



Course Report 2018

Subject	Health and Food Technology
Level	Advanced Higher

This report provides information on the performance of candidates. 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

Summary of the course assessment

Component 1: project

Candidates performed as expected in the project, with a range of marks being achieved.

There was a good range of topics covered from all areas of the course. This then provided some very interesting research questions.

The candidates' main strengths were in stages 1 and 2, and they were slightly weaker in stage 3. The candidates who wrote a clear and concise literature review, and who focused on the topic, were then able to provide a better research question, which therefore led to them having a clear focus of research for stage 2 and completing stage 3 to a higher standard.

The majority of candidates adhered to the 4,000 word limit.

Component 2: question paper

The question paper consisted of four questions, and took the same format as previous question papers and the specimen. It sampled knowledge and understanding from a range of topics in the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding.

There was a range of marks gained in the question paper. Feedback from the marking team suggested the paper was fair in terms of overall demand and course coverage, and candidates were able to complete it in the allocated time.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: project

Stage 1: 1(a)

Most candidates performed well in this section by providing a clear and concise literature review, which focused clearly on the chosen topic. Candidates were also able to back the literature review up with credible and current sources of information.

Stage 1: 1(b)

All candidates provided a research question, which was relevant and based on the topic of the literature review. There were some excellent and different research questions this session.

Stage 1: 1(c)

Almost all candidates were able to access marks for providing a clear and concise outline plan for how they were going to carry out their research and explain why with valid reasons.

Stage 2: 2(a)

This section was much better than in previous years and candidates presented results which were communicated very clearly and easy to interpret. This was carried out in a variety of ways.

Stage 2: 2(b)

Candidates were also able to access the marks in this section by providing sufficient relevant evidence for analysis. Candidates appear to be better than previous years at making sure the type of research carried out is clearly linked to the research question, therefore giving them more information to analyse.

Stage 2: 2(c)

This section was done very well, with almost all results being presented clearly and logically.

Stage 3: 3(a)

The candidates who performed best in this area were the ones who carried it out in a logical fashion, by demonstrating their ability to use the information from the literature review and the results, and analyse the information.

Stage 3: 3(b)

Candidates were generally able to access marks in this section as they were able to draw conclusions from the results, rather than apply the skill of analysis.

Stage 3: 3(c)

Many candidates accessed the marks in this section by evaluating the whole process, giving some interesting information. Almost all candidates were able to give valid limitations and interesting recommendations for further study.

Component 2: question paper

Question 1

Candidates performed the best in this question, as they had a clear understanding of the product development process and the specific stages that were asked about.

Question 2

Candidates who had a good knowledge of the elderly and minerals were able to complete this question well.

Question 3

Some candidates performed really well in this question, as they were able to apply the skill of analysis and clearly relate it to the influence of food packaging and labelling on consumer food choice.

Question 4

The candidates who answered this question well were confident in the skill of evaluation, and had a good knowledge of alternative proteins in the diet.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: project

Stage 3(a)

This is still the area where candidates do not appear to access as many marks. They did not fully analyse the results and link what they had found out from their research to the results. Some candidates introduced new information at this stage, which was not backed up by the research undertaken.

Many candidates purely repeated the results at this stage, without offering any extra information; at Advanced Higher level, more depth is required, especially as it is the technique of analysis which gains marks.

Stage 3(c)

Some candidates did not evaluate the process as a whole. Candidates should not refer to time and word count as being a limitation, as all candidates have the same time and word count to adhere to.

Component 2: question paper

Question 2

This was the 'explain' question, and some candidates were referring to macronutrients and vitamins in their answer and not minerals, as asked specifically for in the question.

Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: project

There was a varying degree of quality in the work submitted. There was a very good range of topics chosen for research, which were taken from all areas indicated in the skills, knowledge and understanding section of the course assessment specification.

Centres must follow the advice given on the project submission, which can be found on SQA's website in the Understanding Standards section.

Candidates must adhere to the word count of 4,000 words.

Presentation of projects was varied. It would be beneficial if candidates used 1.5-line spacing and a minimum font size of 11 throughout.

There was a lack of bibliographies in many projects. This should be included.

Many candidates referred to themselves throughout the project. This should be avoided; where possible use 'the researcher found that'.

Candidates should be using up-to-date and credible research material.

Component 2: question paper

Candidates should be made aware of the knowledge and understanding being assessed in this component of the course. This can be found in the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding section of the course assessment specification on SQA's website.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2017	38
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Number of resulted entries in 2018	44
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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
Maximum mark				
A	9.1%	9.1%	4	70
B	22.7%	31.8%	10	60
C	45.5%	77.3%	20	50
D	11.4%	88.6%	5	45
No award	11.4%	-	5	-

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 which allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and 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 Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from exam 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 exams set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the corresponding practice exam paper.