



General Certificate of Education

Health and Social Care 8623

Advanced Subsidiary Double Award

HC06 Common Diseases and Disorders

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - January series

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HC06 Common Diseases and Disorders

The pattern of performance on this paper was very similar to that of previous series.

Candidates in the main demonstrated that they had been well prepared for the test with all questions proving accessible to the vast majority. There was very little evidence of candidates being unable to complete the test in the time available. As with previous papers higher scoring candidates produced responses in good detail with accurate use of technical terminology, while weaker candidates often failed to gain marks by offering vague responses.

Question 1

In part a) the majority of candidates scored well, understanding that athlete's foot is caused by a fungus and being able to give two symptoms of the infection. Weaker candidates often offered bacteria as the cause in ai). Part b) was again generally well answered but part c) much less so. Some weaker candidates repeated the question stem information in their answers to ci) when offering either a food or drink entry into the body. In part cii) damaging cells/tissues directly gained a mark for a number of candidates, but far fewer were able to gain marks available from taking nutrients from host cells or stimulation of the body's own immune system. Responses to part d) were much better with most candidates gaining at least half marks, demonstrating good understanding of children not having fully developed immune systems and different preventative strategies to reduce the risk of infection from disease organisms.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to gain full marks in part ai) by offering pollen and animal dander as airborne allergens. Knowledge of airborne allergen testing produced a range of responses with good details from higher ability candidates but rather vague responses from those of lesser ability. It was pleasing to see some very detailed answers gaining very high marks in part b), demonstrating good understanding of how allergens cause allergic reactions. Weaker candidates' responses again tended to lack detail and were often confused e.g. role of mast cells and histamine.

Question 3

A majority of candidates gained at least two of the four marks available in part a) by successfully drawing conclusions from the data in terms of the incidence of the different eye disorders. Part b) produced some very good responses but weaker candidates often confused Myopia and Hyperopia (Hypermetropia) and/or their causes. Some responses correctly identified short or long sight but contradicted this in terms of a description e.g. short sight – the inability to see near objects clearly. A smaller proportion of candidates confused Astigmatism with Presbyopia, but most gained the mark in part c) by naming cataracts, glaucoma or conjunctivitis.

Question 4

In part ai) a number of weaker candidates gave vague responses to skin blackhead formation, suggesting that dirt trapped in the skin was the main cause. Few candidates demonstrated a good understanding of skin structure in part aii), but those who did tended to score full marks. Responses to part bi) were generally better with the majority scoring half marks or more of the four available by successfully explaining how headaches cause pain through pressure, tension and stretching of meninges, muscles, scalp and/or blood vessels. Weaker candidates suggested headaches caused the 'tension' rather than were caused by it. The vast majority of

candidates gained full marks in part bii), successfully suggesting two common causes of headaches.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website