

# Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)

Advanced GCE A2 H511

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H111

## Examiners' Reports

**January 2011**

**H111/H511/R/11J**

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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.

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## Chief Examiner's Report

This January session produced a number of good performances at both AS and A2 level. Without doubt, some Centres will be pleased with their results, others will be disappointed, but it is to be hoped that all Centres will build upon their experiences.

It is pleasing to note that the Principal Examiners in each of the AS units (G001 and G002) and the A2 unit (G004) reported a general improvement in candidates' work. Most notable is the attention that has been given to developing extended writing and essay writing technique. Obviously, further improvements can be made. Weaker candidates still tend to write about the theme in the question rather than answering the question itself. The importance of candidates focusing on the command verbs in the question and thinking for themselves exactly what is required, rather than producing a general response, cannot be stressed enough. Centres are strongly advised to make sure that candidates fully understand the differences between the command verbs describe, explain, discuss and evaluate. Furthermore, centres are advised to look at the published markschemes in order to familiarise themselves with the level descriptors used when assessing the extended written responses and essays.

At A2 two essays are required. Some candidates had studied and researched aspects of the specification in great detail and were able to interweave this knowledge into their responses. Accurate reference to wider research or further reading is to be encouraged and is always credited if it is relevant to the question. The quality of English is variable. Centres need to remind their candidates of the importance of writing in a formal style.

**In units G001, G002 and G004 the entire written responses should be contained within the constraints of the examination booklet. The examination booklet has been designed to accommodate the entire response and no additional paper should be required by candidates.**

The Principal Moderator's report for the Unit G003 highlights that the context and the title of the study should be developed from an area of the specification which the candidate finds interesting and can also provide in-depth knowledge on a topic that may be examined on the A2 paper. The title must provide the opportunity for practical work to access the marks in the implementation section. In addition, the candidate should choose an area where they are able to conduct valid, primary research. There needs to be a range of investigative techniques executed in depth in order for high bracket marks to be awarded. Throughout the investigation a critical evaluation of the findings should be produced giving full consideration to original context and question.

In conclusion, the advice contained in the following reports is designed to help Centres and their candidates make further progress. It should be remembered that although the performance of most candidates has been extremely encouraging, there is always room for improvement.

## G001 Society and Health

### General Comments

The paper was accessible to all abilities. There were few overall very poor scripts, but also very few excellent ones. Section A was accessible to all candidates; however, there were a number of candidates who gave a very weak performance on Section B.

The vast majority of candidates followed the instructions on the paper correctly, answering just two questions from three in Section B.

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. It is advisable that candidates consider a full and clear explanation of each point raised to access the higher mark bands.

Many candidates wrote plans; the better ones were concise bullet points which guided the candidate's answers well. Handwriting was generally legible in almost all cases, although some candidates did not write in a suitable pen which again made the question papers difficult to read and mark.

It was encouraging to see that fewer candidates than last year needed additional paper for their answers. This suggests that they are acting on good advice to keep their answers concise. Entire responses should be contained within the examination booklet provided.

When deciding which questions to answer in Section B, candidates should be advised to read all parts of the questions carefully first to ensure they have fully understood what is being asked, and to decide whether they can answer all parts of the question.

It appears that centres are often using last year's papers as a mock examination. This often led to candidates using responses from previous examination sessions and as a result candidates lost marks because they did not answer the question.

### Comments on Individual Questions

#### Section A

**1 (a) (i), (ii), (iii)** These questions were answered adequately by virtually all candidates to gain marks but candidates often failed to read the units correctly as per the question.

**1 (b)** In order to gain full marks, candidates should have given a point with an explanation.

**1 (c) (i) (ii)** This was not answered particularly well. Candidates did not often give a good description of the Welfare State and named actual benefits rather than examples of the Welfare State e.g. NHS.

**1 (d)** The answers to this question were disappointing. Answers tended to be very vague with the most frequent answers being an increase in fast food outlets and lack of exercise. Candidates should note that there should have been a valid point and an explanation of each point to gain the marks available.

**1 (e)** This question was often mis-read by candidates as frequent incorrect answers included points which did not refer to dietary guidelines as demanded by the question. Frequent incorrect answers included the Eatwell plate, pieces of fruit for primary school children and other strategies rather than the actual dietary guidelines. Exercise is not a dietary guideline. Inaccuracies relating to the amount of water the government advises to drink on a daily basis were often seen.

