

GCSE (9-1)

Food Preparation and Nutrition

J309

OCR Report to Centres June 2018

About this Examiner Report to Centres

This report on the 2018 Summer assessments aims to highlight:

- areas where students were more successful
- main areas where students may need additional support and some reflection
- points of advice 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.

The report also includes links and brief information on:

- A reminder of our **post-results services** including **reviews of results**
- Link to **grade boundaries**
- **Further support that you can expect from OCR**, such as our Active Results service and CPD programme

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Grade boundaries

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- Identify areas of the curriculum where students excel or struggle and help **pinpoint strengths and weaknesses** of students and teaching departments.

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J309-01 Food Preparation and Nutrition

1. General Comments:

This is the first year of this examination and it was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates were able to access the exam paper. Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to complete the paper. There were some NR responses however, these tended to be on the higher level response questions.

Some good scripts were seen from able students, but there were also instances of candidates not reading questions with sufficient care. There was little evidence of command words or keywords being underlined this year, which can be good practice for many candidates. Instructions in the questions were sometimes ignored. This was seen frequently with question 5(a) where many candidates did not scientifically explain what happened in the different stages of bread making. Candidates must be encouraged to take notice of the key word in the stem of the question to identify whether the question requires them to explain, describe, discuss, state, name or give. Candidates need to do as the question asks. There were occasions when a candidate was asked for one response, they gave several, and not all the answers were correct. This approach meant that some candidates did not score a mark.

Some candidates did not give sufficient detail in their responses particularly in those questions where candidates had to describe or explain their ideas. Many candidates did not gain full marks on 'explain' style questions as they provided two or more different points, rather than providing a statement with an explanation.

It was clear to see that some candidates had practised writing extended answers for the banded response questions. Some candidates made plans / wrote key words before starting these questions and therefore wrote clearly and answered the question in detail. On the banded response questions some candidates wasted space by rewriting the question out, leaving the top line unused and leaving a line between paragraphs. The additional sheets were used frequently for question 2c and 7. Candidates should be able to gain full marks using just the allotted lines, and many did demonstrate that this is possible. Some candidates answered the banded response questions in bullet points or columns, rather than in essay style and did not include sufficient detail to score marks in the higher mark bands.

Some more able candidates demonstrated that they had very good nutritional knowledge and were able to apply this to specific situations, eg when giving dietary advice to women to ensure a healthy pregnancy and healthy new born baby. However, the nutritional knowledge of some candidates was poor when recalling information and also when asked to apply it to question 7. It was particularly disappointing to see some students referring to dairy as a nutrient. Food science answers were generally weaker eg in question 5. Centres should also remind candidates that words like 'quicker', 'easier' and 'healthy' need to be qualified to gain a mark.

The candidates' written English still causes concern and deciphering responses was sometimes very difficult on low scoring papers. Many candidates did use the additional pages at the end of the examination paper. It was noticeable where candidates used the extra pages at the back of the booklet to continue a question response, that many candidates did not reference the

question number on the additional page or indicate on the original page that they were using the additional pages.

2. Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1a

This question was not generally well answered. Popular correct answers related to not touching the blades, not using near water, switching on /off and assembling correctly. Less able candidates gave rules for personal hygiene rather than safety rules when using a food processor. Common errors were 'checking the lid is on properly' without specifying the blender attachment, 'not putting fingers in when in use' which is not possible as the lid must be in place for the food processor to work. Most correct responses were to do with not using near water, or careful handling of the blade.

Question No. 1b

A few candidates scored full marks. Many wrote about the food processor being faster or easier, without comparison to doing it by hand. The most frequent correct response was concerned with consistency / even slicing / smooth mixtures / no lumps. Only one or two referenced the value to those with limited ability.

Question No. 2a(i)

This question was generally well answered. Most candidates knew that 5 portions of fruit and vegetables should be eaten every day.

Question No. 2a(ii)

A range of answers from the mark scheme were seen. Most candidates made reference to 'preventing obesity', 'providing vitamins and minerals', 'to prevent diabetes', 'they are low in fat'. Most candidates managed 2 correct answers. Some are still stating heart attacks, which is not an acceptable response.

