



GCE

Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)

Advanced GCE **A2 H511**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H111**

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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G001 Society and Health

General Comments:

Section A was answered well by the majority of candidates. In addition, the majority of candidates followed the rubric for Section B and there was an even spread of candidates answering questions 2, 3 and 4. Marks were awarded across the full range of the mark scheme.

Candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately to respond to the questions on the impact of poor housing on individuals, obesity, and the effect of global warming, deforestation and acid rain on the environment. Candidates did not respond well to the questions on the implications of coeliac disease, social care in the community, and the effective management of water in the home.

Many candidates produced short plans for Section B questions which is good practice and should be encouraged. Planning should be brief, consisting of a list of key words which the candidate then uses to write their response. Some candidates did not appear to have the skill of interpreting the context and applying their knowledge to the particular question set. Candidates who demonstrated an understanding of the command words, were able to identify the key words and context in a question, therefore producing high quality responses. Spelling, punctuation and grammar were generally at an acceptable level although the writing on a small number of scripts was difficult to read.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

The majority of candidates attempted all questions.

Question No.1

(a)(i) 12% was an error by some candidates.

(a)(ii)-(iii) The data was extracted correctly.

(b) Good responses were well presented with advances in hygiene and medicine common answers.

(c) Many candidates described two implications of an increase in the birth rate in the United Kingdom. When candidates did not achieve higher marks it was usually because they did not answer the question set. The most common answers described the impact on schools and health care.

(d) To gain marks on this question candidates were required to describe two possible ways unemployment can affect students leaving education. Candidates that described issues relating to poverty, low self-esteem and lack of motivation gained high marks. Answers which referred to adults rather than students failed to gain marks.

(e) Candidates needed to include explanations of the way poor housing impacts on individuals to gain the marks for this question. When candidates did not give explanations they did not gain full marks. The most common answers referred to issues relating to physical and mental health, overcrowding and social exclusion.

(f) Too many candidates focused their responses on using less water rather than other issues such as those concerning the use of grey water, water meters, energy efficient boilers and water efficient toilets.

Section B

Question No. 2

(a) This question provided a wide range of responses. The context of the question, which related to the implications for a child who has coeliac disease, was often missed. Many candidates' responses focused on the actual disease and not the implications for a child. Good answers described fully the implications for a child who has coeliac disease, focusing on the avoidance of gluten, the use of gluten free products and foods, the use of a lunchbox and the emotional impact on the child.

(b) The context of the question, which related to the advice given to parents to reduce the risk of childhood obesity, was often missed. Candidates should read the whole question and note the context in which it is written. Candidates were often able to explain the advice referring to the need for a balanced diet, issues relating to sugar and snacks, five a day, the reduction of fat in the diet, exercise and the amount of time that children spend sitting down.

Question No. 3

(a) Good responses described in detail how the use of leisure time changes throughout an individual's life. Many candidates referred to issues relating to time, gender, age, interests, finance and location. When candidates did not get higher marks it was because they had focused on age or the different leisure activities available.

(b) This question provided a wide range of responses. The context of the question related to how social care in the community may support an elderly person living alone. Good responses referred to personal, domestic, auxiliary, supportive and nursing care, day centres, meals and home helps. When candidates did not get higher marks it was because they had explained the care available in a residential home or respite or had focused on the community rather than social care.

Question No. 4

(a) This question was answered well with candidates able to describe fully how families and households can sustain the environment. Many candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of how families and households can reduce, reuse and recycle. Good responses also referred to issues relating to transport, insulation and buying sustainable products. When candidates did not gain higher marks they had referred to other issues such as energy saving light bulbs and the use of thermostats.

(b) This question was answered well as candidates were able to explain how global warming, deforestation and acid rain affect the quality of the environment. Many excellent responses explained in detail how each of the three factors affect the environment. When candidates did not gain higher marks they had often repeated points from each of the three factors.

G002 Resource Management

General Comments

This session saw a wide range of candidate responses. The paper provided appropriate differentiation, an appropriate level of difficulty and an opportunity for all the candidates to respond to the questions. Candidates were aware of the assessment requirements of each section and most candidates managed their time accordingly. All candidates attempted section A and two two-part questions from Section B which demonstrates that the questions were clear and accessible to all.

High achieving candidates were able to apply knowledge and understanding. The lower achieving candidates provided over generalised knowledge, lacking detail, or answers not applied directly to the question.

Plans were evident and appeared of benefit to the candidates except where they were very detailed, leaving less time for candidates to answer the questions well. Overall, candidates fulfilled the requirements of written communication, producing clear written work in continuous prose. There were also some detailed responses in Section B, where candidates had read and understood the questions fully before producing an articulate response. In general, it was noted that spelling, punctuation and grammar were at an acceptable level throughout and most handwriting was legible with a minority that was difficult to read.

