

Candidates found difficulty in:

- Question 1 (b) Understanding the concept of business tourism
- Question 1 (c) Understanding the importance of business tourism
- Question 3 (b) Explaining what is meant by a publicly funded organisation
- Question 4 (a) Matching the use of services and facilities to consumer groups
- Question 4 (c) Identifying reasons why facilities may be closed in winter
- Question 6 (a) and (b) Understanding the effectiveness of adverts for promotion
- Question 7 (a) Explaining the concept of green tourism

Question 7 (b) Explaining how a green tourism award could be achieved by a business
Question 8 (b) Describing the key principles of customer service
Question 14 Describing the accessibility, attractions and amenities of a winter sports resort
Question 15 (e) Explaining current trends in tourist destinations with reference to city breaks

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

It is evident from the areas that the candidates performed well in that centres are continuing to maintain a high standard of teaching in these areas. Significantly, the *Destinations* Unit is generally being better answered by more candidates than previously. However, there were a number of centres where the destinations questions were poorly answered by all candidates, and it should be noted that the list of destinations in the course arrangements should be strictly adhered to, to give the candidates the best chance of success. The winter sports question was not well answered, and this is an area that would benefit from being given more consideration in future.

Some attention to the following areas could also further enhance candidate performance:

- ◆ business tourism
- ◆ green tourism practice
- ◆ key principles of customer service
- ◆ use of promotional materials in travel and tourism
- ◆ ICT applications in travel and tourism (particularly current usage)

There is a tendency for candidates to write the bare minimum, providing answers that are often vague and lacking in detail. Centres need to ensure that candidates are encouraged to give full and developed answers in the paper. This is especially true in questions on the impact of tourism, customer care and market research and promotion, as one-word answers for these are unlikely to gain marks.

Centres should continue to give due consideration to their presentation policy, as it appears that a number of candidates were incorrectly entered for Intermediate 2 when they could have perhaps had a greater chance of success at Intermediate 1 Travel and Tourism.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Intermediate 2

Number of resulted entries in 2011	607
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Number of resulted entries in 2012	583
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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	10.5%	10.5%	61	69
B	22.8%	33.3%	133	59
C	30.5%	63.8%	178	49
D	11.7%	75.5%	68	44
No award	24.5%	100.0%	143	-

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.