



Course report 2022

Subject	RMPS
Level	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. 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	2350
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	39.1	Cumulative percentage	39.1	Number of candidates	920	Minimum mark required	56
B	Percentage	19.6	Cumulative percentage	58.7	Number of candidates	460	Minimum mark required	46
C	Percentage	14.8	Cumulative percentage	73.5	Number of candidates	345	Minimum mark required	37
D	Percentage	14.0	Cumulative percentage	87.5	Number of candidates	330	Minimum mark required	27
No award	Percentage	12.5	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	295	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](https://sqa.my/).

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper

The question paper performed as expected.

Modifications to the course this year meant there was increased scope for overlap between questions, especially in Section 2 (Morality and Belief). This was most obvious in the 'Morality, medicine and the human body' part, however the questions required candidates to select and apply content in different ways, for example by showing knowledge and understanding or evaluating validity of views.

Some candidates struggled to answer the first question in the Religious and Philosophical Questions section, which asked why people disagree about the philosophical questions studied in each part. For example, they simply presented some different views without getting into the reasons behind them, despite '**why**' being given in bold text. The question proved particularly challenging for those studying 'The problem of suffering and evil'. Although the question was intended to be fairly straightforward, it ended up differentiating because it was only accessible for more able candidates.

This was taken into account and as a result grade boundaries were lowered.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Question paper

As in previous years, candidate performance varied widely, with a few managing to achieve full marks for the paper while others performed well below National 5 level. The majority of candidates had a clear understanding of what the questions were asking them to do, and how much they should write for the marks. It was good to see many candidates developing points, which in some cases showed impressive depth of knowledge.

Candidates who answered on the 'Islam' and 'Judaism' parts did especially well in the World Religion section. The highest scoring section was 'Morality and belief', with the different options performing quite evenly. 'Morality and justice' marks were a little better than the others, and the lowest marks were achieved in the 'Morality and conflict' part. In the Religious and Philosophical Questions section, candidates who answered the 'Origins' option gained fewer marks than those who chose the other options, which achieved a similar average mark.

Candidates answered the 8-mark questions well. There were fewer answers that simply described a range of views. Instead, most candidates briefly stated their position and then made their case clearly using knowledge and analysis. Many gave very good, deeply felt and genuine responses to the issues of morality.

Where candidates didn't answer, or answered poorly, it tended to be because they were not confident about the course content or topic-specific vocabulary, for example **puja** in 'Buddhism', **avidya** in 'Hinduism', **autonomy** in 'Morality, medicine and the human body', and **theodicy** in 'The problem of suffering and evil'. This issue was especially noticeable in the World Religion section because of the number of specialist terms prescribed in the course specification.

Questions 1(a), 4(a), 7(a), 10(a), 13(a) and 16(a)

The opening question in the World Religion section asked for straightforward description, but some candidates went beyond the terms of the question and wrote about the reasons behind the practice. There were marks for doing this in part (b), but they couldn't be awarded in part (a).

Questions 2, 5, 8, 11, 14 and 17

Some candidates found it difficult to get into the connections between the concepts specified in the second question in each of the World Religion parts. Marks are not awarded for straight knowledge and understanding of the two concepts, as this doesn't answer the question, however where candidates used knowledge and understanding to make the connection clear, they were awarded marks.

Questions 5 and 14

A few candidates read 'judgement' as the way people judge each other, rather than as God's judgement.

Question 34

Some candidates found it hard to explain palliative care and hospice care separately, because hospices have particular expertise in palliative care. Overlapping these in the answer was therefore acceptable for the marks, but many didn't go beyond this to show that hospices offer other kinds of support, and palliative care can take different forms and be provided outside of a hospice setting.

Question 38

Some candidates struggled to distinguish between assisted dying and euthanasia, and as a result they were unable to gain marks, for example if they said assisted dying involves taking another person's life.

Questions 40 and 41

Some candidates were unsure what was meant by the Geneva conventions and sanctions.

Question 55(a)

Some candidates found it difficult to explain beliefs about the laws of nature. The question was very open to allow a range of views, rather than just asking for a definition, which would have made it more difficult to pick up all of the available marks.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Centres should ensure they are working with the current National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course Specification.

In a bi-level context, it's important to be aware of differences in the expression of content between National 5 and Higher, for example in the 'Buddhism' part content includes puja at National 5 but devotion at Higher. Some content appears at only one level, such as 'Organ donation' at Higher. If National 5 candidates are only taught Higher content, they will be disadvantaged in the exam.

It is best to make use of the most recent question papers and marking instructions, as these effectively demonstrate the national standard. This might involve using similar wording but adjusting the content. Each section should have 12 marks for showing skills (including the 8-mark question), with the remaining marks allocated to knowledge and understanding.

Centres should emphasise the importance of the specialist vocabulary across all three sections. This includes what terms mean in the context of the religion selected for study, rather than in their wider use. The maximum number of marks allocated to knowledge and understanding questions is 6, so candidates should be prepared to go into enough detail to pick these up. This does not necessarily mean 6 different points, as extra marks are awarded for development.

It may be helpful for centres to give candidates a copy or note of the mandatory content in the course specification as a checklist, or to support revision in class.

In revision, candidates should make sure they can distinguish between distinct terms, for example:

- ◆ 'cosmological' and 'teleological'
- ◆ 'origins of the universe' and 'origins of life'
- ◆ 'euthanasia' and 'assisted dying'

If asked for **one** side of a debate, candidates should not give alternative views as they won't gain marks. Questions use bold text to draw attention to the number of views required. These questions ask for knowledge and understanding of views and the reasons behind them, so there is no need to evaluate.

Centres should remind candidates to read through both parts of an (a) and (b) question to avoid repetition and focus on what the questions ask, as related points that go beyond what's required by the prompt will not be awarded marks.

In the Morality and Belief section, candidates should be prepared to discuss moral issues raised by **all** aspects of the mandatory content. However, religious and non-religious viewpoints studied should relate to the wider headings given **before** the colon in the

mandatory content. Candidates need to know at least one of each, and they should identify the view they are describing in their answers.

The question paper can ask about the impact of a practice, or of having a belief. This is a skills question because it asks candidates to identify and explain a connection. It can be helpful for candidates to ask how a practice or belief might make a follower feel, what they might do, or how it might affect other related beliefs or practices.

In the 'Morality and conflict' part, candidates need to be able to write about the Geneva conventions and their role in moral decisions about conflict. There are no prescribed conventions, so centres can choose which ones to focus on, bearing in mind that the maximum marks for knowledge and understanding relating to them would be 6.

When describing a creation story, candidates should distinguish between the two accounts given in Genesis as they are distinct narratives, however if asked for a religious view on origins, it is acceptable to refer to elements of both stories.

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](#).