



Course report 2022

Subject	Practical Woodworking
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	7260
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	50.5	Cumulative percentage	50.5	Number of candidates	3665	Minimum mark required	49
B	Percentage	23.6	Cumulative percentage	74.1	Number of candidates	1710	Minimum mark required	42
C	Percentage	17.7	Cumulative percentage	91.8	Number of candidates	1290	Minimum mark required	35
D	Percentage	5.0	Cumulative percentage	96.8	Number of candidates	360	Minimum mark required	28
No award	Percentage	3.2	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	235	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

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

Practical activity

All centres used the practical activity task for session 2021–22 from the secure area of SQA's website — this being the only valid assessment instrument this session.

The practical activity performed as expected. The same assessment instrument was used in session 2021–22 as in the previous two sessions, as such, the demand has not changed.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Practical activity

The verification team reported that there were some excellent examples of practical work in the centres that they visited.

The majority of candidates completed joints, including the dovetail, to a good standard.

The standard of the finish was generally very good. Attention to detail, such as removing pencil lines, sanding lines and saw marks was apparent. The majority of verifiers noted the standard and quality of surface preparation carried out by the candidates was good.

Areas that candidates found demanding

The completion of logbooks in many centres was poor, with candidates even missing the basic requirements of providing a procedure, date and signature for each entry. Candidates can choose to complete the logbook through manual or electronic means. Both are acceptable and the logbook can, and should, be completed throughout the delivery of the course (except for the 'safe working procedures' area, which assessors complete relative to the practical activity).

The completion of the logbook is an individual activity — as with every aspect of the practical activity assessment, there is no group working (nor should it be a teacher-led activity).

In addition, logbook responses should have checks that refer to the machine or tool being used (and not just any personal protective equipment being used).

For the artefact, a few candidates completed some of the tasks incorrectly. For example, there were some instances where the halving joints on the base of the two stiles of the flat frame were incorrectly manufactured.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Practical activity

Centres are reminded that the assessment of 'measuring and marking out' must be done before candidates cut joints. This will allow remedial action to be taken to allow the candidates to cut correctly measured and marked out joints.

Centres are reminded that to gain full marks for 'independence of work' the component part or process needs to be fully assembled or complete.

When awarding marks for 'applying a finish' all of the required components need to be assembled, prepared and finished to a high standard to gain full marks.

Centres are also reminded that machines cannot be used to cut joints in the practical activity unless SQA gives specific instruction to the contrary. This is clearly stated in the practical activity documentation.

While changes to most sizes are prohibited, changes to material thickness are permitted, but only if working drawings are amended to reflect this change. If the working drawings are not amended, then the candidates will be unable to access any marks for 'measuring and marking out'. This is because all of the sizes will be wrong relative to the material thickness used.

Most centres record their assessment judgements clearly using the candidate assessment record. In some instances, however, there were no comments to justify or explain assessment judgements. This is an important part of both the assessment and verification processes, and centres should always record this in a suitable format.

Centres are reminded of the videos available on the [Understanding Standards website](#) to support the application of the marking instructions for the practical activity. We encourage all centres to continue to make use of this invaluable resource.

Our [Understanding Standards videos](#) and [specimen log book](#) all confirm the detail required in this area of the practical activity.

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](#).