## **Section B**

**2 (a)** Too many candidates concentrated on Maslow's theory of human need for individuals and failed to make any reference to families and households. This resulted in many candidates not accessing the higher mark bands. Candidates should have made reference to the needs of households and family groups such as identity and inclusivity, employment opportunities, access to services and transport to gain higher marks.

**2 (b)** Candidates often misread the question and discussed means of recycling and not an explanation of how global warming, deforestation and acid rain are affecting the quality of our environment. Many candidates were often confused between global warming and the effects on the ozone layer. Many answers were limited, by candidates often missing the point of the question which was an explanation of how global warming, deforestation and acid rain are affecting the quality of our environment.

**3 (a)** This question produced a range of responses but none were outstanding. Many candidates failed to mention incidences of tooth decay. Some candidates also misinterpreted the question and described the prevention of tooth decay rather than the causes of tooth decay. Very few candidates were able to describe in detail the causes and incidences of tooth decay. The most common answers included a high sugar diet, the build-up of plaque and not brushing the teeth properly.

**3 (b)** Candidates often gave detailed descriptions of the causes and symptoms of coeliac disease not the actual dietary changes, therefore failing to answer the question correctly. Most candidates knew that someone with coeliac disease could not eat wheat and needed to have an alternative but failed to explain dietary changes apart from eating gluten-free bread and pasta. Higher achieving candidates gave alternatives for iron, Vitamin B, calcium and fibre and identified links to osteoporosis.

**4 (a)** This question was generally well answered. Almost all candidates who chose this question were able to demonstrate knowledge and gave comprehensive descriptions of changing leisure patterns throughout a person's life. Many candidates answered the question in a logical order identifying changing leisure patterns through the ages from young children to the elderly.

**4 (b)** This question was generally well answered. Candidates were able to identify a wide range of amenities required by a family with young children. Often, candidates gave comprehensive explanations of how community facilities and amenities may influence the choice of housing available for families with young children, including transport, education, medical services, social and leisure facilities. Some candidates linked their answer to part (a) of the question and only wrote about leisure aspects which made it difficult for them to access high level marks.

## **G002 Resource Management**

### **Section 1 General Comments**

Almost every candidate followed the instructions correctly, answering two out of three questions in Section B. Only a very few candidates appeared to run out of time which suggests that time management was generally good. However, in Section B some candidates still wasted time by writing out the question at the beginning of each answer.

Poor handwriting does remain an issue in a small minority of scripts, although this was less of a problem than in previous sessions.

The main concern in this particular session was candidates failing to read the questions carefully and therefore misinterpreting what was required. This was particularly evident in Q3 (a). Many candidates who attempted this question scored little or no marks as a result.

There was evidence that candidates are paying closer attention to the 'trigger' words and are making efforts to 'explain' or describe' as appropriate, which was encouraging to see.

Generally responses in Section B were clearly laid out. Some candidates requested additional sheets to use for the extension of a Section A answer or for planning, when there was plenty of space remaining in their booklets.

Overall candidates demonstrated a weak level of knowledge and understanding of food hygiene legislation, the role of the food standards agency and of agencies supporting consumer protection. Centres must ensure that knowledge of these areas is secure when preparing candidates for examinations.

### **Section 2 Comments on Individual Questions**

#### **Section A**

The majority of candidates were able to attempt all the questions. It was clear that the range of questions challenged the different levels of ability of the candidates.

a(i) Most candidates answered this correctly. A few were marked incorrect for failing to include the unit of measurement in their answer.

(ii) Most candidates answered this correctly, although a few incorrectly gave the total fat rather than the saturated fat content.

b(i) Some candidates had not read the question carefully and gave the answer as 7% which was the figure in the data.

b(ii) The vast majority of candidates were able to correctly answer this question, although some responses were rather vague e.g. 'eat food with less salt in it'.

c(i) Many candidates were able to answer this question successfully, however, a significant number stated the advantages and disadvantages of internet shopping (e.g. inconvenient delivery times) rather than as a source of information.

c(ii) For full marks an explanation is required.

d(i) This question was generally very poorly answered with the majority of candidates unsure of the ways in which the Trading Standards Department protects the consumer. Many responses were very vague, mentioning quality and/or safety without further qualification, or quoted consumer legislation.

d(ii) This question was also very poorly answered. Very few candidates had a clear idea of the role of the Office of Fair Trading. A common misconception was that it is involved in Fair Trade.

