Course report 2024

National 5 Administration and IT

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 with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

We compiled the statistics in this report before we completed the 2024 appeals process.

Grade boundary and statistical information

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2023:   5,467

Number of resulted entries in 2024:   5,183

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade

A	Number of candidates	1,781	Percentage	34.4	Cumulative percentage	34.4	Minimum mark required	86
B	Number of candidates	1,331	Percentage	25.7	Cumulative percentage	60.0	Minimum mark required	73
C	Number of candidates	1,062	Percentage	20.5	Cumulative percentage	80.5	Minimum mark required	60
D	Number of candidates	649	Percentage	12.5	Cumulative percentage	93.1	Minimum mark required	47
No award	Number of candidates	360	Percentage	6.9	Cumulative percentage	100	Minimum mark required	N/A

We have not applied rounding 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 statistical reports on the statistics and information page of our website.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper

A few candidates attained low marks and a few attained high marks in this question paper. Many candidates did not submit printouts for all questions. Most candidates attempted all parts of the theory question.

Assignment

Many candidates attained very high marks. The assignment performed as expected, although candidates did not attain the top few marks due to keyboarding errors and inconsistencies.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Question paper

Question 1(a) — database table

Many candidates attained high marks in this question.

Some candidates were unable to sort on one field and a few candidates did not include the Contact Title field.

Question 1(b) — database query

Most candidates attained both marks for this question.

Question 1(c) — database form

Many candidates attained more than half of the available marks for this question.

Most candidates attained the marks for printing the correct record and the fields shown being visible and legible.

Most candidates did not attain the mark for including the correct fields, and many candidates did not attain the keyboarding mark as they omitted the full stop or had other keyboarding errors in the footer.

Question 1(d) — database report

A few candidates attained more than half of the available marks for this question.

Most candidates attained the logo mark and the supplier name criteria mark. Some candidates attained the date criteria mark and the heading mark.

Few candidates attained the double sort marks, or the print mark due to the field headings being truncated.

Question 2(a) — price list

Most candidates attained more than half of the available marks for this question.

Most candidates attained the marks for unmerging and emboldening the heading. Many candidates also attained the marks for inserting rows, keyboarding and replicating the formula.

Some candidates did not attain the formula mark to increase the price by 10%.

Question 2(b) — quotation

Many candidates attained more than half of the available marks for this question.

Most candidates attained the keyboarding mark and many attained the formatting mark. Some candidates incorrectly formatted 7.5 to currency.

Most candidates linked at least one of the cells in the price per person column, and many linked all the required cells to attain the marks. Most candidates also attained the formula and replication marks for total costs.

Many candidates attained the sub total formula, although it was consequentially correct. Many candidates also attained the named cell mark and the VAT formula. Most candidates attained the addition formula mark for cost and total to pay.

A few candidates attained the IF statement marks: most candidates calculated a percentage, instead of an amount, many candidates did not include equals and some candidates truncated the cell.

Many candidates did not attain the print mark because the page orientation across the whole question was incorrect.

Question 2(c) — chart

A few candidates attained more than half of the available marks for this question.

Many candidates attained the mark for using the correct data to create a bar chart.

Some candidates attained the mark for inserting accurate headings and labels. Many candidates inserted additional incorrect legends. Some candidates attained the percentage increase marks. Some candidates attained the print mark, however many candidates did not format the percentage increase cell for percentage with 2 decimal places.

Question 3 — theory

Most candidates attained most marks in the outline question about Fire Safety Regulations. Many candidates attained half of the available marks in the two explain questions.

Few candidates attained full marks in the explain questions because their responses were repetitive.

Assignment

Task 1 — Headed paper

Most candidates scored well in this task, with most attaining more than half of the available marks. Almost all candidates were able to insert the essential information in the headed paper.

Many candidates did not attain the header mark because they did not put the slogan in the header, instead they included the heading somewhere else in the headed paper. Many candidates did not attain the keyboarding mark due to inaccurate keyboarding and including a full stop after the slogan in the header.

Task 2 — Advert

Most candidates attained over half of the available marks in this task.

Although most candidates put a map in the box, often the street name could not be read. Many candidates made the box larger, which altered the template so the presentation mark could not be awarded. Most candidates did not include the address when they were asked to include the contact details, so did not attain one of the keyboarding marks. Many candidates did not attain the second keyboarding mark because they did not key-in the opening times with the correct spacing in this section.

Task 3 — E-mail

Most candidates attained most marks for this task. Most candidates were able to include the essential information in the body of their e-mail.

Few candidates attained the keyboarding mark for this task. Many candidates showed a poor e-mail layout and had keyboarding errors.

Task 4 — E-diary

Most candidates attained at least half of the available marks for this task. Most candidates were able to insert at least one of the meetings and print the weekly view.

Many candidates did not insert the meeting correctly, by using incorrect spelling, inconsistent capitalisation or omitting the location. Some candidates did not spell Inveraray correctly. Some candidates inserted meetings and printed the weekly view for the wrong week.

Task 5 — Internet

Most candidates attained less than half of the available marks for this task.

Most candidates were able show the correct driving directions and accommodation in Inveraray.

Though candidates were usually able to find accommodation, many did not show, or select, the accommodation cost. Some candidates provided different snips for accommodation and cost; however, the cost snip did not include the accommodation name, therefore the mark could not be awarded.

Some candidates found bike sellers, but there was no evidence that electric bikes were sold, or that they were in Glasgow. Many snips were very small and were truncated so did not show all the required information or were illegible.