Question No. 2b

The answers to this question were disappointing particularly regarding vegetables. Vitamin C sources from fruit were much better known than for vegetables and most candidates scored a mark for this. Various citrus fruits were the main correct response (mainly oranges), with strawberries frequently stated. Apples were the most frequent incorrect response. Various green leafy vegetable were listed correctly as a vegetable source. Many did not specify 'new' potatoes and therefore did not get a mark. A substantial number of candidates incorrectly listed carrots.

Question No. 2c

A wide range of responses were seen for this banded mark question. Some offered a range of correct points without explanation, which limited the band achieved. There were good explanations relating to reduced carbon footprint, emissions, global warming, environmental concerns and transport. Supporting local farmers was also a frequent correct point made. The most common disadvantages referred to lack of variety, weather and seasons in the UK. A few more able candidates mentioned not being able to support fair trade and farmers in developing countries. Lower attaining candidates wrote incorrectly about knowing where they came from, linking to less use of pesticides and produce being organic and genetically modified foods were discussed at length.

Question No. 3a

Some answers lacked detail and a common error was to give a symptom eg 'prevents constipation', rather than giving functions of water. A number did not gain marks as they answered with statements that referred to rehydration.

Question No. 3b

This question was well answered with many candidates scoring 3 or 4 marks. A wide range of the points in the mark scheme were covered in the candidates' responses.

Question No. 4a

This question was generally well answered. However, it was very disappointing to see some candidates stating milk, as dairy in the nutrient column. Those that listed 3 correct nutrients tended to gain full marks with correct functions. Protein, fat, calcium and vitamin D were the most common nutrients listed. Iron was the most frequent incorrect response. Those who stated energy as a function of protein often did not state it as a 'secondary source', which was required for a mark.

Question No. 4b

This question was poorly answered by many candidates. The mark scheme allowed for candidates to make reference to cheese being made in industry or within the home / classroom. Most recognised that the milk is heat treated. After this, there was a lot of guessing which included such things as mixing with flour, adding butter/cream, leaving milk to go off. Very few mentioned curds and whey. Quite a few mentioned putting in moulds and leaving to mature but not always after a correct description of the method.

Question No. 4c

Almost all gained a mark for Cheddar, Red Leicester, Wensleydale and Stilton were also frequently seen. 'Blue cheese' was a common incorrect response and some European cheeses were suggested by less able candidates. Most candidates scored 1 with the more able candidates scoring 2 or 3 marks.

Question No. 4d(i) and 4d(ii)

This question was well answered by most candidates. Cheeses from Italy, France and Greece were generally well known, with Mozzarella, Parmesan, Brie, Camembert and Feta being popular.

Question No. 5

This required a scientific response and many candidates did not read the question carefully. The majority of candidates described the method of bread making in each section. Where the candidate did answer the question, they tended only to score one mark for a statement. Candidates need to recognise that an 'explain' question needs a statement and an explanation of that statement. Many gave 2 statements and therefore only scored one mark.

Question No. 5a(i)

Most candidates described the process of mixing or rewrote the statement 'Strong plain flour, salt, yeast, water and oil are mixed together to make the bread' in their own words, rather than providing a scientific explanation of what happens. Reference to emulsification of water and oil was an incorrect response frequently seen.

Question No. 5a(ii)

Many candidates scored 2 marks, making reference to the gluten stretching and an elastic dough being formed. Less able candidates wrote about aeration eg trapping air to create air bubbles.

Question No. 5a(iii)

Many candidates gained a mark for understanding that bread rises during proving, but fewer were able to relate it to the production of CO₂.

Question No. 5a(iv)

Many thought that this stage was when yeast worked best; others were only able to give general points about making the bread edible. A few candidates gained 2 marks when they wrote about dextrinisation.

Question No. 5b

There was a general lack of knowledge about fortifying foods. The mark most frequently given was for adding nutrients. Candidates attempted the question, but with incorrect responses such as 'making it safe to eat' or 'making it last longer'. There were also a number of NR responses for this question.

