

GCSE

Home Economics (Child Development)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J441**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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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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B011 Controlled Assessment – Short Tasks

Overview

The cohort taking the specification was wide and varied. From the evidence seen, both the controlled assessment and the examination paper proved accessible to all the candidates and provided opportunities for a wide range of abilities to demonstrate their achievement. At the same time it provided differentiation. It was apparent that where teachers had a clear understanding of the specification the appropriate guidance and support was given to their candidates.

B011 Controlled Assessment – Short Tasks

Candidates are required to complete three short tasks which must be taken from the board set titles found on OCR Interchange, these tasks cannot be adapted or changed. It must be noted that the task titles have been revised and these must be selected for future submissions. Candidates need to undertake tasks that will illustrate a range of skills and that are not repetitive; for example, two practical food outcomes are not acceptable.

The investigative task should be undertaken with a different approach from the practical tasks, the use of questionnaires, interviews with resultant written data, is recommended. Nutritional analysis with relevant conclusions can also be used to good effect. Centres can contact OCR for further advice prior to candidates embarking on their task.

Most candidates submitted short tasks of an appropriate length following the recommended allocated time of 7 hours per task. However, a few candidates submitted work that appeared to have taken considerably longer. A small number of candidates included large quantities of research, (this does not form part of the planning section). This research was incorrectly given credit.

Planning

Good practice was evident by those candidates undertaking a magazine article, book or game and included an annotated draft layout of how their outcome may be constructed. This included different sizes, content, and relevant layout. Accurate plans demonstrated progression through the stages of working and were an effective tool for delivering this part of the planning section. Safety aspects were considered by many candidates when carrying out their outcomes, this was especially evident in the comparisons of bought/home-made baby food and investigating baby changing facilities. Photographic evidence supported these tasks.

Candidates often spent insufficient time on planning and as a result plans were frequently brief. Some candidates were unable to explain their aims and objectives or provide any detailed indication of the resources and how they were going to be utilised throughout the task.

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There was a range of repetitive proformas that did not enable the candidates to achieve and show flair and originality. Although relevant to the task many candidates used them to give bullet pointed responses. It is important that any proformas used only reiterate the assessment objectives and do not guide candidates in their response to the task. In addition many candidates gave website addresses with little or no explanation of use or relevance.

Sources of information should be clearly referenced in the portfolio or in a bibliography.

Candidates were required to carry out a plan of action that was logical, concise, and which clearly identified the key priorities required to carry out the chosen task. This could have taken the form of a flow chart or step by step account and should have had sufficient detail for the candidate to carry out the planned work. This was vital for high marks to be achieved.

Bullet pointed responses do not always provide sufficient detail or imply in-depth understanding.

Carrying Out – Organisation

The range of written evidence to support the marks in this section continues to be improved. Good practice saw the use of diary logs, tabulated charts, annotated photographs or written accounts of the work undertaken.

In this section there was some over marking of the written evidence to show that the work had been carried out. Some candidates had been given credit for work being carried out based only on evidence of the research. Candidates must provide a written account with confirmation of the results of their practical outcome or investigations; together with clear annotation and/or photographic evidence.

In a number of centres there was a lack of detailed written evidence undertaken by candidates to support the work carried out. This is in addition to and separate from the evaluation section. Evidence is credited to the carrying out 'Organisation' section of the assessment criteria.

Candidates must follow their plans making good use of the time available and should organise their resources effectively using any equipment safely and independently.

Several candidates provided outcomes of leaflets (healthy pregnancy and breast v bottle) and there was a range of styles as to how the candidate undertook the task, together with a wide and diverse level of success. Other candidates produced high quality books for a pre school child and/or game. These were evaluated with the intended child and results enhanced the evaluation section. Outcomes produced were usually engaging and successful.

Many candidates presented the data they had researched from surveys with varying levels of competency. Carrying out work to a 'high standard' led to a wide range of interpretations. Some work lacked a range of techniques across the three tasks. Candidates should undertake a variety of tasks to fulfil a range of different skills and techniques.

