

# Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)

Advanced GCE A2 H511

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H111

## **OCR Report to Centres**

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**June 2012**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

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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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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### OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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## Overview

Once again, during this session there was evidence of very good achievement with candidates demonstrating a thorough understanding of key concepts and applying their knowledge accurately. The full range of grades was achieved across each of the units.

Centres are encouraged to consider the detailed feedback on the performance for each of the externally assessed units which follow this report.

There are a number of key themes which emerge from the Principal Examiners' reports. Candidates are still not recognising the requirements of the command verbs in questions which can limit their ability to access the marks; this is essential to ensure high marks are secured by the more able candidates. In particular, candidates that identified and described when the question required an explanation were unable to access the full mark range. Many section B questions and some Section A questions required candidates to 'apply' or 'explain' their knowledge and were not based on straight 'recall' of knowledge.

It would be valuable for candidates to practise reading exam questions carefully. Accurate interpretation must ensure they apply their responses to the question rather than giving a generic answer. Successful answers and good practice were reflected in responses that were factually accurate and applied to the question.

Poor spelling and grammar also made the awarding of top level marks difficult in levels of response questions. Glossaries of key words which reinforce the correct spelling are recommended to support candidates when revising. Candidates were rewarded for quality of written communication in the levels of response questions.

Responses to Section B questions in all the externally assessed units are extended responses or essays rather than bullet lists of facts. These questions offer opportunities for candidates to give detailed and well-reasoned answers demonstrating the depth and breadth of their knowledge and their comprehension of the question. Where low level marks were recorded, it appeared to be the result of a lack of specific knowledge, poor examination technique and an inability to apply knowledge. Lack of clarity of expression or repeating the same information in slightly different words also contributed to lower marks.

Centres should ensure that candidates are fully prepared for their assessments by:

- Helping candidates to improve the way they approach the command verbs 'discuss', 'explain' and 'describe'.
- Practising writing and marking questions by using previous question papers and marks schemes readily available on the OCR website before they reach the examination.
- Improving the techniques used by candidates when reading the question, for example, using a highlighter pen on key words, rephrasing the question at the start of their response and referring to the question during the response.
- Improving the techniques used by candidates when answering questions, for example, sentence construction, accurate spelling and avoiding the 'scattergun effect' of telling all that they know rather than focusing on the actual question.
- Making sure candidates are familiar with the subject specific terminology and the underpinning knowledge used within the units.
- Developing candidates' ability to write concise responses to short questions in section A.

The quality of the work completed for the coursework unit continues to demonstrate a very good level of knowledge and understanding. Higher achieving candidates clearly demonstrated an excellent ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to the assessment criteria for each unit. In the implementation section some of the research methodologies selected require more rigorous application to the aims of the investigation. A small number of centres appear not to be providing candidates with clear guidance about the evidence required to ensure all assessment criteria are met within the unit. Detailed guidance from the Principal Moderator relating to G003 can be found later in this report.

## G001 Society and Health

### General Comments

Section A was answered adequately by the vast majority of candidates.

The vast majority of candidates followed the rubric for section B and only selected two questions to answer, as per instructions. Candidates should read the question carefully so that they actually answer the question set.

It would be useful if Centres could take note of the fact that at this level, the section B answers are extended answers not essays. Candidates need to take note that the second part of each Section B question is worth 15 marks, therefore more time should be spent on answering this part of the question. Some candidates wrote answers to both parts of a Section B question as one piece of continuous prose. This proved difficult to mark, and was unlikely to have produced clearly focused responses. It was also difficult to mark where candidates had not clearly number questions or parts to questions.

Many candidates continued to waste paper in the booklet by starting a new question on a new page or leaving a complete blank page between answers. Candidates do not need to omit whole blank pages between questions.

There was evidence of poor planning of responses by where they gave long repetitive answers to questions and then failed to complete the question or paper. Those who wrote well-structured and concise answers gave no indication of being short of time. Candidates should be aware that any planning should be brief and concise and of benefit. It was apparent that some candidates had spent more time completing their plan than writing their answer to the question. Candidates need to be reminded that they are awarded marks for the quality of their written communication in Section B.

