

FOOD STUDIES

Paper 9336/01

Theory

General comments

The paper reached the required standard and the questions were of the appropriate standard.

Questions which were answered well included questions 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7. Questions which candidates found more difficult were questions 1, 6 and 8. Most of the candidates attempted question 8. This, however, was a question in which candidates tended to be vague and, therefore scored poorly.

Many candidates failed to read the question carefully and tended to include irrelevant information which did not address the questions set. They also need to improve upon their exam technique and take note of the mark allocation for each part of the questions so that the correct amount of time is allocated and the balance of the answers is correct. Too many times candidates wrote at length in sections with only a few marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

There were some excellent responses to this question. However, too many candidates wrote too much in part (a). Several students wrote many pages for part (a) and gave only a few lines for part (d) but part (a) had only 2 extra marks. Candidates tended to become rather muddled in part (b).

Question 2

This question was well answered. Candidates had a good understanding of the dietary requirements of the elderly but some did not know the difference between osteomalacia and osteoporosis.

Question 3

Candidates, on the whole, found part (a) difficult. They did not explain the role of anti-oxidants clearly. Several scripts did score quite well as they wrote in depth and accurately about the different types of anaemia.

Question 4

There were some excellent responses to this question. Those candidates who did not score well tended to become muddled in their responses. They needed to deal with sugar, fat and salt in order within each section and work logically through each part. Again the mark allocation needed to be noted. Poor responses allocated too much time to part (d) which only had 3 marks.

Question 5

Answers to this questions varied. Some candidates became muddled in part (a). Again they needed to work through the nutrients commenting on the value in milk. By working through all of the nutrients candidates ensured they included all relevant information. This was a question which showed lack of planning in some scripts. Several scripts gave excellent accounts of methods of preserving milk and understood the terms 'clotting' and 'curdling' and attained excellent scores.

Question 6

This was probably the question which scored consistently the poorest on the paper. Candidates attempted this question and clearly did not understand the principles of preserving. They seemed to choose the question on the basis of understanding why food is preserved and then could not answer the rest of the question. Again poor choice of question by the candidate.

Question 7

This question tended to score well as most candidates answered clearly and accurately in at least 3 parts and in many cases in 4 or 5 attaining good scores.

Question 8

The answers to this question were very disappointing, on the whole. Candidates seemed to choose this question as the last question but unfortunately tended to 'waffle'. Very few facts were included e.g. when discussing religious factors they failed to give specific examples of foods which certain religions do not allow. They failed to give examples of how time could be saved when preparing food but dealt at length with how working mothers saved time by eating take-aways etc.

Answers could, in many cases, have been improved by better exam technique - reading the questions more carefully, looking at the mark allocation in greater detail and giving each section the appropriate amount of time.

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Paper 9336/02

Practical

General comments

The quality of the written answers was generally good. Scripts were clearly set out and candidates seemed to have had sufficient time to complete all parts of the written preparation. Sometimes pages were assembled in the wrong order. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that all pages are in the correct order and are secured. In many instances the work of individual candidates use not separated from one another. If pages are not held together there is always the chance that pages can be lost. Each page should clearly indicate the candidate's name number, Centre number and the number of the test chosen.

Teachers who mark practical tests are reminded that the mark scheme published by CIE must be followed accurately. When allocating the maximum mark possible for each dish, reference must be made to the list of dishes chosen. If a chosen dish lacks skill the maximum mark for that dish must be reduced. The remaining marks cannot be awarded to other dishes. In many cases the maximum result mark for a candidate will be lower than the maximum mark which appears on the mark scheme, usually because some of the dishes chosen lacked skill. The maximum mark possible and the actual mark awarded must be clearly shown on the Individual Mark Sheet. Detailed comments must be written beside each listed dish to justify the mark awarded. It is not enough to note that a dish was 'lovely' or 'very good'. Reference must be made to texture, appearance, flavour and colour wherever appropriate. If a dish is inedible because it is undercooked then it must be given a zero score; any dish planned but not served must also be given zero. Those marks are not available for transfer to other dishes. In addition, any dishes served but not planned during the planning session cannot be given a mark. It is unlikely that all of the dishes prepared by a candidate are worth full marks so examiners must given very careful consideration to the use of maximum marks. All of the work carried out during the Preparation Session is marked externally although in some instances Centres have marked Choice and Time Plan and completed the corresponding sections of the Individual Mark Sheet. It is clearly stated in the Instructions to Centres that written work is marked externally.

