

Home Economics (Food and Nutrition)

General Certificate of Secondary Education J431

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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Overview

Many candidates performed well and successfully completed each of the three Units. There has been a high standard of work seen and across the units.

There was a closer link between the work completed by candidates for controlled assessment and the requirements of the written paper. Candidates appeared to have been well prepared for the examination.

There are a number of issues that must be addressed by centres. Centres must ensure that the controlled assessment work is fully annotated and that the individual carrying out the marking fully understands the requirements of the criteria. It is essential that all parts of the specification content, including the less popular areas, are covered and that good examination techniques are instilled if candidates are to be fully prepared.

Unit B001/02 Short Tasks

The Short Tasks were of a high standard. It is encouraging to see the quality of work submitted and the understanding of the assessment criteria. The work reflected good quality teaching. All Centres used OCR set Short Task Titles as required.

Key issues within the Short Tasks

- These were carried out to a high standard. Candidates demonstrated a range of different skills across the three OCR set tasks.
- Three tasks, one investigation and two practicals are required and the vast majority of candidates submitted the three as necessary.
- A variety of tasks were used by centres without alteration.
- Reasons for choice of practical work should be detailed. A number of responses needed further development particularly those for Investigation Tasks.
- Investigation Task choices should include a clear indication of what factors will be investigated and a justification of this decision.
- Research skills are not assessed in Short Tasks. The focus is on decision making and justifying choices followed by planning of the task. Candidates needed to demonstrate that they had the knowledge in order to make suitable choices, which may have been obtained in a lesson or through individual research, but it was not part of the assessment.
- Plans of Action were generally well done. An accurate list of ingredients followed by a well sequenced accurate timed plan or plans was required.
- Candidates were expected to fully plan, execute and evaluate any non-food items such as leaflets which were required as part of the Task. This was not always fully completed.
- If specified in the Task nutritional analysis is essential. Otherwise it is desirable.
- Candidates were expected to plan and design (or choose) the necessary testing or recording documents for taste panels. This applied in particular to the Investigative Task.
- The majority of candidates produced two practical items per task.
- A good range of practical skills was demonstrated by candidates in most instances.
- Where candidates included nutritional data they were expected to refer to it. This was not always the case.
- Candidates were expected to refer to star diagrams.
- Candidate evaluations were expected to contain evaluative comments pertinent to the particular task. In some cases candidates made simple and repetitive comments about their personal hygiene or their ability to work safely during their task, with little reference to the Task Title itself. Evaluations were expected to include discussion and evaluation of how well organised the taste panels were and areas for improvements. Candidates should be encouraged to comment on the proformas they designed and whether these were suitable or not.

Unit B002/02 Food Study

The quality of the Food Studies were high. Centres application of the assessment criteria reflected in an improvement in the quality of Studies.

The candidates entered for this Unit demonstrated achievement across the whole ability range; with a diversity of individually written titles and continuing enthusiasm for the subject evident in the work produced.

The best work seen had clear and straightforward task titles, usually written as a question. This gave candidates a clear idea of the primary and secondary research they needed to do and they could then use their research results to produce a list of ideas for practical work. This list of ideas was then discussed by looking at the advantages and disadvantages of **each** dish before making final choices. The work flowed and had a logical sequence, and it was obvious that the candidate understood why they were doing research and what they were aiming to find out and prove. The work produced by these candidates was of an excellent standard.

In some centres there was a tendency to slightly over mark work, resulting in advice in using the marking criteria or small mark adjustments.

Key issues in the Food Study

- A range of themes were used with Food around the World, Healthy Eating and Special Diets being most popular.

Research

- Titles written were often too vague or too unwieldy for candidates to focus in on accurate and specific research. A title with specific key factors is needed so that candidates can highlight the key words in it. This gives them the focus for their research and their selection of dishes. Reasons for choice of title sometimes lacked detail.
- Secondary research was generally well done, with good selection of information from varied sources. However some candidates summarised secondary research too much leading to very little content and limited detail in this section. To achieve the higher mark band candidates need to include detailed secondary research on the topic chosen and they should use a range of information sources eg. books, websites, fact sheets, reports.
- Information sources were credited and many candidates had been encouraged to include references and / or a bibliography as part of their research.
- Primary research was well done but results were not always utilised when making choices.
- Aims of primary research were not always clear.

Selection and Planning

- **This section was poorly done by many candidates.** Candidates often went straight into selecting their recipes and time plans for their practical.
- Ideas for practical work should develop from previous research. Many candidates did not list ideas.
- Little or no sorting and assessing of ideas was completed before making choices. Some candidates did this and others did not but marks were still awarded in the higher mark band.