### Comments on Individual Questions

#### Section A

- 1 (a)(i) The data was extracted correctly by virtually all candidates.
- (a)(ii) The data was extracted correctly by virtually all candidates.
- (a)(iii) Many candidates appeared to have misread the question. The question asked for the weekly recommended units of alcohol for an adult woman but many gave the daily recommended limits, so failed to gain a mark for this part of the question.
- (b) Candidates were often able to explain three different factors that can influence the health of the nation, with the most popular answers being smoking and poor diet. Marks were lost when candidates gave repeat explanations as part of their answer.
- (c) This question was answered by the most candidates who were able to define the term absolute poverty.
- (d) This question was generally quite well answered with very few candidates failing to score one mark from two. Most were able to give a definition of relative poverty.

- (e) Few candidates fully defined food poverty and how it may affect individuals. Very few related the fact that food poverty was not being able to afford to buy food and therefore often individuals did not have a balanced meal or became malnourished.
- (f) This question was on the whole poorly answered. Candidates failed to differentiate between poverty and homelessness. A large percentage of candidates listed groups who were vulnerable to poverty rather than homelessness.
- (g) Many candidates gave vague answers for this question. Some mentioned shelters and hostels but failed to describe how they may be viable housing options for a homeless person. Candidates often described hostels and shelters which was repetition. Buying a house or flat were not suitable answers.

## Section B

A number of candidates would have benefitted from greater preparation on the amount to write for Section B answers. There are 25 marks available for each question, with 15 marks for the second part of each question. Centres may like to stress to candidates that these responses require a full and clear explanation of each point raised.

Question 2 was answered by a very high proportion of candidates.

- 2 (a) Many candidates answered this very well with full descriptions of a range of families and households. Those that failed to score highly often failed to describe both families and households and some tried to relate their answer back to poverty and homelessness from section A, which was not required.
- (b) The second half of the question was again generally well answered. Candidates explained fully the role of women and how it has affected households and family groups. Most tended to concentrate on childcare, lack of contact and the division of chores. Few mentioned the availability of contraception when discussing women's childbearing choices. Weaker answers digressed into women's emancipation and the history of female occupations in World War Two which was not credited.

Question 3 was the least popular question.

- 3 (a) This was the question which elicited the poorest answers from those candidates who attempted it. Candidates often failed to recognise how voluntary provision can contribute to social care in the community. They regularly failed to recognise the organisations which assist with social care. A number described the value to the volunteers themselves and of the volunteering process. There was often discussion relating to personal, social and auxiliary care.
- (b) This question was not well answered. Candidates were often unable to explain the NHS or to list correctly benefits that are provided by the state to support families in need. Answers often were a list of benefits, not always correct, with little development. Those candidates that did answer the question reasonably well were able to name the NHS and describe, although sometimes incorrectly, primary and secondary care. The benefits described often revolved around Job Seekers Allowance, Child Benefit and Income Support.

Question 4 was also popular

- 4 (a) This question was answered quite well by those who attempted it. Some candidates demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the condition osteoporosis and the dietary changes required to reduce its risk. A few candidates failed to read the question correctly and discussed issues other than diet, as specified in the question.
- (b) This question was not generally well answered. Candidates often explained why and not how families are encouraged to follow a healthy lifestyle. Answers were often superficial with a lack of detail provided, candidates often discussing only one initiative in any detail. Some however were able to explain many of the current strategies in place which encourage families to follow a healthy lifestyle.



## G002 Resource Management

### Comments on Individual Questions

#### Section A

- 1
- (a)(i) The data was extracted correctly by almost all candidates.
  - (a)(ii) The data was extracted correctly by almost all candidates.
  - (a)(iii) The vast majority of candidates were able to state one reason why expenditure on tobacco had decreased between 2000 and 2008. The most common responses featured references to the ban on smoking in public places and the increased awareness of the risks of smoking.
  - (b) Candidates were often able to state two sources of income available to individuals and households.
  - (c) This question was generally quite well answered, with the majority of candidates able to explain why a breadmaker is a useful item of kitchen equipment. However, some candidates referred to the ease of use and storage of a breadmaker. Reference to cost and the fact that using a breadmaker is a cheaper option to buying bread were incorrect answers.
  - (d) Few candidates fully described three actions that could be taken by an Environmental Health Officer if a food business did not meet food hygiene regulations. Candidates often referred to a warning rather than an improvement notice but the majority knew that there was a timescale for any necessary improvements and that the Environmental Health Officer had the power to close down a business. There was a misconception that an Environmental Health Officer is able to impose fines on a food business.
  - (e) Few candidates used the correct terminology and answers often lacked detail. This question received very mixed responses. For some of the sources, namely meat and people, candidates were able to give two different reasons why they could be sources of food poisoning with named bacteria. Many candidates included cross contamination in every response. The responses relating to animals and soil were frequently not answered well with candidates quoting incorrect answers including bird flu, foot and mouth disease and pesticides and chemicals.

