Course Report 2016

Subject	Care
Level	National 5

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component: project

This was the third cohort to submit National 5 Care projects. Candidates selected from all three briefs available. However, there were instances of centres using the old project guidelines from 2015.

The majority of projects submitted were of a good standard, with well interpreted briefs. All centres included the log book, which is mandatory.

Adhering to the word count of between 3000–4000 words was variable, as some teachers/lecturers/candidates interpreted the sections included in different ways. Centres should refer to the revised Course Assessment Task document for clarification in this respect.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Summary of Candidate Performance

Component: project

Overall, candidates performed well in 2016.

In section 1, the action plan was generally well executed. Most candidates gained marks from their evidence for Section 1(a) 1 (b) or 1 (c). The range of individuals chosen was diverse, with teachers/lecturers using innovative ways to engage candidates in selecting a client. Examples of individuals selected included the SQA case studies on the 'Taylor family', celebrities and media articles, clients that learners have worked with during placement, and some from personal experience. If a teacher/lecturer is distributing a case study for candidates to work from, it is important that they check that it allows the candidates enough scope to develop the project fully and access all available marks.

Candidates were better than in 2015 at including details of the tasks and timescales relating to the three stages of the project.

Care was taken by all candidates to maintain the confidentiality of their chosen individual. If candidates issue questionnaires or conduct interviews as part of their research, sensitive and personal information must remain confidential and anonymous. If information regarding an individual comes to light that would indicate they are unsafe in any way, candidates should be informed how to alert a teacher/lecturer who would pass this information to an appropriate agency if required.

The Evaluation section was improved from 2015. However, not all candidates evaluated the project research and write-up process. This was viewed more as a list of what worked well or not, with little evaluative comment. A few candidates discussed passing the evaluation to the

teacher/lecturer for marking prior to submission. The Evaluation is conducted under controlled conditions, and under no circumstances should it be reviewed prior to submission to SQA.

It would be useful for centres to deliver more direction on evaluative skills.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component: project
Candidates performed well in the following assessment items:

1(a)	Although different approaches were applied, most candidates gave a clear description of the chosen individual and were able to explain why they were a suitable choice for the brief.
1(b)	Lengths of response were mixed. Some candidates gave detailed timescales while others were brief. The majority of candidates included all three stages.
1(c)	The majority of candidate responses were good, with a mixture of relevant sources used.
2(a)	Most candidates answered this item fully. However, a few did not give a description of the needs of the individual. Others did not link the need to the chosen individual.
2(f)	This item attracted good responses from the majority of candidates.
2(g)	If candidates followed the layout of the brief and completed each section, the 2 marks were easily achievable.

3(a) 3(b) and 3(c)
The majority of candidates gave a clear evaluation, but not all referred to the plan or the log. Some candidates gave statements rather than evaluating.

Areas which candidates found demanding
Candidates found the following assessment items challenging:

2(b)	There was a mixed response from candidates for this item. Candidates found it difficult to give a detailed review of the psychological theory, and there was little linking of the feature identified to explain aspects of development and behaviour of the chosen individual.
2(c)	Some candidates described sociological influences rather than concepts. Linking the impact to the individual was poor.
2(d)	The majority of candidates described services rather than the feature of the positive care environment. Some spoke of the care worker, for example

Physiotherapist, and their role rather than the feature of the positive care environment. Clarification is required on the definition of the organisational aspect of the service. Some candidates had discussed comfy chairs and piped music rather than the policies, aims and objectives, and staff training opportunities. Candidates who had experienced work placement or worked in a care setting answered this question fully.

2(e)   There was mixed response to item 2(e). If items 2(a) 2(b) and 2(c) were accurate, this question was answered well. However, some scored low marks in this question as they had not grasped the component theories and concepts to link these to application. This was the most challenging aspect and was poorly executed by some candidates.

2(b), 2(c) 2(d) Some candidates had difficulty applying theories to their chosen individual.

Section 3: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component: project
Candidates should be reminded that evidence should be in their own words and that referencing of sources is essential.

Candidates will produce a log book throughout the duration of the project. This log must be submitted as a mandatory piece of evidence with the project, but it will not be marked and is not included within the word count for the project.

It is good practice for teachers/lecturers to discuss and agree the chosen individual with the candidate before commencing the project. Some candidates selected individuals who were inappropriate, and did not provide enough detail to allow the candidate to follow the brief and access all available marks.

Item 2(e) *Using two of the psychological theories you have described in 2(b), explain how a care worker in any of the services you have mentioned in 2(d) could demonstrate and apply positive care practice with your chosen individual.* This is a complex question to understand, and candidates need advice and guidance on how to break this item into the component parts.

It is important to give candidates guidance on how to evaluate in their responses, and the difference between evaluation and a statement.

It is important to read the *Setting, conducting and marking of assessment* section of the Course Assessment Specification. Centres should **not** mark the care project prior to submission (it was evident with some evaluations that this had been done). The production of evidence for the evaluation section is carried out under controlled conditions.

Candidates should adhere to the stipulated word count, and footnotes/appendices should only be used to support information included in the project (for example tables of figures,

graphs, statistics, questionnaires, transcripts of interviews, pictures). Footnotes/appendices cannot be used to add information that should be submitted within the word count.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	561

Number of resulted entries in 2016	808

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	34.5%	34.5%	279	70
B	23.9%	58.4%	193	60
C	21.8%	80.2%	176	50
D	5.7%	85.9%	46	45
No award	14.1%	-	114	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

♦ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

♦ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.

♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

♦ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

♦ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.

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