



## External Assessment Report 2011

Subject	Urdu
Level	Higher

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**

It was pleasing to note that candidates performed so well in Listening. Teachers had clearly prepared candidates well by encouraging them to listen to the whole text and to refer to specific sections to answer the questions appropriately.

## **Areas in which candidates performed well**

The Writing element in the Listening/Writing paper was also well done. Candidates were well prepared and made use of key points from the Listening text in the essay.

## **Areas which candidates found demanding**

No area was found to be particularly demanding. However, some candidates found Listening Question 4 (b) and Question 5 demanding, and the resultant answers lacked sufficient detail and were not well expressed.

## **Advice to Centres for preparation of future candidates**

Some candidates wrote detailed essays in Urdu but the corresponding answers to the English sections of the paper were disappointing as they were not well expressed and lacked the accuracy required at this level.

Teachers should ensure that candidates are fully prepared for all sections of the final examination.

### **Reading**

Teachers should remind candidates to refer to the specific lines of the paper for Translation. Only the required lines should be translated, not the entire Reading passage.

### **Directed Writing**

Candidates should be encouraged not to write over-long answers in the Directed Writing section. Candidates should aim for clarity and accuracy within the number of words required.

### **Listening**

Candidates should be reminded that they may jot down notes while listening to the text. They can then use this to develop their answers to the question paper during the time allocated.

**Writing**

Teachers should ensure that candidates are fully prepared for the Writing section of the paper with regular and relevant practice.

**In general**

Teachers should remind candidates to read and answer questions on all pages of the Question Paper. Candidates must not omit the last page of the paper.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2010	89
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Number of resulted entries in 2011	92
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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	85.9%	85.9%	79	70
B	4.3%	90.2%	4	60
C	3.3%	93.5%	3	50
D	3.3%	96.7%	3	45
No award	3.3%	100.0%	3	-

## **General commentary on grade boundaries**

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions that 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, though, very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Each year, therefore, SQA 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 Head of Service 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.