#### Section B

A number of candidates would have benefitted from greater preparation on the amount to write for Section B answers. There are 25 marks available for each question, with 15 marks for the second part of each question. Centres may like to stress to candidates that these responses require a full and clear explanation of each point raised.

Question 2 was answered by a very high proportion of candidates.

- 2 (a) Many candidates answered this very well with clear explanations of the reasons as to why eating patterns have changed in recent years. There were frequent references to the amount of disposable income, patterns of work/leisure and the availability of places to eat out. Some candidates discussed patterns of eating and did not explain the reasons why these patterns have changed.
- (b) The second half of the question demonstrated a variety of responses. Candidates often described the factors affecting food choice rather than the needs influencing food purchase. Many responses focused on health and dietary needs and personal preferences.

Question 3 was also answered by a high proportion of candidates.

- 3 (a) This was the question which elicited a poor response from those candidates who attempted it. Candidates often failed to describe the inter-relationship between time, money and energy in the management of resources in the home. Instead candidates either described the factors affecting time, energy and money management or ways of saving time, money and energy in the home.
- (b) This question was well answered by the majority of candidates. The excellent responses enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of payment. Most made reference to payment by means of cash, cheque, debit and credit cards, with the higher achieving candidates explaining a wider range of payments. There was often repetition for the advantages and disadvantages of the different forms of payment, for example, high interest rates often appeared as a disadvantage for several forms of payment.

Question 4 was the least popular question.

- 4 (a) This question was not answered well by those who attempted it. Candidates often incorrectly described the different Acts which protect consumers rather than the organisations that protect the rights of consumers. There were, however, some candidates that answered the question very well.
- (b) This question was not generally well answered. Candidates often described only briefly how conciliation, arbitration and court action can be used by consumers. Many of them went on to describe the actual complaints procedure which was not part of the question.

## **G003 Investigative study**

### **General comments**

Some excellent work was produced by candidates this year. They were able to demonstrate a wide range of investigative skills and extensive subject knowledge. These investigations progressed logically and employed a range of primary research methods. Annotation was much better this year. Teachers used various methods to show how the marks had been awarded and those who had taken the time to fully annotate the work were usually far more accurate. Many centres provided additional paperwork with a break down of all of the assessment criterion; others highlighted the pages from the specification and made additional comments.

Generally, the presentation was good. Some work was beautifully presented for moderation with bindings and colour printing used effectively. As a rule appendices were labelled correctly and cross-referencing was evident.

Few centres used the design and technology route for their practical work. Nearly all work was nutrition based, there were no dominant themes this year eg Jamie Oliver and School meals (although primary school meals is still quite common) but there were several investigations looking at economy meals, the cost of meals and nutritious low cost meals for students.

All centres had provided photographic evidence of the work undertaken and in most cases the digital images had been pasted into the work. This was not only for practical making and testing, but often of shop visits.

### **Administration**

Very few centres failed to submit centre declaration sheets and there were very few mathematical errors. The work was very prompt to arrive this year, mostly well in advance of the deadline date.

### **Analysis, Aims and Initial Research**

Generally, this section was good and generally accurately assessed. The majority of tasks were appropriate though there were a minority who developed a title from an area not on the specification such as sports diets. Most titles were set with a clear context. However, the discussion of the context was sometimes too brief and possibly too much time was devoted to extensive web diagrams. Detailed web diagrams are an excellent starting point but need following up with a discussion, which includes a reference to the factors identified in the web diagram. Initial research was not evident in all the work moderated. A tabulated discussion of the scope of practical opportunities was completed well by all candidates.