Question No. 5c

A number of NRs were seen for this question. Some candidates are aware that foods are fortified even if they don't know why. This was evident by the number that gave bread and breakfast cereals as their answer. They had not recognised that the question had specifically asked for foods fortified by law. Many stated 'flour' but this was not specific enough for a mark. Many candidates guessed answers such as chicken, tomatoes, meat, or milk.

Question No. 6a

This question was well answered with the majority of candidates scoring 3 or 4 marks. Mayonnaise caused the most difficulty. A minority of candidates misread the question and just stated oil/fat/oil/fat instead of choosing from fig 3.

Question No. 6b

Candidates demonstrated a good level of knowledge for this question and most scored at least two marks. Many candidates made correct links to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol and blocking arteries. Some did repeat CHD as stated in the question.

Question No. 6c

Higher achieving candidates scored marks on this question. These were mainly for correctly stating the source of the fats ie vegetable and animal and / or for their state at room temperature. There were very few candidates who attempted to explain the difference between the two types of fat referencing single and double bonds.

Question No. 7

Candidates who gave higher banded responses related the nutritional requirements specifically to the unborn baby and the pregnant woman. They also explained fully the need for the nutrient and the source. A considerable number of candidates explained the need for folic acid to prevent spina bifida. A few candidates also explained the reason for avoiding alcohol due to the effect on the baby and foetal alcohol syndrome. The most common answers included avoiding alcohol, folic acid, calcium and vitamin D, iron and protein.

Lower attaining candidates gave very general answers referring repeatedly to 'needed for the development of the baby' and not being specific. Some candidates wrote very generally about the need for nutrients without referring to the pregnant woman or did not state the nutrient, its function and source.

Some candidates referred to exercise, taking drugs and smoking, which was not part of the question. Common misconceptions were 'eating for 2' and large amounts of energy foods being required. One or two wrote at length about how a new born baby should be fed.

Question No. 8a

Many candidates did not apply their responses to the marketing of the product. There were many references to making the food attractive rather than the packaging. Advertising was a frequent correct response but tended to be repeated using a different medium so only one mark was credited. Other correct responses were special offers and selling in family sized portions.

Question No. 8b

Many candidates struggled to answer this question. Those who gained marks were able to link a special diet with the nutrients required. Some candidates were able to link their statements to allowing consumers to make an informed decision. More able candidates also wrote about the link between calories and specific diets. A common misconception was that the nutritional information was useful to those with an allergy, food intolerance and vegetarian diets. In these cases, the candidates had confused nutritional information with ingredients and other information found on a label.

Question No. 9a

Most candidates gained marks for this question. Some repetition was seen with glazing of the pasty and bread rolls. Candidates lost marks on the curry and rice section with insufficient detail being given. A few candidates carried on the theme from 8b and suggested ways to improve the packaging as they had not read the question carefully.

Question No. 9b

This question was generally well answered. Those that didn't score a mark usually didn't put 'food' before probe or thermometer.

Question No. 9c

A few candidates had obviously learned all the temperatures related to food safety and scored full marks. However many lost the mark as they just wrote a number and did not put in degree centigrade (°C).

Question No. 9c(i)

The temperature of the fridge was known by many candidates. However many did not put the °C.

Question No. 9c(ii)

The correct temperature of the freezer was less well known.

Question No. 9c(iii)

Many candidates did not put a range. They just put one figure and therefore did not score a mark even if that figure fell within the danger zone. Many candidates did not know the temperatures of the danger zone.

Question No. 9d(i)

The majority of candidates scored at least one mark. The majority stated salmonella with e-coli also being a frequent correct response. Some candidates stated mould, bacteria, fungus; these answers were incorrect.

Question No. 9dii

Most candidates scored one mark and this was usually for fish, dairy, cream or cheese. Many listed meat but did not state cooked, others stated eggs but not raw, rice but not cooked or reheated and therefore did not gain a mark.

J309-02/03 Food Investigation Task

1. General Comments:

In the first year of entry for this specification, candidates produced work that was both wide ranging and varied. From the evidence observed, the NEA tasks proved accessible to all and provided opportunities for candidates with a wide range of abilities to demonstrate their achievement. At the same time this provided a degree of differentiation. It was apparent that where teachers had a clear understanding of the specification and assessment, the appropriate guidance and support was given. Candidates benefited when they applied the knowledge gained from their NEAs in the examined unit.