Time plans were usually very good and gave clear instruction of the methods to be followed, the cooking temperature and time and, in most cases, the method of serving. The best plans included details of garnishes and decorations. Candidates usually listed an appropriate amount of work to be carried out during the Preparation Time. Candidates should be reminded that they should not include any processes, which form part of the preparation of dishes. Many time plans were much too detailed and gave the same amount of detail as would be expected in a recipe. This is unnecessary because candidates should be familiar with the processes they are planning to use. Very lengthy plans are less useful during the Practical Test because candidates find them difficult to follow. Sometimes plans were not realistic because too much was planned for a very short time, or all stages of the preparation of a dish were stated without any dovetailing. Again, this is unhelpful because it does not reflect what will actually be happening at a particular time. Occasionally candidates did not allow sufficient time for a dish to cool before decorating. A common feature was that too much work was planned for the last thirty minutes of the Practical Test. Consequently there was not enough time allowed to make up time, to decorate or garnish dishes or to complete washing up. Candidates in at least two Centres did not relate the times on their time plan to real time. They estimated the amount of time required for each process but would not have been able to use their plan against the clock in the room. It is vital that candidates can look at their time plan and assess how they are using their time according to actual time.

The section of written work requiring candidates to comment on practical reasons for their choice was often poorly answered. It should include reasons for choosing particular dishes for the chosen test. Some candidates correctly noted that the ingredients chosen were readily available and were not expensive; others stated that at least one of their did dish not require the use of an oven so oven management would be easier. Some candidates wrote that they were using seasonal fruit and vegetables or that some of their ingredients were available in their own garden. Many candidates noted that labour-saving equipment could be used to save time or that a particular dish could be served in the dish in which it was cooked, saving time on washing up. Occasionally it was mentioned that the dishes themselves were colourful and would look

attractive on the serving table. It is not relevant to mention the occasions for which dishes were prepared. Candidates should note that they would be easily carried on a journey. Sometimes it was noted that particular dishes were stored for many months in a freezer. Although many of these points are correct they are not relevant to the question; candidates must be discouraged from giving any information which cannot be applied to the question set. The nutritional information for choice was often either ignored or treated in too superficial a way. It is important that candidates note that the question asks for nutritional information only on the dish chosen in part (b) of the question paper. Sadly information was often vague; precise information is expected at Advanced Level. It was not enough to state that the dish contained particular nutrients. Candidates are expected to give both the source of a named nutrient and one of its functions. General terms such as vitamins and minerals are not acceptable. Examples of the sort of information expected are that HBV protein is found in egg and is used for growth, vitamin C is obtained from lemons and can be used for the absorption of iron and starch from flour is an important source of energy. Few candidates gave this amount of detail.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was one of the most popular. Candidates chose a wide range of sweet and savoury dishes, which included fresh and preserved fruit. Some chose to use canned fruit while others included dried fruit, jam and occasionally frozen fruit. The test offered candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a wide range of skills and the dishes chosen were usually most appropriate for Advanced Level.

The written part of the question was less well approached. Although most candidates were able to state some methods of preserving fruit, responses were brief. It was expected that candidates would note that examples of preserved fruit were frozen strawberries, canned peaches, dried mango, mango pickle and strawberry jam (or local equivalents). Since the storage of each type of preserved fruit is different, the general information offered by many candidates was inappropriate. Although few advantages of using preserved fruit were given it was hoped that reference would have been made to the use of fruits out of season and the opportunity to use fruits from other countries. The fact that the fruit is usually prepared so time is saved would have been a valid point as would the variety of colour, flavour and texture offered by preserved fruit.

Question 2

This was an equally popular choice of question and most candidates were able to choose dishes, which showed the use of a range of cereal products. Most used flour in at least one of their dishes and rice, oats and cornflour were frequently included. Although a few candidates used flour in all of their dishes they satisfied the requirements of the test by using a different type of flour for each dish. Again, the majority of candidates demonstrated a wide range of skills.

The written part of the question was well addressed by many candidates. They were able to name many cereals and cereal products and could give precise information on the storage of cereals and their products. Less information was given on the importance of cereals. Most candidates noted that cereals were cheap, easy to store and were an important source of energy. Some answers included information on other nutrients found in cereals although few were precise enough to state that NSP is only found in unrefined cereals.

It was surprising that there was little mention of the fact that cereals are versatile; they can be used for sweet and savoury dishes and can be used for preparing a wide range of baked goods because of the varying amounts of gluten found in different types of flour.

Question 3

This was the least popular question and those candidates who chose to answer it found it difficult. It was expected that dishes would show any of the methods of preparing cakes and pasties and any of the methods of cooking. The choice of dishes was generally good and a variety of skills were usually included. Obviously chosen dishes would show more than one method because each dish would show a method of preparation and a method of cooking so it was easy for candidates to include at least four methods of preparation and cooking.

