

Course report 2026

National 5 Italian, SCQF level 5

We've written this report for teachers and lecturers. We recommend you read this with the published course assessment documents and marking instructions.

The report:

- provides a summary of how each course component performed
- highlights areas of the question papers and coursework where candidates performed well and areas where they did not perform well
- has advice you might find useful when preparing candidates for assessment

We carried out limited verification for performance–talking this year, so we won't publish a verification summary. You can find summaries from previous years on our [website](#).

We collect and prepare the statistics in course reports before we complete the appeals process.

Statistical and grade boundary information

Course entries

Number of resulted entries in 2025: 294

Number of resulted entries in 2026: 335

Distribution of course awards (including minimum mark to achieve each grade)

Course award	Number of candidates	Percentage	Cumulative percentage	Minimum mark required
A	160	47.8	47.8	84
B	68	20.3	68.1	72
C	52	15.5	83.6	60
D	34	10.1	93.7	48
No award	21	6.3	100	Not applicable

We've not applied rounding to these statistics.

In this report:

- 'Most' means greater than or equal to 70%.
- 'Many' means 50% to 69%.
- 'Some' means 25% to 49%.
- 'Few' or 'a few' means less than 25%.

You can find [statistical reports](#) on our website.

General commentary on grade boundaries

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

For most National Courses, we aim 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's very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject, at every level. Therefore, we hold a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Senior Qualifications Scotland staff normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors use their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. We 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.

- We can adjust the grade boundaries downwards if there's evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- We can adjust the grade boundaries upwards if there's evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- If levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, we maintain similar grade boundaries.

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.

For full details of the approach, please refer to the [Awarding and Grading for National Courses Policy](#).

How the course assessment performed

Question paper 1: Reading

This question paper included three texts of equal weight. There were three supported questions. The paper covered the contexts of learning, employability and culture.

The reading paper performed as intended.

Question paper 1: Writing

In this question paper, which is always on the context of employability, candidates have to write a response to a job advert for the role of an entertainer at a kids' club. In the email, candidates have to include the information specified in the four predictable and two unpredictable bullet points. The two unpredictable bullet points (why you would like to work in Italy, and your future career plans) were relevant to the context and allowed candidates to demonstrate their skills and knowledge of Italian.

The writing paper performed as intended.

Question paper 2: Listening

This question paper has two parts: a monologue and a dialogue, each including a supported question. The paper was on the context of society.

The listening paper performed as intended.

Assignment-writing

The assignment-writing performed as expected, with candidates selecting a range of topics from the three contexts of society, learning and culture.

How candidates performed

Areas where candidates performed well

Question paper 1: Reading

Text 1 (employability)

- question (a): most candidates gained the mark by identifying 'introduces pupils, students to future work settings' from *perché introduce i suoi allievi nel loro futuro settore di lavoro*
- question (b)(i): this question offered optionality, and most candidates gained the mark for *intense* or *sono passate molto velocemente* (they passed quickly, time passed quickly, it was (very) fast paced)
- question (b)(iii): this question offered optionality, and most candidates gained the mark from either *un po' ripetitivo* (it was (a bit) repetitive) or *richiede molta attenzione* (it requires, needs much, a lot, close attention, care)
- question (d)(i): many candidates gained the mark by identifying 'watching' and 'learning' from *guardare e imparare*

Text 2 (learning)

- question (a): most candidates gained the marks, with *una materia* (a subject) and *ricordavi nulla* (not remembered anything)
- question (d): this question offered optionality, and most candidates gained the marks from *fanno sport a livello competitivo* (do sport at a competitive level, competitively, high level), *vogliono prendere del tempo per rilassarsi* (they want to relax) or *uscire con gli amici* (go out, hang out, spend time with friends)

Text 3 (culture)

- question (e)(iii): many candidates gained the mark by identifying that 'he wrote down his experiences' from *scrivere le mie esperienze che avevo avuto durante la giornata*

Question paper 1: Writing

- many candidates performed well in this paper with some gaining full marks
- most candidates addressed the four predictable bullet points in a balanced and detailed manner, using a range of grammatical structures and varied vocabulary appropriate to National 5
- many candidates addressed the two unpredictable bullet points with varying degrees of detail and accuracy

Question paper 2: Listening

Item 1 (monologue)

- question (a): most candidates gained the mark for 'inseparable' from *eravamo amiche inseparabili*
- question (b): this question offered optionality, and most candidates gained the marks from *ci telefonavamo ogni sera e andavamo* (phoned, called (each other)); *al cinema almeno una volta al mese* (went to the cinema); *ogni settimana facevamo un giro per i negozi* (went shopping) and *una passeggiata in bicicletta* (went cycling)

