



## Course report 2019

Subject	Hospitality: Practical Cookery
Level	National 5

This report provides information on the 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 post results services.

## **Section 1: comments on the assessment**

This report should be read in conjunction with current supporting documentation. For the 2019–2020 session these include:

- ◆ 2019 past paper and marking instructions
- ◆ 2019 practical activity instructions for centres and for candidates
- ◆ Practical cookery qualification verification summary report (June 2019)

Centres are reminded that they should not confirm dates and times for the practical activity until they have heard from SQA to determine whether they have been selected for visiting verification. This date is usually at the end of January each year.

### **Component 1: question paper**

This year was the second year of the question paper to assess candidate's breadth of knowledge from across the course, their depth of understanding, and the application of this knowledge and understanding. Candidates overall achieved better marks this year, and the question paper performed in line with expectations. Feedback from the marking team and from practitioners suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of course coverage and overall level of demand.

Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of course content but some still struggled with the depth of understanding that is required at this level. There was a marked improvement in exam technique when answering questions. However, explain and evaluate questions are still causing difficulty for a large number of candidates.

### **Component 2: assignment**

All centres used the published SQA recipes to carry out the assignment.

This was also the second year that the planning stage of the coursework assessment task was submitted to SQA for marking. Candidates were expected to write a logical plan of work, requisition minimal equipment and give service details on how they would prepare and serve the three recipes.

This year saw an improvement in the marks achieved by candidates in all three sections of the assignment. However, many candidates are not achieving marks due to a lack of detail in their responses.

### **Component 3: practical activity**

All centres used the published SQA recipes to carry out the practical activity.

The practical activity was of similar demand as previous years, and therefore met with expectations. Candidates achieved slightly higher marks than last year, but this was in line with their results across the other two components.

## **Section 2: comments on candidate performance**

### **Areas that candidates performed well in**

#### **Component 1: question paper**

Most candidates attempted all questions in the question paper.

- ◆ Question 1(a): most candidates were able to access a range of marks linking to current dietary advice
- ◆ Question 1(c): naming an appropriate garnish and preparation technique
- ◆ Question 2(d): linking to weighing and measuring of ingredients

#### **Component 2: assignment**

Candidates achieved the most marks in the service details for each dish section. Candidates who chose to draw and label their diagrams tended to achieve higher marks than those candidates who chose only to provide a description.

#### **Component 3: practical activity**

The overall marks submitted for candidates remains high, and the majority of candidates performed well.

### **Areas that candidates found demanding**

#### **Component 1: question paper**

Questions that required the candidate to either explain or evaluate their response were poorly completed, with a high percentage of candidates achieving few marks in these areas.

- ◆ Question 1(b): very few candidates achieved any marks for question 1(b) as they did not appear to understand the benefits of poaching or, if they did, they failed to explain it.
- ◆ Question 1(d): many candidates achieved marks for identifying how the ingredients should be stored, but few candidates could explain the reason for this.
- ◆ Question 2(a): few candidates were able to explain three benefits of buying local foods, with many writing statements as opposed to explanations.
- ◆ Question 2(e)(iii): few candidates could identify the impact on taste or appearance of using wholegrain mustard, as many got confused and detailed English mustard. Some candidates referred to texture, and therefore could not access the marks for this question.
- ◆ Question 3(e): this confused a number of candidates, as many wrote about hygiene as opposed to safety, and therefore could not access the marks.

#### **Component 2: assignment**

Candidates found the writing of time plans challenging, and the marks candidates achieved in this area reflect this. Some candidates are still writing time plans in a step-by- step format, with minimal or no additional information. This is not good practice and candidates who wrote time plans in this way achieved very low marks.

For the service details, some candidates forgot to identify a clean service plate as clearly stated on the recipe, or at what temperature the dish should be served at. Some candidates added an additional garnish to the starter, even though the recipe clearly states that the soup should only be garnished with parsley croutons.

It is essential that all candidates are given the opportunity to amend time plans and service details once they have been submitted to SQA, to ensure they are workable, and the candidate is not disadvantaged prior to carrying out the practical activity. If a candidate requires a centre-devised time plan, they should be given adequate time to become familiar with it. The candidate should not be given it at the point of starting the practical activity.

