

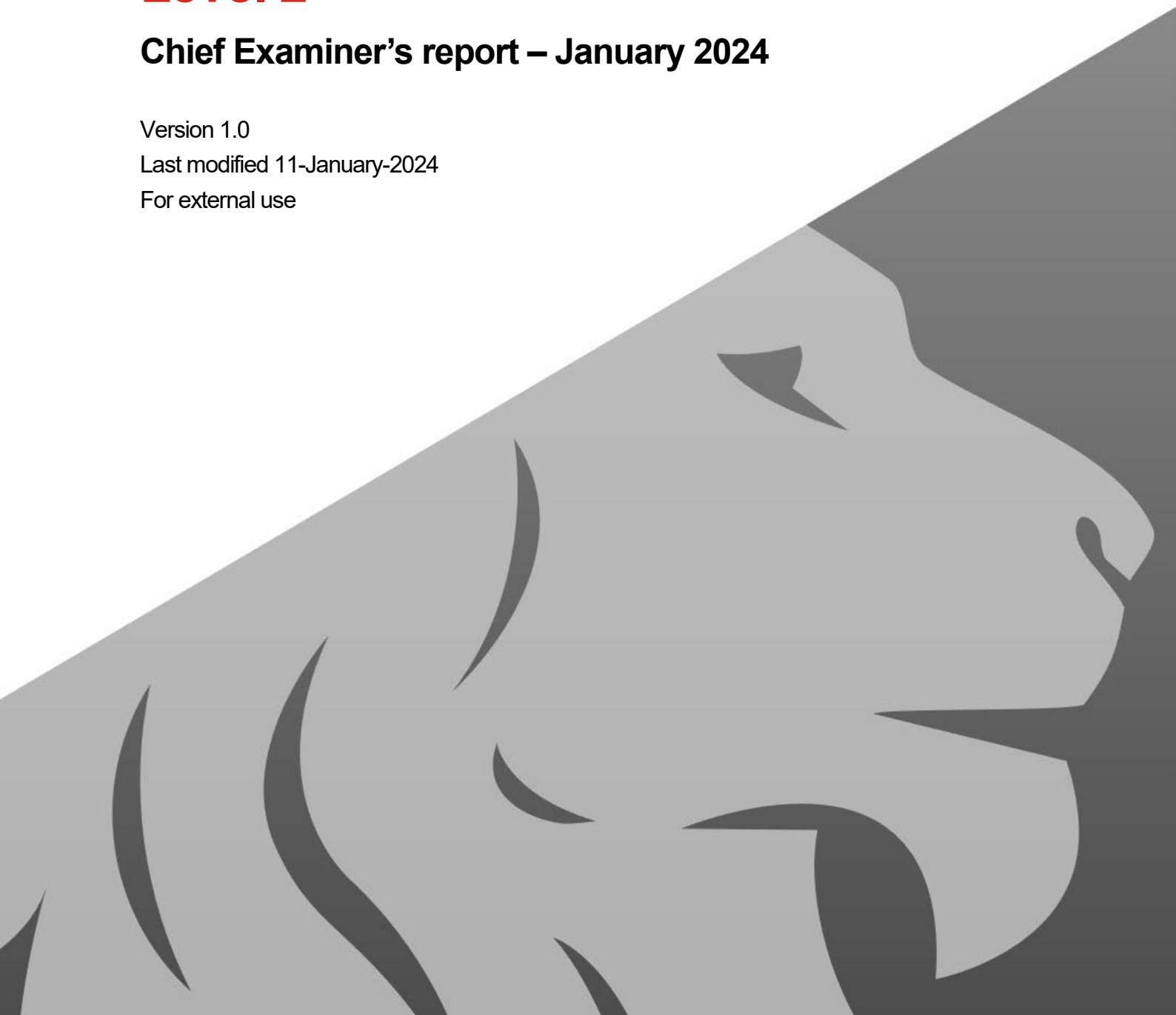
4800-121 Essential Skills Application of Number Level 2

Chief Examiner's report – January 2024

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide centres with feedback on the performance of candidates for 4800-121 Essential Skills Application of Number Level 2.

