Course report 2024

Care National 5

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 2023:   141

Number of resulted entries in 2024:   155

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade.

A	Number of candidates	28	Percentage	18.1	Cumulative percentage	18.1	Minimum mark required	84
B	Number of candidates	35	Percentage	22.6	Cumulative percentage	40.6	Minimum mark required	72
C	Number of candidates	44	Percentage	28.4	Cumulative percentage	69.0	Minimum mark required	60
D	Number of candidates	28	Percentage	18.1	Cumulative percentage	87.1	Minimum mark required	48
No award	Number of candidates	20	Percentage	12.9	Cumulative percentage	100	Minimum mark required	N/A

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

The question paper was accessible and fair. It was apparent that candidates completed it within the allocated time.

Questions differentiated between candidates appropriately and allowed A-grade candidates to develop their answer for full marks, and C-grade candidates to gain marks. Course content was sampled adequately.

There were examples of candidates who performed between A and D grades across all centres.

Project

Candidates were provided with three project briefs this session.

The project had examples of candidates who performed between A and D grades across all centres.

In section 2, candidate differentiation across all parts was evident. Candidates working at A grade were able to apply theories and the concepts described, to the brief and the individual. Candidates working at C grade were able to describe with little application to the chosen individual.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Most candidates did reasonably well. There were clear gaps in knowledge and understanding for a few candidates, which adversely affected their overall grades. It was also evident that a few candidates were not ready to be presented for the question paper component.

Question paper

Most candidates performed well in question 1 — describing social need.

Many candidates also performed well in question 2 — describing a feature of human development at the adolescent stage.

Many candidates were able to offer a good description of mass media and peer groups as social influences in question 6.

Many candidates offered good descriptions of the monitor and evaluate stage of the care planning process in question 8(a).

Project

In section 1, the action plan was well executed overall. Many candidates gained high marks for evidence of 1(a), 1(b) and most candidates for 1(c). Most candidates scored highly in items 2(a), 2(f) and 3(a).

The range of individuals chosen was diverse, with centres using innovative ways to engage the candidates in selecting an individual in receipt of a care service.

Candidates detailed the tasks and timescales effectively and the majority of candidates referred to their individual in the sources of information section.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper

Most candidates did not perform well in Question 11 — positive care environment.

Most candidates did not perform well in Question 12. This was discouraging, as knowledge of statutory care was highlighted as a candidate weakness in the 2021–22 course report.

Most candidates equated the 'voluntary care sector' with only unpaid informal volunteering.

Project

It was noted again this year that a few of the projects submitted fell significantly short of the wordcount. This limited the ability of most of these candidates to access the marks available in each section.

As in previous years, C-grade candidates found item 2(e) to be the most demanding, closely followed by item 2(d).

In particular, for 2(e) some candidates were not clear about what the features of the positive care environment are. This made it a difficult task to access the marks available to explain how these could meet the needs of the chosen individual. This information is available in the coursework marking instructions: additional notes on judging evidence column for this item.

Some candidates had submitted plans which were written in the past tense, rather than future tense. There was no penalty for this, but it perhaps gives an indication that the work was not appropriately planned in advance.

In addition, some candidates based their work on a 'case study' which did not lend itself well to the project. There were cases where the individual in the case study was a fictional cartoon or movie character. It was not clear why they would be in receipt of a care service. Centres should encourage candidates to base their project on a realistic individual in terms of their care needs.

Most candidates submitted a log book with their project and these were used with varying degree of effectiveness. Some log books had one or two sentences and others had a weekly account of progress.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Candidates need to be aware of how to respond to command words, for example describe, explain, identify.

Centres should ensure that candidates understand the care planning process, the different sectors of care, and the principles of the Health and Social Care Standards.

Candidates are expected to display knowledge of key concepts of the four psychological approaches identified. Candidates are also expected to display knowledge of a range of sociological concepts identified.

Attention should be drawn to positive care practice, positive care environments, and candidates should be able to offer knowledge and understanding of the statutory, private, and voluntary care sectors. Centres should look at this aspect of the course, as similar questions will feature in future question papers.

Centres should direct candidates to the National 5 Care Course Specification on the National 5 Care subject page of SQA's website.

Project

The word count is set at 2,500–3,500 excluding references, footnotes and appendices with a penalty applied if the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%. Centres should ensure candidates meet the word count.

In terms of the positive care environment, centres should ensure that candidates understand the four features: organisational aspects, physical aspects, therapeutic/interpersonal aspects, and community aspects, and that they are able to refer to them and the description of what each one refers to. This information is available in the coursework marking instructions: additional notes on judging evidence section.

Centres must remind candidates that it is mandatory to submit their log book with their project.

Centres should remind candidates who chose clients they have worked with during their placement or friends or family to maintain the confidentiality of the individual. If a centre distributes a case study or refers to a DVD for candidates to use as their chosen individual, it is important that teachers and lecturers check that it allows the candidates enough scope to develop the project fully and access marks.

Candidates should be made aware of the importance of putting information gained into their own words rather than copying directly from websites.

Centres should ensure that the current project guidelines are being followed by referring to the National 5 Care Coursework assessment task available on the [National 5 Care](#) subject page of SQA's website.

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](#).