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The written part of the question proved difficult. Candidates did not seem able to state how the preparation and cooking affected texture. It was hoped that candidates would be able to state, for example, that when fat and sugar are creamed, air is trapped. This expands when heated to give an open texture. It could have been noted that frying gives a crisp surface to food because protein coagulates when heated. It was also noted that during steaming a soft texture can be achieved because starch gelatinises or that collagen is converted to gelatine when fish is steamed giving a flaky texture. Most candidates were unable to suggest other methods of varying the texture of dishes apart from adding fruit, vegetables or nuts. It was hoped that some would mention blending soups, for example after cooking or that freezing hardens texture allowing for the creation of ice cream and similar dishes. All valid suggestions were credited but few were made.

There were many examples of skillful dishes rich in iron although some candidates chose skillful dishes, which were poor sources of calcium. It is important that candidates take care with their choice otherwise valuable marks can be forfeited. Milk, cheese and yoghurt were useful ingredients but cream and eggs are not good sources of calcium. Some candidates chose to use fish but calcium can only be obtained from the bones of canned fish so often the choice of fish was not wise. Candidates often lost marks because the dish chosen was not skillful or it repeated a skill, which had already been included. Candidates should be encouraged to look carefully at the nutritional requirement of the dish before deciding what to make. It often seems that candidates decide to make a particular dish to show skill regardless of the nutritional need of the dish. Both aspects of the question are important.

FOOD STUDIES

Paper 9336/03

Paper 3 – Unsupervised Work

General Comments

Most of the individual studies were well presented; it was evident that many candidates had spent a great deal of time following their chosen course of study. There were, however, a few individual studies which showed no evidence of any investigation. They were merely projects on a topic from the syllabus and usually consisted of a few pages taken directly from books or from web pages. Some of the topics chosen were very broad and gave little focus because clear parameters had not been set. The majority of studies had clearly defined titles and were set within realistic boundaries. The poorest studies had titles which did not reflect their content with the results and conclusions showing little or no relationship to the title. Candidates should be made aware that the title of their study must be an accurate reflection of its content. The most successful studies were those which followed the framework set out in the syllabus. The syllabus is not a confidential document so it would be advantageous for every candidate to have their own copy of the Assessment Scheme in which the suggested contents of each section are clearly set out. The criteria used for awarding marks are included. Some Candidates ignored whole sections so the marks available for that section were lost.

Choice/Reasons for Choice

All of the topics chosen were relevant but parameters were not always clearly defined. This meant that the study was not reflected in the title. The title should always indicate the limitations of the study. This can be illustrated by considering examples of titles submitted.

“Do Elderly People have a Balanced Diet?” and “An Investigation into the Diet of Residents of _____ Home for the Elderly” both involved similar types of investigation but one was much more specific than the other. The first title does not lend itself to a possible Advanced Level study. Some titles were too limiting, making it impossible to include a range of investigative methods. This had a direct influence on the possible marks which could be gained. Candidates should be encouraged to choose a topic which will demonstrate their ability at a variety of methods of data collection. Reasons for choosing the topic must always be addressed. Most Candidates gave at least one reason but better Candidates gave several.

Planning

It is important that the aims and objectives of the study are set out. The main aim of the study must always be to investigate the problem identified in the title. The objectives should be a list of activities which will help to achieve the aim. Sometimes Candidates listed objectives which could not be identified as tasks; sometimes they noted objectives which could never be achieved. These objectives often included the wish to educate or inform a section of society on a particular topic. As well as being outside the scope of the study there would be no way of providing supporting data. The objectives should be benchmarks against which the study can be assessed. Many Candidates listed their proposed activities and suggested dates by which they hoped to have carried them out; sometimes the actual dates were added later. This is a useful way to approach the planning stage since sometimes tasks have to be delayed, or they take longer to complete than expected. This allows for discussion in the Evaluation section. Candidates often state that analysing data took longer than expected or that interviews could not be carried out when planned. Each method of data collection should be considered in detail; Candidates must always try to justify their choice of methods. When questionnaires are used there should be some indication of how respondents were selected, and if interviews are to be carried out there should be reasons for selecting particular people to be interviewed. This section should demonstrate logical planning and should confirm that the methods of investigation and data collection selected are those which best suit their needs. Most Candidates were able to justify their choice.

Theoretical Research

As in previous years this was the weakest section of many of the studies. In many cases the section was too long and included all the information, which could be found on a topic. It is never acceptable to include pages which have been downloaded from the Internet. The Internet is a valuable resource but it must be used with discretion. Any information gathered from books or the Internet should be incorporated into a report in the candidate's own words. It is very obvious when work has been copied from other sources because the writing style is very different from that in the rest of the study. Quotations and diagrams should always be acknowledged, but often are not, and web addresses should be included in the bibliography.

