



Course Report 2017

Subject	Care
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 and assessors 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

Summary of the course assessment

Component 1: project

Candidates selected from all three briefs, although not all centres entered the chosen brief on the flyleaf.

Four centres used the old project guidelines from 2015. It is vital that all centres use the updated material, available on SQA website.

The majority of candidates' project responses were good, with good interpretation of the briefs. Submissions for this session were 840 projects from 23 centres — eight schools and 15 colleges.

All centres included the log book, which is mandatory. However, a few individual candidate log books were not included, although they were referred to by individual candidates in their evaluation.

The allocation of marks for the plan and evaluation when combined is high at 30% of the total marks. This can result in a few candidates gaining a higher percentage of marks than in the content of section 2: responding to the brief.

The word count of 3000–4000 words was not adhered to by all candidates, and projects which exceeded the maximum by 10% were referred for further examination and a penalty was applied.

Candidates should be advised to complete the flyleaf with word count details.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Summary of candidate performance

Component 1: project

Overall, candidates performed well in the 2017 submissions. In section 1 the action plan was well executed. Most candidates gained marks for evidence of 1(a), (b) or (c). The range of individuals chosen was diverse, with centres using innovative ways to engage the candidates in selecting a client. Examples include case studies, which, with some projects, limited the candidates' response. If a centre is distributing a case study for candidates to work from, it is important that tutors check that it allows the candidates enough scope to develop the project fully and access marks. Those who chose clients they have worked with during placement, or have used friends or family, have to be careful to maintain the

confidentiality of the individual. Candidates were better at including details of the tasks and timescale for the three stages of the project than in 2016.

Some candidates used a prescribed interview template. Care must be taken when issuing questionnaires and conducting interviews to safeguard the sensitivity of the information. This is paramount, and also requires that the candidate has the skills to pass this information onto an appropriate agency if required. Questions asked to participants should not be of a sensitive nature.

The Evaluation section was done better than in 2016, though not all candidates evaluated the process. From a few centres, this was viewed more as a list of what worked well or not, with a few evaluative comments. Direction on evaluative skills should be delivered by the centre. The Evaluation section is conducted under controlled conditions and this was evident in 2017.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: project

Candidates performed well in the following assessment items:

- ◆ 1(a) Although different approaches were applied, candidates mostly gave a clear description of the chosen individual, and were able to explain why they were a suitable choice for the brief. A few candidates submitted their action plan referring to brief 2 and identified a social issue, but they did not refer the social issue to the way it influences an individual using care services. Some candidates from the same centre referred to the same individual. A few candidates, who had used a case study, spoke about the carer and not the person in receipt of the care service.
- ◆ 1(b) Responses to this were mixed. Some candidates gave detailed timescales, whilst others were brief. The majority included all three stages.
- ◆ 1(c) The majority of candidates' responses were good, with a mixture of relevant sources used. Some sources were detailed at this stage then used throughout to reference the project.
- ◆ 2(a) This part was explained better by candidates than in 2016. Most candidates answered this question fully, though a few did not give a description of the need, and others did not link the need to the chosen individual. Candidates should also be advised to choose four different needs related to their individual.
- ◆ 2(f) Good responses from the majority of candidates.
- ◆ 2(g) A straightforward 2 marks if candidates followed the layout of the brief and completed each section. Almost all candidates gained full marks.

- ◆ 3(a) (b) (c) This part was explained better by candidates than in 2016. The majority of candidates gave a clear evaluation and almost all made some reference to the plan or log. Some gave statements rather than evaluating.

Areas which candidates found demanding

- ◆ 2(b) As in 2016, there was a mixed response from candidates. The main issue was giving a detailed review of the psychological theory, with minimal linking of the feature identified, to explain aspects of development and behaviour of the chosen individual.
- ◆ 2(c) Some candidates described sociological influences rather than concepts. Linking the impact to the individual was done better than in 2016.
- ◆ 2(d) Better response than 2016, but some candidates described services rather than the feature of the positive care environment. Some spoke of the care worker, eg physiotherapist and their role, rather than the feature of the positive care environment. Although candidates answered this part better, the link between the care environment and how it met the need of their chosen individual could be improved. Candidates who had a placement, used relatives or worked in a care setting, answered this question better.
- ◆ 2(e) Mixed responses. If 2(a), (b) and (c) were accurate, this question was answered well. However, some scored low marks in this question as they had not grasped the component theories and concepts to link these to application. This was the most challenging question and was poorly executed by some candidates.
- ◆ Overall for Question 2(b), (c) (d) some candidates had difficulty applying theories to their chosen individual.

Section 3: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: project

- ◆ All staff delivering the project should read the general assessment information and adhere to the section on support and reasonable assistance.
- ◆ The word count is set at 3000–4000 words excluding references, footnotes and appendices, with a 10% penalty applied if 10% over the 4000 words.
- ◆ Provide candidates with guidance on how to evaluate — some gave their own opinion and did not evaluate in section 3.
- ◆ Remind candidates that evidence should be in their own words, and referencing of sources is essential. A few projects were referred under the suspected malpractice process for 2(b), (c) and (e) as evidence was lifted directly from websites.

- ◆ It would be good practice for tutors to discuss and agree on the chosen individual — some were inappropriate and did not have enough detail to allow the candidate to follow the brief.
- ◆ Candidates should not use sensitive questions when interviewing their chosen individual.
- ◆ Question 2(e) is complex to understand, and candidates need advice on how to break it into the component parts.

Whilst it was pleasing to see that the conditions of assessment for coursework were adhered to in the majority of centres, there were a small number of examples where this may not have been the case. Following feedback from teachers, we have strengthened the conditions of assessment criteria for National 5 subjects and will do so for Higher and Advanced Higher. The criteria are published clearly on our website and in course materials and must be adhered to. SQA takes very seriously its obligation to ensure fairness and equity for all candidates in all qualifications through consistent application of assessment conditions and investigates all cases alerted to us where conditions may not have been met.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2016	808
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	829
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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 -				
A	35.5%	35.5%	294	70
B	25.5%	60.9%	211	60
C	21.2%	82.1%	176	50
D	4.9%	87.1%	41	45
No award	12.9%	-	107	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will 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.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings 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.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ 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.