

Home Economics (Child Development)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J441**

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

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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

The cohort taking the specification was extensive and varied. From the evidence presented, both the controlled assessment and the examination paper proved accessible to all the candidates and provided plenty of opportunities for a broad range of abilities to gain success and positive achievement. At the same time it provided differentiation across a wide range of abilities. 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

The majority of the work followed the OCR practical and investigative theme with some adaptations. **It is vital that OCR set titles are used.** Centres may adapt the titles slightly but not change the total focus and topic as this could disadvantage their candidates.

Centres are reminded that to fulfil this unit candidates are required to complete three Short Tasks. The focus of these tasks must be taken from the set titles as set out in the OCR website. Candidates need to undertake tasks that will illustrate a range of skills and not be repetitive in their outcome. For example, two leaflets are not acceptable. The Investigative Task must be undertaken with a different approach to the practical tasks. This task should have an investigative approach which culminates in some results, for example, graphical statistics from the results of a survey, nutritional analysis from a food outcome. Centres can contact the board for further advice and agreement from OCR prior to candidates embarking on a task.

The Short Tasks were not too lengthy and reflected the allocated time (7 hours are recommended for each Short Task) that had been given to candidates in many instances. However, a considerable number of centres still included large quantities of research which does not form part of the planning section and therefore no credit could be given.

Planning

It appeared that in many centres insufficient time was spent planning. Many centres submitted teacher-led plans that had clearly been completed in one session. They were, often brief, did not explain the candidate's aims and objectives, or provide any detailed indication of the resources and how they were going to be utilised throughout the task. The latter were frequently just bullet pointed items lacking detail. Several candidates provided a lot of unnecessary research in the planning section and centres awarded full marks for very limited amounts of relevant information. This should be avoided as it detracts from the focus and assessment criteria of each task.

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 their chosen task. It was expected to have sufficient detail for the candidate to carry out the planned work.

A number of candidates undertaking a leaflet, poster or magazine article included draft layouts of how their outcome may be constructed. This included different fonts, sizes, relevant layout and content. There were some accurate plans that demonstrated progression through the stages of working which were effective tools for delivering this part of the planning section. To support written evidence some candidates included a photographic log of them completing the outcome. However, centres should ensure photographs of candidates are not full face to protect confidentiality.

Candidates were expected to consider any safety aspects of making their identified outcome, for example comparisons of bought/homemade baby food or investigating baby changing facilities in their area.

To summarise it was expected that the plans should be detailed and accurate. All resources that are required to carry out the task should be included in this section. There should be clear evidence of how they will be used, especially if full marks are awarded. Research should not be included or given credit as it is not a requirement of the specification. Each task should lead to different outcomes. The Investigative Task should follow a different format and outcome to the two practical tasks.

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There should also be evidence of an investigative approach with resultant data. Candidates should clearly state their task title on the front OCR cover mark sheet and at the start of each task.

Carrying out – Organisation

Many candidates did not show that they had followed their plans. Also in this section there was confusion over the written evidence to show that work was carried out. A number of candidates did not provide a written account with confirmation of the results of their practical outcomes or investigations. A diary log, tabulated chart, annotated photograph of the candidates undertaking the work, or a section linked to the plan of action could have been utilised to fulfil this assessment criteria.

Centres must ensure that there is detailed written evidence undertaken by the candidate to support the work carried out in this section. This is in addition to and separate from the evaluation section.

Candidates must demonstrate that they had followed their plans making good use of the time available and had organised their resources effectively using any equipment independently and safely. This was imperative where high/full marks are being awarded.

Several candidates provided outcomes of leaflets (comparing nappies – breast v bottle) and there were a variety of approaches as to how the candidates undertook the task, together with a wide and diverse level of success. Many were able to present the data they had researched from surveys with varying levels of competency and use of ICT to enhance detail and presentation.

Carrying out work to a “high standard” led to a wide range of interpretations. Whilst there were some excellent leaflets, booklets and meals in evidence, many teachers accepted poor quality content and finish, and too often gave high marks for the outcome.

