Moderators' Report

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel Entry Level Certificate In Science (NSC0)

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The number of entries for this qualification has continued to grow considerably. A wide variety of Centres are making good use of the qualification with candidates achieving results ranging from very few marks to almost full marks.

Administration

Failure by a number of Centres to follow the administrative requirements resulted in a considerable amount of extra work for moderators, Centres and Edexcel personnel. A significant number of Centres omitted one or more of the following items from their sample; a copy of the completed EDI/Edexcel Online printout, completed Assessment Record sheets, signed Authentication sheets, the work of the highest and lowest scoring candidates where this did not fall within the pre-selected sample ticked on the EDI. (For further details of the administration/Moderation process, see Section 6.1 of Entry Level Certificate in Science – 'Getting Started Guide'.) There was also a significant number of Centres that submitted their coursework after the deadline which, as is customary, was May 15th.

Three further points that Centres should note are:

- NSC0 ELC Science and NSF0 ELC Science are two separate qualifications. Candidates can be entered for both these qualifications or just one of the qualifications but care must be taken to submit the correct papers for each qualification. For the NSC0 qualification the papers are Biology, Chemistry and Physics papers 1A/1B and for the NSF0 qualification they are Biology, Chemistry and Physics papers 2A/2B. Papers from the two schemes cannot be combined or mixed to achieve a result. (Key aspects of the GCSE Combined Science Papers 1, 3 & 5 subject content are reflected in the NSC0 qualification and key aspects of the GCSE Combined Science Papers 2, 4 & 6 subject content in the NSF0 qualification.)

- An entry of '0' on the EDI indicates a candidate has attempted one or more of the papers but has failed to achieve a mark. A candidate with a zero score will automatically become an example of the Centre's lowest scoring candidate, the work of whom must be submitted for moderation. If a candidate has been entered for the qualification but has not sat any papers then an 'X' should be recorded on the EDI and not a '0'.

- When a candidate is withdrawn and was one of the pre-selected Centre sample (ticked on the EDI), the work of an alternative student should be sent to maintain the moderation sample size.

Unit tests

Strict adherence to the mark schemes and guidance for marking is essential for consistency to be maintained across Centres.

The marking of the tests was generally clear and accurate. However, there were a number of Centres where it was difficult to follow where marks had been awarded. Marking is clearest when a tick is used to indicate each mark awarded. Circled marks/question totals should then match the number of ticks. Where it is not already established practice, it would assist moderation if Centres would adopt a policy of marking in a colour that contrasts with that used by the candidates.

Once again this year there were a surprising number of errors made in totalling up Test scores and Assessment Record sheets. Internal moderation is a practice to be encouraged and would have greatly reduced these occurrences.

Where necessary individual feedback was given to Centres about marking but points which cropped up more frequently were:

Paper 1 Q1a It is essential the arrow labelling the nucleus of the sperm cell touches or ends within the nucleus.

Q4c Although handwriting can vary there must be a clear distinction between 'F' and 'f' for the awarding of marks in this question.

Paper 2 Q6b A list of specific points are given in the mark scheme. More general statements like 'eat a healthy diet' should not be credited.

Paper 3 Q1b The question refers to the first modern periodic table produced by Mendeleev, therefore the answer is 'properties' and not 'atomic number'.

Q7 The relative charge of the proton is +1 not 1.

Paper 5 Q7 For the second mark it is important that the student points out the result is significantly/very different to the other groups' results. Reiterating the values or stating it is 'lower' or 'is in the 200's' is insufficient. 'Much lower' would be acceptable.

Paper 6 Q5c/d Apart from the final marking point, answers should include a reference to UV light for a mark to be awarded.

Reproducing the test papers in A5 format is not recommended. For questions involving graphs it becomes impossible for candidates to demonstrate the accuracy required to achieve the marks involved.

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