



External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Travel and Tourism
Level(s)	Intermediate 2

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

There was an increase in candidate performance, with the overall percentage of candidates gaining grades A–C slightly up, from 68.6% in 2013 to 71.8% in 2014.

Notably, the number of candidates achieving an A grade had increased from 16.7% in 2013 to 22.6% in 2014, with 2.5% of these being an upper-A, compared to 1.1% last year. This was supported by centre estimates, which predicted an increase in performance.

Evidence from both examiners and markers clearly suggests that this was a fair exam that presented a similar challenge to candidates as in previous years. The questions functioned well to assess the level of demand and course coverage that was expected. It was felt that overall candidates performed well throughout the paper.

Areas in which candidates performed well

- ◆ Question 1: Most candidates were able to explain the concept of travel and tourism.
- ◆ Questions 3 and 4: The history questions were very well answered.
- ◆ Questions 6 and 7: The questions on marketing and promotion were also well attempted.
- ◆ Questions 10–16: The destinations section was better attempted than in previous years.

Areas which candidates found demanding

- ◆ Question 2(a)(i): Some did not know the differences between chartered & scheduled flights.
- ◆ Question 2(b)(i): Many did not know what ‘the hospitality sector’ meant.
- ◆ Question 2(b)(ii): Few were able to explain the meaning of the symbol for the B&B.
- ◆ Question 5(a): Some were writing about environmental reasons instead of economical.
- ◆ Question 5(b): Candidates were not good at giving detail on ways to reduce impacts.
- ◆ Question 8(a) and (b): Answers on customers’ complaints were very vague, lacking detail.
- ◆ Question 14(a): Many candidates were not able to choose a correct scenic/coastal area.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

The marking team felt that there was a big improvement in overall performance, with more candidates passing and more passing well. It is therefore evident that there is a high standard of teaching and learning taking place in a large number of centres.

It is also clear that the majority of candidates are now better prepared to tackle the destinations unit of the course, as the answers in this part of the paper were generally better attempted than they have been in the past. There certainly appeared to be far fewer centres

whose candidates did not have the required product knowledge to be able to tackle the destinations questions.

The general feeling of the marking team is that some candidates need to be encouraged to try and give more detail in their answers, as well as clearer explanations for their answers. This was particularly evident in the questions relating to both customer service and ICT in the Business Practices Unit — answers in both of these areas tended to be far too vague. For example, for Question 9(b) which was asking for ways technology could be used as an alternative to paper brochures, a one-word answer simply stating ‘website’ or ‘internet’ is not enough. Candidates need to go a step further and say what could be on the website that would bring the holiday to life, eg virtual tours, photographs, videos, customer reviews.

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

- ◆ The differences between chartered and scheduled flights.
- ◆ The economic impact of travel and tourism activities.
- ◆ Methods that can be used to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment.

Centres should also 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 more success at Intermediate 1 Travel and Tourism.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	663
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	562
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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	22.2%	22.2%	125	70
B	22.4%	44.7%	126	60
C	26.2%	70.8%	147	50
D	8.9%	79.7%	50	45
No award	20.3%	-	114	0

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.