



Course Report 2018

Subject	Hospitality: Practical Cake Craft
Level	National 5

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: question paper

The question paper has a total mark allocation of 25 marks and consisted of three mandatory questions.

The question paper performed in line with expectations and feedback from the marking team suggested that the question paper was fair in terms of course coverage and overall level of demand.

The majority of candidates attempted all questions and were able to complete the question paper in the allocated time.

Component 2: assignment

The designing stage has 20 marks. Feedback from the marking team suggested that the majority of candidates completed this stage well, including a design illustration, their chosen recipe, specialist equipment required for finishing decoration techniques and a plan of work.

The evaluating stage has 10 marks. Feedback from the marking team suggested that a large number of candidates were making statements rather than evaluations.

Component 3: practical activity

The practical activity is conducted in three stages: designing, implementing and evaluating. The intention is to extend and apply skills developed throughout the course and in the context of baking and finishing a celebration cake from a given brief. The brief is the same year on year, and the coursework this year performed as expected.

Candidates' work was of a good standard and in most instances assessment judgements were in line with national standards. Centre reports indicated that candidates had worked through the practical activity task independently and with confidence. Centre assessor comments provided justification of marks awarded to each task and within each section.

Centres made good use of the marking instructions and feedback indicated that this was positively received by the assessors with all marks being fair and accessible for candidates. Where marks were lenient, visiting verifiers provided guidance and advice to the assessor to ensure marks awarded were matched to the specific criteria within the marking instructions section of the coursework assessment task document.

The holistic marking instructions allow candidates personalisation and choice in how they present their work, giving them the opportunity to use higher order skills if appropriate to their abilities.

Candidate interpretation of the assessment criteria indicated good understanding of the assignment, with most cake designs constructed with flair and imagination.

Photographic evidence showing tasks carried out during the period of assessment was available and backed up assessor judgements.

The coursework assessment performed as expected. The cakes that were presented for verification were of a high standard.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: question paper

Candidates generally performed well when answering 'describe' questions.

Question 1(a) was answered well by candidates as they listed clear descriptions for each stage.

Question 2(c) was answered well, with candidates providing three points of information.

Component 2: assignment: section 1(a) design illustration

Most candidates performed well in this section as they provided a detailed drawing which clearly included the occasion, cake type, coatings, size of cake and cake board. Candidates also included details of the colour schemes to be used, and good practice was demonstrated when the illustration was coloured and finishing techniques to be used were clearly marked.

Component 3: practical activity

The sampled candidate work was in the main executed to a very good standard. Candidates seemed to enjoy the challenges in choosing a theme for their cake, baking a cake of their choice and finishing the cake with their chosen finishing decoration techniques. A wide range of application and finishing techniques were demonstrated. High marks were attained in these areas.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: question paper

Questions 1(c) and 3(c) asked candidates to explain. These questions were not well executed, as candidates did not provide a straightforward or developed explanation.

Question 3(d) asked candidates to explain three stages involved in the preparation and rolling prior to coating a rich fruit cake with sugar paste. Many candidates did not read the question carefully and explained how to coat a fruit cake.

Question 3(a) asked candidates to evaluate the suitability of a heavily fruited cake as a wedding cake. While many candidates demonstrated an understanding of the question they provided a statement rather than an evaluation.

Component 2: assignment: section 2 evaluating

In general candidates did not perform well in this section. Candidates are making statements rather than evaluations. An evaluation should include a fact, judgement and consequence.

Component 3: practical activity

Centres should encourage choice and all candidates should select their own type of cake. However, it should be remembered that the cake has to be stored and kept for verification. This may limit choice in the type of cake they choose to bake.

Some difficulty arose with the execution of complex finishing techniques such as modelling, piping and embossing.

If models are to be detailed, additional techniques such as texturing or embossing can be added. These techniques make the model more complex, and should be taken account of when holistically marking it. These techniques should not be marked as a separate technique.

In some instances, finishing decoration techniques such as texturing and embossing were incorrectly marked and in some cases led to marks being amended during verification. Visiting verifiers gave constructive guidance and advice where necessary.

Finishing techniques were challenging and while some candidates may have completed the criteria for top marks, the quality of the techniques was often poor and did not meet the marking criteria. In some instances, marks previously awarded to finishing techniques had to be corrected during verification to match marking instructions. Centre assessors were referred to the marking instructions where necessary.

Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: question paper

Good practice would be to give candidates an opportunity to practise question papers and to give guidance on answering questions with different command words. Centres should not use the specimen paper for estimates as the specimen question paper is in the public domain.

Component 2: assignment

The assignment workbooks are available on the SQA open site and centres should ensure that the most up-to-date paperwork is used.

Centres should ensure that the photographs of the trimmed and filled cake and the completed cake are included in the assignment. These photographs are vital for marking evaluations. Most centres include colour photographs and this is good practice as it clearly shows the detail of finishing techniques used and the colour scheme of the finished cake. Candidates should not appear in any of the photographs.

The design illustration can be completed on a separate A4 or A3 sheet of paper. This is good practice as it allows the candidate more space for their illustration. The design illustration should be completed before the candidate starts their cake. A photocopy should be given to the candidate and the original sent with the assignment booklet to SQA. The photocopy must be kept for verification.

Candidates should use metric measurements on their plan rather than imperial.

In section B 'Resources', candidates should only list the equipment required for the finishing decoration techniques.

In section C 'Plan of work', candidates should always complete their plan before they start their cake. It must not be retrospective. Good practice is to have a detailed and logical plan. Plans do not need to be excessive.

Candidates must include the recipe and method they use to make the cake in the assignment, along with the exact quantities used. Please note, plans must not be retrospective.

Component 3: practical activity

Assessors are doing well in making additional practice times available for candidates whenever necessary, mainly during lunchtimes and where candidates have free periods. A suggestion for improvement is to send a reminder to candidates before they start the practical activity that cakes have to be kept for verification and may have to be stored during the period of assessment.

A rich fruit cake can be baked in advance, packed appropriately and will keep well. It can help provide a firm base to work on making the application of marzipan and sugar paste

coatings less demanding tasks. Candidates should be reminded of these points when choosing a cake for the practical activity.

Common Questions for Hospitality: Practical Cake Craft are available on SQA's website. The documents give advice on techniques such as: texturing, embossing, use of impression mats and embossing rolling pins. Additional understanding standards materials relating to course assessment can be found under the Understanding Standards heading on SQA's website.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2017	1730
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Number of resulted entries in 2018	1394
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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	12.5%	12.5%	174	77
B	24.8%	37.3%	346	68
C	24.7%	62.0%	344	60
D	20.5%	82.5%	286	51
No award	17.5%	-	244	-

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.