Practical Outcomes

Many candidates made full use of ICT skills to produce leaflets and magazine articles. There was evidence of some excellent books and meals. However, many outcomes were not worthy of the full marks given by centres as there was insufficient relevant content, and the presentation lacked visual quality stimulus. Many teachers accepted poor quality content and finish, and often gave high or even full marks.

Investigative Outcomes

The outcome in the investigations did not always show a range of detailed results and a significant number of candidates were unable to produce evidence of any investigative techniques, or meaningful results. A number had simply produced a leaflet, with no evidence of an investigation. It is important that the investigative task should include a range of detailed and accurate results. This can be through testing with comparisons, cumulating in a survey with appropriate conclusions. The aim of a survey must be included in the planning section of the task. Some surveys were excellent with detailed questions, however; many were too brief and contained only closed questions. The use of ICT for this section of the short task is strongly encouraged, particularly for resultant data. Where questionnaires were used they were not always relevant to the topic. In addition some candidates included multiple copies which were not required.

Evaluation

Many candidates were able to evaluate all sections of their work and most gave some strengths and weaknesses with suggested ways to improve the task. However, some candidates did not review the whole task. Evaluations were sometimes descriptive but not evaluative and some centres were over-generous when crediting marks in this section.

Candidates who had used written evidence effectively as part of the execution section had also grasped the concept of the overview of the whole task response in the evaluation.

Weaker candidates tended to explain why they had carried out the outcome in the evaluation, rather than addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the task. Marks should only be awarded for the quality of the response and not the quantity.

Candidates were required to identify their strengths and weaknesses in all areas of the task, not just the practical outcomes. They were also required to suggest ways of how to improve on their strengths and weaknesses, and draw conclusions from their work. It was expected that any results should be collated, interpreted and linked back to the task title. All the aforementioned work had to have been undertaken independently for full marks to be awarded.

Administration

The use of OCR Interchange for the submission of marks by centres, the auto checking and updating of arithmetical errors and feedback reports greatly assists in the administration of the moderation process, however, there were a large number of clerical errors. There was good use of secured cover sheets to each of the three short tasks. Detailed annotation on the front cover sheet was usually relevant and justified the marks being awarded. In some centres the task being used had not been identified or numbered and the investigation had not been highlighted. The centre name and number together with the candidate name and number should be completed in the appropriate sections for each of the three short tasks.

B012 Controlled Assessment – Child Study

In order to fulfil this unit candidates are required to complete one Child Study. They are required to select one of the board set themes on which to then base the focus of their study. It is recommended that approximately 22 hours are allocated for the completion of the task. The themes can be found on the OCR website and in the specification. It should be noted that emotional development is not a board set theme and in consequence must not be used.

Research

Candidates should construct task titles that enable them to address all the assessment criteria. They need to include a clear rationale and justify as to why they have chosen their topic. The majority of candidates supported their task title by including several reasons for choice. Most candidates had produced their own focused task title that was written as a question and only covered one area of development.

Candidates provided a range of appropriate sources of information, which included both primary and secondary to use for their research. However, this could have been supported by candidates referencing their sources of information.

Initial research to explore the child's background and other relevant information was frequently undertaken through an interview and/or questionnaire with the parents of the child that was going to be studied. Most candidates carried out detailed research on the development area chosen using a range of suitable secondary sources of information. Most popular resources were books, internet and interviews. Some candidates used a good variety of sources of information, relevant specifically to the age and area of development. It is important that candidates do not just include photocopies or printouts, without highlighting and explaining the relevant information. Very few candidates were able to demonstrate an understanding of the information gathered by providing a comprehensive summary. In the work of many candidates there was little to connect the suggestions of ideas to the research.

Numerous letters of permission were included in candidate's work which is not required. These do not constitute background information and often breach confidentiality as they include surnames and addresses. Full-frontal photographs showing the child's face should also be avoided.

