



Course report 2022

Subject	Health and Food Technology
Level	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	1245
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	16.5	Cumulative percentage	16.5	Number of candidates	205	Minimum mark required	70
B	Percentage	24.4	Cumulative percentage	40.9	Number of candidates	305	Minimum mark required	59
C	Percentage	26.8	Cumulative percentage	67.7	Number of candidates	335	Minimum mark required	48
D	Percentage	19.1	Cumulative percentage	86.8	Number of candidates	240	Minimum mark required	37
No award	Percentage	13.2	Cumulative percentage		Number of candidates	165	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

Question paper

The question paper covered a broad range of course content, with many candidates performing well.

The question paper performed as expected with reports from markers and general feedback from centres highlighting that the paper was accessible to all candidates. The paper allowed candidates the opportunity to access marks through the normal style of questioning and good course coverage.

Some candidates mistakenly completed all questions which resulted in responses that lacked the depth of knowledge required at Higher level.

It was evident that some candidates had been presented at the wrong level, given the lack of detail within some candidates' responses.

Assignment

Both briefs were well received and accessible to all candidates this session. The most popular brief was 'develop a savoury dish for the school canteen which is high in fibre'.

Markers observed a wide range of marks and quality of responses from candidates across both briefs.

Again, it was evident that in some cases, candidates had been presented at the wrong level, given the lack of detail within responses, particularly their research.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper

Question 1(b)

Many candidates coped well with the Dietary Reference Value (DRV) question. Many candidates effectively analysed the diet of the 70-year-old male, using an appropriate answering technique to do so.

Candidates who performed well in this question showed a good understanding of the nutritional needs of the 70-year-old male and the contribution the meal made to his diet.

Question 2(b)

The star profile question was answered well by some candidates. These candidates provided evaluative responses that showed an understanding of the sensory attributes linked to the muesli and yoghurt breakfast pot.

Question 3(a)

Many candidates showed a reasonably good understanding of the inter-relationship between calcium, phosphorous and vitamin D, as well as vitamin C and iron.

Assignment

Section 1(b): research

Many candidates provided quality research using appropriate techniques that were demonstrated correctly and provided a valid source. Presentation of research was also good, with information being presented logically and clearly.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper

Question 1(c)

Candidates' knowledge of the effects of osteoporosis on health was limited, resulting in many being unable to access the full allocation of marks. Many candidates explained the causes of osteoporosis instead of explaining the effects on health.

Question 1(d)

In many cases, candidate responses to this question lacked the depth of knowledge required and were therefore unable to access the full range of marks available.

Question 2(c)

Candidates' knowledge of Food Standards Scotland was poor, and many candidates were unable to access the marks for this question.

Question 3(c)

Candidates' knowledge of food additives and their uses in food production was poor, with many candidates only being awarded one of two marks.

Question 4(a)

In many cases, candidates' knowledge of functional properties of ingredients was poor, as they were unable to explain the impact the functional properties of these ingredients would have on a lemon meringue pie.

Question 4(c)

Most candidates' knowledge of the Trading Standards department was very poor, and they were unable to access the marks for this question.

Question 5(a)

Many candidates poorly answered the current dietary advice question. Responses were not evaluative and did not always refer to a piece of current dietary advice.

Question 5(c)

Candidates' knowledge of genetically modified food was poor, and many were unable to access the marks for this question.

Assignment

Section 1(a): identifying a range of key issues from the brief

Many candidates did not fully justify the key issues which they identified. Although they were able to identify the key issues correctly, they were unable to go on to provide clear justifications of each issue, for example high fibre.

Section 1(b): research

Some candidates carried out more than two pieces of research.

Section 2(b): justifying an appropriate food product based on information generated from the research and relevance to the brief

Many candidates found this section challenging. Candidates provided justifications for features and ingredients that repeated a previous justification.

Many candidates also provided a feature that was derived from part of the brief, for example, 'high in fibre'. This is not a feature of a product, and candidates must avoid providing features that come directly from the brief.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Centres must use the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding information within the course specification to prepare candidates for the question paper. This document identifies the content to be covered across the course. It is advisable to use this as a planning tool when delivering the course.

Candidates should be given more experience of answering exam-style questions with optionality included, in the correct time allocation.

From this year's question paper, evidence suggests that knowledge was exceptionally poor in some areas, particularly consumer organisations and technological developments. Candidates must ensure that they revise all aspects of the course content in preparation for the question paper, and centres should ensure that they provide candidates with regular opportunities to practise questions from these areas of the course content.

In the Dietary Reference Value (DRV) question, candidates should be taught to correctly analyse the diet of the individual mentioned in the question. Candidates should not simply identify a function of a nutrient identified within the table. They must provide a clear impact of the nutrient intake on the individual mentioned in the question, and the relevance to his or her age or stage.

Candidates should not offer a suggestion of an alternative food item; they must make direct reference to the foods included in the meal.

It is important that candidates only analyse three nutrients. Some candidates attempted to provide more than three analyses; this is not recommended, as it results in responses that lack the required detail.

In the star profile question, candidates should provide an evaluative response that provides a complete fact demonstrating a clear understanding of the rating relating to the product, in some cases, candidates did not do this.

Assignment

Centres must ensure that they follow the course modifications for this session and that candidates are given the correct advice for completing the research.

Assignments must be completed using the pro forma provided by SQA, and should not be completed in any other format.

Unfortunately, it was noted again this year that many assignments were sent to SQA incomplete or with missing pages. Centres should ensure that all work completed by the candidate is sent to SQA for marking. If pages are missing, candidates may be unable to access all of the marks. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure all work is included.

Centres must take care to ensure that candidates are given access to the correct briefs. In some cases, candidates used a brief that was not one of the two briefs provided by SQA.

The product being developed must reflect the key issues within the brief. For example, if the brief states that a savoury dish has to be produced, then care must be taken to ensure that the final product is a savoury dish. In this case, a sweet product would not be an acceptable final product.

Centres should ensure that the questions, layout and results are different when candidates are undertaking research and investigations. Although candidates may use the same research technique, for example a questionnaire, the content, layout and points of information must be different. It is not good practice to allow candidates in the same centre to carry out almost identical research.

Research should not be teacher-led and must be individual to each candidate, allowing them to progress and develop an individual product. Centres must take care to ensure they do not provide too much scaffolding for candidates.

Candidates should use appendix 3 of the course specification to seek clarity over carrying out research.

Candidates must present individual results and should not use percentages to summarise results.

For section 2(a): Describing the product, the recipe must be written to include metric measurements. All ingredients must be included in the recipe. Recipe methods should be very clear, allowing the product to be produced with identical results. Portion sizes and cooking methods and times should be included.

Candidates must ensure that for section 2(b) justifications are not repetitive, and they need to use a variety of information generated from their research to justify each feature and ingredient.

Assignments should not be stapled together but inserted into the clear-faced flyleaf provided by SQA.

Each assignment must have a completed flyleaf at the front, and it is essential that it is signed by the candidate.

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](#).