



## External Assessment Report 2015

Subject	Creative Cake Production
Level	Intermediate 2

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors 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 assessment and marking instructions for the examination.

## **Section 1: Comments on the Assessment**

### **Component 1: Practical Activity**

Learners demonstrate their skills knowledge and understanding by: baking decorating/finishing a variety of cakes, using specialist tools /equipment with dexterity and flair, overall presentation/finishing of final cakes for assessment. In addition they demonstrate effective organisational skills while working safely and hygienically.

The Course component performed as expected, with many candidates attaining high marks.

This was the final year for Creative Cake Production, with only four centres offering the award. Candidates were well prepared for this course and had a very good understanding of the criteria for assessment.

## **Section 2: Comments on candidate performance**

### **Component 1: Practical Activity**

Candidates performed well in most instances. The cakes presented and associated documentation were of a high standard and met SQA requirements.

Candidates' interpretation of the design briefs demonstrated complete understanding of the practical assignment requirements. Designs were constructed with flair and imagination; finishing techniques were executed to a very good standard with many exceeding the requirements.

Project proformas were completed to a very good standard, typed and neatly presented. Evidence showed good research, planning, and appropriate self evaluation. Written evaluative comments were appropriate, and photographic evidence supported all stages of final cakes.

Centres' mark allocations were appropriate and met the award criteria. Assessors' comments justified where marks had not been awarded. Assessors provided written feedback and encouraging comments to all candidates.

## **Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well**

### **Component 1: Practical Activity**

Candidates performed well in practical activities and in completing the written proformas.

All candidates were familiar with the research and planning of the practical assignment. In general, projects were well researched, and design plans accurately matched the chosen brief.

Design drawing is an essential part of the planning and attracts high marks. Candidates had been encouraged to draw designs to scale, showing top and side elevations. The addition of colour is not mandatory, but all designs had been coloured which helped candidates to visualise what the end result should look like.

The use of ICT and additional support materials proved helpful at the planning stage.

Cake production and cake decorating techniques had been taught to high standards by very experienced staff. The finishing techniques demonstrated a wide range of creativity flair and imagination

Many innovative approaches were used to inspire candidates and enhance learning. These included: Internet research, YouTube video clips, demonstration CD's, external demonstrators, a wide range of books and monthly cake magazines, as well as staff offering lunchtime and after-school practice workshops.

## Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	844
Number of resulted entries in 2015	72

## Statistical information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark - 200				
A	51.4%	51.4%	37	168
B	41.7%	93.1%	30	144
C	5.6%	98.6%	4	120
D	0.0%	98.6%	0	108
No award	1.4%	-	1	-

Although the assessment was considered to be on standard there was evidence that the structure of the marking instructions may be causing Centres to award marks generously in some areas. As a result, the grade boundaries were moved up 10 marks across upper A, A and C to compensate for this.

## 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.