Work often lacked a range of techniques across the three tasks; candidates should undertake a range of tasks to fulfil a range of different skills and techniques that provide a varied and diverse set of outcomes.

In some cases written evidence was accurate and relevant, however, from some centres it was non-existent or did not support marks awarded.

To summarise, candidates should use a range of suitable methods when carrying out their planned work together with appropriate resources. Centres should provide relevant annotation and reference to the assessment criteria to support the marks awarded in the section - Comments: “Excellent – Well Done!” and “A good attempt”, are not sufficient. The use of revised cover sheets which can be downloaded from the OCR web site should be completed and attached to the work making sure that there is clear justification of why the marks are being awarded. This not only demonstrates good practice but is imperative to support the moderation process. It is also good practice to include the task title on each cover sheet and identify which task is the investigation.

Practical Outcomes

A significant number of centres made full use of ICT skills to produce leaflets and magazine articles. However, many outcomes were clearly not worthy of the full marks that were awarded with many spelling mistakes, hasty cutting out, poor presentation and inaccurate in content. There was a very wide range of extremes in terms of quality.

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Disappointingly, too much work was brief and not of high quality. There were a lot of very poor leaflets and magazine articles which lacked many basic facts whilst looking “attractive on the eye”.

The quality of outcomes were of a mixed standard, however, in many cases had been awarded high marks. The few centres where the candidates lacked ICT skills/facilities were disappointing, as the hand produced leaflets were often limited in content and lacked visual quality stimulus.

Investigative Outcomes

The outcomes in the investigations did not show ‘a range of detailed results’, many candidates did not provide evidence of investigative techniques, nor meaningful results. Quite a number had simply produced a leaflet, as would have been expected in a practical task, with no evidence of an investigation. Many centres undertook the food based task “Eating sensibly during pregnancy is most important”, however, there was often no investigation. This task can include a nutritional analysis of the planned meal with appropriate conclusions linked back to the planning, choices, and outcomes of the meal. Please note, that the task title states that a meal should be planned and carried out, not limited to a single dish. It is important that all investigative tasks include a range of detailed and accurate results. This may take the form of testing and comparisons culminating in a survey with appropriate conclusions. It is obvious that the use of ICT for this Short Task is strongly encouraged, particularly for charts and graphs. “Detailed and accurate results” whilst commented upon by the teacher, were anything but that in reality in a number of cases.

Centres are reminded that if questionnaires are used they must be relevant to the topic and only one copy is required to be included with the work.

Evaluation

Some candidates did not review the whole task, or evaluations were sometimes an account of what the candidate had done in the task (often being used as the written evidence part) which meant information was repeated but not necessarily evaluated. Many candidates were able to evaluate all sections (particularly if they had separated each section in the main body of the work) and most gave some strengths and weaknesses and suggested ways to improve the task.

In general the evaluation was often tackled more successfully than the earlier sections in the Short Tasks. This may possibly be due to the fact that evaluations and conclusions are an inherent part of the whole specification.

However, some centres were over-generous when crediting marks in this section. Those who had embraced the written evidence part of the execution section had also grasped the concept of the overview of the whole task response in the evaluation. The centres who had not attempted to address the written evidence tended to explain what they had carried out in the evaluation, rather than addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the task as a whole.

Centres should award marks for the quality of response. Candidates are required to identify their strengths and weaknesses in all areas of the task, not just the practical outcomes. They are also required to suggest ways of how to improve on their strengths and weaknesses, and draw conclusions from their work. Any results should have been collated, interpreted and linked back to the task title. All the aforementioned work should be undertaken independently if full marks are being awarded.

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Overall the quality of the Short Tasks was an improvement on the 2011 entry, as many of the points in last year's report had been adopted by centres and in consequence the marking was in line with OCR standards.