2. Comments on Task 1 Food Investigation Task

In this task, candidates are required through practical experimentation to investigate and evaluate an understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients and use the findings of that investigation to achieve a particular result.

The two ingredients to be investigated were starch and chemical raising agents.

The majority of candidates undertook the chemical raising agent's task and these tended to read more logically. Photographic evidence was positively used to support the work. Most centres presented their investigations as a succinct report within the 2000 word count. It should be made clear that although research is limited there needs to be a bibliography or references for any sources used.

Planning:

This was in general completed successfully; the plans were well structured and concise including only the relevant information.

Aims were either formulated at the beginning which shows best practice or more commonly were described before each investigation was carried out. Reasons for choice of investigations were generally disappointing as candidates did not link up and connect the research with their planned investigations.

Predictions were mostly clear and helped candidates to focus on what they wanted to be achieved.

Most centres had encouraged candidates to include a 'control recipe' but few actually explained the purpose of having this as part of their investigations / variables, indicating little understanding in this area.

Some centres did not always carry out a range of investigations, and it should be noted that sensory analysis can only be classed as one investigation.

Plans produced varied greatly in detail and some were very 'thin' which in turn affected the quality of the analysis and evaluation. Centres should be encouraged to produce detailed plans as this positively contributes and enables candidates to focus on what they are hoping to achieve and how they are going to record their findings.

Candidates who did not achieve well in this section often had not considered the working characteristics of starch or chemical raising agents in a scientific way. It was encouraging to see that the majority of centres had used a range of scientific terminology.

Investigation:

There was some evidence of excellent accurate and thoughtful execution of planned work. Pictorial evidence was good.

Candidates in general made limited changes or adaptations to their plans as they investigated explored and understood their observations and findings. This is an area that could be improved for candidates to reach the top mark band.

There were few changes or adaptations made and some good recording of results. However, many centres had not used a range of different formats and this prevented candidates accessing the top mark band. The most popular used were star profiles, photographic and tables.

There was also evidence that centres had carried out accurate and fair testing and considered ways of recording information accurately. Some examples to note were rolling scone mixture between 2 pieces of wood so that scones were of equal thickness, use of digital scales, food probes, tools for accurately measuring the rise of scones, viscosity graphs for measuring how sauces spread.

Analyse:

Results collected were analysed to varying degrees, however, there was limited evidence of a range of opinions and viewpoints. Most candidates attempted to link back to their original predictions with many referring to the importance of 'fair testing' to create accurate results. However, there were some that were 'muddled' where students forgot what they were aiming to achieve.

Evaluation:

A weak area was when candidates repeated the analysis of their results rather than applying their findings back to the original hypothesis / prediction and research carried out. Few applied their knowledge by suggesting how this might help in the future, or drawing clear conclusions as to their chosen commodity.

Centres are recommended to address the following aspects of the task to enable candidates to successfully achieve.

Centres should encourage their candidates to fully explain the functional and chemical properties of the food commodities related to the task. Clear aims, recommendations and predictions should be produced. The report should include appropriate, relevant and well-planned practical investigations. Three to four variables is sufficient. These practical investigations should be carried out under set controlled conditions to ensure fair and accurate results. Candidates should produce a clear plan and follow it throughout the task. They must show that they have carried out a wide range of testing. The results of the investigation should be clearly recorded and a wide range of formats should be used. This should be interpreted as at least three.

Candidate evidence should show that they have clearly understood the scientific principles that bring about the functional and working characteristics of a food commodity.

A comprehensive analysis, which includes a range of opinions and viewpoints, should be included. Conclusions should explain what has been discovered.

J309-04/05 Food Preparation Task

1. General Comments:

Centres have positively embraced the Food Preparation Task with the majority understanding and applying the assessment criteria, guiding candidates successfully through the requirements. Work was generally well structured and logically presented. Many centres had clearly accessed the support and training provided to produce the standard required. There was some innovative and exciting practical skills demonstrated and it was pleasing to see such varied and creative work being completed by candidates. Teachers had prepared their candidates very well and they were able to adapt the Food Preparation Task successfully. The celebration task was the most popular. It was encouraging to see that teachers and candidates had clearly encompassed the practical element of this task which culminated in them achieving successfully despite perhaps finding the written areas more challenging, reflecting a real 'mixed ability' and comprehensive emphasis of this part of the assessment.