Sometimes Candidates list books which are not really appropriate for this level of study; it is not expected that textbooks used at earlier stages of study will be of any use to Advanced Level investigations. Although there is no recommended length for this section it must be remembered that nothing in this section is the candidate's own work; the candidate's task is to select and summarise background information appropriate to their study and to set out the context into which their study will fit.

Investigative Methods

The most successful studies used a wide range of data collection methods. The most successful candidates used five or six different methods. Possible methods are suggested in the Assessment Scheme and there is an indication of the range of marks available according to the number of different methods chosen; those who choose only one or two methods limit the marks they can score in this section. Some Candidates visited factories and market gardens; others observed, carried out shopping surveys, interviews and conducted questionnaires. Many Candidates set up tasting panels to assess the success of the dishes they had prepared. Photographs are a useful way to collect data since they provide a record of the events and make the study more interesting. The overall attractiveness of the study is enhanced by the inclusion of photographs to support text. It was expected that for each method of investigation there would be an indication of how, where, when and with whom the investigations were carried out. Most Candidates correctly included a blank copy of the questionnaire they used but a copy of the list of questions asked during an interview was often missing. Copies of letters sent and received were usually included. It was often stated in the Planning section that visits or interviews were to be included. There was, however, often no evidence that any of these had taken place. If planned work cannot be conducted, reference should be made to it in the Evaluation section. It is a matter of some concern that candidates make arrangements to interview busy professionals and plan to ask them questions which will add nothing to the investigation. Sometimes the answers are available in books. Candidates should not expect to be able to visit hospitals and clinics to talk to patients. Confidentiality must always be respected. Questions on family income should never be included in questionnaires for the same reason.

This is an important section to which 20% of the marks are allocated. Only those who can demonstrate that they have a detailed knowledge of each of the methods of data collection they have used can gain high marks. Those who merely name the methods will gain few marks.

Collation of Data Collected

This section is as important as the previous section since each of the methods of data collection must be considered individually; the information gained from each method should be presented in a way which is clear to the reader. Candidates usually presented data well, demonstrating their skill at computer graphics as well as their ability to present their information without the use of a computer. The best studies included many methods of presentation; photographs, graphs, pie charts and histograms. Spreadsheets were used where appropriate but sometimes included too much information. It was a pity that titles and keys were sometimes omitted from charts. Many Candidates chose to use as many different methods of displaying information as their computer would allow. It is always preferable that information is presented in a consistent way. Sometimes prose would have been more appropriate. There is little to be gained by showing YES/NO results in a pie chart or a bar chart. The information could have been given in a sentence.

Analysis/Conclusions/Recommendations

This section was often either omitted or dealt with in a very superficial way. It is essential that candidates present an accurate summary of the evidence they have collected and that this be set out separately. Recommendations should not be interwoven with the presentation of the data collected.

It is expected that information will be interpreted and conclusions drawn. It is inappropriate to state that 'the data shows' without giving the supporting evidence. The conclusions drawn should lead Candidates to their recommendations for further action. Individuals, families, organisations or governments could implement these recommendations; they should not be lists of recommendations, which are already in the public domain. If, for example, a candidate has carried out an investigation on the consumption of sugar by candidates in a particular group, it would not be expected that the recommendations would be a range of ways of reducing sugar in the diet; these can be found in any magazine.

Recommendations should be the result of careful thought on the part of the Candidate to develop solutions in the light of information gathered from their study. Weaker Candidates often listed recommendations, which showed little connection to the study.

Evaluation

Many Candidates gave little thought to this section; sometimes it was omitted.

Some Candidates made no reference to their original aims and objectives so they were not able to comment on the value of their investigation as a means of satisfying their original aim. It is important that the success or lack of success of each method of investigation is considered since this would provide useful information for future studies; suggestions could have been made for improving weak areas. The time plan originally proposed could have been considered and suggestions for improvement made. Some Candidates included a more realistic time scale. The majority of Candidates gave good accounts of their personal benefits from the investigation. It was often noted that they had gained confidence, were less shy when approaching people they did not know and had mastered computer programmes that were new to them. Several noted that they had enjoyed meeting people from other backgrounds. All of these benefits are important.

Presentation

Candidates are to be congratulated on the presentation of their work. The general appeal was good and the Individual Studies made interesting reading. Many Candidates had given a great deal of time and thought to producing attractive and creative covers. Content lists, acknowledgements and bibliography were generally included, although sometimes pages were not numbered. Most Candidates included a diary of activities. Occasionally there was more than one font and more than one print size used. Care should be taken that there is uniformity throughout.