Good practice was evident where candidates produced a clear outline of the steps to be carried out in the task at the end of the research section. This was often undertaken as a specification, 'what steps next', plan of action or flow chart. Candidates must undertake the majority of this work independently and show a high level of understanding if they are awarded marks in the top band.

Selecting and Planning the Observations

The minority of candidates used the research previously undertaken in the planning section to identify and produce a range of possible ideas for their observations. Research had not been collated and assessed as to its suitability. Some candidates fully considered and justified the range of methods for their observations and there were some links to the task title and area of development. The majority of candidates constructed accurate and detailed plans; however, there was a propensity for these to be over marked. Best practice was identified when a variety of methods to record the results of the observations were included together with clear reasons for choice.

Practical observations

It is suggested that six observations are undertaken. In some cases there was good practice seen with each observation having a different focus that related clearly to the area of development chosen. Visits were recorded accurately using the sheets constructed in the previous section. Candidates achieved higher marks when they included strong evidence of each observation supported by teacher annotation to justify the marks awarded. Where candidates had written up each observation after the visit, the evidence showed that they were able to remember what had been seen. They could then more readily relate their understanding to the development area being studied, including their own judgements and views. This was then credited in the 'Applying Understanding to Observations' in the 'Outcomes' section of the assessment criteria.

Outcomes

Some candidates were able to demonstrate that they had understood and applied their knowledge to what they had observed and how it related to their child and the area of development. Less able candidates had not included original thoughts and opinions about their observations but written a descriptive account. They had not always taken every opportunity to compare the child with others/norms. This could have been demonstrated by sharing their understanding with other peers, group work in class, or using text book norms for reference.

Conclusion and Evaluation

In the best work seen candidates produced a high quality evaluation that included all aspects of the task. They drew logical and relevant conclusions that related back to their task title. Good practice was seen when candidates referred back to their title and answered the question they set themselves. Most candidates were able to identify and explain their strengths and weaknesses in their work and recommend improvements. However, the weaker candidates gave a descriptive rather than an evaluative account. To achieve high marks candidates are expected to use a good standard of written communication throughout the whole task using specialist terms/terminology in a structured format.

Administration

Centres must provide clear annotation in the study to support the marks awarded. They are advised to have dividers or clear headings between each assessment criteria. Centres must securely attach the child study to the cover sheet with the task title, candidate number and name being clearly written on it. These can be located on the OCR website under the forms heading. The correct sample for moderation must be sent, a number of centres sent the same candidates for both B011 and B012 even though different candidates were selected. There was a significant increase in the number of clerical errors this year. Centres should take utmost care to input the correct marks for their candidates.

B013 Principles of Child Development Written Paper

General Comments

The paper demonstrated differentiation with a spread of marks being achieved. The paper was appropriate for all levels and a good range of the specification was examined.

Most candidates had prepared well for the examination but where marks were lost, it was generally through either failing to read the stem of the question carefully or not explaining points identified in their responses.

It was evident in the free response question that candidates who planned their responses were better able to give detailed factual information with good use of terminology, show depth and breadth of knowledge and demonstrate their literacy skills.

Questions throughout the paper were well attempted by all.

Comments on Individual Questions

- Q.1(a)(i) Most candidates answered all three parts of this question correctly; a few responses muddled 'kinship' and 'respite'.
- Q.1(a)(ii) Correct answers identified 'foster care is temporary', 'paid' and 'children can keep in contact with the family'. A few candidates confused "responsibility" with "legal rights", saying that carers do not have responsibility for the child.
- Q.1(b)(i) There were some good responses using correct terminology 'to prevent a pregnancy' but some candidates described methods of contraception rather than the term.
- Q.1(b)(ii) Many candidates correctly identified 'condom' and 'femidom'. Where the question was not read carefully enough two methods of contraception were given rather than specifically barrier methods.
- Q.1(b)(iii) Excellent differentiation where candidates could show both their knowledge and understanding of the command word 'explain'. The most common correct answers were "give up smoking", "give up alcohol" and "balanced diet" followed through with an explanation for each.