Task 6 — Theory

Some candidates performed well in this task. Most candidates attained most marks in the outline task and some marks in the explain task.

Some candidates outlined ways of keeping information and people secure instead of property. Some candidates did not attain marks for describing features of word processing, instead they identified the feature. Some candidates also used the same description for different features, for example bold, to stand out and underline, to pop out.

Task 7 — Presentation

Most candidates performed well in this task, with the vast majority attaining more than half of the available marks. Almost all candidates were able to insert a background or design to all slides, move slides and remove a graphic.

Some candidates did not attain the numbered bullet mark because the final bullet was not numbered. Some candidates did not attain the action buttons mark because they only had one action button on every slide. Few candidates attained keyboarding marks, many had capitalisation errors, omitted words and made errors with the manuscript correction signs. Many candidates did not attain the shape mark because they put more than the address into the shape.

Task 8 — Discount voucher

Most candidates attained most marks for this task. Almost all candidates attained the essential information, graphic, text formatting and presentation marks.

Many candidates did not input the correct valid until date, or stated for 7 days, which was incorrect. Most candidates had keyboarding errors.

Task 9 — Mail merge

Many candidates attained less than half of the available marks for this task.

Most candidates attained at least one merge mark and removed the borders around the table in this task.

Some candidates did not use the same headed paper as they created in task 1 and did not input the reference in the correct format. The subject heading was often placed incorrectly and had no enhancement. The complementary close was often incorrect or incorrectly capitalised or had a comma. Keyboarding of the owner's name and designation was often incorrect or omitted. Most candidates did not attain the presentation mark due to incorrect line spacing and omitting information.

Task 10 — E-diary update

Most candidates attained half of the available marks for this task. Most candidates were able to amend the meeting time and set a reminder.

Many candidates struggled to show a task on the correct day; instead, they set up a new meeting in the calendar. Some candidates did not show the date due for the task because they provided a snip which was too small so did not include all the relevant information. Many candidates did not use the date due function, instead they keyed the date due into the task description, which was not awarded the mark.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Database reports should be printed from the database file, not exported to a word-processing document.

Where candidates are asked to include a name, they must have title, first name and surname in the correct order. Teachers and lecturers must ensure that candidates have practised all required features, for example, sorting on two fields and creating a form with the specified fields, and no duplicated fields.

Candidates must ensure that they read the labels in a spreadsheet so that they know when a formula response is to be a rate or an amount, and to ascertain whether they should be adding or subtracting cells. Candidates should practise inputting complicated formula and IF statements. When adding two adjacent cells, candidates can use either plus, for example =A3+A4 or sum the range, for example =SUM(A3:A4). They should not use sum for addition, for example =SUM(A3+A4).

Candidates must check that they hand in printouts for each question, including formula printouts. They should continue to check all printouts for truncation, especially formula printouts, which often require columns to be elongated. All printouts must be proofread before submission.

If candidates are composing their own heading (for example in a report, form or chart), this heading should include all key pieces of information, so that this accurately describes the data displayed. Good practice is to use block capitals for main headings in database forms and reports, and spreadsheet charts; this ensures consistent capitalisation.

Teachers and lecturers should remind candidates to answer theory questions by addressing the command word used. An outline response needs more than one word and usually includes a verb, and an explain response must include a cause and effect.

Assignment

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the marking instructions and general marking principles on SQA's website when preparing candidates for future assessment. Any ICT issues encountered by candidates during the assignment, that might have an impact on marking, should be communicated via the ICT issues form which will be available on the Administration and IT page of SQA's secure website. Teachers and lecturers should not write notes or include information within the candidate's evidence.

If a box is provided for a graphic, candidates should use that box and amend the size of the graphic to fit the box, rather than amending the size of the box to fit the graphic.

Internet searches tend to be poorly completed. If screenshots or snips are used, candidates must ensure that all the information required is visible and legible. Marks cannot be awarded if information cannot be read. Candidates must ensure that they show all the criteria that has

been requested and where one search is related to another, for example accommodation and price, it must be clear which accommodation the price is for. If options of different accommodation or travel are given, candidates must clearly identify which one they are selecting.

The layout of e-mails continues to improve year on year. 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. All e-mails should be proofread carefully.

Candidates should practise the creating tasks function using to-do lists, not inserting a task as an event. They should also use the date due function, not insert the date manually.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates practise keyboarding and completing letters. Many candidates did not know how to construct a reference, the order of the contents of a letter, which salutation to use, and line spacing within the letter.

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, and each cause and effect should be different.

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.

Every year, we evaluate the performance of our assessments in a fair way, while ensuring standards are maintained so that our qualifications remain credible. To do this, we measure evidence of candidates' knowledge and skills against the national standard.

During the pandemic, we modified National Qualifications course assessments, for example we removed elements of coursework. We kept these modifications in place until the 2022–23 session. The education community agreed that retaining the modifications for longer than this could have a detrimental impact on learning and progression to the next stage of education, employment or training. After discussions with candidates, teachers, lecturers, parents, carers and others, we returned to full course assessment for the 2023–24 session.

SQA's approach to awarding was announced in March 2024 and explained that any impact on candidates completing coursework for the first time, as part of their SQA assessments, would be considered in our grading decisions and incorporated into our well-established

grading processes. This provides fairness and safeguards for candidates and helps to provide assurances across the wider education community as we return to established awarding.

Our approach to awarding is broadly aligned to other nations of the UK that have returned to normal grading arrangements.

For full details of the approach, please refer to the [National Qualifications 2024 Awarding — Methodology Report](#).