



Course report 2023

National 5 Gàidhlig

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. You should read the report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics in the report were compiled before any appeals were completed.

Grade boundary and statistical information

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2022: 205

Number of resulted entries in 2023: 229

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade

A	Number of candidates	117	Percentage	51.1	Cumulative percentage	51.1	Minimum mark required	68
B	Number of candidates	46	Percentage	20.1	Cumulative percentage	71.2	Minimum mark required	58
C	Number of candidates	32	Percentage	14	Cumulative percentage	85.2	Minimum mark required	48
D	Number of candidates	20	Percentage	8.7	Cumulative percentage	93.9	Minimum mark required	38
No award	Number of candidates	14	Percentage	6.1	Cumulative percentage	100	Minimum mark required	N/A

Please note that rounding has not been applied to these statistics.

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in the appendix.

In this report:

- ◆ 'most' means greater than 70%
- ◆ 'many' means 50% to 69%
- ◆ 'some' means 25% to 49%
- ◆ 'a few' means less than 25%

You can find more statistical reports on the [statistics and information](#) page of SQA's website.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

The question paper performed as expected. The passage was set at an appropriate level and was relevant to candidates. The text was a contemporary factual passage about an individual's attempt at crossing the Atlantic Ocean single-handedly. The introduction and the title of the passage made clear to candidates what the topic was, with appropriate language used throughout.

The questions caused no issues and allowed candidates to show their understanding and to carry out appropriate analysis of aspects of the passage. There were no questions that performed badly. Some candidates found a few of the questions challenging, but stronger candidates coped well with all questions.

Most candidates who did not achieve full marks gave insufficient information rather than through a lack of understanding. Markers noted that there was a wide enough range of questions to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability.

Overall, candidates performed better in questions that required specific information taken directly from the passage than in questions that required analysis or a personal response. In conclusion, this was a good reading question paper and candidates performed well. There were no specific issues raised.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

As in previous years, literature questions were on five genres: poetry, short story, novel, play or film/TV. Most candidates chose poetry or short stories and gave a wide range of responses. The best responses showed good familiarity with the chosen text and an explanation of the skills and techniques used by the writer, while adhering to the question asked.

Many candidates did not adhere to the specific question that was asked, for example the question on short stories asked candidates to discuss an interesting character within a text, however some candidates provided a more generic response with little focus on an identified character. Candidates may have pre-learned these responses before the assessment and did not adapt them to fit the questions asked. Some of the stronger candidates showed good ability to undertake detailed analysis of the text, with relevant supporting evidence. The best responses had a good use of quotations.

There were a number of responses that did not have much content and showed little evidence of an ability to undertake textual analysis.

Although there was a wide range of texts used within responses, the text *Ar Cànan 's Ar Clò* was used significantly more than others. Although this text was used more, responses using this text were not the strongest. It was encouraging to see candidates using the film/TV genre this year.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

The listening question paper was set at an appropriate level and was in line with previous years. The passage was about some of the opportunities within both the world of work and the wider education system, promoting a positive attitude to work and learning.

The passage was relevant to the interests of teenagers, and the wording of questions was straightforward, presenting no difficulty for candidates. Many candidates gave full responses, however some gave no response, or responses that were not of sufficient detail to achieve full marks for questions. Although candidates are not penalised for spelling and grammatical errors, there should be more of an attempt by candidates to minimise these. Markers commented on the significant number of spelling and grammar errors, which made it difficult at times to mark candidate responses.

Most questions were attempted by the majority of candidates.

Question 3 performed best. It required two pieces of information for 2 marks. Most candidates achieved full marks in this question.

Question 8 was the most challenging: A' cleachdadh fianais bhon earrainn, seall dè cho soirbheachail 's a bha Dòmhnall ann a bhith a' toirt seachadh na h-òraid aige. Candidates were to provide evidence from the passage and explain the effectiveness of this evidence. More candidates failed to provide a response for this question than any other.

The listening paper differs from the reading paper as candidates do not have the text as reference. However, markers noted that the performance of candidates in the listening paper this year was poorer than their performance in the reading paper. Disruption to learning, could be a factor. All of this was taken into account when setting the grade boundaries.