Section A

Most candidates were able to attempt all of the questions.

- 1(a) (i) The majority of responses stated the correct answer.
- 1(a) (ii) The majority of candidates were able to state the correct percentage of multi-person households in fuel poverty.
- 1(a) (iii) The majority of candidates stated 'one person 60 or over' as the correct answer.
- 1(b) Most candidates were able to explain the term 'fuel poverty' but only a few stated that a household needed to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel. Candidates lost marks where there was no mention of affordability or heating the home and some interpreted 'fuel' as petrol/diesel, referring to a lack of transport.
- 1(c) 'High unemployment/a low income' and 'the rising cost of energy prices' were the most frequent reasons given by candidates as to why households might experience fuel poverty. Lower marks were gained by candidates who gave similar responses 'no job/on benefits'. Very few mentioned poor insulation of the home. The number of dependants in the household was stated as a reason but no reference to level of income was made.
- 1(d) There was a wide range of responses suggesting how fuel could be saved but candidates did not always fully describe the way suggested. Candidates lost marks by making general comments about saving energy not linked to the cooking of food eg 'turning off appliances'.

1(e) Excellent responses referred to the elderly, 'shopping at markets or discount supermarkets', 'buying own brands', 'batch cooking' and 'writing a shopping list' when managing a limited budget for food. Some candidates referred to 'buying cheaper protein sources' or 'basing meals on starchy foods'. 'Buying special offers' was not always explained in relation to being of benefit when the food would be used and not wasted.

1(f) This question was not well answered. However, most candidates were able to give superficial explanations of how financial planning could reduce the risk of household debt. Most candidates gave 'balance income and expenditure' or 'careful budgeting' but lacked detail. Many candidates showed awareness of high interest rates charged by credit card or loan companies. However, some candidates gave limited responses instead, stating ways of saving money when shopping for food.

Section B

All candidates followed the rubric and answered only two questions. Most candidates answered questions 2 and 3 with a few not able to complete part (b) of the second question. Some candidates wasted time by writing an introduction which was a repeat of the question and not needed.

2(a) Where candidates answered this well they were able to focus on technological advances of various types of equipment (eg) steamers, air fryers and microwaves. However, this was the minority with few candidates accessing the higher bands. The majority of candidates had not read the question carefully and so did not focus on technological advances in cooking equipment but wrote about developments in food preparation equipment such as blenders and food processors. Others referred to the merits and uses of equipment.

2(b) This question produced a wide range of responses from candidates. There were some very good descriptions of the five main labels found on electrical equipment but the name of the label was not always correct. Labels were often described with no mention of their value to the consumer and some candidates identified relevant labels but were confused about the information they provided and how they informed consumer choice. A few mentioned awards from 'Which?' and 'Good Housekeeping'.

Weaker answers centred on a description of the information the candidate thought appeared on a label eg durability or they misinterpreted the question and described the factors affecting choice of electrical equipment.

3(a) There were a few excellent responses with candidates comparing the advantages and disadvantages of food processors and the two types of food mixers. Many candidates did not differentiate between the pieces of equipment but referred to them as if they were the same. Some candidates merely listed the advantages and disadvantages without any attempt at comparison. Frequently candidates only mentioned one type of food mixer.

3(b) This question tended to be answered well with all candidates able to give at least superficial explanations of how working families could manage their time effectively when preparing and cooking meals, the most common being: the use of labour saving equipment, division of labour, batch cooking and using of pre-prepared products. Candidates were able to support answers with examples. Equipment was often described without an explanation of how it assisted in managing time. Weaker answers included references to shopping and eating outside the home and were not confined to preparing and cooking meals.

4 This was the least popular question within section B.

4(a) It was disappointing that, of the few candidates who chose to answer this question, most were unable to describe the role of the Food Standards Agency to a sufficient extent. Responses were often confused with the work of Environmental Health Officers, assuming these to be employed by the Food Standards Agency or that they were the same. A few excellent responses were able to fully describe the current role of the Food Standards Agency in protecting public health in relation to food in the UK.

4(b) Generally candidates who had performed well on 4(a) were then able to describe regulations and standards that must be implemented in the catering industry in the United Kingdom. Some quoted actual legislation. However a large number of responses listed food safety procedures rather than the regulations.

G003 Investigative study

General comments on Administration

Generally the presentation of work was very good. Some were beautifully presented for moderation, eg use of spiral bindings, dividers, excellent use of ICT skills.

Usually appendices were labelled correctly and cross-referencing was evident.

In some cases annotation was linked to the three assessment bands L, M or H and those centres that did not indicate this tended to over mark.

There was no evidence of arithmetical errors. A small number of centres did not include their Centre Authentication Form.

Most of the work seen was generously marked or just within tolerance.

