



Course Report 2017

Subject	Health and Food Technology
Level	Advanced Higher

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 assessment. 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 documents and marking instructions.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Summary of the course assessment

Component 1: project

Candidates performed as expected in the project, and slightly better than last session. A good range of topics were covered, which provided some excellent research questions.

Candidates performed well in Stage 1: Project proposal and Stage 2: Results.

Candidates who wrote a clear and concise literature review appeared to have more of a grasp of the research question, and were therefore able to complete Stages 2 and 3 to a higher standard.

Stage 3: Analysis and Evaluation was the area where many candidates did not access as many marks. This was particularly evident in 3(a), where candidates did not appear to fully analyse the information they had gathered in their research.

Component 2: question paper

The question paper consisted of four questions and was similar in format to the exemplar question papers. It covered a range of topics from the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding.

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

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Project

Stage 1: 1(a)

Candidates generally performed well in this section. Most candidates accessed marks by providing a clear and concise literature review based around the chosen topic, which was well researched and backed up by credible up-to-date sources.

Stage 1 1(b)

Most candidates provided a research question that was relevant and based on the results of the literature review.

Stage 1 1(c)

Almost all candidates were able to provide a clear and concise outline plan for research that clearly explained why the types of research were chosen.

Stage 2: 2(a)

Many candidates provided very clear results and were able to communicate clearly the results of the research. This was carried out using a variety of methods which was interesting.

Stage 2 2(b)

Candidates provided sufficient relevant evidence for analysis, ensuring that the research they had carried out was clearly linked to the research question and topic.

Stage 2 2(c)

Candidates on the whole presented results clearly and logically.

Stage 3: 3(a)

Some candidates completed this section very logically and showed their ability to link the information from section 1 to the results, and analyse the results using the information in the project.

Stage 3 3(b)

Generally, candidates drew conclusions from the research better than they analysed their research, and had conclusions clearly linked to the information gathered during the research process.

Stage 3 3(c)

Many candidates were able to evaluate the process as a whole by providing some interesting information, valid limitations and recommendations for further study.

Component 2: question paper

Question 1: Most candidates performed well in this question, as they were able to apply knowledge of micronutrients and link clearly to pregnancy and lactation.

Question 2: Candidates were able to access marks in this question as they were able to clearly evaluate the use of colourings and preservatives in food manufacture.

Question 3: This was the question in which candidates performed best. They had a sound knowledge of advertising techniques and clearly linked them to the food manufacturer promoting their products.

Question 4: The candidates who answered this question well had a sound knowledge of dietary guidelines and were able to clearly analyse in relation to the health of adolescents.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: project

Stage 3(a)

This was the area where the candidates did not perform as well, as they did not appear to 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 merely 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 that marks are being awarded for.

Stage 3(c)

Many candidates did not evaluate the process as a whole; some offered valid recommendations for further study and limitations to the research process. However, 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 4

Some candidates did not attempt this question or did not fully grasp the technique of analysis. Candidates should also be clear about the dietary guidelines in which they are attempting to analyse.

Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Project

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

Centres must use the advice given on the submission of the project on the SQA website.

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

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

Many projects lacked a bibliography. 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 in the course assessment specification on the SQA website.

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	25
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	38
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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	26.3%	26.3%	10	70
B	13.2%	39.5%	5	60
C	34.2%	73.7%	13	50
D	7.9%	81.6%	3	45
No award	18.4%	-	7	-

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.