



GCE

Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)

Advanced GCE **A2 H511**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H111**

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

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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

Overall Comments

This year's examination saw a wide range of candidate responses and discriminated well between candidates. There was an even spread in terms of the number of candidates attempting each question in Section B. The vast majority of candidates managed their time well, although there were a small number who appeared to run out of time. As in previous series, a number of candidates spent valuable time completing extensive plans for their answers to Section B, and then virtually re-wrote the plans in their responses. Candidates should be encouraged to keep planning brief, with a list of key words or prompts which can then be used to structure their responses.

Section A

1a [i] [ii] and [iii] Most candidates were able to identify correct responses.

1b Most candidates could give the link with 'high fat diets', fast food/processed food and too little exercise and excess alcohol. Few mentioned 'comfort eating' or medication as a cause of obesity. Virtually all candidates gained at least one mark correctly identifying a cause for the increase in obesity in the UK.

1c The most popular answers were based on people not being able to work, the cost to taxpayer and the strain / drain / pressure/burden on the NHS. In the main, most candidates were able to access some marks. However, a minority of candidates gave answers based on an incorrect focus of the question, eg reasons why obesity is rising in the UK or the implications for individuals or families, rather than society, which highlights the need to read the question carefully.

1d The majority of candidates answered this question well recognising that 'changing interests', independence and time with friends are the trend as children get older.

1e Many of the responses given by candidates were repetitive and lacking in focus. Most candidates accessed some marks but there was repetition of 'live near a bus station, live near a train station, live near an airport'. A popular reason given was 'because they don't drive' but candidates didn't then go on to explain why this might be. Most could say regular or reliable transport, but many just said 'good transport links'.

1f. This question was very well answered with the majority of candidates gaining full marks.

Section B

2a There were many good responses for this question, although some candidates failed to recognise the command word of 'describe'. Most candidates were able to identify the effects of unemployment on young people. Many referred to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and this was rarely appropriate. However, some candidates wrote about 'the young people wouldn't do well at school' with the wrong focus on school children or they wrote about the fathers being unemployed and the effects of that on their children. The most popular answers were based on 'low self-esteem', 'mental health and depression', 'poverty', 'homelessness' and 'drug/alcohol abuse'.

2b A number of candidates only gained lower band marks because they did not answer the question. The majority of candidates made reference to the needs of a family with pre-school children, but responses lacked detail about house purchase / rent/ RSL / private landlords and

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tended instead to include information about gardens, bedrooms, storage, stairs, sockets, carpets, etc.

3a Most candidates were able to access some marks about dietary changes needed to reduce the risk of Type 2 Diabetes. Some candidates focused more on the non-dietary changes, eg exercise and smoking. A number of candidates wrote about Type 2 Diabetes, but did not relate their response to the question asked, and as a result gained fewer marks. The most commonly given answers were based on eating 5 a day / less fat / less sugar and more fibre. Many candidates wrongly stated that diets high in salt are a cause of Type 2 Diabetes.

3b Most candidates were able to name 5 a day / eatwell plate and healthy school lunches and give examples/reasons. Many responses lacked clarity and were muddled or repetitive. Some candidates had not named the relevant policy, for example explaining that school children should eat lots of fruit and vegetables, but not mentioning the '5 a day' policy.

4a Most candidates were able to describe Personal, Domestic and Auxiliary care, although they were not always specifically named. A significant number of candidates identified, incorrectly, palliative care and nursing homes in their responses.

4b The majority of candidates were able to identify a primary health care service. Most responses described the services well but did not always explain comprehensively or use technical terminology. Very few candidates considered 'Screening services' in their answers.

G002 Resource Management

General Comments:

This series provided a wide range of responses. The paper provided an appropriate level of difficulty and differentiation, meaning that there was an opportunity for all the candidates to respond accordingly. The examination was completed by candidates with a wide range of abilities and marks were awarded across this range. All candidates attempted Section A and the majority of candidates attempted two questions in Section B demonstrating that the questions were clear and accessible. The least chosen question was question 3. The majority of candidates allocated their time appropriately and completed the whole paper. A few candidates did not fully attempt all the questions, although this did not appear to be because of a lack of time. Higher scoring candidates were able to apply their knowledge and understanding to the questions, their comprehensive answers applying directly to the question. Where responses were detailed, candidates had read and fully understood the question before producing an articulate response. Lower scoring candidates' answers were generalised, lacked detail and did not answer in context with a few misinterpreting the questions. Overall candidates were able to fulfil the requirements of written communication; producing a clear written response, using paragraphs and in continuous prose. In general, hand writing was legible and spelling, punctuation and grammar were at an acceptable level. Where plans were evident they seemed to have been of benefit to the candidate.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

1ai – The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

1aii – A number of candidates gave the figure for 'state retirement pension' only, ie 6%, rather than adding in the figure of 'other pensions'.

