



## Course report 2022

Subject	Urdu
Level	Higher

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. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any appeals.

# Grade boundary and statistical information

## Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2022	90
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## Statistical information: performance of candidates

### Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

<b>A</b>	Percentage	83.3	Cumulative percentage	83.3	Number of candidates	75	Minimum mark required	79
<b>B</b>	Percentage	3.7	Cumulative percentage	87.0	Number of candidates	5	Minimum mark required	67
<b>C</b>	Percentage	8.7	Cumulative percentage	95.7	Number of candidates	10	Minimum mark required	55
<b>D</b>	Percentage	4.3	Cumulative percentage	100.0	Number of candidates	0	Minimum mark required	43
<b>No award</b>	Percentage	0.0	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	0	Minimum mark required	N/A

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in appendix 1 of this report.

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 page of [SQA's website](#).

## **Section 1: comments on the assessment**

The question papers largely performed as expected. Feedback indicated they were positively received by centres and were fair and accessible for candidates. Most candidates understood what was required. However, given the disruption over the last two years, it was clear from candidate responses' that the lack of face to face learning and teaching, and the opportunity to regularly practise Urdu had impacted on their exam technique and the development of language skills. This was taken into account when setting the grade boundaries.

### **Question paper 1: Reading**

The Urdu reading passage was in the context of learning: a young girl wrote about her school experience and extra-curricular activities. Candidates were able to relate to classroom activities and provided good responses.

Overall, the paper was of a good standard and in line with national standards.

The translation section proved challenging for C-type candidates.

### **Question paper 1: Directed writing**

This year candidates were given a choice between society and culture scenarios; most candidates chose scenario 1. Some candidates missed one or two bullet points and were therefore unable to access full marks.

Overall, the paper was accessible for all candidates and in line with national standards.

### **Question paper 2: Listening**

Candidates listen to Urdu recordings and answer questions in English. The context of the listening paper was employability. Questions 1(c) and (e) proved to be more demanding than anticipated and were not answered as expected by some candidates.

### **Assignment–writing**

This requirement to complete the assignment–writing was removed for session 2021–22.

### **Performance–talking**

The approach to the assessment, and the assessment judgement used by centres, was valid and accepted at Higher level. All centres verified used the SQA guidelines for the internally assessed component of course assessment: Higher Modern Languages performance–talking assessment task.

The quality of performances sampled was high. Candidates chose their topic well in many performances, allowing them to use a range of structures, vocabulary and tenses appropriately.

At Higher level, there is no presentation before the performance; therefore, candidates were asked some general questions to help them settle and perform well.

Most of the discussions went well, with candidates choosing a second topic from a different context. Some candidates chose three or four topics to talk about, which then compromised the difficulty and detail element of the assessment.

The length of the performances sampled varied, with a few of the performances going beyond the recommended duration, and a few being significantly shorter. On occasion, this prevented candidates from accessing the upper pegged marks.

Most centres provided proof of internal verifications, which was helpful to verify the performances.

## **Section 2: comments on candidate performance**

### **Question paper 1: Reading**

Some candidates did not write a full answer for question 1 and could not gain full marks. Candidates responded well to questions 3 and 4 about attending school and classroom activities. Candidates were able to relate to these questions and understood how to respond.

### **Question paper 1: Directed writing**

Candidates who wrote a full detailed essay accessed the full range of marks, whereas candidates who missed bullet points did not gain the available marks.

More candidates made spelling and grammar mistakes this year and their Urdu writing was difficult to read.

### **Question paper 2: Listening**

Most candidates performed well in the listening paper. However, these questions were found demanding:

- ◆ question 1(c): some candidates were unsure what it was referring to
- ◆ question 1(e): candidates didn't write a full answer on what advice was given at the end
- ◆ question 2(f): candidates did not write a complete answer, one or two words is unlikely to gain full marks in this question

### **Performance–talking**

Most candidates performed very well, and the performance standard was high. Candidates understood the questions and responded accordingly covering two or more topics from two different contexts, as required at this level. In some performances candidates took the initiative to ask questions, which reflected good understanding of the spoken language.

However, there were several grammatical errors, with some performances lacking depth and complex language appropriate to the level. Some candidates appeared to repeat themselves to gain time, and some presented a topic where it was not a requirement at Higher level.

## **Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment**

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ answer questions fully
- ◆ practise exam techniques throughout the course to help them respond effectively to the question papers

### **Question paper 1: Reading**

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ try to answer all questions
- ◆ frequently practise translating from Urdu to English in class so that they can access the full range of marks

### **Question paper 1: Directed writing**

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ practise Urdu writing in class: sometimes it was difficult to read their Urdu handwriting

### **Question paper 2: Listening**

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ make notes during the first listen of the recording and then start writing full answers after listening for the second time
- ◆ review all the answers after listening to the recording a third time and adjust answers if required

### **Performance–talking**

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ choose two different topics from two different contexts at Higher level
- ◆ are encouraged to choose a topic where they can use detailed and complex language
- ◆ are aware there is not enough time to discuss four or five topics in depth during the performance

## Appendix 1: 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.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year on year. This is because the specific questions, and the mix of questions, are different and this has an impact on candidate performance.

This year, a package of support measures including assessment modifications and revision support, was introduced to support candidates as they returned to formal national exams and other forms of external assessment. This was designed to address the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching that young people have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, SQA adopted a more generous approach to grading for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses than it would do in a normal exam year, to help ensure fairness for candidates while maintaining standards. This is in recognition of the fact that those preparing for and sitting exams have done so in very different circumstances from those who sat exams in 2019.

The key difference this year is that decisions about where the grade boundaries have been set have also been influenced, where necessary and where appropriate, by the unique circumstances in 2022. On a course-by-course basis, SQA has determined grade boundaries in a way that is fair to candidates, taking into account how the assessment (exams and coursework) has functioned and the impact of assessment modifications and revision support.

The grade boundaries used in 2022 relate to the specific experience of this year's cohort and should not be used by centres if these assessments are used in the future for exam preparation.

For full details of the approach please refer to the [National Qualifications 2022 Awarding—Methodology Report](#).