



External Assessment Report 2014

Subject(s)	Urdu
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

Overall the candidates performed well especially in the Reading and directed Writing paper. The Markers were happy to see that the performance was on a par with previous years.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Most candidates were able to answer the questions in the Reading and Listening components of the paper well.

Candidates performed well in the reading component with Questions 2, 6 and 7 being answered fully by most candidates.

The improvement in short essay writing by candidates identified last year was again evident this year. Candidates produced good essays for the Directed Writing which in previous years was deemed demanding by some candidates.

In the Listening component candidate performance was also satisfactory. Candidates were able to identify demanding details such as: 'Tourism and Hospitality Degrees' as additional qualification for the job of an Air Hostess.

Areas which candidates found demanding

The markers felt the paper had performed as expected. Candidates did find some of the questions in the reading paper demanding, but these questions were purposefully included in the paper to discriminate between the A and C type candidates.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

As with last year's advice, it is recommended that teachers should emphasise the importance of exam techniques. Candidates should be reminded to use the line numbers, which prompt where answers can be found.

- ◆ Candidates should be reminded to translate the full passage, not just the opening and closing sentences.
- ◆ Candidates should answer the Reading and Listening sections components in English.
- ◆ Transliteration is not acceptable at Higher level.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	109
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	103
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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	77.7%	77.7%	80	70
B	5.8%	83.5%	6	60
C	7.8%	91.3%	8	50
D	1.0%	92.2%	1	45
No award	7.8%	-	8	-

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.