

Home Economics (Food and Nutrition)

General Certificate of Secondary Education J431

OCR Report to Centres

January 2013

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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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Overview

Entries in all three units this series were low.

Candidates appeared to be well prepared for the written paper and were able to demonstrate a good understanding of the specification. The paper proved accessible to all the candidates, at the same time it provided differentiation across a wide range of abilities.

A high standard of work was seen in the controlled assessment units although there was evidence of generosity in marking of some candidates work. All candidates submitted the required three short tasks and were able to demonstrate achievement across the whole mark range.

Although the entry for the Food Study was low, there was some very interesting work seen. Candidates need to ensure they provide evidence to support marks awarded for any practical activities. It is important that work is fully annotated and that teachers are aware of the unit requirements.

B001/02 Short Tasks

The entry for this session was small, in comparison to the numbers for the summer examination. The standard of work was good, reflecting quality teaching and clear guidance on meeting the assessment criteria.

Candidates of all abilities have been able to demonstrate achievement in this component and their enjoyment of the subject has been clear to see.

All centres used OCR set Short Task Titles as required.

- Overall the Short Tasks were carried out to a good standard. Candidates demonstrated a range of different skills across the three OCR set tasks.
- The most popular titles were eggs, obesity/5 a day, dietary guidelines and convenience foods although a wide range of titles were used successfully. Although centre marking was consistent it tended to be generous within planning and evaluation sections of both practical and investigation tasks.
- The majority of candidates completed two items per task with some good choices made. However there were significant quantities of research work included within the work. Candidates needed to have a greater focus on decision making and justification of choices followed by planning of the task. Candidates require knowledge in order to make suitable choices but this information, which may have been obtained in a lesson or through individual research; it is not part of the assessment.
- The Investigation Task continues to be the most challenging of the tasks for candidates'. choices should include a clear indication of which factors will be investigated, in addition to the actual food choices and their justification. There were a number of candidates work that contained little evidence of actually planning an investigation as opposed to a practical task. Factors to investigate might include nutritional content, sensory characteristics, economy or time and effort required. It is essential then to plan methods of recording the results of the chosen factors for testing.

Plans of action were generally well done. The best work included an accurate list of ingredients followed by a well sequenced accurate timed plan or plans and a good range of practical skills were demonstrated.

Although a number of candidates produced nutritional data and star diagrams, this often remained unreferenced. Conclusions should be drawn from this information.

Many evaluations described the task rather than assessing performance and results. The drawing of conclusions is a skill which again needs further development. The results of investigational work should form the evidence for conclusions in the investigation task.

Centres must ensure that there is clear annotation relating to the assessment criteria on the mark sheets attached at the front of each Task. Annotation in some cases was insufficient. A centre produced mark grid would support the awarding of marks.

A number of candidates had carried out research in the Planning section of the Short Tasks which should not be included in this section. Also there was limited detail in 'reasons for choices' of the practical work. In the Investigation Task the choice and reasons for choice should include investigative factors in addition to the food choice. The best responses to this task included the planning of recording charts and tester instructions along with the inclusion of blank copies.

Annotation of both written work and of practical work is absolutely essential.

Unit B002/02 Food Study

The number of candidates entered for this session was very small. The overall standard was generally quite good.

However some centres over marked work and did not give their candidates good guidance in meeting all areas of the assessment criteria. It is vital that teachers are fully aware of the expectations within each assessment area.

Centres must also provide detailed annotation to support the marks awarded, particularly those for practical work.

Key issues in the Food Study

Research

A number of the titles lacked clarity, and in a number of centres the reasons for choice of title lacked detail. Only a few candidates considered a detailed number of information sources. The primary research was quite well done but results were not always utilised when making choices and the aims of primary research were not always clear. Best responses drew conclusions from the 'Research' section, but this was absent in a number of candidates work.

Selection and Planning

In this section of the assessment ideas for practical work should develop from previous research. Many candidates did not list ideas and those that did, showed no indication of where the ideas had originated. There was little or no evidence that sorting and assessing of ideas was completed before making choices. To achieve the higher mark band in this section candidates needed to select/reject dishes by sorting ideas using a variety of techniques/factors. As a result of this the reasons for choice of practical work generally lacked detail. Overall the planning of practical work was good with well completed time plans and ingredient lists. Only a few candidates had prepared recording charts and testing instructions prior to the practical, although most carried out some testing.

Practical Work and Outcomes

Some very good practical skills were demonstrated with well-presented outcomes including recording charts which although not planned were usually produced. A number of candidates produced nutritional data and star diagrams however these were not always referred to. Similarly logs of practical work were not always completed. There was some good photographic evidence however there was insufficient teacher annotation so it was difficult for moderators to support teacher marks.

Evaluation

There were some good evaluations seen, however many evaluations did not always refer to the whole task. To achieve higher marks for the 'Evaluation' candidates needed to review all aspects of the task eg comments should be made on how well they did their secondary research, how useful they found the sources of information used, the strengths and weaknesses of their questionnaires, improvements they could make to their selection of ideas and to their planning of the practical work. Comments could also have been made on how well taste tests were carried out and whether any changes to this aspect of the task were needed. Candidates did not always draw well evidenced conclusions. This is necessary to achieve the higher mark band in this assessment area.

B003 Principles of Food and Nutrition

Overall, it was felt that the paper was appropriate for the examined level and produced a wide spread of marks. There seemed to be very little misunderstanding of the questions in either the way they have been phrased or presented. The majority of papers were easily read however, the entry size was small, which is considered usual for the January examination session.

Candidates generally demonstrated a good understanding of the nutrition theory however there appeared to be a lesser understanding of practical skills and the food science aspects of the course, in particular when responding to question 5c.

