

Moderation Feedback - Central

Assessment Panel:

Chemistry

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
included in this report**

Chemistry: Standard Grade

Central Moderation

General comments on central moderation activity

Overall, the standard of candidate evidence was good and assessment applied by centres was in line with national guidelines. A minority of centres accepted very poor diagrams and submitted investigation booklets which had not been marked.

Specific issues identified

Techniques

There was widespread evidence of internal moderation which ensures a consistent approach to assessment of candidate evidence and streamlines the central moderation event. Many centres clearly indicate why marks have been awarded or deducted; this is of great help to moderators. In all cases it was clear where comments had been added by the centre. No old-style sheets were seen and all centres indicated how marks were divided between safety, manipulation and write-up.

Investigations

Very few centres had allowed candidates to investigate variables which were not viable, a marked improvement on last year. Detergents, Current/Voltage and Inks are by far the most common but some centres are running more interesting investigations, e.g. Displacement, Sulphur and Exothermic.

Feedback to centres

Techniques

1. One centre had incorrectly transferred marks from the techniques sheet to the moderation flyleaf.
2. Diagrams were often very small, contained few (if any) straight lines and were not cross-sectional. The acceptance of “closed off” test and delivery tubes in a course exam. is understandable as the time allowed in an exam. is short and skills other than the drawing of diagrams are usually being tested. The Practical Techniques, however, should not be quite as rushed and the drawing of clear, labelled diagrams is one of the specific skills being tested. Given these facts it is not unreasonable to expect diagrams to be drawn using a ruler and pencil, for them to be cross-sectional and of a reasonable size.
3. A substantial minority of centres are using Practical Technique record sheets which give considerable guidance to candidates e.g. E1 (Preparing compounds), questions as pointed as “What colour and shape are the crystals?” give little room for an independent record of observations.

Investigations

1. Marks are still being awarded for RR3d when the candidate has not indicated which variables have been kept constant.
2. A small number of non-standard investigation booklets were seen. These did not have appropriate space to record marks for each of the Investigative Skills Objectives. The use of such booklets is detrimental to candidates as it is not always clear whether the individual objectives have been overtaken.
3. Investigation booklets were seen which had not been completely marked. Criteria had been left unmarked yet ‘phantom’ marks for these criteria had been added to the total recorded on the front cover. In one instance the booklet had been neither signed nor dated by the class teacher. The best practice of internal moderation would have identified and corrected these errors.
4. If a centre has Techniques evidence but the candidate had not undertaken any Investigations then the candidate must be awarded a grade 7 for Practical Abilities.
5. A very small minority of centres are accepting work from their candidates which is well below the national standard. In these cases marking is often careless; arithmetic, scales, units and plotting of points on graphs have not been checked so undeserved marks have been awarded.
6. Within individual centres the standard of candidate evidence accepted by class teachers can vary. In a minority of cases the variations are considerable. Whilst there was evidence of internal moderation of Techniques there was less evidence of internal moderation of Investigation booklets. Centres may find it instructive to carry out an annual internal moderation exercise on evidence provided for both Techniques and Investigations.