Item 2 (dialogue)

- question (a): this question offered optionality, and most candidates gained the marks from *adesso posso prendere la laurea* (get, have, take her degree, graduation); *rilassarmi*; *andare in vacanza* (rest, relax); and *realizzare il mio sogno di andare in Thailandia* (go to Thailand)
- question (b)(i): most candidates gained the mark by identifying '9 June'
- question (b)(ii): many candidates gained the mark from *il mio computer si è bloccato*, identifying that the computer crashed, blocked, locked, froze, did not work, stopped working

Assignment–writing

Many candidates produced an accurate piece of writing including detailed language expected at this level. Many candidates performed well and achieved 16 of the 20 marks available. Candidates covered a range of topics from each of the three contexts of society, learning and culture. Many candidates chose to write about the topics of school or holidays.

Areas where candidates did not perform well

Question paper 1: Reading

- many candidates did not respond to all questions, and a few did not answer any questions
- some candidates had difficulty with expression in English
- some candidates' handwriting was not always legible
- some candidates answered questions by paraphrasing into their own words instead of referring directly to the text and missed out specific details, and did not gain the marks as a result

Text 1 (employability)

- question (b)(ii): some candidates did not understand *mi hanno insegnato molte cose pratiche* (they taught her many practical things) and did not gain the mark
- question (d)(ii): some candidates did not understand *mi hanno permesso di mettere in pratica alcune cose che avevo imparato a scuola* (he put into practice things he learned at school, took part in practical work taught in school) and did not gain the mark

Text 2 (learning)

- question (e): there were two possible answers for this question. Some candidates did not understand *tema* (theme) and *ripassare* (review) and did not gain the mark

Text 3 (culture)

- question (a): many candidates did not understand *sono appena tornata* (I just got back) and did not gain the mark
- question (c)(ii): many candidates did not understand *i mezzi pubblici* (public transport) and did not gain the mark
- question (f): many candidates did not understand *tutte le cose che mi ricordano di Ischia* (all the things that remind me of Ischia) and did not gain the mark. There was a high number of no responses to this question

Question paper 1: Writing

- some candidates did not answer the unpredictable bullet points with enough accuracy and detail or in a full and balanced manner, and did not access the upper marks of 16 and 20
- a few candidates did not complete the four predictable bullet points and could not address the job advert in a full and balanced manner, and did not access the upper marks of 16 and 20
- there were some no responses and instances of illegible handwriting

Question paper 2: Listening

Item 1 (monologue)

- question (c)(i): some candidates did not identify *non vuole più uscire* (does not want to go out, leave the house) and did not gain the mark
- question (e): some candidates did not understand the idiomatic phrase *non possiamo più contare su di lei* (we can't count on, rely on her) and did not gain the mark

Item 2 (dialogue)

- question (d): some candidates did not understand *perdere tutto il lavoro* (ruin, lose all your work) and did not gain the mark
- question (e)(ii): some candidates did not identify *prima di iniziare la scuola* (before starting school) and did not gain the mark
- question (f)(i): some candidates did not identify the comparator *più di* (more than) and did not gain the mark

Assignment-writing

Some candidates wrote about the topic of school and included a number of lists, for example subjects studied and school uniform items. This led to language that did not have enough detail to access the upper marks of 16 and 20.

Preparing candidates for assessment

Question paper 1: Reading

You should ensure candidates:

- attempt all questions and leave time at the end of the exam to check their answers make sense in English
- complete 'true or false' and 'multiple choice' questions
- have a good knowledge of high frequency words and phrases
- include superlatives, comparators and adverbs to access the full range of marks
- have legible handwriting and if not, make alternative arrangements
- do not paraphrase answers

Question paper 1: Writing

You should ensure candidates:

- attempt all six bullet points
- check spelling and all information is accurate, particularly personal information when using pre-learned material
- complete the four predictable bullet points in a full and balanced way, starting a new paragraph for each one
- leave enough time at the end of the exam to check their responses
- have legible handwriting and if not, make alternative arrangements

Question paper 2: Listening

You should ensure candidates:

- regularly practise note-taking in Italian to improve their listening skills
- understand cognates in unfamiliar contexts and expressions, as these are frequently used in the listening paper
- answer in detail, including qualifiers, as this is an area where they often miss out on marks
- read all the questions carefully and underline the key words so that they can listen for the correct answer

Assignment–writing

You should ensure candidates:

- choose a topic that allows them to produce detailed language with a range of ideas, structures, opinions and reasons
- are aware that it is not necessary to cover all the tenses appropriate to National 5 to achieve the higher marks
- avoid writing lists and being overly descriptive