



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Home Economics: Food and Nutrition 45852

(Specification 4585)

Unit 2: Food and Nutrition in Practice

Report on the Examination

Further copies of this Report on **the Examination** are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2012 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

The second year of the examination for the new specification for Food & Nutrition has proved to be very successful, with many Controlled Assessments of a very high standard and fewer candidates in the lower mark bands. Most centres have made good use of the information on the AQA website on carrying out the Controlled Assessments, in particular the Guidelines for the Research Task and the Individual Investigation. As a result, most candidates were able to access marks in all assessment areas, some scoring maximum marks in several assessment areas. The moderation process was greatly assisted where teachers had provided annotation on the investigations and a breakdown of the marks awarded in each area. A wide range of titles was attempted by candidates, producing some excellent individual studies. In a few centres, however, candidates all did the same tasks for both the Research Task and the Individual Investigation, tending to be formulaic in approach and resulting in the same or similar outcomes. The most original work was seen in centres where candidates had been given a free choice of titles and had carried out genuinely individual research.

General Comments

Presentation

As in 2011, there was a great deal of variation in the standard of presentation of the finished studies. Some were outstanding, with excellent use of ICT, photos of finished dishes, graphs, charts and clear text. A few centres still do not pay sufficient attention to details such as page numbering, headings and a bibliography, as well as a title page which should include the task written out in full.

Teacher Annotation

An overall improvement was seen this year, but in some centres a lack of annotation and breakdown of the marking made it hard for moderators to see where marks had been awarded. Teacher comments on the Individual Assessment forms are most helpful, particularly on the practical work when there is a lack of evidence of the work being carried out.

Photographic Evidence

There was a problem this year with several candidates who had downloaded pictures from recipe websites, rather than providing photos of their own finished work. Where there is no evidence of the practical work being carried out and no photos provided, a mark of zero will be given by the moderator (please see page 35 of the specification).

Specific Comments.

Research Task

The recommended time to be spent on the Research Task is 6-8 hours, with approximately 2 hours of that time to be spent on practical work. Some teachers ask how many dishes candidates should make for the Research Task, and as a general guide they should fill in the 2 hours with work that reflects the task title and shows a variety of food preparation skills. The amount of work produced will depend on the ability of the individual candidate. In 2012, as in 2011, the most popular tasks were Task 2 (Fruit & Vegetables) and Task 1 (Low Sugar). Most tasks were well done, but weak areas included AO2.1, where candidates failed to review their work and produce a statement of aims for the rest of the task, and also AO2.3, which although most gave reasons for choice for the practical work, many did not produce a statement of aims linked to the research findings. Candidates should spend time reflecting on their research before planning practical work, and to score high marks in AO2.4 they must include their own detailed timeplans, showing dovetailing of more than one dish, as well as

recipes and methods. Timeplans should also include details of sensory testing or comparisons that may be carried out during the practical sessions.

To be marked in the top band in AO2.5, candidates must demonstrate a 'wide range of skills to a high standard'. A good example of a candidate meeting this criterion for the Research Task would be to make a variety of items for the low sugar snack foods demonstrating the modification of standard recipes for buns, biscuits, scones or flapjacks in order to reduce the sugar content. It is vital that sensory and nutritional analysis is carried out for at least one of the practical sessions for the Research Task. Many candidates lost marks because insufficient practical work was planned and carried out. Evaluations should be ongoing throughout the investigation, with sensory and nutritional analysis credited in AO3.1. Overall evaluations should reflect the whole of the investigation, including the research, with candidates making reference to issues identified in AO1.1. Conclusions should be drawn by candidates on the effectiveness of their investigation.

Individual Investigation

It is recommended that candidates spend 18 hours of class time on the Individual Investigation, and although the evidence indicates that most centres had followed this recommendation, it was obvious that candidates in some centres had spent much more than 18 hours on the work produced. This often did not improve the quality of the investigations, as much of the extra work was repetitive and resulted in very bulky pieces of work. Where candidates had gathered information from a wide range of primary and secondary sources, had synthesised it succinctly, and drawn conclusions from their research before planning suitable practical work, they were able to produce coherent work of a high standard. Some candidates, however, filled up their assignments with many printed sheets downloaded from websites, at the expense of collecting information from other sources. The most popular tasks for the Individual Investigation were Task 2 (Health problems), Task 1 (School Meals) and Task 6 (Non-meat Eaters). The least popular was Task 3 (Starchy Foods). Some excellent work was produced, with many candidates achieving marks in the top bands. There were still some weaknesses, particularly where insufficient time was spent on research in AO1.2 and practical work in AO2.5.

The main areas for improvement for the Individual Investigation are as follows:

AO1.1

Lack of justification for the issues identified in the brainstorm prevented many candidates from scoring marks in the top band.

AO1.2

In some cases, insufficient time was spent on research, with candidates only producing similar amounts to the Research Task. Approximately 6 hours should be spent on assembling relevant information for the Individual Investigation, with at least two primary and two secondary sources employed. Candidates should not be awarded marks above 8 for AO1.2 where they have only produced a questionnaire and notes from secondary sources. Primary research, such as questionnaires, surveys, dietary diaries and case studies, should be carried out using correct methodology. For example, questionnaires require an introduction stating when and where they were carried out, the numbers involved and the relationship to the task title. It might also be helpful to carry out a pilot questionnaire before conducting the final one.

AO2.1

Once the research has been completed candidates should review their work and produce a statement of aims for the rest of the investigation. Many candidates failed to provide a statement of aims, which reduced the marks available to them in this assessment area.

AO2.2

Analysis of the research should include charts or graphs to show the results of questionnaires and surveys, and written comments explaining the significance of the findings. It is not necessary to include all the completed questionnaires in the submitted investigation, but there should be one blank copy and one completed sample. A lack of depth of research in AO1.2 limits the interpretation and evaluation of the information, and restricts the mark that can be awarded in AO2.2.

AO2.3

Candidates lost marks when they did not produce a clear statement of aims for the practical work, which included justification for their choice linked to the research findings. Many candidates just gave a list of dishes with only basic reasons for choice.

AO2.4

In order to be marked in the top band, planning for the practical work should include recipes, methods and timeplans for 6-8 hours of practical work, which demonstrates a wide range of complex practical skills. Timeplans should show a breakdown or order of work for the tasks to be completed in the time allocation. They should include methods used, oven temperature and cooking times. Time should also be allowed for washing up and sensory testing. Unsuitable choice of dishes for the topic should be marked down in AO2.4, e.g. high fat dishes chosen for a study of obesity.

AO2.5

Many candidates were overmarked when the practical work chosen did not occupy the recommended 6-8 hours or where only simple skills had been demonstrated. To be marked in the top band, candidates must demonstrate a wide range of skills to a high standard. Some candidates made the same items such as pizza for both tasks. Where this occurs, the dish will only be credited once, usually for the Research Task. Where there is no photographic evidence, sensory analysis and written evaluations of the practical work, a mark of zero will be awarded. However, a good deal of excellent practical work was seen in many centres, and teachers have obviously worked very hard with their candidates to produce work of such a high standard.

AO3.1

Much improvement was observed this year in sensory and nutritional analysis and evaluation of the practical work in general.

AO3.2

Although there was a slight improvement in overall evaluations, some were very brief. Candidates should be advised to spend more time reflecting on the outcomes of their investigation with reference to the issues identified in AO1.1.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html

