Course report 2024

National 5 Italian

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:   156

Number of resulted entries in 2024:   334

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including minimum mark to achieve each grade

A	Number of candidates	166	Percentage	49.7	Cumulative percentage	49.7	Minimum mark required	82
B	Number of candidates	60	Percentage	18.0	Cumulative percentage	67.7	Minimum mark required	69
C	Number of candidates	38	Percentage	11.4	Cumulative percentage	79.0	Minimum mark required	57
D	Number of candidates	46	Percentage	13.8	Cumulative percentage	92.8	Minimum mark required	44
No award	Number of candidates	24	Percentage	7.2	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 1: Reading

The reading paper was comprised of three texts of equal weight. There were three supported questions. The question paper covered the contexts of society, employability and culture, which were engaging in content.

Text 3 was more challenging due to the cultural context, and this was considered at grade boundary.

Question paper 1: Writing

In the writing paper, candidates had to reply by email to a job advert for a role in a pizza restaurant. In the email, candidates should include the information specified in the four predictable bullet points and the two unpredictable bullet points. The unpredictable bullet points were relevant to the context and allowed candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. Overall, candidates performed as expected and some achieved full marks.

Question paper 2: Listening

Listening continues to be the area that candidates find most challenging. The listening monologue and dialogue were on the context of learning. There was one supported question.

Candidates found this paper more demanding, and this was considered at grade boundary.

Assignment–writing

The assignment–writing was reinstated this session. Candidates submit a piece of writing in Italian focusing on a context of society, culture or learning. Candidates performed well, with many candidates achieving 16 or more marks.

Performance–talking

There was a range of performances, but the overall level was very good. The topics selected for the presentation gave candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a range of structures, vocabulary, and tenses and access the higher pegged marks. Many candidates used detailed language in response to open-ended questions.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper 1: Reading

Text 1 (society)
Overall, candidates engaged well with the topic, which focused on the benefits of learning another language.

♦ question (a): most candidates achieved both marks
♦ question (c): most candidates achieved the mark

Text 2 (employability)
The text focused on a work experience placement.

♦ question (b): many candidates achieved the mark

Text 3 (culture)
This text focused on the feast day Ferragosto.

♦ question (b)(ii): most candidates achieved the mark

Question paper 1: Writing

Candidates performed well in this paper. Many candidates addressed the four predictable bullet points in a balanced manner and used detailed vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate to the level. Most candidates were prepared for the two unpredictable bullet points and addressed these with varying degrees of detail.

Question paper 2: Listening

Item 1 (monologue)
♦ question (b)(ii): most candidates achieved the mark

Item 2 (dialogue)
♦ question (a)(i): most candidates achieved the mark
♦ question (e)(i): most candidates achieved the mark

Assignment–writing

Most candidates performed very well in the assignment–writing. Candidates covered a range of topics within the contexts of society, culture and learning, with many choosing to write about their school, holidays or family relationships. Many candidates achieved 16 marks from the 20 marks available.

Performance–talking

Presentations were well-organised with appropriate content. Candidates took the opportunity to use detailed language during the conversation.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper 1: Reading

Compared to previous years, there were more no responses, which suggests some candidates had difficulty with time management, and there were more examples of poor expression in English and illegible handwriting.

Text 1 (society)
♦ question (d): some candidates had difficulty in understanding *hanno buoni contatti internazionali,* which prevented them gaining one of the marks

Text 2 (employability)
♦ question (e): some candidates had difficulty in understanding *si può essere assunti* and did not gain the mark
♦ question (f): few candidates understood *mettere da parte* to give the idea of 'saving/putting money aside' and did not gain the mark. There was a high number of no responses for this question

Text 3 (culture)
♦ question (d)(i): there were a few no responses for this question
♦ question (e): some candidates did not give the idea of 'swimming/bathing in the sea' and gave *un bel bagno al mare* as 'going to the beach'

Question paper 1: Writing

Some candidates could not manipulate the language to address both unpredictable bullet points in a full and balanced manner. Some candidates did not complete the four mandatory bullet points, which led to writing that didn't have enough detail to access the full range of marks.

There were more instances of illegible handwriting than in previous years.

Question paper 2: Listening

Overall, candidates found this paper challenging.

Item 1 (monologue)
♦ question (a): many candidates did not identify the adjective *accogliente,* which prevented them from gaining one of the marks
♦ question (b)(i): many candidates did not give enough detail to gain the marks
♦ question (d): many candidates did not give enough detail to gain both marks, with some having difficulty in providing the correct detail for *conoscere meglio*

Item 2 (dialogue)
♦ question (b)(i): some candidates did not give enough detail to gain both marks
♦ question (b)(ii): some candidates had difficulty understanding *dedicare tempo ai nostri altri interessi,* which prevented them from gaining one of the marks
♦ question (d): some candidates did not identify *sviluppare uno spirito di squadra* and this prevented them gaining one of the marks
♦ question (e)(ii): few candidates understood *già,* which prevented them from gaining the mark

Assignment–writing

Overall, candidates completed the assignment–writing with a high degree of accuracy and detailed language appropriate to the level. Candidates who gained less than 12 marks tended to write lists, and the language resource was too weak for the level. This was evident where candidates chose to write about their school and did not go beyond basic structures to demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the language.

Performance–talking

Grammatical inaccuracies and poor pronunciation sometimes meant that candidates missed out on the higher pegged marks.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper 1: Reading

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ attempt all questions and leave time to check their answers to ensure they are clear and make sense in English
♦ have a list of high frequency words and phrases in preparation for this paper
♦ include superlatives and adverbs to access the full range of marks
♦ have legible handwriting and if not, make alternative arrangements

Question paper 1: Writing

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ attempt all six bullet points to access the full range of marks
♦ when using learned material for the first four bullet points, check their spelling carefully and ensure basic information, for example name, age and numbers is accurate
♦ complete the four predictable bullet points in a full and balanced manner
♦ leave enough time to check their work
♦ have legible handwriting and if not, make alternative arrangements

Question paper 2: Listening

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ do more practice involving note-taking in the modern language or phonetic equivalents 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, which is an area where candidates miss out on marks
♦ read all questions carefully and underline the key words so they can find the correct answer in the text

Assignment–writing

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

♦ are supported in choosing a topic that allows them to produce detailed language with a range of structures, opinions and reasons
♦ are discouraged from writing lists, for example school subjects, places in the town
♦ have choice in the topic for their assignment. If they use a predetermined structure to complete the task it results in repetitive pieces and does not prepare them for the writing skills required at Higher level

Performance–talking

Teachers and lecturers should remind candidates that it is rarely to their advantage to extend the conversation beyond the required length.

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](#).