

GCSE (9-1)

Moderators' report

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

**OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1)
in Food Preparation and Nutrition**

J309

For first teaching in 2016

J309/02/03 Summer 2025 series

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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by the moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements, identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation, and comment on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. The report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

Online courses

We have created online courses to build your confidence in delivering, marking and administering internal assessment for our qualifications. Courses are available for Cambridge Nationals, GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016).

Cambridge Nationals

All teachers delivering our Cambridge Nationals suite are asked to complete the Essentials for the NEA course, which describes how to guide and support your students. You'll receive a certificate which you should retain.

Following this you can also complete a subject-specific Focus on Internal Assessment course for your individual Cambridge Nationals qualification, covering marking and delivery.

GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016)

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

Accessing our online courses

You can access all our online courses from our teacher support website [Teach Cambridge](#).

These free online courses currently cover the end-to-end NEA process for teachers. You'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

These self-paced online courses are intended for any teachers. During the course, you will engage with interactive content on subjects such as guidance on unit content, structure and administrative processes.

If you have any queries, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 01223 553998 or email support@ocr.org.uk.

General overview

The majority of candidates were able to access each element of the task to varying degrees. The most popular task was based on air as a raising agent. Many candidates had provided clear evidence where they had identified, researched, understood and applied their knowledge to the task. Chemical and functional properties were generally addressed, demonstrating a good understanding particularly for the air as a raising agent investigation.

Air as a raising agent appeared to give more opportunity for scientific information. It was noticeable that candidates choosing reduction sauce struggled to complete adequate research on the subject. Investigations were not considered as effective as those undertaking raising agents. Some candidates appeared unsure as to what constitutes a reduction sauce and investigations were based around thickeners.

Research linked to the commodity was unsubstantiated at times. Most successful candidates had produced research that was relevant and concise as they had been encouraged to summarise research so that irrelevant information was not included.

The most popular focus of the investigation for air as a raising agent was meringues, Yorkshire puddings, and flaky pastry. Focusing on how air can be incorporated was based around the use of electric whisk, hand whisk and forks. Investigations also featured the use of different parts of an egg, oven temperatures, cooking times, sieving/not sieving and using different fats/sugars and their ability to trap air.

Those candidates that investigated reduction sauce concentrated upon different times for the reduction and evaporation of different liquids. When discussing the investigations some candidates included varying amounts of acid to be used, blending the sauce and not blending, and the addition of a different type of fat. This resulted in some contradictory investigations being completed.

Key point - Control recipe

There was a clearer understanding of how control recipes are used in the investigation process. A control sample for comparison purposes was included which then resulted in constructive discussions of findings / comparisons which were used when evaluating results.

Fair testing was sometimes stated but candidates did not explain 'how'.

Less successful candidates were not always sure about what their investigations would show and were unable to develop their initial thoughts. Predictions/hypotheses were mentioned, however, few candidates then used their research to inform themselves and many did not include reasons for their chosen investigations. The majority of candidates planned three investigations/variables.

Misconception



There were a significant number of candidates that undertook too many investigations which is unnecessary and can produce confusing results and clarity when linking back to the hypothesis/predictions.

Some centres discussed and trialled the control idea/recipe first which enabled them to compare all their investigation results. There was a much wider range of different formats of recording methods this year, which included, written, photographic, bar charts, viscosity charts and star diagrams. Quality was variable. Descriptors were applied successfully when they were relevant and specific to the investigation being completed.

A very wide range of responses was seen in the Analyse section.

Key point - Analyse

Many candidates produced strong results when they could interpret their findings and link them to the chemical and functional properties of a raising agent and reduction sauce. There was evidence of strong analytical skills by explaining what had happened and why, and included a range of opinions and viewpoints. Candidates had reflected back to their original aims and predictions against their results. Most candidates had made good use of the sensory outcomes.

Strong responses were seen where the analysis was often sustained and purposeful, clearly linking their findings back to the research and predictions. Where candidates did well, scientific explanations and terminology had been utilised.

Less successful responses were seen when candidates did not use their feedback from their peers when analysing their results.

The Evaluate section proved challenging for some candidates. Most managed to include strengths and weaknesses, however, conclusions relating back to the task were less evident or detailed. There was a limited understanding of the work as to what had been learnt, for example, when referring back to the research carried out, and the results collected. This demonstrated a lack of understanding of the working properties of the commodity.

Key point - Evaluate

Strong responses were seen when evaluative comments were integrated throughout the evaluation. It was pleasing to see when candidates made particular reference to observations and findings, using a wide range of evidence to draw conclusions.

Where teachers had a clear understanding of the specification, the appropriate guidance and support had been given.