1aiii – The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

1aiv – A number of candidates gave 'loans/bank loans/overdraft', which are methods of payment not sources of income. Answers relating to 'rent' tended to be ambiguous, and did not refer specifically rent received from tenants. 'Selling items on e-bay' was mentioned quite a few times, as was 'interest from savings'. A number of candidates gave specific benefits such as housing benefit; child benefits etc. which were considered incorrect as these were already listed in the table. The most common correct answers were 'inheritance' and 'lottery wins'.

1b - Overall candidates were able to demonstrate a good level of understanding in this question, often gaining full marks. Some answers referred to 'advice' helplines rather than consumer helplines, and some responses were considered a little vague to be awarded marks such as 'convenient'. Common incorrect answers included 'confidentiality', 'open 24/7' and 'helpful information'.

1c – Often candidates repeated answers, for example, a response that gave the first point as 'high sugar' and the second as 'high fat', both of which relate to the nutritional value of the breakfast cereal. Candidates often gained 2 or 3 marks for this question as they could state the information the consumer may be interested in but could not fully explain why this would be important in their choice. Candidates tended to offer responses relating to nutritional information, allergies and the packaging being brightly coloured/having an eye catching image. However, there was a tendency for candidates to use the term "healthy" or "healthier" which was considered too vague to be credited. Candidates needed to state the nutrient that the consumer

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may be interested in and indicate why this was important to the consumer. A common incorrect answer was “price”, which was not awarded marks as pricing is not usually present on the packaging.

1di - Most candidates were able to gain the mark for this question. The most common correct term used was “chemicals”. Candidates needed to state “artificial pesticides” or “synthetic fertilizers” to be credited, “pesticides” and “fertilizers” alone were not considered sufficient for a mark. Some candidates’ answers indicated there was some confusion surrounding GM, local, free range and fair trade versus organic foods.

1dii - This was a good differentiating question. All candidates made an attempt to answer the question, but there were varying degrees of outcomes. In order to gain the marks, candidates needed to state that organic foods are “*perceived* to be healthier”, as it is not 100% certain that they are better for us. Many candidates repeated their answer to the previous question, simply stating “they are better for us as they do not contain any pesticides, chemicals or hormones”. The most common correct responses related to “better for the environment”. Answers which made reference to the food being locally sourced, supporting local farmers, being available at local markets etc. showed a misunderstanding of the specific (and rigorous) requirements of organic farming.

1e - Very few candidates gained full marks for this question. Some gained 1 mark but did not offer a full explanation in order to gain the second mark. There was a lot of confusion surrounding the difference between a direct debit and debit card transaction. Many candidates incorrectly gave answers relating to debit cards such as “safe and secure as it’s got a chip and pin” or “you can only spend what is in the account”. The most common correct answers related to the payment being automatic and the customer not forgetting to pay the bill.

1f – This was another good question for differentiating candidates. All candidates attempted the question, very few gained full marks or the top mark band. Candidates most often talked about MAP and vacuum packing and how this extends the shelf life of a product. For many candidates more detail and links to technology were needed. Very few of the most recent developments were mentioned. A common incorrect answer was recyclable packaging. A number of candidates were perhaps still thinking about question 1c and referred to design, nutritional information, dates, weight etc.

Section B

2a - Where candidates understood the meaning of ‘patterns of eating’ they mentioned eating as a family/3 meals a day/ going out etc. However, candidates often missed the point by writing about what type of food the family could buy/eat rather than how, when and where the family would eat. Candidates who understood the context of the question were able to offer a range of answers relating to both the lower income and higher income brackets. Candidates needed to consider a range of both income brackets to gain full marks. The most common correct responses related to “eating out”, “having takeaways”, “desk-fast” and “dashboard dining”. Mentioning convenience foods and ready meals allowed one or two marks to be awarded but there seemed to be a lot of misunderstanding of the question. Many candidates suggested that low income households had a poor level of skill in relation to food preparation which is rather stereotypical.