(e) This question was generally answered well with many candidates scoring high marks. A wide variety of responses were given. The most common responses included sharing chores, use of labour saving equipment, batch cooking and use of the internet.

## **Section B**

Questions 2 and 3 were by far the most popular questions. Very few candidates answered Question 4.

2(a)

A number of candidates achieved high marks, demonstrating detailed knowledge with relevant examples. However, some candidates limited the quality of their response by misinterpreting the question, referring to 'single' and 'elderly' as two separate groups.

2(b)

All candidates were able to identify some factors that affect patterns of eating, and there were some excellent responses to this question. However, the vast majority of candidates did not appear to appreciate the difference between 'eating patterns' and 'food choice'.

3(a)

Few candidates achieved high marks. Many candidates did not read the question carefully and wrote about the uses and advantages of food preparation equipment, rather than technological advances. Other candidates wrote about technological advances in the development of food products, distribution and retailing.

When interpreted correctly there were a few excellent responses demonstrating candidates' knowledge and understanding of technological advances in a variety of food preparation equipment.

3(b)

There was some evidence of very sound knowledge with some excellent responses to this question. The best responses not only described the labels but also explained how these are useful to consumers when purchasing equipment, for example using the labels to compare products.

4(a) & (b)

Many responses consisted of generalised descriptions of food hygiene practices without reference to any regulations.

## **G003 Investigative study**

### **Investigative Study**

#### **General Comments**

It is essential that the work provides the evidence to support marks awarded by the teacher. This is an A2 unit of work so the work produced should demonstrate depth and rigour during the investigative process, the wording of the assessment criteria should be noted when marking candidates' work.

The title of the study should be developed from an area of the specification which the candidate finds interesting. Ideally the title should be worded in the form of a context that sets the scene and a question to investigate. Once the title is established the investigating can begin.

It is a good idea for the candidate to choose an area from the A2 area of the specification to study as it will allow them to research on a topic that may be examined on the paper.

In addition the candidate should choose an area where they are able to access information e.g. if they choose to do something related to pregnant women they will need to have access to a clinic to test ideas, collect food diaries, interviews etc. The title should provide opportunity for practical work to address a significant proportion of marks in the implementation section.

#### **Addressing the criteria**

##### **Assessment Criterion 1 - Analysis and aims.**

The candidate is required to undertake analysis, select an appropriate context and title to demonstrate an understanding of the opportunities for study and develop aims and objectives. When marking candidates' work it is essential that the wording of the assessment criteria is considered carefully as there are subtle differences in language. For instance to achieve high bracket marks for criteria 1a the candidate needs to explore thoroughly possible areas of interest and be able to discuss a range of relevant issues and factors.

##### **Assessment Criterion 2**

The candidate is required to hypothesise, plan and make informed decisions that direct the progress of the study. Good use was made of linking statements in the report which helped to move the work forward.

##### **Assessment Criterion 3**

The candidate is required to carry out a range of appropriate skills and resources to achieve the realisation of their objectives using a variety of primary and secondary investigative methods. It is necessary that they include some relevant investigative food practical work. A suggested list of investigative techniques are:

- shop survey,
- market research
- packaging comparison
- interview,
- case study
- questionnaire

- practical food activity
- sensory analysis
- costing
- nutritional analysis
- comparison practicals
- study of relevant information on:
  - TV/magazines
  - visits
  - food diaries
  - powerpoint presentations
  - designing of leaflets.
  - background research.

There needs to be a range of these investigative technique carried out in depth in order for high bracket marks to be awarded.

The objectives stated in section 1 should be addressed during the investigation. Originality, creativity and aesthetic awareness needs to be considered by the candidate. These factors should also be apparent during the development of the products in practical work. Photographic evidence is important throughout the practical process.

Technical competence need to be clearly demonstrated in the presentation of the work – for example use of ICT, digital images, scanning, and colour printing.

#### **Assessment Criterion 4**

The candidate is required to conclude and evaluate the findings and results achieved whilst carrying out the study. They will also need to critically analyse and review the study as a whole. A critical evaluation should be produced giving full consideration to the prediction and the title's context and question. Everything the candidate states must be supported by reference to the relevant results achieved and by also referring to the relevant appendix. They must be critical of their findings and also critically review their prediction. Once they have completed this, they are then in a position to sum up by looking back at their task title and answering it critically.

