

GCSE

Home Economics (Child Development)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J441**

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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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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B011 Controlled Assessment – Short Tasks

General Comments:

Overview

The cohort taking the specification was wide and varied. From the evidence seen, both the controlled assessment and the examination paper proved accessible to all the candidates and provided opportunities for a wide range of abilities to demonstrate their achievement. At the same time it provided differentiation. It was apparent that where teachers had a clear understanding of the specification the appropriate guidance and support was given to their candidates.

Candidates are required to complete three short tasks which must be taken from the latest revised board set titles found on OCR Interchange, these tasks cannot be adapted or changed. Candidates need to undertake tasks that will illustrate a range of skills and that are not repetitive; for example, two practical food outcomes are not acceptable.

The investigative task should be undertaken with a different approach to that of the practical tasks, and the use of visits, questionnaires, interviews with resultant written data, is recommended. Nutritional analysis with relevant conclusions can also be used to good effect. Centres can contact OCR for further advice prior to candidates embarking on their task.

Most candidates submitted short tasks of an appropriate length following the recommended allocated time of 7 hours per task. However, a few candidates submitted work that appeared to have taken considerably longer. A small number of candidates included large quantities of research, (this does not form part of the planning section). This research was incorrectly given credit.

Planning

Best practice was evident by those candidates undertaking a magazine article, travel system, book for a child's stay in hospital, or game that included an annotated draft layout of how their outcome may be constructed. This encompassed different sizes, content, and relevant layout. Accurate plans demonstrated progression through the stages of working and were an effective tool for delivering this part of the planning section.

Safety aspects were considered by many candidates when carrying out their outcomes, this was especially evident in the comparisons of bought/home-made baby food for a 9 month old baby, and investigating baby changing facilities. Photographic evidence supported these tasks.

Candidates often spent insufficient time on planning and as a result plans were frequently brief. Some candidates were unable to explain their aims and objectives especially for any interviews or questionnaires that were planned. Candidates are also required to provide detail of the resources and how they were going to be utilised throughout the task.

There was a range of repetitive formats and templates that did not enable the candidates to achieve, and show flair and originality. Although relevant to the task many candidates used them to give bullet pointed responses. It is important that any templates / proformas used only reiterate the assessment objectives and do not over direct candidates in their response to the task. A number of candidates presented information from the internet but this was not fully utilised. Sources of information should be clearly referenced in the portfolio and/or in a bibliography.

Candidates were required to carry out a plan of action that was logical, concise, and which clearly identified the key priorities required to carry out the chosen task. This could have taken the form of a flow chart or step by step account and should have had sufficient detail for the candidate to carry out the planned work. This was vital for high marks to be achieved. Bullet pointed responses do not provide sufficient detail or imply in-depth understanding to meet Mark Band 3 criteria.

Carrying Out – Organisation

The range of written evidence to support the marks in this section continues to be improved. Best practice saw the use of diary logs, annotated photographs or screen shots or written prose of the work undertaken.

In this section there was some over marking of the written evidence to show that the work had been carried out. Some candidates had been given credit for this work based only on evidence of the research. Candidates must provide a written account with confirmation of the results of their practical outcome or investigations; together with clear annotation and/or photographic evidence.

In a number of centres there was a lack of detailed written evidence undertaken by candidates to support the work carried out. This is in addition to and separate from the evaluation section.

Evidence is credited to the carrying out 'Organisation' section of the assessment criteria.

Candidates must follow their plans making good use of the time available and should organise their resources effectively using any equipment safely and independently.

Several candidates provided outcomes of leaflets / articles (pre-conceptual care and breast versus bottle) and there was a range of styles as to how the candidate undertook the task, together with a wide and diverse level of success. Other candidates produced high quality books for a pre-school child and/or game. These were evaluated with the intended child and results enhanced the evaluation section. Outcomes produced were usually engaging and successful.