2b - When answering this question, candidates often only discussed money and did not consider the resources of time and energy. There were very few candidates who were awarded the high level of response as most talked only about saving money. There were a huge variety of ideas presented regarding saving money in the supermarket, and a good level of knowledge and understanding was shown on how this could be achieved. However, it should be noted that the rigid adherence to a predetermined meal plan and shopping list may mean that real bargains are

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missed. Newer money saving techniques such as money back apps were mentioned by several candidates. The most common time-saving idea was “shopping under one roof” and “self-scanning your shopping”.

3a - Candidates tended to perform less well on question 3a than 3b. It was clear where candidates had learnt the legislation as they were able to discuss the new and up to date pieces of legislation. Candidates often described the legislation, and where they attempted to name it, they were often imprecise, for example “Sales of Goods Act” rather than “The Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994”. Very few candidates knew the dates of the legislation. The Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994 and the Trades Descriptions Act 1968 were the most commonly stated pieces of legislation. The most common incorrect piece of legislation mentioned was the Weights and Measures Act 1963 as this would not relate to the purchase of a cooker. Many answers gave detailed information about how to seek redress when things went wrong which did not answer the question.

3b - Candidates who attempted this question often offered a range of correct factors that would be considered when purchasing a cooker. Design features such as size; colour and capacity were often repeated but could only be credited once. Candidates demonstrated some confusion regarding safety labels that would be applied to cookers.

4a - Most candidates were able to give a range of accurate reasons for the increase in the reported cases of food poisoning. The most common correct responses were “increased travel”, “increased awareness”, “globalisation” and “increase in BBQ’s”. Some candidates attempted to answer the question with hygiene regulations and rules such as “people are not using coloured chopping boards” and “due to cross contamination” so tried to answer why food poisoning occurs rather than the reason for increase in the number of cases reported. Candidates should be encouraged to read the questions carefully to avoid going off at such tangents.

4b - Again candidates seemed to misread or only partially read the question limiting the marks they could achieve. Most candidates were able to offer some or all of the factors which contribute to bacterial growth. However, many didn’t offer appropriate (or any) ways in which these factors could be controlled. When offering ways the factors could be controlled, in order to gain the higher levels of response, candidates needed to make sure they made precise statements. Many candidates were not awarded full marks as they made general statements such as “keep the food in appropriate conditions” or “do not leave in the danger zone for too long”. There was a lot of misunderstanding about pH and the use of salt, sugar and lemon juice as preservatives. Temperatures were generally accurately given although times e.g. for hot holding/ buffet foods, were less consistent in their accuracy. Some candidates also offered responses such as using coloured chopping boards and checking expiry dates which could not be credited as these didn’t relate to controlling bacterial growth.

G003 Investigative Study

General Comments

Overall this was a good cohort with the majority of centres understanding clearly the demands of the coursework. Most work was clearly and accurately marked. The standard of the samples submitted was better than in previous years. There were more samples within tolerance and the centres are teaching this qualification very well. The way the centres are annotating the work has improved.

Many of the centres sent their work ahead of the deadline date and nearly all enclosed all of the necessary documentation, which helped the moderation process to run smoothly. Nearly all centres had annotated the candidates work and supplied additional evidence – normally by highlighting the assessment criteria. Generally speaking, the marking of these centres was very accurate and nearly always within tolerance. Where there were differences in marks, this tended to be related to the standard of practical work and the selection of primary research methods.

Overall the candidates work was presented in a clear format, with good use and reference to appendices. Candidates presented their work in a clear way, making it easier to moderate. There were some interesting topic areas chosen, the most common themes were sugar and obesity. The wide variety of titles gave the candidates a good range of areas of study to choose from. The work that was carried out seemed to be in areas that the candidates enjoyed and therefore were successful in implementing.

Task titles

Most of the work came from the nutrition section of the specification. A small minority took the design and make route. Titles tended to be based around specific dietary problems such as coeliac disease, or around specific age groups e.g. primary school children. Popular themes for the work were sugar, food costs (particularly linked to university students), and how to avoid food wastage.

The majority of titles were well worded and gave plenty of scope for candidates to meet the marking criteria. Centres which had tightly controlled the tasks tended to perform better than those which allowed wider briefs. Where candidates did not select an appropriate task title they then struggled to carry out appropriate investigations or draw appropriate conclusions.