2. Comments on Task 2:

A small number of centres had completed trialling and testing of ideas within their planning, which is not part of the assessment criteria and in consequence should not be undertaken. The use of pro forma sheets should not be used as this stifles creativity and limits candidates individual response.

Planning

This section had been undertaken effectively, with most centres attempting to encourage candidates to provide evidence in all areas. All centres clearly understood how the level of skill high/medium and low could be utilised within their choice. Nutritional information was mainly provided together with costing but this was not always discussed or suggestions provided as to how it could be adapted to better suit the situation. Candidates found applying food provenance and seasonality to their choices one of the most challenging aspects of the planning.

Time plans were attempted and completed reflecting clear sequencing and dove-tailing. Many colour coded or made clear which dish was being planned at any one time. Washing up/clearing away had been included within the plan and most candidates had attempted to include safety/hygiene and quality points although the detail of these varied widely between centres.

Method of working

A large majority of candidates demonstrated excellent personal preparation and organisation in their work area when undertaking the three hour practical task.

Excellent photographic journals of candidates carrying out their practical dishes were included. It was helpful when centres included annotation to justify the marks being credited.

Skills and cooking:

The majority of candidates had used and demonstrated a wide range of skills and techniques. Photographic evidence helped to support and justify this mark. In addition, aspects of the time plan also illustrated which skills and techniques were being used. Most candidates demonstrated a range of medium/high level skills. Complex and demanding skills such as jointing a chicken, filleting fish, making mayonnaise, hollandaise sauce, sweet doughs, flaky and choux pastry were all evident. It was a pleasure to see such a high level and range of skills being completed admirably supporting the essence of the qualification.

Presentation:

Styling and presentation of the finished dishes was varied. Some candidates had clearly undertaken to 'show case' dishes with garnishing and decorating techniques and the 'whole table'-styling where others were much more basic. Portion control was not always clear and there was limited annotation from the teacher regarding the sensory results produced by candidates. A small number of candidates had not provided a complete dish eg chilli with rice, vegetables with salmon etc.

An A4 coloured picture of the 3 final dishes was not always provided making it difficult to see the final standard of practical work produced. Centres are recommended to include one A4 colour photograph of the final three complete dishes.

Analyse and Evaluation

This section was varied in content and quality. Many candidates did not discuss results from sensory analysis collected, and those who did discussed their results but did not always suggest improvements. Practical work was reviewed but few considered all their work or linked it back to the original task. Often the evaluation involved a descriptive account of what they did rather than relevant evaluative comments, using the judgements found from the work completed. Limited conclusions were drawn or suggestions as to how their work could be improved with specific examples.

Centres are recommended to address the follow aspects of the task to enable candidates to successfully achieve.

Candidates must show that they understand the context of the task. Consideration has been given to the dietary need, meal, culinary or religious tradition, event, celebration or style of menu.

Candidates should consider the needs and circumstances of the groups of people who will be eating the dishes.

Any research that is undertaken should show that the candidate had an understanding of the influence of lifestyle, life stage, dietary group, and culinary tradition in relation to the task.

What the candidates have considered and how they have come to a decision about which dishes to prepare, cook and serve should be evident.

Candidates should justify the choice of dishes in relation to skills, techniques, cost, sensory quality, nutritional choice, provenance and seasonality.

Time plans should include sequencing and dove-tailing, times and actions with reference to skills, techniques, equipment, food safety and quality points.

A range of skills should be demonstrated using a wide range of tools and equipment competently.

All three complete dishes should be presented in a style and finish that is suitable to the task. Consideration of portion control should be evident. Sensory testing should be undertaken.

Candidates should complete a sensory analysis and evaluation of the finished dishes considering the organoleptic properties.

Candidates should evaluate the whole task and include a wide range of evidence together with reasoned judgements on which to draw thorough conclusions. Suggestions for improvements or changes should also be considered.

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