Marks were lost because of poor terminology eg not using the terms 'balanced diet' and drinking was often not qualified by alcohol. Some answers referred to pregnancy. The question specifies three answers with explanations to score full marks. Some candidates mentioned three points on the first response line without giving explanations. Any answers given thereafter could not be credited.

- Q.2(a)(i,ii,iii) Most candidates answered correctly and used the unit of measurement.
- Q.2(b) Some candidates correctly identified 'kitemark'. Incorrect answers tended to focus on European and toy safety marks rather than British Standards.
- Q.2 (c) There were some clear responses, mostly indicating airbags being active or relating to the age of the child. Candidates used the data provided to help them answer this question correctly.

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- Q.2(d) The question was generally well answered with elements of 'green cross code,' 'stranger danger' 'hot' and 'sharp objects' being clearly described and gaining marks. There was some repetition, mainly of road safety points.
- Q.2(e)(i) A few candidates gained a mark for washing of face and bottom but were unable to give a full explanation. Many candidates thought the phrase "top and tail" related to children sleeping at the top and bottom of the bed. Reading both the stem of the question and the question could have led candidates to giving better responses.
- Q.2(e)(ii) Correct answers identified 'redness', 'red rash,' 'sore bottom. 'Vague answers were 'red' or 'sore' with no qualification. Other incorrect responses included 'itchy skin', 'baby crying' or 'uncomfortable'.
- Q.2(e)(iii) This question was well answered with a wide range of answers given. An answer that did not gain a mark was 'talcum powder' rather than 'baby powder'.
- Q.2(e)(iv) Some good responses were 'exercise', 'healthy/balanced diet', 'sleep' and 'warmth'. Marks were lost if examples were given rather than the condition itself. Some candidates had missed 'physical growth' in the question and incorrectly gave answers that were focused on other areas of development.
- Q.3(a) This question differentiated well with some good responses. Many candidates gained marks for identifying the different signs but did not always provide additional detail required to access full marks. Some candidates incorrectly described the three stages of labour or stated that the 'vagina dilates' rather than the cervix.
- Q.3(b) Correct answers described the short term effects of entonox, the drowsiness caused by pethidine and inability to use the TENS in a water birth. Answers that did not gain marks focused on the descriptions of pain relief. The effects of pethidine was sometimes confused with epidurals.
- Q.3(c) This question was well answered with clear descriptions of both answers. Vague responses such as 'slimy substance' or 'hairs' did not gain marks.
- Q.3(d) This question was answered well. A few candidates confused the role of the GP and Health Visitor.
- Q.4 A range of marks was seen across this question which clearly demonstrated differentiation. Some responses provided an excellent range of reasons why children may refuse food and many suggestions how a parent might help this. Weaker answers gave only one or two points which lacked detail. Some candidates identified points well but lacked the specific descriptions or explanations to gain further marks A few candidates referred incorrectly to weaning, allergies and eating disorder which is not relevant to the age group studied in child development. There were also references to poor practice eg bribing a child to eat, stickers, playing games and pretending the spoon is an aeroplane.
- Higher level candidates showed evidence of planning and structuring their responses.
- Q.5(a) This question was well answered by most candidates giving a good range of answers, 'give encouragement', 'praise' and 'encourage socialisation'. A few candidates repeated three different ways socialisation might be encouraged which prevented them gaining full marks.
- Q.5(b) The majority of candidates gained full marks.

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- Q.5(c) There were many correct answers identifying 'being able to hold a pencil', 'fine motor skills', 'creativity', 'imagination', 'express feelings' and 'preparation for writing'.
- Q.5(d)(i) 'Sand', 'water' and 'cooking' were the most popular correct answers. A few candidates referred to playing in the garden/mud rather than actual gardening.
- Q.5(d)(ii) Most candidates had a clear understanding of the question and used a wide variety of answers, 'covering the area with newspaper', 'the wearing of aprons', 'old clothes', 'hair tied back' and 'removing items that could be damaged'. A few candidates misunderstood the question and described how to carry out a messy play activity.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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