Many candidates presented the data they had researched from surveys with varying levels of competency. Carrying out work to a 'high standard' led to a wide range of interpretations. Some work lacked a range of techniques across the three tasks. Candidates should undertake a variety of tasks to fulfil a range of different skills and techniques. Repetitive approaches to the three tasks should be discouraged as it does not enable candidates to develop and enhance their range of skills and techniques.

Practical Outcomes

Many candidates made full use of ICT skills to produce magazine articles. There was evidence of some excellent books, story boards and meals. However, many outcomes were not worthy of the full marks given by centres as there was insufficient relevant content, and the presentation lacked visual quality stimulus. Many teachers accepted poor quality content and finish, and often awarded Mark Band 3.

Investigative Outcomes

There was increase in the quality of the investigative tasks; as many encompassed a high level of investigative approaches and techniques. Baby Travel system and Baby Changing facilities were of a high standard when candidates had planned what they were going to investigate and clearly outlined what their intended outcome was going to be. Restrictive grids should be

avoided as it prevents the most able candidates developing their creativity as they are virtually just listing the 'what, when and why'.

A large number of outcomes in the investigations did show a range of detailed results and significant numbers of candidates were able to produce evidence of both investigative techniques and meaningful results. However, a number had simply produced a meal suitable for a child of four, with no evidence of an investigation. Evidence of a nutritional analysis from a food programme should be supported with a written explanation to the contents. It is important that the investigative task should include a range of detailed and accurate results. This can be through testing with comparisons, culminating in a survey with appropriate conclusions. The aim of a survey must be included in the planning section of the task. Some surveys were excellent with detailed questions, however; many were too brief and contained only closed questions. The use of ICT for this section of the short task is strongly encouraged, particularly for resultant data.

Evaluation

Many candidates were able to evaluate all sections of their work and most gave some strengths and weaknesses with suggested ways to improve the task. However, some candidates did not review the whole task. Evaluations were sometimes descriptive but not evaluative and some centres were over-generous when crediting marks in this section.

Candidates who had used written evidence effectively as part of the execution section had also grasped the concept of the overview of the whole task response in the evaluation. In consequence evaluations were then produced containing relevant high quality written prose.

Weaker candidates tended to explain why they had carried out the outcome in the evaluation, rather than addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the task. Marks should only be awarded for the quality of the response and not the quantity. Candidates were required to identify their strengths and weaknesses in all areas of the task, not just the practical outcomes. They were also required to suggest ways of how to improve on their strengths and weaknesses, and draw conclusions from their work. It was expected that any results should be collated, interpreted and linked back to the task title. All the aforementioned work had to have been undertaken independently for full marks to be awarded.

Administration

The use of OCR Interchange for the submission of marks by centres, auto checking and updating of arithmetical errors and feedback reports greatly assists in the administration of the moderation process, however, there was an increased number of clerical errors. There was good use of secured cover sheets to each of the three short tasks. Detailed annotation on the front cover sheet was usually relevant and justified the marks being awarded. However, there were many centres where task titles were not identified or numbered and the investigation had not been highlighted. The centre name and number together with the candidate name and number should be completed in the appropriate sections for each of the three short tasks.

Witness statements were included in the vast majority of work. Best practice was seen where detailed annotation to support and justify the marks being awarded was apparent. Where the mark band was just circled with no supporting comments it was not always clear why and where marks had been awarded.

B012 Controlled Assessment – Child Study

In order to fulfil this unit candidates are required to complete one Child Study. They are required to select one of the board set themes on which to then base the focus of their study. It is recommended that approximately 22 hours are allocated for the completion of the task. The themes can be found on the OCR website and in the specification. It should be noted that emotional development is not a board set theme and in consequence must not be used.

Research

Candidates should construct task titles that enable them to address all the assessment criteria. They need to include a clear rationale and justify as to why they have chosen their topic. The majority of candidates supported their task title by including several reasons for choice. Most candidates had produced their own focused task title that was written as a question and only covered one area of development.