Most centres presented their investigations as a succinct report within the 2000 word count.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
Planning - wrote out their task at the beginning of their work - put elements of the research into their own words - were able to produce planning that was set out in a structured format - discussed and understood key terms - undertook relevant initial research on raising agents or reduction sauce - concisely summarised evidence - explained what they were going to do and included detailed reasons for choice - made predictions/hypotheses setting out what they thought would happen - produced clear aims for their investigation - included a control recipe that was clearly explained and applied - used scientific responses - chose three relevant investigations - used scientific terminology throughout. Investigations - set out three investigations/variables relevant to air as a raising agent or reduction sauce - followed their plans with accuracy - trialled the control recipe first so they had the results to compare all investigations against - made changes as a result of the investigations - provided methodology demonstrating clear understanding of their investigations - clearly recorded their observations and findings - used a wide range of formats to record findings from investigations.	Planning - did not understand the task - did not discuss the working characteristics and chemical properties - were unable to show a clear structure on how the investigations were going to be conducted - provided inadequate planning resulting in confusion and inability to 'move forward' - made limited use of resources with many taken from dubious websites - did not clearly identify reasons for choice of their investigation - did not explain how it would be a fair test - gave aims and predictions which were not clear - did not produce a control method - demonstrated a lack of variety in approach - did not identify or use key words - used and carried out only one to two variables/investigations - made limited adaptations/modifications - made frequent use of similar proforma for recording results - did not plan in a logical or detailed way - did not use referencing/bibliography. Investigations - did not clarify why investigations had been carried out - had no plan to work through - had no evidence of a control recipe - did not have a clear/logical plan to follow - did not produce plans for recording observations and data collection - did not complete their own results/records where candidates had participated in shared investigations in groups - had limited development of their own ideas, where group work had been undertaken - used similar structures and formats and provided no originality.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
Analysis • were able to interpret and understand their findings • referred back to the initial research carried out • were able to self-reflect on results • were able to reference and link their original aims and predictions to the results • made full use of sensory results • produced work that was logical and accurate • used scientific explanations and terminology Evaluation • were able to refer back to the research and analysis • were able to apply a wide range of evidence • were able to explain the results collected and provide a summary • focused on each aspect of their performance • were able to draw meaningful and relevant conclusions • made suggestions to influence future practice.	Analysis • did not fully analyse or understand the results of their investigations • made ambiguous and descriptive analysis with little reference to the evidence of testing or the original prediction/hypothesis • provided limited explanations of what had happened and why • made limited use of key terms and scientific understanding • lacked evidence that their gained knowledge had been applied to their results • gave brief or no viewpoints from other candidates on their results • made little use of scientific terminology. Evaluation • did not use vocabulary to their best advantage • used a limited range of evidence on which to base their comments • demonstrated lack of scientific knowledge • gave brief strengths and weaknesses with limited justification • made descriptive comments rather than an evaluative review • drew no conclusions • made no reference to future practice or application of findings • provided no referenced sources of information/bibliography.

Most common causes of why centres did not gain a higher level

A lack of understanding of what is expected to plan and investigate based on the actual context of the task and commodity.

No scientific application to demonstrate the chemical and functional properties of raising agent or reduction sauce.

Investigations without plans for candidates to follow.

The use of recipes to produce an outcome rather than having a scientific focus.

Common misconceptions

Fair testing must be explained. A control method should be clearly identified and set out at the beginning of the planned investigations.

Aims should be clearly set out at the beginning and/or at the start of each investigation.

Three investigations/variables are sufficient.

An end food product is not required as this is a scientific investigation.

All sources of information should be provided throughout the body of the portfolio or as a bibliography.

Avoiding potential malpractice

Read and act on any updates from OCR.

Explain the 'live' NEA task and the requirements for each section.

Ensure all teaching staff have a clear understanding of the NEA standards.

Large departments to undertake internal standardisation.

In any group work candidates must have their own results/findings to use for their analysis and evaluation.

The record keeping for all candidates to be regularly updated, for example with the use of trackers.

Encourage candidates to take responsibility for their progress, give constructive feedback and signpost the criteria for them.

Ensure all sources of information are well referenced.

Make sure the scientific investigations meet the 2000 word count including any dates and photographs.

Ask for any clarification and/or assistance if required. OCR will happily support your request.

Helpful resources

OCR GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Student Book 1 Publisher Hodder Education.
ISBN:978147186749

OCR GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Students e Textbook

ISBN: 9781471867132 Publisher Hodder Education

OCR GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Course Companion

ISBN:9781471867491 Publisher: Hodder Education

My Revision Notes: OCR GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

ISBN:978-1-4718-8700-0 Publishers: Hodder Education

Cooking Explained ISBN:0-582-30573-X Publisher Hammond

The Science of Cooking ISBN:0241220782 Publishers DK

Egg Exploration Pack – Teach Cambridge Subject Area

British Nutritional Foundation BNF www.nutrition.org.uk

NHS www.nhs.uk

Food A fact of life www.foodafactoflife.org.uk

www.lovefoodlovescience.org

Additional comments

The MC1 Marking Form must be correct and fully completed to include centre name, centre number, candidate name and candidate number.

