



External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Travel & Tourism
Level(s)	Higher

The statistics used in this report are prior to the outcome of any Post Results Services requests

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

It is a great delight to report that there was a significant increase in presentation numbers compared to previous years — 138 entries, whereas in 2013 it was 87, (2012 had 97 and 2011 79). The number of centres was eight, one more than last year and the same as in 2012. There was one new centre and one returning centre.

The proportion of candidates achieving Grade A – C was 51.4%; Grade D was 9.4% and No Award was 39.1. There were no candidates gaining a Grade A Band 1; this seems to be a recurring issue. Lower Grade A, Grade B and C are fairly consistent with previous exams, with the bulk of candidates in the Grade C category at just over 25%. 10.1% of candidates achieved a Grade D, and a significant number (39.1%) gained a 'No Award' — the highest since 2011.

Despite the high percentage falling into the combined 'Grade D' and 'No Award' category, there is ample evidence, from those candidates who have learned their work, that their responses reflect a high standard of teaching from the eight centres, and once again this is encouraging to see.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Questions 3 and 4 were answered very well overall and this reflects the quality of information imparted to the candidates and the fact that these two questions in particular can be prepared for very well.

Question 5(a) and (b): candidates showed good knowledge of mapping.

Question 7: there were many good responses throughout this question, but too many candidates lost a few marks over basic mapping and tourist destination information.

Question 8: overall this question was answered well and candidates demonstrated that they learned key information relating to the places.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Question 1(c)(ii) and Question 2(a) and (b): Candidates demonstrated a lack of knowledge when it came to providing information on the role/function/activities of organisations.

Question 6(b): Once again the itinerary proved to be difficult for many candidates with many 'clutching at straws', demonstrating a lack of learning of key tourist areas.

Question 8(a)(i) and (b)(i): consistent with previous exams, responses to location description not accurate/specific enough.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Candidates who have revised and learned the material showed breadth and depth in their answers, underpinning the quality of delivery of the course arrangements by the centres.

The same issues cropped up in the 2014 exam as in previous years, and centres are well aware of the type of questions that pose problems, eg itinerary in Question 6.

As the exam is very knowledge-based, it is important that candidates spend time learning the material and centres delivery of course work and pedagogy reflect the nature of the exam.

Incorporating the most recent past papers/marking schemes into teaching methodologies would hopefully prove beneficial, along with the comments made in the report last year.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	86
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	138
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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	10.9%	10.9%	15	70
B	14.5%	25.4%	20	60
C	25.3%	50.7%	35	50
D	10.1%	60.9%	14	45
No award	39.1%	-	54	-

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.