

Chemistry

Appeals Feedback to Centres 2002

The following is a summary of common reasons for unsuccessful appeals.

1. Information missing

- (a) assessment instrument(s)
- (b) marking instructions or criteria
- (c) candidate evidence
- (d) mark or grade on candidate evidence
- (e) cut-off scores.

2. Issues relating to the validity of the assessment instrument and/or marking scheme

- (a) Sufficiency of evidence: knowledge and skills not adequately sampled.
- (b) Sufficiency of evidence: 'prelim' concentrates on early part of course; no additional evidence.
- (c) Level of demand of evidence: tasks/questions set at too low a level (do not meet grade descriptions).
- (d) Level of demand of evidence: mark allocation over-generous.
- (e) Level of demand of evidence: cut-off score(s) set too low.
 - This is often because of insufficient differentiating questions or over-generous allocation of marks to questions or because of a marking scheme which is over generous in terms of demands required to gain the marks.
- (f) Integration: insufficient activities requiring knowledge to be retained over extended period of time.

3. Issues relating to the reliability of the assessment decision

- (a) Concerns that the assessment is in the public domain and may have been seen by candidate
 - Use of the specimen paper and questions in it should be avoided since the paper is available on the SQA website together with its marking scheme and therefore its use calls into question the reliability of the assessment.

- Use of questions from past papers which are available from commercial publishers together with the marking schemes should be avoided. Questions should be adapted as much as possible and care should be taken to select from as wide a variety of sources as possible when compiling an assessment instrument.

- (b) Too much of the assessment is based on a single past paper.
- (c) Ambiguities or technical errors in some questions and marking scheme.
- (d) Problem in application of marking scheme: inconsistencies in interpretation.
- (e) Problem in application of marking scheme: leniency in interpretation.
- (f) Problem in application of marking scheme: clerical errors in addition of scores.

4. Chemistry specific issues

- (a) Over allocation of marks to one skill eg selecting information from data booklet, formulae, calculations, balancing equations.
- (b) Under allocation of marks to one skill eg selecting information from data booklet, formulae, calculations, balancing equations.
- (c) Lack of balance across PCs/topics covered by the assessment.

For National Qualifications

- No evidence for course work for Unit 3 supplied: evidence for an appeal must cover all component units of the course.
- NAB tests do not provide evidence of attainment at course level
- High scoring NAB evidence for the unit not covered in the 'prelim' can only support an appeal for Grade C
- Low scoring NAB evidence for Unit 3 does not support appeal for C Grade
- Appeals for Grades A and B require evidence of course attainment of the appropriate grade for all units in the course.

For Standard Grade

- No general evidence provided so grade 3 cannot be awarded
- Candidates cannot be given an amended grade at a level higher than the paper taken.

Recommendations to centres

Centres are referred to:

- External Assessment CD Rom (HSDU in conjunction with SQA and Media Matters; Distributed by Learning and Teaching Scotland, January 2001)
- The document: *Guidance on generating evidence for National Course Estimates and Assessment Appeals* Second edition Feb. 2001- publication code A0992/2.
- The letter issued to centres from Hugh Gordon in Feb 2002 with *Notes of guidance for Centres on the Appeals process and on the preparation of evidence to support estimates and Appeals* which is also available on the SQA website on www.sqa.org.uk.