



Course report 2022

Subject	Physical Education
Level	Advanced Higher

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report 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 documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any appeals.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2022	1050
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	26.3	Cumulative percentage	26.3	Number of candidates	275	Minimum mark required	70
B	Percentage	27.2	Cumulative percentage	53.5	Number of candidates	285	Minimum mark required	59
C	Percentage	24.8	Cumulative percentage	78.3	Number of candidates	265	Minimum mark required	48
D	Percentage	17.1	Cumulative percentage	95.4	Number of candidates	180	Minimum mark required	37
No award	Percentage	4.6	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	50	Minimum mark required	N/A

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in appendix 1 of this report.

In this report:

- ◆ 'most' means greater than 70%
- ◆ 'many' means 50% to 69%
- ◆ 'some' means 25% to 49%
- ◆ 'a few' means less than 25%

You can find more statistical reports on the statistics page of [SQA's website](#).

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Project

The project component performed as expected.

Performance

The performance component performed as expected. A range of activities was verified. Centres appear to have embraced the chance to allow personalisation and choice in the activity chosen by candidates. The marking instructions allowed for a full range of marks to be accessed. Very few centres were outwith the tolerance in marking the performance and these centres took on board the feedback given to ensure that they were in line with the national standard.

The live assessment verification was welcomed in centres. In some centres the verification was completed through live assessment on the day of the visit and in others it was completed from video evidence of the live assessment.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Project

Stage 1(a)

Most candidates investigated performance using a range of tests and analytical tools and successfully explained the appropriateness of their selected methods. Some candidates used many generic and/or unrelated methods and, as a result, did not establish a focused topic.

Stage 1(b)

Candidates whose analysis led to a clearly identified focus for their project performed well in this section. Some candidates did an overview of a number of factors, and this impacted negatively on the marks that could be awarded.

Stage 2(a)

Most candidates successfully conducted research by reviewing appropriate sources. Some candidates did not use recognised methods of referencing.

Stage 2(b)

Most candidates found this section demanding. The analysis is expected to focus on the implication and impact that the information presented in 2(a) will have on the creation of the Personal Development Plan. Focus on the impact on performance in this stage of the project is not appropriate as this leads to repetition of past (section 1b) and future (section 4a) analysis.

Stage 2(c)

Many candidates set and justified a range of appropriate targets. The maximum of four targets was frequently exceeded — credit could only be given to the best four.

Stage 3

Most candidates produced a summary of their Personal Development Plan in the main text and made reference to a detailed record of Personal Development Plan implementation contained in the appendices.

Stage 4(a)

Candidates found this section demanding — this was often as a result of the limited nature of the data gathered. For example: many candidates used Performance Wheels as a data gathering method and frequently this did not give them enough information for detailed analysis. However, some candidates successfully used this method to support and form connections with other methods.

Stage 4(b)

This section was well done by many candidates who carefully evaluated their Personal Development Plan. Some candidates made judgements which did not reflect the work undertaken in the Personal Development Plan or the post-Personal Development Plan data analysis and as a result could not be awarded marks.

Stage 4(c)(i)

Some candidates failed to support the justification for the new development need(s) by using information gathered from the post-Performance Development Plan analysis and/or evaluation of the Personal Development Plan — as a result they were awarded no marks.

Stage 4(c)(ii)

Many candidates offered explanations, and showed understanding, of how meeting new development need(s) could have a positive effect on the other three factors that impact performance.

Performance

Candidates performed very well with many achieving full marks.

Verifiers reported that they observed some excellent performances. Overall, centres were able to provide suitable contexts for assessment. The context for the single performance event must be challenging, competitive and/or demanding.

Candidates provided information on their composition, tactics or roles in a variety of ways including discussion and written information. Personalisation and choice led to strong performances in this component of the course. There were no reports of candidates having difficulty accessing marks in any particular assessment item of the marking instructions.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Project

Selection of project focus

Candidates should review their performance and select a specific performance issue to focus on throughout the study.

