



Course Report 2016

Subject	Health and Food Technology
Level	Advanced Higher

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. It 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.

Section 1: Comments on the assessment

Component 1: Project

Candidates performed as expected in the project. There was a good range of topics covered, which provided some very good research questions.

Candidates performed well in Stage 1: Project proposal and Stage 2: Results.

Candidates who wrote a clear and concise literature review appeared to have more of a grasp of the research question, and were therefore able to complete Stages 2 and 3 to a higher standard.

Stage 3: Analysis and Evaluation appeared to be the area where many candidates did not access as many marks. This was particularly evident in 3(a), where candidates did not appear to fully analyse the information which they had gathered in their research.

Component 2: Question Paper

The question paper consisted of four questions and was similar in format to the specimen and exemplar question papers, and covered a range of topics from the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding.

There was a very wide range of results in the question paper element. Feedback from the marking team suggested that the paper was fair in terms of overall demand and course coverage, and candidates were able to complete in the allocated time.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Project

Stage 1: 1(a)

Candidates generally performed well in this section. Many candidates accessed marks by providing a clear and concise literature review based around the chosen topic, which was well researched and backed up by credible up-to-date sources.

1(b)

Most candidates provided a research question that was relevant and based on the results of the literature review.

1(c)

Many candidates were able to provide a clear and concise outline plan for research that clearly explained why the types of research were chosen.

Stage 2: 2(a)

Many candidates provided very clear results and were able to communicate clearly the results of the research. This was carried out using a variety of methods.

2(b)

Candidates provided sufficient relevant evidence for analysis, ensuring that the research they had carried out was clearly linked to the research question and topic.

2(c)

Candidates on the whole presented results clearly and logically.

Stage 3: 3(a)

Some candidates completed this section very logically and showed their ability to link the information from section 1 to the results, and analyse the results using the information in the project.

3(b)

Generally, candidates drew conclusions from the research better than they analysed their research, and had conclusions clearly linked to the information gathered during the research process.

3(c)

Many candidates were able to evaluate the process as a whole by providing some interesting information, valid limitations and recommendations for further study.

Component 2: Question paper

Question 1: Most candidates performed well as they were able to apply knowledge to the organic foods.

Question 2: Candidates generally performed well in this question as they were able to clearly explain why vitamins were essential at different stages of life. This was a straightforward knowledge and understanding question.

Question 4: Some candidates performed well in this question as they were able to clearly evaluate and communicate the link between the food manufacturing process and childhood obesity. Candidates who did not make the link did not access marks.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Project

Stage 3(a)

This was the area that the candidates did not perform as well in, as they did not appear to fully analyse the results and link what they had found out from their research to the results. Some candidates introduced new information at this stage, which was not backed up by the research undertaken. Many candidates purely repeated the results at this stage, without offering any extra information; at Advanced Higher level, more depth is required, especially as it is the technique of analysis which marks are being awarded for.

Stage 3(c)

Many candidates did not evaluate the process as a whole; some candidate offered valid

recommendations for further study and limitations to the research process. However, candidates should not refer to time and word count as being a limitation, as all candidates have the same time and word count to adhere to.

Component 2: Question paper

Question 3: Most candidates did not answer this question as expected. Many candidates appeared to misinterpret what was being asked and many referred to product development rather than technological developments. Candidates must be fully aware of terminology that may be referred to.

Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Project

There was a varying degree of quality in the work submitted. There was a very good range of topics chosen for research, which were from all areas indicated in the skills, knowledge and understanding section of the course assessment specification.

Centres must use the advice given on the submission of the project on the SQA website — there were some centres that followed the format of the previous Advanced Higher.

Candidates must adhere to the word count of 4,000 words. Not all centres had the word count clearly displayed on the project or the flyleaf, though the majority of candidates were within the word count.

Presentation of projects was varied. It would be beneficial if line spacing was 1.5 and a minimum font size of 11 was used throughout.

There was a lack of bibliographies in many projects. This should be included.

Many candidates referred to themselves throughout the project. This should be avoided; where possible use 'the researcher found that'.

Candidates should be using up-to-date and credible research material.

Component 2: Question paper

Candidates should be made aware of the knowledge and understanding being assessed in this component of the course. This can be found in the mandatory skills knowledge and understanding in the course assessment specification on the SQA website.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	0
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Number of resulted entries in 2016	25
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	8.0%	8.0%	2	67
B	36.0%	44.0%	9	57
C	28.0%	72.0%	7	47
D	12.0%	84.0%	3	42
No award	16.0%	-	4	0

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and 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.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ 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.