There were numerous clerical errors. Centres must make sure that the addition of marks and the total mark is correct and matches that of the final mark uploaded onto the Interchange.

MC1 Marking Form must be annotated in each section to support the mark awarded.

When using the digital submission, the correct code should be used J309/02.

When uploading files onto the Submit for Assessment platform, these should be clearly identifiable with candidate number and tasks.

Supporting you

Teach Cambridge

Make sure you visit our secure website [Teach Cambridge](#) to find the full range of resources and support for the subjects you teach. This includes secure materials such as set assignments and exemplars, online and on-demand training.

Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

Reviews of marking

If any of your students' results are not as expected, you may wish to consider one of our post-results services. For full information about the options available visit the [OCR website](#).

Access to Scripts

We've made it easier for Exams Officers to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts'. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

Keep up-to-date

We send a monthly bulletin to tell you about important updates. You can also sign up for your subject specific updates. If you haven't already, [sign up here](#).

OCR Professional Development

Attend one of our popular professional development courses to hear directly from a senior assessor or drop in to a Q&A session. Most of our courses are delivered live via an online platform, so you can attend from any location.

Please find details for all our courses for your subject on **Teach Cambridge**. You'll also find links to our online courses on NEA marking and support.

Signed up for ExamBuilder?

ExamBuilder is the exam paper builder platform for a range of our qualifications. [Find out more](#).

Free for all OCR centres with an Interchange account, it allows unlimited users per centre. We require an [Interchange](#) username to verify your centre's users for ExamBuilder.

If you do not have an Interchange account, please contact your centre administrator (usually the Exams Officer) to request a username.

Once you have an Interchange username, use the form on [this page](#) to sign up for ExamBuilder, or ask an existing user at your centre to create an ExamBuilder account for you.

Active Results

Review students' exam performance with our free online results analysis tool. It is available for all GCSEs, AS and A Levels and Cambridge Nationals (examined units only).

[Find out more](#).

Online courses

Enhance your skills and confidence in internal assessment

What are our online courses?

Our online courses are self-paced eLearning courses designed to help you deliver, mark and administer internal assessment for our qualifications. They are suitable for both new and experienced teachers who want to refresh their knowledge and practice.

Why should you use our online courses?

With these online courses you will:

- learn about the key principles and processes of internal assessment and standardisation
- gain a deeper understanding of the marking criteria and how to apply them consistently and accurately
- see examples of student work with commentary and feedback from OCR moderators
- have the opportunity to practise marking and compare your judgements with those of OCR moderators
- receive instant feedback and guidance on your marking and standardisation skills
- be able to track your progress and achievements through the courses.

How can you access our online courses?

Access courses from [Teach Cambridge](#). Teach Cambridge is our secure teacher website, where you'll find all teacher support for your subject.

If you already have a Teach Cambridge account, you'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

If you don't have a Teach Cambridge account yet, ask your exams officer to set you up – just send them this [link](#) and ask them to add you as a Teacher.

Access the courses **anytime, anywhere and at your own pace**. You can also revisit the courses as many times as you need.

Which courses are available?

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

The subject-specific courses are tailored for each qualification that has non-exam assessment (NEA) units, except for AS Level and Entry Level. They cover the following topics:

- the structure and content of the NEA units
- the assessment objectives and marking criteria for the NEA units
- examples of student work with commentary and feedback for the NEA units
- interactive marking practice and feedback for the NEA units.

We are also developing courses for some of the examined units, which will be available soon.

How can you get support and feedback?

If you have any queries, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 01223 553998 or email support@ocr.org.uk.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how to improve the online courses and make them more useful and relevant for you. You can share your views by completing the evaluation form at the end of each course.

Tell us what you think

Your feedback plays an important role in how we develop, market, support and resource qualifications now and into the future. We want you and your students to enjoy and get the best out of our qualifications and resources, but to do that we need your honest opinions to tell us whether we're on the right track or not.

You can email your thoughts to resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk or visit our [feedback page](#) to learn more about how you can help us improve our resources.



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Visit our Online Support Centre at support.ocr.org.uk



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When we update our specifications, you'll see a new version number and a summary of the changes. While we do our best to reflect these changes in all associated resources on [Teach Cambridge](#), if you notice any discrepancies, please refer to the latest specification on our website and [let us know](#).

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