



Course Report 2015

Subject	Hospitality: Practical Cookery
Level	National 5

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

The course assessment is a practical activity. Candidates create a time plan and service details in advance of the activity; this accounts for 15 of the 100 marks available.

The marking instructions were judged to be overly generous against the assessment standards for the Course and, after a review of quantitative and qualitative data gathered on the performance of this year's candidates, the grade boundaries were raised. As a result, work will be undertaken to review the marking instructions to ensure appropriate levels of challenge at SCQF 5. The amended marking instructions will be made available in due course.

Candidates and teaching staff reported that it was a good choice of recipes this year. Considerable time and care is taken to present appropriate recipes which can offer the candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a range of skills, techniques and processes. This was achieved this year.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Practical activity

Overall candidates have performed well this year. A number of visiting verifiers reported that some candidates would have benefited from more preparation time.

When presenting candidates for visiting verification activity, centres should aim for a range of candidates to support the observation of the national standard at differing levels. A number of centres presented their highest-performing candidates and therefore did not gain any experience in identifying poorer performing candidates, until they were marking by themselves. Centres are encouraged to consider this for future, given the support being offered during the verification visit.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Practical activity

Most candidates managed to complete the task within the given timescale to the desired standard.

Most candidates followed effective time plans to create a successful outcome for the practical activity.

Most candidates performed well in creating the first course. The pea puffs were well handled in the majority of cases.

Most candidates created very good whisked sponges, which they layered as per the recipe.

Most candidates handled the whisking of the cream effectively, avoiding over-whisking.

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Practical Activity

A small number of candidates could have improved their knife skills, ensuring that the onion was evenly diced and small enough to be enclosed within the parcels.

A small number of candidates struggled to create effective time plans, and they were given a centre-devised time plan. This should only be done when the candidate's efforts would disadvantage their performance in the practical task. Centre-devised time plans should not be given to candidates who have created effective versions themselves. Candidates should ensure they have a visible copy to follow during the practical activity.

A small number of candidates found the handling of the meatballs demanding, with some not achieving the desired result.

A small number of candidates found the ganache challenging, however most finished gateaux had some form of ganache on them. In order to gain the mark for coating, there should have been no sponge showing.

A small number of candidates found the preparation of the orange segments challenging. The segments should have been free from membrane and an adequate number to use in both layers of the sponge. Candidates should have shown minimal waste — this was open to debate, as it depended on the size of oranges and the formation of the segments within. There should have been very little flesh attached to the skin.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Practical Activity

Candidates should be encouraged to use their time plan throughout the practical activity, recognising its benefits. They should be encouraged to review and memorise the plan in advance, so they need only to glance at it during the activity. Many candidates fall behind due to reading the plan a number of times, unsure of what it is suggesting or losing their place. Colour-coding can prove helpful, or a typed version, as often it is their handwriting candidates find difficult to decipher. Centres should ensure candidates use their own version and not a centre-devised version, unless it is totally unrealistic.

A small number of candidates used UHT cream. This is not permitted in this course assessment as it offers an advantage to the candidates as it does not over-whisk. No ingredients must be altered, unless a request has been agreed with SQA in advance.

During the planning stage all candidates must work under examination conditions; some centres are still not adopting this approach.

During the implementing stage the marks should be awarded for weighing and measuring the prepared weights, the 5 marks should not be awarded if the candidate is not observed reweighing as requested.

While preparing the starter, candidates may have benefited from creating a pre-prepared template for cutting out the pastry squares; this would have reduced the time taken by some to carry out this task.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	561
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Number of resulted entries in 2015	1609
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark - 100				
A	41.6%	41.6%	669	84
B	34.6%	76.2%	557	72
C	17.1%	93.3%	275	60
D	3.2%	96.5%	52	54
No award	3.5%	-	56	-

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 5 marks across upper A, A and C to compensate for this.