Course Report 2017

Subject	Physical Education
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: Performance

This component of the course performed as was expected. A wide range of activities were verified, and reports from centres indicate an even wider range was assessed for the single performance event. The marking instructions allowed centres to award candidates a full range of marks.

Component 2: Project

The project is designed to assess learners' research and investigation skills, as well as their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to performance development. Candidates are expected to produce a detailed and focused piece of work.

The project consists of four stages: project proposal; research; performance development plan (PDP); and post-PDP analysis and evaluation. The clear criteria for awarding marks in each section (and sub-section) guided candidates and markers successfully. The full range of marks was utilised in each section.

Most candidates selected an activity in which they had considerable experience and expertise. A wide range of activities were selected and the candidates' work demonstrated a high level of commitment to performance development.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Performance

Centres report that candidates, on the whole, performed well on the day of their single performance event. A wide range of activities was seen.

Component 2: Project

In general, candidates identified a specific personal performance development need; in addressing the identified issues they produced original, focused and authentic work.

Candidates made good use of appendices to ensure that the project was well presented, clear, focused and within word allocation.

Section 1(a)   A wide range of relevant methods to gather information about performance were utilised by the candidates.

Section 2(a)   Focused and comprehensive literature reviews were presented. Some candidates, when appropriate, gained further knowledge through interviewing experts and/or studying video footage of top performers.

Section 3   Candidates gave detailed records of the PDP programme and presented the work clearly.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Performance

There were no reports of candidates struggling with this component. All those involved knew what was expected of them.

Component 2: Project

Section 2(b)   Candidates found analysing the relationship between, and the significance of, different pieces of information to be demanding.

Section 2(c)   Many candidates did not fully address the requirement to justify the selection of the targets.

Section 4(c)   Many candidates selected future development needs which were not based on information gathered from the post PDP analysis and/or evaluation of the PDP. This resulted in low marks being awarded.

Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Performance

Centres must ensure that the activity chosen will allow candidates to access marks in all the sections. Throughout the performance, candidates must be able to demonstrate a broad and well-established repertoire of complex skills. These skills should be controlled and fluent, with effective decisions being made. All rules and etiquette should be adhered to. All of this must be demonstrated in a demanding context. If centres cannot provide a context to allow candidates the opportunity to access these marks, then a different activity should be considered.

Component 2: Project

Section 1(a)   Candidates are expected to justify the selection of each method used to gather information about performance (eg relevance, reliability).

Section 1(b)   Candidates should be encouraged to **analyse** the information gathered in Section 1(a). It may be helpful to place raw data in the appendices to ensure that the main text is analytical in nature.

Section 2(a)   Candidates should be encouraged to present work that is detailed and tightly focused on the research question. Information should be from respected and reliable sources.

Section 2(b)   Candidates should analyse links, supportive evidence, and any inconsistencies in research findings.

Section 2(c)   Candidates should ensure that they **justify** their selection of each PDP target.

Section 3   Candidates should present a summary of their programme in the main text. Details of sessions, modification and comments should be located in appendices and referred to as appropriate.

Section 4(a)   Candidates should ensure that they analyse the post PDP findings. This should include analysis of the impact on targets and overall performance.

Section 4(b)   Candidates may refer to information from the PDP record (Section 3) to support their evaluation of the PDP process.

Section 4(c)   All future development needs should be **linked** to the post-PDP analysis and/or the evaluation.

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	240

Number of resulted entries in 2017	350

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	28.6%	28.6%	100	75
B	24.3%	52.9%	85	65
C	26.3%	79.1%	92	55
D	7.7%	86.9%	27	50
No award	13.1%	-	46	-

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.