Most candidates selected an appropriate number of aims, which offered scope for interesting primary research. Some candidates devised too many aims and as a result appeared to have had to devote too much time to complete their investigation.

## **Planning and Development**

There was some lenient marking with this section. Centres need to ensure that decision-making is evident in the report. The report should flow and choices made by the candidate should evolve from the initial research and the knowledge acquired. It was encouraging to see some good hypotheses but these tended to be overlong. Candidates must be encouraged to write more precise design specifications for each practical session.

Generally, the plans of action were good and contained realistic timescales. However, some candidates gave only a superficial statement of 'completed' next to each activity.

## **Implementation**

There was an element of generous marking in this section.

Increasingly, electronic sources of information are used as background sources and this information needs to be analysed succinctly.

The implementation provides the opportunity for candidates to demonstrate a range of skills. Most candidates completed a questionnaire, interview and food practical work. There was evidence of the effective use of digital cameras.

Candidates who had valid sources of primary research produced better work. Supermarket surveys with comparisons of products were also evident. It was encouraging to see the level of sophistication towards sensory testing adopted by some candidates. The way in which sampling and measurements were recorded displayed a good level of skill.

The standard of psychomotor skills in the execution of food practical work was generally very good. Good choices for practical activity were made in many cases.

ICT skills were variable. All candidates need to ensure that they use ICT competently; some leaflets were not printed back to back. Many candidates used a variety of methods to illustrate their findings. For example leaflets aimed at a particular audience; there were several PowerPoint displays and some recipe books, or cards.

Following a questionnaire some graphs were not appropriate for recording the results. Candidates could be more selective in the choice of which question to analyse and the choice of graph to present their findings.

Nutritional analysis remains the weakest area. It often consisted of a print out without any comment and it was frequently not compared back to the relevant age group. For example, primary school meals work where the actual age of the child has not been decided and the nutritional print out shows all ages as well as adults.

The other very weak area of research was the food diary. Food diaries often lacked in detail. Where food diaries had insufficient detail to look at the nutritional breakdown, candidates had failed to use a more simplistic analysis of perhaps referring to the eatwell plate, or 5 a day. The candidates need to know what they are trying to achieve from the food diary and plan the page out in such a way as to extract the information. The majority handed out food diaries, to show a research method, without any thought to the end result.

Similarly where candidates had calculated the costs of their practical work it lacked detailed analysis. This was particularly apparent in the "economy" titles, where candidates had failed to realise for example, that there was a cheaper way of buying chicken than pre-cooked, diced chicken breasts.

## **Evaluation**

Assessment of the evaluation was very lenient. Candidates wrote descriptively about their investigation, some made valid judgements about value of research methods they had used. In the better investigations candidates referred to the original aims and hypothesis. Taking each aim in turn and evaluating the extent to which it has been achieved was also used effectively. Only a few candidates made 'genuine' critical comments about their findings and research.

## **Appendices**

All centres used the report format. Appendices were well referenced and accessible. Many candidates had placed a detailed evaluation into an appendix. In the majority of schools the appendices were set out in a logical fashion following the assessment criteria. Just a few candidates had overly large appendices mostly filled with Internet printouts and leaflets. Most pages had been highlighted, but the findings could have been summarised and a bibliography used to list the sources.

## G004 Nutrition and food production

The paper appears to have differentiated well, stretching the top end yet still being accessible to the lower end. Most candidates appeared to have completed the paper.

The examination booklet provides a structure and an indication of the length of responses required and most candidate responses could be accommodated within the format. A small minority of candidates used additional sheets to use for planning when there was plenty of space remaining in their booklets. Centres should encourage candidates to complete their planning in the answer booklet prior to writing up their response.

All candidates followed the rubric of answering two questions from Section B.

Most handwriting was legible and the quality of written communication was acceptable in most cases. In Section B, some candidates wrote out the question at the beginning of each essay, although this does help the candidate to focus on the question before embarking on the written response, it is not the most effective use of time. In addition, there were some very detailed plans in evidence which must have reduced the candidate's time for writing out the response. The responses from some candidates would have benefitted from completing a simple plan in order to produce a well structured response.

### Section A

The majority of candidates were able to attempt all of the questions, there were few candidates that gave no response.