Questions 1(a)(i)(ii)(iii) – The majority of candidates gained the marks for these questions, these were considered straight forward lead in questions.

Question 1(b) – This question produced a wide spread of marks. As with many ‘explain’ questions, candidates tended to either get half (3) or full (6) marks. Candidates usually gave good examples of factors but these factors were not explained to gain the other marks. Price, travel, locality and convenience were the common factors given by candidates.

Question 1(c) – This question was well answered most candidates, the majority gained at least 2 marks. A few candidates did not gain marks as they did not restrict their answers to the school canteen and looked at the school as a whole. Candidates also failed to gain marks as they repeated themselves, for example, stating “offer more variety of fruits” and “have a wide selection of dishes containing fruit and vegetables” which would both be considered under the bullet point “variety”. Common correct answers related to reducing price, more variety and appealing presentation.

Question 1(d) – Generally this was well answered, most candidates gained at least one mark. The most common correct answers were freezing, canning and pickling. Common incorrect answers included refrigeration or a cool place as a method of preservation.

Question 1(e) – This was well answered by all candidates, the majority of answers on the mark scheme were seen, however, bruising, changes in taste/texture/colour were the most common correct responses. A few candidates failed to gain marks as they only gave one word answers (ie) taste or texture. A few candidates also provided answers not related to the spoiling of fruit (ie) curdling.

Question 1(f) – Very few candidates scored marks for this question, which was set as an A/A* question, so the outcome was expected. Most candidates attempted the question but seemed to be confused with convenience foods instead. Those candidates that did gain marks often made statements relating to the food adding a nutritional benefit. A few very able candidates provided examples of an ingredient and their role (ie) plant stanols/benecol and lowering cholesterol.

Question 2(a)(i) – Generally well answered with links to weight management and achieving the correct nutrients or amounts of nutrients. A few candidates stated ‘they would not have enough energy’ instead of showing a greater understanding and giving the nutrients name (ie) Carbohydrate.

Question 2(a)(ii) – Candidate demonstrated a good level of knowledge and understanding on this question, all answers on the mark scheme were given.

Question 2(b) – Generally this was well answered, with Quorn, beans, lentils, eggs and cheese being the most common correct answers. A few candidates incorrectly gave fruit and vegetables.

Question 2(c) (i) – Very few candidates could name the quantity of fibre recommended with answers ranging from 0.5g to 500g per day.

Question 2(c)(ii) – The majority of candidates gained two marks here. TCommon incorrect answers were brown bread, rice or pasta without statint that it was wholemeal/wholegrain.

Question 2(d) – This was fairly well answered by all candidates. Popular answers referred to making lists, planning or budgeting, using leftovers, only cooking the amount needed and the use of special offers. Some more able candidates included bulking out meals with cheaper alternatives such as lentils or vegetables and using things that are in season.

Question 3(a) – Well answered, the majority of candidates gained 3 or 4 marks. However, many candidates repeated answers related to promotion by giving leaflets, posters or billboards which are on the same line on the mark scheme. Popular answers were on TV, radio, in magazines/newspapers posters, and offers/price reductions. Candidates need to be careful that they only give one answer per line or four answers in total as multiple answers gain no credit..

Question 3(b) – This question was poorly answered with many not seeming to fully understand what the question was asking. Generally candidates failed to see what changes had occurred and often couldn't offer any explanation as to why changes have taken place. Some candidates talked about how to budget when shopping for food. More able candidates seemed to easily pick up a minimum of 6 marks. The most common correct answers related to increasing/availability of internet shopping which is more convenient or saves time for people, and people tend to shop in all-under-one-roof supermarkets today rather than independent shops, again linked to time or that these have driven out local shops/the supermarket can offer more variety or more competitive pricing.

Question 3(c)(i) – Many candidates incorrectly thought this was a symbol for frozen foods.

Question 3(c)(ii) – The majority gave correct answers here, although “recycled product” was not given a mark.

Question 3(d) – The majority gave a correct answer, with the most popular being refund. However, some candidates were a little stronger giving “sue the company” which was considered too strong for a simply unsatisfactory product to be credited a mark.

Question 4 – The majority of candidates made a good attempt to answer this question, there were few answers seen in level 1. Candidate performed better in the second half of the question; nutritional needs during pregnancy. Candidates referred to general nutritional considerations such as eat a balanced diet but didn't relate it to pregnancy so limited their achievement. There were a few candidates who demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding for both parts of the question. The most common correct responses for food to avoid were; liver, under cooked products, alcohol and raw egg. When a food was given the candidates usually provided accurate reasons for why that food should be avoided. The most common answers for nutritional considerations were calcium, protein, iron and energy. Again generally good explanations were given for the nutritional considerations; excellent understanding was demonstrated with iron and calcium.

Question 5(a)(i) – This was well answered popular answers referred to changing colour, improving texture, improving flavour and reducing the risk of food poisoning. A few candidates missed marks for only giving one word answers.

Question 5(b) – Majority gained full marks, those that failed to achieve full marks did so due to the scattergun rule where more than the required number of responses were given and thus no marks were given.

Question 5(c)(i) – Majority gained 1 mark with the most popular answer was ‘sticks the breadcrumbs to the chicken’. Few gained the second mark for protecting or sealing the chicken.

Question 5(c)(ii) – This was not well answered, many failed to identify ‘whisking egg whites incorporated air into the mixture’.

Question 5(c)(iii) – This tended to be answered poorly receiving ‘0’ or well receiving ‘2’ marks. Those gaining full marks tended to gain the marks for identifying the egg yolk as an emulsifying agent and that this prevented separation of oil and liquid. The most common incorrect answers related to colour, thickness and creamy taste.

Question 5(c)(iv) – The majority gained 1 mark for giving glaze or golden brown colour.

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