Administration

The OCR Interchange for the submission of marks by centres, the auto checking and updating of arithmetical errors and feedback of reports is a definite improvement. Centres must ensure that cover sheets which are annotated are securely attached to each of the three Short Tasks. They should also identify which task title is being used and number them one, two or three and highlight the investigation. The centre name and number, together with candidate name and number should be completed in the appropriate sections for each of the three tasks.

B012 Controlled Assessment – Child Study

Centres are reminded that to fulfil this unit, the candidates are required to complete one child study and select one of the board set themes on which to 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 web site and in the specification if further guidance is required. Some centres are still allowing their candidates to study emotional development which is no longer part of the OCR board set themes.

Research

The range and quality of research varied considerably and provided good differentiation. It was apparent that in some work there was a lack of guidance from centres regarding the Child Study titles as they constructed titles which were difficult to answer or prevented the candidate from addressing all the assessment criteria. Candidates need to include a clear rationale of why they have chosen their topic. The best responses identified several reasons for choice. Candidates were expected to produce their own task title, this is most effective when written as a question.

It was expected that candidates should choose only one area of development on which to base their study. A range of appropriate sources were expected to be identified which could include varied types of primary and secondary research. However, a large number of candidates had not referenced the sources of information.

In the best responses initial research to explore the child's background and other relevant information had been undertaken through an interview and/or questionnaire to the parents of the child that is going to be studied. Candidates were required to carry out detailed research on the development area chosen using a range of suitable secondary sources of information. Books and the internet were used. Some used a good variety of sources of information, relevant specifically to the age and area of development. Some candidates had only photocopies or printouts, with or without relevant information being highlighted. The information was rarely summarised comprehensively. There was little to connect the suggestions of ideas to the research in the work of too many candidates. Many candidates still undertook research on all the PIES and not just the area of development they were focussing upon, this was even after they had identified their chosen area.

Numerous letters of permission which are not required were included in candidates work, and it should be noted that these do not constitute background information and often breach confidentiality as they include surnames. Photographs showing the child's face should be avoided.

At the end of the research section candidates were expected to produce a clear outline of the steps to be carried out in the task. This took a variety of forms including an action plan, flow chart, 'what steps next' or specification. 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

In a number of submissions the previous research undertaken was not always referred to when planning activities. There appeared to still be some confusion with regards to methods of recording and methods of observations. Most candidates had plans for each visit; however, some of these were too brief and repetitive. Very few candidates demonstrated that they knew

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why they were planning the activities and what they were actually going to find out from undertaking them. They were able to list a range of activities, (not always relevant ones) and the resources needed, but were not able to show that they understood the connection between the research and the observations. A limited number of centres appeared to have planned how the visits would be recorded. Some included blank pro-forma, however, many candidates did not give reasons for using their recording charts and did not mention why they were included. However there were some excellent responses.

Candidates were expected to use the research previously undertaken to then draw appropriate conclusions and explain how the task will be carried out.

Candidates should have gone on to use their research to identify and produce a range of possible ideas for their observations. The research could then have been collated and assessed on its suitability. The ideas suggested were expected to be appropriate for the age of the child and the area of development chosen. Candidates were expected to consider and justify a range of suitable methods for their observations which linked to their task title and area of development. Plans should then have been drawn up, they should have been accurate and detailed for marks to be awarded in the high mark band. Candidates should have clearly identified resources that were going to be used for their observations. Candidates should have included a variety of methods to record the results of the observations together with clear reasons for choice. The observations should have illustrated different skills, for example, a ball game in the park, painting activity, reading, a puzzle, depending on the age of the child and the area of development being studied. Plans for each observation should have been included, candidates were also expected to state how these were going to be recorded. Sample recording sheets are recommended.

