



Course report 2023

National 5 Urdu

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: 71

Number of resulted entries in 2023: 96

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade

A	Number of candidates	75	Percentage	78.1	Cumulative percentage	78.1	Minimum mark required	82
B	Number of candidates	7	Percentage	7.3	Cumulative percentage	85.4	Minimum mark required	70
C	Number of candidates	9	Percentage	9.4	Cumulative percentage	94.8	Minimum mark required	58
D	Number of candidates	3	Percentage	3.1	Cumulative percentage	97.9	Minimum mark required	46
No award	Number of candidates	2	Percentage	2.1	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: Reading

The reading paper consisted of three Urdu reading passages from the contexts of learning, employability and society. The reading passages and the questions were appropriate for A–C level candidates. Candidates were able to relate questions to their life and provided good responses.

Question paper 1: Writing

Overall, the writing paper was accessible for all candidates. Candidates read a job advertisement and then write a job application in Urdu (120 to 150 words). Candidates were asked to apply for a job in a youth hostel.

In the writing paper, A-type candidates write full and detailed job applications, and C-type candidates tend not to complete the last two bullet points.

Question paper 2: Listening

Overall, the listening paper was accessible for all candidates. Candidates listen to Urdu recordings and then answer questions in English. This year the paper was on the context of employability.

Assignment–writing

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

Performance–talking

The approach to the assessment and the assessment judgement used by centres was valid.

All centres verified used SQA’s guidelines for the internally assessed component of course assessment: National 5 Modern Languages performance–talking assessment task. The quality of the performances sampled was generally high. Assessors guided candidates well in the selection of their topics and, in many performances, candidates used a range of structures, vocabulary, and tenses appropriate to the level.

Many presentations evidenced well-organised and relevant content and candidates were generally more accurate in this section, however some presentations were very short.

Most centres provided proof of internal verifications, which was helpful to verify the performances.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper 1: Reading

Many candidates performed well in questions 1(a) and (c), 2(b) and (d)(i), 3(c), (d) and (f). Candidates were able to relate to these questions and understood what to write.

Question paper 1: Writing

Overall, candidates performed well, with most completing bullet points 1 to 4.

Question paper 2: Listening

Overall, candidates performed well in this question paper.

Performance—talking

The overall standard of candidate performance sampled was high. Candidates gave very informative presentations on their chosen topics and performed to a high standard in terms of content, accuracy, and language resource. Most performances selected for verification covered at least two contexts. Candidates were able to understand the questions and respond accordingly.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper 1: Reading

A few candidates did not write full answers and sometimes writing was difficult to read.

Questions 1(d), 2(a), (c), and (d), and 3(c): candidates found the words ‘difficult’, ‘documentary’, ‘exhibition’, ‘strengthen’ and ‘friendship’ challenging, and these questions were not answered as well as expected.

Question paper 1: Writing

Some candidates missed the last two bullet points, which are unpredictable, meaning they were unable to gain full marks.

Spelling and grammar mistakes remain an issue for some candidates.

Question paper 2: Listening

Some candidates found the following questions slightly challenging and did not provide full responses:

- ◆ 1(d): Rabia did not get the job. What feedback did she get?
- ◆ 2(b): Abbas wants to study aeronautical engineering.
- ◆ 2(f): In what ways will this experience help him? Abbas suggests Saleha smiles during her interview. What does he say?

Performance–talking

A few candidates were not fully prepared and did not perform well: there were several grammar errors and the performances lacked depth and complex language appropriate to the level.

It appeared that some candidates repeated themselves for the sake of gaining time. Most of the performances were within the required time limit while some performances were too short.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ know how to write full and complete answers to all questions rather than a few words
- ◆ practise exam technique throughout the course to help them respond effectively to the question papers

Question paper 1: Reading

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ try to answer all questions
- ◆ frequently practise translating from Urdu to English in class so they can access the full range of marks

Question paper 1: Writing

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ practise Urdu writing in class: sometimes it was difficult to read Urdu handwriting

Question paper 2: Listening

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ make notes during the first listen of the recording and then start writing full answers after listening for the second time
- ◆ review all the answers after listening to the recording a third time and adjust answers if required

Performance–talking

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ choose two different topics from two different themes: one for the presentation and a second topic for the follow-on discussion
- ◆ for the performance–talking, consider a wider scope of different contexts to generate a variety of performances

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](#).