



2015 Biology (Revised)

Advanced Higher Investigation Report

Finalised Marking Instructions

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015

The information in this publication may be reproduced to support SQA qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is to be used for any other purposes written permission must be obtained from SQA's NQ Assessment team.

Where the publication includes materials from sources other than SQA (secondary copyright), this material should only be reproduced for the purposes of examination or assessment. If it needs to be reproduced for any other purpose it is the centre's responsibility to obtain the necessary copyright clearance. SQA's NQ Assessment team may be able to direct you to the secondary sources.

These Marking Instructions have been prepared by Examination Teams for use by SQA Appointed Markers when marking External Course Assessments. This publication must not be reproduced for commercial or trade purposes.

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>1 Presentation (3 marks)</p> <p>The Report has a logical structure appropriate to the Investigation and must include:</p> <p>(a) (i) an appropriate and informative title</p> <p>(ii) a contents page</p> <p>(iii) a brief summary stating the overall aim(s) and finding(s) of the Investigation.</p> <p>(b) (i) references are cited in text with entries made in a standard way</p> <p>(ii) acknowledgements <u>where appropriate</u>.</p> <p>(c) The Report is clear and concise.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>No half-marks</p> <p>The title should make it clear what the study is about, eg not “Pollution and plants”; “Effect of garlic on lipase” is OK.</p> <p>Contents page is essential and there must be page numbers listed here and present throughout the report. Do not penalise occasional missing page numbers – eg on hand- drawn graphs.</p> <p>Summary must be clearly indicated and must be separate from the Introduction. Aims <u>and</u> findings must be present (even if not high quality).</p> <p>Minimum of three different sources – texts, journals or websites. At least two sources must be from books or journals. Where website information cannot be attributed to a specific author, the citation should refer to the organisation responsible for the web output. When listed, a website reference must indicate the date the site was visited. Strict marking for minimum three references/sources given in standard form. See AHB Candidate Investigation Guidance (2012-2013) for standard forms. Do not penalise if not alphabetical.</p> <p>Do not award if three different references are not cited in text in the format specified. Acknowledgements/citations following lifted images may not count as references.</p> <p>Assistance given by external agencies, eg consultation with University/research staff or access to facilities should be acknowledged.</p> <p>The Report structure should be easy to follow and must include an introduction, procedures, results and discussion.</p> <p>Word limit of up to 2500 is for guidance only. Penalise excessive length only if repetitive/irrelevant.</p>

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>2 Introduction (4 marks)</p> <p>This section must include:</p> <p>(a) a clear statement of the aim(s) of the Investigation <u>together with</u> relevant hypotheses or questions.</p> <p>(b) an account of the underlying biology in which terms are used accurately and ideas are clearly explained.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Aims and hypotheses/questions must be explicitly stated.</p> <p>The candidate should provide enough information in this section to allow an appropriate level of analysis, interpretation or discussion of results.</p> <p>There are three elements to judge:</p> <p>(i) the background theory must be relevant; ie the information must clearly link to the aims</p> <p>(ii) biological terms/ideas are explained clearly and accurately</p> <p>(iii) the biological importance is justified. The candidate must address issues that explain why the study is worth doing.</p> <p>Copying of lengthy sections of original text should not be rewarded.</p>

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>3 Procedures (8 marks)</p> <p>(a) The procedures are appropriate to the aim(s) of the Investigation.</p> <p>(b) The procedures are clearly described and in sufficient detail to allow the Investigation to be repeated.</p> <p>(c) The procedures are at an appropriate level of demand for Advanced Higher Biology in relation to:</p> <p>(i) controls and control of variables</p> <p>(ii) replicates and sample size</p> <p>(iii) complexity and accuracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complexity of methods/inputs/outputs • creativity and originality • pilot study or experiments based on previous findings • accuracy/modifications of protocols to improve accuracy or reliability 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<p>In broad terms do the procedures allow the aims to be achieved?</p> <p>Omission of a small number of <u>minor</u> details should not be penalised. Safety issues should only be considered if they have a bearing on validity/reliability etc. Bulleted/numbered points only acceptable if statements are meaningful and coherent.</p> <p>Appropriate controls should be employed and relevant variables kept constant.</p> <p>Has measurement error been considered or estimated by taking repeated measurements? Has account been taken of natural variation in replicates or samples? Are there appropriate repeated measures and/or replicates?</p> <p>Has the candidate used a complex protocol or difficult techniques for this level of work? Has the candidate investigated an area of biology unfamiliar to them?</p> <p>Has the candidate generated a novel way of using a simple procedure, or extended it?</p> <p>Has the candidate developed experiments based on previous findings or carried out a pilot study?</p> <p>Credit can be given here for the development of appropriate methods that nevertheless turned out to be fruitless.</p> <p>Procedures/ apparatus used need to be able to deliver an appropriate level of accuracy to test the Aims.</p> <p>Do not give credit for simply identifying procedures as inaccurate or inadequate; modifications should have been considered.</p> <p>Similar or repetitive protocols by several candidates from a single centre will incur a penalty for lack of originality.</p>

