



## Course Report 2018

Subject	Practical Woodworking
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 was introduced for session 2017–18.

The feedback was that the question paper was well balanced in terms of demand and course coverage.

The question paper performed as expected. Candidates were able to attempt all questions in the paper. The marking team noted that a number of candidates were unable to demonstrate basic knowledge of tools and joints.

### Component 2: practical activity

Some changes were made to the practical activity for session 2017–18. The task itself remained unchanged from previous years, with centres selecting from a bank on SQA's secure website. The marking instructions were revised and a mandatory log book was introduced. Although centres were notified in advance, a small minority of centres were unaware of this.

Candidates were generally well-prepared for the practical activity. Candidates' performance demonstrated that teachers and lecturers were knowledgeable of the course content and covered the majority of topic areas sufficiently.

Marking for the 2017–18 National 5 Practical Woodworking practical activity was divided into six sections:

♦ logbook	15 marks
♦ flat frame construction	12 marks
♦ carcass construction	12 marks
♦ machining and turnery	11 marks
♦ finishing	10 marks
♦ overall assembly	10 marks

A total of 70 marks could be awarded for the practical activity. These marking instructions will be used until further notice.

### Logbook

Candidates approached the logbook in a variety of ways. Some utilised the example logbook on SQA's website. Others added sufficient detail to the entries in their logbook to explain exactly which checks they would carry out pre- or post-tool/machine use.

## **Flat frame construction and carcass construction**

The majority of centres made assessment judgements for these sections in line with national standards.

Assessor commentary is essential to support the verification process as it explains where marks have been awarded (or not), especially if the candidate has erred in the marking-out stage.

A minority of centres did not apply the tolerance for marking out and cutting of  $\pm 1$  mm. Candidates need to work accurately to the sizes on the working drawings. It is not sufficient for candidates to have cut the joint anywhere rather than where it is supposed to be.

A minority of centres did not ensure that their candidates produced the correct joints in all areas of the practical activity. Some candidates who made the vanity mirror or coat rack missed the haunch on the stopped housing.

## **Machining and turnery**

The use of power and machine tools is limited to those detailed in the course specification. Candidate performance in the turnery element of the practical activity was very mixed.

Some candidates had prepared well, and produced items that were within the dimensions of their own, or the supplied, working drawing or template.

## **Finishing**

Most teachers and lecturers are clear about the National 5 standard for both the preparation for a finish and the application of a finish. This section was generally well marked and no candidates applied an inappropriate finish that obscured joints.

## **Overall assembly**

The overall sizes are stated on the SQA working drawings.

For National 5 a tolerance of  $\pm 3$  mm is applied to the overall size. Where centres changed some of the thicknesses of the materials they supplied to candidates, the overall sizes were not altered on the working drawing, resulting in candidates being outwith this tolerance. When thicknesses are amended all subsequent sizes must be altered to reflect these changes.

## **Independence of work**

This is incorporated in four of the sections above (flat frame construction, carcass construction, machining and turnery, and finishing). The majority of centres marked this area well and included supporting information in the comments section of the assessment record.

Some centres misinterpreted the marking instructions where a candidate did not complete the practical activity. Where 'all' appears in the marking instructions, it refers to all of the work that was required of the candidate and not all of the work that a candidate did. Where the work is incomplete, centres cannot give the highest available mark, and must refer to the marking instructions to determine the correct mark for the candidate.

Likewise, when assessing the need for assistance, a candidate with incomplete work (who did not need help) cannot be given the same mark as a candidate who completed the practical activity (who did not need help), as these situations are not equivalent. Centres must follow the marking instructions to determine the correct mark for each candidate.

## **Section 2: comments on candidate performance**

### **Areas in which candidates performed well**

#### **Component 1: question paper**

The majority of candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of practical woodworking and answer the following questions well:

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|--------------------|---|
| Question 1(a)(ii): | Most candidates managed to identify and state the name of a dowel joint from a diagram.   |
| Question 1(f):     | Many candidates were able to identify a suitable finish to protect wood and show off the natural grain.   |
| Question 2(b)(i):  | Most candidates managed to correctly identify a mortise machine from a diagram.   |
| Question 2(f):     | Many candidates were able to state the name of wood glue.   |
| Question 3(a)(i):  | Most candidates managed to identify and state the name of a pillar/pedestal drill from a diagram.   |
| Question 4(i):     | Most candidates responded well on sustainability and recycling. They were able to explain the environmentally friendly reasons for using leftover wood from another project to make a bowl. |

The candidates who gained the highest marks explained and justified their answers in depth when required to do so, using the correct terminology.

#### **Component 2: practical activity**

The verification team reported that there were some excellent examples of practical work being carried out in centres. Centres have developed a strong understanding of the standard required, which provides the candidates with the required skills for the practical activity.