- Candidates were expected to select/reject dishes by considering factors which are relevant to the task such as cost, nutritional value, preferences, sensory qualities giving advantages and disadvantages (or strengths and weaknesses) of **each** dish suggested as an idea for practical work.
- Where a leaflet, poster/recipe book is chosen as the 'fourth' practical item there should be evidence of the designing and planning of this within the Planning section of the Study.
- The reasons for choice of practical work were generally poor as no sorting techniques had been used.
- A few candidates failed to make the minimum four choices of practical work.
- A good range of skills was apparent in the practical work selected.
- Time plans were well done as were most ingredient lists.
- Some candidates prepared recording charts and testing instructions prior to the practical although the majority did complete testing.

Practical Work and Outcomes

- Some very good practical skills were demonstrated with well-presented outcomes.
- There was a lack of teacher annotation in some cases which hindered the moderation process, as it was often difficult to see how and where marks had been awarded.
- Recording charts although not planned were usually produced.
- Nutritional data and star diagrams were not always referred to and sometimes not included even when appropriate as part of the Study.
- Logs of practical work were not always completed.
- There was a good range of photographic evidence.

Evaluation

- Some high level evaluations were seen.
- Evaluations did not always refer to the whole Study.
- Insufficient reference was made to primary and secondary research.
- Evaluations tended to be descriptive rather than evaluating performance, identifying strengths and weakness.
- Evaluations sometimes tended to focus exclusively on the practical aspects of the Study.
- Some candidates did not to refer back to the Study title and draw conclusions.

Main areas for improvement in the Food Study

- Tighter more specific title writing.
- Better more personal reasons for choosing the title.
- Specified aims of primary research.
- Accurately displayed primary research results.
- Use of research to develop ideas for practical work.
- Sorting and assessing of ideas using a variety of techniques/factors before making choices of Practical work.
- More detailed reasons for choice based on research and sorting results.
- The planning of recording and testing charts, including in a blank copy.
- The choice of a minimum of four items to complete in the Practical session.
- Detailed annotation to support practical marks. The inclusion of practical logs of work completed by candidates and signed by teachers.
- Include nutritional information wherever appropriate.
- Accurate completion of and reference to any recording charts or data.
- Ensuring that evaluations address the whole Study, evaluating performance, strengths, weakness and outcomes.
- Suggestion of improvements where necessary.
- The drawing of well evidenced conclusions that refer back to all parts of the Study title.

B003 Principles of Food and Nutrition

General comments:

The paper was well attempted by the majority of candidates. There were fewer no response (NR) responses throughout the paper; most candidates could attempt all of the paper. There was evidence of most centres having taught the syllabus well.

The paper was thought to be straightforward to mark and the mark scheme was clear and unambiguous. The lack of 'level of response' questions was preferred.

Candidates should be discouraged from using a 'scattergun' approach to answering a question and expecting to be rewarded for any correct answers. If a specific number of responses is asked for only the first specified number will be marked and all any additional responses disregarded. Candidate responses that used this approach were especially apparent in Q4aii, Q4e.

Much of the writing was easier to read than in previous years although many candidates are still using gel pens/fountain pens and many more scripts are being covered with little dots. This problem has been reported in previous years but we have seen an increase in the problem this year. It does make it difficult for examiners to read. Candidates should be encouraged to use standard ballpoint pens.

Question specific comments:

- Q1a Well answered. Many got the wrong position for mango and raw fish, so gained 2 marks, eggs was always correctly labelled.
- Q1bi Well answered with salmon, tuna, herring, mackerel and anchovies being the most common correct answers. Cod, plaice and haddock were common errors.
- Q1bii Well answered with fat and protein being the most common responses. Iron, water, vitamin C and carbohydrate were the common wrong answers.
- Q1biii Generally well answered with healthy skin and links to brain function being the common correct answers. Some candidates misread the question, giving nutrients in their answer. Too many candidates are still using the word 'healthy' with no qualification.
- Q1ci Well answered. Freezing was the most popular answer. Some referred to keeping food in cans/tins, fridge/cook the fish.
- Q1cii Well answered with frying, grilling and baking being the most common correct answers. Cooked in the oven and boiling were the most common errors.
- Q1d Well answered with milk, wheat, and nuts being the most common correct answers. Common incorrect answers included citrus fruit and named fish/shellfish.
- Q1e Well answered, with the common correct answers relating to vegetarians, smell, taste and texture. A few candidates said 'can't eat fish as they are pescatarians' or 'don't like fish' without a reason, which was considered too vague.
- Q2 This question clearly demonstrated differentiation but overall was not well answered. Some candidates had a fantastic knowledge of religion, whereas others were quite confused and vague in their knowledge getting the different religions muddled/or not actually naming the religion. Religions named were mainly Jewish/Muslin a few mentioned Buddhist and Rastafarian and Sikh and Christianity very rarely given – the only examples being Lent and giving up chocolates. Many referred to not eating meat, meant a lack of protein and iron, demonstrating a poor understanding of nutrition. Some candidates seemed to refer to food around the world rather than religions.

