



Course Report 2014

Subject	Accounting
Level	National 5

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It 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 and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Question paper

This component performed as expected. The majority of candidates were able to gain marks in 'easier' questions, while the 'harder' marks were accessible to the more able candidates.

Component 2: Assignment

With any assessment done within centres over multiple sessions, marks are expected to be higher as candidates feel more at ease and are able to demonstrate their knowledge in a less pressurised environment. However, there was a significant difference in many candidate performances between the question paper and the Assignment, with some percentage differences being especially wide. As such, the Assignment did not provide appropriate discrimination of candidate performance and an adjustment to the expected Grade Boundaries was necessary.

Section 2: Summary of candidate performance

Component 1: Question paper

Overall, candidates showed good knowledge of the syllabus. Of the two 30-mark questions, Question 1 (Financial) was answered considerably better than Question 2 (Management/Analysis). Of the four 10-mark questions, Questions 3 and 4 (both Financial) were answered considerably better than Questions 5 and 6 (both Management/Analysis).

Although theory accounts for 10 marks of the question paper, theory questions were answered more poorly than computational questions. On average, candidates scored less than half marks for theory.

Component 2: Assignment

Candidate performance was extremely high, and candidates scored well in all four Tasks. On the whole, candidates displayed good use of formulae, and formulae marks were high also.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Question Paper

Question 1(a): Most candidates answered well and were able to gain marks through knowledge of layout.

Question 1(b)(ii): Most candidates were able to state two causes of depreciation.

Question 2(a)(i)–(v): The basic break-even calculations were performed well.

Question 3: The invoice was completed well by most candidates. Candidates who were unable to calculate Cash Discount were still able to pick up the majority of marks on offer.

Question 4: Candidates displayed good knowledge of Trial Balance, although Carriage In and Carriage Out did catch out a lot of candidates.

Question 5(a)(i)–(iv): Many candidates showed good application of the ratio figures given in the question, to work back and calculate values for Gross Profit and Net Profit. Fewer were able to calculate the correct figures for Cost of Sales and Expenses, even though the calculations to ascertain these figures required no knowledge of ratios.

Question 6(a)–(b)(i): In a difficult topic, candidates performed well at the start of the question.

Component 2: Assignment

All questions were answered well.

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Question paper

Question 1(b)(i): The majority of candidates were not able to give an adequate description. Many did not specify fixed asset and just indicated asset. Also, many candidates wrote ‘fall in price’ rather than ‘fall in value’.

Question 1(c): The majority of candidates were not able to correctly state the effect the inclusion of Carriage In would have on the Final Accounts.

Question 2(b)–(e): As to be expected, candidates’ performance was poorer in the more complex break-even questions, although most were able to pick up some consequential marks, even if they had gone wrong earlier in the question. Many candidates who had correctly given the Margin of Safety in units were unable to correctly give the Margin of Safety in sales value (in most cases they multiplied by contribution instead of selling price).

Question 2(f): The majority of candidates were unable to describe Production and Service Cost Centres. Q2(f)(ii) on Service Cost Centres was the most poorly answered question in the entire paper.

Question 5(a)(v): Statistically, this was the most difficult computational question in the paper, with many of the candidates who did attempt it only gaining 1 mark because they multiplied the Net Profit by 10% instead of dividing it.

Question 6(b)(ii)–(iv): As the Decision Making question became more difficult, candidate performance lowered. Many candidates did not even attempt Q6(b)(iv). Of those that did, most were able to pick up some marks through consequentiality.

Component 2: Assignment

There were some aspects in each question that were less well done.

Task 1: Some candidates used the Balance column as a running balance and did not show the breakdown of stock and their values. It is also good practice to add the different stock values and show a total stock value at each date.

The layout in the Specific Marking Instructions should be used in teaching to give candidates the best opportunity to gain all the marks available.

Task 2: Some candidates found the bonus calculation tricky, with many incorrectly multiplying by two workers. Some candidates also missed out on formulae marks by not using cell references for wage rates.

Task 3: Some candidates re-apportioned the Service Cost Centre back to itself.

Task 4: Many candidates failed to bring all the stock figures for both dates through to the job cost statement. Some candidates lost marks by calculating the VAT before the Profit.

A significant amount of candidates lost formula marks by not using cell referencing and linking to worksheets.

Section 5: Advice to Centres for preparation of future Candidates

Component 1: Question paper

Theory needs to be concentrated on more — candidates are losing out on marks in fairly straightforward questions.

Statistical analysis has shown that candidates find the Management/Analysis questions more difficult than the Financial Questions. Candidates need more practice on these types of question to be fully prepared for the question paper.

Time should be spent ensuring that candidates learn their layouts, as these are crucial for success. Teachers should review the marking instructions for specific actions regarding errors that are frequently made by candidates, eg headings, extraneous items and labels.

Teachers should share advice given in this report with candidates before the exam.

Component 2: Assignment

Teachers should ensure candidates are familiar with cell references and use them wherever possible in every calculation undertaken by spreadsheet.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	0
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Number of resulted entries in 2014	777
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark 150				
A	48.8%	48.8%	379	113
B	19.2%	68.0%	149	98
C	15.4%	83.4%	120	83
D	5.5%	88.9%	43	75
No award	11.1%	-	86	-