## G004 Nutrition and food production

Marks were awarded across the whole range of the mark scheme and only a few candidates produced a poor performance. The question paper was accessible to all abilities. There is evidence that candidates are becoming more adept at handling the A2 paper and responding well to the essay questions. Some excellent essays were seen in Section B. Time spent preparing candidates for essay questions by centres is time well spent. The quality of handwriting was generally good.

Some candidates failed to contain their responses within the answer booklet and required additional paper. Please would centres reiterate to candidates that the space provided in the booklet is a guide to the length of response required and they must work within this parameter.

### Comments on individual questions

#### Section A

The majority of candidates were able to attempt most of the questions.

**1a (i)** Most candidates were able to state two reasons why food packaging is important.

**1a (ii)** Whilst most candidates were able to describe two advantages of glass as a packaging material, some described advantages to the consumer not the food manufacturer e.g. re-usable. Candidates need to be encouraged to read the question carefully. Popular responses being 'variety of shapes', 'customer seeing product' and references to recycling.

**1a (iii)** Again disadvantages were not always interpreted in terms of the food manufacturer. Candidates frequently referred to products packaged in glass being heavy to carry home.

**1b (i)** Most candidates were able to identify two dietary sources of iron. However, some candidates failed to gain marks because they gave imprecise responses such as 'meat' not 'red meat' or 'vegetables' without specifying the type.

**1b (ii)** Generally answered well, with candidates stating correctly at least one dietary function of iron. Popular responses referred to iron being needed for the formation of red blood cells, its role in the transportation of oxygen or in the immune system.

**1b (iii)** Most candidates were able to correctly identify one symptom in the body associated with a lack of iron. A popular response being anaemia but this was not always spelt correctly.

**1c** Answered well by many candidates and there were some excellent explanations of factors which may affect an individual's energy requirement. Some candidates identified correctly a factor e.g. gender but did not offer an explanation. Age and level of activity/occupation were the most popular factors chosen.

**1d (i)** Most candidates gained one mark for identifying correctly one behaviour change which occurs during the heating of a starch based sauce but many found it difficult to give accurate explanations of the process of gelatinisation.

**1d (ii)** Most candidates were able to refer to aeration, either by name or description, as one behaviour change which occurs during the whisking of an egg to produce a foam.

**1d (iii)** Candidates identified a number of factors which can affect the ability of an egg white to produce a foam. The presence of fat was the most popular response.

**1e** A range of responses were seen but few candidates achieved full marks. Control measures were frequently described without the possible hazard being identified. Many candidates misread the question and their responses were not confined to the storage of food products but referred to preparation, production or cooking of food products.

## **Section B**

In Section B, many candidates wasted time by writing out the question at the beginning of each essay. However, there was little evidence of candidates struggling to manage their use of time and most were able to complete two answers in full. Question 4 was the most popular question but was probably answered least well. All candidates followed the rubric of answering two questions from Section B.

### **Q2**

There were some excellent responses and all candidates were able to demonstrate at least superficial knowledge of the role of vitamins in the diet. A few candidates confused the functions of some vitamins, notably vitamins E and K. The strong responses were characterised by an accurate knowledge and detailed understanding of the functions and deficiencies of the full range of B vitamins. The planning of the essays before writing needs more attention and if centres are looking to improve the performance of their 'middling' candidates this would be a good area on which to focus. There are a number of candidates whose responses were disorganised and contained too many 'bolt on' statements at the end of paragraphs.

### **Q3**

This was a popular question attempted by most candidates. There were some very good responses where higher achieving candidates were able to demonstrate an accurate knowledge of the processes involved in the design, development and production of new food products. Some candidates chose a food product and explained the processes with reference to that particular product. Most responses were structured well with each of the stages being explained in turn. Candidates may break down their responses into distinctive parts using paragraphing, the key to success in that each part of the question must be addressed. Unfortunately, in a few responses there was too much emphasis on marketing and the launch of the product with the design, development and production of the product only addressed superficially.

### **Q4**

Whilst most candidates who chose this question demonstrated a superficial knowledge of the dietary and nutritional needs of babies and children, there were few outstanding responses. Some responses indicated a lack of knowledge with reference to babies' needs with the age at which they are weaned varying between 3 and 18 months. Whilst some candidates were able to link the functions of the key nutrients to the dietary needs of babies and children too many gave generalised accounts.

Some candidates did not distinguish between the needs of children at different stages of development and this often limited their achievement. An understanding of the distinct nutritional stages of babies 0 to 12 months, preschool 1 to 3 years, young children 4 to 6 years and 7 to 10 years was required to access the higher band marks.

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