A number of candidates demonstrated well-developed skills in tool work for flat frame and carcass construction (with consistent adherence to tolerances) and this was reflected in a high practical activity mark.

The standard of finish was generally very good. Candidates' attention to detail was apparent, such as removing pencil lines, sanding lines and saw marks.

### **Areas which candidates found demanding**

#### **Component 1: question paper**

The majority of candidates were unable to identify some basic joints or tools. These questions were either a 'state' or 'name' question.

Some candidates' responses to 'explain' and 'describe' questions were too short and lacked sufficient detail to gain marks. Candidates had the opportunity to use sketches to assist them, but most did not use sketches to aid their responses.

Most candidates found the following questions challenging:

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|---------------------|--|
| Question 1(a)(iii): | Many candidates failed to achieve this mark as they could not identify a bridle joint from a diagram.  |
| Question 1(c):      | Most candidates were unable to identify a plough plane from a diagram.   |
| Question 2(b)(ii):  | Most candidates did not achieve this mark as they were unable to identify a disc sander from a diagram.  |
| Question 2(d):      | Many candidates were unable to identify a band cramp from a diagram.   |
| Question 3(a)(ii):  | Although many candidates were able to achieve the mark in part (i) for identifying the pillar/pedestal drill, few were able to fully explain the appropriateness of a forstner bit for drilling a hole in a tea light holder to create a flat bottom hole. |
| Question 3(e)(i):   | Most candidates were unable to identify a sliding bevel from a diagram. However only a few were able to achieve the mark for part (ii) explaining the use of the sliding bevel.  |
| Question 3(e)(iv):  | Many candidates were able to achieve the mark in part (iii) for identifying a marking knife from a diagram. Most were unable to explain the use of a marking knife.  |
| Question 4(b):      | Most candidates did not achieve the marks for naming the parts of a smoothing plane from a diagram.  |
| Question 4(c):      | A number of candidates were unable to identify a face plate from a diagram to achieve this mark.   |

### **Component 2: practical activity**

Some candidates found some areas of the practical activity more challenging than others. Centres must ensure that they cover all course content and that candidates have opportunities to practise all practical skills before they begin the practical activity.

## **Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates**

### **Component 1: question paper**

Teachers and lecturers and candidates should refer to the section of the course specification that details topic areas and the breakdown of relevant marks for each area, in addition they should note the specific joints and tools that candidates may be asked to identify. Candidates should ensure they read the question paper properly. For example, if a question asks about personal safety, candidates should not refer to machine health and safety.

Teachers and lecturers should prepare candidates by revising command words and the potential responses generated by them. Single-word responses may gain marks where the command word is 'state' or 'name', however where the command word is 'describe' or 'explain', a single-word response or series of bullet points will not gain marks. In these

instances a fuller response, typically formed as a sentence, to convey the description or explanation is required.

Teachers and lecturers should encourage candidates to support their response with sketches where appropriate. Some candidates found it difficult to articulate their responses fully. Using a sketch could help them to convey their response.

Teachers and lecturers should remind candidates that they can use pencil to construct a sketch, but once they have finalised it, they must go over the sketch with blue or black ink.

Candidates should ensure that when a question asks for stages or steps in a process or activity that their responses are in correct sequential order. Several candidates had correct responses but in the wrong order and failed to achieve all the possible marks to these questions.

Teachers and lecturers could prepare candidates for the question paper by utilising some classroom time to go through theory-based knowledge and example questions. This will help to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of the topic areas. Likewise, a discussion of expected responses (including the marking instructions) would also benefit candidates.

## **Component 2: practical activity**

Teachers and lecturers should read and follow the advice given in this report and ensure they are using the most up-to-date National 5 Practical Woodworking documents. These are available on SQA's websites.

The vanity mirror, the two-peg or four-peg coat rack and the toy truck will **not** be valid for session 2018–19. A new practical activity will be introduced for session 2018–19.

For sessions 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21:

- ◆ An initial drawing and materials list will be made available to all centres on the Practical Woodworking subject page of SQA's website. The initial drawing and materials list will be valid for the sessions stated on the front page of the document. This is to allow centres time to order materials.
- ◆ A detailed working drawing, showing joints and construction will be issued separately, on SQA's secure website, but later in the session. The detailed working drawing will only be valid for one session, stated on the front page of the document.

The marking instructions for future sessions remain the same as for session 2017–18.

## Grade boundary and statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2017	4560
Number of resulted entries in 2018	4748

### 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	39.1%	39.1%	1855	70
B	27.0%	66.1%	1283	60
C	19.4%	85.4%	919	50
D	8.3%	93.8%	396	40
No award	6.2%	-	295	-

## **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.