This report covers the period from April 2023 to October 2023.

The Chief Examiner's Report has been provided as a result of feedback from centres, to give them guidance in preparing candidates for examination.

2. Overall Performance

2.1. Areas of good performance

A good level of basic numeracy skills has been demonstrated on both tasks.

Candidates have shown proficiency at calculating suitable **averages and range** for sets of data. Most candidates have also shown a good understanding of **fractions and percentages**. Numerical skills have also been used effectively for **solving problems** in Task 1. Performance on questions involving **area** has also been strong.

There has been a significant improvement in the number of candidates performing accurate **checks** of calculations. Checking calculations requires candidates to use a different method from the original calculation, usually reverse calculations or approximation.

There has also been a considerable improvement in candidates' responses to measurement questions, particularly those involving **scale measurements** and **conversions of units**. A good understanding of scales and how to use them has been demonstrated across the range of Level 2 papers.

There has been a satisfactory response to questions requiring the use of **formula, using tables, tree diagrams, ratio, fractions and interpreting trend lines**.

2.2. Areas for development

Overall, candidate performance is weakest in the following areas:

Pie Charts. The majority of candidates have failed to carry out the necessary calculations for drawing pie charts. Many candidates either made no attempt to calculate the angles for the chart or used incorrect data.

Explaining suitability of average type. Candidates are struggling to provide satisfactory explanations for the type of average used. Reference is too often made to the ease of calculation or to the details of the calculation method. Candidates need, instead, to be confident at knowing the advantage of their choice of average based on its accuracy. For example, reference to extreme values not affecting the result is a good justification for using the median. Reference to all data being used is a good reason for the choice of mean.

Range. Interpretation of the range is poorly attempted with most candidates unable to make accurate statements relating to the consistency of data. Some responses mention that a high figure for range indicates low consistency/high variety of data or that a low figure for range indicates high consistency/low variety of data. Whilst these statements are correct, the candidates must ensure that they relate them to their value for the range.

Expressing increase as a percentage. The ability to express an increase as a percentage was mixed with most candidates achieving either full marks or no marks. This may be considered one of the more challenging Level 2 topics. However, with study it should be expected that most candidates would achieve at least part marks for attempting the method.

Volume. The candidates' ability to calculate volume has been mixed. The most common error made is the failure to ensure that all dimensions have first been converted to the same units. Even when the need for **conversions within the same system** are recognised, the candidates are struggling to perform the calculation correctly. Some candidates also fail to attempt questions on volume at all suggesting that they may not know the formula required for finding it.

Units. Some candidates are giving answers in incorrect money format, eg an answer of £73.50 written as £73.5 will be penalised.

Presentation of results. The presentation of results in charts has been done extremely well by most candidates. However, there are common reasons why some candidates fail to achieve full marks for charts:

Charts / graphs:

- fail to label axes, particularly the vertical axis
- do not construct a continuous linear scale on the vertical axis
- fail to start the vertical scale at zero (bar chart only).

3. Recommendations and Advice for Centres

Centres should carefully consider whether a candidate is operating at an appropriate level for entry at Level 2. Unfortunately, there have been a small number of candidates who were clearly not at the standard required.

There has been a lack of working out shown on a significant number of papers. Candidates who have failed to provide a correct answer are, therefore, missing out on compensation marks. It is recommended that the candidates show as much working out as possible.

Some candidates are using the extra space for workings and answers at the back of the exam papers. It is advisable that the candidates indicate when they have done this on the relevant answer section of the paper.

Centres should advise candidates about appropriate 'exam technique' particularly with regard to attempting Tasks in order. Candidates may attempt Tasks in any order and it may be to a candidate's advantage to start with Task 2 or 3 rather than Task 1.

4. Additional Information

Centres should be aware that pass marks may vary from paper to paper as a result of an awarding process undertaken by City & Guilds. Any difference in pass marks reflects the perceived and actual difference in demand of the exam papers.

Therefore, it is possible that two candidates with the same score may have different overall results (pass or fail) if they sat different papers.

The indicative pass mark ranges can be found in the ESNI Specification, which can be found on the City & Guilds website.