Course report 2019

Subject	Administration and IT
Level	National 5

This report provides information on candidates' performance. 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

Question paper

Candidates performed well in this question paper. It performed as expected, with the majority of candidates submitting printouts for all questions. Very few candidates did not attempt all parts of the theory question, and many achieved high marks in the question paper. Centres commented that candidates had sufficient time to complete the paper.

All questions performed as expected.

Assignment

A few candidates attained very high marks, however a number of candidates attained low marks. The course component performed as expected, although candidates did not attain the top few marks due to keying-in errors and inconsistencies.

The assignment functioned as intended.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper

In question 1, the database, candidates attained most marks in the tables and the form. The average mark was over half marks for each sub-section. The vast majority of candidates submitted a printout for each section.

Question 1(a), the majority of candidates could amend the hotel name and field name, accurately amend the record, and change the format of the field.

Question 1(b), the vast majority of candidates could delete the correct record and sort the table on one field.

Question 1(c), most candidates keyed in the correct heading and included the logo. The keying-in of information in the new record also tended to be accurate.

Question 1(d), most candidates included an appropriate heading and footer, and searched the database for the correct criteria.

In question 2, the spreadsheet, the average mark was over half marks for parts a (i) and (ii), and less than half marks for part b.

Question 2(a) (i), most candidates formatted the cell correctly and inserted the correct formula for 'Goodie Bag'.

Question 2(a) (ii), most candidates correctly inserted the item costs and quantities required, and most formatted these cells correctly. The majority of candidates inserted the correct emboldened label. Most candidates inserted the correct 'Total Cost' formula and replicated it, named the 'Overtime' cell and input the correct formulae for 'Total Cost of Event' and 'Cost per Person'. The majority of candidates understood what the IF statement return should be, for example within/outwith.

In question 3, most candidates could outline at least two benefits of good file management. Many candidates could describe one feature of presentation software.

Assignment
Task 1 – Press release
Most candidates attained most marks in this task.

Task 2 – E-mail
Most candidates were able to print evidence of the sent e-mail, with attachment and to two addresses.

Task 3 – Theory
Most candidates were able to outline at least two ways that the organisation could ensure the security of electronic information and some could explain the benefits of good customer service.

Task 4 – Ticket
Most candidates gained the majority of marks for this task.

Task 5 – E-diary
Most candidates printed the correct weekly views and reminder.

Task 6 – Presentation
Most candidates were able to create a presentation, insert a background/design and include the correct information, accurately on the title slide. Action buttons and slide numbers were also usually inserted correctly.

Task 7 – Favourites and internet search
Most candidates were able to put the correct site into their favourites/bookmark and most candidates searched for the correct date.

Task 8 – Information leaflet
Most candidates included the correct information on the front page of the booklet and chose an appropriate graphic for the back page.

Task 9 – Mail merge
The majority of candidates attained full marks for this task.

Task 10 – Demonstration schedule
Almost all candidates inserted the heading and shaded it correctly, and inserted and merged a new row. Most changed the times to 24 hour clock.

Task 11 – E-mail
Most candidates attained at least half marks for this task. Most candidates were able to mark the e-mail urgent, include the essential information in the message and print evidence of sending.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper
Question 1(a), a few candidates did not follow the capitalisation consistency of the field headings.

Question 1(b), some candidates did not query the database for the correct criteria and many did not print the title field as part of the name.

Question 1(c), the vast majority of candidates did not include all fields from both tables in the printed form. Some candidates printed the wrong form.

Question 1(d), many candidates did not sort the report on two fields and many did not include the title field as part of the name. The vast majority of candidates did not include the full stop in the footer sentence and many candidates had keyboarding errors in the header and footer.

Question 2(a) (i), almost all candidates attempted the formula for 'Overtime Rate', however many did not insert a correct formula.

Question 2(a) (ii), many candidates keyed in the new row items inaccurately and the majority of candidates had incorrect capitalisation for 'Cost per Person'. A number of candidates did not insert two rows correctly. Some inserted the rows incorrectly above the 'Band Members' Wages' and a number of candidates keyed in wage information to column A. Most candidates attempted the formula for 'Band Members' Wages', but many did not manage to multiply the whole calculation by four due to incorrect use of brackets. A number of candidates did not name the 'Overtime' cell accurately. Many candidates did not key in the correct condition for the IF statement as they missed out the '=' when using less than.

Question 2(b), many candidates did not attain any marks for the graph. A number of candidates did not include Hawick in the heading, or had incorrect keyboarding. 'Band Members' Wages' was often not included in the data, or 'Item Cost' was used instead of 'Total Cost'. The legend was often irrelevant or axis labels were truncated, a number of candidates produced pie charts instead of a bar chart.

In question 3, the average mark was less than half marks. Candidates did not always describe a specific feature of presentation software, the answers were very general and a specific feature was not indicated. Many candidates did not explain how corporate image could be improved, many confused this with advertising or customer service. Some answers were again, very general, and some candidates struggled with the command word 'explain'.

Assignment

Task 1 – Press release
Some candidates did not insert the contact details as instructed, or had keyboarding errors. Many candidates did not attain the print mark because they deleted the footer when inserting their name.

Task 2 – E-mail
Many candidates did not have a correct layout for the e-mail and keyboarding was also inaccurate.