- Many candidates found the second part of the question difficult, even those who had scored well on the first part. The majority wanted to show their nutritional knowledge and seemed to have misinterpreted 'eating patterns' with 'nutrients different people require'. This resulted in pages of irrelevant information. The most common answers in relation to lifestyle were Jobs, lack of time, lack of cooking skills and convenience foods and snacks mainly given. Rarely any answers featured 'How to eat'
- Q3ai Answered well, but it was an easy mark for many who referred to 'when to use the food by'. Some responses were too vague, and seemed to imply the best before date.
- Q3aii Generally well answered: mould, change in colour, change in smell, going soft being popular answers. Several candidates incorrectly referred to food being burnt/adding too much salt or sugar, indicating that they did not fully understand the question.
- Q3aiii Well answered with warmth and moisture being the most popular correct answers. Weaker candidates wrote about the right temperature or heat or food being kept in the dark.
- Q3aiv Well answered by the majority of candidates, meat, fish, poultry, eggs and milk were the most common answers. The most common incorrect answer was cheese.
- Q3b Most candidates scored 3 marks out of 4. Many were unable to specify the required reference to the danger zone/temperatures or enzyme activity as in the mark scheme. Most candidates gained full marks for the second part of the question referring to the drying of food.
- Q3c Ways of preventing food poisoning on the whole were good. Where candidates did not gain the full marks, they had not explained why certain procedures were necessary, or had repeated the question as part of their response.
- Q4ai Most candidates said milk or butter so were able to gain one mark but very few said they were not able to 'digest milk'. There were also a large number of candidates who incorrectly made reference to wheat or flour
- Q4aii Well answered. Many of those that did gave 'use lactose free milk' or 'soya milk'. Weaker candidates provided vague answers such as 'change the milk or butter' for an alternative. A large number of candidates thought that margarine and butter had different lactose contents.
- Q4b Quite well answered, but the need to name fruit, nuts and seeds prevented many from doing better. Wholemeal flour was the most correct popular answer, with a few candidates mentioning adding oats or bran. A surprising number of candidates thought that adding brown sugar would increase the fibre content.
- Q4c It appeared that a number of candidates had not understood the question and many gave the answer yeast which made you wonder if they knew what a scone was. The majority of correct answers were self-raising flour and baking powder, Bicarbonate of soda was often given but the acid was missing. The less frequently seen correct answers included milk and air.
- Q4d The majority were able to gain 50% of the marks, but were unable to explain the change. Rise and colour change were most common responses. Good candidates did give dextrinisation and colour change. There was little use of technical terminology.
- Q4e Generally well done with free samples, tasting, special offers and posters/banners being popular answers. Candidates who failed to gain full marks, failed to link their answer to "instore".
- Q5a Generally well answered, but many gave references to the various ages of people and the amount of energy required for exercise. Responses had to be read very carefully.
- Q5b Poorly answered by the majority. Many referred to people not knowing about the need for energy/not having enough, and therefore were energy dense. Many candidates failed to make reference to the weight of the product. This was the most common no response (NR) question.
- Q5ci-iv Well answered, but some missed out the units. Others doubled or halved the correct response, not having read the data carefully enough.
- Q5d The wording of candidates answers meant that many failed to gain the mark. Many referred to metabolic rate/BMI, or made references to 'functions' and omitted clarity of whilst at rest.

- Q5e Many candidates gained either 4 marks here, or scored badly. They seemed to be reluctant to repeat themselves, so even good candidates gained a max of 5 marks. Those that did score well showed a good range of knowledge. 'Weight gain/loss' were common answers for excess energy intake/low energy intake. Weaker candidates incorrectly wrote about excess energy intake causing hyperactivity.) Some students failed to attempt this question. Some also "forgot" to include whether their answer referred to 'high energy intake' or 'low energy intake'. It was felt that this would have been better as a level of response question.

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