Practical Observations

Variety and detail were lacking in the work of many candidates. Too many write-ups were descriptive and repetitive lacking in any originality. Only a few centres had an interesting variety of ways of recording. A large number of centres marked candidates in the higher mark range where there were six visits all written in exactly the same way. The marking criteria point "use a number of different methods effectively" was not evident in the work of many candidates. Some centres gave high marks for very brief descriptions in this section, where there was little other evidence. The length of each observation varied from 3 minutes to 1 hour. A small number of candidates had completed five observations on the same day which did not give them any opportunity to see development over a period of time. The former does not enable the candidate to gain a worthwhile experience especially if six observations were undertaken on the same day within an hour. There were more annotated photographs (activity shots not full face) and sketches as a result of a particular planned observations being carried out. A small number of candidates completed their observations during a work experience week. This can be achieved successfully if there is a clear focus of the area of development they are studying, and the individual child. Detailed planning of all the activities which are going to be carried out during the week must be completed beforehand.

Applying Understanding

There was a varied level of evidence in this section. To gain high marks candidates must show that they have clearly understood and applied their gained knowledge to what they have observed and in particular to their child and the area of development.

Few candidates referred specifically back to their research, or noted progression in the child's development. Too often this was really a repeat of what was written in the observations. All

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candidates should be encouraged to include their original thoughts and opinions of their observations. Where a chart, tabulated evidence, or a set of norms was used as a check-list the work was much enhanced. More candidates attempted a comparison with another child of a similar age and drawing conclusions on the child's progress. This area could be enhanced by candidates sharing understanding with other peers, group work in class, or using the text book norms for reference.

There are still some centres referring to this section as "Application of Knowledge".

Conclusion and Evaluation

Candidates were expected to produce a high quality evaluation that included all aspects of the task. Many included the strengths and weaknesses in their study and identified some improvements. However, many candidates identified their strengths and weaknesses but did not explain them. Some candidates had difficulty in drawing conclusions without repeating the previous section or re-writing their observations. Relevant and pertinent conclusions that relate back to the task title should be evident especially if high marks are being awarded. Where the task title was appropriate, and had been written as a question, the candidates commented upon their degree of success in a meaningful way. It was noted again that few candidates gave recommendations for further work that could be completed to develop their Child Study. Bullet points were not sufficient for the awarding of high marks.

If high marks are awarded a good standard of written communication throughout the whole task using specialist terms/terminology in a structured format is necessary.

B013 Principles of Child Development Written Paper

The paper proved accessible to all candidates and gave plenty of opportunities for differentiation throughout. It was evident that some centres had prepared their candidates well by delivering the whole specification.

Where marks were not awarded, it was generally through a lack of basic subject knowledge, failing to read the question carefully or to explain the points identified.

For the free response question it was evident that candidates who planned their responses were able to give detailed factual information demonstrating their literacy skills, good use of terminology and depth and breadth of knowledge.

Candidates should be made aware that information and concepts developed during coursework components are relevant and should be applied to questions in the written paper.

- 1a) Some good answers were seen but many candidates tried to explain more than was required which resulted in conflicting advice.

Step 1. Many candidates used the word “germs” instead of “bacteria”.

Step 2. Marks were not given if candidates referred to the effect on the baby rather than the person making up the bottle or the bottle itself.

Step 3. A good range of answers on the mark scheme so many gained a mark here. Few mentioned about the salt content and damage to kidneys.

Step 4. Well answered with “mix” being the most popular.

Step 5. Mainly well answered with “right temperature”.

Overall few candidates gained full marks often due to a scattergun approach for which, under current guidelines, marks may not be awarded.

“where the candidate has adopted a 'scattergun' approach by providing multiple answers to a single response question, no mark should be awarded”.

- 1b) Most candidates gained marks with “mother can go back to work”, “father can bond”, “can see how much milk baby takes”. Marks were lost for vague answers e.g. “easier when out”.

TIP: avoid vague terms such as ‘comfortable’, ‘easy’, ‘prevent illness’.

- 1c) Well answered by reading the data accurately.
i/ii

- 1c) This was not well answered. Again the word “germs” was often used rather than “bacteria”.
iii Some candidates lost marks for stating “bacteria were **on** the bottle” rather than “**in** the bottle”, whilst other candidates did not gain marks if they made general statements such as “otherwise it would make the baby ill”. Few used correct terminology to say that incorrect sterilisation of bottles could lead to “gastro-enteritis”.