Task 3 – Theory
A number of candidates gave ways that an employee ensures security of electronic information, instead of from the perspective of the employer. Many candidates did not give a specific use when describing the methods of communication, they gave generic answers. Candidates sometimes repeated answers when explaining the benefits of good customer service.

Task 4 – Ticket
Many candidates had keyboarding errors and a number of candidates missed out essential information.

Task 5 – E-diary
Many candidates had keyboarding errors in the meetings and the site visit. Some submitted truncated printouts, without including additional printouts showing all keyboarding. Some screenshots were included which were not legible. A number of candidates did not attempt to create the task 'book conference room' using the task function, or they entered this task as an event.

Task 6 – Presentation
Some candidates did not copy and paste the heading and information correctly in slides two and three. Many had keyboarding errors in the heading and some had bullet points at the start of each sentence. Many candidates also had inconsistent headings on slides and were unable to correctly copy and paste the exhibitor names from the spreadsheet. Some keyed in this table and many included additional rows. Some did not print the handout in landscape.

Task 7 – Favourites and internet search
Candidates tended to gain less than half marks for this task. Though candidates used the bookmark/favourite feature, some did not bookmark/favourite the correct site. Many candidates provided printouts which did not evidence the required information. Many candidates used review ratings instead of star ratings for the hotel and did not include the actual distance to the town centre.

Task 8 – Information leaflet
Many candidates did not attain any keyboarding marks. Most candidates did not attain the print mark because they had deleted the page numbers on the leaflet or they did not follow the e-file template for the menu being keyed in.

Task 9 – Mail merge
A few candidates printed an A5 page, instead of A4.

Task 10 – Demonstration schedule
Many candidates made keyboarding errors and some did not follow the layout in the e-file template.

Task 11 – E-mail
Many candidates did not attain any keyboarding marks due to inaccuracies and poor layout of the e-mail. Many candidates did not insert the signature block accurately.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Centres should refer to the marking instructions and general marking principles on SQA's website when preparing candidates.

Candidate names should be separate from any footer or header text, and any footer or headers in the e-file must not be deleted.

The quality of printing was generally good. Centres must continue to ensure that printouts are legible, the ink was faint in some instances. Data must be visible and legible to gain marks.

Centres are reminded that evidence in support of exceptional circumstances should demonstrate how the candidate has coped with the course assessment requirements. There is additional guidance around types of evidence that centres should submit in *Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service: Information for Centres*. Assessments, marking instructions and e-files and marked candidates responses should be submitted as part of evidence.

Question paper

Centres must ensure that candidates have practised all required features for the database, for example sorting on two fields.

Where candidates are asked to produce a form from the database, they must use fields from both tables, and ensure that there are no duplicate fields.

Where candidates are asked to include a name they must have title, first name and surname fields, or column headings in the correct order.

When using spreadsheets, candidates must follow instructions when inserting new rows, to ensure that they are entered in the correct place, with the correct formatting.

Where a name is being provided for the named cell, this must be keyed in accurately.

Candidates should practise inputting complicated formula and IF statements.

Candidates must ensure that they complete the type of chart requested, using the correct data and appropriate axis labels. The heading should be as given, or meaningful for the chart being produced.

The vast majority of candidates attempted theory, and many attained half marks. Candidates should be reminded to answer the question by thinking about the command word used. Candidates must be able to describe features and benefits of different types of software when responding to theory questions or tasks.

Assignment

There was evidence of poor keyboarding across all tasks in the assignment, especially when candidates had to create a document. Candidates must proof read their work carefully before submission.

When completing e-files, candidates must follow the template given, to ensure consistency of style and layout.

The layout of e-mails was poor. All e-mails must have a subject, start, sensible message and close, along with open punctuation. It is good practice for candidates to use the cc function when copying in additional recipients to an e-mail.

Centres must ensure that candidates have practised all required features for electronic communication, for example, creating and using a signature block and creating tasks. Where e-diary events and times are truncated, supplementary printouts must be included to show the required detail.

Where new slides are inserted, they must be consistent with the existing slides, for example, the same heading styles. All printing instructions must be followed.

Internet searches tended to be poorly completed. If screenshots are used candidates must ensure that all the information required is visible and legible. No marks can be awarded if information cannot be read. Candidates must ensure that they show the criteria which has been requested. For example, if options of different hotels are given, candidates must clearly identify which hotel they are selecting.

Theory responses were generally good, however candidates must remember that all responses must be from the employer's perspective, not the employee, as detailed in the task. Explain responses must include a cause and effect.

Centres should ensure that the software used allows candidates access to all the functions listed in the course specification. For example, e-mail software must have an urgent facility.

Date/time formats should be set for UK English, not American English, as was evidenced in many centres.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2018	4767

Number of resulted entries in 2019	4885

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	29.7%	29.7%	1451	84
B	26.8%	56.5%	1307	72
C	22.3%	78.7%	1087	60
D	13.2%	91.9%	643	48
No award	8.1%	-	397	-

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 that allow:

♦ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary)
♦ 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 head of service and statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. Members of the SQA management team chair these meetings. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper has been more, or less, challenging than usual.

♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper is more challenging than usual.
♦ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual.
♦ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question 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 question papers set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the question papers that they set themselves.