General comments on the work overall

Some excellent work in which candidates were able to demonstrate a wide range of investigative skills and extensive subject knowledge was produced by centres this year. Most of the investigations progressed logically and employed a selection of primary research methods.

The majority of the work came from the Nutrition section of G004, a small number of centres followed the D + T process

Most tasks were appropriate. Candidates would benefit if centres encouraged them to write their task/title as a question rather than an investigation into a commodity or health condition.

Nearly all of the reports were within the word count. There were a few very low ones, but this was reflected in the marks awarded. Appendices were well used and well referenced.

Analysis, aims and initial research

Some candidates failed to conduct sufficient preliminary research or initial research. When a context was identified the discussion and justification was usually too brief. Web diagrams are an excellent starting point but need following up with a discussion, which shows the opportunities and issues. This was not always done in enough depth. This section was often over marked, because of the lack of depth and detail.

There was confusion between initial research (1b) and background research (3a) by some candidates. The quality of the initial research was variable. It was encouraging to see effective use of the Internet, a wide variety of information was collected and discussed by more able candidates. Some centres encouraged candidates to include too much initial research instead of focusing on selecting a small amount of good quality research and scrutinising it carefully.

The discussion of the scope of opportunities offered by the potential investigation was usually tabulated, it was completed thoroughly.

Most candidates selected an appropriate number of aims, which offered scope for primary research. Some candidates were a little too ambitious and devised an aim, which would take much longer than the allocated time to realistically achieve, or offered too many aims.

Planning and development

Some centres gave more than one prediction/hypothesis and other centres produced very detailed and lengthy ones. Some gave a prediction for each practical or aim. This often complicates matters and makes evaluation more difficult.

Centres need to ensure that decision-making is evident in the appendices or report. The choices made by the candidate should evolve from the initial research and knowledge acquired.

All candidates must be encouraged to write more precise design specifications for each practical task, referring to nutritional/costing targets. Nearly all had specifications but not always related to their practical work and not always detailed enough. Often there was nothing "measurable" so was of little use for evaluation. There is still confusion between aims/objectives and hypothesis/specification.

Many candidates provided tables with methods and lists of equipment in their practical work, sometimes with accompanying photographs which were always helpful.

Generally, the plan of action was good and contained realistic timescales however, some candidates gave only a cursory statement of 'completed' next to each activity. There was a significant amount of lenient marking with this section.

Implementation

The process provides the opportunity for candidates to demonstrate a range of skills. The success of the process depends upon the nature of the task. Most candidates completed a questionnaire, interview and food practical work. Candidates who used a variety of primary research methods tended to produce better work. The majority of the over marking was in the implementation section. Candidates were often credited in the higher band when, in fact, the work should have middle band.

Background information was again variable. There are still some candidates sending vast amounts of downloadable sheets, magazine pages, leaflets etc. Where these were included they were generally annotated. The best work was from candidates where information was analysed and summarised, using techniques such as screen shots with annotation and justification to go with it.

The more able Candidates used a wider range of sources such as magazines, journals, books in addition to the internet.

Time plans were tackled in a variety of ways and were usually well done. Some of the more advanced plans showed dovetailing of activities, removing food from the oven and washing up! Most candidates were able to complete the relevant time plans, generally with accurate timings. Some were more detailed than others with good evidence of hazards.

Questionnaires were widely used and all had been piloted first. Food diaries were used with varying degrees of success. In some cases the candidates had only given a very general analysis of the content, when they had information to apply more rigour to the findings. Surveys, interviews, food testing, sensory analysis, nutritional analysis and costing were all very widely used. Nutritional analysis still shows a lack of understanding and in too many cases was not evaluated or discussed.

Practical work was, on the whole excellent using a range of skills.

Many centres are using a skills tick sheet which focusses the candidate on the variety of skills involved in making their dishes.

Realisation

Some graphs following a questionnaire had no labelled axis or title. The use of three dimensional cone graphs and polo mints graphs are not always appropriate for recording the results. Candidates could be more selective in the choice of which question to analyse, and the choice of graph.

Evidence of the use of digital cameras and scanners was pleasing.

ICT skills were demonstrated in a various ways. Some candidates produced leaflets, fliers, and recipe books. Others included a range of ICT skills in compiling their work. There was very little handwritten work.

Evaluation

The evaluation sections were very often over marked.

Most Candidates are very good at writing descriptively about their investigation and discussing the outcome. They also make valid judgements about the value of research methods they have used.

More able candidates referred to the original aims and hypothesis. However, only a few candidates made critical comments about their findings and research. The ability to reflect on how the research method could have been employed more effectively was omitted or given only a cursory reference by some candidates.

Nearly all candidates were able to identify some strengths and weaknesses in their work.