- 1d) Many candidates appeared not to have read the question carefully and a common error was to describe general reasons why child care would be needed. Better answers were characterised by an understanding of the special benefits of using a child minder in preference to any other provision. Answers that were given and explained included, “flexibility”, “home environment”, “more personal attention”.

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- 1e) Most candidates gained some marks here, “crèche”, “playgroup” or “relatives” were popular answers. Marks were not given for inaccurate names, e.g. “nursery” “daycare” or “preschool” with no type identified.
- 2a) Generally this was answered well although a few candidates referred to other developments or gave examples of intellectual development which was not credited.

TIP: use glossaries to reinforce the use of correct terminology.

- 2b) Well answered on the whole with hardly any candidates failing to include the units.
- 2c) Generally well answered, “colours”, “shapes”, “numbers”, and “counting”.
- 2d) Most candidates gained at least one mark with the most common correct responses being “death of parent,” “divorce,” “new baby.” Wrong answers given were “abuse” or “neglect”.
- 2e) Reasonably well attempted by all, “scared” or “frightened”, “being told off” and “being shy or quiet”
- 3 Generally well answered with a good balance between both parts of the question and evidence of differentiation. For some candidates with poor written communication the right answer was hinted at but lack of technical / specialist terms meant that the answers lacked precision and therefore these candidates were not able to access the higher marks.

It is good practise to link work done in coursework to the examination paper and some candidates had clearly used information from a Short Task to help them answer this question.

Quite often candidates had included a plan at the beginning of their answer which helped focus their response.

Although weaker candidates found the signs of pregnancy difficult to expand upon and so produced a simple list of points, they did gain some marks for knowledge. Marks for suitable clothing were not given if vague reasons such as ‘comfortable’ was given. Good answers seen included, “loose”, “soft”, easy to wash”, “not expensive”, “lightweight”, “support bras”, “flat shoes”.

TIP: link knowledge gained through coursework to the written paper.

- 4a) This was well answered. Some candidates did not recognise the unexpected/sudden nature of cot death.
- 4b) A range of correct answers given, e.g. “put baby on its back”, “no smoking near baby”, “feet to foot” and “not using pillows”.
- 4c) Generally well answered with a range of points given. However, candidates gained more marks if they could link each point with a correct explanation, e.g. “ premature babies have trouble keeping warm as they are unable to maintain their own body temperature”.

TIP: practise how to respond to the command words ‘describe’ and ‘explain’.

- 4d) Most common correct answer was “milk teeth”.

i

- 4d) Well attempted but not widely known as one of the stages of physical development.

ii

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4d) Candidates gained a mark if they knew the correct number of milk teeth was 20.
iii

4d) Some good marks given for, “crying a lot”, “dribbling more”, “biting/chewing on things”.
iv

5a) Marks were not given for vague comments about the Combined Pill and lack of detailed
i/ii/
iii knowledge. Very few answers gave “21 days”, “not effective if taken 12 hours late” or
named the two hormones.

Although some good answers were seen many points given were vague about where the
Cap is placed, e.g. “goes in the woman”.

IUD was least well known of the three contraceptives. Many candidates wrote about the
IUD as an injection or implant into the arm or inserted into the vagina.

5b) Well attempted: “do not have to seek medical help”, “no side effects”, “protection from
STI’s”. A few candidates appeared to have misread the question and tried to explain how
the femidom worked which was not credited.

TIP: read each question carefully and highlight key words before answering.

5c) Well answered by all, “split” or “tear” being the most popular answers.

5d) The most common answers were “unable to have a child of their own” and “too old to have
i children” A misconception about adoption was because of “not wanting to give birth”.

5d) Correct answers seen referred to the process “being permanent”, “legal rights”, the fact
ii that “adoption is a legal procedure” and there is “no payment for looking after the child”.
Some candidates misread the question and made reference to the adoption process and
or gave vague answers ,e.g. “ giving a child a home”

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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