Candidates provided a range of appropriate sources of information, which included both primary and secondary to use for their research. However, this could have been supported by candidates referencing their sources of information, either in the body of the study or as a bibliography.

Initial research to explore the child's background and other relevant information was frequently undertaken through an interview and/or questionnaire with the parents of the child that was going to be studied. Most candidates carried out detailed research on the development area chosen using a range of suitable secondary sources of information. Most popular resources were books, internet and interviews. Some candidates used a good variety of sources of information, relevant specifically to the age and area of development. It is important that candidates do not just include photocopies or printouts, without highlighting and explaining the relevant information. Internet downloads; printouts and photocopied sheets on PIES should be used with care or avoided. Very few candidates were able to demonstrate an understanding of the information gathered by providing a comprehensive summary. In the work of many candidates there was little to connect the suggestions of ideas to the research. Candidates should be encouraged to be selective in the research carried out and then to summarise their findings prior to selecting and planning of the observations.

Background information of a personal nature should not be included as it often breaches confidentiality as they include surnames and addresses. Full-frontal photographs showing the child's face should also be avoided.

Good practice was evident where candidates produced a clear outline of the steps to be carried out in the task at the end of the research section. This was often undertaken as a specification, 'what steps next', plan of action or flow chart. Candidates must undertake the majority of this work independently and show a high level of understanding if they are awarded Mark Band 3.

Selecting and Planning the Observations

The minority of candidates used the research previously undertaken in the planning section to identify and produce a range of possible ideas for their observations. Research had not been collated and assessed as to its suitability. Some candidates fully considered and justified the range of methods for their observations and there were some links to the task title and area of development.

Candidates should focus on planning a number of different methods of recording their observation and preparing recording sheets prior to their observations. In a number of centres

there is still some confusion as to what is the difference between methods of observation and methods of recording observation. The majority of candidates constructed accurate and detailed plans; however, there was a propensity for these to be over marked. Best practice was identified when a variety of methods to record the results of the observations were included together with clear reasons for choice.

Practical observations

It is suggested that five/six observations are undertaken. In some cases there was good practice seen with each observation having a different focus that related clearly to the area of development chosen. Visits were recorded accurately using the recording sheets constructed in the previous section. Candidates achieved higher marks when they included strong evidence of each observation supported by teacher annotation to justify the marks awarded. Where candidates had written up each observation after the visit, the evidence showed that they were able to remember what had been seen and apply their knowledge. They could also easily relate their understanding to the development area being studied, and able to include their own judgements, opinions and views. This was then credited in the 'Applying Understanding to Observations' in the 'Outcomes' section of the assessment criteria.

Best practise was demonstrated by a clear record of each visit with detailed and knowledgeable observations. The use of annotated photographs of the child and activities together with record sheets were positively used as evidence.

Outcomes

Best practise was evident when research by candidates was clearly evident both in records of observations and by those who referencing specific sources of data from their research. This was best achieved by those where candidates had completed an additional section for this though it should be stressed that it is not intended to be a duplication of the observations themselves. Centres should award Mark Band 3 in this section if there is insufficient qualified reference to their research and expected 'norms'.

Some candidates were able to demonstrate that they had understood and applied their knowledge to what they had observed and how it related to their child and the area of development. Less able candidates had not included original thoughts and opinions about their observations but written brief descriptive account. They had not always taken every opportunity to compare the child with others/norms. This could have been demonstrated by sharing their understanding with other peers, group work in class, or using text book norms for reference. This could be ideally presented as a written account or tabulated format.

Conclusion and Evaluation

In the quality work seen candidates produced a high standard evaluation that included all aspects of the task. They drew logical and relevant conclusions that related back to their task title. Best practice was seen when candidates referred back to their title and answered the question they set themselves. Most candidates were able to identify and explain their strengths and weaknesses in their work and recommend improvements. However, the weaker candidates gave a descriptive rather than an evaluative account.