Interpretation of the Assessment Criteria

Analysis Aims and Initial Research

This section was extremely well done with good choice of coursework topics selected, mind mapped and then generally researched before discussion took place. Candidates may benefit from being given more guidance on how to discuss topics. Most candidates were able to thoroughly explore areas of interest, select an appropriate title and formulate aims and objectives for their study. A few candidates struggled with the writing of their titles if they devised either hard to answer titles or did not come up with any question or scenario to answer. Far too many candidates printed off excess research for this section, for the selection of titles and areas of study, which was not used or needed.

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Candidates are still tending to write too many aims. This makes the study lengthier and often the candidates are unable to complete them all. However, on the whole, the aims are realistic and quite detailed.

Planning and Development

There was an improvement in execution of (2d) within the body of the study but not always so evident in the Report. It would be helpful to remind the candidates that in the report they need to document what they have found out and how that links to the next investigative method. The report should not be simply an account of what they have done.

Most candidates were able to establish a relevant prediction of what they expected to find out. The most common error was to write too much for this section. Some candidates had a prediction for each aim or area of study. Where candidates had written a more simplistic hypothesis or prediction, of perhaps just one or two sentences, they were much more capable of proving or disproving this, and these candidates usually referred to it in their evaluation. Candidates often produced a plan of action of work for the entire piece of work, however, did not go into sufficient detail or did not state the problems that arose. Most candidates produced detailed time plans for practical work. Some of the higher level candidates also included a list of materials necessary for each area of their primary research. Specifications still tended to lack detail.

Realisation

This was very well done by the majority of candidates. Most candidates produced high skill practical work and a wide selection of research methods were tackled and executed well. A minority of candidates were lacking opportunities for primary research methods resulting in them being too reliant on web based secondary knowledge.

There was excellent use of appropriate and relevant IT skills demonstrated. Candidates do need to ensure that their outcomes are relevant to their chosen task title. For example, cooking for a family on a low budget and making puddings. Whilst this is nice, if you are on a very low income the main meals are more important. Candidates need to be aware of using their design specifications during their practicals, as well as evaluating their outcomes against their initial brief.

A lot of good research was seen and from a variety of sources, although there was a reliance upon internet sources. Too few candidates actually used this research effectively by summarising their findings. However there has been a vast improvement in the amount of secondary materials being included in the submission, with many candidates now choosing to write a summary sometimes with a screen shot of the book or magazine used. Many candidates are now referencing web sites used and providing a bibliography.

Sometimes costings had been done, but without discussion. In many cases the costings were computer generated and were included with the nutritional analysis without any comments. Some candidates were planning meals for school canteens or old people's homes without comparing them to either the selling out price or a discussion of how much their research had told them the ingredients should cost.

Questionnaires have nearly always been piloted and interviews were well planned. Shop surveys were carried out, usually with supporting photographs; case studies and food diaries were also very popular. There was an increase in sensory testing, or comparative testing. The weakest area was nutritional analysis, where the majority of candidates included a printout, but often did not include any discussion of the findings. Where discussions were present, they often lacked depth of understanding, for example a dish might have 100% of the day's protein

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requirements, which candidates thought was good, but they did not take into account the other food to be consumed during the day.

There were fewer leaflets produced this year but the standard and layout of the work itself has greatly improved. There were several PowerPoint presentations with feedback from when they had been used. Most work was fully word processed.

Evaluation

A significant number of candidates did not provide sufficient evidence to gain the higher bracket marks. Candidates need to remember to answer their task title fully as well as look at the strengths and weaknesses of the whole study. Strengths and weakness were often mentioned, but this tended to be in relation to practical work.

4d was often the weakest area of evaluation with only the higher order candidates doing this well. It is reliant on the quality of the title, context, and prediction. Evaluation was usually found in the appendices and the more successful candidates had used headings for each of the four criteria.

Word Count

The vast majority of candidates adhered to the 3000 word limit, placing investigative findings in the appendices.

Appendices

The vast majority of candidates used appendices to present evidence to support, justify, and explain statements and decisions documented in the report, and the appendices were clearly cross referenced.

G004 Nutrition and Food Production

General Comments:

The session saw a wide range of candidate performance and differentiated well. It appears that Centres are familiar with the structure of the examination paper; candidates are well prepared for the assessment requirements of each section and are managing their time accordingly. All candidates attempted Section A and two questions from Section B. The majority of candidates allocated their time appropriately and recognised that two thirds of the time allocated for the exam should be spent on Section B. A significant number of candidates write out the essay question, Centres should discourage this practice and encourage candidates to plan their responses instead.