G004 Nutrition and food production

General Comments:

Overall, examiners saw a wide range of performance with the vast majority of candidates attempting to answer all the Section A questions and two questions from Section B. Most candidates used their time effectively, spending more time on section B which is worth two thirds of the overall marks. The majority of candidates wrote between 4 and 6 pages of the answer book. The answer book provided sufficient space for responses in virtually all cases.

Some excellent responses were seen in Section B. Most candidates had obviously been well prepared for answering the long response questions with evidence of clear planning and well-structured answers. Some excellent essays were seen in Section B.

Quality of written communication is a concern for some candidates. Poor spelling and handwriting has, in a small number of cases, affected the flow of a candidate's work to the point where it is difficult to see what the candidate was attempting to say.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

The majority of candidates were able to attempt all of the questions.

- 1a (i)** Although many candidates were able to identify one food that is a good source of vitamin D, few gave 2 correct answers. Milk was a frequent response but not qualified as full fat/whole milk. The question differentiated well.
- 1a (ii)** The majority of candidates correctly identified calcium as the mineral which vitamin D helps the body to absorb.
- 1a (iii)** Rickets was the most popular response with some excellent descriptions of how this deficiency disease linked to a lack of vitamin D. The question differentiated well. Some candidates incorrectly identified and described osteoporosis.
- 1a(iv)** Generally candidates could identify correctly one group of people who are at risk of not getting enough vitamin D. 'The elderly', 'housebound' and 'Asian women' were popular responses.
- 1b(i)** Whilst many candidates correctly stated one function of sodium in the body, there were some candidates who referred to it being for nerve function without mentioning transmission of impulses.
- 1b (ii)** Raised blood pressure (hypertension) was quoted by the majority of candidates as one possible effect on the body of consuming too much salt.
- 1b (iii)** The majority of candidates were able to state two ways of reducing salt consumption. 'Not adding to cooked food' and 'reducing intake of ready meals or processed food' were frequent responses.
- 1c** There were some excellent descriptions of the differences between saturated and unsaturated fats. Most candidates referred correctly to the nature of the bonding between the carbon atoms although a few confused the two. Some candidates

attempted to describe the difference in terms of benefit to health but these descriptions often lacked detail. The question differentiated well.

1d (i) Generally, candidates were able to define food fortification. 'Addition of nutrients' was the most frequent response with some being more specific and mentioning the addition of vitamins and minerals.

1d (ii) This question differentiated well. A range of responses were seen but, while most candidates were able to suggest two benefits to consumers of fortified foods, only a few achieved full marks. There was evidence of repetition and inaccuracies with the use of fortification by the food industry; some linked it to food additives.

1e Most candidates knew of at least one behaviour change that occurs during the kneading of bread dough but often found it difficult to give an adequate explanation. Some candidates did not read the question carefully and so did not confine their answers to behaviour changes which can occur during kneading but referred to changes during fermentation or even baking.

Section B

In Section B, many candidates wrote out the question at the beginning of each response. There were a few very detailed plans in evidence; which must have reduced the candidate's time for writing the response. However, the responses from some candidates would have benefitted from completing a simple plan in order to produce a well-structured response and avoid repetition and the inclusion of irrelevant information.

Q2

This question produced a range of responses with a few that were outstanding. Higher achieving candidates were able to demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the differing nutritional needs of the different types of vegetarians.

Many candidates defined, although not always correctly, the different types of vegetarians. The terms lacto- and lacto-ovo vegetarians were often confused and many thought fruitarians eat vegetables. Mycoprotein/Quorn was frequently misquoted as a suitable source of protein for vegans.

Lower achieving candidates did not always differentiate between the different types of vegetarian but referred to the nutritional needs of vegetarians in general. Also, these candidates tended to explore the reasons for becoming vegetarian.

Q3

All candidates were able to demonstrate at least superficial knowledge of the concepts of a balanced diet and malnutrition in the UK. There were some excellent responses where candidates discussed the concept of a balanced diet in relation to the five groups of food shown on the Eatwell plate and the nutrients provided by these foods. References to food energy recommendations and amounts of nutrients required also characterised high level responses together with a clear definition of malnutrition and the groups of people at risk.

Disappointingly, many candidates seemed to view people with eating disorders as the only group suffering from malnutrition in the UK.

Some candidates did not confine their discussion of malnutrition to the UK but included details of deficiency diseases more common in developing countries eg Marasmus and Kwashiorkor.

Q4

There was a wide range of responses to this question. In very good responses candidates were able to demonstrate an accurate knowledge of the importance of risk assessment to the food industry and knowledge of HACCP. Detailed understanding was shown of the seven stages with relevant examples quoted. Subject specific terminology was used appropriately.

However, there were a few very weak responses where none of the seven stages of a HACCP plan were mentioned and the candidates discussed ways in which food could be prepared safely with no reference to the importance of risk assessment. There was only a limited reference to the food industry and implications for food manufacturers.

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