- 1a (i)** Well answered. Many candidates were able to state one good dietary source of animal fat. Popular responses were lard, butter and red meat. However, some candidates failed to gain a mark because they stated 'meat' without any qualification.
- 1a (ii)** Well answered. Generally candidates could state one good dietary source of plant or vegetable oil. Sunflower oil and olive oil being frequent responses.
- 1a (iii)** The majority of candidates were able to give at least two functions of fat in the body. Protection of internal organs, insulation and a source of energy were the most popular responses. Although there were some confusing references to what was being protected such as bones.
- 1b (i)** Most candidates were able to state one good food source of dietary fibre. Popular responses were wholemeal bread and bran. Several candidates gave answers such as bread and pasta which needed to be qualified.
- 1b (ii)** Relatively few candidates gained the full 2 marks here, again because answers were not specific enough, general references to helping digestion were frequent, with some inaccurate answers such as 'helping with absorption of foods'.
- 1c (i)** Few candidates were able to state correctly one dietary function of iodine in the body.
- 1c (ii)** More candidates were able to name one good source of iodine. 'Green leafy vegetables' was the most popular response. Very few candidates referred to seafood.

- 1c (iii)** Few candidates were familiar with the deficiency disease associated with a lack of iodine. When known, goitre was not always spelt correctly. There were some candidates that gave no response to the question.
- 1d** Few candidates gained full marks usually again because answers were far too general. A range of responses were seen but few candidates demonstrated a clear knowledge of how vitamin supplementation can help some individuals meet their dietary needs and so achieved full marks. Several candidates referred to minerals, especially iron, rather than vitamins and some gave answers based on the forms the supplements could take, such as tablets or capsules and how to take them, instead of meals, with meals. Often candidates specified an individual and sometimes identified correctly the vitamin they may be lacking but failed to explain the significance of the vitamin supplementation. Many candidates referred to vegetarians rather than vegans needing vitamin B12 supplementation to meet their dietary needs.
- 1e(i)** Most candidates could identify correctly at least one method of market research. 'Questionnaires' and 'interviews' were popular responses.
- 1e(ii)** Few candidates gained the full 2 marks here, usually because answers were too generalised. Most answered this as an 'identify' question rather than an 'explain' question.
- 1f** Generally this was not answered well. Few candidates achieved full marks as many candidates could only manage to explain one behaviour change that occurs during the production of shortcrust pastry. Correct responses often referred to the shortening effect of the fat or non enzymic browning. Not only did candidates lack the knowledge, there were several references to inappropriate ingredients, usually eggs and sugar.

Some candidates did not appear to be familiar with the preparation of shortcrust pastry and confused it with flaky or puff pastry referring to the production of layers or a flaky texture.

## Section B

- 2** All candidates were able to demonstrate at least superficial knowledge of the nutritional value, choice and use of meat in food preparation and cooking. There were a few outstanding responses where detailed knowledge and understanding was demonstrated in all three aspects of the question; the nutritional value of meat was particularly well explained. The structure of meat and its significance in the choice of a method of cooking was often overlooked but methods of tenderising meat were included. There was also a tendency for repetition and candidates simply listing cuts of meat or methods of cooking without any explanation on how specific cuts could be used.
- 3** There were some excellent responses enabling candidates to demonstrate an accurate knowledge of the main costs involved in the design, development and production of food products. High achieving candidates generally structured their responses so that they made on-going references to the costs involved with design and development, production and launch of a new food. Where a more general approach was adopted, responses were often repetitive and candidates found it more difficult to identify costs. In a few responses the candidates did not refer to the question in their response and explained the design, development and launch of a food product in more general terms without reference to the costs involved.

- 4 Good levels of understanding demonstrated in answers to this question. Candidates were able to demonstrate at least superficial knowledge of how the food industry has responded to lifestyle changes to create the range and type of food products available today. Most answers gave a logical link between the change in lifestyle and the resulting development. Answers invariably referred to women now working more and mothers not wanting to spend time preparing meals - no references to enabling fathers to take a role in using ready meals to feed their families!

The explanations from higher achieving candidates showed detailed understanding by referring to a wide range of lifestyle changes. Relevant examples were quoted to explain the response of the food industry. In the responses from weaker candidates, there was too much emphasis on the products on the market without linking their explanation sufficiently to lifestyle changes.



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