Candidates should not produce unnecessary amounts of repetition of earlier parts of the study re-writing their visits again and reviewing the child's performance rather than drawing conclusions to the success of their own observations and performance.

To achieve high marks candidates are expected to use a good standard of written communication throughout the whole task using specialist terms/terminology in a structured format.

Administration

Centres must provide clear annotation in the study to support the marks awarded. They are advised to have clear headings between each assessment criteria. Centres must securely attach the child study to the cover sheet with the task title, candidate number and name being clearly written. These can be located on the OCR website under the forms heading. The correct sample for moderation must be sent. A number of centres sent the same candidates for both B011 and B012 even though different candidates were selected. There was a significant increase in the number of clerical errors this year. Centres should take utmost care to input the correct marks for their candidates.

B013 Principles of Child Development Written Paper

General Comments

The paper was accessible to all candidates whilst covering a wide range of topics from the specification. There was a range of questions giving opportunity for differentiation across the paper.

Candidates have been able to attempt all questions and there was very little evidence of 'No Response' to questions. Candidates also made good use of the additional pages to provide detailed responses especially to Q3.

Higher ability candidates were able to achieve well in the free response question and those who wrote a plan were better able to provide a detailed and well structured response.

Comments on Individual Questions:

- Q1(a) The majority of candidates were able to identify age '6 months' for 'Holds a rattle'. Many mixed up the responses for 'Can thread large beads' and 'Can pick up small toys using a fine pincer grasp'.
- Q1(b) Most candidates were able to correctly identify use of 'large muscles' or 'large limbs'.

Some candidates incorrectly gave an example of a gross motor skill e.g. running rather than a definition of the skill or gave 'large movements' instead.
- Q1(c) Well answered by the majority of candidates. Marks were lost if candidates repeated an activity e.g. 'riding a bike' and 'riding a scooter' or if they provided more general responses e.g. 'playing on equipment'.
- Q1(d) Where marks were gained it was for 'easy to wash', 'comfort', 'fits correctly' and 'durable'.

Incorrect responses made reference to footwear or made vague statements about the weather or children liking the clothes.
- Q1(e) 'Right size', 'durable' and 'comfortable' were frequently used correct answers.

Incorrect responses often referred to 'cost', 'size of heel', 'room for growth' and 'colour'.
- Q1(f) Generally well answered and popular correct responses were 'holding hands', 'walking with the child on the inside of the pavement', and 'stop, look and listen'.

Marks were lost if candidates made more than one reference to the Green Cross Code or if they made vague statements about 'keeping an eye on the child'.
- Q2(a) The majority of candidates correctly used the words provided to label the diagram of the female reproductive system.

Q2(b) This question seemed to differentiate effectively and was correctly answered by those who understood that the question was asking for a 'stage' not a day/days and also those who understood what was meant by 'conceive'. The most common incorrect answer was 'Stage 3: Ovulation'.

Q2(c) Most candidates were able to describe one point worthy of a mark usually related to 'lining breaking down' or 'lining sheds'. Fewer candidates were able to develop their answers to gain the second mark for 'bleeding' or 'period'.

No marks were awarded for lining 'shreds' or 'tears' or for responses that referred to implantation.

Q2(d) Many candidates gave good answers which included 'blocked fallopian tubes', 'age', 'cancer/treatment', 'not enough eggs', 'smoking' and 'STIs'. The most common incorrect answers were 'genetics', 'weight', 'drugs', 'drinking alcohol' or reference to a 'low sperm count'.

Q2(e) Very few candidates gained more than half marks for their responses to this question. Usually only one mark could be given for IVF with no marks gained for the explanation which was either too vague or factually inaccurate to be deemed worthy of a second mark e.g. 'sperm and eggs mixed/placed together' rather than 'fertilised'. Candidates were not often able to identify correctly a second type of fertility and other named incorrect treatments were 'egg donation' and 'surrogacy'.