Obair shònraichte–sgrìobhadh (Assignment–writing)

The requirement to complete the assignment–writing was removed for session 2022–23.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

The performance–talking performed as expected. Candidates discussed a wide range of topics and applied an appropriate approach.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

Candidates performed well in reading. Generally, candidates cope well with the reading question paper as they can refer to the text. This is particularly true of questions that required them to identify information within the text.

Some candidates struggled with questions that required them to make inferences based on information in the text or to give their own opinions.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Overall, candidate performance was average in the literature question paper. Some of the stronger candidates gave good responses. These candidates answered the specific question that was asked.

For poetry, the strongest candidates gave detailed evidence of the writer's skill along with supporting evidence and quotations. For short stories, the strongest candidates successfully identified a particular character in the story and explained the skills and techniques used by the writer within the text. Good analysis of the texts was evident in the best responses.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Candidate performance in the listening question paper was fair.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

Candidate interaction with the teacher or lecturer was an area of strength. Candidates selected a wide range of topics.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

Questions where candidates had to provide explanation in their own words or where they had to give their opinion proved more challenging.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

A few candidates failed to answer the specific question asked.

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Overall, candidates found this question paper fairly demanding. Some candidates found it challenging to answer inferential questions.

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

Candidates frequently found it demanding to make use of specialist vocabulary in the context of their chosen topic.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ are presented at the correct level
- ◆ make use of support mechanisms that may be available to help improve their handwriting
- ◆ make use of support mechanisms that may be available to help improve their spelling and grammar (candidates are not penalised for incorrect spelling and grammar, however incorrect spelling and grammar may interfere with the marker's understanding of responses given to questions)

Question paper 1: Leughadh (Reading)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ check how many marks each question is worth and ensure that their response reflects the number of marks allocated
- ◆ pay attention when questions specify how much information is required, for example one piece of information or two pieces of evidence

Teachers, lecturers, and candidates should make use of the Understanding Standards materials on SQA's website.

Question paper 1: Litreachas (Literature)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ do not write their answer in English first before writing it in Gaelic
- ◆ take more time over their responses to ensure they are legible

Question paper 2: Èisteachd (Listening)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ read the question carefully and answer the question that is asked, rather than give a general response
- ◆ be prepared to adapt their essay in line with the specific questions asked within the assessment

Còmhradh (Performance–talking)

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ have knowledge of, and can apply, detailed vocabulary that is specific to their chosen topic in a natural manner
- ◆ select topics that will allow them to demonstrate fully their broad understanding of, and ability to use, the language

Appendix: general commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim when setting grade boundaries is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

For most National Courses, SQA aims to set examinations and other external assessments and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional grade C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional grade 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 for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and to make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Members of SQA's Executive Management Team normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors utilise their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the discussion at these meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more, or less, difficult than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- ◆ Where levels of difficulty 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 on year. This is because the specific questions, and the mix of questions, are different and this has an impact on candidate performance.

This year, a package of support measures was developed to support learners and centres. This included modifications to course assessment, retained from the 2021–22 session. This support was designed to address the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching that young people have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic while recognising a lessening of the impact of disruption to learning and teaching as a result of the pandemic. The revision support that was available for the 2021–22 session was not offered to learners in 2022–23.

In addition, SQA adopted a sensitive approach to grading for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses, to help ensure fairness for candidates while maintaining

standards. This is in recognition of the fact that those preparing for and sitting exams continue to do so in different circumstances from those who sat exams in 2019 and 2022.

The key difference this year is that decisions about where the grade boundaries have been set have also been influenced, where necessary and where appropriate, by the unique circumstances in 2023 and the ongoing impact the disruption from the pandemic has had on learners. On a course-by-course basis, SQA has determined grade boundaries in a way that is fair to candidates, taking into account how the assessment (exams and coursework) has functioned and the impact of assessment modifications and the removal of revision support.

The grade boundaries used in 2023 relate to the specific experience of this year's cohort and should not be used by centres if these assessments are used in the future for exam preparation.

For full details of the approach please refer to the [National Qualifications 2023 Awarding — Methodology Report](#).