

A Level Food Studies

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there any guidance on marking the Practical Examination?

There is a Coursework training manual written for IGCSE Food and Nutrition syllabus. Teachers of the A level may find this document useful and we would advise them to work through the document. The Coursework Training Manual includes some marking tasks for the teacher to complete. These tasks are then sent to CIE's moderator for checking and to give feedback on the marking.

What do the dashes (-) in the mark scheme represent? For example in the November 2008 exam mark scheme Q4b on why many adolescents have an unbalanced diet: snack between meals – or instead of meals – lack of parental supervision – availability of junk food. Is it that every time a dash(-) appears then this a point?

Every time there is a dash between facts on the mark scheme it breaks up 'correct information' which would gain a point. Therefore the answer above would be 4 points =2 marks.

Do we mark the time planning internally too?

Planning is marked externally by the UK Examiner. The centre marks the rest of the work – B Manipulative Skill and Method of working and C Results and Serving. When the practical session is complete, copies of the planning sheets and working mark sheets should be sent to CIE. The marks will then be assessed by a CIE examiner.

The following points need to be noted during the marking:

- (a) Follow the mark scheme in the syllabus – it provides a guide which can be transferred to whatever dishes are presented by the candidates.
- (b) It is important to identify skilful work. Very simple dishes, which show little skill should receive minimal or no marks, depending on the actual dish.
- (c) Make comments on the working mark sheet, which will enable the moderator to judge whether the marks awarded were appropriate. For example 'the student worked all the way through and succeeded in presenting the dishes on time' is very useful in identifying the competence and time-keeping of the student. Comments on what was done well and what was well handled or how the student dealt with any problems are also useful. It is also important to mention the taste as well as the appearance of dishes. Essentially the moderator is asking for thoughtful, honest and detailed comments.

How many students can take the Practical Examination at any one time?

No more than 6 students should be examined in one session. Students who are not undergoing a practical test can attend their usual lessons (apart from not being allowed to practice their specific task in school).

How are the Practical Tasks allocated?

Students can choose which one of the 3 tasks they would like to complete. Teachers must NOT allocate tests to candidates. (This is different to the O Level and IGCSE Food and Nutrition syllabuses where the five tasks should be allocated by you and the Director of Studies in strict alphabetical order for all of the candidates (i.e. entire cohort) one week before the first timetabled practical test begins.)

Can the students take their own recipe folder into the exam?

The candidates can bring in their own folders. They should be encouraged to 'get on with the cooking', rather than keep referring to their recipes, as the folders/books are there only as reminders. The planning etc. should have been done in the previous session.

Are the students allowed to purchase the ingredients themselves?

Ideally the school should buy and supply the ingredients wherever possible. This makes the session more economic – all the quantities can be calculated after the planning session and brought in for the practical session. Also, the centre can be sure that all the necessary ingredients are to hand when the test begins.

Unusual/specialist ingredients can be brought in by the candidates, but a note will need to be made of this.

How are the tests administered?

Details of how to administer the tests are in the set of Confidential Instructions which are sent out with Practical Test Question Paper. These must be locked away until the date fixed for the Planning Session.

What does the centre need to send CIE in relation to the marking - is it just the candidate recording form?

Once the examination has been completed, copies of **all** the planning sheets and mark sheets should be sent to CIE. They will then be forwarded to an examiner who will assess the practical marks allocated by the assessor. Please use the official stationery, envelopes, labels etc. The work should be sent to the address indicated on the envelopes.

Is there a separate mark scheme for the Practical Examination or do I just use the mark scheme in the syllabus?

For A Level Food Studies the mark scheme is in the syllabus (see page 10). All the instructions on how to award marks are contained in the syllabus document and there is no separate mark scheme. (This is different to the IGCSE and OL syllabuses for Food and Nutrition where there is a generic mark scheme in the syllabus and a separate more detailed mark scheme provided to centres.)