Q3 A wide range of marks was seen across this question which demonstrated differentiation. It was very accessible as the majority of candidates answered the question and attempted a response to both parts.

There was evidence of candidates planning their answers so they were generally well structured into sections i.e. birth plan, home birth – advantages and disadvantages and hospital birth – advantages and disadvantages.

For the first part of the question common responses were 'where the birth would take place', 'type of delivery', 'pain relief' and 'birthing partner'.

A number of candidates confused a birth plan with general preparations for the arrival of a baby e.g. buying a layette or list of equipment needed for a new baby and a few candidates wrote about antenatal care.

In the second part of the response most candidates were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both a home and hospital birth.

Higher level responses were characterised by the use of specialist terms e.g. 'epidural', 'Caesarean section', 'obstetrician' etc.

Lower level responses lacked explanation and/or contained repetition of information.

Q4(a) When marks were gained it was for ensuring 'food is in date', 'keeping pets away from food', 'keeping surfaces clean', 'hands washed', 'separate chopping boards', 'raw and cooked foods separate' and 'washing fruits and vegetables'.

Candidates lost marks because they wrote about dangers in the kitchen, for example, 'making sure knives are out of the way', 'pan handles turned in' etc. Or they described how to make the food suitable for a child, 'cut food into small pieces/mash their food', for example.

- Q4(b) Many candidates were able to identify two ways of preparing a child for a stay in hospital and common responses were ‘hospital visits’, ‘packing a bag’ and ‘talking to the child’ linked to ‘reassurance’, ‘reducing fear’ and ‘understanding of what was going to happen’. However, not all were able to provide a sufficiently detailed explanation of each way of preparing a child to gain full marks.
- Q4(c) Popular correct answers were ‘fluids’, ‘food’, ‘sleep’, ‘rest’, ‘fresh air’ and ‘exercise’.
- Incorrect responses were ‘love’, ‘cuddles’, ‘attention’ or descriptions of signs of illness in a child.
- Q4(d) This question differentiated effectively. The majority of candidates had an awareness of the ways in which infection could spread. However, in many instances only one mark could be awarded for ‘sneezing’, ‘food eaten’, ‘cuts’ or ‘contact’.
- Specific terms such as ‘droplet’ and ‘ingestion’ were not often used.
- Q4(e) Correct responses most often given were ‘tetanus’, ‘diphtheria’, ‘whooping cough’ and ‘polio’ and incorrect responses often confused the 5-in1 vaccine with the MMR vaccine.
- Q5(a) This question was generally well answered with most candidates achieving a mark for ‘crying’, ‘smiling and facial expressions’. ‘Waving’, ‘looking at what they want’ and ‘laughing’ were not credited as the question was asking about communication skills in a new born baby.
- Q5(b)(i) Many candidates answered this question well with ‘singing’, ‘talking’ and ‘asking questions’ as popular responses.
- Where candidates did not achieve full marks they had made reference to ‘reading’ and ‘TV programmes’.
- Q5(b)(ii) Some candidates gave responses relating to language and vocabulary and therefore were not credited with a mark. However, there were a lot of good responses such as ‘develops imagination’, ‘creativity’, ‘bonding’ and ‘intellectual development’.
- Q5(c) Candidates were able to apply their knowledge well and answers related to ‘pictures’, ‘short sentences’, ‘age appropriate’ and ‘interactive books’.
- Some answers made reference to characters, focussed on safety or books being ‘simple’ and were not credited with a mark.
- Q5(d) Well answered. The majority of candidates identified ‘single parents working’ or ‘both parents working’ in their responses.
- Q5(e) Most candidates attempted to provide two advantages and one disadvantage for the child minder and the nanny. However, some answers were repetitive especially with regard to ‘expensive’ and ‘flexible’. Candidates also seemed to have more knowledge about child minders than nannies.
- Some candidates did not gain credit for some responses as they did not read the guideline in the question about not using an advantage in one type of provision as a disadvantage in the other type.

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