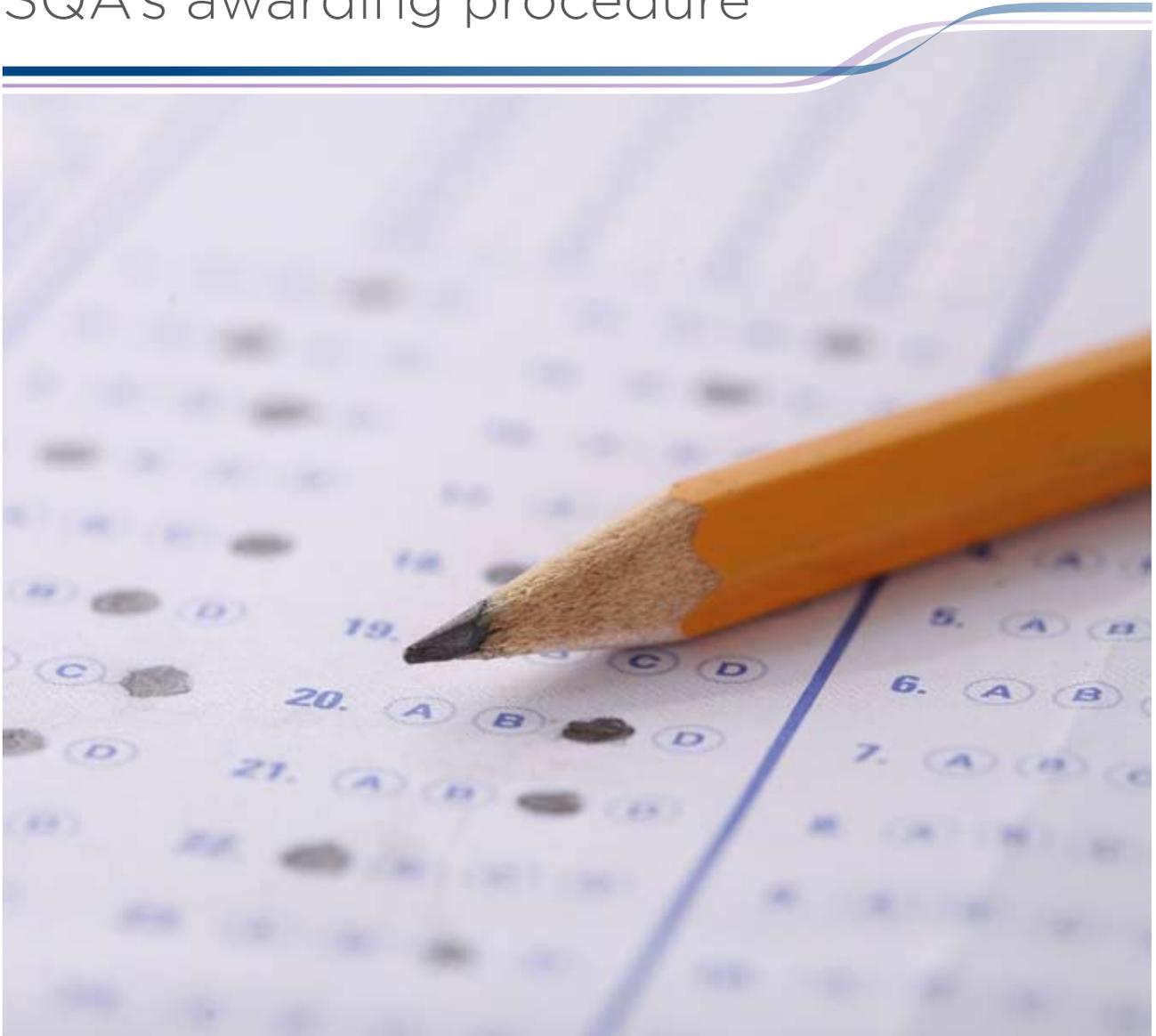


Setting the Grade

SQA's awarding procedure



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1. *What are grade boundaries?*

Grade boundaries are the marks needed in order to achieve a particular grade for a course. SQA reviews these grade boundaries each year to ensure exam results are fair across the whole of Scotland, year on year.

2. *Who decides on the grade boundaries?*

Senior SQA staff meet with subject specialists so that they can talk about whether the **course assessment** was set at the right level of difficulty. For example, sometimes a question can prove to be more difficult due to the way it was worded. When this happens, we rely on the subject specialists and statistical information to justify whether the question was more difficult, or indeed easier than intended.

Did you know?

A course assessment can be an exam, coursework or a combination of both. We call these parts of course assessment the “assessment components”.

3. *How do we decide on the grade boundaries?*

In order to determine how difficult a course assessment was, we review a range of information such as:

- Feedback from markers
- Information on learners' marks achieved at course, **assessment component**, and, in some cases, question level
- Learner assessment answer booklets

This information allows us to establish the level of difficulty of the course assessment.

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Did you know?

There are 7 possible assessment components:

- assignment
- practical activity
- portfolio
- question paper/test
- case study
- performance
- project

4. *Are grade boundaries the same for every course?*

No, each course will have separate grade boundary decisions made for it each year.

5. *How will SQA set grade boundaries for the new National 5 courses?*

There is no difference in the way we will make grade boundary decisions for the new National 5 courses. We will consider the intended demand of each National 5 course assessment and whether or not it proved more or less difficult than expected to ensure fairness to all candidates.

6. *Does SQA report on grade boundary decisions?*

Yes, we will post information on our **website** showing what decisions were made once certificates have been sent to learners.

Grade boundaries 2014

A complete list of all the grade boundaries set for subjects will be published in August 2014.



If you would like any further information on SQA's awarding procedures please contact our Customer Contact Centre:

Tel: 0345 279 1000

E-mail enquiries: customer@sqa.org.uk

it can
be done 