Generally, there was a clear difference between the high and low achieving candidates. Good responses were characterised by the precise application of knowledge and understanding of a range of appropriate facts, concepts and principles. Weaker responses failed to provide accurate knowledge and understanding and their answers were generalised and were not applied concisely to the question.

In terms of the assessment objectives, Knowledge and Understanding (AO1) remains the strongest area; good candidates were able to recall with accuracy detailed factual information and concepts. AO2, Apply knowledge and understanding and analyse problems, seemed to be the most difficult skill area for candidates; whilst many have been taught to recall factual information, they are less successful at interpreting knowledge and applying it to the specific question or context.

Overall, candidates fulfilled the requirements in terms of quality of written communication, producing work written in continuous prose and with clarity of expression.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

1ai. A significant number of candidates did not read the question carefully and answered with a fruit source rather than a vegetable source. The most common incorrect answers were 'carrots' and 'oranges'.

1aii. This question was well answered. Poor responses were vague 'healthy skin', 'helps gums' and 'maintains tissue'.

1aiii. Generally well answered but some did not explain the reason why each technique retained vitamin C so did not gain the second mark. Some answers related to the preparation of fruit and vegetables rather than cooking. Those that mentioned adding vegetables to boiling water or blanching didn't understand that it was because the boiling water destroyed the enzyme ascorbic acid oxidase and discussed the action in relation to reducing the cooking time.

1aiv. Most candidates understood that the process of enzymic browning was as a result of oxidation but very few identified the enzyme ascorbic acid oxidase so did not gain the second mark.

1bi. This was well answered. Common incorrect answers included 'eggs', 'pulses' and 'meat'.

1bii. Well answered with reference to 'blood clotting' and 'healing wounds'. Common incorrect answers included 'makes red blood cells' or '*prevents* clotting'.

1ci. This was poorly answered by many candidates. Many discussed the fact that sugar substitutes do not provide calories or energy.

1cii. This question was not well answered by a majority of candidates. They needed to be more precise in their description of where intrinsic sugars are found.

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1di. Well answered question. A common incorrect answer related to plastics being easy to recycle. The second mark was lost by many candidates as they didn't link the reason to why it was an advantage to the consumer.

1dii. This was reasonably well answered. Incorrect answers stated an advantage or said it was expensive but didn't mention it is biodegradable plastics that are expensive.

1ei. Well answered. Some candidates didn't state the actual test. Some candidate descriptions were too vague so didn't warrant a mark.

1eii. Well answered. Some candidates were vague and described the test in generalised terms. Good responses included an example to illustrate the description.

Section B

2. This was the most popular essay question. All candidates were able to demonstrate at least a superficial knowledge of the nutritional value, choice and use of protein and protein alternatives. Where candidates had learnt about protein it was well answered. Some candidates focused on the nutrient protein and then discussed alternative proteins, whereas, others discussed the nutrient, protein, and then went on to discuss the nutritional value choice and use of the various proteins culminating in discussing alternative proteins. In a few responses there was too much emphasis on just one aspect e.g. uses, with the other areas only addressed briefly. In this type of question, to achieve the higher mark band, a balance needs to be achieved and a plan would be helpful.

3. This question was the least popular. For those candidates who read the question carefully and answered what had been asked they gained top band marks. However, many candidates discussed all the processes involved in the entire design, development and production process rather than focusing on marketing and launch, they gave the seven stages of the design process. As a result, fewer marks were awarded as they hadn't discussed marketing and launch in enough depth. Good responses were characterised by a reference to market research methods, pricing strategies and marketing techniques.

4. This was a well answered question. There were some excellent responses where detailed knowledge understanding was shown of the needs of adolescent girls and boys. Top band answers gave a good comparison between males and females, although few really gave a clear distinction between the needs of adolescent girls and boys. Weaker answers just worked through the Eatwell Guide and all the nutrients they had learnt regardless as to whether they were particularly important to adolescents.

Good responses were characterised by accurate recall of energy and nutrient requirements for the specific groups being quoted and explained. Some responses explained the function and sources of many nutrients, but there was little mention of the specific needs of either adolescents or adults. Some candidates did not distinguish between the two different stages of adolescence or between males and females and this limited their achievement.

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