



External Assessment Report 2015

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|------------|------------------------------|
| Subject(s) | Classical Studies |
| Level(s) | Intermediate 1 and 2, 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

Intermediate 1 and 2

Candidates performed very well at both levels and results were very good — in fact the best ever. Clearly, teachers had prepared their pupils very well and pupils enjoyed the topics chosen for the courses.

Higher

Overall the performance was excellent. The results were the best ever thanks to the commitment and hard work of the teachers and pupils. Accessing marking guidelines for previous years is helpful and gives confidence to all those involved.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Intermediate 1 and 2

Candidates performed very well in Classical Drama and Classical Mythology, as always.

Higher

Performance in Classical Drama, especially in the questions on 'Antigone' and 'Medea', was excellent. Many candidates scored full marks.

Section 1: Candidates answered very well in both Power and Freedom and Religion and Belief, showing the wide extent of their knowledge and the ability to analyse the sources.

Section 2: Again a very strong performance, especially in questions 5 on citizenship, and 7 on the status and lifestyle of women; also in questions 9 on Mystery religions and 12 on death rituals.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Intermediate 1 and 2

There were no areas of difficulty at either level. The only problem in Intermediate 2, Section B, question 4, concerning the evidence of the Roman occupation of Scotland was that some candidates thought Hadrian's Wall was in Scotland.

Higher

There were no particular problems identified with this paper.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Performance was very encouraging at all three levels, which bodes well for the future of Classical Studies. Much praise should be given to the teachers and candidates for all their hard work and commitment.

Accessing marking guidelines for previous years has proved very successful over the past few years, and so advice to new teachers would be to refer to these guidelines for newly implemented N5 and Higher courses and encourage their pupils to do the same.

Intermediate 1

Statistical information: update on Courses

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2014 | 11 |
|------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Number of resulted entries in 2015 | 2 |
|------------------------------------|---|

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

| Distribution of Course awards | % | Cum. % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark - 50 | | | | |
| A | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0 | 35 |
| B | 50.0% | 50.0% | 1 | 30 |
| C | 50.0% | 100.0% | 1 | 25 |
| D | 0.0% | 100.0% | 0 | 22 |
| No award | 0.0% | - | 0 | - |

Intermediate 2

Statistical information: update on Courses

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2014 | 103 |
|------------------------------------|-----|

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|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2015 | 28 |
|------------------------------------|----|

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

| Distribution of Course awards | % | Cum. % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum Mark - 75 | | | | |
| A | 50.0% | 50.0% | 14 | 52 |
| B | 28.6% | 78.6% | 8 | 44 |
| C | 17.9% | 96.4% | 5 | 37 |
| D | 0.0% | 96.4% | 0 | 33 |
| No award | 3.6% | - | 1 | - |

Higher

Statistical information: update on Courses

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2014 | 49 |
|------------------------------------|----|

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|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2015 | 58 |
|------------------------------------|----|

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 | 79.3% | 79.3% | 46 | 210 |
| B | 13.8% | 93.1% | 8 | 180 |
| C | 5.2% | 98.3% | 3 | 150 |
| D | 1.7% | 100.0% | 1 | 135 |
| No award | 0.0% | - | 0 | - |

Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher

The Course assessment functioned as intended, therefore no adjustment to grade boundaries was required.

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.