



Course report 2022

Subject	Classical Studies
Level	National 5

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	180
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	50.8	Cumulative percentage	50.8	Number of candidates	90	Minimum mark required	56
B	Percentage	12.7	Cumulative percentage	63.5	Number of candidates	25	Minimum mark required	46
C	Percentage	17.7	Cumulative percentage	81.2	Number of candidates	30	Minimum mark required	37
D	Percentage	11.1	Cumulative percentage	92.3	Number of candidates	20	Minimum mark required	27
No award	Percentage	7.7	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	15	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

Overall candidates performed well in all three sections; however, it was noticeable that this year some candidates found the 'describe' questions in sections 1 and 3 difficult, with a few not attempting them.

All candidates covered the Pompeii topic in the section on the Roman world.

In the literature section, candidates referred to a wide variety of texts, all of which worked well for both themes.

Candidates had enough time to complete the question paper and most candidates managed their time accordingly.

This year there was a significantly higher number of candidates and therefore the overall spread of grades was wider than in previous sessions.

Assignment

The requirement to complete the assignment was removed for session 2021–22.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Question paper

Candidates performed particularly well in Section 1: Life in classical Greece.

Question 1, the 'describe' question, is usually very well done but this year some candidates wrote about other aspects of religion such as festivals, instead of describing the building. A few candidates missed this question out entirely.

Question 2, the 'explain the reasons why' question on enslaved people, was answered by all candidates. There were many excellent responses demonstrating good knowledge and understanding.

Question 4, the 'compare' question, was answered well overall, however, a few candidates achieved half marks because they only made two straightforward comparisons. A single mark is awarded for making a point about the classical world and explaining why it is similar or different to the modern world. This was also applicable to question 12.

Questions 5 and 6, the 'explain' and 'evaluate the usefulness' questions, were generally tackled well. However, in question 5, some candidates merely repeated what the source told us instead of explaining the content of the source.

In Section 2: Classical literature, many candidates demonstrated a strong knowledge and understanding of the texts they had studied and the themes they had covered. There were some excellent responses to question 7(a), the 'describe' question, with candidates describing the behaviour of Antigone, Medea, and female characters in the Odyssey.

There were equally interesting responses to question 8(a), with candidates considering different types of conflict. However, not all responses looked at how both sides suffered and therefore could not always be awarded full marks.

In Section 3: Life in the Roman world, candidates answered question 10, the 'explain the reasons why' question on the casts, very well. Candidates demonstrated a considerable depth of understanding and were clearly engaged with the subject matter.

Question 11, the 'to what extent' question, was also answered well with a wide variety of jobs and roles included in responses together with considered discussion about the unpleasant nature of some of the work.

In question 13, the 'explain what the sources tell us' question, some candidates merely repeated what was said in Source B, rather than explaining what it told us.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper:

In sections 1 and 3, when asked to make comparisons with the modern world, candidates should be made aware that at least one similarity and at least one difference should be given. To be awarded a mark for comparison, a candidate must make a point about the classical world and say why it is similar or different to the modern world.

Candidates should also remember that in questions where they are asked to explain a source or sources, no marks are awarded for merely quoting a word or paraphrasing from the source without any explanation. While it is good practice to quote a word or phrase from the source, the candidate must then explain what it means or tells us in order to be awarded the mark.

Candidates should be reminded that in Section 3: Life in the Roman world, they should answer only the questions on either Part A: Pompeii, or Part B: Roman Britain, not both.

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](#).