### **Component 3: practical activity**

The completion of the practical activity required a high standard of multitasking. Some candidates struggled with the timing of the three dishes and did not get all components of them served in the allocated time slot. There was also some confusion as to the need for all four portions to be served, as stipulated in each recipe. Please ensure that candidates follow each recipe, so they are able to access the full marks available for each dish.

## **Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment**

### **Component 1: question paper**

Centres need to ensure that candidates are better prepared for the question paper, to ensure that they know the depth of information required for both 'explain' and 'evaluation' style questions. Candidates in many cases did not create a suitable answer.

It is important that candidates use the correct terminology when answering questions in the question paper. For example, in questions such as:

- ◆ Question 1(a): wholemeal rice and low-fat butter are not acceptable alternatives to white rice and butter.
- ◆ Question 1(c): parsley cannot be diced.
- ◆ Question 1(d): when storing food from an open can, it is important to remove the content from the open can prior to storing it in a closed container in the fridge.

The term 'healthy' was used by many candidates as an explanation in a number of questions. This is not acceptable, as candidates are required to explain why a change to a dish or cookery process is deemed healthy, for example, poaching is considered a healthy method of cooking as less fat is used during the cooking process, therefore the total fat in the dish is reduced.

Please note, the specimen question paper or the 2018 question paper must not be used in their entirety as a prelim paper for candidates and later submitted to SQA as evidence. This is due to the fact that these papers are freely available on SQA's website and could have been accessed by candidates.

### **Component 2: assignment**

Centres should spend more time preparing candidates for the demands of writing a good time plan. It is not acceptable for candidates to write a time plan in a step-by-step format with no other details.

The time plan is not only an aid to help candidates organise themselves during the practical activity, it is also there to remind them to carry out those activities which are often forgotten, for example, re-weighing of prepared ingredients (where required), clean as you go, tasting and seasoning, pre-heating oven and service dishes (where required) and adjusting oven temperatures.

These are all tasks that many candidates forget to do during the practical activity. The time plan is a reminder that time must be made for these tasks, to ensure candidates are able to access all marks available.

For service details, candidates must ensure they serve the food as detailed in the recipe. If the recipe states a warm clean plate, then this must be specified in the service details. The candidate should also make it clear where the garnish or decoration will be located, whether this is done via a drawing or description. The marker and assessor must be able to visualise what the finished dish will look like.

### **Component 3: practical activity**

Centres are reminded that the recipes should only be given to candidates on three occasions:

- ◆ during the one permitted practice of each dish
- ◆ during the planning stage
- ◆ during the implementing stage

Candidates should not have access to the recipes on any other occasion, and can only be given one opportunity to sit the practical activity.

Candidates are permitted to garnish/decorate either their plate or food to access marks. If any part of a finished dish is deemed 'inedible', or is not served, no marks should be awarded for the service of that dish. It is important that this is implemented by all centres, to ensure fairness to all candidates.

Centres are reminded to use the holistic marking instructions to record the practical activity marks for their candidates. Please note, if a dish contains component parts ie, profiteroles and a sauce, candidates must serve both components/correct quantities in order to be able to access the marks available for service.

## Grade boundary and statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2018	5035
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Number of resulted entries in 2019	4939
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### Statistical information: performance of candidates

#### Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	Percentage	Cumulative %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
<b>Maximum mark</b>				
<b>A</b>	19.9%	19.9%	981	77
<b>B</b>	34.9%	54.8%	1726	67
<b>C</b>	28.6%	83.4%	1412	57
<b>D</b>	12.0%	95.4%	594	47
<b>No award</b>	4.6%	-	226	-

## General commentary on grade boundaries

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.

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary)
- ◆ 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.

Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting every year for each subject at each level to bring together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The principal assessor and SQA qualifications manager meet with the relevant SQA head of service and statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. Members of the SQA management team chair these meetings. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper has been more, or less, challenging than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper is more challenging than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual.
- ◆ Where standards 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 to year. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for question papers set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the question papers that they set themselves.