



Course report 2022

Subject	History
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	15710
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	41.5	Cumulative percentage	41.5	Number of candidates	6520	Minimum mark required	54
B	Percentage	22.3	Cumulative percentage	63.8	Number of candidates	3500	Minimum mark required	42
C	Percentage	17.3	Cumulative percentage	81.1	Number of candidates	2720	Minimum mark required	30
D	Percentage	12.0	Cumulative percentage	93.1	Number of candidates	1885	Minimum mark required	18
No award	Percentage	6.9	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	1085	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

Feedback indicated that the question paper was positively received. The assessment was considered fair and accessible to candidates, with a positive response to modifications as a result of COVID-19 recovery planning.

Many candidates performed strongly with a few achieving full marks. A few candidates found it challenging to demonstrate the range of knowledge and skills in the question paper.

Overall, options such as Section 1: Scottish contexts, Part E — The Era of the Great War, 1900–1928 performed comparably to other Scottish contexts. In Section 2: British contexts, sections such as Part C — The Atlantic Slave Trade, 1770–1807 performed comparably to other British contexts. In Section 3: European and world contexts, options such as Part D — Hitler and Nazi Germany, 1919–1939 and Part E — Red Flag: Lenin and the Russian Revolution, 1894–1921 performed well compared to other European and world contexts.

A few candidates did not gain marks because they did not interpret source points in the 'How fully' questions.

Assignment

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

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper

Most candidates were well prepared, demonstrating good historical knowledge and appropriate subject skills.

The modifications to the question paper worked well for most candidates, giving them optionality in the British and European and world sections (in the 9-mark essay and ‘How fully’ question). This allowed candidates to choose the question most appropriate for them, maximising their attainment.

Most candidates answered the ‘Describe’ and 9-mark essay questions well, demonstrating good historical knowledge. For example, questions 21, 61, 37(a) and 37(b).

Similarly, most candidates also performed strongly in the ‘How fully’, for example 65(b), and ‘Evaluate the usefulness’ questions. In the ‘How fully’ question, most candidates interpreted source points well and in the ‘Evaluate the usefulness’ question they coped well with making appropriate evaluative comments for source provenance points.

Most candidates performed well in Section 2: Part C — The Atlantic Slave Trade, 1770–1807, Section 3: Part D — Hitler and Nazi Germany, 1919–1939 and Part E — Red Flag: Lenin and the Russian Revolution, 1894–1921.

Some candidates answered question 22 well (Part E — The Era of the Great War, 1900–1928).

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper

Overall, standards have improved in the ‘Evaluate the usefulness’ question but some candidates need to remember to make the required evaluative comments on all aspects of the source. For example, a few candidates interpreted source points rather than making evaluative comments relating to the content of the source.

A few candidates quoted rather than interpreted source points in the ‘How fully’ question. When seeking to make appropriate source interpretations, it is possible to quote and explain or paraphrase. Paraphrasing can be done by a complete rewording, partial rewording or reordering of the source point.

In question 34, some candidates did not read the question with sufficient care, selecting source evidence not relevant to the experience of enslaved people in slave factories on the African coast.

In the ‘Compare’ question, some candidates were not awarded marks because they did not quote the full source point or misinterpreted the sources. In some instances, candidates did not read the question with sufficient care and select relevant detailed comparisons. In

question 17, a few candidates did not focus on selecting appropriate comparisons on the reasons for Lithuanian immigration. In question 22, a few candidates did not focus on the military tactics on the Western Front.

For the 'Explain' question, a few candidates were not awarded marks because they made statements rather than explanations. A few candidates did not access the full range of marks because of the limited number of reasons they provided in their answer or the limited nature of their specific historical knowledge. In question 23, a few candidates were uncertain about the reasons why some people became conscientious objectors in Scotland.

A few candidates did not use the question numbering given in the paper when providing their answers.

A few candidates found it difficult to complete all questions in the three sections of the paper, therefore limiting their attainment.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Candidates, teachers and lecturers should note the following key messages.

Teachers and lecturers should note the advice given in the 2022 general marking instructions on positive marking and appropriate annotation when assessing candidate evidence.

Centres should ensure that they prepare candidates with specific historical knowledge (as detailed in the course specification).

Candidates should be reminded to use the question numbering given in the question paper when providing their answers.

In preparing for the question paper, candidates and centres are encouraged to review the knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment, which determines the variety of ways in which questions could be asked.

Question types and skills

For the 'Evaluate the usefulness' question teachers and lecturers should note the advice on the Understanding Standards website (National 5 History page) on the variety of ways in which candidates can make evaluative comments on provenance, source content and significant omission. Further exemplification is given in the 2022 detailed marking instructions.

For the 'How fully' question teachers and lecturers should note the advice on the Understanding Standards website (National 5 History page) on how to make appropriate source interpretation comments and relevant recall points. Further exemplification is given in the 2022 detailed marking instructions.

For the 'Compare' question teachers and lecturers should note the advice on the Understanding Standards website (National 5 History page) on preparing candidates to make appropriate overall and detailed source comparisons. Further exemplification is given in the 2022 detailed marking instructions.

For the 'Explain' question teachers and lecturers should note the advice on the Understanding Standards website (National 5 History page) on how candidates can ensure that they provide valid explanations. Further exemplification is given in the 2022 detailed marking instructions.

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](#).