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>4 Results (4 marks)</p> <p>(a) (i) The results are relevant to the aims of the investigation.</p> <p>(ii) Readings (raw data) are recorded and are within the limits of accuracy of measurement.</p> <p>(b) Raw and processed results are presented in a clear and concise manner with appropriate use of tables, graphs, diagrams and calculations.</p> <p>(c) In descriptive components of the work, observations are detailed, suitably recorded and, where appropriate, quantitative.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Extensive raw data may be recorded in an appendix. Penalise if no raw data are presented to enable checking of processed results.</p> <p>Penalise average results with an excessive number of decimal places or a claimed degree of accuracy greater than that of the raw data.</p> <p>Are tabulation and graphical presentation appropriate: consider</p> <p>(i) if the graphs and tables chosen are appropriate for linking the data and the Aims</p> <p>(ii) if the quality of presentation is adequate, including headings/units/scales/ labels/clarity.</p> <p>Computer generated graphs should be appropriate to the aims and <u>have suitable scales</u>.</p> <p>Data presented should summarise the overall results. Where raw data are presented in an appendix, any graph of processed data must be <u>supported by an appropriate table</u> in the body of the report.</p> <p>Award up to three marks to include (a) (ii) – i.e. consider observations as raw data.</p>

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>5 Discussion (6 marks)</p> <p>(a) (i) The overall conclusions relate to the aim(s) of the Investigation.</p> <p>(ii) The overall conclusions are valid for the results obtained.</p> <p>(b) The evaluation of the procedures addresses such points as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accuracy of measurement • adequate replication • adequate sampling • adequate controls • sources of error in relation to measurements • the ways in which problems encountered in the Investigation were dealt with • the ways in which procedures have been modified to improve the Investigation. 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Descriptions of trends and patterns in results tables or graphs should be related to the aims or used to draw conclusions on the work as a whole</p> <p>If an essential variable has not been controlled then conclusions will not be valid. This mark is not awarded where candidates fail to appreciate the significance of an uncontrolled variable or where variation in replicate results clearly casts doubt.</p> <p>The inclusion of replicates and controls is a pre-requisite at the planning stage in the Unit assessment so the absence of these in Procedures is a major omission. Candidates cannot achieve marks here simply by noticing that replicates or controls were omitted and by going on to discuss their use as examples of improvements.</p> <p>Award two marks for evaluations that consider the aspects of experiment design that have most bearing on validity of conclusions. It is appropriate to emphasise positive aspects of the investigation design as well as negative ones.</p> <p>Award only one mark if a major aspect of the procedures that compromises validity has not been considered, eg the inadequacy of replicates, controls, sample size.</p>

Category	Marks	Notes
<p>5 (c) The evaluation of the results addresses such points as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• analysis and interpretation of the results • significance of the findings discussed in a critical and scientific manner.	2	<p>Work lacking complexity/demand is unlikely to score in this section where treatments do not offer much scope for meaningful evaluation.</p> <p>Discussion here is expected to be critical/analytical. Variation in results obtained from replicates and the degree of accuracy of results should be discussed. Candidates need to show awareness of the role of replicates in judging the reliability of mean values and apparent trends. Credit can be given for attempts to carry out statistical evaluation.</p> <p>In discussing the Investigation outcomes, candidates should make effective use of their biological knowledge, drawing particularly on the background they presented in the Introduction section. Credit should be given for discussion that attempts a critical evaluation of the Investigation as a whole and can include meaningful suggestions for further work.</p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]