Candidates may select focused topics where, potentially, several factors may be considered. For example:

- ◆ specific performance issue — improving my start in swimming may be related to technique, fitness and confidence which would be incorporated within a Personal Development Plan covering the relevant factors
- ◆ specific performance issue — improving my tackling in hockey may include consideration of strength, speed, decision making and tactical considerations
- ◆ specific performance issue — improving my backhand in tennis may include consideration of agility, strength, timing and court positioning

Alternatively, candidates may select linked factors, for example:

- ◆ improving my power and reducing my anxiety in gymnastics
- ◆ improving my mental toughness and cardiorespiratory endurance in basketball

In these cases, care must be taken to ensure that a clear connection between the two factors is shown throughout the project.

The creation of two projects (for example one on power and one on anxiety) is not acceptable and will result in credit being given to only one of these topics.

Selection of activity

Candidates must select a performance issue related to an activity. The activity should come from the acceptable activity instructions from SQA. Candidates should state their activity. It is not acceptable to focus solely on a training issue. For example, strength can be the main focus if it is shown to be an important factor in a rugby performance. Building muscles to improve strength is not acceptable without the activity performance focus.

Centres should ensure that candidates carry out work which:

- ◆ allows them to 'demonstrate their ability to work independently'
- ◆ is sufficiently open and flexible to allow 'personalisation and choice' in the selected activity.

If candidates need more than what is thought to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Appropriate referencing

Any recognised method of referencing is accepted; however candidates are advised to use footnotes.

Performance

A key aim of the Advanced Higher course is to enable candidates to develop their ability to demonstrate a broad and comprehensive range of complex movement and performance skills in one activity, in a challenging context. Candidates should select, demonstrate, apply, and adapt these skills and use them to make informed decisions. As they develop their knowledge and understanding of how these skills combine to produce effective outcomes, candidates should develop consistency, precision, finesse, control and fluency of movement as they respond to, and meet, the demands of performance in a safe and effective way.

To set it apart from normal learning and teaching activities, the assessment of this single performance must take place in a context which is suitably challenging for an Advanced Higher-level candidate thus allowing the opportunity to access the full range of marks.

Guidance can be found on SQA's website to help teachers, lecturers and assessors decide which activities are acceptable for assessment.

Where verification took place from a video of the live performance, a number of centres provided a very detailed assessment record. Some included the time at which a skill or decision or other relevant item had taken place or a clear description of why a passage of performance had been credited. Other centres had overlaid a commentary on the video to allow justification of the marks awarded. While this is not a requirement, it gave these centres an excellent record of why the marks were awarded and could be used for reference in the future.

Appendix 1: general commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim when setting grade boundaries is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

For most National Courses, SQA aims to set examinations and other external assessments and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional grade C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional grade A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level. Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and to make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Members of SQA's Executive Management Team normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors utilise their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the discussion at these meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more, or less, difficult than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- ◆ Where levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year on year. This is because the specific questions, and the mix of questions, are different and this has an impact on candidate performance.

This year, a package of support measures including assessment modifications and revision support, was introduced to support candidates as they returned to formal national exams and other forms of external assessment. This was designed to address the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching that young people have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, SQA adopted a more generous approach to grading for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses than it would do in a normal exam year, to help ensure fairness for candidates while maintaining standards. This is in recognition of the fact that those preparing for and sitting exams have done so in very different circumstances from those who sat exams in 2019.

The key difference this year is that decisions about where the grade boundaries have been set have also been influenced, where necessary and where appropriate, by the unique circumstances in 2022. On a course-by-course basis, SQA has determined grade boundaries in a way that is fair to candidates, taking into account how the assessment (exams and coursework) has functioned and the impact of assessment modifications and revision support.

The grade boundaries used in 2022 relate to the specific experience of this year's cohort and should not be used by centres if these assessments are used in the future for exam preparation.

For full details of the approach please refer to the [National Qualifications 2022 Awarding—Methodology Report](#).